

Journal of Synagogue Music

Greetings from the

Editor

Celebrating

the Cantors

Assembly

at 75

The World

of Jewish

Music

Of Texts

and Tunes

N'ginah

L'ma'aseh

A Liter-

ary Glimpse

Mailbox

Reviews

In Memoriam

SEPTEMBER 2022

תשרי תשפ"ג כרך מ'ז מספר א'

THE CANTORS ASSEMBLY AT 75

Looking back, Looking forward ♦ Women in the Cantors Assembly: Thirty Years of Singing a New Song ♦ History of the Cantors Assembly: 1998 to Present ♦ Turkish Tradition and Change

♦ Out of the Ashes: Cantor Esrongo Nachama and the Rebirth of Musical Tradition in Post-WWII Germany ♦ "Via Passiva" and "Via Activa" Through the Prism of R.

Nahman's Niggun ♦ The Poetry of the Two Geullah Benedictions: Hehazzan Yosef Aharon Aben Ve'emunah and Emet v'yatsiv ♦ How Music Articulates Liturgical Structure, Meaning, and Perception: The Kaddish ♦

Kiddush for Shabbat ♦ Eil Malei Rahamim ♦ A New Niggun Re: Singing Hebrew with Proper Accentuation ♦ A Happy Blast from the Past ♦ Addendum to "Glowing Coals" ♦ Encyclopedia of British Jewish Cantors, Chazzanim, Ministers, and Synagogue Musicians ♦ The Choral Torah ♦ Raising the Bar Mitzvah ♦ Shul Going ♦ Songbook: Shabbat, Holidays, Children, Congregational and Solo Selections

Journal of Synagogue Music

September 2022

Tishrei 5783

Volume 47

Number 1

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GREETINGS FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

While the past year (and more) has certainly had its challenges, there has also been cause for celebration, both in our personal lives (*ken yirbu!*) and as a community. Among the significant occasions we marked this year was the 75th anniversary of the Cantors Assembly. As we all know, well beyond supporting this publication, the Cantors Assembly provides ongoing education and encouragement for our clergy, their congregations and the community at large – both Jewish and beyond. We wanted to share in the celebration (and the well-deserved kudos) by reprinting several articles that reflect upon the long history of the CA as well as its more recent accomplishments. We are grateful to Matt Austerklein, who edited the 75th Anniversary Journal, as well as to authors Abe Lubin, Steve Stein, Nancy Abramson and Alisa Pomerantz-Boro for permission to include their articles here.

As the global village we all inhabit becomes smaller and smaller, developments in Jewish music around the world become of greater interest. Articles by Joseph Alpar, Andrew Lowy and Chani Haran Smith bring their new voices to these pages, as well as their interesting looks at the evolution of Jewish music in far-flung locales and/or across distant historical horizons.

With the *Siddur* at the core of the life and work of the hazzan, we are pleased to include substantive articles on the texts and music of our people. John Planer's examination of two parallel *piyyutim* (liturgical poems) offers intriguing comparisons; Boaz Tarsi's discussion of the *Kaddish* in its various musical iterations provides a fascinating overview of the ways in which this text is adapted to the occasion.

As always, this issue offers musical selections, in this case, revisiting memorable works whose composers have unique significance for this issue, as well as reviews of new publications to entertain and enlighten. We are also grateful to the readers who fill our "Mailbox" with thoughtful responses to articles they have read and enthralling anecdotes to illuminate and entertain.

And again, this issue offers remembrances of colleagues who have gone to their eternal home in the past year. All were precious members of our community whose warmth, love for our people and sweet singing touched their students, their congregations and their colleagues. But with great respect to Cantors Sanford Cohn, Israel Goldstein, Robert Kieval and Bob Zalkin, I want to use this "pulpit" for a personal reflection on the passing of Joseph A. Levine:

Last year, when I concluded my first message, I did so with sincere thanks to Joe, who preceded me with his own many years of service as Editor of this Journal. I freely admitted that I could not begin to approach his encyclopedic knowledge, but hoped I would have his good counsel to draw upon for however many years I was granted to attempt to fill his shoes. Sadly, it was not to be. When Joe left us as 2021 was drawing to a close, the outpouring of grief over his loss came in a recurring refrain of plaudits for his erudition, gratitude for his mentorship, and admiration of his consummate *mentshlikhkeit*. The loving *hesped* in this issue by our colleague,

Dave Sislen is a well-deserved tribute. Even more, we will honor his memory by continuing to fill these pages with the best of Jewish music scholarship.

Yehi zikhro barukh.

Marsha Bryan Edelman

Marsha Bryan Edelman, Editor



As the global village we all inhabit becomes smaller and smaller, developments in Jewish music around the world become of greater interest.



CELEBRATING THE CANTORS ASSEMBLY AT 75

Looking Back, Looking Forward

By Abraham Lubin

From time immemorial, the worship service in the Jewish community was assigned to a functionary whose duties and functions evolved, developed, and were shaped according to the specific needs of the time and the content of the liturgy.

Already during the existence of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, we know of the institution of the *Ma'amad* for the purpose of representing the entire Jewish people during the Temple service. After all, not everyone living outside Jerusalem and in the outlying areas of the country was able to attend the Temple service, even during the three Pilgrimage Festivals (Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot). Thus the *Anshei ma'amad*, the representatives and emissaries of the people who stood by during the actual Temple service in Jerusalem, symbolically fulfilled the participation of every Jew who could not be physically present to share in the performance of the Temple's sacrificial service.

Similarly, all the Jews in the Diaspora, whether in Babylon or elsewhere, were represented at the Temple through a system of an annual poll tax of all the people. The very institution of the synagogue had its earliest embryonic beginnings during the existence of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. There is ample evidence of such "Houses of Gathering" or *Batei am* (the "People's House,") independent of the Jerusalem Temple, albeit not as a substitute for the *Beit hamikdash* — the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. Some prayers and readings of the Torah constituted the service at these "synagogues" during Temple days.

The *Anshe ma'amad*, who "stood by" during the Temple service and represented all the people who could not be physically present, were the progenitors of what later evolved into the office of *Sh'liaḥ tsibbur* of the synagogue following the destruction of the Temple.

The *hazzan*, during the early Talmudic period, was a communal functionary at the center of what was the newly formalized institution of the synagogue. He served in a variety of religious, social, and educational functions. The *hazzan* was responsible for the Torah scroll, and there are indications in Tanaitic sources that he was to delegate the Torah readers, assist them when necessary, and at times even read himself.

In addition to the *hazzan*, there was another functionary in the synagogue during the early Talmudic period—the ubiquitous *Sh'liaḥ tsibbur*—agent, messenger, emissary for the community. The beginnings of this office were current during the earliest fixing of the *Sh'moneh esrei* ("Eighteen Blessings") as the *T'fillah*—the prayer par excellence of the liturgy. Thus the mandatory aspects of this prayer for the people resulted in the consideration of a functionary who was to execute the articulation of the prayer for the uninformed or ill-informed masses of the community. The *Sh'liaḥ tsibbur* functioned as the leader of a new and dramatically altered system of worship. He acted in the absence of the Temple and its sacrifices. In fact, he functioned in a system that had already been somewhat, if not fully, formalized in the earlier system of *Ma'amadot* that was in existence during the Temple period. It is even reported "in the

name of Menachem D'Glayah, a Tanna of the Baraita, that the summons to the *Sh'lich tsibbur* included the words: 'perform our sacrifice' . . . !"

The person responsible for the public recitation of the Eighteen Blessings, or *T'fillah*, was technically termed *Oveir* (or *Yoreid*) *lifnei hateivah* ("He who passes or descends before the Ark"). According to a second-century Tanna, that person had to be modest, acceptable to the congregation, musical, and the possessor of a sweet voice. That person also had to be able to read the Torah, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa, as well as teach Midrash, Laws, and Aggadah and be an expert in all blessings of the liturgy.

Another Talmudic term for the functionary who was responsible for the recitation of the *Sh'ma* paragraph in the context of a public or communal service was the *Poreis et/al sh'ma* ("He who 'spread out' or 'displayed' the *Sh'ma*"). This procedure, according to R. Nehemiah, described the act of *P'risat sh'ma* as the antiphonal technique of recitation, a very interesting and poignant musical aspect of the conduct of the liturgy.

The post-Talmudic period, beginning with the later part of the sixth century, saw the fusion and merging of the roles of *hazzan* and *sh'lich tsibbur*. A striking Midrashic reference to the role of the *hazzan* is found in *Pirkei d'R. Eliezer*, an eighth-century Midrashic source. There we find that God acted, so to speak, as *hazzan* as He pronounced the Seven Benedictions under the bridal canopies for both Adam and Eve and Isaac and Rebecca. This rather fanciful and touching Midrashic commentary reveals quite clearly how the *hazzan's* functions were understood then and what they still are today.

The period of the *Pay'tanim* (liturgical poets) introduced into the liturgy a plethora of new and complex poetry often based on alphabetic acrostics and other metric and rhythmic principles. These *Piyyutim* (liturgical poems) that were added to the basic rubric and preexisting liturgical texts of the service, especially on the holidays, required special musical and performance skills on the part of the prayer leader, culminating in the professionalization of the role of the *hazzan*, who was to articulate these liturgical innovations in the service.

Further innovations in the musical content of the liturgy came during the nineteenth century, with the classic works of Salomon Sulzer, Louis Lewandowski, Samuel Naumbourg, and others. These advances necessitated adding vocal and musical skills to the role of the *hazzan*, who was to execute these new renditions of the liturgical repertoire.

As we view the role of the *hazzan* in the first decades of the twenty-first century, it is remarkable to note that we have now come full circle and that all of the salient qualities and requirements of the *hazzan* of the past and through the ages are still the desired requirements and qualifications of the contemporary *hazzan* and more. The *hazzan* today is a leader and teacher of prayer, a provider of the spiritual needs of the congregation, a vital member of the *Klei kodesh* of the community, and a servant of the people and of God.

“The most permanent and continuous synagogue office, one which underwent few changes after the Middle Ages, was that of the Hazzan,” wrote Salo W. Baron, the preeminent Jewish historian of the twentieth century.¹ It is a remarkable fact of historic permanence and entrenchment. Perhaps it reflects and mirrors the classic role that prayer has played in the life of the Jew from time immemorial. If, throughout its history, the prayer book served the Jewish people as a textbook of Judaism, then the hazzan must be credited as being the guardian and custodian of this sacred and spiritual tract. What greater responsibility or more fulfilling an act is there than to be the representative of the Jewish community during its most profound and hallowed hour, the period of public worship?

So long as the Jew will pray and so long as the synagogue will remain the central and most important religious institution of the Jewish community, the hazzan will continue to be the carrier of the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts before God.



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Abraham Lubin is a past President of the Cantors Assembly and the cantor emeritus of Congregation Beth El of Montgomery County in Bethesda, MD. This concise history of the office of the hazzan was first published in the Journal celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Cantors Assembly.

1. Salo W. Baron, *The Jewish Community: Its History and Structure to the American Revolution*, vol. 2. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1942, p. 100.

Women in the Cantors Assembly: Thirty Years of Singing a New Song

By Nancy Abramson and Alisa Pomerantz-Boro

Psalm 96 opens with the words “*Shiru l’Adonai shir hadash*” (Sing a new song to God). The psalmist then continues by proclaiming that the harp, trumpet, shofar, sea, rivers, mountains, and voice of song be harnessed in praise of God. As the two women who have held the post of President of the Cantors Assembly—Nancy from 2013 to 2015 and Alisa from 2017 to 2019—we are honored to co-author this article.

Perhaps the most significant positive change in the culture of our beloved Cantors Assembly has been the inclusion of women’s voices and the ordination/investiture of female cantors. We celebrate the blessings of adding our female colleagues to the chorus singing a new song to God, as we share a brief history of the past twenty-five years, some personal and professional challenges, and our hopes for the future.

Among Alisa’s earliest memories of CA conventions are late-night caucuses working to get the votes necessary to admit us. She recalls:

I remember feeling like an outsider in the “Old Boys Club,” learning to smoke cigars and drink scotch, trying to fit in, listening to the *gedolim* of the day, being petrified to get up and sing in front of them, and feeling ecstatic when complimented on my *hazzanut*. I have *hazzanut* in my *kishkes* as I assumed my place in the long family legacy of prominent rabbis, cantors, and educators. Hazzan Gedalyah Pomerantz, *z”l*, was my beloved Saba. During his 103 years, he escaped the pogroms and married his beloved Tovah (his piano teacher and lifelong accompanist, in every sense of the word). They became *halutzim* who helped build the village of Ra’anana and started their family there in Palestine. They returned to the United States before World War II, where he served as a *hazzan* and educator, and joined the Cantors Assembly before returning to Israel in the 1960s. Throughout his life, he and my Savta wrote cantatas and put together shows to entertain their friends and congregations. He was full of life and continued singing and davening well into his nineties. He was a major influence on my sister Raquel and me in our career paths and our love for *hazzanut* and Jewish music. They and my parents, Rabbi Moshe and Kay Pomerantz, instilled a love of music and Judaism in our home and taught me that I could do anything and be anything, including being a *hazzan*!

The Assembly voted to admit women in 1990, and that decision is well documented in the *50th Anniversary Jubilee Journal* of 1997. However, it was the following year, at the 1991 CA convention in Los Angeles, that fourteen women, Alisa included, were the first to be admitted officially into the ranks of the CA. In those early days, the women were treated differently from the men. While students at the Jewish Theological Seminary, female cantorial students were required to sign a document officially accepting the responsibility of *hiyuv*, obligating us to *mitzvot*.

At the time of the *50th Anniversary Journal*, only six years after the 1991 events, 28 women were listed among the members’ biographies. Today 219 women are among the Assembly’s 570 members, and 13 women serve on the Executive Council. In addition to the two of us, Joanna Dulkan, Elisheva Dienstfrey, and Hillary Chorny have risen in the leadership, currently serving as officers.

Nancy still has her 1994 letter of acceptance into the CA, written on a typewriter, not a computer, and signed by our dear former Executive Vice President Samuel Rosenbaum. Nancy had waited several years after the historic 1990 decision to admit women into the Assembly before she became a member. She reminisces:

I was skeptical of the reception I would receive in joining the CA. And for many years I felt like an outsider. There were so few of us women, and it was intimidating to join this mostly male club. I wanted to be accepted, so I began to volunteer for committees and was thrilled when I was elected to the EC. When I got the call that I was chosen to become the first female officer of the Assembly in 1997, I was overcome with gratitude, and while it was out of the ordinary for anyone but the incoming president to make a speech, I was given the honor of addressing the convention that year in Los Angeles. Like all of our officers, I rose through the ranks and was privileged to serve as your first female president.

As in many professions, once the doors opened, a flood of women joined our ranks. We became increasingly involved by having our voices heard. We worked on committees, produced concerts, joined the Executive Council, and ultimately rose to leadership roles. It has taken many years to change the culture. While Alisa was impressed by the leadership and vision of those who came before her, she refused her first offer to serve as an officer because she did not want to be the first woman. We both celebrate the fact that we are female *hazzanim* but never wanted to be defined by gender. All of us perceive gender roles in specific ways. For Nancy, it was important to assume that trail-blazing mantle of “first woman” with all of the glory and hardships endemic to the role. Alisa is eternally grateful to Nancy for serving as a role model for successful leadership. It was a historical *Shehehyanu* moment for all of us. We all watched closely as our meetings became more welcoming and inclusive. When Alisa became the second woman to become president of the Assembly, we felt the continuity of positive change.

Being female in a traditionally male role has certainly presented some challenges. Juggling eighty-hour work weeks, late nights and weekends while raising children, making Shabbat and Holidays meaningful for our congregations and our families, and having the strength to get through the emotional strain of being clergy — running from leading *minyan* to officiating at a funeral, to teaching b’nai mitzvah, sitting on the floor singing with our preschool students and then counseling a grieving congregant — all with a smile, a kind and open heart, and a box of tissues at the ready requires tremendous strength, resilience, and determination.

Many of us have heard comments about our appearance and chosen profession, from our hair to our shoes, from our salaries to our life choices. We have endured inappropriate remarks and questions. We both furthered a zero-tolerance policy toward sexual harassment during our presidencies and beyond. We stand on the shoulders of the brave women who came before us, who made our choices possible. As we continue to strive for equality, we must never become complacent. We know that the next generation of women will achieve even greater success.

When thinking about how to share the story of women in the CA, we chose to invite some of our female colleagues to sing their own songs in these pages. These words are from 1991 JTS graduate Janet Ilene Roth:

CA mentors were so encouraging and helpful in those early years of my career. They were supportive at the start and continued to be supportive and their successors are *still* there for me now. I know that whenever I need to speak to someone in the CA my call is always returned no matter when. I know that my questions will be answered seriously, creatively, thoughtfully, and

empathetically. I am and will be forever grateful to the leadership of the CA and the rest of the cantorial *amcha* for being true colleagues and friends.

Penny Myers, who entered the CA in 2013 through CICA (Cantorial Interns of the Cantors Assembly), wrote that she was honored to be included in this special moment in CA history. Here are Penny's thoughts:

I am not only confident about the Assembly's next seventy-five years, but truly excited to take witness as we continue to open up all the doors of possibilities. This organization changed my life in a myriad of meaningful and profound ways — friendship, scholarship, and sisterhood. Reflecting that at a spry seventy-five-years young, our beloved organization has sojourned together, and I am encouraged by how it is evolving to strive to be a safe, inclusive, and supportive organization.

Another colleague, Ronit Wolff Hanan shared:

After years of resisting going into the “family business” I was about to graduate from the H. L. Miller Cantorial School at JTS in 2012. All of my fellow graduates were women. I told my father that I would be required to join the CA upon graduation, and, harboring just a bit of resentment from the 1950s, he said “What do you need *them* for?” “A lot, Abba,” I explained. “The CA has come a long way.

Ronit is proud to be a second-generation *hazzan* and member of the Cantors Assembly. Roz Barak, who was invested by Hebrew Union College and served for twenty-eight years as senior cantor at Congregation Emanu-El in San Francisco, recalls the following:

There was never a time in my history with the Cantors Assembly that I didn't feel warmly welcomed, embraced, and respected — and that includes before and after women were admitted into the organization. In my days as a student at Hebrew Union College, enchanted by *nusah* and the beauty of Jewish synagogue prayer and music, I would attend CA conventions in the Catskills and bask in the collegiality, scholarship, musical offerings and yes — fun — that permeated the halls and rooms of the Concord and Grossinger's. It was a world I was eager to inhabit and the day that I was allowed to become a member was a day I celebrated with great joy.

It was a long road to recognition of women as true *hazzanim* for the Assembly, but the milestone was achieved, and we are contributing to our communities with our voices and souls in a profound way. The relationships I have formed with my colleagues and friends are ones that I cherish, and my life has been enriched beyond measure. Happy 75th — *ad me'ah v'esrim v'ad olam*.

May every voice continue to bring joy and comfort for many generations to come.

Ken yehi ratzon.



Perhaps the most significant positive change in the culture of our beloved Cantors Assembly has been the inclusion of women's voices and the ordination/investiture of female cantors. We celebrate the blessings of adding our female colleagues to the chorus singing a new song to God...



***Nancy Abramson** is director of the H.L. Miller Cantorial School at JTS. She previously served as cantor at the Park Avenue Synagogue and West End Synagogue in Manhattan and at Congregation Sons of Israel in Westchester, NY. She earned undergraduate degrees from the joint program of Columbia University and JTS, earned a Master of Arts from Columbia's Teachers College and received her cantorial training at JTS. Nancy was awarded an honorary doctorate from JTS in 2018. She was the first female president of the Cantors Assembly.*

***Alisa Pomerantz-Boro** was invested as a hazzan and earned her degree in Jewish Sacred Music from the Cantors Institute of JTS. She also holds a B.A. in Near Eastern Studies and Music from the University of Washington. Since 2004, Alisa has served as the cantor of Congregation Beth El in Voorhees, NJ; for 13 years before that, she was the cantor at Tifereth Israel Synagogue in San Diego, California. While in cantorial school, she broke new ground as the assistant cantor at New York's Park Avenue Synagogue, that shul's first female member of the clergy. She was among the first 14 women to be inducted into the Cantors Assembly in May 1991, and ultimately served as its president.*

History of the Cantors Assembly: 1998 to Present

By Stephen J. Stein

The past twenty-five years were a period of tremendous growth and accomplishment for the Cantors Assembly, as you will read below. Truly, our success has resulted from the contributions of many, a collaboration among our professional staff, support staff, officers, committee chairs, project leaders, and the membership at large. We pulled together with a common purpose, a commitment to the perpetuation of our sacred calling, a term penned by Sam Rosenbaum, z"l, accompanied by a love for the Cantors Assembly. Leadership opportunities were spread throughout the membership. In fact, some of our most impressive achievements were spearheaded by our youngest colleagues. Also, without question, a key reason for our success has been the inclusion of women into the cantorate. Admitted to membership in 1990, women have made a powerful and positive impact on the organization over the past twenty-five years.

When I wrote the history of the Cantors Assembly from 1973 to 1998 for our *Jubilee Journal*, I chose to report on those events chronologically. This time I've decided to approach this task by topic, listed alphabetically.

It was my privilege to be selected by our membership to succeed Samuel Rosenbaum, z"l, in 1998. Sam passed away unexpectedly on Purim eve the previous year. We would not be where we are today without Sam's wisdom, vision, and leadership over four decades. He laid the groundwork for our success. Sam's achievements are chronicled in our *Jubilee Journal* and elsewhere. In addition, before moving forward, I would also like to pay tribute to our executive administrator of many years, Abe Shapiro, z"l. Abe passed away in 2005. I had the privilege of partnering with Abe for eight years. He took me under his wing and made sure that I didn't falter in the early years of my tenure. I attribute much of my success to their tutelage.

In early 2019 a group of nine colleagues and two spouses traveled to Uganda on a mission of support for the **Abayudaya**, a community in eastern Uganda comprising different villages who practice Judaism that, coincidentally, was also celebrating its 100th year. The goals of our travelers included a desire to learn more about local customs, especially as they relate to liturgical music and practice. Recordings were made and brought back to the United States. Additionally, a Passover Seder supplement based on the Abayudaya experience has been created and was unveiled in 2021. Of note, a virtual fundraising concert was held on May 11, 2020, coinciding with Lag B'omer. That effort raised approximately \$55,000 to help feed the hungry of the Abayudaya community, a heartbreaking situation exacerbated by the worldwide pandemic of 2020.

One of our boldest decisions in the past quarter of a century was to move our office, in 2009, from Manhattan to Akron, Ohio. As a result, the **Administration** of the Assembly has grown by leaps and bounds. Among the reasons for this decision was the realization that the cost of doing business in Ohio is significantly less than that in New York City. We were able to secure quality support staff at a fraction of its previous cost. Additionally, with a membership spread throughout North America and beyond, there was no compelling reason to keep the office

in New York. And, by 2009, we had a glimpse into how future technology would make working from remote locations easier. We have been blessed with a wonderfully talented and dedicated office staff over the past thirteen years. Listed alphabetically, those who have worked in our Akron office are Hazzan Bruce Braun, Martha Kelly, Crystle Martin, Cindy Preston, and Michelle Strickland. Cindy has been with us since 2009. As every active member knows, so much of our administrative growth is attributable to her, notably the array of responsibilities she assumes to ensure the success of our annual conventions.

Barcheinu was the brainchild of past president Sol Mendelson, z"l. This campaign has been in place for approximately twenty-five years. *Sefer Tehillim* is divided up among a devoted group of colleagues; each member commits to reciting a few chapters so that all 150 psalms are covered each week. An updated list of cantors and non-cantors alike who are in need of healing is also distributed. At the conclusion of the recitation of one's assigned chapters, the *Mi sheberakh l'holim* is chanted, and the names of those who are ill that have been passed along to us are inserted. *Kol hakavod* to Carey Cohen who kept this wonderful project going over many years.

While the relationship between the Cantors Assembly and the H. L. Miller Cantorial School of the Jewish Theological Seminary remains unique and sacrosanct, during the past twenty-five years we have nurtured closer ties with the **Cantorial Schools** at the Academy of Jewish Religion (Los Angeles and New York) and Hebrew College in Boston. The CA has been enriched by the welcoming of their graduates into our ranks.

The past quarter of a century has seen a growing number of colleagues focusing their careers on **Chaplaincy**, broadening employment opportunities for *hazzanim*.

Abe Shapiro, z"l, used to refer to the Cantors Assembly as an organization that is *rahamim b'nei rahamim*. Any one of us can fall on hard times. We established the Larry and Gita Vieder **Chesed Fund** to provide financial assistance to such colleagues. Larry, of blessed memory, was the Assembly's most prolific fundraiser. The money in this account was primarily raised by Daniel Gross, Larry's most recent successor at Adat Shalom in Farmington Hills, Michigan, through two major concerts.

CICA (Cantorial Intern of the Cantors Assembly), created in 2005, was the brainchild of past president Joe Gole. During the last twenty-five years, we've witnessed a growing number of synagogues engaging nonprofessionals as *sh'lichei tsibbur*, giving them the title of cantor or *hazzan*. Prior to the implementation of CICA, we lacked any influence over these individuals. Rather than shun them, we've chosen to reach out to those for whom cantorial school is not a viable option and implemented a program that enables them, through rigorous study and the passing of extensive examinations, to gain entry into the CA. In 2021 we installed Luis Cattán as president, the very first graduate of CICA to attain the highest elected office in our organization.

The Cantors Assembly was among the very first Jewish professional associations to publish a **Code of Professional Conduct**, governing the conduct of our members in their interactions with colleagues as well as laity, adults and children alike. The first edition of this document was published in 2002 and updated in 2018 to reflect societal changes such as the advent of social media.

Key to our success over the past quarter of a century has been **Collaboration** with a multitude of organizations and institutions both within and outside of the Conservative

movement. They include, but are not limited to, the Academy for Jewish Religion (East and West Coasts), American Conference of Cantors, American Jewish University, American Society for Jewish Music, Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, Guild of Temple Musicians, Jewish Educators Assembly, Jewish Theological Seminary, Masorti, Masorti Olami, Mercaz, Milken Archive of Jewish Music, National Association of Synagogue Administrators, Rabbinical Assembly, United Synagogue, Women's League of Conservative Judaism, and Zamir Choral Foundation. While hesitant to single out any of these organizations and institutions, we are especially proud of the recent collaboration with the Academy for Jewish Religion in Yonkers, New York, through which a reputable rabbinic *seminar* program has been specially designed for cantors who wish to expand their professional careers to encompass the rabbinate.

Quite appropriately, **Continuing Education** is an area we take most seriously. Those who commit to a certain number of hours of study per year are honored during our Annual Meeting. Much credit goes to Mimi Haselkorn, who has chaired our Education Committee over many years. The Nosh N' Drosh program, a series of monthly presentations on a variety of topics of interest to *hazzanim*, offered around the lunch hour East Coast time, has been a committee staple for many years.

The passing of time brought about a change in the quality of accommodations in the Catskill Mountains. It therefore became necessary to move our **Conventions** to urban centers. Locations where we have gathered for this annual event include cities, such as Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Louisville, New York City, Stamford, Toronto, and Washington, DC, as well as less-urban settings in Florida and New Jersey. During this period, we did convene on three occasions in the Catskills, the final time being in 2008. The Cantors Assembly marked its jubilee celebration with an unprecedented and memorable convention during the week of June 7, 1998, in New York City. Performances were held in Central Park, Ellis Island, Temple Emanu El, Park Avenue Synagogue, and Carnegie Hall. Media coverage was significant. The event was chaired by Chayim Frenkel, Joseph Gole, and Nathan Lam. Substantial funds were raised, including from a magnificent *Jubilee Journal*, completed and distributed the following year and edited by Sol, z"l, and Emma Mendelson and Jack Chomsky. The book continues to be a valuable resource well beyond what we could have imagined. My tenure as executive vice president, succeeding Samuel Rosenbaum, z"l, also began with this convention.

Convocations continue to be held about every four years. Convened by JTS, these ceremonies bestow honorary doctoral degrees on colleagues in recognition of longstanding devoted service to the Jewish community and cantorate. Convocations were held in 1998, 2002, 2006, 2008, 2013, and 2018. The current benchmark is thirty years of membership in the CA. We are working with JTS to move that standard to twenty-five years.

It is essential that **Covid-19**, the term used to refer to the pandemic of 2020 and 2021, be given special attention in this narrative. While throughout the world it was a time of great suffering that will long be remembered, it was also a period of great achievement for the Cantors Assembly. This success was derived, in good measure, from an abundance of creative online programming. The architect of this remarkable endeavor was Mike Weis. The Cantors Assembly turned lemons into lemonade. Through an array of video broadcasts — from traditional *hazzanut* to contemporary Jewish music and everything in between — during this period our database of lay supporters grew from 500 to over 13,000.

Director of Strategic Projects (initially Director of Continuing Education and Development) was a position created in 2007 and held by Rebecca Carmi from its inception through 2017. The focus of her portfolio was continuing education (partnering with Mimi Haselkorn), fundraising, and strategic planning. When Rebecca elected to step aside to pursue other interests, our officers wisely reconsidered the Assembly's primary needs and replaced Director of Strategic Projects with Director of Communications, a position ably assumed by Mike Weis.

Always cautious with our income, spending, and investments, as of the writing of this piece, the Cantors Assembly is in the strongest **financial** position in its history. We are grateful to our members who pay their dues in a timely manner and who have raised significant funds for the Cantors Assembly over the years through concerts and personal appeals. We are equally indebted to our many lay donors who have joined with us to ensure the future of the American cantorate.

Harvey L. Miller Supporting Foundation is deserving of special mention here. As a result of the close friendship between Steven Stoehr and Harvey Miller and the efforts of Rebecca Carmi during her tenure as Director of Strategic Projects, over the past number of years a significant annual financial gift from the Harvey L. Miller Supporting Foundation has been given to the CA. Those contributions have enabled us to embark on special projects that we would otherwise not have been able to afford.

As *hazzanim*, it is our responsibility to preserve cherished sacred music of the past while simultaneously creating new repertoire that resonates with contemporary worshipers. The growth of Jewish a cappella music on college campuses is a notable phenomenon of this period. As a result, the CA embarked on a project entitled **Ilu Finu** through which we supported and hosted ensembles performing this repertoire, culminating in the creation of the first liturgical publication in this musical style. That effort was engineered by Matt Austerklein, ably assisted by Ben Tisser.

While the *Journal of Synagogue Music* has been a staple of the CA since early in our history, it, too, merits special recognition in this history. Most of the CA's daily activity understandably focuses on the nitty-gritty of the cantorate. However, it is essential that we never forget the scholarly components of Jewish liturgical music, a field that encompasses an extensive period of time dating back to the Temples. For most of the past quarter of a century, our editor has been *Hazzan* Dr. Joseph Levine, one of the true contemporary scholars of synagogue music. On Joe's recent retirement, the reins were handed over to Dr. Marsha Bryan Edelman. Though Marsha is not a *hazzan*, she was an exceptional choice to succeed Joe as editor as she, too, is highly regarded for her expertise in the field of Jewish music.



The past twenty-five years were a period of
tremendous growth and accomplishment for the
Cantors Assembly



Once the Spirit CD Project (see below) ended, the Assembly needed to find another fundraising effort to fill the void that had been created in our budget. In 2016, Mike Weis came up with the idea of a ***Mishloah Manot*** campaign for Purim through which members are able to send a small package with an edible treat and good wishes to colleagues. Later the program was expanded to enable cantors to order packages to be sent to friends and acquaintances outside the cantorate.

The Cantors Assembly has conducted **Missions** to Israel (2002 CA/ACC); Poland and Israel (2009), culminating in the creation of the highly acclaimed documentary film, *100 Voices: A Journey Home* (below); Germany and Israel (2012); and Spain (2016). Each of these trips presented us with a remarkable opportunity to learn about Jewish life in these countries and to share our talents, in prayer and concerts, with local residents. A trip to Italy, planned for 2020, has been rescheduled for 2023 due to Covid-19. Kudos to Nate Lam, the architect of these amazing missions, aided by Ayelet Tours.

Two versions of the Cantors Assembly's **Mission Statement** were written during this period. Version 1, drafted in 2006, read as follows:

The Cantors Assembly, the largest body of *Hazzanim* in the world, is the professional organization of cantors, which serves the Jewish world. We are a founder and supporter of the Cantors Institute, now the H. L. Miller Cantorial School of the Jewish Theological Seminary. We are affiliated with the Conservative Movement.

Since our founding in 1947, we have remained faithful, as clergy, to our principles:

To help our members serve the spiritual and religious needs of their congregants;

To preserve and enhance the traditions of Jewish prayer and synagogue music.

To maintain the highest standards for our sacred calling and those who practice it we safeguard the interests of our members by:

Providing placement services, retirement and pension programs;

Publishing materials of Jewish liturgy, music, and education;

Fostering a spirit of collegiality, cooperation, and continued professional growth;

Representing *Hazzanim* to the Jewish and non-Jewish communities at large.

We will build on the traditions of the past and will continue to inspire young people to train for the Cantorate. We will teach and touch future generations of Jews through:

Jewish liturgy, music, and singing;

Continued development of creative, vibrant programs;

The personal rapport our members extend to millions of adults and children.

The document was updated in 2014 to its current version, which reads:

The Cantors Assembly promotes the profession of the Cantorate, serving our members and their congregations by supporting our colleagues in their roles as vibrant, engaging, vital clergy and musical leaders.

Beyond offering our members opportunities for mentorship, professional development, and personal growth, we also provide essential services such as placement, insurance, and retirement planning.

Affiliated with the Conservative/*Masorti* movement, we serve congregations from across the denominational spectrum. We seek to ensure that our members are fully prepared to lead synagogues and the whole Jewish community through an ever-evolving musical and spiritual landscape.

One Hundred Voices: A Journey Home, an acclaimed documentary film based on the CA's mission to Poland, played in movie theaters throughout North America. Without question, the release of this film was one of the proudest moments for the CA during this period. Kevin Thomas of the *Los Angeles Times* reviewed the film and described it as, "a profound expression of the healing power of music . . . deeply affecting. It is glorious simply as a concert film but immeasurably more." Kudos, once again, to Nate Lam, who had the vision to create this work.

As with the *Journal of Synagogue Music*, though **Placement** and Publications have been central to the CA throughout its history, they merit particular mention here. Our placement chairs during this period have been Morton Shames, ז"ל, Robert Scherr, and Jeremy Lipton. Serving in this capacity requires exceptional interpersonal skills. Each of these individuals has done an outstanding job counseling colleagues and advising congregations. Placement is at the very core of the services the CA provides to its membership. Perhaps the biggest change over the years has been the manner in which electronic technology has streamlined the placement process.

The Cantors Assembly maintains a vibrant and lucrative **Publications** department, expertly chaired by Jeffrey Shiovitz. Most recently, newer works that reflect the changing musical tastes of our colleagues as well as the laity include *Shira Chadasha*, the music of the independent minyan movement; *Ruach Hadarom*, an anthology of congregational synagogue melodies from Latin America; and *Ilu Finu* (noted above).

The Cantors Assembly has always understood the importance of **Public Relations** and over the years we have engaged a few outside consulting firms. But, in recent years, it became clear that we needed to ratchet up those efforts. Many, if not most, congregations are smaller than they once were, which has created financial challenges for them. That has made the position of full-time *hazzan* vulnerable in some synagogues, including congregations that have had full-time *hazzanim* for decades. It is clear from surveys and conversations with lay leaders that synagogues want cantors, but they are concerned about affordability. Our message is that synagogues can't afford not to have a *hazzan*. We've also seen a small but growing number of *kehillot* opting for a second rabbi over a *hazzan*. Stepping up our efforts in public relations began in 2012 with the engagement of Steven Cony, who conducted a number of surveys with rabbis, congregational leaders, and young Jewish adults, as well as the leadership of synagogues that don't have cantors. Mr. Cony concluded that there are two target audiences we have to win over — rabbis and lay leaders. In 2017 the CA added colleague Mike Weis to its professional staff and created the position of Director of Communications. Under his leadership and that of past President Alisa Pomerantz-Boro, we launched #whatcantorsdo, a campaign that has produced a series of influencer videos featuring prominent Jewish figures both within and outside the Conservative movement. Mike's name appears throughout this narrative as his array of talents and contributions have immeasurably contributed to the growth of the CA.

“Sacred Sounds” is a newsletter targeted to our lay supporters, covering a variety of topics related to the cantorate and Jewish music that we hope readers will find of interest. This bulletin also affords us an opportunity to keep our laity updated on developments within the CA. Initially the newsletter was published both in hard-copy and digital formats, but currently it is distributed only electronically. Kudos to Pamela Schiffer for the excellent job she has done as its editor and to Cindy Preston for layout.

SongSwap is a highly successful monthly virtual program that focuses on contemporary synagogue music and brings cantors together with young singers and musicians at the forefront of today’s popular Jewish music scene. It is open to cantors and non-cantors alike.

No effort during the past twenty-five years has been more prominent than our **Spirit CD Series**, a collaboration with United Synagogue that produced thirteen recordings. The chair of this incredible project was David Propis. Aided by a committee of CA members and representatives of United Synagogue, our colleague, Sam Weiss, deserves special mention for his work, notably preparing the accompanying texts. Each recording had a theme. Selections were submitted primarily by colleagues, with the final tracks being chosen by the oversight committee. Profits, shared between the CA and USCJ, yielded on average \$25,000 per recording.

In the summer of 2020, in an effort to promote domestic peace through music, members of the Cantors Assembly joined together with Black music ministers to produce an interfaith, multiracial virtual video recording of the song *Total Praise*. The project, spearheaded by Alisa Pomerantz-Boro and Jeff Myers, was called **Voices for Change**.

One might question whether the CA’s **Website** (www.cantors.org) deserves mention here. Most organizations/institutions have one. But, as an important portal to the Cantors Assembly for members and non-cantors alike, it is central to our operation. Access to placement, publications, and resources are all to be found here. Certain areas are restricted to members only. With the advancement of technology, our website has been redesigned a few times over the past twenty-five years, and there is every expectation that it will continue to be reimaged periodically.

There is an old saying that the only constant in life is change. With retirement on the horizon, it is my fervent prayer that the next twenty-five years will be as productive and successful for the Cantors Assembly as the past quarter of a century. The Cantorate and the organization are well poised to continue on as a positive influence for North American Jewry and beyond.

Stephen J. Stein serves as Executive Director of the Cantors Assembly.

THE WORLD OF JEWISH MUSIC

Between Tradition and Transformation:

Makam and Shabbat Musical Practice in the Jewish Community of Istanbul

By Joseph Alpar

This article describes ongoing transformations in the sacred musical repertoires practiced by *hazzanim* and their synagogue congregations in Istanbul's contemporary Jewish community. I argue that clergy and laypeople alike negotiate their religious identities as Turkish Jews in the musical choices they make. While many try to maintain the community's local music tradition rooted in *makam*, the Ottoman Turkish melodic system, others attempt to broaden their repertoire with selections from Israel, the United States, and *Habad* *Hasidic* Judaism. I examine adjustments made to the musical components of ritual as responses to decades of Jewish religious life as experienced under the authority of the secular Turkish state and to the resurgence of religious observance within certain segments of the contemporary Jewish community. Newly religious and spiritually searching Jews now have a conflicted relationship with their community's historic, sacred musical practices, appreciating their significance to local tradition but sometimes questioning their relevance and efficacy. I assert that *hazzanim* and community members articulate ambivalent and changing attitudes about their Jewish identities, memory, and the value of local tradition in their diverse approaches to making sacred music. Based on more than three years of ethnographic fieldwork in Istanbul's Jewish community, my study investigates these contemporary musical practices and debates.

