Journal of Synagogue Music

September 2023 Tishrei 5784 Volume 48 Number 1

MUSICAL COMMENTARY AND SOUNDS OF FAITH IN ROSSI'S *HASHIRIM ASHER LISHLOMO*

THE RISE OF CANTORIAL PROFESSIONALISM

CELEBRATING ISRAEL AT 75

OF TEXTS AND TUNES

IYYUNIM BIT'FILAH

NEGINAH L'MA'ASEH

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GREETINGS FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

This issue marks two important milestones in Jewish history. The first, observed throughout the world, was the 75th anniversary of the State of Israel. Our unique interest is, of course, its music, and my article and Ethan Goldberg's offer special note of Jewish references (textual, historical and theological) in Israeli popular song.

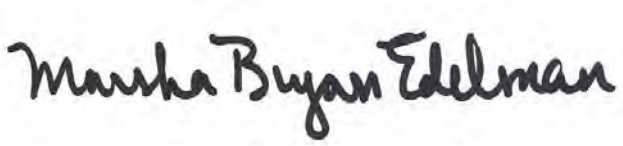
Less celebrated, but no less significant for our readers, was the 400th anniversary of the publication of Salamone Rossi's ground-breaking collection, *HaShirim Asher LiShlomo*. Matthew Lazar offers an appreciation of this first effort to use Western harmonic techniques to illuminate Jewish texts.

Additional views on the juxtaposition of Jewish texts and music can be found in several items in this issue: Benjamin Matis and Chani Haran Smith offer traditional articles, while poetic "Teachings" from Gabriel Lehrman, Kevin McKenzie and Rabbi Margaret Wenig reflect on texts from the liturgy of Rosh HaShannah.

Fascinating aspects of our history come alive in the work of Matthew Austerklein, and a delightful tidbit from Daniel Katz. We also offer an introduction to the new-and-improved Jewish Music Research Centre at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem by its director, Edwin Seroussi.

David Tilman's review of Rabbi/Hazzan Herbert Feder's memoir brings to light aspects of his impressive career some six years after his departure from this world. Sadly, we also record the more recent losses of cantorial colleagues Simon Haas, Edward Klein and Bradlee Kurland, as well the passing of composers Simon Sargon and Ben Steinberg, who offered so much to the world of Jewish music for the synagogue and beyond. Our *Neginah L'Ma'aseh* feature is privileged to include previously unpublished compositions by these giants, as well as choral settings by Israeli composer Sergiu Natra and by Salamone Rossi.

Wishing you good reading – and a happy, healthy and productive New Year.



Marsha Bryan Edelman

STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS

Word Painting, Musical Commentary and Sounds of Faith in Salamone Rossi's *HaShirim Asher LiShlomo*

By Matthew Lazar

I first met Salamone Rossi (1570-ca. 1628) when I was fifteen years old. He, of course, had been dead for more than 300 years, but his choral music spoke to me as clearly and directly as did the music of the great Western composers, who combined accessible yet riveting music with familiar and meaningful texts. In Rossi's case, those texts were Jewish texts, in Hebrew. Rossi became my hero for obvious reasons: He was the first important crossover Jewish musician, composer and violinist extraordinaire; he was pivotal in the creation of the trio sonata[1] and yet he was so Jewishly knowledgeable that the list of 33 works in his magnum opus are in Rashi script.[2] He was the first to publish music (going left to right) with Hebrew text (going right to left) and he copyrighted it. But it is his Jewish pride and bravery that inspired me and inspires me still. Imagine living in an Italian city-state at a time when all the other composers are setting only the beginning of Psalm 137 and ending their work with the image of Jews hanging their harps on the willows -- a musical and textual choice in service of an anti-Jewish theological doctrine—and you have the courage to set the psalm in its entirety (including the brutal ending) and adjuring God to remember and punish *B'nei Edom* (Rome)! Talk about speaking truth to power.

As a madrigalist, Rossi was fluent in "word painting," that is, a compositional device of illustrating the meaning of texts he set to music and somehow reflecting the meaning of the text through the music. Sometimes it was in a very simple and straightforward way, as we shall see. At other times, through his use of harmony and other musical devices, Rossi was able to create an opportunity for his singers, his listeners, and for us, even today, to think more freely, deeply and more imaginatively about the power of the text, its context, and Rossi's own connection to his faith.

I have always felt that the miracle of combining text and music was a gateway to deeper meaning and that the composer's choices of line and harmony were a roadmap to that knowledge. When I was a young student, I sang Victoria's[3] *O Magnum Mysterium* with a conductor who challenged us to go beyond the simple word painting of the semi-tone ascent and descent on the word *mysterium*. He asked, rhetorically, "But what about that opening fifth? What's *that* all about? Why did the composer choose *that* interval to open?" He quickly answered his own question and explained that, for him and maybe the composer, "That's God coming down from Heaven to become involved in the lives of mankind." (See Figure 1)

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[1] A multi-movement work for two melody instruments and basso continuo.

[2] A typeface based on fifteenth century Sephardic cursive handwriting. The font is named for the famous commentator, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki (1040-1105), and used to notate his commentaries of the Bible and Talmud, although the font only came into use centuries after he lived.

[3] Tomas Luis de Victoria (1548-1611) was the most famous Spanish composer of the Renaissance.

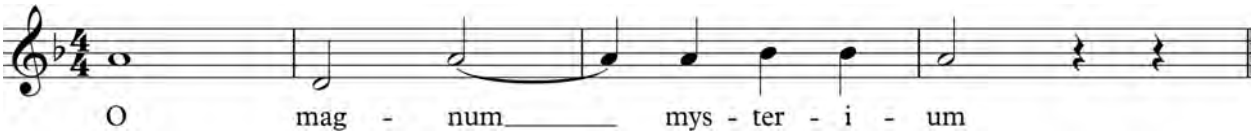


Figure 1. *O Magnum Mysterium*

My antennae for looking beyond the *peshat*—that is, the plain meaning of what we're studying – got a strong, sustained signal. Soon after, I was studying Schein's[4] setting of part of Psalm 126, "They that sow in tears will reap in joy," *Die mit Tränen Säen* with its slow, agonizing, chromatic journey.[5] I was struck by how the musical illustration of the sometimes-excruciating emotional process could lead to catharsis and transform those tears into joy. (See Figure 2)

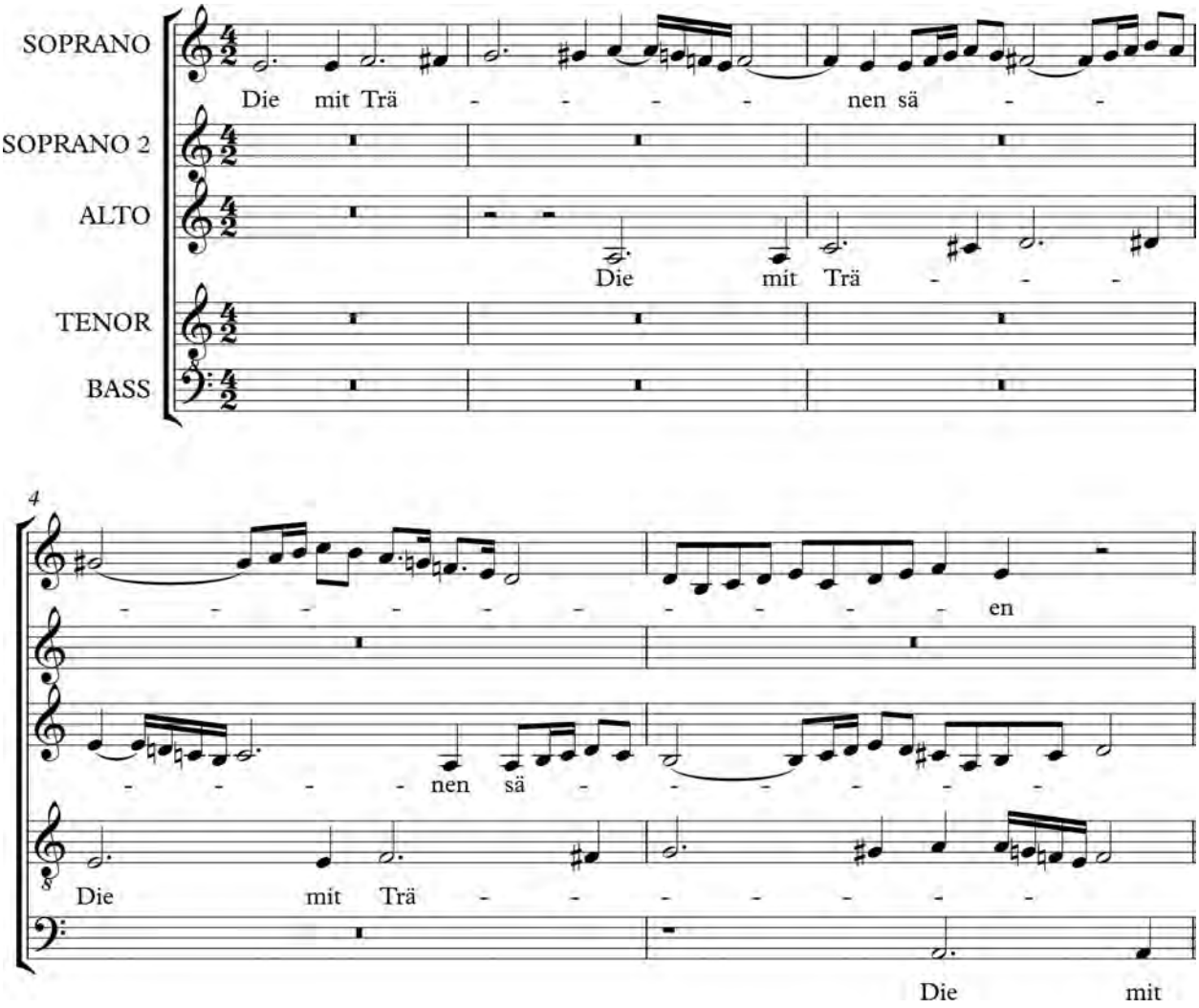


Figure 2. Opening of Schein's *Die mit Tränen Säen*

[4] Johann Hermann Schein (1586-1630) was a German composer of the early Baroque era, and the first to import early Italian stylistic innovations into German music.

[5] In a fugue, possibly because in these kinds of circumstances, *everyone's* road is similar, yet different.

When I next returned to Rossi's settings in *HaShirim Asher LiShlomo*, I looked and listened with more openness and attentiveness, and I found many precious Jewish music jewels, in various shapes and sizes. I share some of them with you now:

Word Painting

First, let's look at some examples of the basic form of word painting in which the music plainly reflects the text.[6] In *Bar'khu*, the musical figure accompanying the text *l'olam vaed* (forever) is passed from the top-line to the middle line, and, by continuing the musical motif and repeating the words, the idea of "forever-ness" is represented and evoked.[7] (See Figure 3)

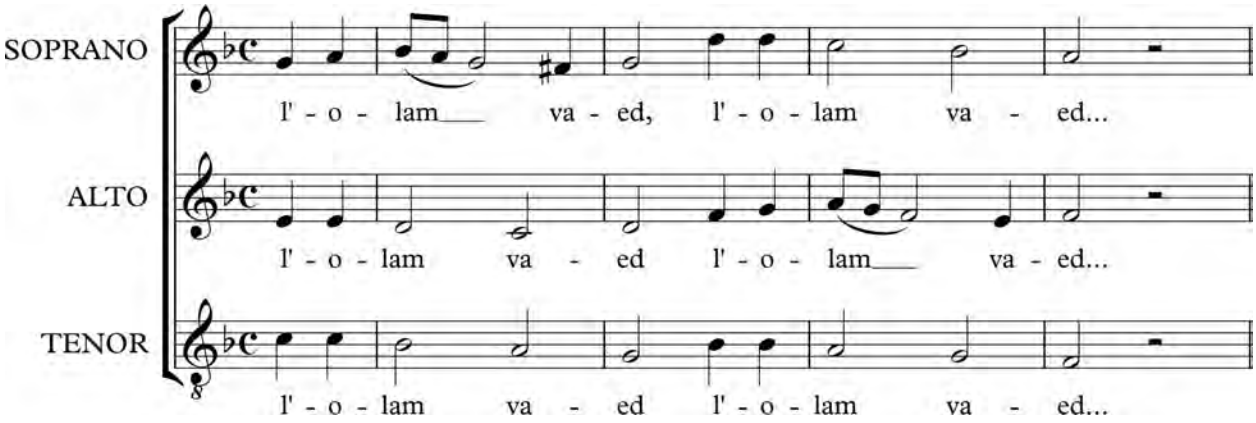


Figure 3. *L'olam va'ed* from the conclusion of Rossi's *Bar'khu*

In Psalm 146, the Tenors illustrate *yashuv l'admato* (he will return to his earth) by descending (i.e. returning) from the C to the G. The Altos, and subsequently the Sopranos and Tenors, continue evoking that descent on the words *bayom hahu (*on that very day) with their descending imitation. The phrase ends with a cross-relation between D major and a shocking F major on the word *Avdu* (are lost), a clash that does make us feel "lost" for just that moment. (See Figure 4)

A little later in this setting, in describing God as Creator, Rossi has the Alto, Tenor and Bass singing the word *Oseh (shamayim va-aretz),* "maker" (of Heaven and Earth) in staggered entrances suggesting what we would call today a mini-chain reaction. (See Figure 5)

[6] In madrigals and motets the simplest examples would be the words ascending/*ascendit*, where the musical line would rise and descending/*descendit*, where the musical line would fall.

[7] Notwithstanding the representation in all of the illustrations to follow, the notation of music in Rossi's time did not include measures, bars or bar lines (nor did multiple parts appear together in a score, but only individually.) The usage of that vocabulary in this essay is a convenient method of referring to the *tactus* (underlying rhythmic pulse) of the music. In Rossi's collection, one *tactus* equals one bar.

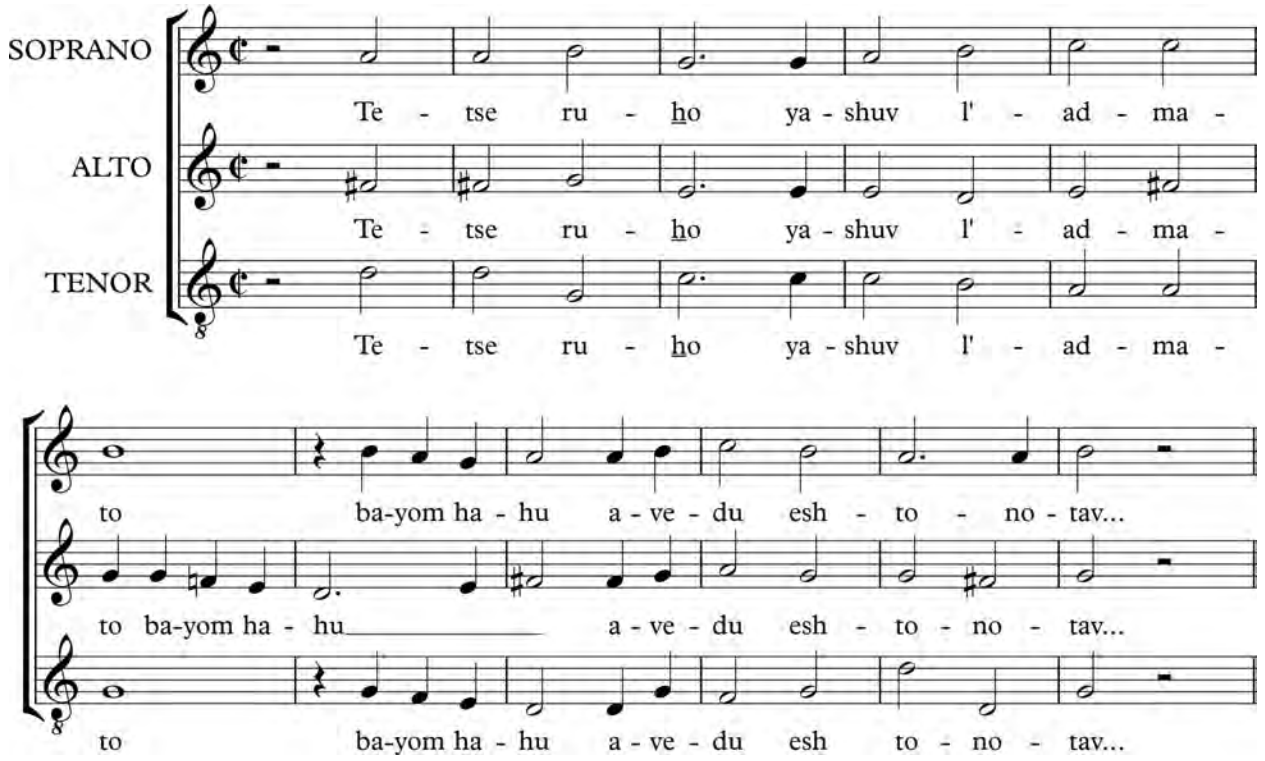


Figure 4. Psalm 146: *Tetse ruho yashuv l'admato…*

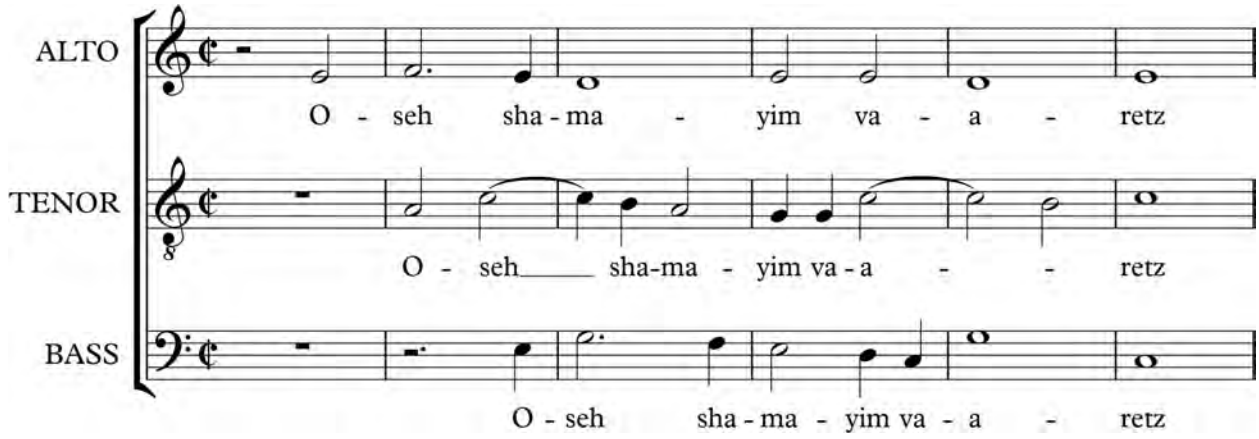


Figure 5. Psalm 146 *Oseh shamayim va'aretz*

In the opening of Psalm 137 (By the waters of Babylon) Rossi uses the same technique used by other composers to suggest water. The opening flowing lines in the Tenor and Bass on the words *Al Naharot* are further emphasized by the overlapping between the two parts and their eventual return to their natural tessitura - just as water will flow over itself. As other composers did, he elongated the duration of the note values to mimic the meaning of *sham yashavnu* (there we sat). However, when it comes to evoking the next verb, *bakhinu* (we wept), Rossi has a unique and startling approach. He uses two consecutive but clashing major chords, D major and B major, to create a bewildering, disconcerting, and emotional state of being a captive in Babylon and remembering Zion *(B'zokhrenu et Tziyon)*—which is remembered here at the

cadence—with a chord whose quality is defined by what I can only call a "melancholy" third. (See Figure 6)

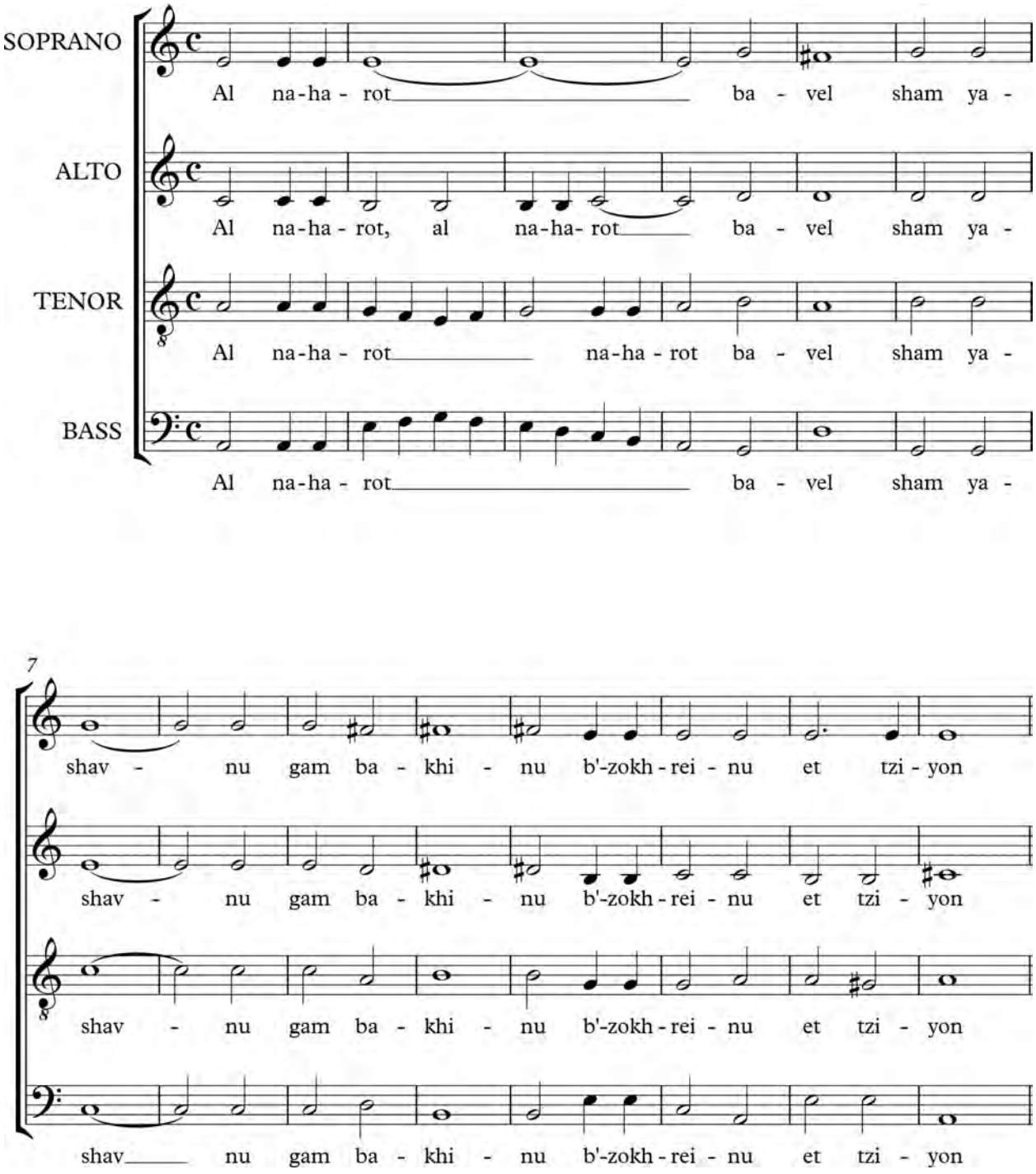


Figure 6. Psalm 137- *Al naharot bavel…*

Keter, the Sephardic *Kedushah,* begins with a long melisma. Suddenly, a little more than half-way through the first phrase, the Soprano jumps up and out of its natural tessitura and stays

more than an octave above the lower three parts, who are in close harmony. This provides the crowning effect that we should expect to feel from the word *Keter* (crown.) (See Figure 7)

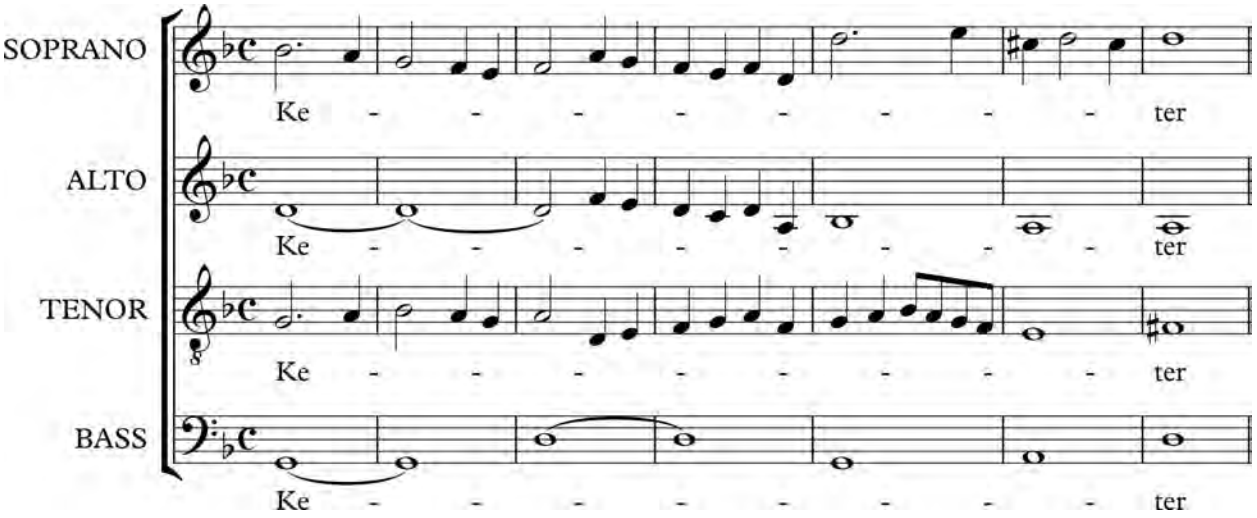


Figure 7. Opening of *Keter*

When God's ministering angels ask each other *Ayeh m'kom k'vodo*? (Where is the place of His glory?) Rossi evokes this inner dialogue by first having the Sopranos and Altos ask the question *Ayeh* (where) before the Tenors and Basses interrupt them to ask the same question. (See Figure 8)

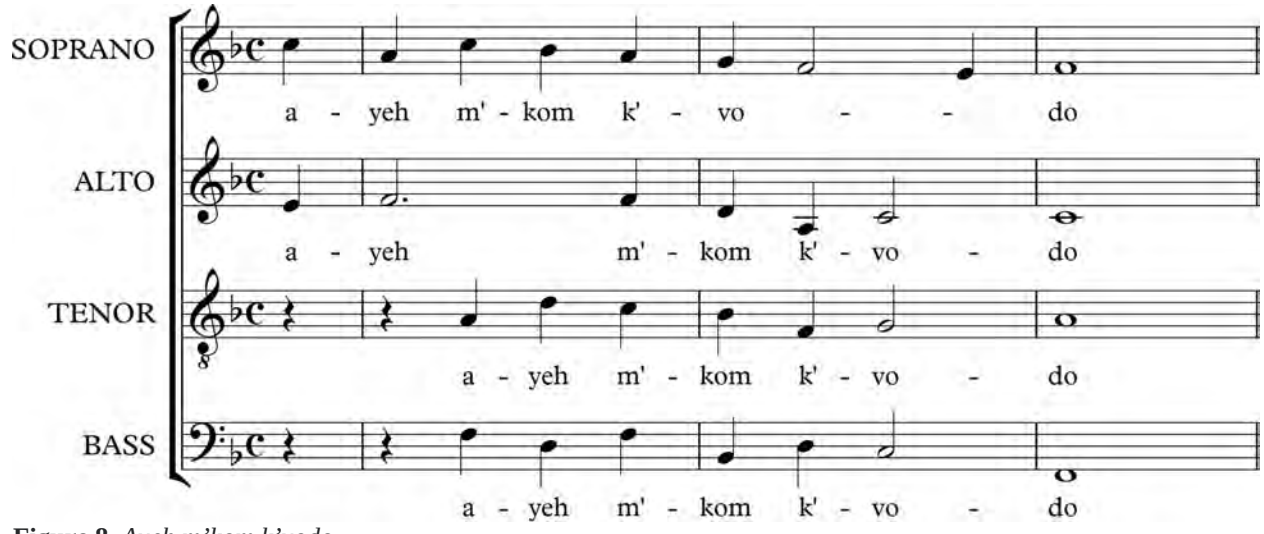


Figure 8. *Ayeh m'kom k'vodo*

The very next music that Rossi writes in this piece highlights the spatial gap between God in His heavenly abode and His people to whom He turns. *Mim'komo* (from His place) begins with an F major chord, and through two back-relating dominants descends - with Soprano and Bass each going down a fourth to A major as God turns to His people (*Yifen l'amo).* The

tessitura of this progression changes abruptly when the very next chord is the exact same F Major voicing which began this Divine-human encounter. (See Figure 9)

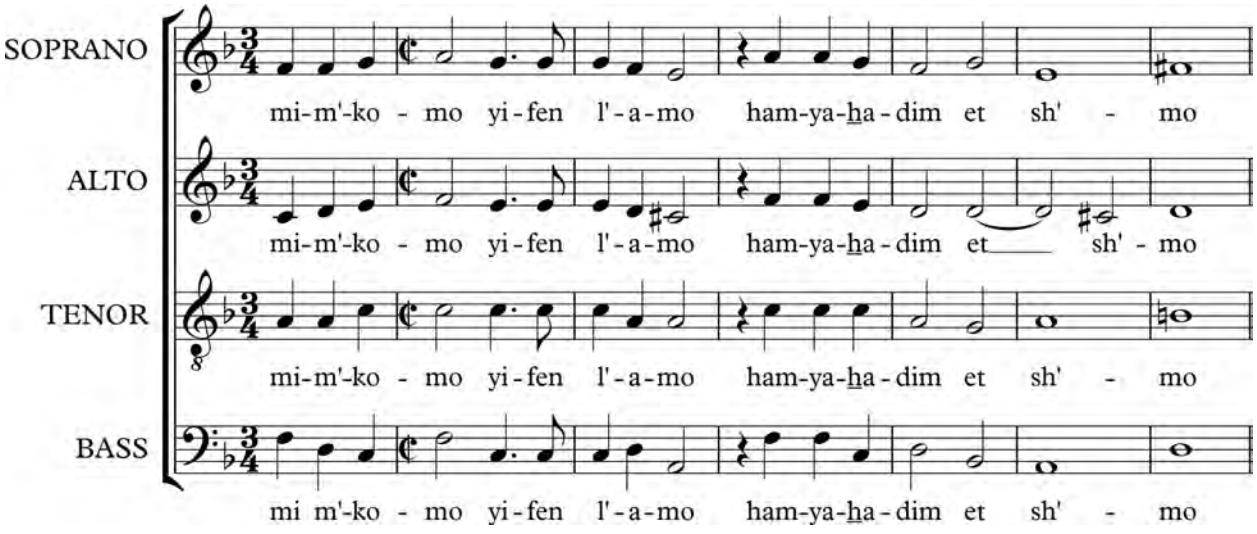


Figure 9. *Mim'komo yifen l'amo*

As the piece concludes, the text and the music praise God, who will reign forever, from generation to generation. Rossi outdoes himself in his treatment of the phrase *l'dor vador* (from generation to generation) by having the Soprano begin a quarter note motion that is passed along to the Alto line, which continues this quarter note motion (while repeating these two words) for a combined total of 11 consecutive quarter notes (against a wall of half notes). All of this assures us of continuity throughout the passing of generations (and quarter notes) and of God's presence. *Halleluyah*! (see Figure 10)

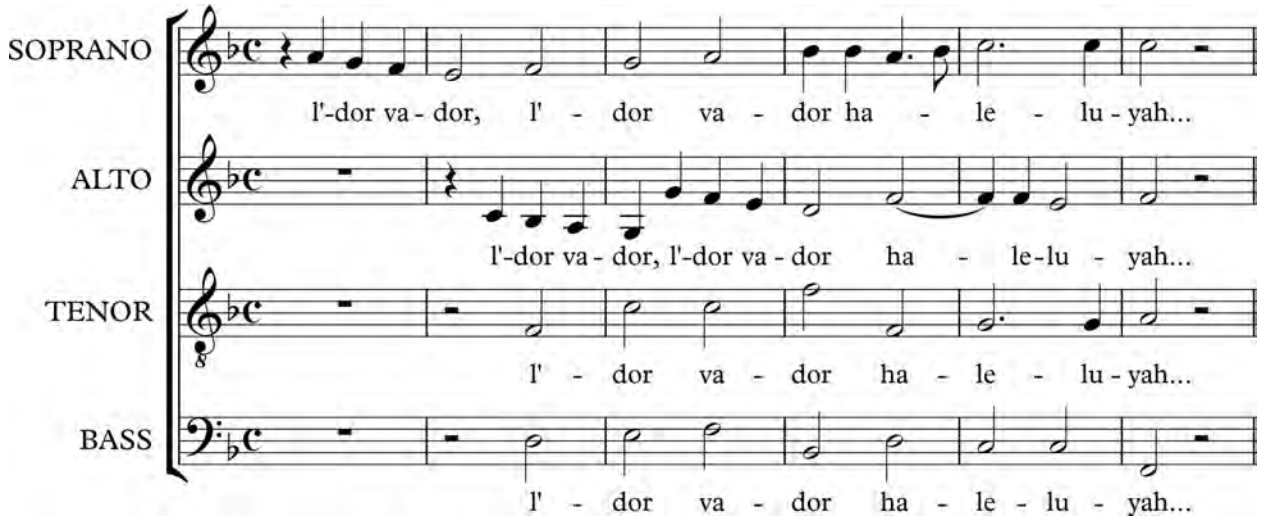


Figure 10. *L'dor vador, halleluyah*

There is one brief but ecstatic moment at the end of Rossi's magnificent treatment of Psalm 29. In describing the eternal nature of God, "Who sat enthroned during the Flood and is sitting enthroned forever," Rossi treats the word *vayeshev* ([God] sits) by initially having Soprano 2 (Sesto in Rossi's score) sing *vayeshev* starting with a series of Ds as the top note of a Bb major chord sung by a quartet. Then Soprano 1 (Canto) interrupts and repeats the same text (*vayeshev*) with a series of high As sitting on top of an F major chord – as God sits at the top of the world—sung by the complete six-part texture. That A is the highest note of the piece (and there is no higher note for Soprano in the entire collection) and it provides a brief, unexpected and thrilling moment through which we can experience that which is above and beyond us. (See Figure 11)

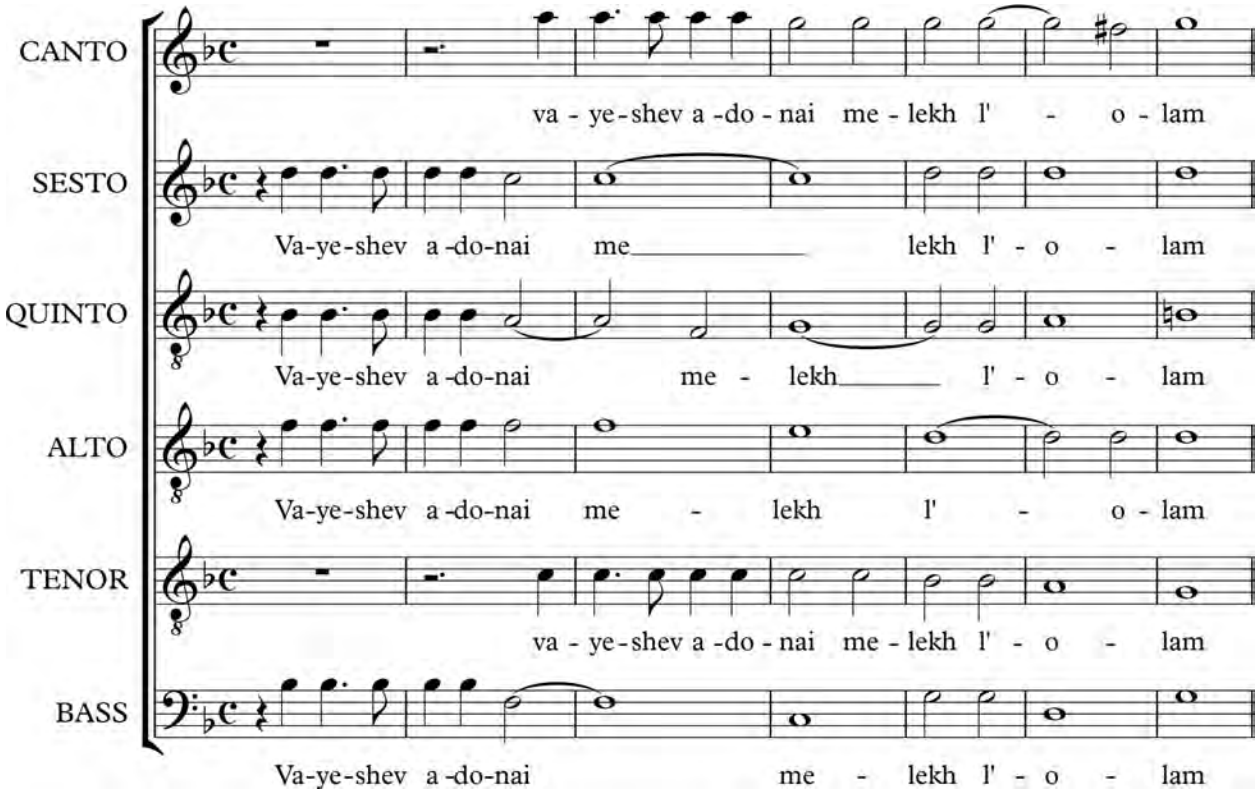


Figure 11. *Vayeshev Adonai melekh l'olam*

One final, small and easily overlooked gem appears at the end of the first phrase of Rossi's setting of *Adon Olam* for double chorus. In describing the Master of the Universe as eternal and existing before any forms were created (*b'terem kol y'tzir nivra*), Rossi demonstrates the relative insignificance of the *y'tzir* (form) as compared to God, the Omnipotent Creator, by having all four parts suddenly drop down in range, giving the listener an unmistakable feeling and aural understanding of this dynamic. However, on the word *nivra* (was created) Rossi cadences on a major chord, revealing his (and God's) positive view of creation (See Figure 12).