Hazzanim function as powerful anchors for sustaining a locally rooted Turkish Jewish tradition while creating new possibilities of Jewish experience through musical innovation. Within the past twenty years a growing number of individuals in Istanbul's largely secular Jewish population have chosen to become more religiously observant. They are looking beyond the local community for new ways of expressing their Judaism. Certain *hazzanim* have acquired added influence for these newly religious Jews as both guardians of the local tradition and inventive religious leaders. Their musical, spiritual, and social work bridges local and global Jewish practices to best suit the needs of a community in transition. I will explore some of these ideas through the lens of Shabbat music-making in Istanbul.

An Encounter with *Makam*

“*Hicaz makamı.*” Moshe Palaçi, a merchant trained in Turkish *hazzanut* uttered these words with a deep sense of gravity and reverence following his demonstration of the Ottoman Turkish *makam* or mode, *hicaz* (pronounced hee-jahz). His baritone voice was gentle yet remarkably rich for a man in his eighties. He sang the

characteristic embellishments of an Ottoman *gazel* or vocal improvisation with sophistication and subtlety, while his melody revealed the distinctive arc and character of *hicaz*. Each phrase paused at a particular pitch on the scale, first ascending from the tonic to rest on the third, hovering briefly around the fourth before climbing to the fifth. For the sake of brevity, Palaçi avoided leaping up beyond the octave into new worlds of transpositions to other *makams* but, instead, began his rippling descent until arriving with a declarative prolongation of the tonic.

I sat across from Moshe Palaçi one weekday in October at a table in Levi Lokantası, a kosher restaurant in the historic port neighborhood of Eminönü overlooking the shores of the Golden Horn. Eminönü was, and still is, in some ways, one of Istanbul's main commercial centers, a district of maddeningly busy winding streets packed with customers who bargain with merchants over textiles, small electronics, toys, spices of every variety, and, of course, coffee. At one point in time, hundreds of Jewish merchants worked in this neighborhood. Eminönü could even support a daily yeshiva, a school of Talmudic learning, where men would study on their lunch breaks and come for morning and afternoon prayers. Today the number of Jewish merchants has dwindled to a handful, Moshe Palaçi among them. Some still loyally return each morning and afternoon to pray in the tiny former yeshivah on the second floor of a marketplace hidden within Eminönü's maze of narrow and teeming alleyways.

As we sat sipping black tea, enjoying the cool breeze blowing in from the Bosphorus, Palaçi continued our impromptu *makam* lesson. It turned into more of a musicianship test for me. He would sing a few melodic phrases and then pause waiting for me to properly identify the *makam*, pleased when I was right and thoroughly amused when I was wrong. A deeply religious man, Moshe Palachi was raised immersed in synagogue life and the local liturgical singing tradition, which is firmly rooted in *makam* and Ottoman Turkish courtly musical practices. He grew up among a generation of synagogue-going Turkish Jews for whom knowledge of *makam* was typical and essential. However, music learning was not confined within the four walls of the synagogue. Rather, Ottoman music of varying forms was a ubiquitous element of the Istanbul soundscape in the 1930s and 40s – in the *gazino*,¹ *meyhane*², *café aman*³, and of course, at home on the Victrola with records by beloved singing stars such as Safiye Ayla, Münir Nürettin Selçuk, and Zeki Müren. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1sNHPyQ2D6c>

The Jewish community produced its own significant musical recording stars: the *hazzanim* İsak Algazi, Haim Effendi, and lastly İsak Maçoro, who passed away at the age of 90 in 2008. Memories of his magnificent voice echo in the minds of Turkish Jews. Many refer to him as the greatest Turkish *hazzan* of his generation. Here is a short video clip of Maçoro chanting “*Hanoten teshua*,” the traditional Jewish prayer for the government, at a wedding at the Neve Şalom Synagogue in Istanbul's Galata neighborhood. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZInaZpR_no

¹ A nightclub or cabaret with food, drinks, and musical entertainment

² Literally meaning “house of wine;” a restaurant serving alcoholic beverages and traditional foods, often with music performances.

³ A pre-war cafe in cities such as Istanbul or Athens where singers would improvise melodies, often repeating the word “*aman*” meaning “Mercy!” in between improvising new lyrics.

Makam is more than an art form. It is woven into the fabric of Jewish ritual in Istanbul, and for Turkish Jews, it is a quintessential element of Jewish ritual in Turkey. Yet, for many *makam* has become unfamiliar with an archaic, impenetrable sound. During the period in which I completed dissertation fieldwork in Istanbul I was struck by the ambiguous combination of reverence and frustration with which Turkish Jews of all ages dealt with *makam*-based liturgical and para-liturgical singing. The following vignette may illuminate this ambiguity to which I refer:

It is a Friday evening in early July of 2016 at the Bet Israel Synagogue in Istanbul's Şişli neighborhood. A junior *hazzan* begins chanting *Lekha dodi*, a liturgical song welcoming Shabbat. He begins with a plaintive vocal improvisation on the opening Hebrew words, outlining the notes of *nihavent makamı*, in which this version of *Lekha dodi* is chanted. He cascades downward to the tonic before beginning the stately, march-like melody. (Click [here](#) for a link to the recording).

As *hazzan* and congregation sing, a young friend standing beside me turns to face me, a flicker of not-so-subtle frustration passing across his face. "Why did he have to pick *this* tune? It will take forever." *Lekha dodi* is a poem comprised of nine verses. Sung to Turkish melodies with the long phrases, heavier tempos, and florid vocal ornamentation that are so characteristic of Turkish Jewish liturgical music, it can take around ten minutes to complete. Meanwhile, people are hungry, may have long walks home ahead of them, and, at a musical level, they struggle to sing along. Despite his mild displeasure, around verse six my friend nudges me again and asks what *makam* we are singing in. When I answer, "*nihavent*," he smiles, makes a gesture indicating that he is impressed, and turns to his father proudly declaring, "He knows all of *our makam*s. This is our history." The father replies, "*Maşallah!*" a word indicating praise and respect, before letting out an audible sigh of fatigue. Three verses left...

Many similarly ambiguous exchanges on *makam* reveal a tension between respect and frustration with the art form. Some of my interlocutors argue that many secular Jews cannot connect with *makam* in liturgy because they see it as another element of a religious way of life that is unapproachable, strict, and unforgiving. They trace these attitudes to the late 1940s and early 1950s, a period in which Turkish Jews and other religious minorities felt the pressures of a state ideology of secularism.

The Aftermath of 1948

After the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, thousands of Jews, many of whom were religious, made *aliyah* en masse. Many rabbis and *hazzanim* followed their communities to Israel, leaving a vacuum in Jewish ritual life. This void was filled beginning in the 1950s through the extraordinary and dedicated work of a teacher named Nissim Behar. He trained a multitude of young *hazzanim* and rabbis in local Jewish practices and established strong synagogue schools for children to learn how to read Torah and synagogue prayers. Many Turkish Jews who grew up at that time describe Behar as uncompromising in his work, often roaming neighborhood streets, hunting for errant boys on Shabbat afternoons and pulling them by the ears back to synagogue to learn.

The *hazzanim* and rabbis Nissim Behar trained are the spiritual leaders of the community today and carry on his legacy. They all agree that the Turkish *minhag*, the custom or way of being Jewish, would not exist without his efforts. Although his strictness helped to preserve Turkish Jewish custom, it alienated non-religious Jews, isolating them further from synagogue life. Today, many Jews who have remained in Turkey shun religiosity and rarely enter a synagogue. One of the challenges synagogue leaders face in their attempts to draw potential congregants is how to re-position Judaism, Jewish ritual, and synagogue music as welcoming, familiar, and compatible with a modern Turkish way of life.

Makam is the past. It represents a legacy of Ottoman Jewish compositional creativity stretching back to the mid-sixteenth century. The sound of *makam* embodies a time in Turkish Jewish history when dozens of *hazzanim* and Jewish singers gathered in the dawn hours of Shabbat to sing the *maftirim*, para-liturgical hymns organized into suites based on a single *makam*. At one time, those same *hazzanim* would depart from their *maftirim* sessions for morning services at their respective synagogues, and their musical recitations had to be sung in the same *makam*. Moreover, the congregation would expect that of them and know whether they were listening to the correct *makam*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKg70VToZWU>

Makam is also very much the present. As has been the case for more than four hundred years, Hebrew prayers are still vocalized according to characteristic melodic pathways, ornaments, and modulations of *makam*. The application of *makam* in Jewish liturgy is rooted in a position of religious authority. It is partly for this reason that skilled proponents like the community's Chief *Hazzan*, Rabbi David Sevi along with many senior *hazzanim* and older congregants want to uphold and preserve *makam* as "our community's *minhag*, our custom."

Change is Inevitable

Current *hazzanim* recognize that some dilutions and changes to Turkish Jewish liturgy are inevitable. For example, they do not feel bound to sing exclusively in the *makam* of the *maftirim* of the week because so few people can distinguish one *makam* from another. David Sevi argues that "since people don't expect one *makam* or another, it gives me more freedom to experiment and to choose *makams* that inspire me in the moment. During *Shaharit*, the morning service, I might sing in *hicaz*, but in *Musaf*, the additional service, I'll switch to *rast* or *hüseyni*. These are options that I didn't have at one time. However, if there are certain melodies and *makams* associated with a particular holiday, I will always insert them" (excerpt from 2015 interview).

Some *hazzanim* in Istanbul are willing to make musical allowances, but many are wary to inject repertoire into prayer services that might disrupt the integrity of the traditional *nusah*. However, other *hazzanim* take more liberal approaches to this challenge, following a long legacy of *contrafactum* in the Turkish Jewish repertoire, that is, the substitution of one text for another without substantial change to the music. Contemporary *hazzanim* apply different melodies to a variety of Shabbat prayers, choosing music that is lively, familiar, and inherently singable for participants who do not read Hebrew and do not yet know the vocabularies and choreographies of prayer.

Bridging the Gap

One *hazzan* who is trying to bridge these gaps is İzzet Barokas, who has been successful in drawing new populations to synagogue services. A *hazzan* at Istanbul's Ortaköy Synagogue, he sets Shabbat prayers to love songs in Ladino (Judeo-Spanish), classic Israeli songs, songs from the *Fiddler on the Roof* soundtrack, light Turkish popular music, and even an occasional Andrea Bocelli adaptation. I recall my first time listening to İzzet chant the *Kedushah* portion of the *Amidah*. He set the Hebrew text to the melody of "*Hatırla Sevgili*," a popular Turkish waltz from the 1930s. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YlQ9Z-S1Gjw> The congregation joined him, quietly singing Hebrew words to the well-known love song about Margaretha, the French wife of a doomed Ottoman general. (Click [here](#) for a link to the recording.)

İzzet explains that he faces a combination of praise and critique from congregants and fellow *hazzanim* for his musical choices. Some argue that hearing recognizable music makes them feel grounded and comfortable in unfamiliar territory. Detractors suggest that these love songs combined with the beauty of his voice distract them from focusing on their prayers. The quarrels over *contrafacta* are not new. *Makam* and borrowed melodies in Jewish prayer were frequent targets of rabbinic responsa throughout the Ottoman period.

İzzet Barokas enthusiastically argues that *makam* in synagogue prayer can survive if there is a balance. "*Makam* is a part of who we are, and we need to hold on to it. However, it has the power to alienate people in the community who don't understand it. In Ortaköy we seek to find the balance where the senior *hazzan* chants in the traditional style, and I bring something that operates within *makam* but is familiar and modern. I also can choose melodies that will fit the atmosphere and crowd of the day. If they are more religious, I'll select ones that I think will not offend them. If it's a more secular crowd, I'll find familiar tunes that will make them feel included" (excerpt from 2016 interview). It should be noted that Istanbul's larger synagogue congregations employ multiple *hazzanim* who officiate together, dividing the different portions of the Shabbat service among them.

Some religiously observant and influential Jewish community leaders wish to build on Barokas's particular approach and create additional opportunities to make the service more accessible and energetic like services they have witnessed outside of Turkey. They see the future existence of synagogue life in Istanbul as dependent upon updating the image and experience of Shabbat services. But again, they face the critical challenges of keeping everyone comfortable and of performing the service according to the tenets of traditional Judaism. As one community member told me, "We do not want to divide the community or alienate anyone by bending too far" (excerpt from 2016 interview).

Turkish Jews use music in multiple contexts of prayer, celebration, study, and dialogue to bring Judaism informed by local history, ethnic identity, and links to Jewish communities across the globe into their everyday experiences. Through these practices they illuminate for themselves and their community what it means and how it feels to be Jewish in Turkey today and what Turkish Judaism can (or should) look like in the future. It is not an easy or straightforward

process, particularly where long-standing musical traditions are concerned. Some *hazzanim* and community members argue for the reinvention of some synagogue practices to stimulate and motivate a wider resurgence of religious practice. They argue for looking beyond local tradition for answers, but in ways that bend the tradition without breaking it. Some younger *hazzanim* argue for adaptations to the liturgical music tradition that might energize the community. However, this attitude is not limited to younger generations. One of the community's oldest *hazzanim* once said in an interview, "I would like our traditional synagogue music to be preserved. Tradition should not be an obstacle and prevent new ideas and opportunities. Neither should the *hazzan*. The question is whether my prayer matters more than yours. I would do anything to make the community more interested in my prayer." Yet for others, the commitment to tradition is too great. In the words of another senior *hazzan*, "It is our custom, our *minhag*. It is who we are! How can we change that?"



Makam is the past.

Makam is also very much the present.

Makam is a part of who we are,

and we need to hold on to it.



Joseph Alpar is an ethnomusicologist, performer, and educator whose research centers on musical and religious practices in Turkey and former Ottoman territories. He earned his Ph.D. in ethnomusicology from The Graduate Center, City University of New York in May 2020, having completed a dissertation titled, "Music and Jewish Practice in Contemporary Istanbul: Preserving Heritage, Bending Tradition." His research has been supported by fellowships from The American Research Institute in Turkey (ARIT) and The Center for Jewish Studies at The Graduate Center, CUNY among other institutions. In addition to his academic work, Alpar is an accomplished multi-instrumentalist and singer of Middle Eastern and Western art music. He is the director of David's Harp, an acclaimed Philadelphia-based ensemble specializing in the music of Turkey, Greece, and North Africa. Alpar is on the music faculty of Bennington College.

Out of the Ashes: Cantor Estrongo Nachama and the Rebirth of Musical Tradition in Post-WWII Germany

By Andrew Lowy

Introduction

Prior to World War II, German synagogues – and indeed, many throughout the world – were dominated by the musical traditions of the *Chorshul* (choral synagogue) established by Salomon Sulzer (1804–1890) in Vienna and expanded upon by Louis Lewandowski (1821–1894) in Berlin. *Kristallnacht* (the “Night of Broken Glass,” November 9, 1938) brought the destruction of most Berlin synagogues, and an end to this glorious tradition for the duration of the War. While musical tastes continued to evolve in much of the world to a point where only limited excerpts of this repertoire are heard with any regularity (these are often in single-voiced, folklorized renditions, save for isolated selections on the High Holy Days and occasional concert performances), many survivors of the War yearned for the comfort of their musical memories. One synagogue, and one unlikely cantor, provided those memories.

The Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue in (West) Berlin

Of all the synagogues in Germany, only the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue resumed its fidelity to Lewandowski’s repertoire almost immediately following the war, and continues to this day. Like many Berlin synagogues, the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue is nestled behind two residential homes in Berlin’s Charlottenburg district, tucked away discreetly in a courtyard, an old habit that the smaller, private congregations found especially difficult to break. It is built in a Romanesque style, though with the red brick facade and massive form typical of German medieval architecture. The property and land on which it was built was inexpensive. Its location behind an inconspicuous entrance within a courtyard did not protect it from major damage on *Kristallnacht*; although it was set on fire, the blaze was quickly extinguished by the fire department, fearing that the neighboring buildings would be burned. The interior of the synagogue was therefore only slightly damaged.¹ Other important synagogues in Berlin were destroyed, including the Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue and the Fasanenstrasse Synagogue.

Building of the synagogue, which began in 1911 and completed the following year as a bold, neo-Romanesque structure, was commissioned and financed as a private synagogue by a group of Orthodox Jews (*Religionsverein*) who did not wish to be associated with or acquiesce to the assimilatory forces unleashed by the *Haskalah*; they were especially intolerant of the introduction of the organ and mixed choir into religious services, consistent with (Orthodox) Judaism’s prohibition on instrumental accompaniment to services by rabbinical decree following the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. They eventually decided to merge with the Jewish Community of Berlin as a suitably large synagogue (1,400 seats) with its own all-male

¹ Igal Avidan, “Der letzte Ort des alten liberalen Ritus” *Deutschlandfunk* Jan. 10, 2013. [Online] <https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/der-letzte-ort-des-alten-liberalen-ritus-100.html>

choir to serve the Orthodox community in 1919. It was the most important and popular Orthodox synagogue in western Berlin.

A few years earlier, during the second year of World War I, Cantor Leo Gollanin was appointed cantor of the New (*Neue*) Synagogue on Oranienburgerstrasse. That was just over 20 years after the death of Louis Lewandowski, who had served the synagogue as its organist, choir director and composer-in-residence from his appointment in 1866 until his death in 1894. The New (Oranienburgerstrasse) Synagogue was the first major synagogue to house a *Liberale* congregation and to feature a mixed choir and organ. In keeping with the emancipatory conditions of the *Haskalah*, German-Jewish tradition began to adapt to the changing circumstances of its adherents. One such adaptation was the embrace of Lewandowski's published works by the Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue and the formal introduction of his settings into its services. Gollanin maintained the Lewandowski repertoire, and it became his *hazzanut*, which he developed over the following 24 years until the onset of the *Shoah* forced him and countless others into hiding. Fortunately for Gollanin—and for the survival of Lewandowski's repertoire—he was married to a Catholic woman, which afforded him protection from deportation and almost certain death.



Fig. 1: *Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue Berlin, rebuilt in 1947.* Drawing by the architect, Arthur Biberfeld (1874–1959), detailing the altar in the sanctuary of the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue²

² Arthur Biberfeld *Synagoge Berlin Pestalozzistrasse, wiederaufgebaut im Jahre 1947*, Drawing: pencil and watercolor on paper; 18.7 × 14.6 cm (New York: Steven Schwarzschild Collection, AR 25376, Leo Baeck Institute) 1948 <https://www.lbi.org/griffinger/record/397966>

From May 1945, Jewish concentration camp survivors returned to Berlin; on arrival, they made their way specifically to the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue in Charlottenburg. The reason that Pestalozzistrasse became such a nucleus of Jewish activity in the immediate aftermath of the *Shoah*, and not any other synagogue, was due to the clandestine activities of Alexander Rothholz, an employee of the Jewish Community, throughout the war. He had been given an ill-defined job: to maintain synagogues and other buildings for the Gestapo's use, in addition to removing their Jewish religious artifacts and symbols and triggering blackouts in the event of air raid alerts. He used his privileged access to these buildings to help persecuted people living underground. In addition to saving many artifacts, he managed to save his brother and sister-in-law from deportation. (Rothholz and his own wife, who had converted to Judaism, were nevertheless considered partners in a mixed marriage by the Nazis, and hence protected.) At the end of the war, he continued the help he had been giving people while underground. As the Pestalozzistrasse synagogue was not far from his apartment, Rothholz and several other rescued people, including synagogue board member Fritz Sachs, set up a contact point for racial and political victims of persecution. Its welfare kitchen was also put back into operation. Thus, Pestalozzistrasse initially became an aid and reception center for those who had escaped the *Shoah* and a place to go for those who had been rescued.

On June 2, 1945—barely four weeks after the end of the war—prayer services were held for the first time since *Kristallnacht*, led by Cantor Gollanin from the Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue, while the rest of Berlin lay in ruins. Regular services resumed in late summer, 1945, with participants sitting on borrowed garden chairs. The building thus became the center for the remaining scraps of the community—those returning from the camps as well as those who had lived underground during the last years of war—who gathered there to ask about relatives and exchange news. Thus, the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue became the first officially recognized post-war Jewish congregation in Berlin, and in December, Hanukkah was celebrated there.

But there was a second reason that Pestalozzistrasse achieved prominence within the minuscule community of German Jews that had begun to reconstitute itself in the war-torn ashes of Berlin. The Jewish communities that were re-established in Germany after the war were shaped by Displaced Persons, survivors of the camps and refugees from Eastern Europe. The vast majority were Polish or Russian Displaced Persons, who still established their services in the Eastern European Jewish tradition. They therefore tended to be Orthodox in their outlook,³ and most of the synagogues that were able to function were or became Orthodox. Ironically, the synagogue that had been established by Orthodox Jews who shunned the rituals of the old liberal rite, was the vehicle through which the Lewandowski-Sulzer rite survived, and thus became the symbol of that liberal tradition. It was because of those who chose to remain in Germany that the liberal liturgical tradition of Louis Lewandowski was saved from extinction in its ancestral home. Since the Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue had been destroyed in the war, Cantor Gollanin and its Catholic organist, Arthur Zepke, transferred to the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue and formalized its *Liberale* identity thereafter. Nowhere else in the world would the divine service composed by Louis Lewandowski for cantor, organ and mixed choir be continued in its original form, as it does to this day. Yet in all other aspects, including separate seating for men

³ Jan Mühlstein, "The Return of Liberal Judaism to Germany," *European Judaism*, Vol. 49, 2016: 44–48. DOI: 10.3167/ej.2016.49.01.05

and women, the Pestalozzistrasse functions as a “traditional” synagogue (“Orthodox,” in the American context).

Indeed, Pestalozzistrasse board member Fritz Sachs instinctively understood what German Jews were so desperately pining for—even if only in an emotional sense—and what would provide them with exquisite fulfillment in that respect: “I want the beautiful, holy melodies, which we sang during our childhood, those old songs, which we were not allowed to hear for such a long time, to be remembered. They should give the elderly memories of a happier time and our children strength for everyday life.”⁴ And so, in the early summer of 1946, he organized a synagogue choir. Soon the mixed choir was accompanied by Arthur Zepke on organ. According to newspaper publications of that year, Sally Sittig, Edmund Lehmann or Oscar Ruschin officiated as cantors, as occasionally did Leo Gollanin, the famous, former (but rapidly ageing) cantor of Oranienburgerstrasse. Informal events also began to take place, and as early as November 1946, a concert took place in the Pestalozzistrasse synagogue. “With the participation of Herrn Oberkantor Sittig und Herrn Orgelspieler Zepke and the synagogue choir, synagogal songs were performed... the most famous compositions by Lewandowski, [Eduard] Birnbaum, Mendelssohn and [Ludwig] Altmann sounded,” wrote the Jewish newspaper *Der Weg* at the time. “A promising beginning, which should also give inspiration to the district offices of the other sectors to intensify Jewish life in Berlin again.”⁵ It was also reported that those present heard Lewandowski’s German *Kedushah*.⁶

Enter Estrongo Nachama

However, Pestalozzistrasse evidently escaped the attention of a Greek survivor of the Auschwitz and Sachsenhausen camps, who stumbled into Berlin on May 5, 1945, the day after his 27th birthday, having just been liberated a day earlier by the Red Army outside Berlin. That was how the grueling 45-kilometer “Death March” from Sachsenhausen had ended; he had survived only by virtue of his youth. Finding himself unable to return to his native Thessaloniki (Salonika), he was determined a Displaced Person. The name of this young man, who was riddled with typhus, was Estrongo Nachama. Weighing only 65 pounds, he was admitted to the hospital ten days later, his treatment and recovery lasting almost eight months. When he was finally discharged, in February 1946, he made his way to the Rykestrasse Synagogue in what would become East Berlin.

⁴ As described by eminent ethnomusicologist Professor Tina Frühauf in her definitive work: Tina Frühauf, *Transcending Dystopia: Music, Mobility, and the Jewish Community in Germany, 1945–1989* (New York: Oxford University Press), 2021, 144

⁵ Slevogt, *op. cit.*, 70

⁶ As explained at <https://www.jewishchoralmusic.com/compositions-dh/german-kedushah-lewandowski>, the German *Kedushah* represents Lewandowski’s nod to the reformers who sought to modernize the liturgy by introducing prayers in the vernacular. While Hebrew is maintained for the core biblical citations, the remainder has been rendered in German. The Jewish Reform Congregation in Berlin favored this setting for High Holiday services and confirmation ceremonies. A historical recording of the German *Kedushah* can be heard on the CD, originally recorded in 1928, *The Musical Tradition of the Jewish Reform Congregation in Berlin*, re-issued by the Feher Jewish Music Center of the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in Tel Aviv. Cantor Nachama later recorded a version of the *Deutsche Keduscha* with the RIAS Kammerchor (Chamber Choir) and Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue organist, Harry Foss z”l in 1995; it appeared as the first track on the CD *Es Tönt Von Der Erde Zum Himmel Empor* (not on label).

Trying to find his way to a synagogue after his release from the hospital, Estrongo Nachama was given the Oranienburgerstrasse address of the Jewish Community, where he became a registered member on April 25, 1946. There, he bumped into a former fellow-inmate at Auschwitz, who immediately recognized him as “*der Sänger von Auschwitz*” (“the singer of Auschwitz”). This was the rather chilling sobriquet bestowed on him by his Nazi captors, who, upon hearing his singing voice, had forced him to sing Italian love songs for them almost every night; in return, they would throw him scraps of bread, as one might throw morsels of meat to a hungry dog. Nevertheless, Nachama always insisted that it was his voice that saved his life. He was redirected to the main community synagogue on Rykestrasse, which provided meals on the weekends, and where he attended services. For a few months, Estrongo Nachama supported himself by performing *schlager* (popular songs), operettas, and secular and sacred Jewish songs at a piano bar in Lietzensee popular with Jewish youth.⁷

Estrongo Nachama had trained as a cantor in his native Thessaloniki—also known as the “Jerusalem of the Balkans” and “*La Madre de Israel*” (“the Mother of Israel”), having once been home to the largest Sephardic Jewish community in the world. He was the son of a grain merchant, Menachem (also said to have a beautiful voice) and the cousin of David Nachama, who left Thessaloniki in 1933 to pursue a career as a cantor—initially in France and then in Palestine—and was the only member of the family to escape Nazi persecution.

One night, having been brought along to an engagement party, Estrongo sang a setting of *V’shamru* in response to an impromptu request from the groom-to-be. His rendition caught the attention of Alexander Rothholz—by then a board member of the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue—who happened to be one of the guests. As Nachama had told the highly regarded German-Jewish historian of German Jews, Michael Brenner, many years later, he had not even been aware of another synagogue in Berlin when Rothholz immediately invited him to audition the following Friday at the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue.

Brenner recounts Nachama’s testimony of what happened next:

“The chief cantor, Leo Gollanin, who had been the cantor in the Oranienburgerstrasse synagogue before the war, was an old man by then. A week later, he let me lead the service. So, I sang solo. The organist, [Arthur] Zepke, had already been there before the war. After the service, Gollanin came to me and asked, “Herr Nachama, I am old. Why don’t you take my place and help rebuild the [Jewish] community?”⁸

However, Nachama was trained in a Sephardic *minhag* (the precise manner of his training is unknown) and therefore would not have had expert knowledge of the Western Ashkenazic tradition (*Minhag Ashkenaz*); he was certainly completely unfamiliar with the melodies of Louis Lewandowski and how to sing with a choir, let alone with an organ, an instrument he had never previously associated with the synagogue. Moreover, at this point, he had still intended to return to Greece. As he told Michael Brenner, he balked at the idea of replacing Gollanin, and was

⁷ Frühauf, *op. cit.*, 108

⁸ Michael Brenner, *After the Holocaust: Rebuilding Jewish Lives in Postwar Germany* (Princeton University Press), 1997, 224

completely honest about his reluctance when Gollanin approached him after that first solo performance, and repeatedly thereafter:

“I replied, “Cantor, I can sing *hazzonus*, but I was trained to do that in Greece, and I would like to go back to Greece.” Every week he tried to persuade me: “Help us, please.”

Nachama eventually relented after the future Chairman of the Jewish Community, Dr. Heinz Galinski, appealed to him. No other cantor had been available to replace Gollanin, who was in failing health and needed to retire as soon as possible.⁹ Nachama therefore agreed to be employed as Assistant Cantor to Gollanin, knowing that he would somehow have to master the *nusah Ashkenaz*—and specifically, Lewandowski’s *oeuvre*—in short order. And master it, he did—a considerable endeavor under trying circumstances.



Fig. 2: Cantor Leo Gollanin, Cantor Estrongo Nachama, and organist Arthur Zepke, who ensured the survival, revival, and enshrinement of Louis Lewandowski’s musical tradition in Berlin, which continues to this day.

In a telling radio interview with journalist Peter Claus in 1999 for the state broadcaster, RIAS (later *Deutschlandradio*)—the last of many that Nachama had given over the final 25 years of his life—Claus inquired as to how difficult it was for the Greek cantor to become rapidly expert in a new liturgical ritual:

“It couldn’t have been that easy for you—basically had to learn from scratch; you had to learn the liturgical music that was sung in Central Europe, in Germany—those were different Jewish melodies than those in your home country?”

Nachama replied:

“Yes, you are absolutely right: we have different melodies in Greece. It took me four months. I came from Lichtenberg, on the other side of town, to West Berlin to meet Cantor Gollanin. And

⁹ Thomas Klatt, “Claudia Keller: ‘Lilli und Estrongo Nachama’ – Der Sänger von Auschwitz”. *Deutschlandfunk Kultur*, Jan. 18, 2019. [Online] <https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/claudia-keller-lilli-und-estrongo-nachama-der-saenger-von-100.html>

Zepke, my organist, was there every day, twice a day, to study—morning and afternoon—because I had to learn. That was bad. But I learned, thank God.”

Claus: “Bad because studying was so exhausting for you?”

Nachama: “It was very exhausting, very, very exhausting. There was no subway or connection, or the subway was broken.”

Claus: “Do you mean so bad, so exhausting due to external circumstances, or because it was so difficult for you to learn?”

Nachama: “Yes, it was difficult. I also had a preacher [Cantor Herrmann Klein] who I learned from. He was a bit rough, but thank God, I learned from him [as well].”

Claus: “What do you mean by ‘rough’? Did he, perhaps, hit you?”

Nachama: “Once he sang it, then he would demand that I sing it perfectly. I would say: ‘Look, I’m sorry, I can’t learn that fast; I have to practice it a few times and then I’ll sing it.’ But *Oberkantor* Gollanin was wonderful, I learned a lot from him. I was very, very pleased with him... And here I am, still singing, thank God, singing at the age of 81.”¹⁰

Estrongo’s difficulty in mastering the new liturgy was exacerbated by his still-weakened condition following his Auschwitz experience. The Jews of Thessaloniki—who suffered the greatest loss of life at the hands of the Nazis in all of Europe (96 percent of the 46,000-strong population¹¹) were subjected to even more diabolical conditions than their Ashkenazi co-religionists, often because of egregious treatment by their fellow Jews,¹² and Nachama was personally subjected to unimaginable torture, as well as forced sterilization. There was also the fact that in late 1946, he had spent over half of the previous twelve months recovering from severe typhus, and had no knowledge of the whereabouts of his closest family and wife. At that time, he could barely speak any German, and despite living in Berlin for the rest of his life—55 years—he never became fluent. While Greek was the language of his upbringing, his native tongue was, like that of all Jews in Thessaloniki, Ladino (Judeo-Spanish).

Adding to Estrongo’s challenge is the fact that, unlike many other Sephardi European cities, the liturgy in Thessaloniki synagogues did *not* adapt to the modernizing musical tastes; in fact, it went in precisely the opposite direction to that of the *Liberale* movement in Germany. As musicologist Edwin Seroussi notes, the Ottoman (traditional) music sung in Hebrew was *reinforced* at paraliturgical gatherings in synagogues as an “antidote” to such modernizing tendencies.¹³ In other words, the neo-classical liturgical tradition embodied by Lewandowski

¹⁰ Peter Claus und Estrongo Nachama, *Im Gespräch mit Peter Claus: Estrongo Nachama*. Jan. 27, 1999. Deutschlandradio – Archive No. X383904(D)

¹¹ Maria Kavala, “The Scale of Jewish Property Theft in Nazi-occupied Thessaloniki.” In G. Antoniou & A. Moses (Eds.), *The Holocaust in Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2018, 200
DOI:10.1017/9781108565776.010

¹² Devin E Naar, *Jewish Salonica: Between Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press), 2016

¹³ Edwin Seroussi, “Sacred Song in an Era of Turmoil: Sephardic Liturgical Music in Southeastern Europe at the Turn of the 20th Century,” *Musica Judaica* Vol. 21, 2015: 1–64

would have been antithetical—at least notionally—to Estrongo Nachama, whose Judaism was very traditional.

The division of Berlin into three Allied-controlled sectors (American, British, and Russian) had been stipulated by the 1944 London Protocol and agreements pursuant to it; its final iteration (July 1945), shortly after Germany's surrender to the Allies, included a fourth sector controlled by France. The absence of stable governance in Berlin and Germany made it difficult to move between the sectors, necessitating popular celebrations—such as those on Hanukkah—being held separately in each sector. Hanukkah observances in 1946 were the first major community-wide, unfettered Jewish religious celebrations on any significant scale to be held in that city for almost 15 years—since the final days of the Weimar Republic. Esther Slevogt writes of a report describing the big Hanukkah celebration held by the District Office of Charlottenburg at the *Grand Casino am Zoo* (as a counterpart to the formalities held in the British sector). In its December 27 edition, only a few weeks after the November synagogue concert, *Der Weg* described the non-ceremonial event:

“The welcoming address was given by Dr. Münzer as the chairman of the Jewish Community in the British Sector and the artistic part featured the popular Jewish artists Villi Prager, Martin Rosen, the Greek [baritone] Estrongo Nachama, the opera singer Ms. Thomas and a Mrs. Springfield-Rainer.”

Slevogt continues:

“This is the first time that the then 28-year-old Estrongo Nachama was mentioned in connection with the Pestalozzistrasse synagogue, on which he was soon to make a significant mark as cantor, and later as head cantor, for decades.”¹⁴

Historian Tina Frühauf similarly recounts that Estrongo Nachama easily assimilated into his new environment, and that he “would play an active role in the restoration of German Jewish culture immediately after the war and become a tower of strength for the Berlin Jewish community and beyond.”¹⁵

On June 1, 1947, the Directors of the Board of the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue, Alexander Rothholz and Fritz Sachs, wrote to Gerhard Kohn, who was responsible for cultural affairs of the Jewish Community of Berlin, directing him to make the necessary contractual arrangements to employ Estrongo Nachama as Cantor. He formally took up the posting on July 1, 1947, a position he would hold continuously until the day he died on January 13, 2000, at the age of 81.¹⁶

¹⁴ Slevogt, *op. cit.* 74

¹⁵ Frühauf, *op. cit.*, 90

¹⁶ While he accepted the position at the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue, Nachama continued to harbor the hope that he might reunite with his family and return home to Greece. Those hopes were dashed in 1951, when Nachama received the long-awaited news of the fate of his father, both his sisters, and his newlywed wife, all of whom had been deported with him from Thessaloniki on April 10, 1943, arriving at Auschwitz eight days later. At the age of 33, Nachama learned that his wife and family had been executed on the spot immediately after he last saw them on “the Ramp,” where the trains pulled up at Auschwitz.

According to the journalist Anita Kugler, writing in the July 6, 1992, edition of the German daily newspaper *Die Tageszeitung, Rundfunk im amerikanischen Sektor* (Radio in the American Sector, or RIAS) was the first radio station in Germany to broadcast a Shabbat celebration with choir, organist, and cantor from Pestalozzistrasse as part of its program, doing so from July 6, 1947—exactly 45 years earlier:

“Today, exactly 45 years ago, RIAS broadcast the Shabbat celebration from the synagogue in Pestalozzistrasse into the bombed-out houses of the city for the first time. On July 6, 1947, the popular receivers, which two years earlier had been broadcasting anti-Semitic diatribes, sang the Old Testament psalms and the evening prayer *Hashkivenu Adonai Elohenu leshalom* (*Lead us, Lord our God, to peaceful rest*). And since that day, continuously, week after week, every Friday at 6:10 pm.

No other religious mission has been heard as much for decades as this Shabbat celebration with Cantor Nachama. Few understood the Hebrew words, but the ‘glorious voice of this moving singer ... created peace and inner closeness where there was strangeness and prejudice’, as the director Herbert Kundler once said. And despite constant harassment of the Jewish community East, this broadcast of the American class enemy was taken over by the State Broadcasting Committee of the GDR for decades.”¹⁷

In September 1947, a fledgling Jewish community rededicated the building, which has been used for liberal prayer services ever since. In describing the Hanukkah celebrations later that year—by which time Nachama had become fully installed as Cantor of the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue—Frühauf documents the beginning of his ascendancy:

“[T]he Hanukkah celebration at Rykestrasse was one of many taking place sector by sector. These were held on different days so that the members of a growing community could attend several of them. During the celebration of the officially named *Jüdische Gemeinde Groß-Berlin* (the Jewish Community of “Greater [East] Berlin”), Estrongo Nachama [oversaw] the ceremonial part. The evening continued with cabaret performances and light entertainment music provided by the Radio Berlin *Tanzorchester* under Horst Kudritzki. Nachama’s role marks the onset of his meteoric rise as cantor.”¹⁸

“Rémigré” German Jews, “represence” and received tradition: Rebuilding the community with ritual music

In that crucial, immediate post-War period in Berlin, Lewandowski’s repertoire, as sung by Cantor Nachama, must have been received as a welcome source of nostalgic memory. Little or nothing else was left that could relieve the grim reality and trauma of those surviving Jews.

Frühauf makes a critically insightful observation in that regard:

¹⁷ Anita Kugler, “Estrongo Nachama – ein Zauberer der Liebe” (a magician of love). *Die Tageszeitung*, July 6, 1992. <https://taz.de/!1663378/>

¹⁸ Frühauf, *op. cit.*, 106

“Concepts of self-representation, cultural memory, and nostalgia evidently played an important role in revitalizing postwar musical life. Nostalgia here acts as a historical utopia that has been displaced on the pole of time. It facilitated the continuity of identity. But more than evoking nostalgia, remembering, performing, and hearing those melodies again after liberation compensated for their prohibition from public performance during the Nazi era. As such, cultural memory played a vital role in motivating survivors in their efforts to rebuild the Jewish community after the Holocaust.”¹⁹

Nachama, having arrived in Berlin in the most inauspicious of circumstances, was an improbable agent of this self-preservation and facilitator of the continuity of identity. In doing so, he thoroughly vindicated Fritz Sachs’ decision to appoint him as cantor, considering the importance Sachs had placed on the community once again being able to hear “the beautiful, holy melodies, which we sang during our childhood...”