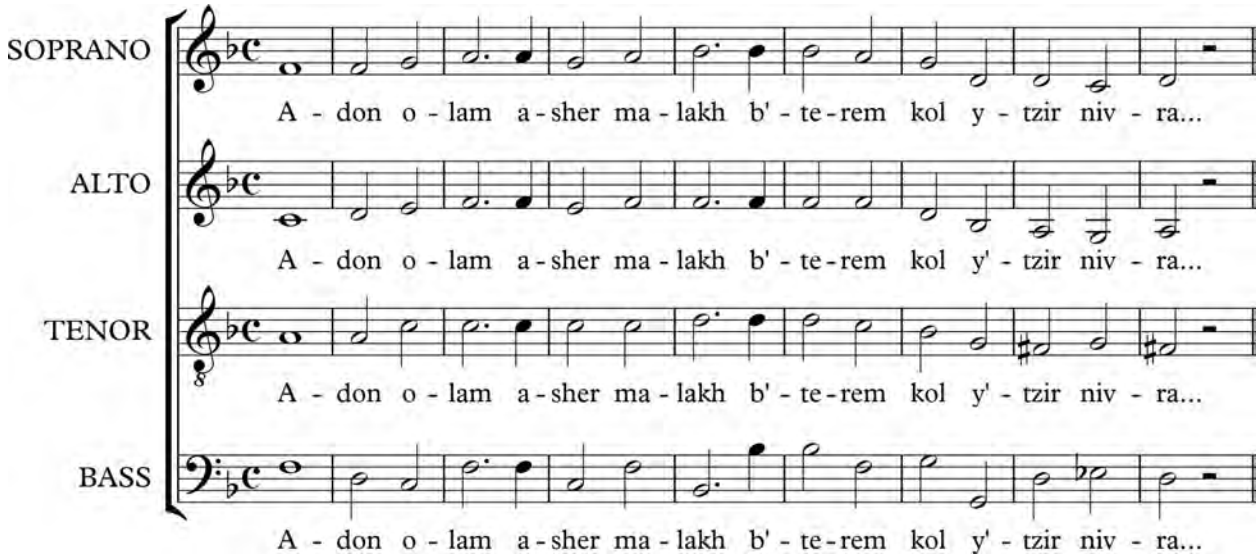


Figure 12. *Adon olam asher malakh b'terem kol y'tzir nivra*

Holy Numbers

When composers of church music wanted to signal the idea of holiness, they would often change the meter from duple to triple. This *tempus perfectum* (perfect time) would be a reminder of the perfection of the Trinity and of holy Christian thinking. Rossi also uses this triple meter for purely musical reasons, but sometimes he is celebrating Jewish three-part ideas and thinking. For example, in his setting of the closing hymn *Adon Olam*, the three-ness and Jewish holiness he presents is the description of God as *hu haya, hu hoveh* and *hu yih'yeh* (God was, is and will be). (See Figure 13)

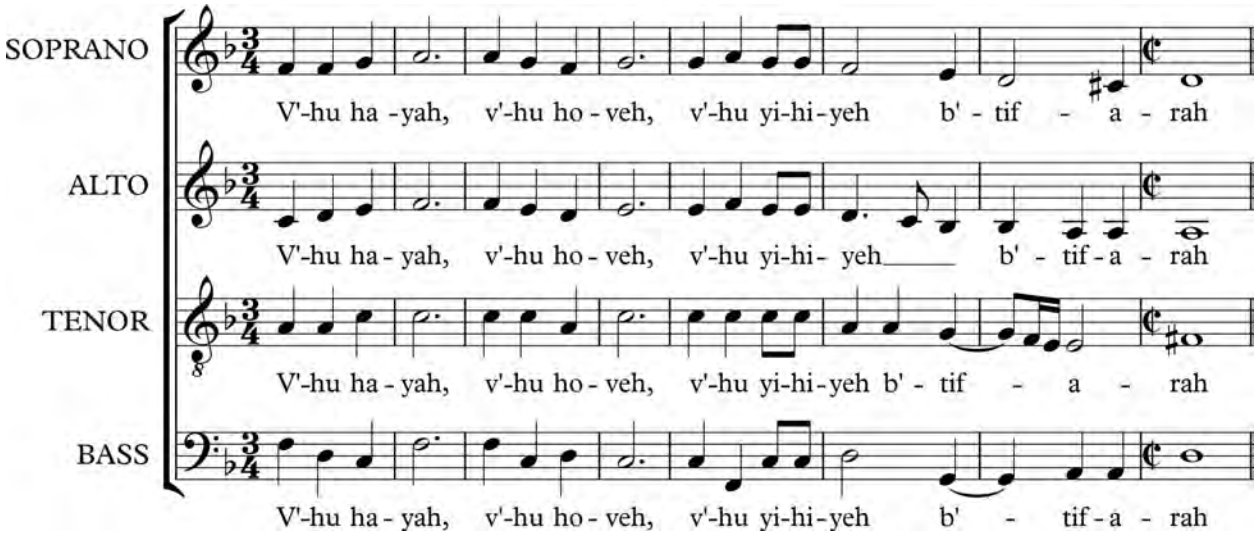


Figure 13. *V'hu hayah, v'hu hoveh, v'hu yih'yeh*

A little later in the piece, he returns to the triplum to share that *v'hu Eli, v'hai go'ali, v'tzur hevli b'yom tzarah (*He is my God, a living [God] Who saves [me] ,and the Rock of my pain in times of distress). (See Figure 14)

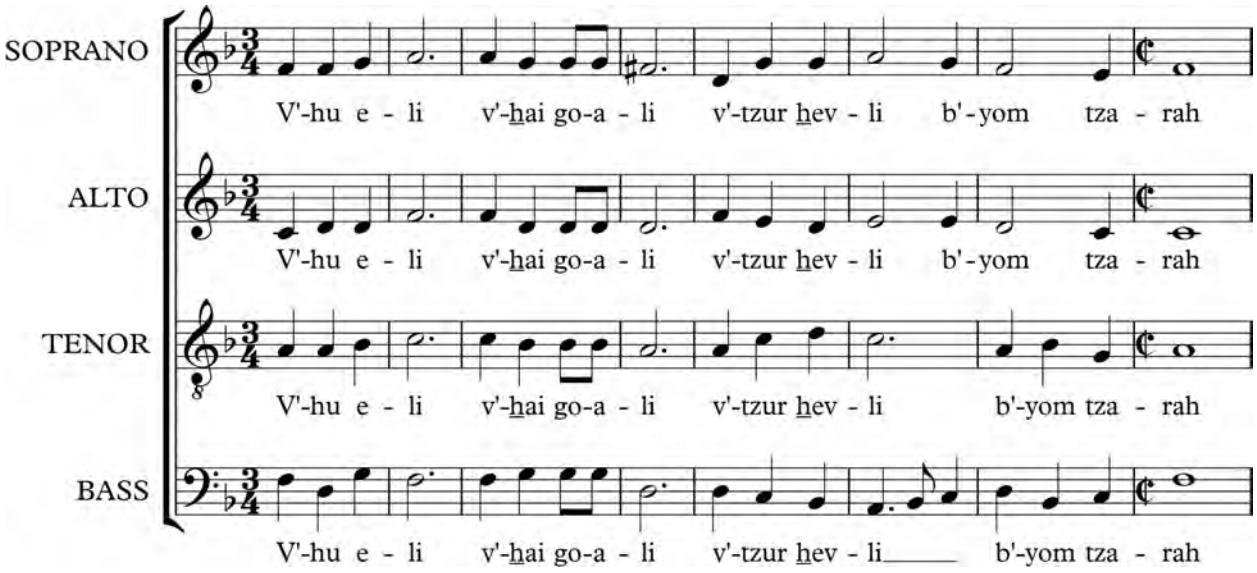


Figure 14. *V'hu Eli, v'hai go'ali*

In *Keter, Hu Moshi'enu, Hu Yashmi'enu* (He is our Sovereign, He is our Deliverer) is also written in that "holy" meter. (See Figure 15)

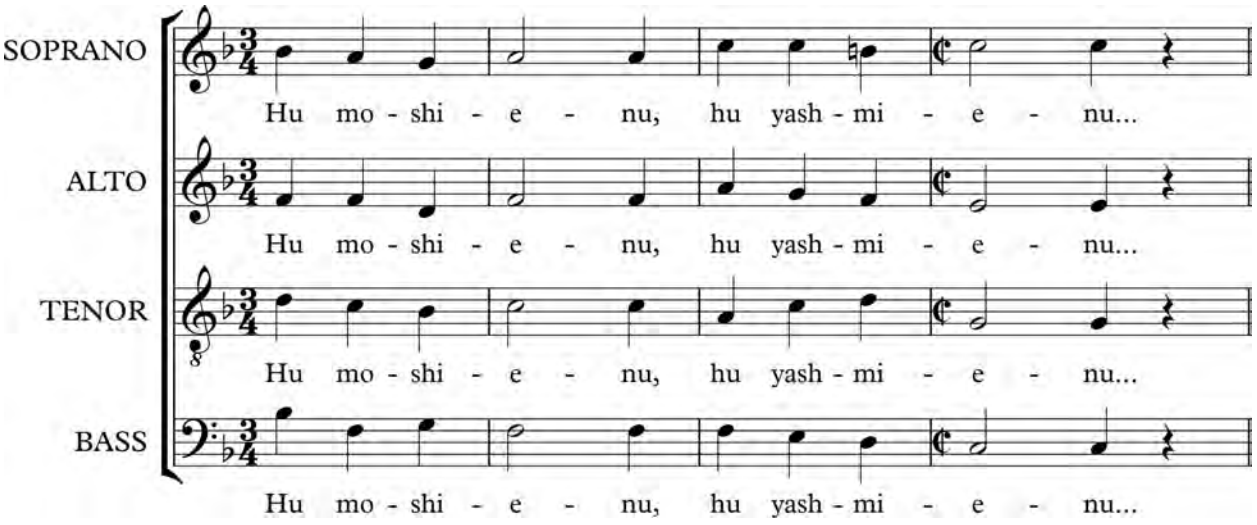


Figure 15. *Hu Moshi'enu, Hu Yashmi'enu*

Earlier in this same piece, in a moment we referenced above - where God is pictured as being in His heavenly domain - that one word *Mim'komo (*from His place) is sung for just one measure in triple meter. Just one measure is necessary to immediately convey the holiness of the place and of God. (See above, Figure 9).

We have seen how Rossi was able to repurpose the Christian holy number three in music to further his Jewish interpretation and commentary. But is there a holy Jewish number that Rossi can use in a musical way to reaffirm his Jewishness and add to our musical Jewish consciousness? Yes, seven is the holy Jewish number[8], and Rossi's usage of it makes him the

[8] Based on the Creation story, in which God rested (*Shabba*t) on the seventh day.

first (and only, at least for a few hundred years) conceptual Jewish composer. This is yet another "first" that we can add to Rossi's illustrious list. Composers of his era and later created phrases that had even numbers of bars, usually four or eight. But Rossi finds elegantly imperceptible ways of writing seven-bar phrases, especially when setting the most sacred words in a religious text. One example is the opening phrase of *Keter,* although the soprano register displacement in the service of word painting distracts us from noticing the balance/ imbalance of the seven-bar phrase. (See Figure 7 above).

Rossi's setting of *Elohim Hashivenu* provides four very clear examples of seven-bar phrases. The opening phrase with its two-part (Alto and Tenor) Renaissance texture leads us, through a lyrical seven-bar phrase to the final seventh-bar unison as we finish singing/saying a name of our one God. The very next phrase is also seven bars long, just in case you might think that the first seven was an accident. (See Figure 16)

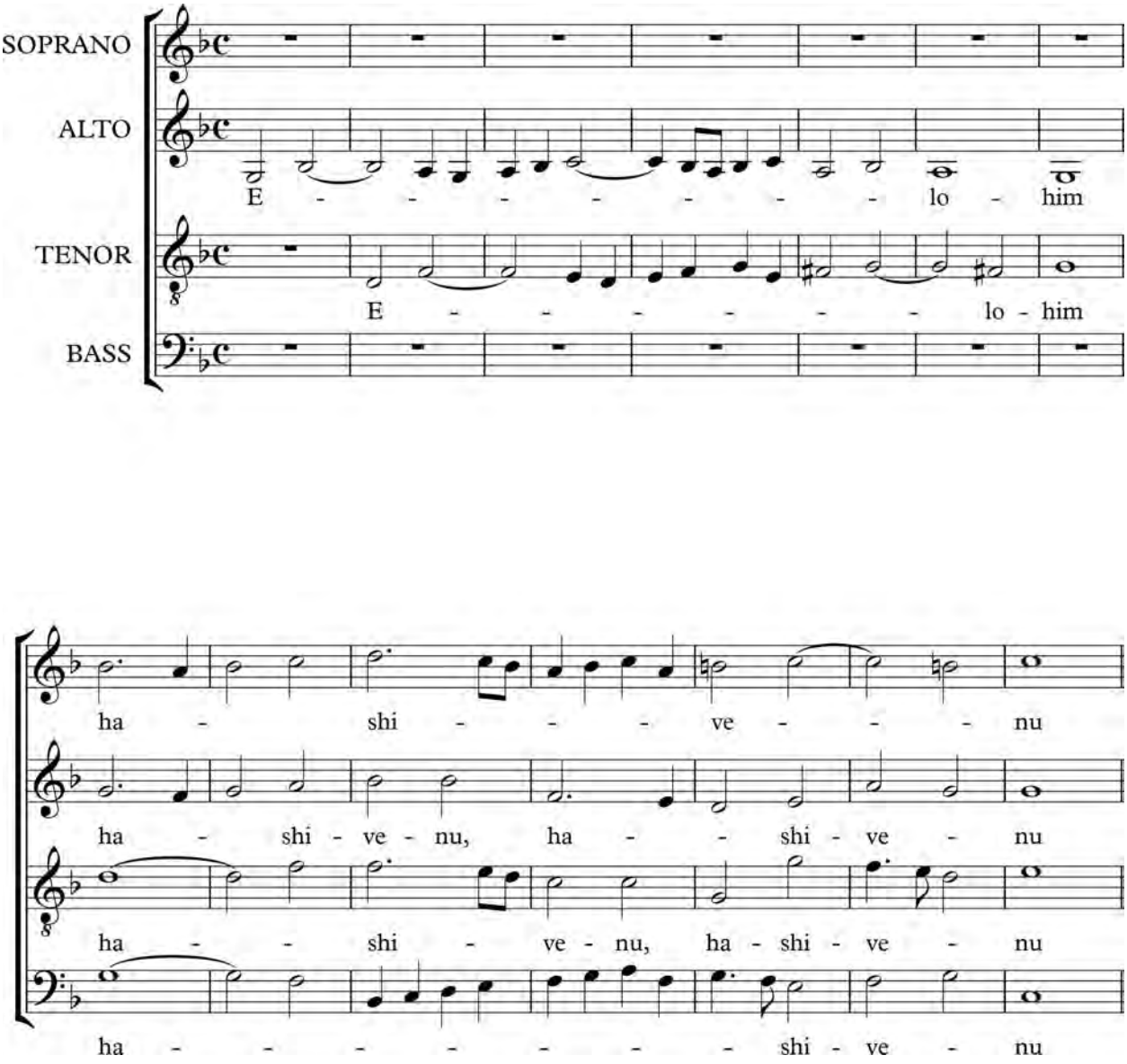


Figure 16. Seven-bar opening phrases of *Elohim Hashivenu*

The second verse *Elohim tz'vaot* (God of Hosts) also begins with a two-part texture (this time Soprano and Alto) and cadences again in a unison on the downbeat of the seventh bar before being interrupted with syncopated entrances from other parts. (See Figure 17)

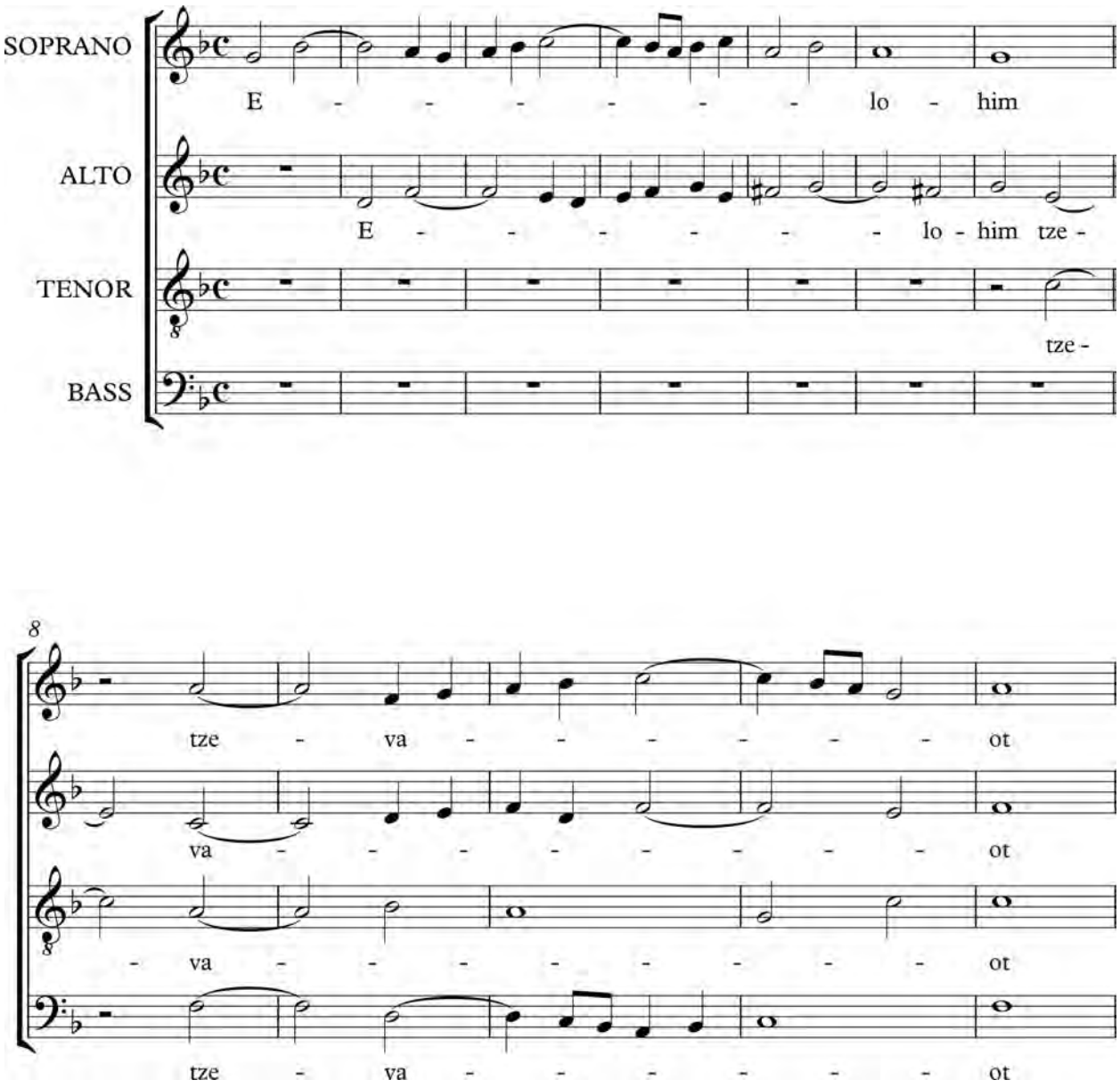


Figure 17. 7-bar opening of *Elohim Hashivenu* second verse

The final example of "sevens" in this piece is a setting of the word *Hashivenu* (Cause us to return) where the top line, in typical Rossi instrumental coloratura mode, revels in a circuitous eighth-note road to "return." All of this is accompanied by an initially static, but increasingly interesting lower three-part texture (I'm imagining krumhorns). (See Figure 18)

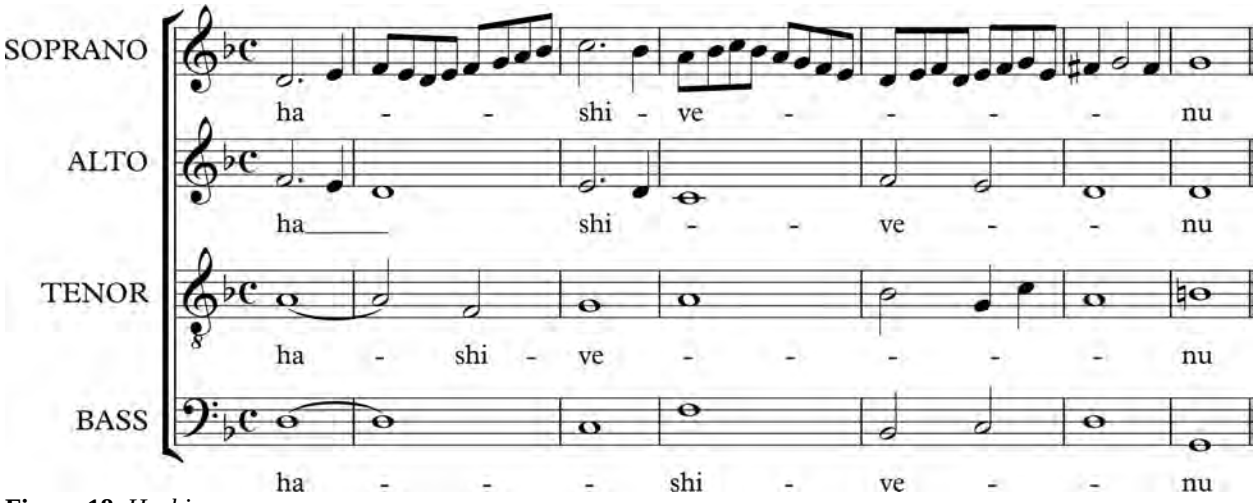


Figure 18. *Hashivenu*

The greatest example of Rossi's genius in this regard is the opening phrase of *Bar'khu et Adonai* ([Bless] God). Not only is this call to worship written in a seven-bar phrase, as is, again, the following phrase, but at the very same time, the contour of the Soprano/Canto line is mimicking the physical gesture that worshippers make when reciting the *Bar'khu,* that is, bending the knee and bowing down. (Figure 19)

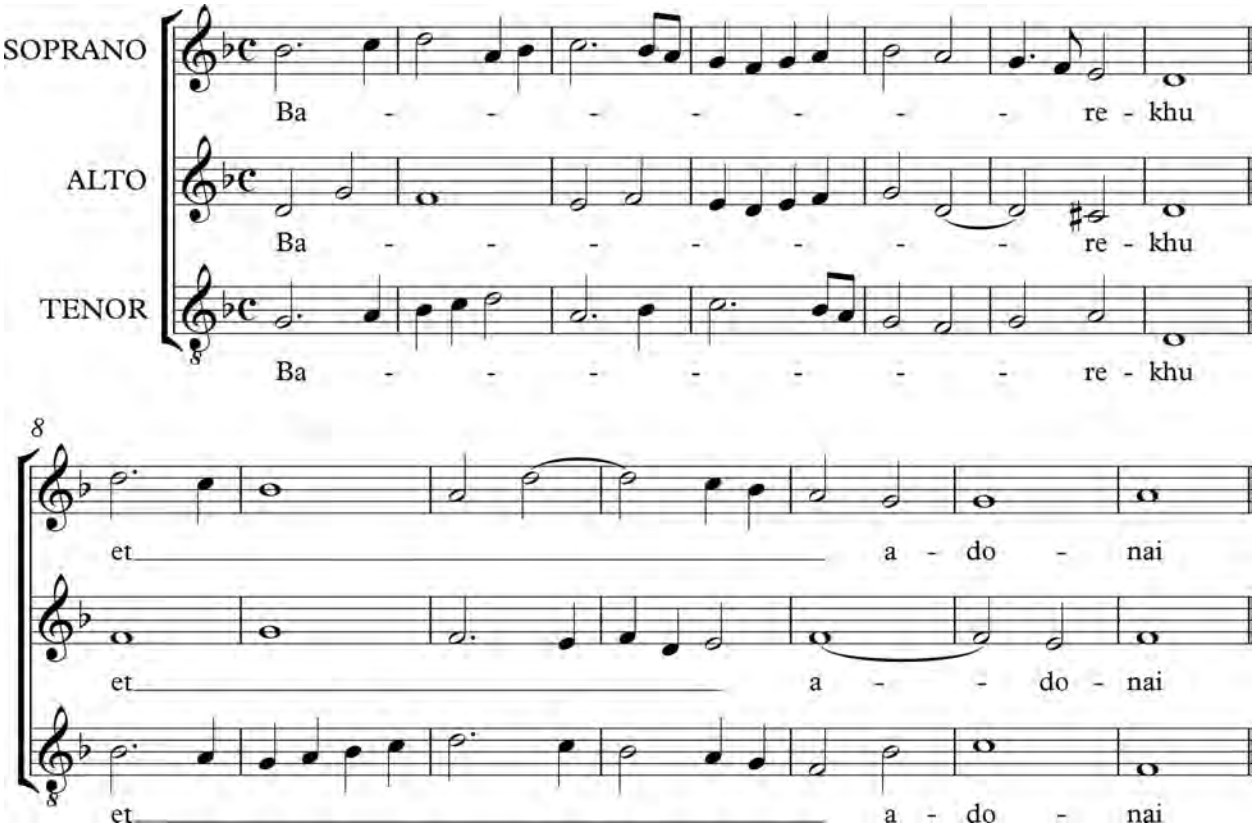


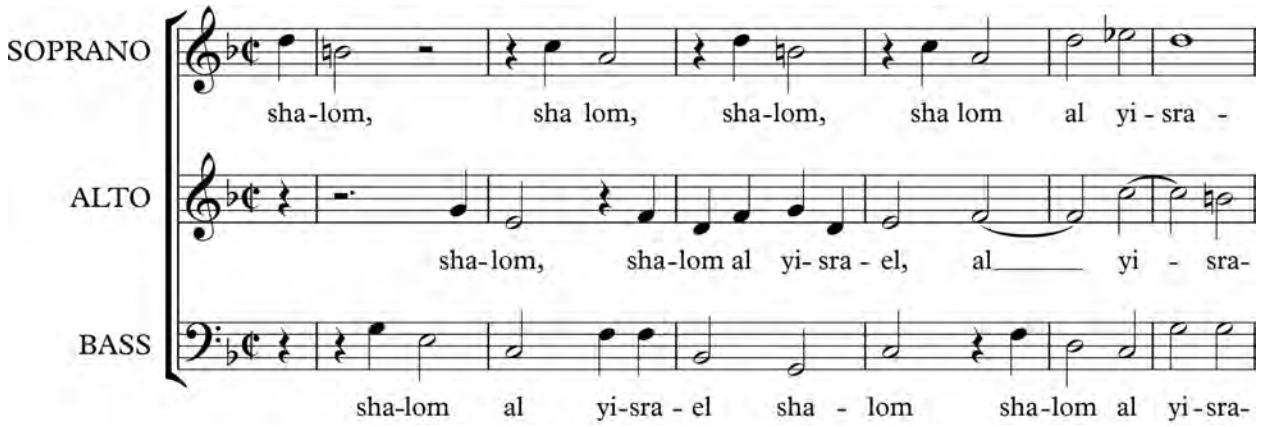
Figure 19. *Bar'khu et Adonai*

So to recap: we're singing the call to worship while the top line is mimicking what our physical worship posture should be, and all in the context of living a seven-bar phrase -- and of course, on the seventh beat/ ie. seventh day, we rest on the unison/octave. What a confluence of holiness! It might not *sound* Jewish—the relationship of Gregorian chant to Temple chant notwithstanding—but it surely *is* great, serious and meaningfully authentic Jewish music.[9]

Is Rossi Sending a Message?

Before I conclude with examples of what I consider the epitome of Rossi's creative Jewish motet genius and commentary, I'd like to highlight four of the unusual compositional moments where I think Rossi is sending us a message (or at least winking at us):

In all three versions of Psalm 128 (for three, five and six voices) the final text *Shalom al Yisrael* (Peace be upon Israel) is parsed out in such a way that the word *Shalom*/Peace actually suggests the other usage of the word, as a greeting, i.e. "hello."[10] By having just that single word, *Shalom*, (and not the rest of the textual phrase, *al Yisrael*) thrown back and forth between the vocal parts (in musical parlance, a hocket), Rossi changes, for just those moments, the dynamic of the prayer into an opportunity for community communication.[11] (See Figure 20)



[9] I am always reminded by this of the ancient public confluence of holiness when, on the holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur, the holiest person in Israel, the *Kohen Gadol*, would enter the holiest place, the *Kodesh ha-Kodashim*.
[10] Yes, of course, the greeting implies "peace to you" as well.
[11] In those moments, I imagine the *Kiddush l'vanah* prayers in which the worshippers turn to three of their fellow congregants and say "*Shalom aleikhem*."

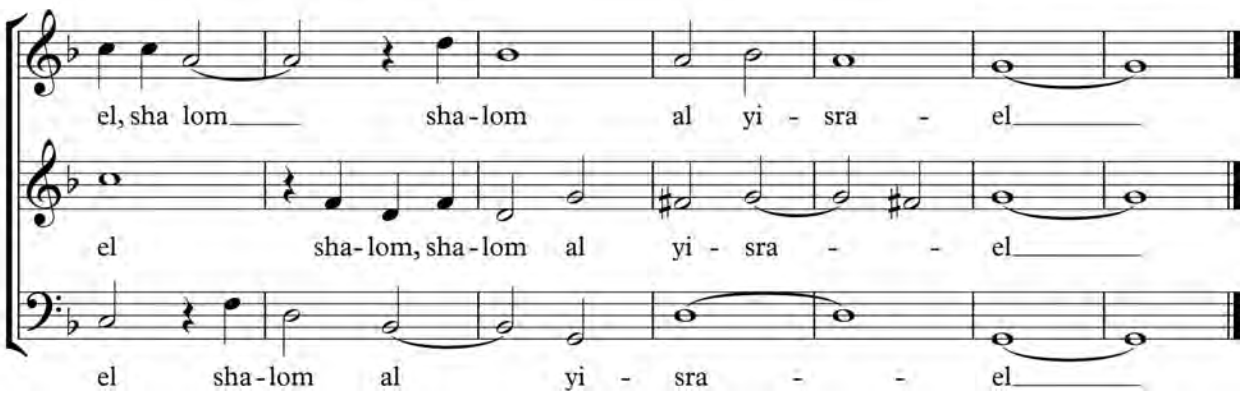


Figure 20. Psalm 128, *Shalom*

In the middle of Rossi's stirring eight-part setting of Psalm 92, the Psalmist is explaining that God's thoughts are very deep (*m'od amku mahsh'votekha*) and that a boor cannot know (*ish ba'ar lo yeda*) and a fool cannot understand this (*uch'sil lo yavin et zot*). Rossi makes it a point to have all eight parts, especially Chorus I, singing at the top of their ranges, almost shouting from the rooftops, "A boor and a fool can't understand this!" It is hard for me not to think that Rossi had some of his more ignorant critics and other fools in mind when he composed these few bars (See Figure 21) and that the "this" that they can't understand includes Rossi's own music.

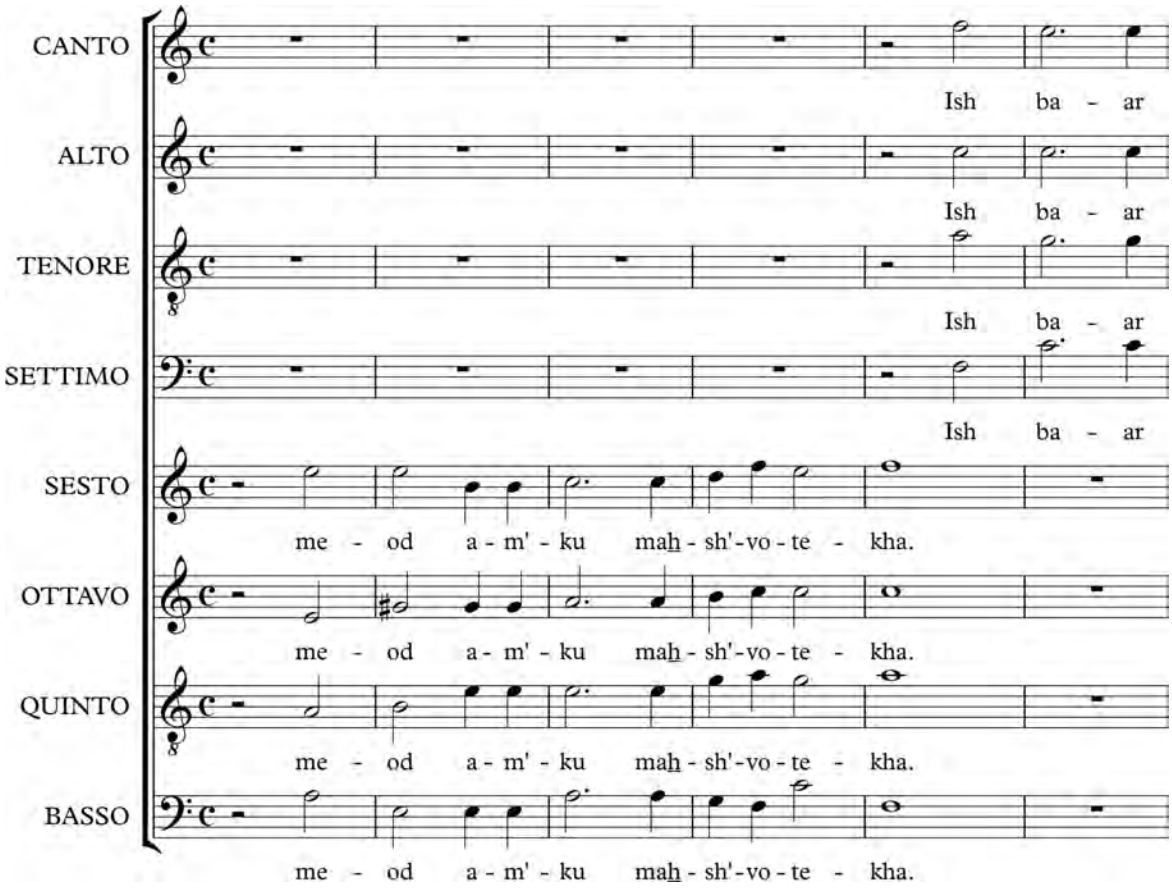
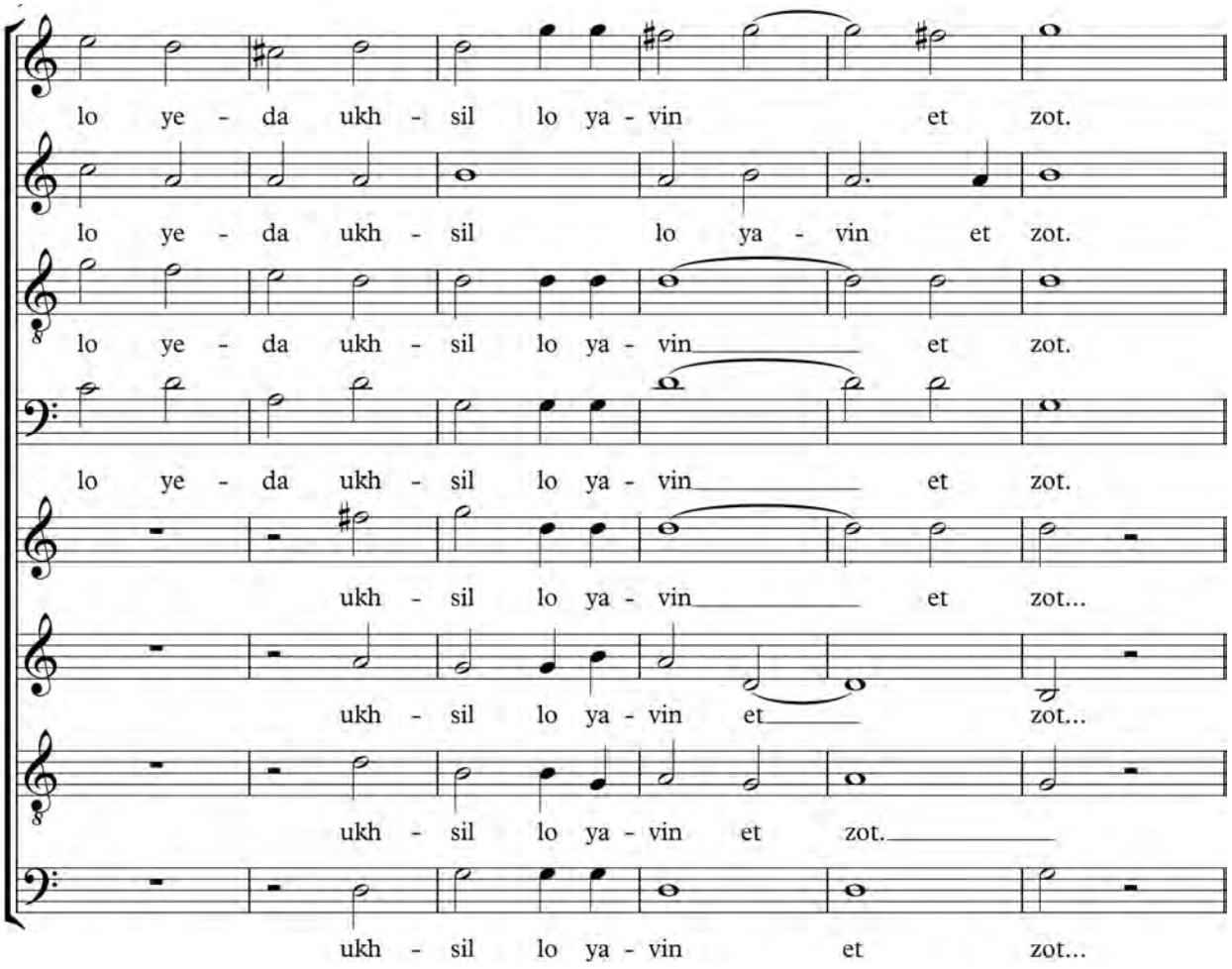