Fig. 3: Inauguration of the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue, *Erev Rosh Hashanah*, September 14, 1947 (Cantor Estrongo Nachama leading, carrying *Sefer Torah*)

Cantor Nachama did exactly that for German Jews in the very country from which the Holocaust originated. Since Nachama was not only the Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue’s cantor for over 50 years but was also the *Oberkantor* (Chief Cantor) of the Jewish Community of Berlin, the combination of his considerable cantorial skills, his extraordinarily effusive personality, and his omnipresence made him into a supremely effective and important connection between the tradition of Lewandowski and the present day.

¹⁹ Frühauf, *op. cit.*, 116.

Musicologist Philip Bohlman coined the term “represence” to indicate the return of Jewish music to Germany after the Holocaust.²⁰ A closely related concept describes the effect returning to Berlin had on the Jewish artists themselves—the agents of this Jewish musical reestablishment in its place of origin—who have been termed “*rémigré* Jews”; they felt like exiles, once again, but in their own city. This sociocultural phenomenon²¹ addresses and highlights the powerful, almost magical, effect of Jewish music: No matter how utterly displaced the Jewish community in Berlin—or what remained of it—may have felt in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust, and despite how unrecognizable postwar Berlin may have appeared to its musical artists, that culture nevertheless quickly reestablished itself. Musicians were able to re-express themselves and their art; its reception revived the people formerly bereft of it.

French author Laurence Duchaine-Guillon, finds Estrongo Nachama’s situation strikingly relevant:

“Finally, within the religious communities themselves, those who attempted to revive cantorial music in the scorched earth that was Germany, and relied heavily on lost traditions, were also, in a way, ‘in exile’. Indeed, we are witnessing a revival of the Berlin tradition of synagogue music in the wake of Louis Lewandowski, relying on the choir and the organ, mainly in the West with Estrongo Nachama, but also in the East with [Rabbi] Martin Riesenburger until 1965. In this field, the importance of the ‘transmitters’ of traditions is particularly decisive: Riesenburger himself had experienced pre-war Berlin, and Nachama had been trained by Leo Gollanin, the pre-1937 Community singer who survived after the war. Since Nachama also performed in the East, East Berlin Jews benefited from his art as much as West Berliners, compensating somewhat for Riesenburger’s absence. Even if they were not recognized for their true worth by the recording industry, they nevertheless contributed to defending an ancestral musical tradition, dear to the Jews of Berlin, at the risk of appearing completely out of step with their times.”²²

Nachama was also a prolific concert performer, and he frequently traveled from West Berlin across the border into East Berlin and then throughout East Germany at the behest of the SED (Socialist Democratic Party—the official and classically euphemistic name for the Soviet vassal state’s *Politburo*).²³ In this way, Estrongo Nachama became a household name in both East and West Berlin and in the major cities of the former German Democratic Republic (the former East Germany) for the second half of the 20th century. There is much more to the extraordinary life that Oberkantor Estrongo Nachama went on to lead, but that is well outside the scope of this paper. An imperfect accounting of his record as a human being of rare benevolence is the following: He was awarded West Germany’s highest civilian honor twice (the second one is equivalent to Commander of the British Empire in the UK and the *Legion d’honneur* in France) and was similarly decorated by East Germany on the 50th anniversary of *Kristallnacht*. In 2013 a 10,000-euro annual award was established in his honor, named the *Estrongo Nachama Preis für Zivilcourage und Toleranz*.²⁴ His funeral was attended by well over 1,000 people,

²⁰ Tina Frühauf and Lily E. Hirsch (eds.) *Dislocated Memories: Jews, Music and Postwar German Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press), 2014, 5.

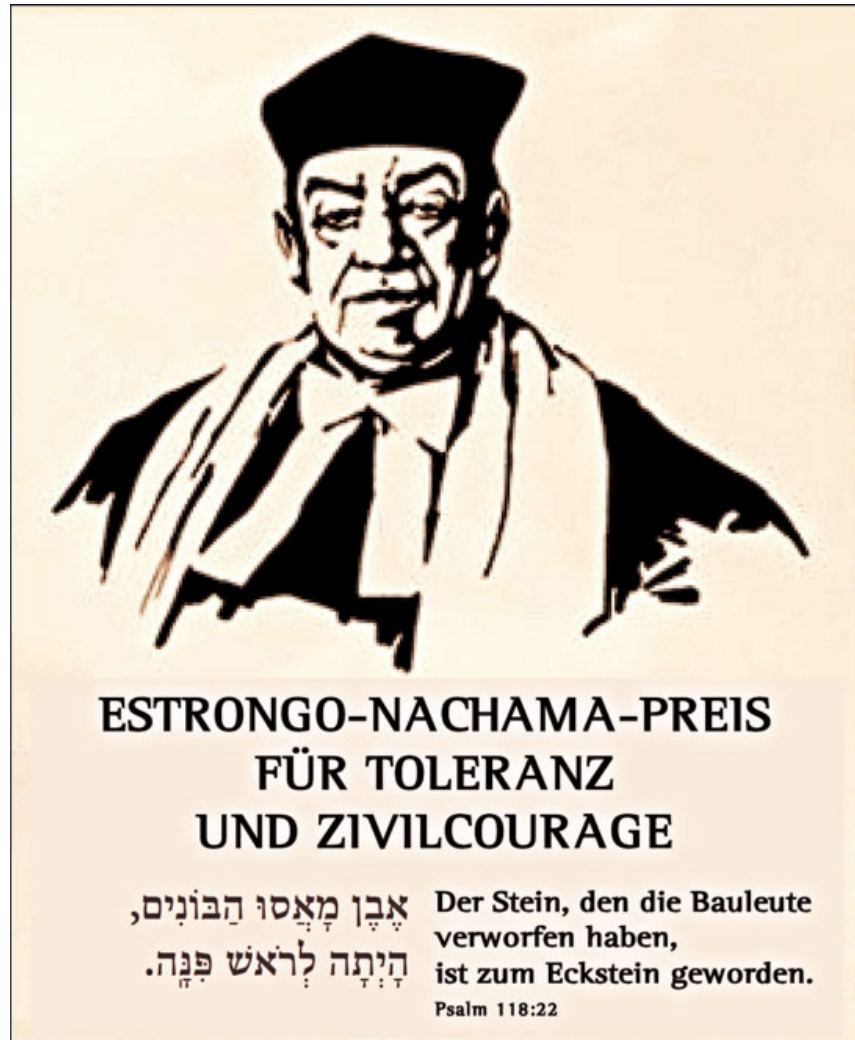
²¹ *Ibid*, 268

²² Laurence Duchaine-Guillon, *La vie juive à Berlin après 1945* (Paris: CNRS Éditions), 2011, p. 377

²³ Carrying a Greek passport—he never became a German citizen—Estrongo was one of a rarefied group of individuals that was allowed unrestricted access across the Berlin Wall.

²⁴ *Estrongo Nachama Preis für Zivilcourage und Toleranz*, Meridian Stiftung, Berlin. <https://www.meridian-stiftung.de/estrongo-nachama-preis/>

including several prominent and senior politicians. Obituaries were written by *The New York Times*,²⁵ *The Economist*,²⁶ *Los Angeles Times*,²⁷ *Chicago Tribune*,²⁸ *The Miami Herald*,²⁹ and the *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*³⁰ (and then syndicated to reach local and Jewish newspapers across the U.S.).



²⁵ Roger Cohen, Estrongo Nachama, 81, Dies; Chief Cantor of Berlin's Jews, *New York Times*, January 17, 2000.

[Online] <https://www.nytimes.com/2000/01/17/world/estrongo-nachama-81-dies-chief-cantor-of-berlin-s-jews.html>

²⁶ *The Economist*, Estrongo Nachama: Estrongo Nachama, a Jewish voice in Berlin, died on January 13th, aged 81

[Online] <https://www.economist.com/obituary/2000/01/20/estrongo-nachama>

²⁷ *Los Angeles Times*, Estrongo Nachama; Led Jewish Revival in Berlin [Online]

<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2000-jan-15-mn-54333-story.html>

²⁸ *Chicago Tribune*, Chief Berlin Cantor, Saved by Voice at Auschwitz, Dies [Online]

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-2000-01-14-0001150027-story.html>

²⁹ *The Miami Herald*, Berlin cantor Estrongo Nachama, 81 [Online]

<https://miamiherald.newspapers.com/search/#query=%22berlin+cantor+estrongo%22+nachama+81>

³⁰ Axelrod, Toby. Berlin Says Farewell to Beloved Cantor, *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, January 17, 2000. [Online]

<https://www.jta.org/2000/01/17/lifestyle/berlin-says-farewell-to-beloved-cantor>

Fig. 4: The picture inscribed on the tablet representing the *Estrongo-Nachama-Preis für Zivilcourage und Toleranz* (Estrongo Nachama Prize for Tolerance and Moral Courage)



Fig. 5: Cantor Estrongo Nachama passes an honor guard of German soldiers in front of soldiers' graves at the Central Jewish Cemetery in Berlin on the German National Day of Mourning (*Volkstrauertag*), Nov. 14, 1999, at the beginning of a wreath-laying ceremony to commemorate the 12,000 Jewish-German soldiers who died in World War I.³¹

Further details of Estrongo Nachama's life—as a Jew, traditionalist, Sephardi, Greek, Auschwitz survivor, cantor/*Oberkantor*, rebuilders of the post-war Berlin Jewish community, concert performer, prominent Jewish community figure,³² leading figure in interfaith dialogue, witting or unwitting pawn of the GDR's *Politburo*,³³ public radio broadcaster, actor, and spiritual

³¹ The imagery captured in this photograph, taken two months before his death (from natural causes), is replete with both irony and symbolism: 55 years earlier, the now-frail cantor had been imprisoned at Auschwitz and was made to sing for his Nazi captors' entertainment in return for scraps of bread thrown to the ground. Here, he walks directly down a line of German soldiers, not just as a Jew—for which he had been deported to the camps—but clad in Jewish clerical attire as an official of the Jewish Community of Berlin.

³² Volker Wagner, *Geschichte der Berliner Juden* (Berlin: Elsengold Verlag), 2016. Nachama was among the 40 Berlin Jews selected for Wagner's book, *History of the Jews of Berlin*.

³³ Martina Thiele, *Publizistische Kontroversen über den Holocaust im Film: Chapter I.8.3. DDR-Filme zu Nationalsozialismus und Holocaust (1949–1989)* (Münster: LIT Verlag) 2001; see also Ulrike Offenburg, "Seid

leader to Jewish members of the United States Armed Forces (and their families) in Allied-occupied Berlin and as peacekeepers until 1994—are extraordinarily scant and, apart from a short book in German,³⁴ another in Greek,³⁵ and some published interviews, there is no complete narrative that covers the life of this remarkable individual. The material presented here is a very brief summary drawn from those fragments. A full accounting of the life and contributions of this remarkable cantor awaits.

Andrew Lowy, an Australian-born physician, has lived in the United States for the past 10 years. Although not having had any formal training in music or the cantorial arts, he began cultivating an interest in synagogue music from the time of his bar mitzvah in the late 1970s. That appreciation grew after his move to the U.S., inspired in part by the differences in contemporary cantorial settings heard in traditionally oriented synagogues in the two countries. His chance discovery of Cantor Estrongo Nachama, who “turned up” in Charlottenburg in 1945—7 years after Lowy’s own grandparents fled Charlottenburg to Australia—added a new dimension to his curiosity. Dr. Lowy is currently researching material with a view to publishing a book about Cantor Nachama and his many contributions to post-war German Jewry.

vorsichtig gegen die Machthaber”: *Die jüdischen Gemeinden in der SBZ und der DDR 1945–1990* (“Beware of those in Power”: *Jewish Communities in the Soviet Occupation Zone and the GDR*) (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag), 1998; and Alexander Muschik, “Die SED und die Juden 1985–1990: Eine außenpolitische Charmeoffensive zur Rettung der DDR” (“The SED and the Jews 1985–1990: A foreign policy charm offensive to save the GDR”) *Journal of Theology and Cultural History*. Vol. 5; 2010 [Online] <https://theologie-geschichte.de/ojs2/index.php/tg/article/view/561/599>).

³⁴ Claudia Keller, Lilli und Estrongo Nachama: Zwei Solisten – ein Paar (Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich), 2018.

³⁵ Katerina Oikonomakou, *Ο τραγουδιστής του Άουσβιτς: Εστρόγκο Ναχάμα (The Singer of Auschwitz: Estrongo Nachama)* (Athens: Kapon Editions), 2017.

*Via Passiva and Via Activa Through the Prism of R. Nahman's Nigun*¹

By Chani Haran Smith

Joseph Weiss was an eminent scholar of Hasidism. He was the first to articulate and write in a scholarly way about Rabbi Nahman of Bratzlav's core ideas, to whom he dedicated much of his life's work.² The breadth of his contribution and incisive insights in this field are still the basis of academic research, over 50 years after his death.

In 1960, Weiss published a seminal essay "*Via Passiva* in Early Hasidism."³ Hasidism was recognized for having introduced the idea of serving God through corporeality and engagement with the world as a central tenet, yet Weiss focused on a less recognized strand present in early Hasidism. It is the idea of human passivity that allows for divine activity within a person.

"*Via Passiva*" opens with the following sentence: "That the human soul must conduct itself in a mode of passive receptivity whilst God takes the active part is said to be one of the fundamental principles of mysticism."⁴ Weiss explores this notion in early Hasidism and focuses on the writings of the Maggid of Mezeritch, the foremost disciple of the Ba'al Shem Tov. He demonstrates that passivity is essential for the encounter between God and human beings and is a requirement for ecstasy.

In this study, I will briefly describe some of Weiss' core findings and will compare and juxtapose them with the approach of R. Nahman of Bratzlav to passivity, receptivity and activity in religious life.

In Hasidism, the theme of passive receptivity is expressed in the context of the bigger doctrine of *Bittul hayeish*, the nullification of being, and *Bittul atsmiut*, the annihilation of the self.⁵ The underlying assumption is that for God to bestow His divine influence, a person must become an empty, passive vessel, a container for God's active power. To illustrate this desired passivity that allows for a mystical union to take place, Weiss focuses on a metaphor from the world of music. A person is required to transform himself into a sort of musical instrument, ready for the Holy Spirit to animate it, causing the spirit contained in it to vibrate and play

¹ This article is dedicated to the memory of my dear teacher, Prof. Ada Rapoport-Albert ז"ל, with sadness at her untimely death and deep gratitude for her guidance, generosity and wisdom during my PhD research into R. Nahman's teachings.

² Many of Weiss' major essays were compiled in a book, Weiss, Y. *Mehqarim Behasidut Bratzlav*, (Jerusalem, 1975).

³ J. Weiss, "*Via Passiva* in Early Hasidism," *Journal of Jewish Studies*, ii (1960), pp. 137-155.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁵ On this subject see R. Schatz-Uffenheimer, *HaHasidut kemistiqah* (Jerusalem, 1968), pp. 21-31, 105-123, 130-132; R. Elior, "Yesh and Ayin in Hasidic Thought," in A. Rapoport Albert (ed.), *Hasidism Reappraised* (London, 1997), pp. 168-179; Idel, *Hasidism, Between Ecstasy and Magic* (Albany, New York, 1995), pp. 107-133.

through it. The musical instrument becomes a metaphor for the person, while the music is a metaphor for God's influence flowing through.⁶

The Maggid's sources for the musical metaphor are both biblical and Talmudic. In the Bible (II Kings, 3:15) the kings of Judah and Israel seek advice regarding going to battle. They turn to the prophet Elisha who summons a musician to induce himself into prophecy. As it is written: "When the minstrel played, the spirit of God⁷ came upon him" (*V'haya k'nagen ham'nagen, vatehi alav yad Adonai*). Music is recognized as capable of generating divine inspiration and prophecy.

The Talmud, in tractate *B'rakhot* of both the Babylonian and the Jerusalem Talmud, tells the well-known legend of King David getting up in the night to pray, sing and study. His "magical" lyre hangs above his bed, and exactly at midnight the North Wind (*Ruah tsafon* or *Ruah tsfonit*) blows through its strings, so the lyre plays "of itself," *mei'eilav*, and wakes David up.⁸

The text is confusing. Is the lyre truly magical? Does it play spontaneously – "of itself," or perhaps it is the North Wind that powers and activates the lyre's strings? The Babylonian Talmud does not answer this conundrum. However, the Jerusalem Talmud offers a commentary on the enigmatic expression "played of itself." It cites the verse quoted above from II Kings, 3:15, suggesting that "*Vehaya kenagen hamenagen*" should be understood as saying that the musician (*ham'nagen*) had become one and the same as the instrument (*k'nagen* or *k'nagan*).

In the teachings of the Maggid of Mezeritch, such an identification of the musician with a musical instrument is a key metaphor for what Weiss calls "ecstatic passiveness."⁹ Note, however, that the Maggid replaces the lyre with another instrument - the shofar:

As it is written "O Lord, open thou my lips" (Ps. 51:17), [...] so that he [the person] is merely like a shofar, for it produces merely the sound that is blown into it.¹⁰

⁶ On the image of the human body as a musical instrument in R. Nahman of Bratzlav teachings, see the extensive note in my book, C. H. Smith, *Shir Shel Hesed*, (Jerusalem, 2016), pp. 85-86, n. 71, (the book was also published in English, see C. H. Smith, *Tuning the Soul: Music as a Spiritual Process in the Teachings of Rabbi Nahman of Bratzlav*, p. 63-64, n. 70). References in this article are first to the edited Hebrew version, *Shir Shel Hesed*, followed by reference to the earlier English volume, *Tuning the Soul* in brackets). This metaphor is found in the writings of the mystic Abraham Abulafia, as well as the medieval poets Judah Halevi and Solomon ibn Gabirol. Similar images of man as the wind-harp or lyre played by God were popular in the writings of early Romantic poets such as Coleridge, Wordsworth and Shelley. For example, see Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind:" "Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is: What if my leaves are falling like its own! The tumult of thy mighty harmonies, Will take from both a deep autumnal tone, Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce, My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!" (Cited in L. Rowell [Massachusetts, 1983], *Thinking about Music*, p. 64).

⁷ Lit., "the hand of God," a metaphor for God's inspiration.

⁸ For more on this legend and on King David as the ideal musician and religious man, see Smith, *Shir Shel Hesed*, pp. 91-98 (*Tuning the Soul*, pp. 69-76).

⁹ Weiss, *Via Passiva*, p. 141.

¹⁰ *Or Ha'emet*, 3b (cited by Weiss, *ibid.*)

The message is clear – God does the “blowing.” God is the active source of the sound that issues from the shofar/the person who prays. Provided he is completely passive, this person turns himself into a vessel open and ready to receive divine inspiration.

Weiss explores in detail the subsequent development and subtleties of this idea in the writings of the Maggid’s contemporaries and in later generations. I will quote just one example cited by Weiss, which comes from R. Nahman’s uncle, R. Ephraim of Sudilkow.

R. Ephraim associates the lyre from the Talmudic legend with the soul, by reading the letters of the word *kinnor* as alluding to the three aspects of the soul, *nefesh*, *ruah* and *n’shamah*.

וזהו (ברכות ג) כנור היה תלוי למעלה ממטתו של דוד, כי כנור הוא בבחינת נפש רוח, וכ"ו היא בחינת הנשמה [...] וכן דוד היה עושה עצמו כלי [...] וזהו רוח צפונית מנשבת בו וכו' – פירוש בחינת אלהות הצפון בתוכו בתוך נפש רוח נשמה של אדם שהוא חי העולמות והוא מנגן מאליו, וכמו (מלכים ב, ג:טו) "ויהי כנגן המנגן ותהי עליו יד ה'". רוח אלקים. פירוש, על ידי התקשרות האדם את נשמתו בבורא ברוך הוא, על ידי כן "רוח אלהים מנשבת" בנפש רוח נשמה בו¹¹

(Tr.: This is (*bBer.* 3) “A lyre was hanging above David’s bed”, for lyre-*kinnor* (כנור) alludes to (נ and ר) *nefesh* and *ruah* [נר], while כ"ו alludes to the soul [...] and David transformed himself into an instrument/a vessel¹² [...] and this is the meaning of “a northerly wind was blowing through it etc., it refers to the aspect of godliness which is concealed in him,¹³ in the [three aspects of the soul] *nefesh* - *ruah* - *neshamah* of a person, which is the life force of all worlds; and it plays of itself, as it is written (II Kings, 3:15): “*V’haya k’nagen ham’nagen, vatehi alav yad Adonai*” - “When the minstrel played, the hand of God came upon him.” The meaning is this: When a person’s soul cleaves to the creator, Blessed be He, then the spirit of God blows through his *nefesh ruah n’shamah*”).¹⁴

This somewhat complex passage has esoteric meanings. The letters of *kinnor* simultaneously allude to the divine realm of the *S’firot malkhut* and *Tiferet*, and to the human soul. The key sentence is “David transformed himself into an instrument.” It is as an example for every person to become a vessel for God’s bounty to flow through, in the same way as King David did.

¹¹ R. M. H. Ephraim of Sudilkow, *Degel Mahane Ephraim* (Jerusalem, 1994, *drosh* for *sedrah Teshuvah*, p. 243.

¹² The word כלי is interpreted here in two simultaneous meanings - that of a musical instrument and that of a vessel/container for the concealed, divine spirit.

¹³ *Tiqney Zohar* (Jerusalem, 1998), *Tiqun*13, p. 28a.

¹⁴ See *Tiqney Zohar*, *Tiqun* 21, p. 52a: ר' יהודה אורי וישעי. נהיר בנ"ר. (Tr.: A lyre - *kinnor* [is made out of the letters] *kaf vav* and *nun resh*. [It alludes to] the Holy One Blessed be He who is YHVH, and about Him it is said: ‘YHVH is my light and my salvation’ [Ps.27:1]. He is illumined by the candle who is the *Shekhinah*). The combination of the Hebrew letters ‘*kaf*’ and ‘*vav*’ has esoteric meaning. Their combined numerical value in Gematria is 26, which is equal to the value of the letters of the ineffable divine name י-ה-ו-ה. In Kabbalah, this divine name alludes to the *S’firah Tiferet*, which represents the masculine aspect of God and is also referred to by the name ‘The Holy One, blessed be He.’ The letters ‘*nun*’ and ‘*resh*,’ which make up the word *ner*, ‘candle,’ allude to the *S’firah Malkhut* which represents the feminine aspect of God. This, the image of the musical instrument lyre, *kinnor*, alludes to the union of the masculine and feminine aspects of God and to the harmony in the divine realm.

Another key image, based on a Zoharic passage,¹⁵ is the North Wind -*Ruah tsafon*, which is associated with *Ruah tsafun* - a concealed wind/spirit.

R. Ephraim's ideas are echoed in the teachings of his famous nephew, R. Nahman of Bratzlav. Looking at R. Nahman's references to music through the prism of Weiss' *Via Passiva* article is intriguing. We find similar images to the ones cited above, albeit pointing elsewhere. R. Nahman advocates a path to God fundamentally different from the passive, submissive way mentioned above. His approach is marked by human initiative and activity, which involves developing, purifying and tuning every bit of the human body and soul in order to elevate oneself to God.

In an early *torah*¹⁶ in *Liqutey Moharan*¹⁷ I, 8, delivered in 1802, R. Nahman refers to David's lyre, identifying it with man's heart, or more specifically, with King David's heart. In R. Nahman's interpretation, the lyre comprises five strings, alluding to the Pentateuch as well as the five lobes of the lung.¹⁸ He adopts the Zoharic link of North Wind with concealed spirit (*Ruah tsafon*, *Ruah tsafun*),¹⁹ and explains that the spirit of God, the spirit of life (רוח חיים, רוח אלקים), resides permanently in a hidden state within the human heart, i.e., the "human lyre." The challenge is to draw out this divine spirit from its concealment.

R. Nahman, in a typically original reading, injects a new layer into this association by expounding further on the word *tsafon*. As well as the literal meanings of "North" and "concealment," he interprets *tsafon* as *hisaron* - deficiency, shortcoming, lacking something.²⁰ Thus, *Ruah tsafonit* indicates a state of deficiency in the heart. When the spirit of life diminishes within a person, and that person recognizes a loss of vitality, feeling perhaps a little flat or down, one naturally releases a deep sigh. R. Nahman, always a keen observer of human behavior in its tiniest details, comments on this act of sighing (in Hebrew אנהה, in Yiddish, *krekhsts*, as specified in the text). This *krekhsts* is exactly what is needed in order to access the divine spirit - the *Ruah Elohim* that is hidden within. By releasing a deep sigh, a person extends the breath, the *ruah*, pulls and draws out the divine spirit, the spirit of life, from the deepest recesses of one's soul. In this way the dearth, the inner deficiency, created by sins and shortcomings, is filled with the holy spirit of life and animates that person:

ועל כן כשמתאנה על החסרון ומאריך רוחה, הוא ממשיך רוח החיים להחסרון, כי עקר החסרון הוא הסתלקות הרוח חיים כנ"ל, ועל כן על ידי האנהה משלים החסרון.

(Tr.: Therefore, when a person sighs over his lack and extends his *ruah*/ breath, he draws the spirit of life to that which he is lacking, because the essence of deficiency is the departure of the spirit of life, as mentioned above. Therefore, through the sigh, the lack is made whole).²¹

¹⁵ See *Tiqney Zohar*, *Tiqun* 13, 28a.

¹⁶ "Torah/Torot" is the way the Bratzlav's Hasidim refer to their Rebbe's teachings.

¹⁷ Hence LM.

¹⁸ Ibid. For more on the five-stringed lyre, See Smith, *Shir Shel Hesed*, p. 75 n.23 (*Tuning the Soul*, p.53, n.22).

¹⁹ See above, n. 16.

²⁰ See BT Bava Batra 25b "כי צפון חסר".

²¹ LM I, 8:1.

In another seemingly paradoxical passage that highlights the human effort to ascend spiritually, R. Nahman explains the words שבת וינפש²² (literally translated: “He [God] ceased from work and He rested”). He alludes to the Talmudic concept of the extra soul that one gains on Sabbath’s Eve.²³

ועל ידי זה בעצמו שאנו מתגעגעין אחר הנפש, מזה בעצמו נתהווה הנפש היתרה

(Tr.: By our very longing for the [extra] soul [which departed from us at the end of the previous Shabbat], by this [act of longing] itself the extra soul is created).²⁴

In this passage, R. Nahman identifies our power to increase our spiritual capacity by means of our active longing. The deliberate yearning of the soul for the extra soul gives birth to it.

R. Nahman’s commentary on שבת וינפש is both interesting and novel. According to the Zohar, the additional soul is generated through the union of the *Shekhinah* and the Holy One, Blessed be He, in the divine realm. In contrast, R. Nahman teaches that we ourselves can increase our soulfulness and create the additional soul through longing.

But perhaps the best example for R. Nahman’s *Via Activa* – an active path towards God, is none other than his doctrine of the Good Points. This doctrine runs like a long thread from his earlier to his later *torot* and down to his last sermon. It gradually changes shape, context and focus. It starts with a personal process of locating a holy innermost point in each individual soul and ends with a messianic vision of a cosmic transformation brought about by the power of all the good points acting in the world.²⁵

In an early *torah*, R. Nahman, speaks about the innermost point that is the locus where the divine resides within the human.²⁶ He explicates the three aspects of this inner point that operate, each in its own sphere: 1. interpersonal relationship; 2. the unique relationship between the *tsadiq* and his followers; 3. the human/God relationship. R. Nahman explains the processes that activate and reveal each of these three aspects so that the inner point can shine in its fullness.²⁷ In later teachings, he further develops the core idea of “points,” saying that in every single person there are good points filled with holiness, loving kindness and longing for the divine.

At the heart of the doctrine of the “good points” is King David, who is searching for the good points within himself.²⁸ The process involves separating the evil forces active within him from the good, godly ones, thereby purifying his spirit. R. Nahman describes a lyre-like

²² Ex. 31:17.

²³ BT Beitzah 16a.

²⁴ LM I, 31:9.

²⁵ The doctrine of the ‘Good Points’ is dealt with extensively in my book *Shir Shel Hesed*, especially chapters 1-2 pp. 29-124 (*Tuning the Soul*, pp. 11-100).

²⁶ LM I, 34:8.

²⁷ See Smith, *Shir Shel Hesed*, pp. 57-59 (*Tuning the Soul*, pp. 38-40).

²⁸ LM I, 54.

instrument, a hollow container with strings, on which the person engaged in spiritual endeavor plays. He cites the following verse:

אזכרה נגינתי בלילה, עם לבבי אשיחה ויחפש רוחי.

(Tr.: "I remember my song in the night, I converse with my heart and my spirit searches").²⁹

He explains that King David would wake up in the middle of the night to play his music, while simultaneously conversing with his heart and searching for good points. This pursuit creates a channel to God. The music, which is essentially made from *ruah*, i.e., air waves that are meticulously controlled by the musician, serves both as a metaphor and as an aid in this spiritual work (the work of the *ruah*/spirit). The musical instrument is likened to a person. Both the instrument and the person are identified as containers of conflicting spirits/winds/air/*ruah*.

In this *torah*, R. Nahman lists various requisites for achieving the goal of cleaving to God. These are the identical requirements for making music. These conditions include, first, ensuring that the person, like the instrument, is whole. When cracked or broken, spirit/sound cannot be contained inside.

Second, the instrument as a whole and each individual note must be precisely tuned. In human terms this means that a person tunes the heart/soul to God according to the Torah.³⁰

Third, the hands must be skillful in the art of playing music. The skilled hands represent the power to control one's spirit and to act with precision.³¹ The skillful musician is able to ascend safely to heaven, but also to descend back to earth:

"מי עלה שמים וירד - זה בחינת המנגן, כי זה המנגן הוא עולה ויורד בנגינה, כי צריך לעלות ולירד במדת הנימין כפי משקל השיר כדי לקבץ הרוח"

(Tr.: Who has ascended to heaven and descended³² - this is the musician, for the musician goes up and down with the melody, for he must ascend and descend according to the correct tension [or measurement] of the strings, according to the meter of the melody, in order to gather the *ruah*).³³

Nahman's stipulation to tune the *nigun*/melody to specific measures is particularly interesting because R. Nahman uses the Hebrew word לכוון (*l'khaven*, to tune), in a musical context.³⁴ This is unusual, as I only found one other example for *l'khaven* in a context of music in rabbinic literature before R. Nahman's time. Commonly, the verb *l'khaven* (noun: *Kavanah*) signifies a direction of the heart to heaven/God. However, in the treatise *Niggun Olam* [Music of the Cosmos] in the homiletic book *Aqedat Yitzhak*³⁵ by R. Yitzhak Arama, a 16th century rabbi

²⁹ Ps. 77:7.

³⁰ See Smith, *Shir Shel Hessed*, pp. 87-90 (*Tuning the Soul*, pp. 64-69).

³¹ For more on the significance of "hands" in R. Nahman's teachings, see *ibid.*, pp. 102-5 (*Tuning the Soul*, pp. 79-83).

³² Pro. 30:4.

³³ LM I 54:6

³⁴ *Ibid.*: "ולכוון הנגון בשלמות כראוי" (Tr.: and to tune the melody perfectly as is fitting).

³⁵ R. Y. Arama, *Aqedat Yitzhak*, (Jerusalem, 1961), I, gate 12, p. 92a.

writing under Renaissance influence, we find the word *l'khaven* referring to musical intonation. R. Nahman was familiar with R. Arama's text, and the many similarities between Arama's treatise and R. Nahman's *torah* in LM I, 54 suggest that Arama's text was a source for R. Nahman.³⁶

Arama describes King David, who had to tune the "frequency" of his heart's strings to be identical with God's "frequency." Of course, we must put inverted commas on the word "frequency" on both sides of the equation (Arama uses the term "*yahas*," proportions.) The question arises: What does it mean to have the same frequency or wavelength as God? The image that Arama presents is taken from the Italian renaissance scholar Marcilio Ficino who compares God and man to two instruments, two worlds – *kli gadol* (big instrument, God) and *kli qatan* (small instrument, man) or *olam gadol* (macrocosmos, God) and *olam qatan* (microcosmos, man). In the physical world, when two instruments are tuned identically, the unique phenomenon of resonance will occur, namely, when a note is played on one of the strings of the first instrument, the identically tuned string on the other instrument will vibrate "in sympathy," apparently by itself. This real acoustic phenomenon fascinated some Renaissance scholars who encountered it and served as their metaphor for the mutual influence of God and human beings. If they are in sync, they can prompt each other to act. If a person is tuned to God, then that person can activate God, who will in turn bestow His bounty on that person. And of course, vice versa.

Arama adds a new dimension, a *hiddush*, to the Renaissance comparison of acoustic resonance to the dynamics between God and humanity. He explains that the desired "frequency" or "ideal proportions" can be achieved by adhering to the Torah and its commandments. The Torah contains the secret of the music of the cosmos. A righteous person can participate in this cosmic music and partake in the cosmic harmony by aligning himself to God by means of the Torah.

R. Nahman echoes Arama's teaching by stressing the importance of correct tuning and the integrity of the instrument. In R. Nahman's text, the tuning is applied to the self, or psyche, perceived as a container of mixed spirits. The psychological, religious and musical effort entails finding, one by one, tiny particles of goodness, holiness, *hesed* - loving kindness. While doing this, one also needs arduously to locate and separate the evil spirits and overcome their negative power. The finely tuned particles of "good spirit" are the perfectly tuned tones that create a *nigun* - melody when strung together. If the process is successful, then the person is purified, tuned to God, and the human/divine gap is bridged.

This paradigm of self-analysis and conscious focus on the soul is very different from the *Via Passiva* model of early Hasidic sources that advocated an annihilation of the self as a necessary step for reaching a mystical union.

We see that R. Nahman uses images of musical instruments, like those utilized by earlier generations of Hasidic masters, to portray the dynamics between the human and the divine. However, the theological context has changed. In the worldview of the Maggid, God and human

³⁶ On Arama's treatise and its possible influence on R. Nahman, see Smith, *Shir Shel Hesed*, pp. 106-114, (*Tuning the Soul*, pp. 84-93).

beings belong to unbridgeable spheres; connection between them is only made possible through passive receptivity and negation of the self which enables God to fill one's being, like in the example of God's voice filling the hollow shofar. In contrast to these quietistic strands of the Maggid and some of his disciples, R. Nahman does not advocate passivity; in fact, the opposite is true. In his view, there is no real separation between human beings and God, since God is present *a priori* in the soul of every person. The gap that needs to be bridged in order to reach God lies between the revealed and the hidden. In order to draw God out of concealment and encounter the Divine, one must act, using all of oneself and all of one's strength as agency: physical, spiritual and intellectual. Great faith is needed to overcome the many hurdles along the way.³⁷

We could say that some of these actions are “psychological” by nature— i.e., dealing with the psyche, analyzing, locating and subduing negative urges while separating out and purifying the good, holy forces.

There are other, more physical, corporeal means recommended by R. Nahman for reaching spiritual elevation. This subject is beyond the scope of this essay, but the following three examples, out of many others, highlight and illustrate R. Nahman's emphasis on physical, bodily action:

1. Clapping hands - This purifies the air, mitigates harsh judgements and induces inspiration.³⁸
2. Dancing – The legs elevate a person physically as well as spiritually.³⁹
3. Exercising sexual restraint– This keeps one's voice pure and beautiful. God listens to a pure voice and redeems the person who calls for God.⁴⁰

To conclude, it is helpful to return to the paradigm of musical resonance. According to R. Nahman, the path that connects us with God is through our good actions - *Via Activa*. Through our efforts we purify and tune our souls to such an extent that we can operate on the same “wavelength” as the divine, so to speak, and reach the ultimate goal of meriting the light of *einsof* - the infinite God.

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³⁷ Weiss dedicated two articles to the question and nature of faith in R. Nahman's teaching, *Hasidut shel Mystika V'Hasidut shel Emunah*” and “*Haqushiah B'torat R. Nahman*,” in Y. Weiss, *Mehqarim Behasidut Bratzlav*, (Jerusalem, 1975) pp. 87-95, 109-149.

³⁸ See, for example LM I, 10; 44; 45. See also Z. Mark, *Mystika V'shigaon*, (Tel Aviv, 2004), pp. 290-292.

³⁹ LM I, 10; 32; 41 169; II, 61. See also Smith, *Shir Shel Hesed*, pp. 214-7, (in English: Smith, *Tuning the Soul* 188-90); M. Fishbane, “The Jump for Joy: The Rites of Dance According to R. Nahman of Bratzlav,” *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, vol VI, (1997), issue 2, pp. 383-384.

⁴⁰ LM I, 27:6. See also Smith, *Shir Shel Hesed*, p. 215, n. 151 (In English, Smith, *Tuning the Soul*, p. 189, n. 150).

OF TEXTS AND TUNES

The Poetry of the Two *Geullah* Benedictions: *Emet ve'emunah* and *Emet v'yatsiv*

By John H. Planer

The two *Geullah* benedictions immediately follow the *Sh'ma* and precede the *Amidah*. Both conclude with the *hatimah Barukh atah Adonai, ga'al yisrael*; both comprise two sections. The first section affirms the three preceding lections from the Torah and emphasizes the words אמת, אמונה, and קים—truth, faithfulness, and everlasting.¹ The second section narrates the Redemption from Egypt; the primary roots are גאל and פדה—redemption and ransom.² Despite these thematic similarities, the evening and morning texts differ significantly. Below is a comparison of these benedictions.

Emet ve'emunah *Sh'ma Affirmation*

Three verses / 15 words

1. *Emet ve'emunah kol zot [Sh'ma]*
True, faithful, enduring—*aleinu*
2. *Adonai is our God—none else*
3. *We are Israel, His people*

Emet v'yatsiv *Sh'ma Affirmation*

Three Strophes

1. *Emet v'yatsiv:*
16 adjectives about the *Sh'ma*
2. *Emet elohei olam:* God
3. *Ne'emanim:* Israel—*aleinu*

Five Strophes

couplet—*Emet ve'emunah*—a *hok*
strophe—*Emet she'atah*—God's roles
strophe—*Ezrat avoteinu*—God & Israel
couplet—*Emet atah hu*
couplet—*Emet atah hu*

¹The words אמת and אמונה may both derive from the same root. Alfred Jepsen, “אמן” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Vol. I, 292-94 and 309-16. The word-field of *emet* encompasses truth and verity; it functions both as a noun and adjective. *Emunah* can also function as a noun or an adjective, and encompasses faithfulness, fidelity, reliability, steadfastness. In *Tanakh*, *kayam* occurs only in Daniel; in post-biblical Hebrew its meanings encompass endurance, validity, permanence.