Figure 21. Excerpt from Psalm 92



There is much commentary on the difference and meaning of the two words which we primarily use to refer to God: *Adonai* (the tetragrammaton) and *Elohim*. In his setting of Psalm 80, Rossi makes an extremely direct musical juxtaposition and interpretation. I leave it to you to compare it to the various rabbinical approaches.[12] (See Figure 22)

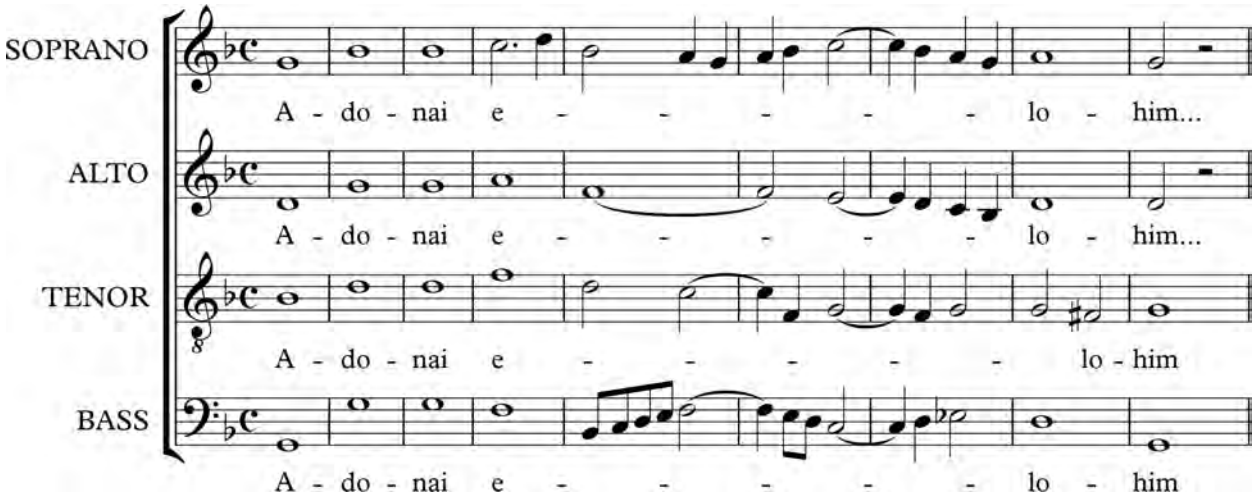


Figure 22 *Adonai, Elohim*

[12] See Rashi on Ex. 6:2, *vayomer elav ani Adonai*; Ibn Ezra on Ex.6:3, *ushmi Adonai;* Ramban on Ex. 6:2 *vay'daber Elohim el Moshe*. See also Yehuda Halevi *The Kuzari,*, 4:1-15.

Aside from the ideas Rossi expresses in his music, he also makes his opinion known in the ways he chooses to repeat certain texts. At the close of Psalm 29, for example, Rossi repeats the second half of the closing verse, *Adonai oz l'amo yiten, Adonai y'varekh et amo vashalom* (God will give strength to His people; God will bless His nation with peace). In this regard, it feels as if Rossi, given the powerless circumstances of the Jewish people throughout his lifetime, is combining the surety of the Psalmist's promise and Rossi's own prayer and hope.

Similarly at the end of one of our closing hymns, *Ein Kelohenu* (There is none like our God… Lord… King… Savior…), Rossi adds in a repetition of the entire last stanza, *Atah Hu Eloheinu* (You are our God). After praising God with 1) There is none like our God/ Lord/ King/ Savior; 2) Who is like our God?/ Lord?/ King?/ Savior? 3) We give thanks to our God/ Lord/ King/ Savior; 4) Blessed be our God/ Lord/ King/ Savior. I ask myself, why repeat? It's exactly the same music, so it's not a musical choice. I think it's a psycho-emotional choice. The first four statements seem like articulations of fact, whereas it's only in the last verse - with the word "You" - that the personal nature of your true relationship and connection to *your* God is experienced. Considering the pressure that Rossi and his co-religionists (especially those with high profile positions in Christian society) were under to convert, Rossi's repetition feels more to me like a bold statement of faith, self-empowerment and defiance.

Rossi at His Finest

Two of the pieces I referenced earlier, are so extraordinary that they require greater examination:

Elohim Hashivenu (excerpts from Psalm 80) consists of three similar verses that each end with the word *V'nivashe'ah* (And we will be saved), enabling us to see three of Rossi's different articulations of the sometimes long and often complicated musical journey to salvation. The first of these is revelatory and, harmonically, truly groundbreaking. In the middle of the word, the music pivots on the Alto Eb - and the sudden C minor - with the phrase's goal being one of the earliest, if not *the* first, half diminished ii6/5 chord here on the last stressed syllable (*v'niva-SHE-'ah*.) My amazement and excitement at hearing that unique chord in a Jewish musical context is still with me today, especially as it's heading to a Picardy third cadence (all three verses end with a G major chord). The harmonic action is powerfully expressive, especially with the closing ii6/5 V-I cadence. (See Figure 23)

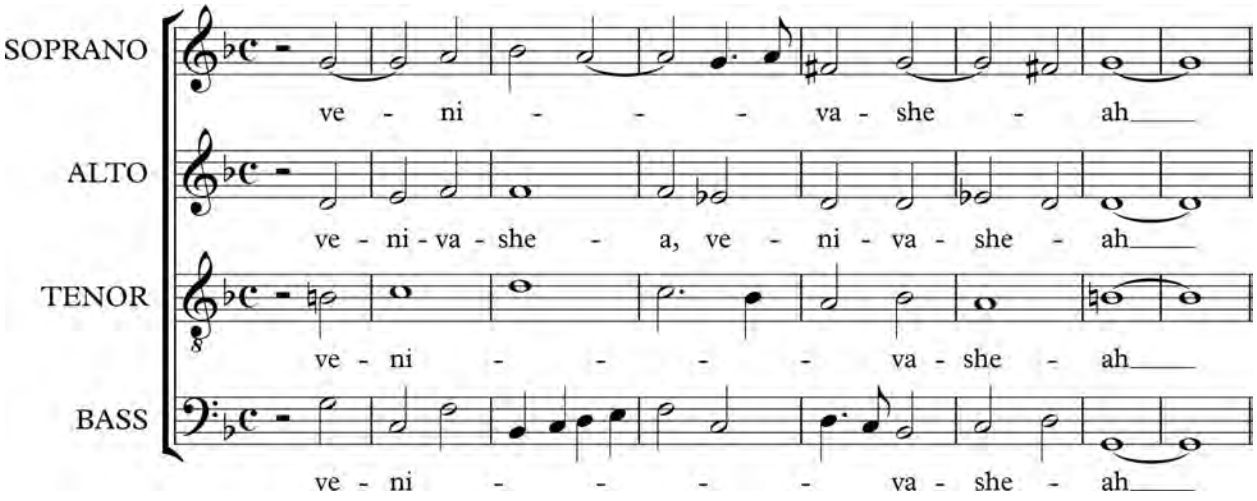
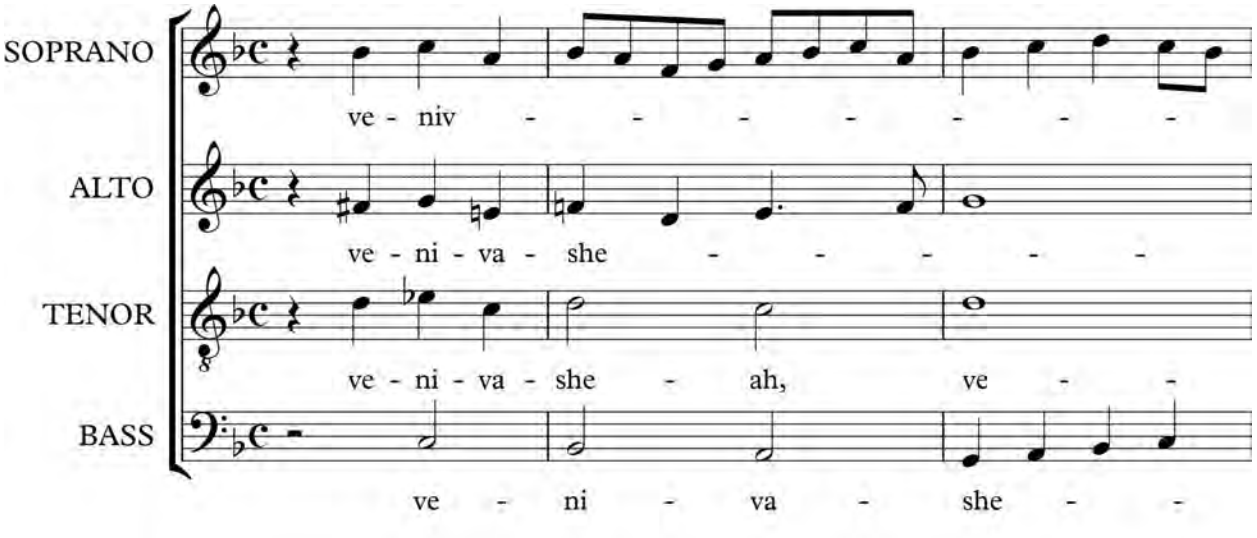


Figure 23. First setting of *V'nivashe'ah*

The second setting of *v'nivashe'ah* begins with a surprise D augmented chord and continues in quick succession through C minor and A minor, which forces us to look for (harmonic) stability. It arrives via a long and undulating soprano melisma, supported by a G minor-ish harmony, which leads us to a more confident Vsus4 -V-I cadence. Apparently, the Alto finds its truth before the others find theirs. (See Figure 24)

The third and final setting, which closes the piece, is very elaborate, filled with melismas and with very rapid and imitative musical content in the Soprano and Alto voices supported by sometimes melismatic, but purely functional Tenor and Bass parts. The Soprano and Alto lines and their interplay reflect the twists, turns and accommodations necessary to reach the goal and to never lose sight of it. If you want to experience salvation, hitch your emotional/musical life to Rossi and let him and his music lead you to it, if only for the moment. (See Figure 25)



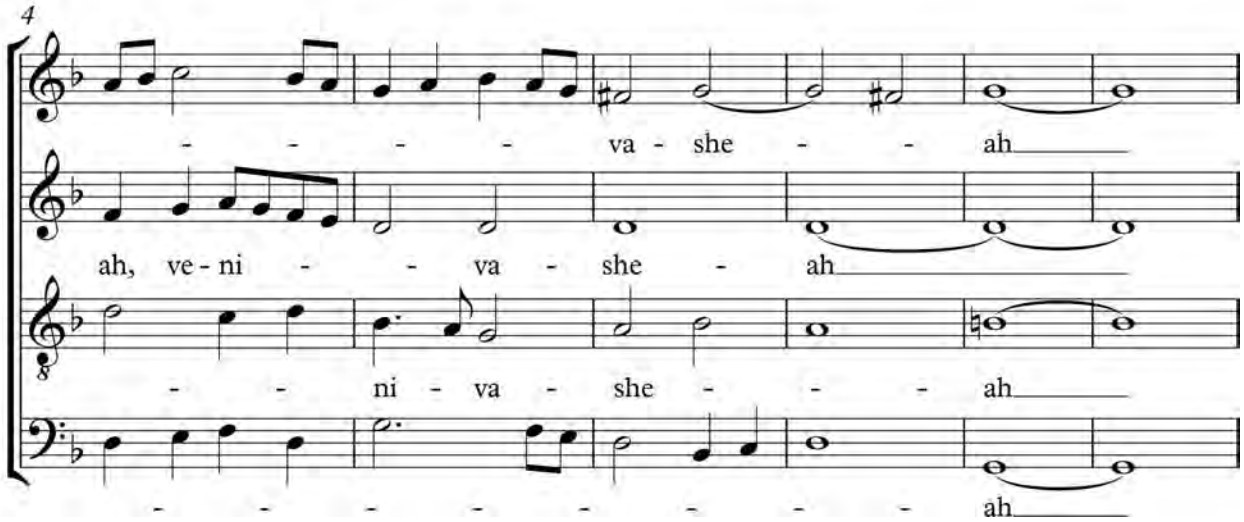


Figure 24. Second setting of *V'nivashe'ah*

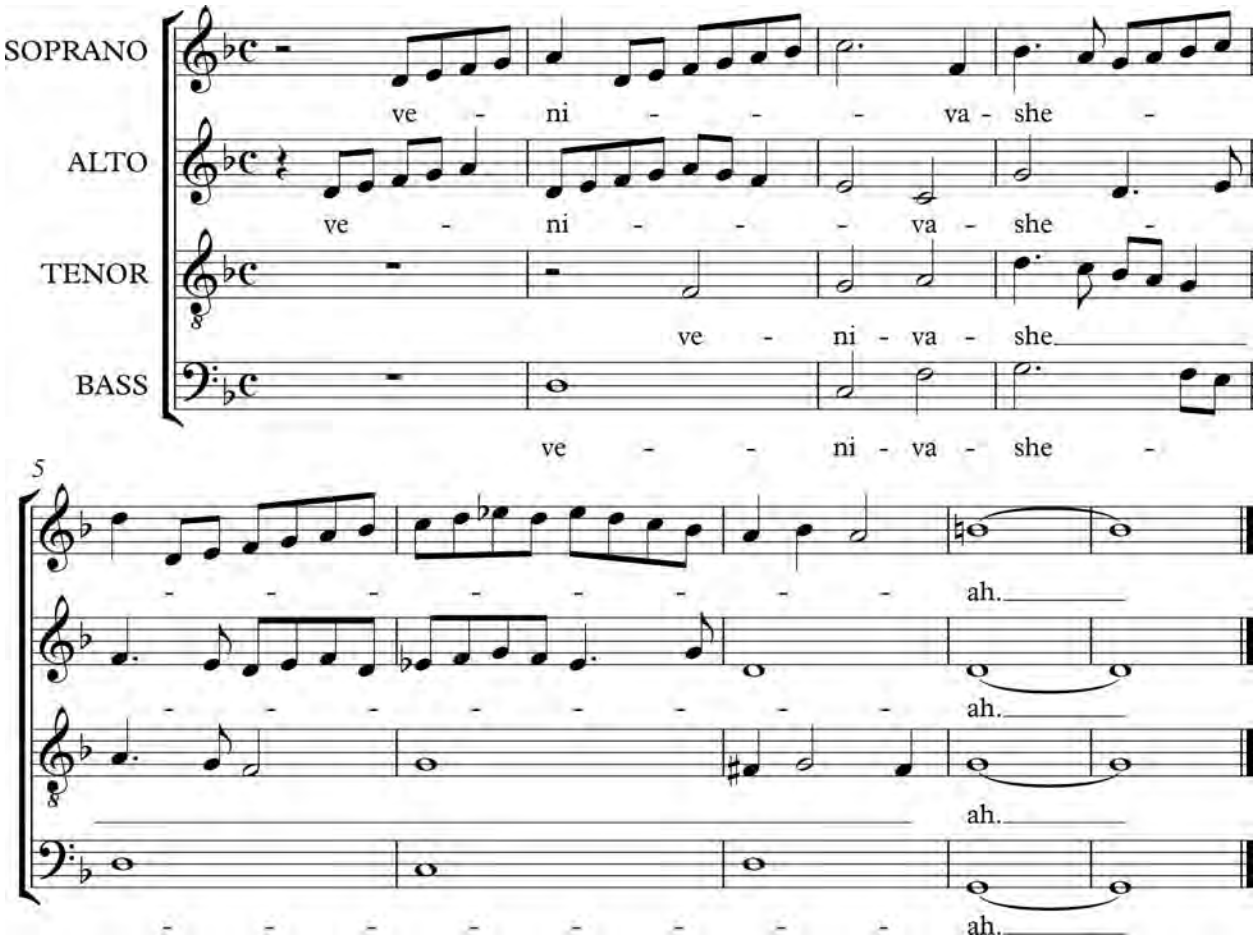


Figure 25. Third setting of *V'nivashe'ah*

Rossi's music is often accused of not sounding "Jewish," so I thought I would highlight two "Jewish"- sounding moments from this piece:

In the last eighth note of bar 21—just before the half-diminished chord we extolled earlier—we hear a C minor7(+6) chord which, if isolated, would, to my *hazzanu*s-loving ear, sound like the penultimate chord of a standard cadence (i.e. IV-V & decidedly *not* V-I). (See Figure 23)

In his final setting of *v'nivashe'ah*, after giving us E natural after E natural after E natural for several measures, Rossi suddenly has the Alto and then Soprano sing Eb's as part of a C minor prolongation. And - here's the "Jewish" part: the Soprano and Alto are actually singing in parallel minor sixths! (See Figure 25).

I paid tribute earlier to our hero by praising him as the first conceptual Jewish artist, and a radical one at that. There are two breathtaking and defining moments in Ps. 146 that support that praise. The first occurs already in the second measure! Praising God in minor is no big deal for Jewish composers, and Rossi starts his praise of God with an A minor chord. But on the very syllable of the word *Halleluyah* that actually *is* God's name, we're shocked and thrilled by a surprise A major chord. I was hooked on Rossi because of his attentiveness not only to the words but to individual Hebrew syllables as well! I still like to commit totally to the opening minor chord so I can be rewarded by the Tenor's anticipatory C#. (See Figure 26)

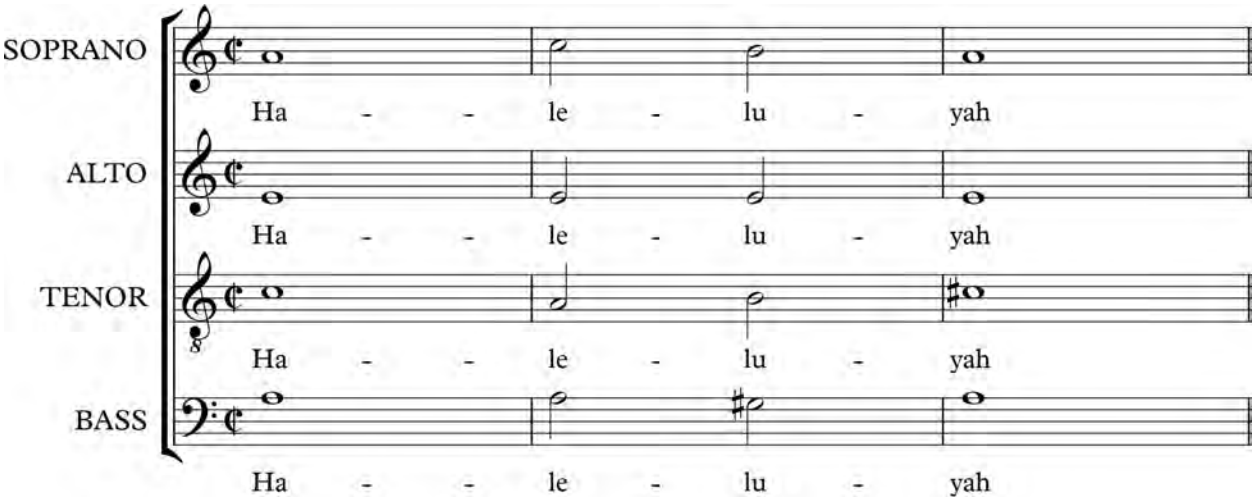


Figure 26. Psalm 146, opening *Halleluyah*

I've saved the best for last. At the end of this same setting of Ps. 146 we hear six different *Halleluyahs*, the first five of which are establishing A minor as the main key of this section (and why not - the piece *started* in A minor). It would have been so easy, natural and logical to end the piece in A (probably major). (See Figure 27)

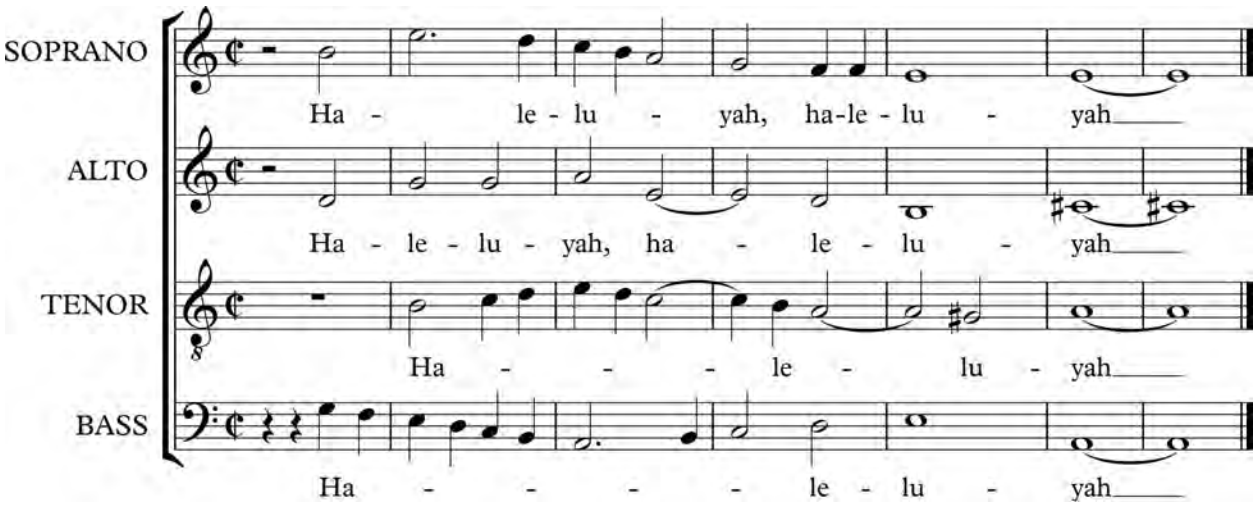


Figure 27. Easy, simple and logical conclusion to Psalm 146

But at the very last second, Rossi pivots and what we thought was going to be the Tonic (A) becomes the Dominant for the closing D major chord.[13] (See Figure 28)

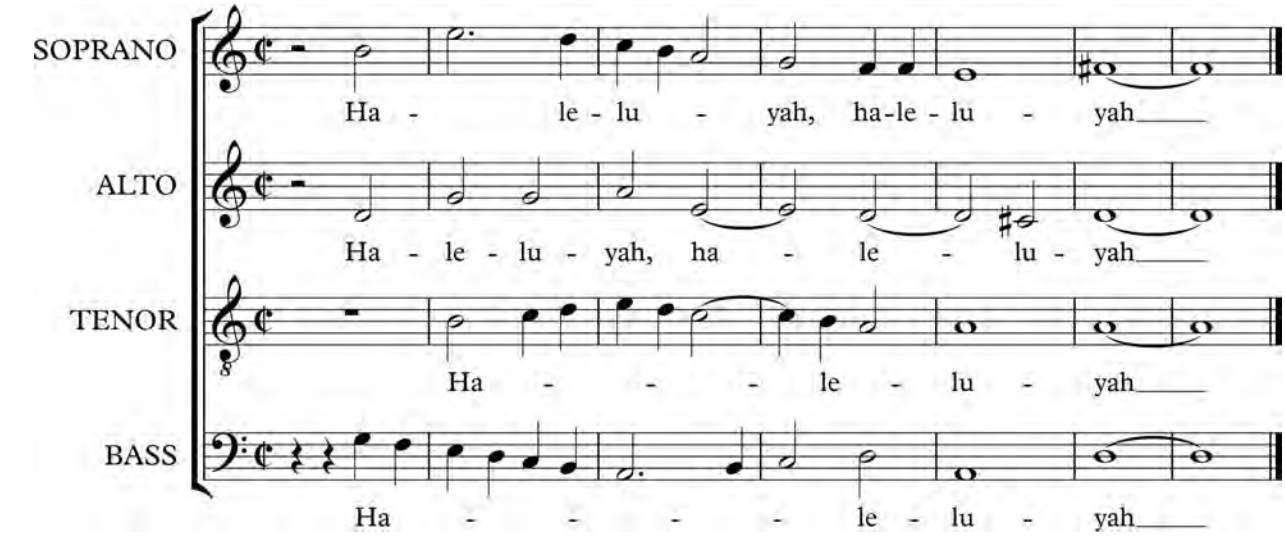


Figure 28. Final cadence of Psalm 146

I always wondered why, until I remembered that Rossi was a composer who straddled the late Renaissance and early Baroque eras. Perhaps he's making a conceptual point, musically, that whatever has come before—and what you consider a source of stability, ie. the key/ tonic—may, in fact, be just transforming itself into being the dominant to the *next* era's Tonic. *Olam hazeh b'dor haba* (This world in the next generation). And that's OK because, as the text and now the music is teaching us, God - and all that that entails - will reign forever, *HalleluYah*! Embrace and celebrate change, and God's eternity.

[13] which was the opening chord in the section that sets up the *Halleluyah*'s

Closing Thoughts

I share this incomplete list of musical illustrations to stimulate your search for your own interpretations of Rossi's musical choices in his *HaShirim Asher LiShlomo.*

In Psalm 146, in the middle of those six *Halleluyah's*, the Alto part sings out with a clear *cantus firmus*.[14] Is Rossi quoting music we should know?

Did Rossi believe? He must have. His music certainly does.

Matthew Lazar *is the leading force of the Jewish choral movement in North America. His superior talents as a conductor and interpreter of Jewish music have elevated the standards of Jewish musical performance and educated musicians and audiences across North America and Israel. He is Founder & Director of the Zamir Choral Foundation. He has created the North American Jewish Choral Festival, HaZamir: The International Jewish Teen Choir, Zamir Noded, and is the conductor of the Zamir Chorale. Lazar created the first international conference celebrating the vocal music of Salamone Rossi in 2002. He created The Mantua Singers to give voice to the extraordinary Jewish music of Salamone Rossi. He has devoted himself to mentoring the next generation of Jewish choral conductors.*

[14] A pre-existing melody that stands out by usually appearing in slower note values, and forms the basis of a polyphonic composition.

Rossi in Moravia: The Rise of Cantorial Professionalism in Czech Lands and Poland-Lithuania in the Seventeenth Century[1]

By Matt Austerklein

I. INTRODUCTION

Nearly one hundred years after its publication in Venice, a copy of the quinto partbook of Salamone Rossi's *HaShirim Asher LiShlomo* found its way across the Alps and into the library of Rabbi David Oppenheim, the Chief Rabbi of Prague and extraordinary early modern collector of the printed word.[2] On its journey, the partbook passed through the hands of two other Ashkenazic Jews who left their inscriptions and notation exercises in the book. The first owner, Yitzhaq ben Yehuda Leib Katz, may have been a well-known Hebrew printer from Wilhermsdorf (Bavaria).[3] The second owner, Moshe ben R. Avraham, was a Moravian cantor and head of the Jewish community [*rosh ha-kehillah*] in Nikolsburg (*Cz*. Mikulov), where Rabbi Oppenheim himself was head of the yeshiva. The cantor inscribed that God "had favored [him] to study this music [*musikah*] for the sake of the Unity of the Holy One, Blessed be He, to chant songs of praise in the synagogue, and to exalt him with an exalted voice." Both owners used the extra musical staves in the partbook to write out mutation rules and to practice solmization exercises, showing their eagerness to learn to sing in Western notation (Figure 1).[4]

It is likely that R. Oppenheim's copy of Rossi's partbook was read by yet another cantor and one of his prize pupils, Rabbi Shlomo Lipschitz (1675-1758).[5] R. Lipschitz had been a student at the prominent yeshivah in Nikolsburg founded and presided over by Oppenheim. After serving small Bavarian pulpits in Wallerstein and Pfersee (near present-day Augsburg), he worked his connections in Prague to land a position as a prominent cantor, serving in the Pinkas and Zigeuner synagogues. During this time, R. Lipschitz drafted parts of a magisterial cantor's guide, *Teudat Shlomo,* which included practical guidance for cantors, biographical material, homilies, and liturgical poetry.[6] In R. Lipschitz's description of Prague (completed in 1709), he described the professionalized yet fraught cantorial environment during his tenure and in the generations preceding him:

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[1] I would like to express my thanks to Edwin Seroussi, Diana Matut, Rachel Greenblatt, and Robert Rawson, who each read drafts of this article and offered valuable suggestions.

[2] For a rich accounting of Rabbi David Oppenheim's biography and bibliophilia, see Joshua Teplitsky, *Prince of the Press: How One Collector Built History's Most Enduring and Remarkable Jewish Library* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019).

[3] The figure in question may be Yitzhak ben Leib Yuedeles/Jeiteles of the Gershuni family of Hebrew printers. Cf. Moshe Rosenfeld, *Jewish Printing in Wilhermsdorf* (London: M. N. Rosenfeld, 1995).

[4] This source is transcribed in Israel Adler, *Hebrew Notated Manuscripts Sources up to Circa 1840 : A Descriptive and Thematic Catalogue with a Checklist of Printed Sources* (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1989): 32-33. By this time, mensural notation was going out of standard use in Europe and being replaced by modern notation. For an introduction to solmnization in mensural notation, see Elam Rotem, "Solmization & the Guidonian Hand in the 16th Century," YouTube, July 27, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRDDT1uSrd0.

[5] For literature on R.Shlomo Lipschitz, see Jon Roger Haddon, *An Analysis of Sefer Teudat Shlomo* (M.A. Thesis, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1980); Akiva Zimmerman, "Cantor Shlomo Lipschitz and his book "Teudat Shlomo" [Hebrew], *Shana BaShana,* ed. Yehuda Shaviv (Jerusalem: Heichal Shlomo,1999): 537-543.

[6] R. Shlomo Lipschitz, *Teudat Shlomo* (Offenbach: Seligmann Reis, 1718).

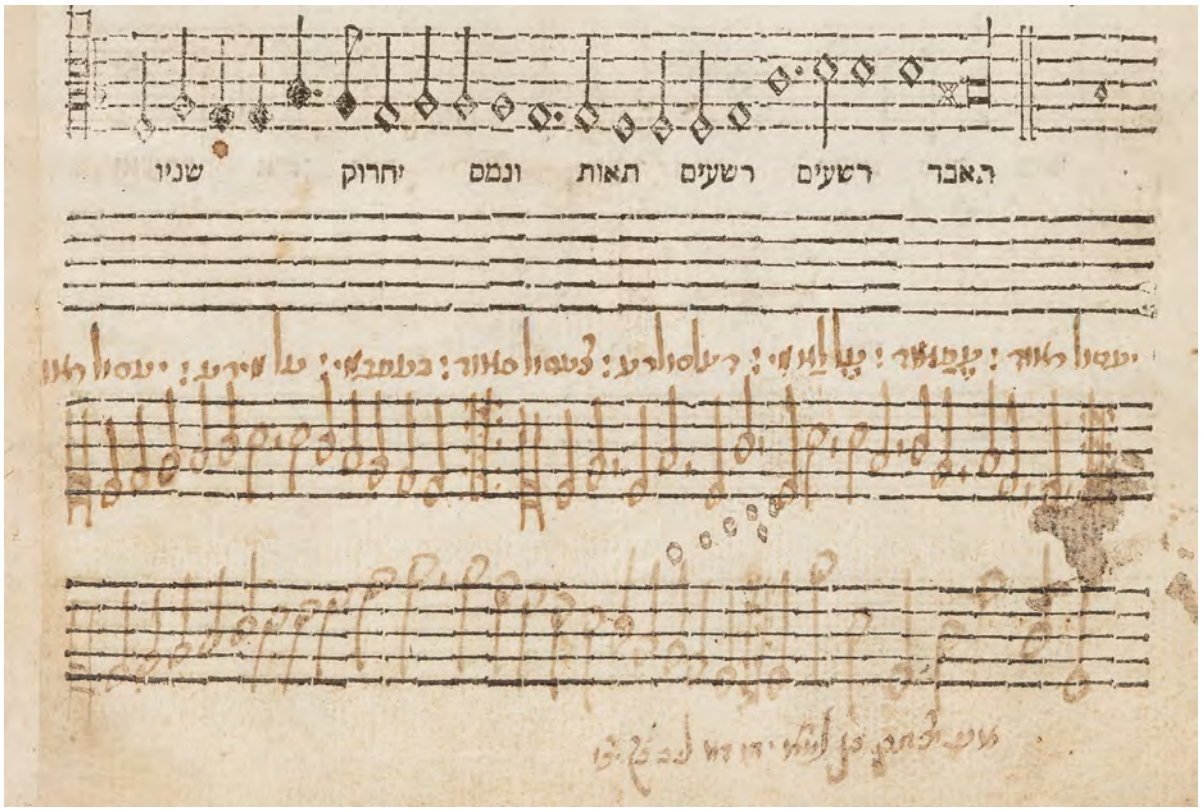

Figure 1. Owner's inscription and Mutation-Solmnization exercises by Yitzhaq ben Yehuda Leib Katz in a Salamone Rossi part book. The Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, Opp. 4º 1119, 27r (CC-BY-NC 4.0).

> As for me, when I was chief cantor in the Holy Community of Prague, the elders of the generation reported that, in years gone by, all of the cantors were together in love, brotherhood, peace, and friendship. This was evident by the fact that they would study [together] and ask questions of *Yom Tov* a few days before the holiday — *Pesah* laws on *Pesah, Shavuot* laws on *Shavuot, Sukkot* laws on *Sukkot*, and for the High Holidays all of the customs and melodies in their appropriate places. And there were among them some cantors who were skillful in the science of music [*hokhmat ha-musikah*], and every festival they would write melodies "renewed every morning."[7] And there were other cantors who learned melodies from them, and they were thankful and not ashamed.
>
> But now, it is not that way — everyone builds a stage for himself, and wraps himself in someone else's *tallit*,[8] and does not want to study from his friend, saying: 'Who is so and so that I should study with him? I am a good singer – he should come and study with me!' And everyone in his eyes is like Navot and like Hogrus ben Levi[9] — who knew a

[7] Cf. Lam. 3:23.

[8] This is an expression for someone who does not fear God. Cf. Rabbi David HaLevi Segal (1586-1667), known as the *Turei Zahav*, on *Shulhan Arukh, Orakh Hayyim* 14:4.

[9] On Navot as a musical figure, see *Pesikta Rabati* 25:1; On Hogrus ben Levi, see BT Yoma 38a. Both Talmudic figures are identified as having musical gifts but withholding them from others.

chapter about song [*perek b'shir]*, but didn't know the details [*sugiyot]* of the masters of song, specifically the science of music…"[10]

By the turn of the eighteenth century, R. Lipschitz's Prague had witnessed a transformed Ashkenazic cantorate. Of sufficient numbers to organize, Prague's cantors met to review Jewish law and customs, as well as to acquire new melodies from those skilled in "the science of music" – a term of some ambiguity yet, as we will see below, related to the reading of Western notation and/or the execution of Western musical forms. This cantorial community was also driven by the rise of artistic reputations and competition. R. Lipschitz saw the egotism emerging in this era as a threat to the unity of the cantorial community, as well as its members' ability to learn from each other. R. Lipschitz further recognized the practice of choristers *(meshorerim)* accompanying the cantor as normative, writing that "just as the world cannot exist without wind, so too the cantor cannot be without *meshorerim*."[11] This growth in musical professionalism among Ashkenazic cantors developed in parallel to Jewish musical professionalism and experimentation across Prague, which also featured a musicians' guild, the incorporation of musical instruments in Friday night services, and the early morning musical devotions of several confraternities. These developments were not limited to Bohemian Lands, but also simultaneous with similar changes in Poland-Lithuania. In both regions, Jews experienced population increase, rise in affluence, new opportunities in the professions, and a relative security which created a more stable environment for new musical customs to form. The cantorial norms incubated in these lands would come to pervade Yiddish-speaking Jewry during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, largely transmitted by emigrant Polish cantors seeking opportunity in West European communities.

How did we reach an era in which Ashkenazic cantors could engage with Salamone Rossi's madrigals? The subject of musical professionalization among early modern Ashkenazic cantors has not been revisited in Jewish musicology in many decades, and many questions still remain: What factors drove the Ashkenazic cantorate towards professionalization? How might we understand this change in its broader historical context?[12] Where did the Ashkenazic practice of synagogue singers [*meshorerim*] come from? What was the nature of Western musical literacy amongst Ashkenazic Jews (particularly *klezmorim* and cantors)? And how does this relate to Ashkenazic conceptions of "the science of music?**"** This article will situate these questions within the context of the growth of Jewish centers in Bohemia and Moravia and in Poland-Lithuania in the early modern period, as well as with reference to the musical activities of

[10] Lipschitz, Ibid., 21b.

[11] Ibid., 15a.