²The root גאל refers to redemption—in these benedictions, God's redemption of Israel from Egyptian servitude. The word-field of פדה encompasses the words ransom, liberation, and redemption; in this context it refers to God's ransom of Israel from Egyptian servitude, perhaps repaying Egyptians for their enslavement of Israel. In the evening benediction the roots פרע and גמל also appear. Both roots suggest repayment, recompense, and, by extension, punishment and revenge. These roots fit well the meaning of פדה: ransom and subsequent liberation. The root ישע also appears in the *Geullot* with the sense of salvation. But the root נצל, meaning deliver or rescue, appears only once—in *Emet v'yatziv*.

Redemption Narrative

Nine couplets—quotations/phrases

1. Phrases: Deut 2:8/Job 6:23/Jer 15:21
rhyme; roots גאל פדה
2. cf Isaiah 59:18
3. Quotation Job 9:10
4. Quotation Psalm 66:9
5. cf Hab, Mic, Deut, 1 Sam, Ps 148:14
6. cf Psalm 135:9
7. cf Exodus 7:5, 12:12, 12:29; Ps 136:11
8. cf Nehemiah 9:11; Psalm 106:9-10
9. non-biblical

Moshe u-v'nei Ex 15:1

Mi khamokha Ex 15:11

Verse: *Malkhut'kha*
Isaiah 63:12/Exodus 15:2

Verse: *Shirah hadashah*
cf Isaiah 51:10

Adonai yimlokh Ex 15:18

V'ne'emar Jeremiah 31:11

Tsur yisrael 2 Samuel 23:3, Isaiah 30:29
Kumah b'ezrat cf Psalm 44:27
Uf'dei khinumekha cf Jeremiah 23:6
Go'aleinu . . . Yisrael Isaiah 47:4

Hatimah: *Barukh atah adonai, ga'al yisrael* cf Isaiah 49:7

The evening benediction begins *Emet ve'emunah*—"True and faithful." The Affirmation of the *Sh'ma* is brief and has no prominent poetic features; the Redemption narrative, which follows, is longer and consists primarily of couplets, some with end-rhyme. The concluding verses relate events at the *Yam-suf* and contain the exclamation *Mi khamokha*; they consist of quotations from *Tanakh* and inserted non-biblical statements, concluding with the *hatimah*.

The morning benediction begins with the words *Emet v'yatsiv*—"True and certain." The *Sh'ma* Affirmation is long; its two primary parts have several strophes with prominent poetic features. The Redemption text relates the events of the Exodus in strophes of varying lengths and forms, rather than in couplets. Most of the biblical quotations at the *Yam-suf* are the same, but the

insertions differ. Preceding the *hatimah* is a plea for God to intervene again and save Israel—*Tsur yisrael*.

Most *siddurim* print these benedictions as prose paragraphs. The ArtScroll and Hertz *siddurim* indicate paragraphs beginning at *Emet v'yatsiv*, *Al harishonim*, and *Ezrat avoteinu*; in *Siddur Sim Shalom* paragraphs begin at *Emet v'yatsiv*, *U'd'varav khayim*, and *Ezrat*; in *Rinat Yisrael* at *Emet* and *Ezrat*. These *siddurim* print many Psalms, especially those without refrains or acrostics, in paragraph format as well, even though their poetic natures are undisputed. Prose format saves space in vellum/parchment manuscripts as well as on printed pages. The prose format also emphasizes the words rather than the groupings of verses and perhaps de-emphasizes rhythm and rhyme. Prose format also avoids difficult choices when the verse groupings are ambiguous. Nevertheless, many non-biblical prayers, including the evening and morning *Geullah* benedictions, are sophisticated poems whose structure shapes emphasis and meaning. Paragraph format obscures and contradicts their forms.

The earliest references to the *Geullah* benedictions are in the Mishnah, Tosefta, and Talmuds. Mishnah *Tamid* 5:1 explains that after sacrificing a lamb for the daily Temple burnt offering, the priests recited a benediction, read the Ten Commandments, and recited the *Sh'ma* and its three blessings: *Emet v'yatsiv*, the *Avodah*, and the Priestly Benediction. In this and subsequent references, the *Geullah* benedictions are identified only by textual incipit. Mishnah *Berakhot* 1:4 refers only to the benedictions preceding and following the *Sh'ma* but does not indicate their incipits; Mishnah *Berakhot* 2:1 discusses pauses in recitation and cites the *Sh'ma* and *Emet v'yatsiv*. In Tosefta *Berakhot* 2:1 the one who reads [הקורא] the *Sh'ma* must remember the Exodus from Egypt in *Emet v'yatsiv*. Rabbi [רבי—Judah haNasi, c135-217 CE] adds that one must remember/mention [להזכיר] *HaShem's malkhut*—sovereignty. Others say that one must remember the slaying of the first-born and the dividing of the *Yam-suf*. Talmud *Yerushalmi Berakhot* 17a recites the Tosefta passage and continues: Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi [early third century CE] added that one must mention all of these events and say “Rock of Israel” and “its [Israel’s] Redeemer”—צור ישראל וגואלו. In Talmud *Bavli*, *Berakhot* 12a, Rabbah bar Chinana observes that one is obligated to recite *Emet v'yatsiv* in the morning and *Emet ve'emunah* in the evening.³ In all these references we know only the words of the incipit, the topics covered, and the *hatimah*—but not the specific words between incipit and *hatimah*.

The texts of the *Geullah* benedictions differ in Babylonian and Palestinian traditions. The texts of Rav Amram, Gaon of the Talmud academy at Sura, and the *Mahzor Vitry* are fairly consistent despite minor variants, such as inclusion or deletion of the *vav* conjunction; there are a small number of significant variants, and these are cited below in the text and notes. The Palestinian texts were reconstructed from many fragments in the Cairo Geniza, and reflect wide variations. The *Geullah* benedictions in the *siddur* of Saadia Gaon generally follow the Babylonian tradition, with one significant addition. The text selected for poetic analysis below follows the Babylonian tradition, is virtually identical to the text of the *Mahzor Vitry*, and is most often reproduced in Ashkenazic *siddurim* in Western Europe and North America.⁴

³See also Talmud *Bavli*, *Berakhot* 9b and 21a for additional references. *Berakhot* 14ab is discussed below.

⁴*סדר רב עמרם גאון* edited by Daniel Goldschmidt (Jerusalem: Mossad haRav Kook, 2004; *מחזור ויטרי*, ed. Aryeh Goldschmidt, 2 vols. (Jerusalem: Mekhon Otsar ha-Poskim, 2003); *סידור רב סעדיה גאון*, ed. I. Davidson, S. Assaf, B.I. Joel (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass Ltd, 2000).

Liturgical poetry often closely resembles biblical poetry. *Piyyutim*, obviously, use biblical models, but many prayers which are not acrostics use similar poetic structures: pervasive parallelism and various types of repetition; they also emphasize sound—rhyme and rhythm. These characteristics are prominent in both *Geullah* benedictions.

In poetry, the form groups meanings into strophes of various lengths. In biblical poetry, parallelism is pervasive. Most verses have two balancing phrases or clauses divided by the disjunctive Masoretic accent *etnahtah*. These balanced parts are called cola (singular: colon). Similarly, parallelism frequently extends to verses, forming couplets, triplets, and more complex strophes. While the text provides the content, strophes visually group topics and images. In some poems “framing words” recur to identify the beginnings and endings of strophes. Such recurrent words or phrases serve as markers; they may be single word, derivatives of a single Hebrew root, a phrase, a clause, or a distinctive grammatical element. Such repetition conveys emphasis and intensity. Framing words are prominent in the *Geullah* benedictions, but in prose format they may not be obvious to the *shaliah tsibbur* and the *kahal*, even when the parallelism and recurrence are clear. Poetic format also suggests implicit meanings and wordplay, whereas prose usually expresses meanings explicitly.

In poetry, sound is structural as well as aesthetic. Rhyme clarifies parallel units and reinforces the parallel content of adjacent verses. In some prayers, alliteration and assonance are evident. Rhythm, too, is significant and is suggested by the number of words or accents in adjacent verses or within the cola of a single verse. A short verse at the end of a strophe may be emphatic; a long verse following a series of short verses often summarizes. In Hebrew liturgical poetry, heaping a sequence of nouns, verbs, or short phrases suggests emphasis, climax, or occasionally movement.⁵

Liturgical poetry in prose format requires the *Shaliah tsibbur* and congregants to discern these patterns: to recognize the thought-units of meaning, to group or balance the repetitions, and to discern the conjunctions of related phrases and the disjunctions of sections. Poetic format makes such structures evident visually.

The texts of the two *Geullah* benedictions appear below in a poetic format which visually reveals the strophes, the individual thought-units and grammatical units, the presence of end-rhyme, the rhythm of various cola, and the parallelism of adjacent verses. Spaces between verses indicate strophes; spacing between words indicates thought-units, parallel and balancing grammatical structures, and parallel words. The numbers and letters preceding each strophe help identify the text under discussion. Different fonts and font sizes identify repeated framing words as well as important recurrent words. In some instances, one could group the cola of a verse or a short couplet in different ways, either as the conclusion of one section or the beginning of another. Close analysis of the two *Geullah* benedictions will clarify these explanations. As in *B'reishit—Vay'hi erev, vayhi voker*—we begin with the evening: *Emet ve'emunah*.

⁵Examples include *hitpa'el* verbs in the *Kaddish* [*Yitborakh, v'yishtabach*...], the infinitives in *Ahavah rabbah* [*l'havin, ul'haskil*...], the sequence of eight imperfect verbs in *Ya-aleh v'yavo* [*Ya-aleh, v'yavo, v'yagi'ah*...], and the fourfold repetition of *zikhron* in the same prayer.

ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֱמַת:

[אֱמַת] וְאֶמוּנָה כָּל זֹאת וְקִיָּם עָלֵינוּ.
כִּי הוּא ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵין זִילְתּוֹ.
וְאֶנְחֵנוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמּוֹ:

1. הַפּוֹדֵנוּ מִיָּד מַלְכִּים.
מִלְכֵנוּ הַגּוֹאֲלֵנוּ מִכַּף כָּל הָעָרִיצִים.

2. הָאֵל הַנִּפְרָע לָנוּ מִצָּרֵינוּ.
וְהַמְּשַׁלֵּם גְּמוּלָה לְכָל אוֹיְבֵי נַפְשֵׁנוּ:

3. הָעוֹשֶׂה גְּדוּלוֹת עַד אֵין חֶקֶר.
נִסִּים וְנִפְלְאוֹת עַד אֵין מִסְפָּר.

4. הַשֵּׁם נַפְשֵׁנוּ בַּחַיִּים.
וְלֹא נָתַן לַמוֹט רַגְלֵנוּ:

5. הַמְּדַרְיֵכֵנוּ עַל בָּמוֹת אוֹיְבֵינוּ.
וַיָּרֶם קַרְנֵנוּ עַל כָּל שׁוֹנְאֵינוּ:

6. הָעוֹשֶׂה לָנוּ נִסִּים וְנִקְמָה בַּפְּרָעָה.
אוֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים בְּאֶדְמַת בְּנֵי חָם.

7. הַמַּכָּה בְּעֶבְרַתּוֹ כָּל בְּכוֹרֵי מִצְרָיִם.
וַיּוֹצֵא אֶת עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתּוֹכָם לְחֵרוֹת עוֹלָם:

8. הַמַּעֲבִיר בְּנֵיו בֵּין גְּזָרֵי יָם סוּף.
אֶת רוֹדְפֵיהֶם וְאֶת שׁוֹנְאֵיהֶם בְּתֵהוּמוֹת טָבַע.

9. וַרְאוּ בְּנֵיו גְּבוּרָתּוֹ שֶׁבָּחוּ וְהוֹדוּ לִשְׁמוֹ:
וּמִלְכוּתּוֹ בְּרָצוֹן קִבְּלוּ עָלֵיהֶם.

מִלְשָׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָךְ עָנוּ שִׁירָה בְּשִׁמְחָה רַבָּה.
וְאָמְרוּ כָלָם:

מִי כָמְכָה בְּאֵלִים ה' .
מִי כָמְכָה נֶאֱדָר בְּקִדְשׁ .
נִזְרָא תְהִלּוֹת עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא:

מִלְכוּתְךָ רָאוּ בְנֵיךָ .
בּוֹקֵעַ יָם לִפְנֵי מִלְשָׁה .
זֶה אֵלֵינוּ עָנוּ . וְאָמְרוּ:
ה' יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד .

וְנֶאֱמַר .
כִּי פָדָה ה' אֶת יַעֲקֹב .
וּגְאָלוֹ מִיַּד תְּזַק מִמֶּנּוּ:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' גֹּאֲלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Affirmation of the *Sh'ma* in *Emet ve'emunah*

The Affirmation of *Emet ve'emunah* is succinct; its brevity makes identification as either prose or poetry debatable. The words *emet*, *emunah*, *kayam* are emphasized above by font and size, not because they are structural poetic elements but rather because they are also prominent in the morning benediction *Emet v'yatsiv*. The first two verses consist of balancing thought-units comprising four words followed by two words with a *vav* conjunction. The third verse is an emphatic three-word conclusion to the strophe.

This three-verse strophe restates three central ideas: the words of the *Sh'ma* are true and everlasting; *Adonai* is *our* God, the *only* God; and we are Israel, God's people. The strophe concludes and seals the *Sh'ma*. There is no mention of Egypt or Redemption. The first two lines are in the third person; the three concluding words shift to the first-person plural, and thereby transition smoothly into the first couplet of the Redemption section.

Poetic elements of this short strophe are not prominent, unlike *Emet v'yatsiv*. Parallelism, if it exists, is not repetition of words and ideas. Rhyme does exist—*aleinu* and *Eloheinu*, *zulato* and *amo*—but it may be more incidental than structural.

The Palestinian versions of the Affirmation are similarly succinct. The first verse in all variants is identical with the text above. There are slight variants in the second and third verses.⁶ But most Geniza fragments, as well as Saadia's *siddur*, contain an additional phrase after *amo: Emet malkeinu* or *Emet hu malkeinu*.⁷ One manuscript extends the phrase: *ואנחנו ישראל עמו*.⁸ Aside from these variants, both the Babylonian and Palestinian versions of the first three verses of *Emet ve'emunah* are similar in brevity and share common or similar phrases.

When the *Shaliah tsibbur* chants *Adonai eloheikhem emet*,⁹ the word *emet* is an adjective¹⁰ modifying God. But in the phrase *Emet ve'emunah kol zot*, the two adjectives refer to the preceding three pericopes of Torah, the *קריאת שמע*.¹¹

We may ask whether this concise conclusion to the *Sh'ma* is an early or even an original text, for it is brief, succinct, straightforward, unadorned. There are several possibilities. (1) It is an early text, in contrast to the elaborate parallel *Emet v'yatsiv* in the *Shaharit* service. (2) Its brevity conforms to the short *Arvit* service and hence does not necessarily witness an early origin. (3) The brief text was a late distillation of the longer *Emet v'yatsiv* text, adapted to fit the shorter *Arvit* service.

Redemption in *Emet ve'emunah*

The first section of the Redemption narrative comprises nine couplets. The very first word of the first couplet introduces the Exodus topic—*ha-podeinu*—our Ransomer; the second verse cites God as our Redeemer—*ha-goaleinu*. The couplets closely resemble biblical poetry. Two couplets quote Tanakh directly: Job 9:10 in couplet three and Psalm 66:9 in couplet four. Other couplets frequently cite biblical phrases.

⁶In the second verse the words *ki* and *hu* are absent in some texts. In the third verse several texts replace *Ein zulato* with *Efes zulato*: Cambridge University Library (henceforth CUL) Or 1081 2.76 and CUL AS 101.47.

⁷CUL Or 1081 2.76; CUL T-S AS 101.47; CUL T-S Misc 24.137.12a; Jerusalem, National Library of Israel (henceforth NLI) 577.4/95. I am grateful to Pamela Friedman for locating several of these and for her careful reading of this article.

⁸CUL T-S A29.41. The words come from Psalms 95:7 and 100:3.

⁹The Talmud *Bavli* records a debate about linking the last two words of the *Sh'ma*—*Adonai eloheikhem*—with the first word of *Emet ve'emunah*. In *Berakhot* 14ab, Rabbi Abahu cites Rabbi Yochanan that one may not pause between the end of the *Sh'ma* and beginning of *Emet ve'emunah* because Jeremiah 10:10 cites that God is *emet*. The subsequent question is whether the word *emet* is then to be repeated. Rabbi Abahu, again citing Rabbi Yochanan, argues that *emet* is repeated; Rabbah disagreed.

¹⁰Dictionaries classify *emet* as a noun, but here and elsewhere it functions as an adjective.

¹¹The phrase recurs in *Emet v'yatsiv* in strophe two of the Redemption section.

Couplet one: Jeremiah 15:21—compare Deut 7:8 and Job 6:23

Couplet two: Isaiah 59:18

Couplet five: Deut 33:29, Micah 1:3; Habakkuk 3:19; 1 Sam 2:10; Ps 148:14

Couplet six: compare Psalm 135:9

Couplet seven: Exodus 12:12 and 12:29

The Redemption narrative uses the third person, often with the first person plural pronominal suffix *-nu*. Each of the first eight couplets begins with a masculine, singular participle prefixed with the definite article; each participle describes an attribute of *Adonai*: Ransomer, God, Doer, Granter, Guide, Doer or Maker, Slayer, and Transporter [of the Israelites across the sea]. Those nouns unify these nine couplets and cite God's diverse roles in Redemption.

The spacing within each couplet above reveals the pervasive, complex parallelism in the first five couplets. The parallel elements include words of similar meanings and categories, repeated parts of speech in prominent positions, repeated nouns and prepositional phrases, and both end- and internal-rhyme.¹² The position of these terms within the verse—initial, terminal, or medial—is significant. For example, in the first couplet *mi-yad* is parallel with *mi-kaf*; both are mid-verse. At the ends of each verse are parallel rhyming plural nouns: *ha-aritsim*—violent oppressors—and the *m'lakhim*—presumably the pharaohs/kings of Egypt,¹³ though other kings are possible. In couplet six, the Pharaoh is parallel with the *b'nai ham*—Egyptians.¹⁴ In several couplets end-rhyme is present. Within cola internal rhyme also occurs, as in *hapodeinu* and either *malkeinu* or *hago'aleinu* in couplet one; *g'dolot* and *nifla'ot* in couplet three; *nafsheinu* and *ragleinu* in couplet four, etc.

The Babylonian and Palestinian versions of the Redemption text of *Emet ve'emunah* often agree. There are many minor variants, such as the presence or absence of the *vav* conjunction; changes in the preposition prefix such as *b'otot uv'moftim* versus *v'otot umoftim*;¹⁵ and the presence or absence of the particle *et*.¹⁶ But some variants are significant. For example, couplet three, which quotes Job 9:10, is absent in the *siddurim* of Rav Amram and Rav Saadia Gaon, as well as all the Geniza fragments. Significant variants sometimes suggest that a word, phrase, or an entire verse¹⁷ has been inserted.¹⁸ Some additions are grammatical, such as adding

¹²While Hebrew has many verb-endings, pronominal suffixes, and plural forms which make rhyme facile, it is incorrect therefore to assume that intentional rhyme does not exist.

¹³Exodus 1:8, 15.

¹⁴I Chronicles 1:8.

¹⁵Jerusalem: National Library of Israel (henceforth NIL) 577.

¹⁶Couplet 9: *et g'vurato*.

¹⁷For example, the clause *מפי עוללים ויונקים שירה שמעת לשמך* appears after *oseh fele* in several Geniza fragments. In the same place Saadia has a different text. CUL T-S A29.41; NLI 577 4/95.

¹⁸For example, in the second verse of *Emet ve'emunah*, the words *ki hu* are absent in several Geniza fragments and in Saadia's *siddur*, making the parallelism: *יי אלהינו ואין זולתו*.

the particle *et* to identify the direct object or adding the word *erets* before *Mitsrayim*. Some are clarifications; some expand a small field or group; and some may be personal additions. Some affect the parallelism. For example, in the first couplet the word *Malkeinu* is absent in Amram, Saadia, some versions of *Mahzor Vitry*, and four Geniza fragments.¹⁹ Absent that word, the parallelism is even stronger. But conversely the word *Malkeinu* creates a chiasmic structure which contrasts the oppressing kings with *our* King. Similarly in couplet seven, the words *l'heirut olam* may be a later amplification. Finally in couplet nine, one manuscript²⁰ adds the word *ko'ah* before *gevurato*. *Ko'ah* marginally intensifies *gevurato* but greatly weakens the parallelism and internal rhyme of the cola.

Poetry, in contrast to prose, frequently employs wordplay.²¹ Perhaps such wordplay occurs in couplet two, for *mitsareinu* resembles closely *Mitsrayim*, Egypt. *Mitsareinu* refers to our oppressors/adversaries. In couplet seven *b'evrato* can have two different meanings. The unpointed text could be read as an infinitive construct: [God is] the One who, in His passing over, slew/smote all the first born of Egypt. The meaning in couplet eight—*hama'avir*—clearly refers to God in that sense: the One who brought—root עבר —*hiphil* masculine singular participle—"transmit" or "cause to pass" His children over the *Yam-suf*. But the same root as a noun עֲבָרָה: [God is] the One Who, in His anger, slew the first-born of Egypt.

Both sections of *Emet ve'emunah*—the Affirmation of the *Sh'ma* and the Redemption narrative—suggest a style, if not an origin, earlier than the *Emet v'yatsiv* benediction in the *Shaharit* service. The Affirmation is concise, and its style could be either prose or poetry. The poetry of the Redemption closely resembles biblical poetry in its parallel couplets. But the structure of *Emet v'yatsiv* contrasts greatly.

Emet v'yatsiv: Affirmations of the *Sh'ma*

ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶמֶת:

		וְיִצִּיב	A [אֶמֶת]
וְנִכּוֹן	וְקַיָּים	וְנִאֲמֵן	וְיִשָּׁר
וְאֶהוּב	וְחֻבִּיב	וְנִעִים	וְנִחְמָד
וְנִרְאָה	וְאֲדִיר	וְמִקְבֵּל	וְמִתְקַן
וְטוֹב	וְנִפְּה	הַזֶּה	הַדָּבָר
עֲלֵינוּ	לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:		

¹⁹CUL Jerusalem NLI 577; London, BL Or 5557E.6; CUL T-S A29.41; and CUL T-S Misc. 24.137.12a.

²⁰CUL T-S A29.41. This manuscript also expands couplet eight with the words *v'et tsar'reiheim* after *son'eihem*; the addition adds little.

²¹Determining wordplay is difficult. What a modern reader imagines to be wordplay may not have been recognized or intended by the author. Where the intent of the author ends and where the imagination of the analyst begins is often most unclear.

B	אֱמֶת	אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם	מִלְכֵנוּ.
	צוּר יַעֲקֹב	מִגֵּן יִשְׁעֵנוּ.	
	לְדֹר וָדֹר	הוּא קִיִּם	וּשְׁמוֹ קִיִּם.
	וְכִסָּאוֹ נִכּוֹן.	וּמַלְכוּתוֹ וְאַמּוֹנָתוֹ	לְעַד קִיָּמָת:
	וּדְבָרָיו	חַיִּים	וְקִיָּמִים.

C	נְאֻמָּנִים וְנַחֲמָדִים	לְעַד וְלְעוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים.
	עַל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ	וְעַלֵינוּ.
	עַל בְּנֵינוּ	וְעַל דּוֹרוֹתֵינוּ.
	וְעַל כָּל דּוֹרוֹת	זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל עַבְדֶּיךָ:
	עַל הָרָאשׁוֹנִים	וְעַל הָאַחֲרוֹנִים.
	דְּבַר טוֹב	וְקִיִּם לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

D **אֱמֶת וְאַמּוֹנָה. חֶק וְלֹא יַעֲבֹר.**

E **אֱמֶת. שְׁאֵתָה הוּא ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ.**

מִלְכֵנוּ	מֶלֶךְ	אֲבוֹתֵינוּ.
גּוֹאֲלֵנוּ	גּוֹאֵל	אֲבוֹתֵינוּ.
יוֹצֵרֵנוּ	צוּר	יְשׁוּעָתֵנוּ.
פוֹדֵנוּ וּמַצִּילֵנוּ	מֵעוֹלָם שְׁמֶךָ.	
אֵין אֱלֹהִים	זוֹלָתְךָ:	

F **עֲזַרְתָּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֶתָּה הוּא מֵעוֹלָם.**

מִגֵּן וּמוֹשִׁיעַ	לְבִנְיָהֶם אַחֲרֵיהֶם	בְּכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר.
בָּרוּם עוֹלָם מוֹשֶׁבֶךָ.		
וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ וְצִדְקָתְךָ	עַד אֶפְסֵי אֶרֶץ:	
אֲשֶׁרִי	אִישׁ	שִׁישְׁמַע
לְמִצּוֹתֶיךָ	וְתוֹרָתְךָ	וְדְבָרְךָ
יְשִׁים	עַל	לְבוֹ:

G **אֱמֶת. אֶתָּה הוּא אֲדוֹן לְעַמֶּךָ.**

וּמֶלֶךְ גִּבּוֹר לָרִיב רִיבָם:

ח אמת. אתה הוא ראשון ואתה הוא אחרון.

ומבִּלְעָדֶיךָ אֵין לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ גּוֹאֵל וּמוֹשִׁיעַ:

Both *Geullah* Affirmations “squint”—that is, they look backward to affirm the three *Sh'ma* pericopes and simultaneously look forward transitioning to the Redemption. In *Emet ve'emunah* the Affirmation is succinct; the transition to Redemption is direct. But the Affirmation in the morning service is lengthy; the poetry is complex; and the strophes are clearly demarcated. The Affirmation itself comprises two subsections. The first consists of three strophes in the third person, herein labelled A, B, and C. The second section begins *Emet she-atah hu*. Its four stanzas—E, F, G, and H—vary in length and address God directly in the second person. A brief passage between the two sections, D, also squints, for it concludes the first subsection while introducing the second.

The first subsection of the Affirmation consists of three strophes; A and B begin with *Emet*; the third begins with *Ne'e'manim*. Each has five or six verses. The last verse of each strophe begins with a form of the root **דבר**. The roots *emet*, *emunah*, and *davar* thus frame each strophe; the root **קיים** is also prominent. Each strophe has distinctive repetitive structures, uses different parts of speech and different numbers of words, and has different subjects. These strophes develop in order the same three ideas of *Emet ve'emunah*: (A) the words of the *Sh'ma* are true, certain, established, and enduring; (B) God, our Sovereign, Shield, and Rock, is true; and (C) upon us forever lies the obligation.

Strophe A consists of the word *Emet* followed by fifteen additional masculine-singular adjectives. The preceding noun, *Adonai*, is the probable referent for these adjectives, for the *Shaliah tsibbur* follows the last two words of the *Sh'ma*, *Adonai eloheikhem*, with *emet*. Yet another referent noun appears at the **end** of the strophe: *hadavar hazeh aleinu*—the word/matter/text [which is] upon us—that is, the *Sh'ma*. Thus the meaning shifts from God as true, certain, enduring, and beloved to the text of the *Sh'ma*, which also is true and enduring. The fifteen repetitions of the conjunction “v-” are cumulative and emphatic.

These sixteen adjectives do not suggest a progression,²² but rather form pairs, especially the *pual* pair *um'tukan* and *um'kubal*. These pairs appear below with the attribute linking them.

<i>emet v'yatsiv</i>	true, certain	veracity
<i>v'nakhon v'kayam</i>	established, enduring	permanence
<i>v'yashar v'ne'eman</i>	straightforward, faithful	reliability, trustworthy
<i>v'ahuv v'haviv</i>	beloved, beloved	love
<i>v'nehmad v'na'im</i>	desirable, pleasant	affection, “agreeableness”
<i>v'nora v'adir</i>	awesome, mighty	power, strength
<i>u'm'tukan u'm'kubal</i>	proper, accepted	authenticity
<i>v'tov v'yafeh</i>	good, beautiful	desirability

²²As for example in *Ya'aleh v'yavo*.

The text of strophe A follows that of Rav Amram's *siddur*, *Mahzor Vitry*, and Geniza fragments.²³ But two variant lists exist in multiple copies. Saadia Gaon's list also includes sixteen adjectives, but *adir* is absent and *tsadik* replaces it.²⁴ Saadia's order of the first nine terms and the last two are identical with Rav Amram, but the order of adjectives ten through fourteen differs: **ונעים, ונורא, וצדיק, ומקובל, ומתוקן, ומתוקן**. The other variant has only seven adjectives: the first six in order plus **וטוב**.²⁵ It is tempting to hypothesize that the shorter list is earlier, but we cannot date any of these fragments, and while an evolution from simple to complex, brief to lengthy, seems logical, that argument is inconclusive. The list of adjectives in *Mahzor Vitry* and Amram probably represents a Babylonian formulation, while the list of Saadia and the Geniza manuscripts may represent Palestinian, Egyptian, or Maghrebian formulations. But the similar pairings of one through six in all three sources and in adjectives one through nine and fifteen-sixteen²⁶ suggest that juxtaposing pairs of similar adjectives was intentional.

The second strophe (B) also begins with the framing word *emet*, but instead of piling adjectives, it heaps primarily two-word units, both phrases and clauses. Whereas the first strophe described the *Sh'ma—hadavar hazeh*—the second describes God as Sovereign, Shield, Rock. The concluding framing word is *d'varav*, His words; its short three words contrast with the preceding, longer verses to form an emphatic conclusion. Four times the strophe uses the root **קים**, and that word concludes each of the last three verses. Not only is the *Sh'ma* true and enduring, so too is *Adonai*.

The phrase **צור יעקב** is unusual. No other Patriarch is mentioned in the *Geullah* benedictions, though the evening benediction also cites Jacob: **כי פדה ה' את יעקב**. Jacob indeed is associated with stone in Genesis 28:11, 18, 22, but the word there is *even*, not *tsur*. *HaShem* as Rock of Israel is attested in *Tanakh*²⁷ and similar references to rocks of salvation and to God as my Rock appear, but not Rock of Jacob. Yet just as God redeemed Jacob from Esau, so too God redeemed Jacob's namesake Israel; hence *Tsur ya'akov* is synonymous with *Tsur yisrael*, God's true and certain faithfulness to Israel.

The third strophe (C) opens with the word *ne'emanim* rather than *emet*, and again the final verse begins with the root *davar* and reiterates *kayam*. As in the first strophe, the referent for *emunah* seems to be *Adonai*, the subject of strophe two: God is faithful. But the third strophe is not about *Adonai*: it is about us. Jews have an obligation to be faithful, and responsibility rests *aleinu*, upon us.

Strophe C piles up a series of prepositional phrases beginning with the preposition “*al*.” The phrases progress from ancestors, to ourselves, our children, our descendants, and all generations of Israel; it then summarizes: the former and the latter. The repetition of *al* suggests

²³CUL T-S 8H11.3 and H8.85.

²⁴Saadia Gaon and CUL T-S fragments: AS102.116; 6H3.5; NS278.41; and 8H10.15.

²⁵CUL T-S fragments: 8HJ9.4; AS 102.273; H18.3; and K27.33.

²⁶In the list of Saadia the words *m'tukan* and *m'kubal* are adjacent as are *na'im* and *nora*.

²⁷2 Samuel 23:3 and Isaiah 30:29.

wordplay on the noun *ol* [על], a yoke. We accept faithfully, as did our ancestors, the yoke of servitude to *HaShem*.²⁸ In Amram, *Mahzor Vitry*, and Saadia, the word *aleinu* occurs first, before *al avoteinu*, thereby placing primary emphasis on us before the chronological progression of ancestors and descendants. Its placement after *al avoteinu* in modern Ashkenazic *siddurim* places us within a historical genealogy: ancestors, ourselves, our children, etc.

The fourth line זרע ישראל עבדיך וְעַל כָּל דּוֹרוֹת, however, is anomalous. Unlike the other verses, there is no end-rhyme; each phrase has three words rather than two and contains the second-person singular suffix “-ekha.” It clarifies the previous verse, for it specifies not only *our* descendants but *all* descendants of Israel, but it could be a later addition.

Verse D חַק וְלֹא יַעֲבֹר אֱמֶת וְאֱמוּנָה both concludes the first section and introduces the following one.²⁹ These five emphatic words recall the evening benediction *Emet ve’emunah*, linking evening and morning. They summarize the three preceding strophes, which begin with these words, and restate that they are eternal, enduring. The word יַעֲבֹר also hints at the Redemption narrative to follow, for God passes over the Egyptian homes at night, and the Israelites pass over or through the *Yam-suf*.³⁰ And *emet* is the initial and governing term for the three strophes which follow.

Four stanzas of various lengths and structures constitute the second section of the Affirmation: E, F, G, and H. Three of the four begin with the word *Emet*, and the opening verse of each strophe contains the words *Atah hu*, directly addressing *Adonai*. Many strophes are built of three-word phrases or clauses. Formatted as poetry, this structure is readily apparent.

The first *Atah hu* strophe (E) cites the attributes of God in primarily three-word verses. As in the first benediction of the *Amidah*, so too the first verse establishes our standing as descendants of ancestors who believed in *Adonai*. The next three verses cite God as Sovereign, Redeemer, and Creator. Each contains three words: a noun with the first-person plural suffix, the same noun without the suffix, and a different noun in construct with a first-person plural suffix: Our Sovereign, Sovereign of our ancestors / Our Redeemer, Redeemer of our ancestors / Our Creator, Rock of our salvation. The last triad plays with the root יצר, to fashion or shape, and *tsur* צור, Rock. This wordplay occurs in Saadia’s *siddur* and modern *siddurim*. Amram’s *siddur* and *Mahzor Vitry* have the wording צורינו צור ישועתנו, which preserves the parallelism of all three triads. The rhyme scheme of the strophe, excluding the first verse, is a a a + b b.³¹ Verses five and six break the preceding pattern. Line five has four words and contains two attributes of God—our Ransomer and our Deliverer—words which forecast Redemption. Reference to God’s Name שם, however, is not prominent in the *Geullah* benedictions; its presence here is interesting;

²⁸There are numerous slight variants in this stanza and one significant insertion. In Amram the first and last verses of this strophe are short: וְנִאֲמָנִים לְעוֹלָם וְלְעוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים. דָּבָר קִים. The London manuscript of *Mahzor Vitry* adds the verse לב מוֹשֶׁךְ חֶסֶד לְיֹדְעֵי וְצַדִּיקָתוֹ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל after the word *olamim*. That verse alludes to Psalm 109:12 and perhaps Psalm 94:15.

²⁹The words אֱמֶת וְאֱמוּנָה are missing in Saadia’s *siddur*. The words in Amram’s are בִּאֲמַת וּבִאֲמוּנָה.

³⁰Exodus 12:12, 12:23; 15:16.

³¹Amram’s *siddur* extends the concluding verse: אֵין לָנוּ עוֹד אֱלֹהִים זוֹלָתָךְ. The verse has a similar number of syllables as the preceding one.

its rhyme with *zulatekha* suggests that it is not a later insertion. Nevertheless, the word *Sh'mo* does appear in strophe B of the first Affirmation.

The second *Atah hu* strophe (F) is anomalous and could be a later addition. The word *emet* does not open the strophe, though the *Atah hu* clause is present; the word *avoteinu* links strophes E and F.³² Most of the units have three sections—either three groups of two words or three-word clauses. The content emphasizes God's goodness to humans. While end-rhyme is not present, internal rhyme is—specifically the second person ending “-ekha” in two different groups of three successive words: *moshavekha*, *umishpotekha*, *v'tsidkat'kha* and *l'mitzvotekha*, *v'torat'kha*, *u'd'var'kha*.

Saadia's text differs significantly:

עוזר את אבותינו אֵתָהּ הוּא מְעוֹלָם.
מִגֵּן וּמוֹשִׁיעַ לְבָנֵיהֶם אַחֲרֵיהֶם בְּכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר.
אֵמֶת אֲשֶׁרִי אִישׁ שִׁישָׁמַע
אֵל מִצְוֹתֶיהָ וְדִבְרֶיהָ וְתוֹרָתָהּ יְשִׁים עַל לִבּוֹ

The absence of two verses בְּרוּם עוֹלָם מוֹשָׁבֶה / וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיהָ וְצִדְקָתָהּ עַד אַפְסֵי אָרֶץ: simplifies the parallelism but reduces the internal rhythm of the -ekha pronominal suffix. Saadia's insertion of the word *emet* links this strophe with the other *emet* verses, but his text weakens the existing structure and its *Atah hu* clauses.

Perhaps strophe F is an addition. The topics wander from God as Shield and Savior (third person), to God's residence on high (second person), to God's judgments and righteousness, to one who happily heeds and places on his heart God's *mitzvot* and teachings. *Ezrat/Ozeir* rather than *emet* opens the strophe but does not govern the content, for God's *mitzvot* and Torah are not prominent in previous or subsequent passages. Furthermore, the tone of the last three verses is more exhortative than declarative. Perhaps the last three lines of the strophe, beginning with Saadia's word *emet*, constitute an independent strophe.

The Affirmation concludes with two unrhymed couplets, each beginning with *emet*. The first (G) is brief and emphatic: God is Lord, Sovereign, and Mighty One to “*Your* people,” which recalls strophe C: *zera yisrael avadekha*. The phrase *lariv rivam* “to contend their contention/case/suit” may well allude to Psalm 74:22 and seems intercessory.

The second couplet (H) again opens with *emet*. It repeats the roots present in strophe C: the first and the last, עַל הָרָאשׁוֹנִים וְעַל הָאַחֲרוֹנִים. The phrases and clauses comprise primarily three words: God is Sovereign, Redeemer, and Savior, words which lead to the Redemption. The emphatic words “and aside from You we have no other. . .” recall אֵין אֱלֹהִים זוּלָתָהּ in strophe E.

³²In Amram and *Mahzor Vitry* the first word is עוזר.

I מַמְצְרִים גָּאֲלָנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ.
וּמִבֵּית עֲבָדִים פָּדִיתָנוּ.

J כָּל בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם הֲרַגְתָּ. וּבְכוֹרְךָ גָּאֲלָתָּ.
יָמִם סוּף בָּקַעְתָּ. וְזָדִים טִבַּעְתָּ. וַיִּדְיִם הֶעֱבַרְתָּ.
וַיִּכְסּוּ מִיָּם צָרֵיהֶם. אֶחָד מֵהֶם לֹא נִוְתַר:

K עַל זֹאת שָׁבְחוּ אֱהוּבִים וְרוֹמְמוֹ אֵל.
וְנָתַנוּ יְדִידִים
זְמִירוֹת וְשִׁירוֹת וְתִשְׁבָּחוֹת בְּרָכוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת
לְמֶלֶךְ אֵל חַי וְקַיִם:
גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא. רַם וְנִשְׂא.
מְשַׁפִּיל גָּאִים. וּמַגְבִּיהַ שְׁפָלִים.
מוֹצִיא אֲסִירִים. וּפּוֹדֶה עֲנֻוִּים.
וְעוֹזֵר דָּלִים. וְעוֹנֶה לַעֲמֹו
בְּעֵת שׁוֹעֵם אֵלָיו:

L תִּהְלֹוֹת לְאֵל עֲלִיוֹן.
בָּרוּךְ הוּא וּמְבָרֵךְ.

מִשֶּׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָךְ עָנוּ שִׁירָה בְּשִׁמְחָה רַבָּה.
וְאָמְרוּ כָלָם:

מִי כָמֶכָה בָּאֵלִים ה'!
מִי כָמֶכָה נֶאֱדָר בְּקִדְשׁ.
נוֹרָא תִהְלֹת. עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא:

שִׁירָה תִּדְשָׁה שָׁבְחוּ גְאוּלִּים לְשִׁמְךָ עַל שִׁפְתַּי הֵימָּה.
יִחַד כָּלָם הוֹדוּ וְהִמְלִיכוּ וְאָמְרוּ:
ה' מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל. קוֹמָה בְּעֶזְרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל.
וּפִדָה כְּנָאֲמָךְ יְהוּדָה וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל.

גָּאֲלָנוּ ה' צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', גָּאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל:

The Redemption section of *Emet v'yatsiv* comprises four strophes (I, J, K, and L), the first and last of which are couplets. Most cola have two or three words. End rhyme and internal rhyme are prominent in all strophes except couplet L. Unlike the concluding section, *Moshe uv'nei yisrael* through *Ga'al yisrael*, strophes I through L contain few biblical quotations. The second strophe (J), however, has significant variants.

The first word, *mi-mitsrayim*, of the first couplet (I) introduces the Redemption narrative. The Redemption passages of both *Geullah* benedictions begin with couplets containing verbs with the roots פָּדָה and גָּאֵל—ransom and redemption.³³ Both couplets have end- and internal-rhymes with the pronominal suffixes *-im* and *-nu*. The *Emet v'yatziv* couplet is first-person, direct address to God. In the *siddurim* of Amram and Saadia, the first word is אַמֵּת (though not in *Mahzor Vitry*) which links the Affirmation of the *Sh'ma* with the Redemption. Saadia's text אַמֵּת גָּאֲלָנוּ וּמִבֵּית עֶבְדִּים פָּדִיתָנוּ balances perfectly the second verse מִמִּצְרַיִם גָּאֲלָנוּ. Such short, succinct passages often open and conclude benedictions and may preserve the earliest versions; over time and space, poetry standardized the text between the incipit and the *hatimah*.

The second strophe (J) is complex. The texts of Saadia and the Geniza fragments vary greatly from the relative uniformity of Amram and *Mahzor Vitry*. The poetic arrangement of the verses above is hardly definitive. The first five cola address God in the second person; all rhyme with the verbal suffix יָה; and all emphasize God's direct involvement in the deaths of the Egyptians and the redemption of the Israelites. The parallelism is clear: *their* firstborn You killed / *Your* firstborn You redeemed; the insolent You drowned / Your beloved You permitted to cross over.³⁴ The last two verses are third-person description and may well be prose. The clauses of verse three are balanced and parallel, but there is no internal or end rhyme. Perhaps there is wordplay in the words *mayim tsareihem*, for the final *mem* of *mayim* and *tsareihem* resembles *Mitsrayim*, Egypt.

Saadia's text differs:

כָּל בְּכוֹרֵי מִצְרַיִם בְּדָבָר הָרַגְתָּהּ [בָּהֶם]
וּבְאַלְהֵיהֶם שִׁפְטִים עָשִׂיתָ
עַל אֲדוֹת שְׁבֻטֵי עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל נָחֳלֶתְךָ
יָם סוֹף קָרַעְתָּהּ לִפְנֵי בְּנֶיךָ
וּתְעַבִּירָם בְּתוֹכָהּ בְּאֶהְבָּהּ בְּחֶרֶבָהּ
וְאֵת כָּל רוֹדְפֵי בְּנֶיךָ
וְאוֹיְבֵי עַדְתְּךָ וְצוֹרְרֵי נָחֳלֶתְךָ
הַבָּאִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם כָּל־כְּסֹמוֹ יָם
אֶחָד מֵהֶם לֹא נֹתַר

³³Compare Deuteronomy 7:8 and 13:6.

³⁴In Amram, Saadia, and *Mahzor Vitry* the fifth colon is וַיִּדְּיִים עֲבָרָה rather than the *hiphil* וַיִּדְּיִים הָעֲבָרָה.

Saadia's text contains elements of the Amram and *Mahzor Vitry* versions, words from couplets seven and eight of *Emet ve'emunah*, plus elaborations and clarifications³⁵ and hence suggests a paraphrase. Like the Amram and *Mahzor Vitry* texts, Saadia's verses address God in the second person. The Geniza fragments contain additional versions of this strophe in very different words with different details.³⁶ The differing texts of the *Yam-suf* events in Palestinian sources contrast with the uniformity of the Babylonian texts of Amram and the *Mahzor Vitry*.

The third strophe (K), like the second, is complex third-person description with pronominal suffixes. Most cola contain two words; several have end-rhyme. Probably the first three verses are prose rather than poetry; the subsequent verses, however, are clearly poetry. A pile of five, feminine-plural nouns, however, separates the two-word balanced cola; all five describe the verbal tributes the Israelites offer to God for deliverance. The ten word-pairs are:

preposition-noun-noun	/ adjective-adjective
adjective-adjective	/ adjective-adjective
noun-object	/ noun-object
noun-object	/ noun-object
noun-object	/ noun-preposition-object ³⁷

The last six nouns are all *hiphil* or *qal* participles. The two *hiphil* participles have chiasmic repetition, as God is Humbler of the proud and/but Exalter of the humble. Both Amram and Saadia, but not *Mahzor Vitry*, expand the fifth verse: **מְשַׁפִּיל גָּאִים עַד לָאָרֶץ וּמְגַבֵּיהַ שְׂפָלִים עַד מְרוֹם.**

The concluding unrhymed couplet has only three words in each verse and repeats the root **בִּרְךְ**. The brevity and repetition afford closure.

Conclusions

Evolution of Liturgical Texts

Apart from *piyyutim*, most liturgical texts evolved over time; like folk ballads, what one person may have created, others, at different times, in varied locales, modified by adding, deleting, restating. Ascertaining the original authors or original versions of liturgical texts presents the same difficulties as finding the original text and author of a biblical text. Before Amram we have only the opening words of a benediction, the concluding *hatimah*, and the topics covered, as preserved in the Mishnah, Tosefta, and Gemara, but not the wording between the incipit and the *hatimah*. Amram's *siddur* gives full texts, but after his death, his text was modified significantly; the earliest manuscripts come from the thirteenth century. The Cairo

³⁵For example, it mentions plague **דִּבַּר**; God's judgment on Egyptian gods; the tribes of Israel as God's inheritance.

³⁶CUL T-S 6H8.2 and CUL Add. 3356. Both are printed in Jacob Mann, "Genizah Fragments of the Palestinian Order of Service" in *Hebrew Union College Annual*, vol. 2 (1924), 293-95.

³⁷The last three verses could also be grouped as two: three two-word cola with end-rhyme **יִם** and an unrhymed bi-cola.

Geniza provides numerous texts, many fragmentary, from the ninth century onward, but most are of unknown date and provenance. Therefore, analysis of a benediction always raises questions about how a surviving text became authoritative. Examining benedictions as poetry can help us understand the evolution of an established, authoritative text.

Probably benedictions and some liturgical texts evolved from simple to complex as wording was clarified or glossed, and as additional thoughts were appended. Such is the hypothesis, but supporting evidence is circumstantial. (1) The Mishnah, Tosefta, and Gemara identify benedictions by incipit and discuss the wording of the *hatimah*. The intervening words usually explain and justify the *hatimah*; they were less important and not standardized, which explains variants in different sources. For example, Tosefta *Berakhot* 2:1 relates that one must mention [להזכיר] God's sovereignty, slaying of the firstborn, and dividing the *Yam-suf*; R. Yehoshua ben Levi adds that one must mention [להזכיר] and say [לומר] *Tsur Yisrael* and *Go-alo*.³⁸ (2) The intermediate benedictions of the Palestinian *Amidah* are short, consisting only of a brief initial statement and *hatimah*; the Ashkenazic *Amidah* often amplifies the text. (3) Among variant texts, the first and last portions usually have the fewest variants. For example, in the sixteen adjectives of strophe one of *Emet v'yatsiv* (A) in both Babylonian and Palestinian texts, the most stable are the first six and the last two. (4) In *Emet ve'emunah* the Affirmation is succinct—only fifteen words. It may well be earlier than the long, florid Affirmation in *Emet v'yatsiv*.³⁹

And yet, for each argument cited above and for any specific example, alternative explanations are possible. Perhaps the most stable texts are the oldest; perhaps the couplets of *Emet ve'emunah*, which resemble biblical couplets, are older than the sophisticated strophes of *Emet v'yatsiv*. But a manuscript of a late date sometimes represents an older tradition, just as old practices often survive on the margins of society.

In most liturgical texts, we may suspect additions and/or revisions. Any anomaly within an otherwise regular or recurrent structure or context may be suspect. For example, in *Emet ve'emunah* couplets three and four are biblical quotations: Job 9:10 and Psalm 66:9. The other couplets use biblical phrases but are not quotations. Couplet three is not found in Palestinian texts; couplet four does not directly refer to Redemption. Likewise in *Emet v'yatsiv* in the third strophe, the verse וְעַל כָּל דְּרוֹת זָרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדֶיךָ: breaks the rhymes of surrounding verses and adds an extra word to each colon. Such anomalous passages suggest later accretions.

Redundancy within a text might also suggest an addition, unless it occurs as an emphatic poetic device within a pile of parallel terms. For example, in couplet two of *Emet ve'emunah* the word *malkeinu* disrupts the parallelism between the primary words *ha-podeinu* and *ha-goaleinu*. In couplet seven the word *Yisrael* is unnecessary, for *amo* is perfectly clear; furthermore, the last two words are not only unnecessary but also are untrue, for Israel was not eternally free. Eliminating the superfluous leaves a succinct וְיִצְחָא עִמּוֹ מְתוּכָם. In couplet eight the words *v'et*

³⁸Talmud *Yerushalmi*, *Berakhot*, 17a.

³⁹In Jewish, as in Roman Catholic traditions, liturgy tends to expand over time. *Paytanim* composed cycles of *piyyutim* called *qedushot* to expand and thereby enhance standard prayers on festivals. In the Middle Ages Catholics added hymns, sequences, and tropes to the liturgy to express their devotion. Both traditions later trimmed many such expansions.

son'eihem are unnecessary, for the pursuers drowned, not those who hated the Israelites. In *Emet v'yatsiv* the two prepositional phrases are probably additions as well for they are redundant: משפיל גאִים עַד לָאָרֶץ וּמַגְבִּיהַ שְׂפָלִים עַד מָרוֹם. The existence of manuscripts omitting such redundancies enhances the likelihood that they are later clarifications or additions. These examples may well be expansions to an earlier text, but we cannot be certain.

Significance of Poetic Formats

While the Song of the Sea, hymns, and Psalms with refrains are often printed in poetic format in the *siddur* and *mahzor*, most other liturgical poetry is formatted as prose.⁴⁰ Few congregants recognize these benedictions to be poems, especially given the rapid recitation of a plethora of words in the lengthy *Shaharit* service. Prose format saves space, and therefore money. At times distinguishing between different strophes, and even between poetry and prose, is problematic. Since the words and their sequence are the same in prose as in poetry, does format really matter?

It does matter if the meanings of the words of our prayers are more important than their rote recitation to fulfill a *mitzvah*.⁴¹ Prose format does not mark different strophes and their subjects. For example, most *siddurim* divide the text of *Emet v'yatsiv* into three paragraphs, beginning *Y'tsiv*, *Al harishonim*, and *Ezrat avoteinu*. But, as formatted above, the verse *Al harishonim* lies midway within the third *Emet* strophe, beginning *Ne'emanim* (C). *Ezrat avoteinu* is the second strophe (F) of the *Emet atah hu* section. These prose divisions conceal and contradict the poetry, for the framing words which open and close the strophes lie embedded, and thereby obscured, within prose paragraphs.⁴²

Poetic format identifies textual divisions and changes of thought by grouping content visually to express meaning. For example, in the first Affirmation of *Emet v'yatsiv*, strophes A, B, and C begin with either *emet* or *emunah*, and each concludes with the root *davar*. These framing words designate strophes which describe the *Sh'ma* lections, God, and those who serve God. In *Emet v'yatsiv* the repetition of *Atah hu* marks each strophe. In *Emet ve'emunah* poetic format reveals the parallelism of the couplets and their resemblance to biblical poetry.

Poetry also emphasizes the sounds of words: rhyme, rhythm, repetition of vowels (assonance), and consonance. The parallelism of cola of a verse often balances the number of words. Biblical and liturgical poets knew well that a short verse at the end of a strophe imparts emphatic closure. Such sounds and rhythms make phrases and their meanings memorable. Furthermore poetry, much more than prose, is a medium for wordplay; while prose is generally explicit, poetry is often implicit.

⁴⁰All benedictions of the *Sh'ma* are poetry but are printed as prose: *Ma'ariv aravim*, *Yotser or*, *Ahavat olam*, *Ahavah rabbah*, and *Hashkiveinu*.

⁴¹"If one prays in a language other than Hebrew, he does not fulfill his obligation unless he understands whatever he says, but if he prays in Hebrew, he fulfills his obligation even if he does not understand (see *Beur Halakhah*, *Orach Haim* 62)." Nossan Scherman, "An Overview: Prayer a Timeless Need", *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur*, Nusah Ashkenaz. Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, 1984, xv.

⁴²The word *Uv'khein* frames the three sections in the High Holiday *Shaharit* service.

Poetic format can indicate emphasis to the *Shaliah tsibbur* as well as the *kahal*. For example, the word *emet* at the opening of each strophe is emphatic, and the repetition of *kayam* at the end of each verse underscores God's enduring existence. Poetic format visually indicates such emphatic terms. A cantor interprets the liturgical text by the dynamics, by the speed or slowness of recitation, by the clarity of enunciation, by the lengths of pauses separating poetic units, and by tone quality. Such interpretation is easier if the strophes, rhymes, and rhythms are evident visually. Both cantor and congregant are obligated to those who wrote and revised our liturgy to comprehend liturgical forms and their embedded meanings—a yoke upon us all—*oleinu aleinu*.

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HOW MUSIC ARTICULATES LITURGICAL STRUCTURE, MEANING, AND PERCEPTION: THE *KADDISH*

By Boaz Tarsi¹

The Conceptual Territory

One of the most crucial characteristics of Ashkenazi liturgical music is its text-time-occasion sensitivity. Why or when this specific musical discipline in general and this sensitivity in particular developed is not clear. It seems evident, however, that by now it has crystallized into a well-defined system. Within this system, text-time-occasion sensitivity is one of the most important qualities involved in articulating a specific liturgical experience that characterizes the Ashkenazi synagogue.

“Text-time-occasion sensitivity” denotes that musical considerations are tightly attached to the specific text, occasion, and time in which they come into play. Thus, different preassigned musical elements (e.g., scales, motifs, melodies, intervals, central tones, modes, and many others) are allocated specifically to their respective texts. In addition, different musical settings are assigned to different times of the day, occasions, holidays, ceremonies, life-cycle events, or to different calendar units—day of the week, day of the month, week(s) of the year (e.g., *S’firah* or *Bein ha-m’tzarim*), month of the year, season, and so forth. Thus the musical setting for the High Holidays is particularly specific and as such, fundamentally different from the one for the Three Festivals or for Shabbat or weekdays. By the same token, the music for the morning liturgy (*Shaharit, Musaf*) is different from that of the afternoon or evening (*Minhah, Ma’ariv*).

Among other phenomena, these connections effect a condition in which the same text—a phrase or even one word—may be expressed musically in different ways, depending on the time or occasion when it is chanted. For example, different musical considerations apply to the word *aleinu* when it is sung on a weekday, on Shabbat, or on the High Holidays. The same applies to expressions such as *bar’khu et Adonai ha- m’vorakh* or *barukh ata Adonai*, among many others.

The level and quality of connection between musical and extra-musical components and among the musical components themselves varies drastically from one liturgical instance to another. In addition, the degree of strictness that governs these interrelationships varies greatly. For example, there is almost no choice in how to apply the music to a word like *va-y’khulu*,²

¹ I dedicate this article to Dr. Menahem Schmelzer, who has always offered the right reference, indicated the necessary source, and offered sage guidance. It originally appeared in *The Experience of Jewish Liturgy: Studies Dedicated to Menahem Schmelzer*, Debra Reed Blank, ed. (Boston: Brill, 2011), pp. 309-340.

² For the details of this one-on-one word-motif connection, see Boaz Tarsi, “Toward a Clearer Definition of the *Magen Avot Mode*,” *Musica Judaica* 16 (2001–2002): 61.

whereas entire paragraphs such as *U-n'taneh tokef* are free to take any music the *sh'liaḥ tsibbur* chooses. Most of the liturgy falls somewhere in the middle in terms of the freedom of choice for assigning music. Two examples: (1) a pre-concluding phrase during any section of *K'dushat ha-yom* on Shabbat may (but need not) take on a variety of motifs, so long as they are limited to a given part of a specific interrelated scale; (2) the six psalms before *L'khah dodi* should use a unique scale with some given motifs, but these motifs can be freely applied (i.e., they can be used in a different order, inserted anywhere one chooses, not used consistently throughout the section, etc.). The section can include free variants of these motifs, i.e., each individual motif does not have to be exact (it can consist of slightly different notes, some notes can be omitted, some can be replaced by others, ornamentation may be added, the rhythm may be changed, etc.). Finally, “chunks” (very short musical fragments, a few notes, maybe even a full motif or a full phrase) of freely improvised music may be inserted between these motifs.³

Although the previously mentioned qualities are among the most characteristic markers of Ashkenazi liturgical music, the role and authority of music in the liturgy go further and deeper than a mere “audible clock” or calendar reminder. Phenomenologically speaking, liturgical text is almost never informative text on a page. Rather, liturgical text is a version of the written text expressed as an acoustical phenomenon in vocal performance, almost always as sung words, occupying a span in time. Any phenomenological observations made on text in liturgical context, therefore, would be incomplete unless they addressed the performed text as such. Once we take the musical aspects into account, a much more complicated, multidimensional, and richer picture comes into view, a picture that may, in fact, change our perception of the written text. As we shall see from the following *Kaddish* case study, many otherwise hidden issues—structural, functional, and perceptual—come into focus.

Among the realms of perception that music can offer or influence are liturgical function, liturgical structure, cross-references and inter-connections among different liturgical sections or topics, preparing for the next moment or foreshadowing a moment that is to come later and repeating the passing moment or recalling an earlier one that has already passed. Music also contributes additional articulation to the perception of separateness between different liturgical sections, and it may add extra emphasis to the feeling of such separation—or vice versa, it may blur these distinctions or render them ambiguous. Musical aspects of the performed text also offer additional dimensions of articulation to the liturgical experience that may engage our intuitive sense of movement in time: ebb and flow, changes in levels of excitation, tension and release, unity and variety, different levels of timing, and the like. It may even affect our perception of the meaning of the words, or give them additional depth by creating cross-references, connotative links, additional layers of meaning, and what will be explained later on as “ethos.” In this sense, as well as in the shaping and articulating power it possesses, music renders the liturgical experience a complex, multidimensional occurrence and provides additional levels of perception, understanding, and coherence.

Among the most notable instances of extreme time-occasion-calendar sensitivity is the

³ See my comment on the *Adonai malakh* mode below.

case of the *Hatzi kaddish*. With only one exception, each *Hatzi kaddish* is assigned its own unique musical setting. This does not mean that the musical material that each *Hatzi kaddish* presents cannot be found in other liturgical texts. To the contrary, as the following discussion demonstrates, there are numerous connections on several levels between most renditions of *Hatzi kaddish* and other musical-liturgical texts and occasions. Yet so far as the *Hatzi kaddish* itself is concerned, it is sung differently for each time, occasion, event, or calendar circumstance.⁴ The *Kaddish shalem* constitutes yet another component within this tapestry, although in a different manner. As such, the difference between the musical approach to the *Hatzi kaddish* and the *Kaddish shalem* provides an example of different types of text-music connection and degrees of freedom.⁵

Because the vast majority of renditions of a *Kaddish*—as is true of most liturgical texts—are sung or chanted, music becomes one of the most dominant vehicles of expression. The amalgamation of textual, occasional, and musical considerations drives, shapes, articulates, and gives meaning to this unique liturgical experience, as explained above. The following discussion is an attempt to cover some of the phenomena that the exploration of the music of the *Kaddish* can reveal to us. Specifically, it examines the musical manifestations of the *Hatzi kaddish* at various times and occasions in the Eastern-European Ashkenazi tradition. It also points to different principles that govern the musical performance of the *Kaddish shalem*.

Although the exploration of the aforementioned objectives is a sufficient goal for the present discussion, I suggest that once these observations are in place, new directions for exploration open up. My intention is not to pursue these directions, which deserve a separate discussion. Rather, I suggest that this kind of understanding of the musical aspects of the liturgy contributes other layers of insight into the role music plays within the overall structure and performance of the liturgy and the way we experience it. The discussion at hand, therefore, offers a few examples as a case study of the dimensions of experience that music provides in one specific liturgical occurrence: the *Kaddish*.

The “Musically Immersed” *Hatzi Kaddish: Shaharit*

The main liturgical representatives of *Hatzi kaddishes* that are musically integrated into their liturgical environment are those of the *Shaharit* service. In these instances the *Kaddish* seems to be integrally “immersed” in the music that precedes it in the service, as well as that which follows. This sense that these *Kaddishes* organically belong in their liturgical surroundings stems primarily from the fact that, unlike some other renditions of the *Kaddish*, they do not necessarily consist of a preset complete melody, but rather of a mosaic of sorts in which different, relatively shorter motifs are grouped in various combinations along with some

⁴ In this sense, the *Hatzi kaddish* provides an excellent example of how we can observe time-occasion sensitivity because the text in each case is the same. By isolating one variable (text), we can clearly demonstrate how each occasion, time, or calendrical or ritual factor changes the musical treatment of the same text.

⁵ I use “degree of freedom” in the discourse of Ashkenazi liturgical music theory as an idiomatic term in its original meaning borrowed from disciplines such as physics, chemistry, mechanics, and statistics. The closest analogy I can muster would be a chess game, in which the “degree of freedom” is the total number of possible moves for each piece on the board at any given moment.

free musical “moves.”⁶ It is these motifs that constitute the musical common denominator that they share with the liturgical section in which they appear.

The clearest example of this characteristic can be drawn from the *Kaddish* for the *Shaharit* service of the High Holidays. From a performance point of view, on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the formal beginning of the liturgical section in which this *Kaddish* is found begins with the word *ha-melekh*. Articulating this as the beginning of a liturgical section is due to more than the tradition of emphasizing the word *ha-melekh* during the High Holidays. From a musical and a performance point of view, the convention of changing to a different *sh'liaḥ tsibbur* at this moment in the text signals a new musical “movement.” From a strictly textual point of view, this section begins at *Nishmat kol ḥai* (or *Shahar avakeshkha*). Normally this is also supported by the music, which introduces new material at this point. However, on Shabbat the introduction of a new *sh'liaḥ tsibbur* does not occur at the same time as the musical change but rather at *Shokhen ad*. On the High Holidays, in all likelihood because of the issue of *Malkhut*, the switching of the *sh'liaḥ tsibbur*, as well as a musical change, occurs at the word *ha-melekh*. A similar consideration occurs during the Three Festivals when this change takes place at *Ha-el b'ta'atzumot uzekha*.⁷ Whether this is the cause or effect of this fact, traditionally this is also where—if a change of *sh'liaḥ tsibbur* or *hazzan* occurs—this change takes place.⁸ In the High Holiday *Shaharit*, at the words following *ha-melekh*—in most cases on *Ranenu tzadikim ba'adonai* and *La-y'sharim navah t'hilah*—two distinctive motifs are introduced (see Example 1 below).⁹ These motifs continue to dominate the music throughout this section until the end of the *Bar'khu*.



An additional motif in this section, which usually is not introduced at *ha-melekh* (although

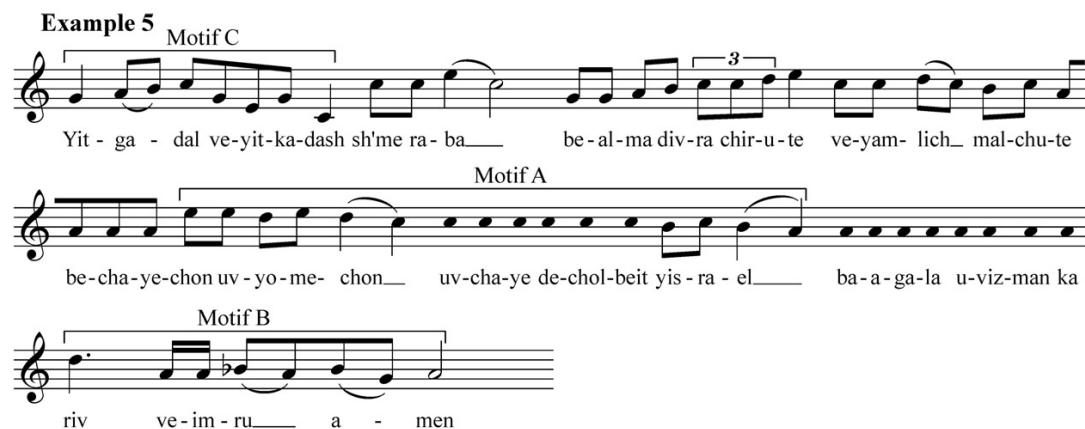
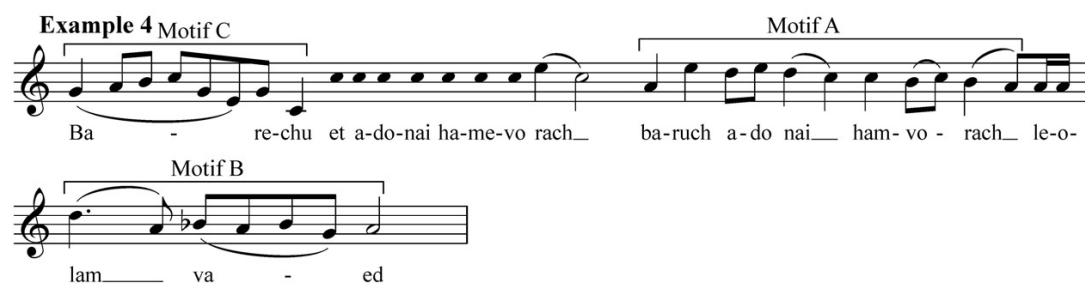
⁶ The exact and full explanation of “move” is beyond the scope of this discussion. For our purpose it will suffice to view it as similar to a motif, except not as rigidly defined—i.e., its various constituent variables may change, vary, or be flexibly applied. The result of this loose definition is that we may view what can be considered to be different motifs or motivic variants simply as different expressions of the same “move.”

⁷ There are indications that in some Ashkenazi traditions there were also differences among the Three Festivals, that is, the change of *sh'liaḥ tsibbur* occurred at a different word on each festival (*ha-gibbor* on Passover, *ha-el* on Shavuot, and *ha-gadol* on Sukkot). See Abraham Baer, *Baal T'fillah oder Der practische Vorbeter* (1st ed. Leipzig, 1877; Frankfurt am Main: J. Kauffmann, 1901), 173.

⁸ It is interesting that in all of these cases, when there is a discrepancy between textual and musical factors in determining a new section, the music or the performance aspect is the determining factor.

⁹ These motifs also appear on other occasions in addition to the High Holidays. They are part of a group of motifs that I call “cross-repertoire” motifs. These appear in various sections throughout the liturgy. This phenomenon is partially explored in Boaz Tarsi, “Tonality and Motivic Interrelationships in the Performance Practice of Nusah,” *Journal of Synagogue Music* 21, no. 1 (1991): 21–24, where I refer to it by the (now discarded) term “universal motif.” Of the motifs explored in the above-mentioned article, motif A in Example 1 is also mentioned in Eric Werner, “The Music of Post-Biblical Judaism,” in *The New Oxford History of Music*, vol. 1, *Ancient and Oriental Music*, ed. Egon Wellesz (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), 323. Werner uses the term “wandering motif,” but it has a meaning very different from the cross-repertoire qualities discussed here. The complete territory of cross-repertoire motifs has yet to be thoroughly explored and discussed. Nevertheless, some of its implications and ramifications do concern the current discussion and thus appear occasionally throughout this paper.

it is often tonally alluded to at *Shokhen ad marom v'- kadosh sh'mo*) appears soon thereafter (Example 2). It may be combined with other typical motifs of this section as in Example 3, which occurs at *El ha-hoda'ot adon ha-nifla'ot* (note that motif B in this example, at the words *Hei ha-olamim*, was already introduced in Example 1). Among other places in this liturgical section, this motif almost always opens the *Bar'khu*, which in itself uses all three motifs featured in Examples 1 and 2 (Example 4). When the *Hatzi kaddish* extensively utilizes these motifs in this section, it establishes itself musically as an organic, inseparable part of the liturgy around it (Example 5).



A similar “immersion” occurs on weekdays as well, in which the music for the *Hatzi kaddish* follows a musical change introduced at the words *Yishtabah shim'kha la-ad malkenu* and is utilized throughout *Bar'khu et adonai ha-m'vorakh* and onward. We should note, however, that when it comes to the weekday *Shaharit* service, many different versions of musical renditions exist—some of which are fundamentally different from one another—even within the Ashkenazi tradition. Thus, I cannot say with complete certainty that this is a universally applicable concept in the entire Ashkenazi tradition for the weekday *Shaharit* service. Yet it is the most common practice

in America and Israel today.¹⁰

Still, the same “musical immersion” of the *Hatzi kaddish* occurs during the *Shaharit* service on weekdays, Shabbat, the Three Festivals, and the High Holidays.

Cross-Reference, Ethos, and the Two “Currents” in the *Hatzi Kaddish* for the High Holiday *Ma’ariv*

A different case of a *Kaddish* that is musically integrated into its liturgical context is the *Hatzi kaddish* for the *Ma’ariv* service of the High Holidays. The signifying characteristic of the *Kaddish* music for this time-occasion is a specific expression of a duality. Two musical currents underlie this service through its entirety. One current consists of a group of musical motifs borrowed from what is known in the practicum as the *Adonai malakh* mode. This “current” of *Adonai malakh* motifs is combined with a second current—an autonomous complete melody that repeats several times during the service. The melody is not within the *Adonai malakh* mode but rather in a major key. This melody is the most significant marker in the High Holiday *Ma’ariv* and appears throughout this service, primarily in a congregational response, or when congregational participation is prompted (Example 6).¹¹ The *Adonai malakh* motifs also appear throughout the service, mainly from *Bar’khu* throughout the *Sh’ma u-virkhoteiha*, primarily when the *sh’liaḥ tsibbur* sings out the opening words of a textual section and repeats the last sentence or two.¹² The High Holiday *Ma’ariv Hatzi kaddish* consists of a tapestry of both currents: *Adonai malakh* motifs interspersed with the above-mentioned major-key melody. This *Kaddish*, therefore, consists of both a straight-through melody and a tapestry of motifs. How these motifs appear in the *Hatzi kaddish* and how they are combined with the tune is demonstrated in Example 7.

¹⁰ In all likelihood, this tradition has an East European origin. A completely different tradition can be found in, among other sources, Baer, *Baal T’fillah*, 1–29; Baer includes two or three different versions, and this is only one source out of many. For a detailed discussion of the liturgical music of the weekday services of yet another version, see Brian Mayer, “The Origins and Identification of the *Nusah L’hol* of Frankfurt am Main,” *Journal of Synagogue Music* 19, no. 1 (1989): 6–55. I offer the speculation that because the weekday service was performed so many more times throughout the life of this tradition, it had more of an opportunity to “mutate” into different versions. In a one hundred year period, the music for High Holiday *Shaharit* had the opportunity to be performed three hundred times: two days of Rosh Hashanah and one day of Yom Kippur per year. The music for Shabbat was sung about 5,200 times. Yet the music for the weekday (both *Shaharit* and *Ma’ariv*) was repeated an overwhelmingly disproportionate—give or take—66,500 times (365 days a year, twice a day, not counting *Minḥah* [see further below], minus 52 Shabbat days, 3 High Holidays, and 10 days of the Three Festivals in the Diaspora).

¹¹ This melody is one exemplar within the category of *Nigunim mi-sinai*, which is discussed below.

¹² For a current table of *Adonai malakh* motifs, see Boaz Tarsi, “The *Adonai Malakh* Mode in Ashkenazi Prayer Music: The Problem Stated and a Proposed Outlook Based on Musical Characteristics,” *Proceedings of the Thirteenth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, 2001: 15–21. http://www.lekhet.com/data/articles/003-000-093_000.pdf.

Example 6



Example 7

Adonai malach motif

A.M. A.M. Adonai malach motif

Yit-ga- dal_____ ve-yit-ka- dash_____ she-me ra- ba_____ be-al-ma div-ra chir-u- te_____

Adonai malach motif Tune in C Major (Missinai)

ve- yam - lich_____ mal- chu - te_____ ye - he shme ra - ba me -

va - rach le - al me ul-al-me al - ma - ya yit - ba - rach

Adonai malakh motifs are used for many other times and occasions in addition to the High Holiday *Ma'ariv*. Perhaps the most typical use of these motifs and the core of their presentation in their pure format is in *Kabbalat shabbat*. Other typical liturgical occasions include parts of the Shabbat *Musaf k'dushah*, *G'vurot* for Shabbat, and the Rosh Hodesh announcement (not at the beginning of the prayer for the New Month at *Y'hi ratzon mi-l'-fanekha*, but during the announcement text itself or beginning at *Mi she-asah nisim*). It also may be heard during the *Shofarot* and *Malkhuyot* of Rosh Hashanah *Musaf* and the *Sheva b'rakhot* of the wedding ceremony (especially the last *B'rakhah*), as well as at other times.

The significance of the use of *Adonai malakh* both during *Kabbalat shabbat* and a wedding, for example, may be the more obvious reflection of the proposition that extra-musical factors may be involved in association with this mode. The multilayered connection between Shabbat and a wedding is beyond the scope of this discussion.¹³ Yet the fact that the same musical mode is used as a feature on both occasions suggests that the music provides another dimension to this connection. Furthermore, because this is a musical expression of a multilayered association, it is immediately and directly recognized or felt, without a need to be consciously aware of this connection or conceptualize its significance or meaning.

This quality of *Adonai malakh* opens a window into the realm that in musicology is idiomatically identified as “ethos.” By this term we mean that some systems of musical

¹³ Among the many discussions of this popular topic, see the articles in Lawrence Hoffman, ed., *My People's Prayer Book*, vol. 8 (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2005); David Ariel, *The Mystic Quest: An Introduction to Jewish Mysticism* (Northvale, NJ: J. Aronson, 1988). A detailed review of the entire topic is offered in Reuven Kimelman, *L'khah Dodi v'-kabalat shabat: ha-mashma'ut ha-mistit* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2003), particularly the first chapter.

repertoires comprise not only musical variables but are also inseparable from a variety of extra-musical factors. As we already confirmed, in Ashkenazi liturgical music, text, time/ calendar, season, and occasion are part of this system. Other extra-musical factors, not addressed here, are also included (e.g., gesture, choreography, attire, and artifacts).¹⁴ In addition to these factors, ethos suggests that certain musical factors are connected with extra-musical abstract concepts such as emotions, virtues, moral stances, philosophical concepts, and so on. Such connections are known in various musical systems outside of Western common practice (e.g., in Asian-Indian and Chinese music, and, at least in earlier times, the Arab *Maqamat*).¹⁵ Whether this notion exists in the system of Ashkenazi prayer music has yet to be explored.¹⁶ Observing the use of *Adonai malakh* motifs may be the first step toward such exploration, as initial observations show that the *Adonai malakh* mode may, in one tentative way or another, be connected to the aspects of Jewish experience that reflect or express positive elements, affirmation of faith, glorification of God, fresh beginnings, and celebration. The other side of these experiences, which by their existence and presence define the aforementioned positive component, is the one that introduces mourning, pleading, imploring, and grieving over past traumas—in other words, the feeling that something in the world is fundamentally wrong or broken, as well as the pain and desperation involved in requesting that it be restored. In this respect, the connection of the *Adonai malakh* mode to the idea of restoration (e.g., in *Birkat Rosh Hodesh*, which includes both positive and negative aspects) and, especially, to the concept of *Tikun* (at least temporary) of precisely the kind of rupture or broken aspects of the world that we mourn (hence its dominant role in *Kabbalat shabbat* and the wedding liturgy) is very enlightening. The beginning of the High Holiday events, which occurs during the *Ma'ariv* service, is also attached to this possible ethos, particularly its celebratory, God-glorifying, festive, fresh beginning. Thus the *Adonai malakh* mode, which accompanies the liturgy from the beginning of the High Holiday *Ma'ariv*, is then repeated and perhaps summed up in the music of the *Kaddish*, which also epitomizes the combination of this ethos-expressing mode and the unique *mi-Sinai* tune (see discussion below) allocated to this event (see Example 7).

¹⁴ See Uri Ehrlich, *Kol atzmotai tomarnah: Ha-safah ha-lo milulit shel ha-t'filah*, (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1999). Note that Ehrlich simply sets out to account for the non-textual components of the liturgy. His subject is *not* the system of interrelations among components or the central role of music (rather than the text) as the primary axis around which these connections occur, nor the idea that the entire system might be defined by the interrelations among the various musical and extra-musical connections themselves.

¹⁵ For a discussion of musical and extra-musical components in musical systems outside of Western common practice, see Harold Powers, "First Meeting of the ICTM Study Group on Maqam," *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 20 (1988): 199–218.

¹⁶ Suggestions of the existence of ethos in Ashkenazi prayer music, although unconceptualized, can be inferred in some of the work of Avraham Zvi Idelsohn, Eric Werner, Joseph Levine, and occasionally in the writings of insider practitioners (e.g., in professional conference proceedings or in this *Journal of Synagogue Music*), as well as from comments in educational settings. The only direct and deliberate attempt to conceptualize ethos in a scholarly context is found in Hanoah Avenary, "The Concept of Mode in European Synagogue Chant," *Yuval* 2 (1971): 18–19, although his conclusions and certainly the discussion that leads to them are only a partial treatment of the subject. The full exploration of ethos in the modes of Ashkenazi liturgical music is the topic of a paper currently in preparation.

On *Kaddish* as an Introducer of New Musical Material, and on East European and West European Versions—*Ne'ilah* and *Tal-Geshem*

Unlike the “immersed” *Kaddish*, on some occasions *Hatzi kaddish* introduces new musical material that was not used prior to its recitation, but is appropriated by the liturgy that follows. Both the *Hatzi kaddish* of the *Ne'ilah* service and that of a *Musaf* service that includes *Tal* or *Geshem piyutim* feature a unique musical setting. This musical setting is then used for the *Avot* and *G'vurot* that follow and in *Tal-Geshem*, for their respective *piyutim* as well. The music for these sections—unlike the settings discussed thus far—does not comprise a tapestry of motifs but rather a continuous (as if “through-composed”), complete melody.¹⁷ We can speculate that being special, seasonal occasions, these events not only require their own unique musical setting but also demand that this setting not be introduced before the liturgical section assigned to them—the *Musaf* service. As such, at least from a musical perspective, the *Hatzi kaddish* —the point at which the specially assigned music for this occasion appears for the first time—clearly serves as the marker for the beginning of this designated liturgical section.