[12] Recent general scholarship on Jews in Bohemian and Moravian lands all but omits any reference to musical activities. See Rachel Greenblatt, "Building the Past: Historical Writing on the Jews of the Bohemian Crown Lands in the Early Modern Period." *Studia Judaica* 19, 1 (2016): 11-40; Verena Kasper-Marienberg and Joshua Teplitsky, "Between Distinction and Integration: The Jews of the Bohemian Crown Lands until 1726" in *Prague and Beyond: Jews in the Bohemian Lands*, ed. Katherina Capkova and Hillel Kieval. (Philadelphia: Penn University Press, 2021): 22-60; For major studies in Jewish musicology treating this subject, see Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, "Songs and Singers of the Synagogue in the eighteenth century with special reference to the Birnbaum Collection of the Hebrew Union College," *Hebrew Union College Jubilee Volume* (Cincinnati: HUC, 1925); 367-424; Israel Adler, *La Pratique Musicale Savante dans quelques Communautés Juives en Europe aux XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles*. Volume 1. (Paris; Mouton, 1966); Alfred Sendrey, *The Music of the Jews in the Diaspora up to 1800* (New York: T. Yoseloff, 1970); Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard : The Sacred Songs of the Ashkenazic Jews* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976).

cantors, instrumentalists [*klezmorim*], and confraternities. We will also probe major causes of early modern cultural change and their effect on the Ashkenazic cantorate, including the rise of popular *Kabbalah*, the standardization of the prayer book, and the attenuation of rabbinic authority.[13]

II. CZECH LANDS (BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA)

Urban Jewish communities in 16th- and 17th-century Czech lands featured growing populations marked by long-term stability, religious leadership, and political agency. Beginning with the accession of Maximilian I (1564-76), the Prague Jewish community grew from a few dozen to over three thousand by the end of the 16th century.[14] Following the defeat of the Czech nobility and Protestants at the Battle of White Mountain (1620), the triumphant Hapsburg monarchy began a campaign of re-Catholicization, decimating the population of Bohemia through a purge of rebels and the forced emigration of as many as 30,000 Protestants. This downturn in population indirectly allowed the expanding Jewish population, largely protected from the conflict, to increase its footprint in Prague's Old Town. Holy Roman Emperors Rudolf II (1576-1618) and Ferdinand II (1619-37) saw their Jews as an imperial asset to increase mercantile activity and finance military campaigns, and in 1623, the latter allowed the Jews expanded rights of residence and commerce in exchange for annual taxation. Jews thus served as mercantile agents for the new Catholic nobility of Bohemia; major Jewish financiers like Mordecai Maisel (1528-1601) and Jacob Bassevi (1570-1634) acted as some of Europe's earliest "court Jews." In exchange for their services, they were able to secure privileges and finance projects for their own communities.[15] New synagogues of great size and splendor arose in the expanding Jewish Town during this period, including the High Synagogue (1568), Maisel Synagogue (1592), Zigeuner Synagogue (1613), and Great Court Synagogue (1626). These featured vibrant material culture of Torah covers, parokhets, and other rich adornments donated by affluent Jews and Jewish confraternal organizations.[16] Moravian Jews also experienced a similar period of security based on protections and privileges granted by the Emperor and the

[13] A secondary goal of this article will be to re-examine many of the assumptions of the core texts of 20th- century Ashkenazic musicology written by A.Z. Idelsohn, Eric Werner, and Israel Adler, whose scholarship on this period of cantorial history has not been systematically revisited. Those with a familiarity with the historiography featured in these sources will find ample food for thought in the footnotes.

[14] See Kasper-Marienberg and Teplitsky, "Between Distinction and Integration," 27. Whereas the Jewish community of Prague comprised the vast majority of Bohemian Jews, Moravian Jews had many viable communities of more equal stature in demographics, religion, and economic terms. The two largest communities were in Nikolsburg and Prossnitz, both of which were strong centers of Talmudic learning; yet medium-sized communities in Boskowitz, Lipnik, Holleschau, and Trebitsch also attracted *yeshivah* students from Hungary, Poland, and Germany. See Michael Miller, *Rabbis and Revolution: The Jews of Moravia in the Age of Emancipation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011): 1-4.

[15] These Jewish financiers did not only support imperial taxation and warfare. In 1581, Mordecai Maisel donated 100 Reichsthaler towards the construction of the Church of St. Salvator in Prague's Old Town. See Koppelmann Lieben, *Gal-Ed: Grabsteininschriften des Prager Israelitischen Alten Friedhofs: mit biografischen Notizen* (Prague: M.J. Landau, 1856): 17. For more on early court Jews see Jonathan Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism 1550-1750*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989): 88-90, also Yosef Kaplan, "Court Jews Before the *Hofjuden*" in Vivian B. Mann and Richard I. Cohen, eds., *From Court Jews to the Rothschilds: Art, Patronage, and Power, 1600-1800* (Munich and New York: Prestel, 1996): 11-25.

[16] See Arno Parík, *The Prague Synagogues: in Paintings, Engravings, and Old Photographs*, trans. Slavoš Kadečka (Prague: The Jewish Museum, 1986).

new Catholic nobility.[17] This era saw the rise of Jewish supra communal organization in Moravia (called the *va'ad hamedinah*), as well as a culture of Talmudic learning and a chief rabbinate in Nikolsburg which attracted illustrious rabbis, including Judah Löw ben Betzalel (the "Maharal," 1520-1609), Yom Tov Lipmann Heller (1579-1654), and Menachem Krochmal (c. 1600-1661).[18] This growth in Jewish urban centers and communal self-organization in Czech Lands reflected the nascent affluence, burgeoning population, opportunity in the trades, and religious and cultural flourishing rendered by imperial protections and privileges. Like other adornments of the synagogue, Jewish music would also grow in beauty and complexity under these more favorable conditions.

The Music Professionals: *Klezmorim* and the Jewish Musicians' Guild

The earliest forms of musical professionalism in Czech Lands were among its instrumentalists, especially in Prague. The city's Jewish musicians were well-known since the 16th century; families of harpists (Harrfner; Faital) and violinists (Fidler) are recorded as early as 1540.[19] Jewish ensembles acquired reputations as dance bands and played before Christian nobility: Jewish musicians are noted at a procession in honor of Ludwig II in 1512; at a dinner for a certain Herr Slavata in 1533; and at the wedding of nobleman Peter Wok von Rosenberg in 1580, for which "a Jewish band from Prague was also ordered and played very sweetly for the dances."[20] Prague was also the first site of Jewish musicians organizing into a formal guild. The earliest sources of this guild's activity date to the mid-seventeenth century, a time during which imperial decrees permitted the burgeoning Jewish population to broadly participate in Bohemian commerce and crafts.[21] In 1641, the Archbishop of Prague, Ernst Albrecht von Harrach, issued a privilege for the Jewish musicians' guild to play at Christian weddings, baptisms, and religious services, sparking a prolonged conflict with Prague's Christian musicians' guild. Both sides petitioned the city council and Emperor Ferdinand III (1637-1657) to intervene on their behalf. The Jews requested the right to play "when we are demanded by various people of rank and Christians to make music at Sundays and holidays," arguing that otherwise they would be "bound to die miserably and to perish together" for "we poor people

[17] See Miller, *Rabbis and Revolution*, 16-19.

[18] Ibid.,11-35.

[19] Joachim Stutschewsky, *Jüdische Spielleute ('Klezmorim"), Herausg. und kommentiert von Joachim M. Klein*. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2019): 52-53.

[20] Gerben Zaagsma, "The *Klezmorim* of Prague. About a Jewish Musicians Guild," *East European Meetings in Ethnomusicology* 7 (2000): 41-48. Zaagasma misidentifies Ludwig II, the last Polish King of Bohemia, as "Louis II"; his source, Sendrey (1970), is accurate.

[21] Mark Wischnitzer, "Origins of the Jewish Artisan Class in Bohemia and Moravia, 1500-1648," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 14 (Oct., 1954): 347-350. Walter Salmen claims that the incorporation of Prague's Jewish musicians into a formal guild has been suggested by scholars as early as 1558. However, Zaagsma points out, this year cannot be found in the sources. See Walter Salmen, "*...denn die Fiedel macht das Fest:" Jüdische Musikanten und Tänzer vom 13. bis 20. Jahrhundert* (Innsbruck: Edition Helbling, 1991): 58; Zaagsma, supra, note 18. It may be noted that 1558 is also the publication year of Czech bishop Jan Blahoslav's *Musica (That is a Book for Singers, Appropriate News Enclosing*), the first treatise on music theory written in Czech. The work was based on *Practica Musica* by German composer and theorist Hermann Finck (1527-1558), who was a classmate of Blahoslav at the University of Wittenberg. For a biography of Blohuslav and a translation and commentary on *Musica*, see Thomas Paul Sovik, *Music Theorists of the Bohemian Reformation: Translation and Critique of the Treatises of Jan Blahoslav and Jan Josquin*, PhD Dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1985.

have to make a living of the art acquired by ourselves."[22] The Christian guild countered that these Jews clandestinely held second jobs as craftsmen and were financially comfortable, and moreover were undermining Christian labor with their subterfuge, flooding the market with, and taking advantage of, their new privileges. They also accused the Jews, who were both teachers and vendors of musical instruments, of polluting the quality of musical instruction in the city.[23] Despite these attempts to quash Jewish competition, such efforts were often rebuffed by imperial decree. Jewish musicians also secured similar privileges in the Moravian community of Nikolsburg, where Jewish musicians formally negotiated in 1668 with Prince Ferdinand Dietrichstein and local officials for rights to play at Christian services and weddings.[24]

These new privileges, as suggested by Walter Zev Feldman, may have reflected a change in nomenclature and social status.[25] Jewish musicians in German lands were referred to as *letsim* ("clowns"), a pejorative term reflecting their low position in society and possible deviance in the community. Jews of Bohemia, Moravia, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth developed a different term: *klezmer* (from the Hebrew words *klei zemer*–"instruments of song"). The term developed in Western Yiddish in the early 16th century to refer to musical instruments, as well as to describe those who play them.[26] Prague's Jewish musicians were the first to adopt this professional title into their own names, as evidenced on a mid-seventeenth century epitaph:

> Friday, 22 Sivan 5428 (1668). Here rests the "Bottle of Manna", the musician Avram [or "Avram Klezmer"] son of the elder Hirsch Kubia of blessed memory. He too was a member of the musicians' guild [*ehad mikat hevlei hazamarim*], that always appears in the synagogue at the beginning of the Sabbath.[27]

These *Klezmorim* had far more power than their counterparts in German lands: they could organize a guild, contend with Christian musicians, work throughout Jewish and Christian religious life, and play a distinct role in Sabbath worship. The *klezmer* guild in this way anticipated the heightened level of self-organization and professionalism later observed by R. Lipschitz among Prague's cantors. Abraham Z. Idelsohn suggested that cantors learned to play musical instruments and to read musical notation from these musicians.[28] Indeed, opportunities to play across Christian religious life put the *klezmer* on the front lines of musical exchange with non-Jews, and suggests them as a strong vector for musical exchange and transmission within the

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[22] Translation quoted in Hanoch Avenary, "Music," *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd edition, Vol. 14 (Jerusalem: Keter, 2007): 674, col 2.

[23] For these and related documents see Paul Nettl, *Alte Jüdische Spielleute und Musiker* (Prague: Joseph Flesch, 1923): 49-55; Stutschewsky, "*Klezmorim*", 50-55.

[24] Jiří Sehnal, *"Židovské taneční kapely na Moravě* (Jewish Dance Bands in Moravia)," *Hudební věda*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (1997): 292-294.

[25] See Walter Zev Feldman, *Klezmer: Music, History, and Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016): 59-98.

[26] See the entry from *Historische jiddische Semantik* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2005): 358-360, s.v. "*klesmer*."

[27] Translation in Feldman, *Klezmer*, 69.

[28] Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 207.

Jewish community.[29] The exact repertoires of seventeenth-eighteenth century Jewish dance bands and potentially analogous forms in cantorial repertoire remain under-examined and perhaps elusive, yet their historical intersections of the two groups are manifold. Instrumental textures and forms are evident across eighteenth and early nineteenth century cantorial manuscripts, as well as in more contemporaneous descriptions of synagogue music made by Christian observers.[30] Prague's cantors also made music directly with *klezmorim* during the city's *Kabbalat Shabbat* services, as mentioned in the aforementioned Avram Klezmer's epitaph. These services, described further below, reveal not only the nexus of the cantor and *klezmer*, but the unique role of popular *Kabbalah* in elevating the status of music.

Sounding Joy: Popular *Kabbalah* and Music in Prague

Prague's Jews had a long tradition of *Kabbalistic* study and advocacy of mystical practices by rabbinic leaders like R. Mordechai Yaffe (1530-1612) and R. Yeshayahu Horowitz (1555-1630). The seventeenth century in particular saw the diffusion of *Kabbalah* into popular forms and the publication of many *Kabbalistic* commentaries and prayer books, including Yeshayahu Horowitz's *Shnei Luhot HaBrit* (1648) and Nathan Hannover's widely-circulated *Sha'arei Zion* (1662).[31] Confraternities devoted to the recitation of mystical early morning liturgies arose by the early part of the century and met in the synagogues of Prague. These included Psalm singers [*mezamrei tehilim*], *Barukh She'amar* singers [*mezamrei barukh she'amar*] and Guardians of the Morning [*shomerim laboker*].[32] R. Horowitz emphasized the mystical importance of such practices, remarking that "prayer may not escape the grasp of the demons and *klipot* in the world unless they are cut down by the recitation of *pesukei d'zimra*."[33] While visiting Prague, the Moravian rabbi Meshulam Zalman Fischoff (1584-c. 1677) reported that these novel mystical societies gathered early in the morning to sing liturgical poetry and the

[29] Czech Lands were unique in Europe, featuring both an extraordinarily high level of literacy as well as broad, grassroots music education across society, which impressed generations of travelers to the region. See Robert G. Rawson, *Bohemian Baroque*: *Czech Musical Culture and Style, 1600-1750* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2013): 89ff.

[30] See Feldman, *Klezmer,* 235f; Also Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands, and United Provinces (*London: T. Becket and Co., J. Robson, G. Robinson, 1775): 299-303. For 19th- and 20th-century Ashkenazic terms describing *meshorerim* by identifying them with specific musical instruments, see Hanoch Avenary, "The Musical Vocabulary of Ashkenazic *Hazanim*" in *Biblical and Jewish Folklore*, Vol. 13 (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1960), 187-198. For observations about the adaptation of instrumental repertoires in synagogue vocal music across Turkish, Moroccan, and Ashkenazic sources, see Edwin Seroussi, "The *Pesrev* as a Vocal Genre in Ottoman Hebrew Sources," *Turkish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Catonsville, MD: University of Maryland, 1991):1, note 5.

[31] Sharon Flatto, *The Kabbalistic Culture of Eighteenth-Century Prague* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2014): 40-44.

[32] Leaders [*gabbai'im*] of these confraternities are indicated on their gravestones, the earliest of which date between 1632-1635. See Simon Hock, *The Families of Prague: According to their Gravestones* [Hebrew] (Pressburg: Alkalay, 1892): 38, 59, 187, 221, 243, 276, 362, 374. For more on confraternities, see Roni Weinstein, "Religious Confraternities" in *Kabbalah and Jewish Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016): 83-100; Jacob Katz, "Confraternities and Social Life" in *Tradition and Crisis: Jewish Society at the End of the Middle Ages* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000): 132-140.

[33] "גם התפלה היא כובשת מלחמות רבות, דהיינו הקליפות והשטנים אשר הם מלאים בכל אויר העולם, ולא תוכל התפלה לעלות אם לא כשמחתכין את אלו בפסוקי דזמרא"

Cited in Edwin Seroussi and Tova Beeri, "Rabbi Israel Najara in Ashkenaz" [Hebrew], *Kabbalah*, Vol. 33 (2015): 66.

pesukei d'zimra, and on other occasions to sing the entire book of Psalms before the afternoon service "with melody and *ta'am* [*benigun uvte'amim*]."[34] Prague thus featured multiple Jewish circles of musical practice – the *klezmer* guild, the confraternity, and the synagogue, whose activities were inflected by a growingly *Kabbalistic* telos.

Prague's instrumental *Kabbalat Shabbat* was a partial outgrowth of this long-standing mystical impulse. These services were famously documented in the eighteenth century by Jewish travelogue writer Abraham Levie (1702-1785), who mentioned Prague's famous cantors together with singers and musical instruments, including "cymbals and a positive organ."[35] This ensemble accompanied the singing of the mystical poem, *Lekha Dodi*, and continued to play even after the

Figure 2. Positive organ carried by four porters and played by Rabbi Mahram b. Mordechai Bash. Then come cantors from all of Prague's synagogues who sing together with the organ. The Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, Ms. Opp. 4º 1420 *Seder Tehinos (Prager Aufzug)*, 1716. (CC-BY-NC 4.0). See note 34.

[34]Ibid., 66–67.

[35] The two types of organs in Jewish-related iconography in this period are the portative organ and the positive organ, both movable organs of small size originating in the medieval period. These are quite different from the large European church organs of later centuries. The portative organ could be carried by hand or worn on the body; the positive organ was moveable and could be set on a table, or alternatively carried on two horizontal poles (requiring at least four men). These organs were used in processions and in bands for banquets, weddings, and even dances in taverns. Perhaps the earliest record of a Jewish organist was one Mandl, who is recorded in 1605 as having played at Christian weddings. See William Leslie Sumner, *The Organ: Its Evolution, Principles of Construction, and Use* (New York: St. Martin's, 1962: 54-60; Method Lumir Sychra, *K dějinám varhan a varhanní hry v Čechách* [On the History of Organ and Organ Playing in Bohemia] (Prague: *Obec. jednota cyrill*, 1912): 26-28; For an illustration of a Jew playing an organ, a picture (Fig. 2) of Rabbi Mahram b. Mordechai Bash playing a positive organ carried by four porters can be seen in a festival book for the 1716 Jewish parade in honor of the new Hapsburg prince. See *Grundlich un' far heftige Prager Aufzug* (MS Opp. 4° 1420). I would like to acknowledge Eric Randall Scholsberg for his assistance in identifying Rabbi Bash.

poem concluded until darkness fell.[36] Contemporaneously, the Christian Hebraist Johann Jakob Schudt (1664-1722) observed the playing of the organ in the Altneuschul, as well as singers with musical instruments in the New Synagogue.[37] The earliest sources for this practice are the epitaph of Avram Klezmer (see above), and a *siddur* (c. 1677) appended to several publications by the Jewish bibliographer Shabtai Meshorer Bass (1641-1718). The appendix to the *siddur* features a Hebrew song composed for the occasion: "A nice song by Rabbi Shlomo Singer which was sung in the Maisel synagogue with organ [*ugav*] and stringed instruments [*nebalim]* before *Lekha Dodi*."[38] While scholars have projected the advent of these innovations as early as the late 16th century, primary sources are lacking to substantiate such a claim.[39]

The mystical import of these instrumental services is captured in a description by the turn of the 18th century:

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[36] Abraham Levie, *Travels Among Jews and Gentiles: Abraham Levie's Travelogue Amsterdam 1764*, ed. Shlomo Berger (Leiden: Brill, 2002): 69. Levie observed similar musical services in Nikolsburg. See *ibid*., 72-73.