The melodies for both the *Hatzi kaddish* for *Ne'ilah* and for *Tal-Geshem* are two additional examples of what is known in the field as *Nigunim mi-Sinai*, *Manginot mi-Sinai*, or *mi-Sinai* tunes (the other examples in this paper are the music for the High Holiday *Ma'ariv* discussed above and the *Hatzi Kaddish* for the High Holiday *Musaf* discussed below).

Both in the *Hatzi kaddish* for *Ne'ilah* and in that for *Tal-Geshem* there is clear evidence for the existence of two versions, and in the case of the *Ne'ilah Kaddish*, one version also has a variant form. Initial exploration suggests that the existence of two versions can be traced to a geographical factor: one version originated in East Europe and the other in West Europe. This hypothesis is better supported in the case of the *Kaddish* for *Ne'ilah*; however, the notion of different geographical origins of the versions and variants of the *Tal-Geshem Kaddish* is also quite convincing. In both cases it seems that the West European version is more complex with respect to mode, tonality, and motifs, and tends to include elements in a major key, whereas the East European versions are simpler and rely more on a minor scale. Other possible theories regarding these versions are that the West European version comes from an earlier time period, and that perhaps the West European version evolved into the East European one, and that a further process of evolution has resulted in a specific American variant.¹⁸

Exploring these versions of the *Hatzi kaddish* —the ones that introduce the music that follows them (which, like the High Holiday *Ma'ariv* and the High Holiday *Kaddish* for *Musaf* use

¹⁷ These tunes also include motifs that in other settings appear as separate building blocks, but here they become an integral, organic part of a complete flowing melody. For example, the *Tal-Geshem Kaddish* includes at least two motifs that appear elsewhere; see the motifs illustrated in Example 1 above. The possible cross-referential meaning of such cross-repertoire motifs, if any, has yet to be examined.

¹⁸ See Boaz Tarsi, “On a Particular Case of Tonal, Modal, and Motivic Components in Sources for Liturgical Music of East and West European Origins,” in *Iggud—Selected Essays in Jewish Studies*, vol. 3, *Languages, Literature, Arts*, ed. Tamar Alexander-Frizer, Yosef Tobi, Dan Laor, Ora Schwartzwald, and Ziva Amishai-Maisels (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 2009), 145–164.

mi-Sinai tunes)—also opens a rare window onto the geographical origins of Ashkenazi liturgical music, the temporal aspects of this repertoire, and the possible evolutionary processes involved in its development.

More Cross-References, a Unique Anomaly, and Counterindicative Congregational Practices: The Friday Night/Saturday Morning Torah Service *Kaddish*

A significant number of versions of the *Hatzi kaddish* introduce unique musical material that is neither appropriated afterward nor introduced beforehand. The unique musical content of these renditions of the *Kaddish*, therefore, is not found anywhere else in the liturgy. Among these are *Ma'ariv* for the Three Festivals, every *Kaddish* recited during a Torah service (the anomaly of Shabbat morning and the unique case of Shabbat *Minhah*, discussed below, notwithstanding), the *Hatzi kaddish* for High Holiday *Musaf*, the *Minhah* service for Yom Kippur, and a few others.¹⁹

Among the *Kaddishes* that use their own unique musical setting, one is worth further examination. It also provides an opportunity to examine an intriguing cross-referential case and observe the relationship between congregational musical practices and halakhic or quasi-halakhic issues. As already mentioned, the musical material for the *Hatzi kaddish* for the High Holiday *Ma'ariv* is taken from the music for the *Sh'ma u-virkhoteha* that precedes it. This seems to be natural because not much music actually occurs after this *Hatzi kaddish* since there is no repetition of the *Amidah* during *Ma'ariv*. This observation applies to the weekday *Ma'ariv* service as well. On Friday night, however, more text is sung after the silent *Amidah*: *Va-y'khulu*, the beginning of the *B'rakhah* (from *Avot* through *Koneih shamayim va-aretz*), *Magen avot*, and *R'tzeh vim'nuhateinu* are among the primary sung texts that follow. The *Hatzi kaddish* here presents its own unique musical themes and motifs. One may argue, however, that it constitutes a foreshadowing of the musical mode that is used for the section sung after the silent *Amidah*.²⁰

One anomaly concerning this *Kaddish* is that it is the only case in which the same music for a *Hatzi kaddish* is indicated for two different time-occasions. The *Hatzi kaddish* for Shabbat *Ma'ariv* is also used during the Torah service on Saturday morning. There is no current explanation for this phenomenon except for several speculative and interpretive views, none of which can be supported convincingly at present. Furthermore, it seems that we cannot simply attribute the anomaly to a modern or post-modern American practice because there is evidence for such similarity in the cantorial books of nineteenth-century Europe. (This anomaly is unrelated to an American practice of reciting this particular *Hatzi kaddish* on many other occasions instead of the specifically designated *Hatzi kaddish*. The reason for this practice could be attributed to the fact that on many of these occasions, the *Sh'liah tsibbur* is an uninformed lay

¹⁹ Some of these (e.g., *Kaddish* for High Holiday Torah services and Yom Kippur *Minhah*, not to mention those that are part of virtually extinct services such as *Yom Kippur Katan*) are almost all but forgotten, because within the current practice in the American service they would take on a musical setting not traditionally prescribed for them, in all likelihood using the music for Shabbat *Ma'ariv Kaddish*, as described below.

²⁰ On this particular case of foreshadowing, see Tarsi, "Toward a Clearer Definition of the *Magen Avot* Mode," 72–73. On the phenomenon of foreshadowing within the musical system of Ashkenazi liturgical music, see Eliyahu Schleifer, "Anticipation in the Ashkenazi Synagogue Chant," *Orbis Musicae* 9 (1986): 90–102.

person, especially in congregations in which there is no professional *hazzan* to guide the laity.)

Yet another fascinating peculiarity of this *Hatzi kaddish* is the use of a particular congregational tune. Where or when this tune first appeared is unknown, but it seems that this is not yet another case of the American tendency toward congregational singing, as it was already in place in European sources (Example 8).²¹ What is peculiar about this melody line is that it is identical to a fragment related to the Havdalah ceremony. This similarity is apparent when we observe that the music for the text *Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu ha-giladi*, as sung during Havdalah is identical to *b'ḥayeikhon u-v'yomeikhon* and so forth in the Friday night *Kaddish* (Example 9).²²

Example 8



Example 9



Apparent as this similarity is, there seems to be no clear or strong explanation for it. This cross-reference may be comparable to the use of *Adonai malakh* motifs in the High Holiday *Ma'ariv* service discussed above. Yet in this particular case, there is a one-to-one correlation in the use of an identical tune on two different occasions, rather than the free use of a set of several musical motifs throughout the liturgy. Moreover, although many hypotheses can be offered vis-à-vis the extra-musical connections rooted in content, mood, and occasion, as well as the textual, subtextual, or intertextual implications of the use of this tune, all would constitute mere speculations. Indeed, the temptation to invent midrashic, *perush*-like scenarios is great. For example, among such possible specifications may be the notion of having a minute sense of the inevitable end of Shabbat already contained in its very beginning, a hint of what is to come, or even the ethos-oriented idea that a reminder of tragedy is always with us, even in a happy, *tikun*-oriented occasion; or the tangential points between Shabbat and a wedding, and therefore, having a reminder of sadness (in the form of the inevitable *hol* that follows every Shabbat, just like the breaking of the glass at a wedding). Regardless, a strong, clear, convincing, and well-supported explanation for this similarity, if one exists at all, has yet to be offered.

Another aspect of this *Kaddish*, concerning congregational responses and participation, is

²¹ For example, Samuel Naumbourg, *Semiroth Yisrael: Chants liturgiques de Sabbath*, Out of Print Classics Series of Synagogue Music 13 (1847; repr., New York: Sacred Music Press, 1954), 41. Interestingly, Naumbourg also uses it for the words *Beini u-vein b'nei yisra'el* in *V'sham'ru* (ibid., 38). We may speculate that the reason is that it is an anticipation of the *Kaddish* (see n. 19 above on foreshadowing), or that Naumbourg uses it as a “floating” motif for the *Sh'ma u-virkhoteha* section or for the additional text between *Ga'al yisra'el* and the silent *Amidah* on Friday night, or that this is simply a personal whim.

²² I am referring here to the American version of this song. In Israel there is no repetition of *Eliyahu ha-navi*, nor is there the repetition in *Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu ha-gil'adi*. Thus the tune in Example 9 is sung in Israel to the words *bi-m'herah yavo eleinu im mashiah ben David*.

embedded in the same congregational melody. This issue affects almost any *Kaddish* in the post-modern synagogue, but I use this *Kaddish* as a clear example of the point at issue. In *Seder avodat yisra'el* we find the statement, “*Ein omar kaddish im ha-hazzan, v'lakhen ein l'nagen im ha-hazzan k'shem nagen ha-kaddish*” (One should not say the *Kaddish* with the cantor; therefore one should not sing with the cantor when he sings the *Kaddish*).²³ This is not a particularly surprising discovery or one that sheds new light; it simply provides a clear articulation of a simple instruction concerning the congregation's role in the reciting of the *Kaddish*, which renders the *Kaddish* a responsorial. Yet the congregation's obvious role—to provide the responses of *Amen* and *Y'hei sh'mei rabba*—is blurred when it comes to the post-modern musical settings of some renditions of the *Hatzi kaddish*. The existence of a tune for *Y'hei sh'mei rabba* coincides with its function as a congregational response. Yet the promulgation of a metrical tune for the words *b'hayeikhon uv'yomeikhon* through *Uvi-z'man kariv v'imru amen* turns a text into a congregational response where none exists. Moreover, it creates a dissonance between the musical setting and the textual content by having the congregation “require itself” to say *Amen* and then to actually say it, instead of having the *Sh'liah tsibbur* declare *V'imru amen* before the congregation follows with the required response.

Older Cantorial Elaborations versus a Congregational Tune and *Nigunim mi-Sinai*—the *Hatzi Kaddish* for the High Holiday *Musaf*

The particular counterindicative congregational practice we have just observed, which is the direct outcome of the musical setting, can be found in other settings of the *Kaddish*. One such instance is a well-recognized traditional recitation of the *Kaddish*—the *Hatzi kaddish* for the High Holiday *Musaf*. This *Hatzi kaddish*, too, is an example of a *Kaddish* that brings its own unique musical setting. Earlier versions of this *Kaddish* do not include the congregational tune that currently is very pervasive in the Ashkenazi synagogue (Example 10). It does, however, present a few typical motifs and some cantorial elaborations (Example 11).²⁴

²³ Yitzhak Ben Arie Yosef Dov, *Seder Avodat Yisra'el* (Berlin: Schocken, 1897 [based on the 1868 edition]), 16.

²⁴ Some of the noteworthy sources that feature this *Kaddish* and these motifs are the settings by Abraham Baer (*Polnische weise*), Joseph Goldstein, Avraham Zvi Idelsohn (in the seventh volume of his *Thesaurus*), Samuel Naumbourg, Fabian Ogutsch, and Selig Scheuermann. Maurice Ravel's setting for this *Kaddish* in *Deux mélodies hébraïques* provides another piece of evidence, although the specific source on which Ravel's piece is based has yet to be identified.

Example 10



Example 11



Hugo Weisgall recalled (personal communication) that his father (the cantor and composer Abba Weisgall [1886–1981]) identified the congregational tune (Example 10) as a Polish dance. In his *Cantorial Anthology*, Gershon Ephros attributes this melody to Wolf (Ze'ev) Shestapol (1832–1872);²⁵ Hyman Harris makes the same claim.²⁶ Whatever its origins may be, this tune replaces some of the motifs and cantorial elaborations in the earlier version (Example 11) with a congregational melody.²⁷ As in the case of Shabbat *Ma'ariv*, the melody here leads the congregation to participate in textual parts beyond the designated congregational responses. In its first appearance, the tune begins at the words *B'hayeikhon uv'yomeikhon*, and it then appears a second time—an occurrence with no parallel in the practices for the Shabbat *Ma'ariv Kaddish*—beginning with the words *L'ela ul'ela*.

This *Kaddish*, which occurs on one of the more distinguished and perhaps dramatic moments during the High Holiday service, uses musical material that belongs to a special category in the Ashkenazi repertoire. From the time of Avraham Zvi Idelsohn (1882–1938), this material has been called *Nigunim mi-Sinai* or *Manginot mi-Sinai*. There is some confusion and disagreement regarding which tunes belong in this category. Moreover, there is very little known about their origin or how old they are, and the claims in the discussions that delve into this topic are not well supported.²⁸ Today this term refers to *Skarbove*—a term that was used

²⁵ “The Recitative for Rosh Hashanah,” in *Cantorial Anthology of Traditional and Modern Synagogue Music*, vol. 6, ed. Gershon Ephros (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1953), 31–32.

²⁶ Hyman Harris, *Toldot ha-n'ginah v'ha-hazanut b'Yisra'el* [Hebrew Liturgical Music: A Survey of Traditional Hebrew Music: Biblical Cantillation and the Music of the Cantors] (New York: Bitzaron, 1950), 421.

²⁷ There might be a possible connection between the earlier motif in Example 11 and this tune, but that is beyond the scope of this discussion and has yet to be fully developed and explained.

²⁸ The vast majority of discussions of *mi-Sinai* tunes claim that they originated around the Rhineland. A significant component of this argument rests on a highly speculative comparison between *mi-Sinai* tunes and music outside of the Jewish realm. Part of the argument is somewhat circular and relies on the fact that this is the area connected with the earliest evidence for Ashkenazi communities; this fact is cited both as the reason to assume that these tunes

by insider practitioners before the time of Idelsohn's work. There is no clear and definite answer as to the meaning of the word. Still, the overall opinion that emerges from more recent discussions, as well as more reliable sources,²⁹ is that it may be related to a Polish-derived word indicating a treasure or a collection or body of official data. This interpretation opposes some commonly held opinions, which may have originated in Idelsohn's work itself, that this is a distortion of the Latin *sacra*.³⁰ I suspect that this interpretation might have been chosen as a convenient way to underlie the connection to *mi-Sinai* by way of holiness. Regardless of the exact origin or meaning of the word, *Skarbove* was used by European cantors to refer to a group of tunes considered to be very old and universally used, and whose usage was mandatory: they could not be changed or replaced. There is no documented evidence as to what tunes these were, or for that matter, to what texts and occasions they were assigned.

The idea of *Nigunim mi-Sinai* was traditionally attributed to the Maharil (Rabbi Yaakov Ben Moshe Levi Mölin), perhaps because of his reputation as a rabbinical genius, a Talmudist, a *posek*, and as a respected authority on the codification of the *minhagim* of Ashkenaz—reputable for his insistence on tradition. The written origin of this expression is considered to be *Sefer Hasidim*, which states: “*Kol nigun k'mo she-hu m'tukan she-ha-kol halakhah l'-Moshe mi-Sinai she-ne'emar* (Exod 19:19) *ya'anenu be-kol*.”³¹ (Every melody, as it is ordained by law according to Moses from Mt. Sinai, as it is said, [and God] answered him by a voice.) Yet it is clear from the same source that the term *Nigunim mi-Sinai*—which is short for “*nigun . . . halakhah l'-Moshe mi-Sinai*”—does not apply to prayer music but rather to *ta'amei ha-Mikra*, because the preceding text in the same source refers to these *nigunim* in the following manner: “*asher gav'lu rishonim* (Deut 19:14) *she-tak'nu ha-nigunim she-lo yomar [ye'amer?] nigun shel torah li'n'vi'im u'kh'tuvim v'shel n'vi'im l'torah u'li-kh'tuvim v'shel k'tuvim li-n'vi'im*.”³² (Which the Rishonim specified this musical practice and put in place a regulation that one should not say the music assigned to reading from the Torah for that of the Prophets and Writings, or that for the Prophets to that of the Torah and Writings and that of the Writings to that of the Prophets.)

So far as we know, it was Idelsohn who took the term that originally referred to the *t'amim* and reassigned it to tunes that he believed to have the qualities and status of the *skarbove*. (When Idelsohn first mentions *skarbove*, he immediately replaces it with *mi-Sinai* and uses the latter term from then on.) He also offers a detailed account of what these tunes are and what their textual and occasional designation is. Regardless of the dubious borrowing of the term and

originated there (because the tunes are old, they must have originated there), and as evidence for their ancient origin (the tunes are from there; therefore, they must be old). These tunes may very well have originated in this area, but an objective, evidence-based demonstration of this is currently lacking.

²⁹ Hanoah Avenary, “The Musical Vocabulary of Ashkenazic *Ḥazanim*,” in *Studies in Biblical and Jewish Folklore*, ed. Raphael Patai, Francis Lee Utley, and Dov Noy (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1960), 187–198; Hanoah Avenary, “*Mi-sinai nigunim*,” *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 12 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), 151–153.

³⁰ “*Scarbove [sic]*—a corruption of the Latin *sacra*. They were also called *Missinai*-tunes, which means ‘received by Moses on Mt. Sinai.’ ” Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1929), 136.

³¹ Reuven Margaliot, ed., *Sefer Hasidim she-ḥiber Rabenu Y'hudah he-Ḥasid* (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1957), 241, 302.

³² *Ibid.*

the speculative nature of determining what the tunes are and when they are used, it is clear that such a musical category does exist within the Ashkenazi tradition. These days Idelsohn's term generally has been adopted, and there are some tunes whose inclusion in this category (be it called *mi-Sinai* or not) is not disputed.³³ The sections upon which there is agreement include the music for *Kol Nidrei*, the High Holiday *Ma'ariv* tune (including that which is used by the *Hatzi kaddish*), the music for the beginning of *Ne'ilah* (used at least for the *Hatzi kaddish*, *Avot*, and *G'vurot*), and *Musaf* for *Tal-Geshem* (the same sections as *Ne'ilah* and at times including the *piyyutim* or part of them), *V'ha-Kohanim* in the Yom Kippur *Avodah* service (with a cross-reference in the *Musaf K'dushah*), the beginning of the High Holiday *Aleinu* that opens *Malkhuyot* ("The Great *Aleinu*"), and the *Hatzi kaddish* for the High Holiday *Musaf* (Example 12).

Example 12

Yit-ga- dal_____ ve-yit-ka- dash_____ sh'me ra ba_____ be-al-ma di-ve-ra chir-u - te_____

Congregational tune (ex. 10)

ve-yam-lich mal-chu-te_____ be - cha - ye - chon. uv - yo - me - chon

A Comment on the Weekday *Kaddish*; More Cross-References and Interrelationships

As already mentioned, the *Hatzi kaddish* during *Shaharit* belongs in the “musically immersed” category, because the musical material of the *Hatzi kaddish* consists of a tapestry of motifs that both precede and follow it in the liturgy. This applies to the weekday *Shaharit Kaddish* as well. By the same token, we can observe a similarity between the *Hatzi kaddish* of the weekday *Ma'ariv* and of the High Holiday *Ma'ariv*. In both cases the music for the *Kaddish* already appears during the *Bar'khu* and throughout *Sh'ma u-virkhoteha*. And here, too, because there is no repetition of the *Amidah*, there is no real sense of any follow-up to this material after the silent *Amidah*. (Note the comment above on the difference when it comes to Shabbat *Ma'ariv*.)

What is more interesting in the music for the weekday liturgy is the *Hatzi kaddish* for *Minhah*, and more important, its connection to the music of the weekday *Amidah* (both for *Minhah* and *Shaharit*) and to the *Kaddish shalem*. The key to these connections is the component in music theory called a pentatonic scale. Most Western common-practice scales consist of seven notes; the chromatic scale—which comprises all the notes within the Western common-

³³ For a sample of discussions on the *mi-Sinai* tunes in addition to the sources already mentioned above, see Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, “*Der Missinai-Gesang der deutschen Synagoge*,” *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 8 (1926): 449–472; Avraham Zvi Idelsohn, *Thesaurus of Hebrew Oriental Melodies*, vol. 8, *Der Synagogengesang der osteuropäischer Juden* (Leipzig: Friedrich Hofmeister, 1932), xv–xvii; Avraham Zvi Idelsohn, *Thesaurus of Hebrew Oriental Melodies*, vol. 7, *The Traditional Songs of the South German Jews* (Leipzig: Friedrich Hofmeister, 1933), xxix–xxxvi; Joseph Levine, “The Musical Trope System of Ashkenazic Prophetic Reading,” *Musica Judaica* 5, no. 1 (1982–1983): 43–44; Joseph Levine, *Synagogue Song in America* (Crown Point: WhiteCliffs Media Co., 1989), 44–54; Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard: The Sacred Songs of the Ashkenazic Jews* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), 26–43.

practice octave—includes twelve notes. A pentatonic scale can be any musical scale that consists of five notes. When a scale includes only five notes, many possible combinations and permutations are possible. Thus, many possible pentatonic scales exist. The liturgical music for weekdays is largely dominated by one kind of pentatonic scale. The music for the repetition of the weekday *Amidah* uses the pentatonic scale in Example 13. The connection to the weekday *Minhah Hatzi kaddish* is that it, too, uses a pentatonic scale, but a different one (Example 14). The weekday *Minhah Hatzi kaddish*, therefore, can be characterized by its “pentatonic connection.” This scale is also used for the part of the weekday liturgy before the *Shaharit Amidah* (e.g., during *Birkhot ha-shahar*, *P’sukei d’zimrah*, and others). As we shall see below, the *Kaddish shalem* for *hol* also uses the same pentatonic scale. (And as discussed below, this *Kaddish shalem* and all the weekday material in the pentatonic scale seen in Example 14 are also musically connected to the *b’rakhot* used for the Torah reading.)

Example 13: Pentatonic for weekday Amidah



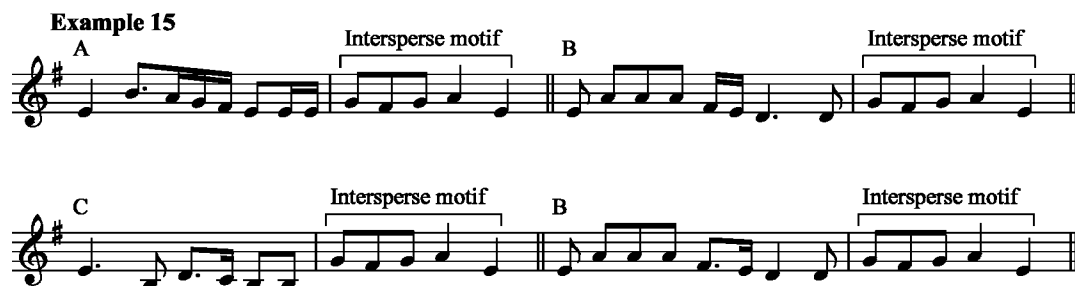
Example 14: Pentatonic for weekday outside of the Amidah



Bein kodesh l’-hol: The Special Case of the Types of Kaddish for Shabbat Minhah

A particular case of a *Hatzi kaddish* that introduces new musical material for what follows it is the one for Shabbat *Minhah*. This case, however, is more involved than the simple introduction of the musical material featured by the *Ne’ilah* and *Tal-Geshem Kaddish*. The liturgical music of the Shabbat *Minhah* service is a unique combination of two primary musical components. This combination follows an underlying principle by which any Shabbat *Minhah* text that also appears on weekdays receives the same musical treatment as on weekdays. The text that is unique for Shabbat *Minhah* is given its own unique musical material. Thus, for example, the *Amidah* begins with the same music as the *Amidah* during the week, but as soon as a special Shabbat text is introduced (e.g., *Atah ehad v’shim’kha ehad*), the special Shabbat *Minhah* music is used. Unlike the sense of a complete melody unit in *Tal-Geshem* and *Ne’ilah*, the Shabbat *Minhah* music (Example 15) consists primarily of four motifs that are constructed together as a sort of mosaic, with one motif (B) as a final or transitional motif that can be inserted after any of the other motifs or between them.³⁴

³⁴ This motif is in fact one of the most prevalent cross-repertoire motifs in the Ashkenazi tradition, as it is used ubiquitously in a significant number of liturgical circumstances. I suspect that its cross-repertoire qualities do not necessarily indicate cross-referential meaning but rather are indications of different structural functions within the text (closing cadence, transitional/anticipatory cadence, connector, structural building block of a given mode, and other functions yet to be explored).



The combination of weekday music and specially designated Shabbat *Minhah* material is also reflected in the two types of *Hatzi kaddish* of Shabbat *Minhah*. The first *Hatzi kaddish*, which is chanted before the Torah is read, utilizes the special mosaic of Shabbat *Minhah* motifs; the second *Hatzi kaddish*, before the *Amidah*, is chanted in the same manner as on weekdays. The possible logic behind this phenomenon is that the *Hatzi kaddish* before the *Amidah* belongs to the *Amidah* itself, and thus, because the repetition of that *Amidah* is recited like the weekday one, so is the *Kaddish* before it. This example illustrates how music, in some cases, establishes the role of the *Hatzi kaddish* as a marker of a new section (see the final section, “Assessment,” below). Therefore, this leaves the *Kaddish* during the *Minhah* Torah service as a foreshadowing of sorts of what is to follow later on (beginning after the *K’dushah*). It may also come to serve as an “announcement” of this special time and occasion (Shabbat *Minhah*) right at the beginning of the service, even though the unique music of that service is only introduced later on. What may strengthen this notion is that here *Ashrei* also uses the Shabbat *Minhah* motifs.

All of these notions may pose other considerations—for example, whether the *Minhah* service Torah reading is a continuation of the *Musaf* service, and if so, why the *Kaddish* for this Torah service does not constitute a unique musical setting that is not connected to any other liturgical occasions (as is the norm for the recitation of the *Kaddish* for other Torah services, as mentioned above). On the other hand, perhaps this can shed light on the presence of the same *Hatzi kaddish* in Shabbat morning Torah service as in Shabbat *Ma’ariv* (the anomaly mentioned above). And what does it mean that the *Hatzi kaddish* for Shabbat *Minhah* is a musical foreshadowing of the specifically assigned Shabbat liturgy of the *Minhah* service (*Atah ehad*)? In turn, these questions might relate to the liturgical function and articulation of the *Hatzi kaddish* when combined with other factors, such as the level of excitation, ebb and flow, directivity, and norm of performance, as discussed in the assessment below.

The *Kaddish Shalem*

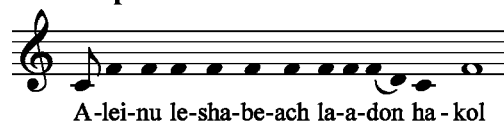
One of the clearest examples of the different types of connections among text, occasion, time, and music is the difference between the musical treatment of the *Hatzi kaddish* and that of the *Kaddish shalem*. As stated earlier, regardless of its multifaceted interrelationships with other musical aspects of other liturgical sections, the music for each *Hatzi kaddish* is distinctively different from any other (the anomaly discussed above notwithstanding). Yet whereas each *Hatzi kaddish* is unique depending on its time and occasion, as a rule of thumb the music for the *Kaddish shalem* is sensitive only to the difference between *hol* and that which is not *hol*.

This distinction is in place in current American and Israeli practice. It is not clear whether this type of time and occasion sensitivity existed prior to the modern era, and the evidence from written sources is mixed. In addition, according to Eliyahu Schleifer, formerly each instance of *Kaddish shalem* adopted the music of the liturgical section that preceded it. In that case, there may have been a different type of time-occasion sensitivity. Yet this type of connection between time-occasion and music would still be different from that of the *Hatzi kaddish*. In current practice, the time-occasion sensitivity of the *Kaddish shalem* concerns only the difference between *hol* and not *hol*. In the case described by Schleifer, however, the level of sensitivity is greater, since each *Kaddish shalem* might have had its own setting. Yet the music for the *Kaddish* in that case was not different from the rest of the music for the time and occasion in which it was recited. Both cases point to a qualitatively different kind of time-occasion sensitivity for the *Kaddish shalem* as opposed to that of the *Hatzi kaddish*. Note that in the type of *Kaddish shalem* in which the music is the same as the music of the entire preceding liturgical section, the role of the *Kaddish shalem* as a piece that concludes a section is re-emphasized (see further discussion below).

In the current common practice, the *Kaddish shalem* for *hol* is performed in the same manner as the *Hatzi kaddish* for *hol* during *Minhah* using the pentatonic scale depicted in Example 14. This in turn imbues it with all the characteristics and connections discussed above in connection with the *Hatzi kaddish* for *Minhah*. Another important interrelationship marking this musical section is that it is identical to the *b'rakhot* recited before and after the reading from the Torah. As in the connection between the *Hatzi kaddish* for Friday night and the Havdalah melody, the meaning of this connection, if any, has yet to be explicated.³⁵

The *Kaddish shalem* for occasions that are not *hol* is normally a fast-paced, semi-spoken recitation in a major key. An interesting potential resemblance between this musical setting and the beginning of *Aleinu* is offered in Example 16.³⁶

Example 16



³⁵ My initial hunch is that here the similarity is not a matter of cross-reference, nor is it a structural function as mentioned in n. 34. Rather, the similarity might be the product of an evolution that took place as this musical tradition evolved. If this is the case, one may pose the question of why this evolutionary process led to this specific result (i.e., using the same music for *Kaddish shalem* for *hol* and the *b'rakhot* for the Torah reading, or, for that matter, the music for the early part of weekday *Shaharit*.)

³⁶ This *Aleinu* (the one chanted by the congregation at the end of the service, not the “great *Aleinu*” of the High Holidays) is also *hol*/non-*hol* sensitive. This *Aleinu*, however, is also one of the liturgical sections that lose their occasion-sensitivity in many American congregations, as it is often performed to non-*hol* music even during weekday services.

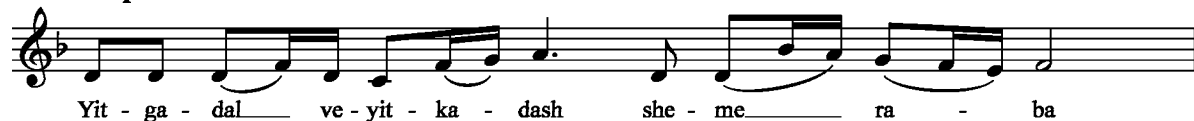
On occasions that are not *hol*, other possible alternatives come into play for *Kaddish shalem*. I believe that these alternatives are derived from, borrowed from, or intended to resemble *Hasidic* practices. Contrary to a common belief, liturgical *Hasidic* music for the synagogue service is far from being a free-for-all. The freedom expressed in original *Hasidic* liturgical and non-liturgical practices can be manifested musically in *nigunim*, which in principle do not originate in liturgical music. Although such *nigunim* may exist with and be inserted into pre-set liturgical music in the synagogue service, they constitute an additional artifact in a predesigned musical system; they certainly do not replace it. Nevertheless, the *Kaddish Shalem* in *Hasidic* communities can adopt a large number of possible melodies, especially on non-*hol* occasions.³⁷

Perhaps the most famous and commonly heard *Kaddish shalem* of *Hasidic* (or possibly pseudo-*Hasidic*) origin is one that has been mistakenly attributed to Yosef (Yossele) Rosenblatt, or at times to Moshe Koussevitzky,³⁸ and has become very popular as a High Holiday *Kaddish shalem* in North America and Israel (Example 17). Depending on the local custom of each individual community, this *Kaddish shalem* might be used any number of times at different points during the High Holiday season (sometimes even on Shabbat *Shuvah* and in the *S'lichot* service). What is particularly interesting about this *Kaddish* is that its thematic and motivic material bears a significant similarity to a special *Kaddish shalem* (Example 18) designated to be used after the repetition of the *Amidah* for *Shaharit* on occasions when *Hallel* is recited (e.g., the Three Festivals, Rosh *Hodesh*, and Shabbat *Hanukkah*).³⁹

Example 17



Example 18



Transcribed by Yakov Hadash (yakov.hadash@gmail.com)

In this sense, in addition to serving as the conclusion of the section that precedes it, the *Kaddish shalem* acquires an additional dimension. In all cases when special melodies for

³⁷ In general, not much is known about current, genuine *Hasidic* liturgical music practices. Some *Hasidic* liturgical music has been explored; more insights have been offered by occasional informants, including the notion that there are set principles for the musical conduct of the liturgy rather than just free *nigunim*. The studies of André Hajdu and Yaakov Mazor constitute the most extensive work on *Hasidic* musical practices, particularly in Israeli communities.

³⁸ “This concluding *Kaddish*, which can be simply and syllabically chanted, is based on a setting composed in Europe by Jacob Gottlieb (1852–1900), better known as Yankl der Heizeriker. This basic composite tune was sung and recorded by both Yossele Rosenblatt and Moshe Koussevitzky. It has therefore often been attributed erroneously to one or the other.” Neil Levin, liner notes to *The First S’lichot*, Ira Bigeleisen, Ben Zion Miller, and *Schola Hebraica*, dir. Neil Levin, Naxos 8559428–29, 2004, compact disc (pp. 16–17).

³⁹ Baer, *Baal T’fillah*, 178.

Kaddish shalem are derived from Hasidic tunes, especially tunes that primarily have a quick tempo and a lively, upbeat character, an additional sense of release of the tension accumulated in the section prior to the *Kaddish* is provided, as I discuss immediately below.

Assessment

Music is perhaps the best discipline to organize, motivate, direct, and drive a medium that “lives” predominantly within the time axis (as a chronological order of events). In this sense, music works perfectly as a vehicle by which to induce coherence in liturgical text, because within the liturgical occurrence, the text is transformed from its informative dimension as words on paper into a text that is performed vocally. In this particular circumstance, liturgical text also occupies a span on the time axis. For a variety of analogous choices, we can “translate” various phenomena that occur when music is an inseparable, organic part of the text that is performed into quasi-experiential/cognitive analogies. (We must realize, however, that these are analogies only, just as atoms or ions do not really look like the common graphic representations of round shapes with lines around them.) These analogies may include a sense of direction or movement in time, tension and release, unity and variety, static or dynamic occurrences, monotony and change, ebb and flow, and so forth. Thus, one can intuitively sense how music (and now also the text that is inseparable from it) moves in a way that “makes sense” through time. Music, therefore, can help liturgical text move in a “sensical” manner through the time axis.

The sense of completion that music helps to induce in the *Kaddish shalem* is one case in which musical structure creates the feeling that there is an ebb and flow of intensity that moves through an “introductory level,” gradually becoming more intense and reaching a climax, and is then followed by a resolution and sometimes even further release. So far as these waves of tension and release or rising and dropping levels of excitation are concerned, we can observe that the *Kaddish Shalem* always serves as a significant—at times dramatic—drop in the level of excitation and a notable release of accumulated tension.

Perhaps the most apparent demonstration of this effect is the *Kaddish Shalem* that follows the “quasi-repetition of the *Amidah*”⁴⁰ on Friday night (the text between *Va-y’khulu ha-shamayim v’ha-aretz* and *M’kadesh ha-shabbat*). The section begins with a medium level of excitation that stems from the cantor’s simple chant of *Va-y’khulu* (colloquially referred to as “straight *davenen*”).⁴¹ A somewhat higher level of excitation is added during the congregation’s participation in the responsorial that occurs during the beginning of the *B’rakhah m’ein sheva* (from *Avot* to *Koneih shamayim va-aretz*), an excitation that rises further with the congregational singing of *Magen avot bi-d’varo* and reaches a climax with the cantorial elaboration that traditionally occurs in the paragraph of *R’tzeh vi-m’nuhateinu*, particularly toward its final words, *M’kadesh ha-shabbat*.⁴² Thus after this peak of excitation and tension, the *Kaddish shalem*, whether

⁴⁰ Debra Reed Blank suggested to me the term to describe the text sung by the *Sh’liah tsibbur* after the silent *Amidah* during Shabbat *Ma’ariv*.

⁴¹ One of the dominating variables in this case is how the norm of performance (see note 42) affects this ebb and flow of excitation level.

⁴² I realize that in many American and some Israeli congregations, this section (*R’tzeh vi-m’nuhatenu*) is not always sung by the *hazzan* alone. In this case, there is an interruption or loss of the wave formed by an increasing level of

chanted quickly as a semi-recitation or sung as an upbeat Hasidic or quasi-Hasidic melody, instills a palpable sense of release that further serves as the conclusion of the drama of sorts that preceded it.

However, this effect does not necessarily require such a clear example as the drama that the music creates during the performance of the liturgical text on Friday night. Even a *Kaddish Shalem* that is recited after a silent or quasi-silent section (such as the silent *Amidah*) disperses and releases the tension that has accumulated through the elongated period of silence or murmuring, whispers, and other silence and semi-silent acoustic phenomena, all of which are tension-inducing as they accumulate during the unfolding of the time allocated to them. All of this further supports not only the notion of the *Kaddish shalem* as a “concluder,” but also strengthens our perception of its role as belonging to the section that precedes it, almost serving as its seal.

Note that I am not trying to redefine what seems to be the obvious function of the *Kaddish shalem* as the conclusion of a section. I am seeking to demonstrate the powerful effect music has in actually *making* the *Kaddish* function as such. Moreover, this function occurs on a particular experiential and perhaps cognitive level, such that without the music, this function may not be felt or noticed and, in fact, may not exist at all. Furthermore, the music here serves to bypass our cerebral processes because we sense this release on an intuitive level without having to conceptualize the facts I account for here.

When it comes to the *Hatsi kaddish*, I believe its function can seem more subtle and involved, because numerous other factors come into play. Of course, the musical treatment of each *Hatsi kaddish* functions as a marker of a specific time, calendar event, and occasion. As stated at the beginning of this paper, not only is this true for the *Hatsi kaddish*, it constitutes one of the fundamental traits of Ashkenazi liturgical music. Yet, the musical component of the liturgy goes far beyond the function of a musical clock or a reminder of an event. As a case study, the *Hatsi kaddish* shows how music may open, close, or divide liturgical sections, or create a sense of immersion of one liturgical section with the sections that surround it; it also demonstrates how music can serve as a cross-reference and indicate interrelationships between different liturgical sections. Exploring the music of the *Kaddish* also introduces the subject of geographical origin (East European and West European differences in *Ne'ilah* and *Tal-Geshem*, or various examples of American practices) and its role in the introduction of *mi-Sinai* melodies.

We also can observe how the music determines how the *Hatsi kaddish* relates to its liturgical surroundings, or how it offers specific cases of interplay between various “norms of performance.”⁴³ Regarding the latter, the case of the *Kaddish* in particular reflects the roles of the

excitation and tension. I use the words “interruption” and “loss” not as a value judgment but as markers of the difference between this practice and the system as designed, evolved, developed, and crystallized during a few centuries in what I view as an evolutionary process intended to optimally enhance and “sharpen” the liturgical experience.

⁴³ This article does not address the details of the “norm of performance” as one of the musical components in the liturgy. Briefly, this phrase relates both to an agent or agents delivering a specific prayer/ritual and to the manner of vocal expression by which one performs it. For example, in our case this may constitute simple cantorial recitation (straight *davenen*, as in *Va-y'khulu*), cantor-congregation responsorial (*Barukh atah—koneih shamayim va-*

Sh'lich tsibbur and the congregation, as well as the articulated difference between the *Sh'lich tsibbur*'s norms of performance—chanting, singing, and elaborated cantorial rendering—and the singing of metrical tunes by the congregation. Indeed, the norm of performance can determine the level of excitation; as in the case of the *Kaddish shalem* examined above, the *Hatsi kaddish* may also offer a preparatory level of excitation at the opening of a section or a release of tension at its close. We have also observed the relation between the music and various interpretations of the occasion, time, or perhaps even the text itself (e.g., the use of *Havdalah* elements at the very beginning of Shabbat on Friday night); the presence of possible ethos elements (e.g., the use of elements of the *Adonai malakh* mode as discussed above); the foreshadowing, reprising, and connoting of liturgical moments; and the use of music to either establish a given text as part of its surrounding liturgical environment or establish it as a separate unit.

This last attribute leads us back to the function of the *Hatsi kaddish* as a divider or connector of liturgical sections, or as the articulator of the various qualities of the line between them. Of course, any *Kaddish*, be it *Shalem*, *Hatzi*, or any of the other types that I have not addressed here, is initially and predominately a division of sorts. As a divider, *Hatsi kaddish* can function as an opening or a closing, or as something in between. When we consider the musical aspects of the liturgy as the primary factor for inducing (by analogy only) a sense of performance division and as a way of creating subsections that are similar to themes, movements, or forms in a musical piece, or to scenes, acts, or speeches in a theater play, we see that the “in-between” state may result from the fact that the musical aspects of the *Kaddish* affect relationships among the various factors that together constitute this “drama” or “symphony.”

As mentioned previously, the intermediate level of excitation stemming from the norm of performance of the *Hatsi kaddish* may cause it to function either on a preparatory level (as an opening) or as a summation of sorts (as a closing or an aftermath.) But its musical connections may introduce other factors. As a specific example of an isolated factor that can elicit a variety of issues, we can focus on the musical connection between the *Kaddish* and its liturgical environment. Examining only this feature reveals two major categories: *Kaddishes* that employ the music introduced in the preceding section, and *Kaddishes* that introduce the section that follows. The latter presents two sub-categories, one in which the music follows the *Kaddish* immediately, and one in which there is a silent or semi-silent section between the *Kaddish* and the reappearance of the music (e.g., a silent *Amidah*). In other cases, the *Kaddish* may present its own unique musical setting, yet still retain a connection to the liturgical section that follows by using the same key (e.g., major) or scale (e.g., pentatonic); or the *Kaddish* may not be connected at all to the section that follows, but still foreshadow a change in the liturgy that occurs later (e.g., introducing music at the beginning of the service that will be used only after the *K'dushah* on Shabbat *Minhah*).

aretz), congregational singing of a metrical tune in unison (*Magen avot bi-d'varo*), and a section of cantorial elaboration (*R'tseh vi-m'nuhateinu*). I have made initial comments on the role of the norm of performance in “The Function of Music in Creating a Coherent Liturgical Experience: *Kabbalat Shabbat* and Friday *Ma'ariv*” (paper presented at the Association for Jewish Studies annual meeting, Washington, DC, December 21–23, 2008). Some aspects of this issue are examined in Boaz Tarsi, “Congregational Singing as a Norm of Performance within the Modal Framework of Ashkenazi Liturgical Music,” *Journal of Synagogue Music* 30, no. 1 (2005): 63–95. Further exploration of this phenomenon is the subject of an article currently in preparation.

In turn, these connections may affect whether the different cases of musical connection impinge on our perception of the function of the *Kaddish*. (For example, is it an opener of a new section if it uses the music that immediately follows and has not been introduced in a preceding section?) To discover whether musical context is the dominant factor in this instinctive cognitive perception would require further research. Nevertheless, it is clear to me that being aware of these musical connections certainly raises this aspect of their function. But even in this isolated consideration, we can detect gray areas and fuzzy definitions. For example, the *Kaddish* performed before the silent *Amidah* of *Musaf* occurs immediately after the Torah service is over (preceding section), whereas there is a gap of silence between its performance and the repetition of the *Amidah* (following section). If we set aside for a moment any liturgical or structural definition and observe this phenomenon simply as a performance that has perceptual and cognitive aspects, we can identify at least two ways in which the function of the *Hatsi kaddish* may be perceived in this case. From the perspective of timing or “acts in a play,” this *Kaddish* is likely to be perceived as the conclusion of the Torah service. Yet it may also be interpreted as the beginning of a new “act” (*Musaf*), especially if we do not consider the silent *Amidah* as a break in the music, because from a phenomenological angle it does not really constitute pure silence.

From a musical point of view, these kinds of ambiguously functioning *Kaddishes* are either identical to the beginning of the repetition of the *Amidah* (*Tal-Geshem*, *Ne'ilah*), or they foreshadow a particular time-indicated section that occurs later (Shabbat *Minhah*) or use their own unique musical setting (Shabbat *Musaf*). As part of a *Musaf* service or weekday *Minhah*, they are even more connected—primarily by way of key and tonal structure—to the repetition of the *Amidah* than to the liturgical section that precedes them. This may or may not be the determining factor as to whether these instances of *Hatsi kaddish* are perceived as openings or closings of a liturgical section; however, this factor certainly adds another dimension to this aspect of their function in the liturgical structure.

Similar considerations (that can lead to different conclusions) apply when we consider the musical aspects of *Hatsi kaddish* during Torah services, all of which (as mentioned earlier) feature their own unique musical setting. An even more complex set of considerations involves the *Hatsi kaddish* before the Torah reading at Shabbat *Minhah*. Here the recitation does not draw on a one-time musical setting but on the special Shabbat *Minhah* music. This consideration is further complicated by the fact that the music of this *Hatsi kaddish* does not belong to the section that immediately follows the silent *Amidah* (on Shabbat the service uses weekday music until the end of the *K'dushah*). To further complicate the picture, we must recall the question of whether, from a phenomenological point of view, the *Minhah* service here is a continuation of the *Musaf* service or is in fact a separate event. At this stage of the investigation I will not attempt to impose a scheme on all of these musical and extra-musical variables. The point is that the various considerations in the above cases demonstrate that from an experiential angle, the perception of structure is multifaceted and multidimensional, which is a direct result of the musical component of the liturgy.

An attempt to account for the multifaceted considerations that the music contributes results in many questions that have yet to be answered. For example, how do the differences

among *Kaddishes* that are musically immersed, that anticipate a new section, or that hark back to an earlier section affect their liturgical function or the liturgical structure around them? If a *Kaddish* is musically immersed, is it less of a divider? And if it is a divider, does the fact that it is closely linked musically to both what precedes and what follows it blur this function? Is the musically anticipatory *Kaddish* more of an opening of a new section, whereas the *Kaddish* that recalls an earlier section is more of a conclusion? What does the musical separateness of the Torah-service *Kaddish* do to the liturgical experience of this section, the entire service, and the liturgy before and after the service? These questions only address the effect music has on the *Kaddish* as a marker, divider, or unifier of liturgical sections. The other qualities explored above—levels of excitation, ebb and flow, cross-referencing, and ethos—suggest other questions: How do all of these qualities mix with the level of excitation of the *Hatsi kaddish* in each case? How do they affect the “special moment” before the High Holiday *Musaf*? How do different cases of cross-referencing color the function and experience (cognitively and perhaps emotionally) of various instances of *Kaddish*? Does the “ethos” aspect of the High Holiday *Ma’ariv Kaddish* carry any significance, and why is it designated particularly for this specific time and occasion?

The point here is not to try to answer these questions or to strive for a clearer picture of how all the variables and considerations combine with the role of the music in the liturgy. Rather, I bring all of them into the foreground to illustrate how the existence of music immediately produces these additional dimensions and extra layers of experience. This does not mean that the experience itself is complicated; it is not. But this observation sheds light on the fact that articulating or trying to explain the experience, or observing it from its cognitive and phenomenological underpinnings, reveals an extremely involved, multidimensional experiential complex. The point here is that music is the primary and dominant factor in what makes the liturgical experience so effectively multidimensional. Perhaps an analogy might be the experience of a walk in a botanical garden on a spring day. The experience itself can be simple, but it consists of multitudes of variables; accounting for these and explaining how they come together to create this experience would be extremely complex.

Beyond demonstrating possible contributions of music to the liturgy, each one of the questions raised above identifies a topic for inquiry. Whether these questions can be answered with any certainty, and without a degree of speculation that is either too overreaching or that departs from the realm of systematic observation, has yet to be determined. Whether or not they are answered, these questions, as well as others not posed here and the various topics they suggest, open up a vast realm of inquiry and experience. The more we explore this realm, the more we are likely to discover about the role of music within the type of liturgical experience found in the Ashkenazi synagogue.

Boaz Tarsi has published and presented internationally, primarily on the theory of Jewish prayer music. His compositions have been performed, published, recorded, and broadcast throughout the US, Europe, and Israel. His Hebrew poetry book “Yad Ahat Hehela Roshemet” was recently published by Pardes publication in Israel. He earned his Doctorate at Cornell University. Dr. Tarsi is an associate professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

N'GINAH L'MA'ASEH

Kiddush for Shabbat by Max Wohlberg

Eil malei raḥamim by Abba Yosef Weisgal

The choice of music for this edition of the *Journal* was inspired by “current events.” As we noted the 75th anniversary of the Cantors Assembly, we were drawn to a composition by one of the early leaders of the cantorial community. Not only was Max Wohlberg one of the first presidents of the Assembly, he was among the creators of the cantorial school at the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he taught for decades, sharing his encyclopedic knowledge of nusach and putting his unique imprint on the American cantorate. A prolific composer, his singable melodies are “traditional” tunes sung by congregants across the continent (and beyond) but in this year celebrating cantors, we’ve chosen a selection designed to showcase the talents of the *sh’lich tsibbur*. You can access the beautiful rendition by Rafi Frieder by clicking anywhere on the first page of the score.

This volume also pays tribute to former editor Joseph A. Levine, who departed this earth late last year (see the remembrance by David B. Sislen on pages 122-123). A true scholar of cantorial music, Joe was especially immersed in the music of Abba Yosef Weisgal, who was the subject of his doctoral dissertation, and whose music Levine transcribed and published in *Emunat Abba: The Sacred Chant of Abba Yosef Weisgal*. One of those chants was this *Eil malei raḥamim*, offered here in loving memory of Heḥazzan Yosef Aharon Abba ben Hayim Z’ev. You may access the moving recording by Jonathan Schultz by clicking anywhere on the first page of the score.

Kiddush For the Sabbath

Max Wohlberg
March 9, 1962

Unhurried, with tranquility

legato

Ba-rukh a-tah A-do-nai E-lo hei-nu me-lekh ha-o-lam bo-

5 *piu mosso*

rei p'-ri ha-ga-fen. Ba-rukh a-tah A-do-nai E-lo

10 *calando*

hei-nu me-lekh ha-o-lam a-she-kid-sha-nu b'-mitz-vo-tav v'-ra-tzah

14 *quasi recitativo*

va-nu v'-sha-bat kod-sho b'-a-ha-vah u-v'-ra-

18 *Agitato*

tzon hin-hi-la-nu zi-ka-ron l'-ma-a-sei v'-rei-shit. Ki hu-

22

yom t'-hi lah l'-mik-ra-ei ko-desh zei-kher zei-kher li-tzi

26 *legato cantabile*

at mitz-ra-yim. Ki va-nu va-har-ta v'-o-ta-nu ki-dash-ta mi-kol ha-a-

31

mim v'-sha-bat kod-sh-kha b'-a-ha-vah uv'-ra-tson hin-hal-ta-

35 *Rit*

nu. Ba-rukh a-tah A-do-nai m'-ka-desh ha-sha-bat.

Eil Malei Rahamim

(In memory of Hazzan Joseph A. Levine)

Abba Yosef Weisgal

p

Eil ma-lei ra - ha - mim, sho-khein ba-me-ro-mim, _____ ham-tsei me-nu-

4 ha ne-kho-nah ta - hat kan - fei ha-she-khi - nah, _____

6 be-ma-a-lot ke-do-shim u-te-ho - rim _____ ke - zo-har ha-ra - ki - a maz-hi - rim,

9 et nish-mat _____ *Hehazzan Yosef Aharon Abba ben Hayim Z'ev*

12 she-ha-lakh _____ le-o-la - mo. _____ Ba - a - vur _____ she-nad - ru tse-da-kah _____ be -

15 ad haz-ka-rat nish-ma-to _____ be-gan ei-den te - hei me-nu - ha - to. La -

18 khein ba - al ha - ra-ha - mim _____ yas - ti - rei - hu be - sei-ter ke-na-fav _____

21 _____ le - o-la-mim ve - yits-ror bits-ror ha-ha - yim _____ et nish - ma - to _____

24 *f* *sub. p*

A - do - nai hu -

27

na-ha - la - to; ve - ya - nu - ah b'-sha-lom al mish-ka - vo

30

ve - no - mar a - mein.

A LITERARY GLIMPSE

A New Niggun

By I. L. Peretz

The shofar was blown, people shuddered, a mighty sound was heard, the voice of a congregation: Next year in Jerusalem!

An impromptu clean-up crew had already scraped away the hardened wax drippings that had dripped from the candelabra onto the reader's desk. Next to the Prayer *omud* stood an appointed "weekday" *hazn* who chanted the *Ma'ariv* service in a workaday drone.

Having removed *talis* and *kitl*, worshipers rapidly concluded their individual prayers. Everyone rushed, for a splendid moon shone in the autumn sky. No one had time to notice a pale young man pacing the perimeter of the study hall, leading a helpless-looking, whiter-faced boy behind him. He circled the room again but still no one took notice... they were busy rummaging under benches for their shoes, exchanging hats that had been put on mistakenly. All were hungry, and for all of them the bright moon waited to be blessed.

"Let's go home," pleaded the boy.

"One more time," answered the father, "just once more."

And thus the cycle moved inexorably- the final *Kaddish*, the last *Omein*--drawing the young man and his son in its wake.

Outside, men stood in the synagogue courtyard, facing the brilliant moon, while rows of women--still swathed in white shawl--streamed away in all directions, headed home to quickly put a meal on the table.

The young man and his pallid little boy wandered back and forth among those dancing in the courtyard before the moon. When others called out *Sholom aleykhem*, he responded with the obligatory *Aleykhem sholom*, his countenance darkening with every passing moment. Those who were blessing the moon passed by as mere shadows.

No one invited him home to come and break the fast with them. His lips quivered--what to do? "Perhaps this, too, is for the best," he murmured to himself. "I will not start the New Year by begging, especially on the night after Yom Kippur."

The boy, thinking his father is praying, grabs the young man's coattail, pulls lightly on it and whines, "Daddy, finish your prayers so we can go," his thin voice choked with tears.

"Silly, silly boy," his father replies, "why would you want to rush home?"
"I'm hungry, very hungry."

The father retorts jokingly, to cover his pain: "Of course you're hungry; it's quite simple. What else could you have said, that you've only fasted from time to time and so you're full?"

"Let's go home, Daddy," implores the child.

The father stands still for several minutes, wrestling with his soul.

"Listen, my son," he says weakly. "Listen, Dovidl, even at home there's nothing to eat."

"Not even bread?"

"No bread... not enough to make a blessing over..." The child is despondent.

The father tries to lift his spirit.

"Dovidl, tell me, do you know what day this was?" The child cries quietly.

"Today," continues the father, in answer to his own question, "was a holy day, Yom Kippur. Do you understand what that word means?"

"Yes..."

"And what did we do today, Dovidl? Tell me what we did." "We prayed..."

"Very good... you deserve a kiss for that... but tell me, please: we prayed- and what did God do?"

"Forgave all our sins..."

"And what do you think, Dovidl; if God forgave all our sins, should we be sad or happy?"

"Be happy," sniffs the lad though his tears.

"You're right... we should be happy... And Dovidl, do you remember the new *niggun* that we sang at the end of last Yom Kippur, when your mother (may she rest in peace) was still

alive and with us--do you remember the *niggun*?"

"No ..."

"I'll remind you... and you can help me... "

And the shining young moon heard a *niggun*, a prayer really, that could tear open even a heart that was closed... And the father sings and the youngster drags along behind him.

T'fillah in Four Movements

M. Beigel

I marcato

Bi-ri bam bam bam bam, ba-ba-bam Bi-ri - bam bam bam bam, bam ba - bam.

5

Oi, - oi bo-boi, oi bo-boi; boi - boi boi.

8 **II con moto** *mf*

Bi-ri - bam boi, bi - ri - boi, bi-ri boi, bi-ri-boi, boi, bo-boi.

12

Oi boi, oi boi, oi boi; oi boi boi, bo - boi. Oi bo-boi, bo-

17 **III appassionato**

boi. Bi-ri boi, boi, ri - bo-no shel o - lam, half dain folk yis - ro - eil Oi vei, oi vei, oi vei, oi vei; vei -

21 **ff disparato**

vei, vei - vei. Oi vei, vei - vei vei; vei.

25

30 *IV meno mosso*
f marcato

Bi-ri - bom, bom, boi,boi, boi, boi; boi-boi — bo - boi.

35 *mf* *rall.*

Bi-ri - bom-, boi - boi, bo-bo-bom, bom, bo - boi, bo - boi. Bo - boi,

39 *p sostenuto* 3

bo-bo-boi. bo-bo-boi; bo-bo - boi.

Joseph A. Levine translated Isaac Leyb Peretz's story *A Nayer Niggun* from the Yiddish. He also transcribed *T'fillah—In Four Movements* from a tape that Hazzan Abba Yosef Weisgal had recorded for him privately in 1963, as part of several titled *Mahashavot shel n'ginah b'hasidut* (*Imaginative Musings in the Style of Hasidic Niggunim*). Among the personal effects that Hazzan Weisgal later bequeathed to Dr. Levine before his death in 1981 was a note that identified *T'fillah* as having been mailed by "M. Beigel, the Bronx, New York." The musical transcription of Weisgal's taped recording originally appeared in Levine's doctoral dissertation on his revered mentor, *Emunat Abba—The Sacred Chant of Hazzan Abba Yosef Weisgal*, later published by the Cantors Assembly (2006: 212-13).

MAILBOX

A Reply to Burton Abrams

by Jacob Adler

Burton Abrams, writing in a recent article in this *Journal*,¹ is certainly correct to want Hebrew songs to be sung with proper accentuation, but with all due respect, it must be said that his proposals are based on some mistaken assumptions. These points have been laid out previously in two articles in this *Journal*, so I need not reproduce them in detail here.² In this communication I present only a brief recap of the points made in those articles:

1. The author proceeds on the assumption that the accentuation of a word in song must coincide with the accentuation of the same word in the spoken language. This is not true of Hebrew, English, German, or (we may speculate) most other languages. Just one example from English. In spoken English, we accent the word *Tripoli* on the first syllable, but this does not prevent us from accenting it on the last syllable when we sing the Marines' Hymn:

...to the shores of Trip-o-LI.

Anyone proposing to "correct" the Hymn would be making an error (to say nothing of incurring the ire of the Marines): the Hymn is perfectly correct as it is. One can find many examples, both Hebrew and English, in Tarsi's article and my own, of such divergences. Once one is aware of the phenomenon, innumerable examples come to mind. They are not mistakes, but part of what one learns in learning the respective languages.

2. The standard of correctness for a language is, by definition, the practice of native speakers. As Tarsi documents, Israelis feel no need to make most of the changes proposed by the author. One only need consider *Hatikvah*, the national anthem. Here are the first lines:

Kol od ba-LEI-vav pe-ni-MAH.
NE-fesh ye-HU-di ho-mi-yah.

(Capital letters indicate the syllables where accents diverge from spoken Israeli Hebrew.) In spoken Israeli Hebrew, one would say *ba-lei-VAV*, *pe-NI-mah*, and *ye-hu-DI*. But Israelis accept their national anthem as it is. Another example, more to the point: Abrams proposes changing the well-known folk version of *Hineih Mah Tov* (p. 93), whereas Tarsi, the native speaker of Hebrew, finds it perfectly acceptable as is (p. 12).³

¹ Burton Abrams, "Singing Hebrew With Proper Accentuation," *JSM* 46.1 (2021): 88-93.

² Boaz Tarsi, "On the Placement of Hebrew Accents, Hebrew Accentuation in the Synagogue: the Musical Considerations," *JSM* 29.1 (2003): 1-30. Jacob Adler, "On the Proper Accentuation of Hebrew Prayer: A Comparative Approach," *JSM* 42.1 (2017): 2-31.

³ Abrams objects in particular to the pronunciation *TO-rah* in the popular song "*Torah tsivah lanu moshe*," because it allegedly teaches students the wrong way to pronounce Israeli Hebrew. But one can listen to a group of Israelis singing

3. Many of the non-Sephardic accents come from Ashkenazi Hebrew, where penultimate accentuation is common. In English, when singing a song written in a dialect other than our own, we retain many (but not all) dialectal features. We do not, for example, try to make over *The Banana Boat Song (Day-O)*, or *Old Man River* or *Annie Laurie* into standard American English. In the same spirit, there is no reason to put Ashkenazi songs into the Procrustean bed of “proper” Sephardic accent. Indeed, as Tarsi points out, “spoken Modern Hebrew is neither fully Sephardi nor fully Ashkenazi, but a mixture of practices . . .” (p. 7), so it is quite natural that Ashkenazi accent appears from time to time.

4. In some cases, accent-shifting is not only not a mistake, but it can be used as a valuable musical device. Consider the song “Return Again” (music by Shlomo Carlebach, lyrics by Rafael-Simkha Kahn):

RE-turn a-GAIN, RE-turn a-GAIN, re-TURN to the LAND of your SOUL.

In spoken English, we accent the word *return* on the second syllable, but in the song we begin by accenting it twice on the first. We could easily “correct” this by setting the first “re” to a pickup note, but that would turn an interesting and snappy song into a dull and pedestrian one.

5. Even if changes could theoretically be justified, other considerations can lead us to refrain from making them, especially in a well-known song. As prayer-leaders and song-leaders, we want people to sing. If a familiar, beloved tune is presented as “wrong,” people stop singing. No one likes to be told, “You’re singing it wrong.” It is like trying to have a conversation with someone who constantly corrects one’s grammar: annoying enough when the correction is needed, galling when the corrector is in fact incorrect.

6. Abrams wants his children and grandchildren to speak and sing Hebrew correctly. Part of what they need to learn in order to sing and speak correctly is that the accentuation of Hebrew as sung frequently diverges from the accentuation of spoken Hebrew, just as people learning English need to learn the corresponding fact about spoken and sung English.

the song—to a different tune, admittedly, but still blithely singing *TO-rah* rather than *to-RAH*, as Abrams would want them to do. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOXbDdBmxoo>, accessed 13 July 2021.

A Happy Blast From the Past

Editor's note: Our colleague (and JSM Editorial Board Member) Charles Heller heard a remarkable story conveyed by Alexander Tsaliuk, music director of the Moscow Male Jewish Cappella, during a Zoom presentation last Spring. Alexander kindly agreed to share this story for our readers:

The Moscow Male Jewish Cappella is not only a musical, but also a historical phenomenon in the Jewish life of Russia and the whole world.

In 1988, after a nearly 70-year hiatus, a mission from the Joint Distribution Committee visited Moscow, under the leadership of its legendary director, Ralph Goldman. He was accompanied by Cantor Joseph Malovany, of the Fifth Avenue Synagogue in New York, and Rabbi Arthur Schneier of Park East Synagogue.

The delegation went to see the President of what was then the USSR, Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev, with a proposal to recreate pre-revolutionary Jewish life in the country. Gorbachov was wary of this initiative, and then Cantor Malovany suggested starting the revival of the community with music, beginning with a restoration of the Moscow Grand Choral Synagogue and the male choir that once sang there (renowned across Europe and in America as well.)

In response, Mikhail Gorbachev allowed his guests from the Joint to gain access to some unique archives:

In the basement of the Lenin Library, in the department of special storage, there were boxes sealed with dusty wax seals. These were filled with materials of religious content confiscated during the terrible years of mass Stalinist repressions. In addition to ancient prayer books, Hebrew dictionaries, calendars, etc., genuine musical treasures were discovered: pre-revolutionary manuscripts of music which were used by the singers of the same historical choir that had sung at the Grand Choral Synagogue at the beginning of the 20th century. Cantor Malovany asked for copies of these priceless manuscripts. In return for a carton of Marlboro cigarettes, a "library worker" (KGB officer) soon brought in dark green copies made on antediluvian rotaprint.

At the time, I was studying at Moscow's Tchaikovsky Conservatory. My grandfather, Leib Rayak, had served for many years as *Ba'al t'filah* in the small hall of the Choral synagogue. He introduced me to Rabbi Adolf Solomonovich Shaevich. In 1989, I began to lead a small ensemble of World War II veterans - non-professional musicians, members of the synagogue community who had regularly prayed in it for many, many years. They could not sight-read like professionals, but they sang with an "incredible soul." These people still found and remembered the old traditions of the Moscow Jewish community. The word *Yiddishkeit* (Jewish spirit) perfectly describes the spirit of those grandfathers.

At first, the choir's repertoire consisted of simple Shabbat songs; later Cantor Malovany provided scores from the collection of Yeshiva University. With the support of the American "Joint" I got the opportunity to attract my colleagues, young professional musicians from the Conservatory and other Moscow musical universities, to the choir.

The choir musicians refer to the old scores from the Lenin Library as “notes from the Greenpeace series.” Now photocopies of these manuscripts are kept in my library. I copied works from separate leaflets with choral voices into full scores that had never been performed since those times. The Moscow Male Jewish Cappella still sings some of the compositions from these scores.

The Choir now sings at services and holiday celebrations held at the Jewish religious and cultural center Zhukovka, under the auspices of which it is currently working. Its concerts are also posted on the choir's YouTube channel. (www.youtube.com/user/atsaliuk). Visitors to Moscow can attend rehearsals of the Choir held in the Memorial Synagogue on Poklonnaya Gora, where the ensemble has been regularly engaged for the past 10 years.

Alexander Tsaliuk

Editor's Note:

The Moscow Male Jewish Cappella is a unique professional ensemble, preserving Jewish music of the past and making an important contribution to Jewish cultural life in contemporary Russia. Unfortunately, when the pandemic brought an end to choral singing and concertizing, support for the choir's activities disappeared. The choir is now in desperate need of funds to pay its singers and produce their concerts. Alexander Tsaliuk has big creative plans, with dreams of recording an Anthology of Jewish Liturgical and Folk Music. You can support the choir on its website (www.hasidic-cappella.com) or by contacting AlexanderTsaliuk via Facebook.

The Oseh Shalom of Hazzan Gottlieb

by Charles Heller

In my article “Glowing Coals: Synagogue songs recalled from the tradition of the Jewish community of Newcastle upon Tyne” (*JSM* 46: 62-72) I regret that the music of *Oseh Shalom* did not appear. I am grateful to the *Journal* for the opportunity to include it here.

I was introduced to this piece by Raphael Richmond. Mr Richmond was 7 years old in 1934 when he joined the choir at Leazes Park Synagogue, singing with Hazzan Berl Gottlieb, who died three years later. Hazzan Gottlieb had his own way of singing *Oseh Shalom* at the end of the Hasidic *Kaddish* on the High Holydays, a piece composed by his father the celebrated Jacob Gottlieb (“Yankel der Heyzeriker”) and which became world-famous in the recording by Herman Zalis and David Kusevitsky. Mr Richmond could not remember every detail, but he vividly recalled that the whole congregation looked forward eagerly to Hazzan Gottlieb’s high notes added at the end: “The people were all waitin’ for his fantastic high notes, Ah canna do it!”

I was fortunate to get in touch with Dr. Bruce Gottlieb of Montreal, the son of Hazzan Berl Gottlieb, who kindly forwarded me a copy of his father’s manuscript which I include here.

Oseh Shalom

As sung by Hazzan Berl Gottlieb

SOPRANO

O-seh sha-lom bim-ro-mav hu ya'a-seh sha-lom a - le - nu a - le - nu

ALTO

O-seh sha-lom bim-ro-mav hu ya'a-seh sha-lom a - le - nu a - le - nu

TENOR

O-seh sha-lom bim-ro-mav hu ya'a-seh sha-lom a - le - nu a - le - nu

BASS

O-seh sha-lom bim-ro-mav hu ya'a-seh sha-lom a - le - nu a - le - nu

6

Hazzan

v' - al v' - al v' - al

S.

a - le - nu v' - al kol Yis - ra - el v' - al v' - al

A.

a - le - nu v' - al kol Yis - ra - el v' - al v' - al

T.

a - le - nu v' - al kol Yis - ra - el v' - al v' - al

B.

a - le - nu v' - al kol Yis - ra - el v' - al v' - al

12

Hazzan

S.

A.

T.

B.

kol yis - ra - el v' - al al

kol yis - ra - el v' - al al

kol yis - ra - el v' - al al

kol yis - ra - el v' - al al

v' - al v' - al v' - al
*A - heim a-heim a-heim

* For Neilah

15

S.

A.

T.

B.

kol yis - ra - el v' - im - ru a - men

kol yis - ra - el v' - im - ru a - men

kol yis - ra - el v' - im - ru a - men

kol yis - ra - el v' - im - ru a - men

REVIEWS

*God Save the Cantor: Review of Michael Jolles' Encyclopaedia of British Jewish Cantors, Chazanim, Ministers, and Synagogue Musicians*¹

By Matthew Austerklein

The history of a cantorate is like a silver thread through Jewish history – of both great beauty and importance, but easily overlooked. Since the rise of modern cantorial professionalism in 19th century Europe, and particularly in the wake of *Wissenschaft des Judenthums* (the scientific study of Judaism), cantors themselves noticed that they were being left out of emerging narratives of Jewish history. In his rhapsodic pamphlet, *Der Jüdischer Kantor in der Jüdischen Geschichte* (“The Jewish Cantor in Jewish History” published in 1879), Dr. Israel Goldschmidt bemoaned the cold reception of the cantorate in public scholarship:

“It is human nature to focus one’s enthusiasm preferably towards that [subject] which has the closest, most inward and special relationship to one’s inner self. But where do we find the subject that stands in such close relationship to the most immanent and particular being of the Cantor? Even in Jewish history, which has recently found such an excellent and thorough cultivation – where can you find in its annals a consideration of the Cantor? The worst poet, the most unimportant poetess, the most dubious philosopher all have their place in Jewish history – only the Cantor doesn’t. How is the Cantor supposed to warm up to the study of Jewish history when he is treated by historians with such indifference?”²

Complaints of this nature recur across the 20th century as well, with each generation of cantors often seeking validation in the form of thorough scholarship on the origins and meaning of their profession.³ This lack of academic attention should perhaps be as predictable for cantorial studies as it has been for Jewish music. Edwin Seroussi refers to this phenomenon in his 2009 article “Music: The Jew of Jewish Studies,” in which he identifies deleterious perceptions of Jewish music which have kept it on the fringe of academic discourse, such as its associations with entertainment, perceived over-specialization, and the “incorporeal nature of the musical ‘text’ in Jewish contexts, dictated by its primarily oral mode of transmission.”⁴ New studies of the cantorate

¹ I am indebted to Dr. Amalia Kedem of the National Library of Israel for valuable input which went into this review.

² Translation by Rebecca Kushner (unpublished). For an abbreviated translation of this publication, see Israel Goldschmidt, “The Jewish Cantor in History.” trans. Rebecca Kushner. *Journal of Synagogue Music*, Vol. 44, No.1 (September 2019): 4-13.

³ For major contributions to the quest for cantorial history, see Aron Friedmann, *Lebensbilder Berühmter Kantoren*, Vol. 3 (Berlin: C. Boas Ncf. Buchhandlung, 1918); Aaron Rosen, ed. *Di Geshikhte Fun khazones: Aroysgegeben Tsum 30 Yohrigen Yubileum Fun Agudat Hazonim Di-Amerikah ve-Kanadah Zuntog Dem 3ten Februar, 1924* (New York: 'Agudat ha-hazanim de-Amerika', 1924). New York; Leo Landman, *The Cantor: An Historic Perspective* (New York, NY: Yeshiva University Press, 1972); Mark Slobin, *Chosen Voices: The Story of the American Cantorate* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989); Wayne Allen, *The Cantor: Mishna To Modernity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2019); On the desirability and difficulty of writing a full history of the cantorate, see Judah Cohen, *The Making of a Reform Jewish Cantor* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 12; Freimann, 81-82; Slobin 23, Note 4.

⁴ Edwin Seroussi, “Music: The ‘Jew’ of Jewish Studies.” *Jewish Studies* 46 (2009): 4*. To extend the metaphor further, the cantorate might itself be seen as the “Jew of the Jew of Jewish Studies,” receiving scant phenomenological or sociological attention within major Jewish liturgical and Jewish musicological studies alike.

thus serve not only to fill major lacunae in Jewish scholarship, but also to fulfill the cantorate's own quest for a noble history which brings recognition to its vocation and validation to its narratives.

Michael Jolles' *Encyclopaedia of British Jewish Cantors, Chazanim, Ministers, and Synagogue Musicians: Their History and Culture* (London: Jolles Publications, 2021) adds to the quest for cantorial history in remarkable ways. A project of over a decade of research, this 871-page encyclopedia makes as its objective to "set out an authoritative and comprehensive compilation of significant facts descriptive of the chazanim and ministers who have served Jewish congregations in the United Kingdom over the past three and a half centuries, as well as their role and operating environment in the synagogue."⁵ Identifying the familiar lack of attention to the cantors in the annals of Anglo-Jewish history, British musical history, and Jewish musical scholarship, this towering work "effectively constitutes the first substantial printed history of the profession of the chazan in the United Kingdom."⁶ The encyclopedia was published with a limited run in Britain, but is available as a free ebook from the European Cantors Association. Those who are interested in acquiring a complimentary copy should reach out to Alex Klein, the Director of the ECA, or e-mail an inquiry to DownloadJollesEncyclopaedia@cantors.eu.

American cantors may be largely unschooled in the role that the United Kingdom has played in cantorial history. With both Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities formed by the end of the 17th century, cantors in both cultures developed strong choral traditions through the 19th and 20th centuries and created vibrant musical communities. Britain's synagogues set norms of cantorial repertoire and style that continue to this day in its former colonies, including in Canada, South Africa, and Australia. Many of the great cantors of the Golden Age like Yossele Rosenblatt, Gershon Sirota, and Mordechai Hershman made regular concert appearances in London, and still others, like David Kusevitzky, Naftali Hershtik, and Asher Hainovitz got their start in British pulpits before emigrating to the USA or Israel.⁷ But this is just the very tip of the iceberg, as Jolles' encyclopedia represents an incredibly broad entrée to the wide-ranging music, figures, synagogues, and 350+ year history of this sceptered cantorial isle, comprising 175 pages of conceptual background and bibliography, together with 2,155 entries and over 6000 footnotes.

As an encyclopedist by trade, Michael Jolles is ably assisted in guiding the direction of his volume by Cantor Yehuda Marx, Dr. David Prager, and others who may be counted among those traditional repositories of cantorial lore – *mavens* – individuals who follow, share, and cultivate oral histories of the biographies and activities of cantorial legends.⁸ So too, one who peruses this encyclopedia will discover that it is not simply a work of academic interest, but a passion project guided by the idiosyncrasies and interests of cantorial insiders.

⁵ Jolles *Encyclopaedia*, 9.

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ Emigration of this nature was partially due to a cap on cantorial salaries instituted by the organized Jewish community, the United Synagogue.

⁸ For Jolles' own comments on "devotees" of the cantorate, see Jolles *Encyclopaedia*, 11. For more by Dr. Prager & Cantor Marx, see Yehudah Marx, *In Defence of Chazonus* (Manchester, 2018); D. R. Prager, "The Cantorial World through the Eyes of an Analytical Cantorholic" *Journal of Synagogue Music*, Volume 34 (Fall 2009), pp.101-117.

The span of the work itself is truly impressive, and quite useful as a database of Anglo-Jewish cantors, institutions, and synagogues. Even if parts of such material may be found piecemeal across the internet, the encyclopedia gathers the far-flung records of British cantorial history in a reliable and unprecedented collection. Jolles' sources for his encyclopedia, beyond oral histories and the guidance of mavens, include 20th century books and periodicals from (and about) Anglo Jewry; archival & genealogical research from major Anglo-Jewish archives and institutions; and particularly extensive data from the Jewish World and the Jewish Chronicle, the latter being the primary Jewish newspaper of London since 1841. These all provide a wealth of knowledge on synagogues, rabbis, cantors, choirs, composers, and other hallmarks of British synagogue culture. An impressive bibliography is also included, gathering cantorial biographies from a wide variety of British and European reference books, as well as in English literature.⁹ However, the uniformity and sources could use some expansion as the encyclopedia grows and develops (there is no reference, for example, to National Library of Israel's archives concerning figures in the Anglo-Jewish cantorate).¹⁰

The biographies lean towards cantorial figures of the more distant and traditional past, but Jolles also includes nods to the more contemporary era. This includes sections on the Reform Movement (21.3) Liberal & Progressive Jews (21.7), and the Assembly of Masorti Synagogues (21.11), as well as female figures in the British rabbinate and cantorate. But overall, the traditional, orthodox norms and narrative dominate the work, weighted by the more traditional character of British Jewry and the girth of its traditional history. American cantors reading this biography may be surprised to find only short entries for living British cantors.¹¹ This is due to the prudence of the author, who has efforted "not to trespass on the privacy of an individual, past or present. For this reason, the biographical details of living chazanim are predominantly those of migration history, genealogy, residence, training, appointments, community involvement, compositions and other publications."¹²

Perhaps the most curious and ambitious aspect of the book is its opening material (1-175). Here Jolles takes the mighty task of defining the terms, institutions, and major features of the traditional British synagogue and its cantors in encyclopedic form. Reading parts feels much like receiving an introduction to the Jewish synagogue through the eyes of a cantorial historian, including "Glossary (Section 3 - relating to Jewish and synagogue related terms in use through the book)" Roles of the Chazan in Britain (Section 9)," "Attributes of the Chazzan (Section 11, dealing with personal deportment)" and "The Operating Environment of the Chazan (Section 12 - relating

⁹ Jolles, *Encyclopaedia*, 126-136.

¹⁰ Archive of Benzion Opendik (Benjamin Hoffman), MUS 0345; Israel (Vivian) Berman, Studio Recordings, CD 05042-51.

¹¹ Current British cantors in the Cantors Assembly include Abraham Lubin, Simon Spiro, Meir Finkelstein, Jaclyn Chernett, and Geoffrey Goldberg. For more additional information on these figures, see *Cantors Assembly 75th Anniversary Journal*, ed. Matthew Austerklein (Akron, OH: Cantors Assembly, 2022).

¹²Jolles, *Encyclopaedia*, 31.

to the synagogue, its officiants, and features).” Every section of the book is incredibly detailed in scope, with many subheadings and countless footnotes to meet the broad objectives of the author. Yet some sections pull towards the cultural concerns of the apologetic, preservationist, and maven-driven energy of cantors themselves. “Historical Note About the Role of the Chazan (Section 15)” attempts to describe the noble history of the cantorate, and “The Inclusion of Chazanut in British Musical History (Section 18), together with “Printed Publications on the British Cantorate (Section 19) and other parts of the book identify the lack of attention to this noble history and profession in the four fields in which it should be most relevant: Anglo-Jewish history, British musical history, Jewish musical history, and world Jewish liturgical music history.

Jolles book, though not nonpartisan in some matters of cantorial history and vocation, is nevertheless a *shulchan arukh*, a “set table” for future research on British cantorial and synagogue life from which many a scholar may well profit. For the cantors and their mavens it is surely a welcome remedy against the perennial lack of cantorial historical narrative and scholarship. Both the cantorial and academic communities surely owe Michael Jolles and the ECA a debt of gratitude and a hearty *yasher ko’ah*.

In the spirit of the book’s more personal passion and nostalgia for aspects of the cantorate, a final word of appreciation: It may be said that Great Britain is gifted with a unique sense of *yir’ah* (reverence). Whether born of a sense of tradition, a love of culture, a sense of law and propriety, the persistence of the monarchy and nobility, the grandeur and imperial force of the country’s historic landscapes, or even just the intimacies of communal and village life, there is just something quintessentially British about the appreciation of that which is transcendent. This is something also at the heart of *Hazzanut* — that we have received a good inheritance, and that when we benefit from the musical talent and *kavannah* of a good *hazzan*, we too are experiencing something ineffable. Michael Jolles’ expansive new book brings a new opportunity for future generations to experiencing that transcendence as it happened (and happens) in the British synagogue, as it makes plain: *Ashreinu, mah tov helkeinu, umah na’im goraleinu* - how happy are we, how good is our portion, how pleasant is our destiny.

NOTE: *Michael Jolles’ encyclopedia project is ongoing; he continues to welcome communication and to add new content to the ebook. Those who wish should reach out to him directly at mjolles@btinternet.com).*

Cantor Matt Austerklein is a prayer leader, musician, and scholar exploring the religious meaning of Jewish musical forms. He is currently a PhD candidate in Jewish Studies at Halle-Wittenberg University (Germany), where he is writing his dissertation on the professionalization of Ashkenazi cantors in early modern Europe. He is also an Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich Studienwerk (ELES) Research Fellow”

***The Choral Torah: Five Books in Four Parts* by Josh Ehrlich (Cantors Assembly, 2021)**

Reviewed by Marsha Bryan Edelman

For centuries, rabbis have used *Parashat hashavua*, the division of the Torah text into 54 weekly readings, to inspire their sermons, drawing upon important stories and themes in order to teach Jewish history, laws and values to their congregations. Composers (known and anonymous) drawn to the texts of the *Humash* have provided music educators with a wealth of song literature with which to imprint memorable texts onto the hearts of their students, and lyrics like *Ufaratzta*, *Mah tovu* and *Eretz zavat halav ud'vash* have connected singers of all ages to the Bible, the liturgy and the land of Israel. The effort to identify a song for each Torah portion reached a highwater mark in 1992 when Randee Friedman and her SoundsWrite Productions Inc. collected existing popular songs by composers as varied as Raymond Smolover, Robbie Solomon and Joel Sussman (of Safam), Linda Hirschhorn, Joe Black, Craig Taubman and Debbie Friedman, and commissioned new songs for “missing” portions. The result was a series of anthologies begun in 1992 with *Sounds of Creation (Genesis)* and *Sounds of Freedom (Exodus)*, and completed in 2000 with *Sounds of Holiness (Leviticus)*, *Sounds of Sinai (Numbers)* and *Sounds of Promise (Deuteronomy)*.

But while any number of choral settings (liturgical as well as secular) have set isolated passages from the Torah, there has never been a focused effort to create an entire year’s worth of music to accompany the Torah reading cycle until the 2021 publication of Josh Ehrlich’s magnum opus, *The Choral Torah: Five Books in Four Parts*. The project launched in 2018 when, as a music counselor at Camp Ramah in the Berkshires, Josh composed a choral piece to complement the camp’s educational “theme of the week.” Worried that the unfamiliar music might not have met the expectations of the camp community, he was nevertheless thrilled with the accomplishment of having written, taught and performed the piece in the space of just one week, and eager to do more. His first thought was to continue to write a new composition for each week of camp, but then what? He reasoned that if Johann Sebastian Bach could write weekly cantatas for his congregation in Leipzig, he could find a source to provide the literary inspiration for a year’s worth of new music. It didn’t take too long to arrive at the connection to the weekly Torah portion, or for Ehrlich to set himself a rigid timeline for completion of his ambitious project: one composition per week, for four mixed a cappella voices, with a line or two of text drawn from that week’s Torah reading. After establishing these procedural guidelines for himself, he allowed himself to be inspired by virtually all forms of vocal music, from hymns and polyphonic madrigals to Christmas carols, folk songs and yes, Jewish liturgical classics.

The resulting volume has a great deal to recommend it. It is thoughtfully designed, borrowing conventions from other forms (measure numbers on each bar, typical in the a cappella repertoire popular on college campuses; arrows to indicate the movement of the melodic line, common in barbershop transcriptions) with clear and copious instructions for changing dynamics and tempos. Ehrlich has written a short introduction to each piece, explaining the rationale behind his choice of text (often a not-particularly-obvious selection), any musical influences that might have inspired him (lots of musical theater references, jazz standards, Negro spirituals, Beethoven

and more) and “what to listen for” guides to tie specific musical patterns, effects or chords to given passages or even particular syllables. Ehrlich clearly wants those teaching and singing his music to understand its motivation.

But what about his audiences? Will they be able to understand and appreciate this new music? Some of the music is fun and accessible, like *Miriam HaN’viah* (from *Beshallah*) <https://youtu.be/kAAV9lyX40k>. Other selections are more “traditional” in their lyricism and structure, like his setting of *Ma Tovv* (from *Balak*) https://youtu.be/L6F2wHcx_Nc. Still others are more challenging, like *Al Tira* (from *Lekh l’kha*) and *Sa Na* (from *Vay’hi*), with lengthy, irregular phrases, unpredictable harmonic rhythms and painful dissonances (though always rewarded with beautiful resolutions).

The Choral Torah is also more than simply a collection of compositions, however ambitious. Prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, Ehrlich had organized a performing “Collective” that appeared before synagogue and community groups (including a lecture-demonstration by Josh on musical “Wordplay”) and worked with the congregational/community choir. These presentations won wide acclaim from the cantors and music educators who hosted them. Ehrlich is a passionate choral singer, and, currently a student at the H.L. Miller Cantorial School, he hopes to use his cantorate to continue bringing four-part harmony to “reanimate our ancient words.”

Still, Ehrlich’s idea to create a year’s worth of choral music at a time when choral singing in the synagogue has reached an acknowledged nadir was bold, audacious, and possibly even reckless. Who will sing this music? Even in synagogues that continue to support their amateur choirs, is it likely that those choirs will be able to master a new piece on a weekly basis? Ehrlich helpfully indicates a “scale of difficulty” for each composition, but even those designated “easy” will still require considerable preparation. Pragmatically, Ehrlich’s introduction is addressed not only to synagogue musicians, but to Jewish performers on stage, as well as to musicians from other communities looking for “foreign language selections” (although he does himself and his music a disservice by not capitalizing on the potentially attractive fact that these are settings of biblical texts in their original vernacular). He also encourages artists from other disciplines to find inspiration in the work he has done. Indeed, there is much here to be inspired by -- and while the notion that any one congregation might perform a complete year’s worth of Bible settings is probably remote, there is material here to enrich the Jewish choral repertoire for many years to come.

Marsha Bryan Edelman is the Editor of the Journal of Synagogue Music.

***Raising the Bar Mitzvah: Reimagining What Our Kids Learn* by Cantor Matt Axelrod (Rowman & Littlefield 2021)**

Reviewed by Sheldon Levin

Recently on *HazzaNet* there was a lengthy discussion of whether we should be continuing the practice of most b’nai mitzvah chanting the Haftarah or instead do more Torah leyning and prayer leading. *Raising the Bar Mitzvah*, a new book by our colleague and Cantors Assembly officer, Matt Axelrod, addresses this and many other current issues regarding b’nai mitzvah training and practices.

He begins pointing out things that have already changed during the first months of the Covid pandemic. For many families, a personalized service, Zoomed from their living room to celebrate their child’s bar or bat mitzvah was the only celebration. There was no party, no DJ, no travel to eat and dance together with distant relatives. There was, instead, an opportunity for a thoughtful way of connecting family and friends, albeit electronically, through prayer and sacred text. While everyone wishes to bring people together in person, this past year or so has shown that we can be flexible and creative, and search for new meaningful ways of celebrating a young person’s Jewish coming of age.

Cantor Axelrod shares some historical models that are very different from the way most American synagogues highlight the bar or bat mitzvah. There were times when a Torah *aliyah* on a weekday morning followed by some herring, honey cake and schnapps was the standard celebration. He compares the experience of a family that attends shul every week and then calls the youngster to the Torah after his or her thirteenth birthday, with what a family who rarely, if ever, attends services might feel.

There have been large synagogues that were known as bar and bat mitzvah factories. Every child had to do the same things. No exceptions were made for someone with learning challenges or someone who went to Day School and could easily read Hebrew. In this “one size fits all” model, which might be fine for some children, many others felt either overwhelmed or unfulfilled. The book talks of different modes of training, though for the vast majority, the bar or bat mitzvah memorizes from recordings of the *Haftarah*, which will likely never be chanted again.

The book explains how we have gotten to the current situation and begins to suggest alternative models. For clergy, this book is an opportunity to rethink our goals and perhaps change future b’nai mitzvah programs. For lay people, this book may not only open their eyes to issues regarding bar and bat mitzvah training and celebration but also gives detailed explanations of terms and practices. Rabbis and cantors can probably quickly skim through those explanations, which will likely be useful to parents and some ritual committee members.

The book does not give one new correct way of rethinking b’nai mitzvah practices. Instead, it carefully lays out many questions synagogues and families should be asking. Just as “one size fits all” may not be good for everyone, new practices and models may also need to be experimented with and changed for different communities and different learners.

The author knows that change is not easy and by showing historical and various current models he is opening the door for those changes to begin. The book doesn't dictate the answers but instead encourages us to begin asking questions that will facilitate change.

This book is recommended to everyone who is willing to rethink the way their congregation can and should design future b'nai mitzvah programming. The book concludes, "Reimagine. Rethink. Rejoice. The only limits are those we place on ourselves."

Hazzan Sheldon Levin is a past-president of the Cantors Assembly. He has edited several books on B'nai Mitzvah and classroom teaching, has tutored over 2,000 bar and bat mitzvah students and has worked with many children of different learning styles over his 48 years as a cantor.

Shul Going: 2500 Years of Impressions and Reflections on Visits to the Synagogue
by Charles Heller (Resource Publications, CA)

Reviewed by Marsha Bryan Edelman

Any regular attendee at Shabbat services has noticed guests who join the community to celebrate a bar or bat mitzvah. While some are clearly knowledgeable Jews able to actively participate (and likely eager to report their impressions of the rabbi, the cantor and everything else about the service to their home congregations), others are just as obviously non-Jews, visiting a synagogue for the first time. On occasion, I have been asked to guide such visitors through the service and to explain (as briefly as possible) what was going on, and why. I have always been conscious of an enormous responsibility to present our traditions in the best possible light, and to leave this new shul-goer with a positive impression of my community in particular and Jewish worship in general. Each year on Purim and Simchat Torah I have also fervently hoped that no visitor will choose one of those atypical occasions to make a first visit to the synagogue. What on earth would they think?

Charles Heller's "Shul Going" answers that question – and much more. He has scoured the sources, from our own Bible and Talmud to the diaries, newspaper reports, eyewitness testimonies and occasional fictional representations of shul-goers through the ages. Heller has offered a brief preface to each excerpt to introduce its author and provide it with historical context. The 76 short items are arranged chronologically (I suspect an editing error allowed a 1791 description of a "delightful" Charleston service to appear out of sequence) and provide a fascinating overview of the who, what, where and how of Jewish worship from the earliest days of the synagogue to our own times.

Some of Heller's selections describe well-known episodes, but provide the direct quotations that may be less familiar to some readers. God's description of himself (to Ezekiel 11:16-17) as a *mikdash me'at*, a small sanctuary, is also understood as "I have given them a synagogue," and

provides the source for that term, still in use. A Talmudic passage (*Sukkah*, 51b) discussed the “frivolity” that often ensued when men would bring their sacrifices and mingle with the women, leading to the decision to create separate seating arrangements in the Temple. An excerpt from the preface to Salamone Rossi’s *HaShirim Asher LiShlomo* by Rabbi Yehudah Aryeh Leone of Modena quotes his enthusiastic support for the introduction of choral singing into the synagogue. Excerpts from the writings of Frances Trollope and Franz Liszt describe their impressions of Sulzer’s singing at the Stadt Temple in Vienna. George Washington’s visit to the Touro Synagogue of Newport, Rhode Island and the letters of congratulation he received from the congregation’s president, Moses Seixas, occasioned a response from the president in which he expressed the hope that all the “children of the stock of Abraham” would continue to “enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants” of the United States. Extracts from Rabbi Samuel Rosenblatt’s biography of his father, Yossele Rosenblatt, describe the famous cantor’s early years as a child star, and the impressive salary offer that brought him to Ohab Zedek Congregation in Harlem.

Heller has also included many more obscure references to synagogues and the proceedings therein: The first century Roman poet, Ovid, suggested that the synagogue might be a good place to meet women. Akbar the Great, a 16th century Indian ruler, decreed that “if any of the infidels choose to build a church or a synagogue...” no one should stand in their way. Samuel Pepys, a British government official under Charles II, was understandably confused by his 1663 visit to a London synagogue – on Simchat Torah. Charles Burney, traveling for research toward his study of the history of music, paid a visit to an Amsterdam synagogue in 1772 where he apparently endured some very poor singing (though he charitably declined to “pronounce it to be good or bad”). Jack Rosse, who as an adult was well known in Jewish music circles in London, was born in Moscow, and offered a fascinating description of his time as a boy soprano in the Moscow “Choral Shul.”

As he draws closer to modern times, Heller’s selections reveal his own strong feelings regarding the decline of synagogue tradition, from the inability of many contemporary congregants to participate knowledgeably in the service to their increasing rejection of *nusah*. In this regard, he shares laments by Sholom Kalib, Sam Rosenbaum and Robert Kieval. He also shares descriptions of some contemporary synagogue offerings that attempt to appeal to the masses with “alternative” offerings, and the solicitation of feedback through “crowd-sourcing” to determine what modern congregants want, even on the High Holy Days.

Heller also sticks a toe in the waters of contemporary political controversy around synagogues, especially regarding the tension between liberal movements (in the US and Israel) and the Israeli rabbinate. He reports on the controversies surrounding prayer at Robinson’s Arch and attacks on the Women of the Wall. His 2019 publication also includes various responses to the shootings at Pittsburgh’s Tree of Life Synagogue in October, 2018: both the “Show Up for Shabbat” response of Jewish communities around the world in the week following the tragedy, and the refusal of the Israeli Chief Rabbinate to refer to the site as a “synagogue.”

Ironically, Heller’s book was published only months before synagogues around the world were forced to shut down in the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic. It remains to be seen how synagogues will respond in the post-Covid era and to what extent Zoom and live-streaming will

continue to be a part of synagogue life. Heller's slim but highly-researched (and well annotated) volume provides a fascinating overview of the challenges synagogues have faced over the past 2500 years. It may offer interesting insights to those looking for guidance toward the next chapter.

Marsha Bryan Edelman is the Editor of the Journal of Synagogue Music.

***Songbook: Shabbat, Holidays, Children, Congregational and Solo Selections* by Sheldon Levin**

Reviewed by David F. Tilman

On the eve of Cantor Sheldon Levin's retirement as Cantor of Congregation Neve Shalom in Metuchen, New Jersey, after more than two decades, the Cantors Assembly has published his latest songbook, entitled, "Songbook: Shabbat, Holidays, Children, Congregational and Solo Selections. Cantor Levin has been an incredibly productive member of the CA. He served a two-year term as president, chaired several national conventions, and most recently taught on the Miller Cantorial School faculty. He conducts the New Jersey Cantors Assembly Ensemble and is a resident pianist and guest presenter annually at the Zamir Choral Foundation's North American Jewish Choral Festival, all in addition to his innovation-filled career as Hazzan of Neve Shalom.

The Songbook is intended for Hazzanim and song leaders who are always searching for new melodies for davening and *Shirah b'tzibbur*/community singing in Day Schools, Hebrew Schools, and summer camps. Most of the book contain melodies to *T'filah*/prayer texts from the Shabbat, Festival, and High Holiday prayerbooks.

In an era when many hazzanim, rabbis, and lay leaders overstep the nusah boundaries that we have all been taught, Levin was meticulous in crafting his tunes according to the prescribed modes for the sections of the service in which he advocates his melodies be inserted. *Mi yasaf*, a Medieval *piyyut*, has been beautifully set by the composer in the traditional *mi-Sinai* mode for the Rosh Hashanah evening service. He has been careful to set all Hebrew texts according to correct stresses.

There are no choral arrangements in this volume. There are several songs set in "call and response format:" the leader sings a melodic idea, and the congregants repeat it exactly. A few examples: *R'tzei*-39, *Hatov*-41, *Mikimi*-68, and Today is Friday, (words by the composer's son, Josh)-65. A few of the tunes are suggested from well-known choral settings of the same text. Levin begins a song with the opening of the choral composition, and then resolves the phrase with a simple rhythmic response. *Sefirat ha-omer* is derived from the traditional Alman setting.

There are twenty-two prayer settings for the Shabbat evening service. Psalms 95-99 are set to the very same melodic phrases as a way of unifying musically these opening Psalms. Levin indicates pauses where the congregation should "daven" prior to the hazzan's fulfilling the responsibility to "*m'sayem*," to conclude each Psalm. There are just three for the *Shaharit* service,

and nine for *Musaf* texts. Levin has given us nine High Holiday melodies, three for *Shalosh Regalim*, and two Seder tunes. Levin has written music for lyrics on Jewish themes by Broadway composer Michael Colby. He concludes this charming and useful book with a few songs for which he wrote both original lyrics and music.

There are two examples where Cantor Levin has set prayers that are not traditionally sung to rhythmic tunes: *Tikanta shabbat* for Shabbat morning, and *Hineni*, the Cantor's plaintive and expressive prayer for G-d's acceptance of the hazzan's *T'fillah* on behalf of the congregation. The *Hineni* prayer is written in a simple English adaptation.

In *B'chol dor vador*, from the Pesach Seder, the composer states the eight-measure melody, and then elevates the key for each following verse—a clever device that will hold the interest of the singers.

Michael Colby's lyrics inspired from Levin more sophisticated and introspective music than the earlier pieces, which are primarily for congregational singing and are simple and straightforward harmonically.

This volume is well worth your examination and perusal. If you find one tune that both touches your *n'shamah* and moves your congregants to more active engagement with a prayer text, Cantor Levin will be fulfilled in his creative efforts.

David F. Tilman is Choral Director and Pastoral Outreach Professional at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, and Hazzan Emeritus of Beth Sholom Congregation. A graduate of Columbia College, Miller Cantorial School of JTS, and the Juilliard School, Hazzan Tilman is founder and music director of Sing Hallelujah at Verizon Hall in Philadelphia, the annual citywide concert bringing together several Jewish choirs under his baton.

IN MEMORIAM

Sanford Cohn (1954-2022)

Remembered by Joseph Ness

As I write this, Sandy's voice, his sweet and calming voice is in my head. Hazzan, husband, father, teacher, guitarist and friend, he was the man who really cared, a man who always was so genuinely sensitive and understanding of those around him. I remember him with students and colleagues both children and adults. He created bonds and connections with all of us. What was understood was that he cared for everyone as a unique individual, each with their own specialness! He put his heart and soul into his work at the synagogue.

I was in West Hartford for about 10 years before he arrived as the cantor of Emanuel Synagogue. As it is, I was invited by him before I had a chance to do the inviting. He had a knack to contact me and ask how I was doing I just at just the moments when a genial and amiable voice was needed. Someone who would, just by his presence, make the times brighter. We engaged in so many services and events and concerts together. He was a delight to work with, to study with, and to learn from. It seemed like he had a way to soften everyone's hearts to him.

Somehow, he would make the normal day to day moments special, and we all were blessed by that rare gift.

I miss his voice, his presence and most of all his sweet friendship. A shining light has left us but one whose light continues to shine for all who knew him.



Israel A. Goldstein (1936-2021)

Remembered by Faith Steinsnyder

It is my honor to write in memory of someone we loved so much, Hazzan Israel Alter Goldstein.

Please indulge me if I quote freely from a wonderful article about him, written by Jean Bloch Rosensaft, published in the Chronicle of HUC-JIR, from 2006: “How did a British soccer player become the Director of the School of Sacred Music of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion? Cantor Israel Goldstein’s journey from avid London athlete to renowned New York cantor illuminates the trajectory of 20th century Jewish history and the evolution of the cantorate from its Golden Age to its contemporary vigor.

The roots of Israel Goldstein’s life work can be traced to his primary role model, his father, Hazzan Jacob Goldstein who, during the 1920’s and 1930’s, was the cantor of the leading Orthodox



synagogue in Vilna, known as “the Jerusalem of Lithuania”, and a vibrant cultural and religious center of Jewish life. Despite the vitality of life in Vilna, his mother, Toba, foresaw the impending threat of the Shoah and the family immigrated to London, where a colleague had recommended his father to The New Synagogue in Stamford Hill. Hazzan Goldstein and his family, including Israel, born in 1936, survived the London blitz. (Israel was evacuated periodically to Wales and other safe havens).

Israel’s vocal talents were recognized at an early age, I think he was five. He sang in his father’s choir, with men and boys, in a cathedral-like synagogue that seated 1800, and would be packed to the rafters. Hazzan Goldstein’s words about his father, Jacob Goldstein, “My father leading these services was an incredible, electrifying experience. I remember saying to myself, if this is what being a cantor is all about, I want to get in on this!”

"The choir had about thirty singers on Shabbat and as many as sixty on holidays." Goldstein memorized the music by ear and he said: “I soon had my own following - all the girls and women in the balcony who could see me in the loft! My choir position was boy alto, but when you talk about positions, I was right half of my soccer team.” Soccer was very important to him, and he played cricket as well. His family came to New York in the 1950’s and there was no soccer team for him here. He followed baseball and basketball. He couldn’t get into football. He reminisced about comedy in London by watching Benny Hill and Monty Python, and he had a great sense of humor.

Izzy became a student at HUC-JIR’s cantorial school, where his father wanted him to study, so that he could work with Cantor Moshe Ganchoff, Dr. Eric Werner, Abraham Wolf Binder, Isadore Freed, Lazar Weiner and Cantor Lawrence Avery. Invested in 1959, his congregations

included positions in Stamford, CT, and Caldwell, NJ, but for the better part of five decades, he served the Jericho Jewish Center on Long Island.

Cantor Goldstein's call to join the faculty of the School of Sacred Music at HUC came in 1974 from his mentor, Cantor Lawrence Avery. His students number in the hundreds. He witnessed the burgeoning number of female students and their successful integration into the field over the decades.

He has written and published much music, including arrangements of Moshe Ganchoff's "*Ma'ariv Service*" and "*T'filot Moshe*" (great cantorial recitatives), "*Magen avot*", plus four of his original compositions, published as "*B'chol Levavcha Uv'chol Nafsh'cha*". He was heard in recital in 1993, in the Old Jewish Theatre in Odessa, Ukraine, as part of the Second International Festival of Jewish Art Music. His recordings are available online and I recommend to you the YouTubes of him singing Yiddish and Israeli Art Songs as well as hazzanic masterpieces.

One last thing I must add is that he was the one who invited me to join the faculty of the School of Sacred Music. His belief in all of us made him a friend for life. He was a mensch among mensches! His humor was unbelievable! His voice was like a lion! But he was the most modest person I have ever met.

My love goes out to Ellen, his wife, and to his family, and to all of us, who have lost a really good friend and a tremendous mentor. *Yehi zikhro barukh*.

Robert Kieval (1946-2022)

Remembered by Jeffrey Nadel

Hazzan Robert Kieval served the Jewish community from his late teens. During his formative years, he came under the influence and tutelage of Hazzan Charles B. Bloch, who urged him to pursue the study of Hebrew and Hazzanut. It soon became evident that his voice was developing a mature richness; thus, he began the study of vocal technique with Professor Mario Rubini-Reichlin, prominent voice teacher and formerly professor at the Vienna Conservatory. A few years later, also at the urging of Hazzan Bloch, he entered Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, School of Sacred Music, where he studied Hazzanut under such great masters as Hazzanim Israel Alter, Lawrence Avery and Moshe Ganchoff. Subsequently, he studied at the Jewish Theological Seminary–Cantors Institute under Professor/Hazzan Max Wohlberg and later advanced Hazzanic studies with Hazzan Moshe Ganchoff. He continued studying voice with Mario Rubini–Reichlin until his teacher’s death, after which he studied with Jerome LoMonaco, formerly leading tenor with the New York City Opera Company.



Hazzan Kieval served as *Sh’liah tzibbur* in several congregations in Brooklyn, Jamaica Estates, Long Island and for twenty-five years, as the Hazzan rishon of B’nai Israel Congregation, Rockville, Maryland. During his tenure as Hazzan of B’nai Israel Congregation he also chaired a monthly Lunch and Learn program for the students and faculty of the Cantors Institute of JTS (now the H.L. Miller Cantorial School). In 2001 upon his retirement from B’nai Israel he was awarded the title of Hazzan Emeritus.

The 100th Psalm, *Mizmor l’todah*—a psalm of thanksgiving—tells us: Serve God with gladness, come before Him with joyous song... Robert devoted his entire adult life to serving God with a joyous song...and he did so with great gladness. He loved what he did as the Hazzan of the community which he served for so many beautiful years, and those whom he served respected and loved him in turn.

Robert was the consummate *Sh’liah tzibbur*, the emissary of the people, and he took that challenge with the utmost seriousness and love.

Everything he undertook to do in his position as the *Sh’liah tzibbur* he did with excellence and seriousness, and he was proud to do so. During his long and fruitful tenure as Hazzan of B’nai Israel in Rockville Maryland, he brought the level of hazzanut, and choral synagogue music to unparalleled heights.

His career also extended to the concert and lecture field, appearing throughout the United States in programs of Jewish music.

Hazzan Kieval was active for many years in the affairs of the Cantors Assembly, serving variously as Treasurer, Vice-President and ultimately as President. During his Presidency women were admitted as members of the Cantors Assembly. In 1994, Hazzan Kieval was awarded the degree of Doctor of Music *honoris causa* by The Jewish Theological Seminary of America for his devotion and tireless efforts on behalf of Hazzanut in America. He also served on the board of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and was the first hazzan to serve on the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Conservative Movement and on the boards of a number of other Jewish organizations.

Beginning in 2001 he served on the Adjunct Faculty of the H.L. Miller Cantorial School of the Jewish Theological Seminary and as Coordinator of the *Beit shirah* (music study library center). During the 2011-2012 academic year he served as the Interim Director of the School. In his positions in the Cantorial School, he was highly revered and regarded.

Perhaps one of the most enjoyable tasks which he undertook in recent times, was the originator and presenter of the Cantor's Assembly "Listening Room," where he brought the information surrounding, and the music of cantorial greats of the generations. In his broadcasts, he attracted hundreds of listeners each and every time he presented, and the listeners adored his presentations. People tuned in from all around the United States, as well as from countless other jurisdictions---and they kept tuning in, time after time after time because of what and how Robert presented. He valued and brought forth knowledge, caring, love and beauty combined with excellence and seriousness.

Robert was asked quite some time ago if there was something that he would have preferred to do other than being a Hazzan, and his response was that there was no other life he wanted to lead—Hazzanut was all he ever wanted, and he truly loved his calling.

Robert was a "true blue" friend. If Robert was your friend, you knew you could count on him for anything, any time. I was the recipient of his friendship, and I already greatly miss his physical presence in my life.

Chaim Nachman Bialik, the great Hebrew poet wrote in his work *Aharei moti*:

There was a man-and behold, he is no more.
He died before his time.
The music of his life suddenly stopped.
A pity! There was another song in him
Now it too is lost
Forever.

Robert was married for forty-seven years to the pre-eminent singer and musician Gayna Sauler Kieval. They were blessed with two sons: Moshe Zev Kieval, his wife Eden and their nine children,

Ora Tzvia, Chayala, Yosef, Sara'le, Devora, Bracha, Judah Aryeh, Michoel and Levi; and his second son Joshua Hanan and his wife Maria.

T'hei nishmato tz'rurah bitzror hahayyim—may his soul be bound up in the bonds of everlasting life.



אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא הָלַךְ בְּעֵצַת רְשָׁעִים וּבַדְרֹךְ
חָטָאִים לֹא עָמַד וּבְמוֹשֵׁב לִצִּים לֹא יָשָׁב : כִּי
אִם־בְּתוֹרַת ה' חִפְּצוֹ וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ
יִהְיֶה יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה :

Praise the man who has not walked in the advice of the wicked, has not stood in the path of the sinful, and has not sat with the scornful. His delight is the Torah of God, and upon it he meditates day and night.

Psalm 1:1-2



Joseph A. Levine (1933-2022)

Remembered by David B. Sislen

Hazzan Dr. Joseph A. Levine was a unique individual who defied categorization. While it is possible to describe his accomplishments as *hazzan*, author, editor, teacher, artist, authority, or friend, those who knew him can roll everything he was into one single, all-encompassing and one-of-a-kind moniker: Joe. That says it all.

Joe's breadth of talent, depth of knowledge, encyclopedic memory, and insistence on quality is what defined him as a professional. The style, humor, tact (and sometimes the lack thereof) with which he shared his talents defined him as a *mensch*. Knowing that Joe was on the case, regardless of the issue, meant that every angle would be considered, every detail scrutinized, every precedent weighed, and every possible outcome accounted for. Whether in *hazzanut*, scholarship, the classroom, or in dealing with the minutiae of personal or professional life, Joe would attack the

project with his unique combination of fluency and tact; inspiring others to strive for perfection, always teaching and motivating all those he touched.



Born in Brooklyn in 1933, Joe was known as a youthful prodigy in terms of his shul skills and talents. After he auditioned at Baltimore's Beth Tfiloh in 1961, Rabbi Samuel Rosenblatt remarked that he was hired "because [you] sound like Papa! ('Papa' being the Rabbi's father, Yossele Rosenblatt)." Influenced stylistically in his youth by the great Berele Chagy, one of the greatest influences on his growing cantorial style and outlook was the time he spent as assistant to *Hazzan* Abba Yosef Weisgal in Baltimore. Weisgal's influence and tutelage inspired Joe for a lifetime, in terms of quality, depth, and work ethic. Joe remembered those years warmly not only for the professional experiences he had, but also for the wisdom he gained during the long Shabbat afternoon walks with his mentor around the Druid Hill Reservoir. While Joe also served synagogues

in Philadelphia, Long Island, Connecticut, and St. Louis, his time with Weisgal at Chizuk Amuno was particularly formative. Weisgal was the subject of his doctoral thesis, and the comprehensive volume *Emunat Abba* and its companion recording have immortalized Weisgal's music for future generations.

In November of 1960, Joe went on a blind date and met soulmate Doris. Somehow, it's not surprising to learn that they were engaged that same night. Their enduring, loving, and mutually supportive partnership produced three daughters, Rona, Lisa, and Donna, and four grandchildren.

After leaving the full-time pulpit, Joe turned to academics, teaching at the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Academy for Jewish Religion. He is likely best known, however, as

the editor of this *Journal of Synagogue Music*, a position he held for 16 years. It was in this iteration of his career that I got to know him on a different level. When Joe contacted me to offer me the position as JSM's Associate Editor, he told me that it was after having read some of my writing that he was inspired to make the offer. He was able to quote—and critique—everything he'd read or seen of mine which had influenced his decision. The friendship and professional partnership which resulted has left an indelible impression. Joe's ability to pre-plan issues of the Journal years in advance, categorize disparate articles into a cohesive, thematic whole, his insistence on quality and depth, and attention to ensuring that even the most minute details were addressed, were inspirational. Each and every debate over the placement of a comma, whether a note had the correct accidental, if the transliteration was correct, or if the article was placed correctly in the final volume, was a lesson in making sure that your work was being done well and was being done right. Since such wisdom came naturally to him, Joe made it look so easy that one could overlook the fact that they were truly working with one of the *g'dolei hador*, the greats of our generation.

For all his insistence on literary, musical, ritual, and programmatic integrity, it was his warm personality that made Joe so beloved. His abilities and skills extended beyond the world of Jewish music. A talented artist, Joe would often share his original paintings, drawings, collages, and sketches with others. Sometimes commemorative, sometimes nostalgic, sometimes true-to-life, and sometimes impressionistic, Joe's art was always from the heart, and always fit the bill.

Thanks to Hazzan Dr. Joseph A. Levine, there is a generation of hazzanim, scholars, authors, and artists of all stripes who have a heightened sense of the value of quality traditional synagogue music, albeit with a nod to contemporary innovations which improve its relevance without cheapening it. He taught us to always strive for the best, take the time to do it right, and then let your work shine on its own merits. Following his passing, dozens of his colleagues shared personal memories of the experiences they'd had with Joe which affected or motivated them. I will miss the way he taught me that a few aptly chosen and well delivered words, notes, or brush strokes could make all the difference. *Yehi zikhro barukh*.

Cantor Robert Zalkin (1927-2021)

Remembered By Melissa Cohen

It is with great humility that I offer this *hesped* for our distinguished senior member of the Cantors Assembly, Hazzan Robert Zalkin, who passed away on September 28, 2021 at the age of 94. Following in the legacy of our *g'dolim*, among them Cantors Miro Glass, Judah Goldring, and Ray Edgar, all of blessed memory, and later by Cantor Misha Pisman, I am honored to now serve as the first female Cantor at Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis, Indiana, where Bob Zalkin served from 1961-1989. He remained actively connected in the life of our shul during his retirement as Cantor Emeritus and I feel privileged to have known him, and to have learned from him. I will always remember his infectious smile and calm and encouraging demeanor. Singing together with him on *Selihot* several years ago and standing with him on the *bimah* during my installation as Cantor in 2015 will remain highlights in my career. He is survived by his beloved wife, Irene, and step-daughters, Sonja and Nicole, and five grandchildren. He was predeceased by his daughter, Shira, who died at just age 3.



Before becoming a Cantor, Bob Zalkin earned a degree from New York University. A gifted mathematician, he worked as an actuary at the Pentagon. Bob was a member of the first graduating class of the Cantors Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1955, serving as the first president of its student body. His first pulpit was at Niles Township Jewish Congregation in Skokie, Illinois where he served until 1961 before coming to Indianapolis. During his 28 years of service to Beth-El Zedeck, Bob endeared himself to young and old, and elevated the musical tradition at the shul to new heights still maintained today.

Bob was not the *typical* Cantor, nor was he the *typical* person. He was truly *sui generis*, one of a kind. He was an eclectic; a spiritual entrepreneur. Upon retirement, Bob continued to engage in the community and beyond as a gifted and award-winning storyteller, a mediator, psychotherapist, a teacher and a mentor to the many who admired and loved him within and beyond the Jewish community.

Rabbi Dennis Sasso and our Rabbi Emerita Sandy Eisenberg Sasso recall many wonderful and fond memories of their collaboration and friendship with Bob, which they have shared with me during this time. Flipping through old photos in our archives, I came across a *Purimshpiel* featuring Bob sporting a green tutu, green tights, a wand and a bag of fairy dust -though this wasn't the only time he arrived at shul in tights! I am told he would frequently arrive at work in his biking tights or running shorts. He became an avid practitioner and advocate of physical fitness. He followed a strict vegan diet before it was fashionable. He practiced yoga and deep breathing before they were

in vogue. An avid outdoorsman, Bob ran marathons in his 60s, rafted down the Grand Canyon, wandered among penguins in Antarctica, and spent frigid nights in the mountains of Norway.

Bob loved children. He founded the Beth-El Zedeck Junior Choir, and with them, recorded in 1980 a story written and narrated by him called “Sing, Little Cantor” based on the traditional melody, *Chiri-bim, Chiri-bam*. It won him the National Solomon Schechter Award for excellence in congregational musical programs. A beautiful composition of *Modeh Ani* by Charles Davidson was commissioned by the shul for his retirement, performed by Bob, Charles Manning, our congregational organist since 1978 who was indeed hired by Bob, the Beth-El Zedeck Junior Choir and members of the Indianapolis Children’s Choir. He chose this text to offer his personal gratitude to God for the many blessings in his fruitful life. In his farewell remarks to the congregation, Bob said: “Soon it will be time to say farewell, but not goodbye, for I plan to remain in this community. I thank God for health and for a youthful spirit and for continued growth and for your love and for the love I have for you. With the assurance of ongoing love and connection, I’ll just say thank you, I love you, *shalom uv’rakhah—peace and blessing*.” But the gratitude is now for us to give having known and loved Bob ourselves.

Bob taught through example what it means to cultivate your soul. In an age when many people care so much about appearances, Bob was the real thing—genuine in thought and deed. He always knew when you needed a kind word or a smile. As a pastor, I am told he was welcoming and gracious, and as a teacher, modest, patient, and gentle. Bob Zalkin was both practical and idealist; he possessed secular learning and spiritual wisdom; he sang the songs of our people and helped sing the song of their souls.

Bob lived a long and full life. He always taught that one can find joy at any age, which he did, in his garden, on cruises, exercising, singing, meditating, teaching, and of course, being with family and friends. A favorite poet of Bob’s, Mary Oliver, wrote, “If you suddenly and unexpectedly feel joy, don’t hesitate. Give into it.” And Bob did. He gave into joy, and he shared it generously with others.

Bob died on *Simhat Torah*, notably the time of our joy in rejoicing in the Torah he loved so dearly; the Torah which he dedicated himself to and faithfully brought to life through his soul, his heart, and his holy voice. The passage we read from the Torah this day, of course, includes the account of the death of Moses at 120 years of age. Bob came pretty close! The text reads: *Lo-khahatah eino v’lo-nas leihoh*, “His eyes were undimmed and his vigor unabated.” Like Moses, Bob, too, remained visionary and vigorous until his last days. He now entrusts to each of us a portion of his unexpended vision and vigor, courage and wisdom. Cantor Zalkin: thank you. We love you, *shalom uv’rakhah—peace and blessing*.

T’hi nishmato tz’rurah bitz’ror hahayyim. May the “sweet singer of Israel,” the soul of *HeHazzan Reuven ben Tzvi v’Esther Golda n’im z’mirot Yisrael* find rest and comfort in the eternity of God’s love.



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The *Journal of Synagogue Music* is published annually. Current and past issues are accessible through a link on the Cantors Assembly Website: www.cantors.org

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