[37] See Johann Jacob Schudt, *Jüdische Merckwürdigkeiten: Vorstellende Was sich Curieuses und denckwürdiges in den neuern Zeiten bey einigen Jahrhunderten mit denen in alle IV. Theile der Welt, sonderlich durch Teutschland, zerstreueten Juden zugetragen / mit historischer Feder in drey Theilen beschrieben* (1714-18), Vol. 1: 218; Vol. 4: 366 ; ibid, *Jüdisches Franckfurter und Prager Freuden-Fest* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Andreä, 1716): 68-9;

[38] *Siddur*. ed. Shabtai Meshorer Bass (Amsterdam: Jacob de Cordova, 1677): F. 21b. This *siddur* was originally appended to Bass's *Siftei Yesheinim* and is held in the Birnbaum collection at HUC-Cincinnati. Herbert Zafren contends that the *siddur* is in fact a separate publication, bound, with addendums, into editions of Bass' works. See Zafren, "The 1678 *Siddur* and the שפתי ישנים: A Methodological Exercise," *Yad LeHeiman:* The A.M. Habermann memorial volume, ed. Zvi Malachi (Lod: *Mechon Haberman L'Mechkarei Sifrut*, 1983): 273-287. Rabbi Shlomo Singer (d.1662), possibly a cantor himself, was a well-known author of Yiddish songs and melodies. For more on his biography and compositional output, See Diana Matut, *Dichtung und Musik im frühneuzeitlichen Aschkenas*, Vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2011): 328-330.

[39] Jewish musicologists have frequently dated the use of the organ in Prague's synagogues to the 16th century, yet the majority rely on Schudt and Levie who offer no information on this period. A.Z. Idelsohn posited the introduction of the organ with the building of the Maisel synagogue in 1592, but his sources ultimately go back to Schudt and a reference in the forged 19th-century source, the Ramshack Chronicle. See Abraham Zvi Idelsohn. "Cantors in Famous Communities" [Hebrew] *Reshumot*, No. 5 (Tel Aviv, 1927): 351; David Kaufmann, "III. *La Synagogue de Mardochée Meisel et Jacob Segré*," *Revue des études juives*, Vol. 21, No. 41 (July-September 1890)143-145. Walter Salmen dated the organ to 1598, but his source (Bodenschatz) ultimately relies on Schudt as well. See Salmen. …*denn die Fiedel*.., 78, 141 n.7. Joachim Braun's brief comments about Prague in his article on Jewish organ iconography contain an erroneous reference to the Pinkasshul, not substantiated by his sources. See Joachim Braun, "The Iconography of the Organ: Change in Jewish Thought and Musical Life," *Music in Art: International Journal for Music Iconography*, Vol. 28, No. 1-2 (New York: Research Center for Music Iconography of the City University of New York, 2003): 64, 68 n.40. Organ scholar Rudolf Quoika wrote that Rabbi Meir Mahler had constructed a positive organ which was lent to the Church of Our Lady in Front of Týn 1683; such a specific claim would seem credible, yet is undermined by the indicated source – Schudt's *Jüdisches Franckfurter und Prager Freuden-Fest*, which contains no such information and only briefly mentions R. Mahler having constructed a new positive organ for the Jewish town's parade. Cf. Rudolf Quoika, *Der Orgelbau in Böhmen und Mähren, Der Orgelbau in Europa*, Vol. 2 (Mainz: Rheingold, 1966): 68; and Schudt, *Freuden-Fest*, 68-9. A surprising illustration of Jewish music-making on the organ can be found in the 1494 Lobkowicz Breviary (XXIII F 202, National Library CZ, fol. 110v), entitled "Jews in the House of God," which depicts a Jew playing a positive organ together with other co-religionists engaged in music and merrymaking. It is not clear to what extent the scene emerges from the religious imagination of the illustrator, rather than their ethnographic experiences of Bohemian Jews. For more on the Prague organ in Jewish law, particularly its role in polemics between Reform and Orthodox thinkers in the early 19th century, see David Ellenson, "A Disputed Precedent: The Prague Organ in 19th Century Central European Legal Literature and Polemics," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, no. 40 (1995): 251-264.

> ...The matter of Shabbat is the alighting of the S*hekhinah*, and thus is Shabbat called by the name "bride," "queen," and "rest," for these are the known [nicknames] of the *Shekhinah*; and thus *Kabbalat Shabbat* is with great joy and pleasant songs. And in some communities they receive the Shabbat in the synagogue with musical instruments [*klei zemer*], players and singers together, and forbid sadness to us…for the *Shekhinah* will not descend except amidst joy.**[40]**

Beyond a renewed recognition of the power of music in elevating emotions towards prayer, Prague's Jews also ascribed renewed power to the prayer leader himself. Ashkenazic codes and halachic texts identified the prayer leader with the biblical priest, further realizing the Talmudic understanding of prayer in place of sacrifice and of the synagogue as the "minor Temple" [*mikdash me'at*].[41] As an opening to his ethical guide to the cantorate, R. Shlomo Lipschitz poignantly compares the role of the cantor on the High Holy Days with the mystical work of the high priest:

> As it is stated in *Sefer Or Yisrael*[42] in the name of *Sefer Heikhal HaKodesh*: One must know the reason for why the only appropriate work on Yom Kippur is that of the High Priest; You already know that the secret of the High Priest is compassion, and on this holy day, which is a day of atonement and forgiveness and mercy it must be that the quality of compassion overcomes the quality of judgment…
> ...And behold now we have no High Priest, only the *shaliah tzibbur* [prayer leader]. The cantor must be in the place of the High Priest: pure and steadfast, forgoing anger and expressing mercy, as we said before. If he has a voice which is pleasant to the spirit of humanity, then of course it will be pleasant to the spirit of God, for "One should honor the Lord with his wealth" (Prov. 3:9) [43]

The concept of priesthood suffused Lipschitz's understanding of the cantorate, both in his exhortations for high religious standards and his call for musical excellence. In this latter regard, Lipschitz counted himself lucky when his second pulpit allowed him to focus almost exclusively on leading prayer. Of his position in Pfersee, he wrote: "I threw off the yoke of ritual slaughter, nor was I required to teach children, but rather to have one labor – that of the holy service of the miniature Temple."[44] This image of service in the Temple through the priestly figure of the cantor conferred another layer of distinction to the cantor's role, augmented by both music's elevated status as a vehicle to create religious joy and the simultaneously growing market for cantorial artistry.[45]

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[40] Yehudah Leib Puchowitzer, *Kevod Hakhamim* (Venice: 1700): F.15a. Israel Adler observes that this is also quoted in the Frankfurt custom book *Noheig Katson Yoseif* (1722-23). See Adler, *La Pratique*, 244.

[41] On the the minor Temple, cf. Rashi, *ad loc*. Ezek 11:16; BT Megillah 29a; for prayer in place of sacrifice, cf. BT Berakhot 26b; Tur, O.H. 120:1; *Shulhan Arukh*, O.H. 98:4.

[42] Yisrael ben Aharon Yaffe, *Sefer Or Yisrael* (Frankfurt-an-der-Oder: Michael Gottschalk, 1702).

[43] Shlomo Lipschitz, *Teudat Shlomo*, 1a. Cf. Yeshayahu Horowitz, *Sefer Shnei Luhot HaBrit* (Amsterdam: Benvenisti, 1648):221a.

[44] Ibid., 9b-10a.

[45] A contemporary Bohemian cantor, Yoel Sirkis (approx.1650/1660-1740), will later compare the high priest and the cantor in his *Reiah Nihoah* (1724), using this image as a basis for defending cantors being well-paid and well-fed. See Klein, *A Pleasant Aroma*, 11-12; 27-29; 32; 35.

More Music, More Singers: The *Meshorerim*

Czech lands were also host to a new norm in Ashkenazic synagogue -- the institution of additional singers who accompanied the cantor, later known as *meshorerim*. The first observation of this phenomenon was made in Leon Modena's 1604 responsum supporting art music in the Italian synagogue. Here he praised the Ashkenazi Jews' use of assistants as a foundation by which to advocate for "coordinated" choral harmony:

> "Or if, at his side, there stood assistants [*mesayyim]* whom the Lord favored with a sweet voice and they sang along with him not in [contrapuntal] order but rather [by improvising here and there] *a*[n] *aria* (to the tune), as is customary all day long in Ashkenazic congregations, and it should happen that they connect and coordinate with him, would it be considered a sin on their part?[46]

The sources witnessing Ashkenazic *meshorerim* in the early seventeenth century show that singers accompanied the cantor for specific liturgical moments and at festive occasions.[47] Yet Prague provides the earliest evidence of specialized names and musical functions for *meshorerim*. The first example of this phenomenon is that of the Jewish bibliographer, Shabtai Meshorer Bass (1641-1718). He and his brother fled the Swedo-Muscovite wars in 1655, migrating from Kalisch to Prague, where Shabtai served as a synagogue bass singer [*meshorer bass*] under cantor Leib "*Shir HaShirim*," a role which he incorporated into his surname. A unique glimpse into the bass's early musical function may be found in the *Jüdisches Affenspiel* ("Jewish Monkey Play"), a 1678 pamphlet documenting a Jewish communal parade in honor of the birth of a new heir to the Hapsburg throne (then the future Joseph I). The text describes multiple groups of cantors processing "with their singers, each holding a sheet of music and pointing to it as they sing." Distinguishing the bass singers, it then remarks that "the basses also joined in their droning ["*Die Bassistis (Bassisten) haben ach drein thon brumen*"].[48] This

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[46] Translation in Don Harrán, *Three Early Modern Hebrew Scholars on the Mysteries of Song* (Brill: Leiden, 2015): 168. Israel Adler suggested that the *meshorerim* originated in the medieval custom of *seganim* – assistants flanking the cantor during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. This custom, however, was eliminated by the spread of the *Shulḥan Arukh* and its Polish commentaries, which circumscribed the practice to Yom Kippur and then to recitation of the *Kol Nidre* alone. Cf. *Shulḥan Arukh, Orakh Ḥayyim* 619:4; *Bayit Ḥadash ad loc.*; *Magen Avraham ad. Loc*. A still speculative but more likely origin for this practice is the singing of *arie* and other strophic musical forms for *piyyutim*, which were abundant in Ashkenazic worship; cf. Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard: The Sacred Songs of the Ashkenazic Jews* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976): 87-104; Also Avery Gosfield, "*Gratias post mensam in diebus festiuis cum cantico* העבריים: A New Look at an Early Sixteenth-Century *Tzur Mishelo"* in *Revealing the Secrets of the Jews: Johannes Pfefferkorn and Christian Writings about Jewish Life and Literature in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Jonathan Adams and Cornelia Hess (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017): 275-296.

[47] See, for example, Thomas Coryate and George Coryate, *Coryate's Crudities: Hastily Gobled Up In Five Months Travels In France, Savoy, Italy, Rhetia Commonly Called the Grisons Country, Helvetia Alias Switzerland, Some Parts of High Germany and the Netherlands; Newly Digested in the Hungry Aire of Odcombe in the County Of Somerset, and Now Dispersed to the Nourishment of the Travelling Members of this Kingdome* (Glasgow, 1905 [1611]), I: 371. Also, *Likkutei Yoseif*, in Yuspa Shammash, *Minhagim de-Kehillah Kedoshah Wurmaisa*, ed. Benjamin Hamburger (Jerusalem: *Machon Yerushalayim*, 1988): 59, 238.

[48] *Judæorum morologia oder jüdisches Affen-Spiel: das ist: der jüdischen Gemeinde zu Prag possir- und sehr lächerlicher Auffzug, welchen sie bey Celebrirung des Freuden-Festes über der höchst erfreulichen Geburt des Römischen Kaiserl. Printzens in der Juden-Statt öffentlich gehalten.*..(Leipzig: Brandt, 1678):

tantalizing sentence conceals as much as it reveals. Minimally, we can ascertain that by 1678, bass singers were featured in enough Prague's synagogues so as to form a group for this procession.[49] The word "*brumen*" has many potential connotations in Western Yiddish, ranging from the growling of wild animals to the cooing of doves, humming, or the sounding of musical instruments.[50] A tempting speculation is to associate this with the later Eastern European cantorial practice of *brummstimmen* – cantorial improvisation over hummed harmonies sung by the *meshorerim*.[51] This diverges from 17th- and 18th-century observations of *meshorerim*, in which they primarily alternated singing with the cantor and only infrequently provided harmony.[52]

Another *meshorer* role, the "*zinger*" (a youth or high voiced singer) first appears in Prague as the last name of the aforementioned composer, Rabbi Shlomo Zinger (or Singer, d.1662).[53] While the term is not well documented among *meshorerim* until the 18th century, some evidence exists in 17th-century Bohemia for the incorporation of youth singers in Jewish worship. Rabbi Ephraim Lentschutz wrote in his *Amudei Sheish* that worse than the excesses of cantors in their extended singing were "the prayers that were prayed by the youths—it is clear that these have neither good sense nor a pleasant offering to the Lord."[54] Another quotation of this source adds that the youths prayed "on Sabbath eve and *Musaf* services [*beleilei shabbat uv'musafim*]."[55] Here, the rabbinic concern with meticulous execution of the prayers runs up against the engagement of new, higher voiced singers for the beautification of the service - a tension which increased as the *meshorerim* phenomenon spread. Other specialized names and roles for *meshorerim* developed over the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, including

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No. 61. For musical features of this parade, including ensemble singing, basses, cantors, and the use of the portable organ, see also ibid, No. 65 & 67.

[49] Bass singers were also known in Nikolsburg by this period. See below.

[50] Timm, *Historische jiddische Semantik*, 193-194.

[51] For an association of this phenomenon directly with the early *meshorerim* practice, see Arnold Marksohn & William Wolf, "Aus der Vorrede über Charakter und Geschichte der Synagogalgesänge" in *Dem Andenken Eduard Birnbaums*, ed. Aron Friedmann, Vol. 1 (Berlin: C. Boas, 1922): 183-184.

[52] Tina Frühauf's recent book suggests that the *meshorerim* sang harmony, potentially imitating the organ itself and anticipating its use in the 19th-century synagogue. This is based partly on her reading of Leon Modena's observation of Ashkenazic synagogue singing in his 1605 art music responsum, and on an assumption of coherence between a number of 19th-century descriptions of *meshorerim* musical functions and these early sources. However, Modena's description of Ashkenazic singing itself is limited to "*a[d] aria*", a term indicating an improvisational style of strophic music. Even late 18th-century manuscripts of *meshorerim* contain very little harmony at all. See Tina Frühauf, *The Organ and its Music in German-Jewish Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 18-22; An intriguing connection is Daniel Katz's observation of "lower pedal point" singing in bass parts from an early 19th-century Dutch *meshorerim* manuscript. For a full description of *meshorer* bass functions in late 18th- and early 19th-century *meshorerim* manuscripts, see Daniel S. Katz, "A Prolegomenon to the Study of the Performance Practice of Synagogue Music Involving *M'shor'rim*," *Journal of Synagogue Music*, Vol. 24, No.2 (Akron, OH: Cantors Assembly, 1995): 40-51, 75.

[53] See Hock, *Die Familien Prags*, 263.

[54] Ephraim Lentschutz, *Sefer Amudei Shesh* (Amsterdam: Pinchas, 1863): 64a.

[55] Yehuda Puchowitzer, *Sefer Derekh Hokhmah* (Frankfurt-an-der-Oder: Yoḥanan Ḳrisṭof Beḳman, 1682): 40b-41a; In the Sephardic realm, Menahem di Lonzano (1550-1626) also observed in Izmir a cantor who, amidst other foibles, sang with high-voiced young singers on either side. See the text and commentary published in Edwin Seroussi, "Menahem di Lonzano – Musicologist" [Hebrew], *Meir Benayahu Memorial Volume*, Vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2019): 615-618.

"tenor" and "tiscant".[56] These too, like the bass, appear to correspond to recognizable voice parts in Western vocal polyphony. However, they just as readily may refer to instrumental music: a 1651 census of Prague's *klezmer* guild uses the term "tiscant" to refer to violinists, and "basso" to refer to bass players.[57] While it is possible that these terms were borrowed from musical functions observable in co-territorial instrumental or vocal repertoire, they may simply reflect the plasticity of Western Yiddish to absorb new words for its own purposes – in this case, to describe singers of various vocal ranges relative to the cantor.[58]

It appears that the addition of *meshorerim* in the synagogue also required sensitive religious governance. The *takkanot* of the Nikolsburg community (1650-1720) restricted their cantors from appointing itinerant, unmarried basses to sing with them without communal consent, and limited its assistant cantors [*hazzanim sheniyim*] from engaging any *meshorerim* other than their own sons.[59] This suggests the subversive potential of itinerant musicians in the face of communal norms: An ideal cantor, by Jewish law, is not typically permitted to go before the ark if he is unmarried, particularly on the High Holy Days.[60] Furthermore, one of the standard features of cantorial terms of hire, dating to the Middle Ages, is the restriction from leaving the city without the express consent of the community. [61] Itinerant cantors and *meshorerim* thus represented a potential subversion of the communal leaders' authority, as well as presented potentially unfit candidates to lead the congregation in prayer. The requirement of communal consent for itinerant basses and restricting *meshorerim* candidates to the cantor's sons thus attempted to apply traditional parameters for cantorial appointment to the *meshorerim* as well.[62] The hosting of traveling guest cantors from other towns was also a norm by this time, as was their distinction by fame and reputation; the Nikolsburg *takkanot* restrict guest cantors from leading the *Shacharit* and *Musaf* services on the Sabbath unless they also led *Kabbalat Shabbat* and *Kiddush* the previous night – a stipulation which is waived in the case of a "famous cantor."[63] Thus in an era of the rising demand for traveling guest cantors and singers, community leaders sought to reign in this populist (and potentially religiously problematic) musical innovation in synagogue life.

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[56] An early Jewish source showing these terms together is the anonymous *Achashverosh Spiel*, copied out for the Christian Hebraist Christoph Wagenseil by a Polish Jewish informant in 1697. The play opens with Haman declaring "Scribe, I wish to sing discant, tenor, & bass / the walls will resound like an empty barrel [שרייבר מייר וועלין זינגן טישכן טענר אונ באס/ דיא שטובין זאל קלינגן גלייך פאם איין הול פאס]!" Haman's henchmen, called "*meshorerim*," enter afterwards to sing before the king and queen. See Chone Shmeruk, *Maḥazot miqra'im be-jiddish* (Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1979): 160f. I am grateful to Diana Matut for directing me to this source.

[57] Salmen, … *denn die Fiedel*, 156. Paul Gifford incidentally wrote that Jewish musicians developed a new ensemble with two violins and a bass, as in Italian baroque instrumentation, but with a cimbalom performing the role of basso-continuo accompaniment in lieu of a harpsichord. See the quotation in Feldman, *Klezmer*, 106.

[58] I am indebted to Diana Matut for this insight.

[59] Abraham Naftli Tzvi Róth, *Taḳanot Niḳolsburg* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Sura/M. Nyuman, 1961): 24-25.

[60] Moshe Isserles (ReMA) on *Shulḥan Arukh, Orakh Ḥayyim* 581:1.

[61] For the duties of cantors in medieval Spain, see Edwin Seroussi, "Music in Medieval Ibero-Jewish Society," *Hispania Judaica Bulletin*, ed .Yom Tov Assis and Raquel Ibáñez-Sperber, Vol. 5 (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 2007): 39-43.

[62] Cf. Ephraim Kanarfogel, "The Appointment of *Ḥazzanim* in Medieval Ashkenaz," in *Spiritual Authority: Struggles over Cultural Power in Jewish Thought* [Hebrew], ed. Howard Kreisel, Boaz Huss, and Uri Ehrlich (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 2010): *5-*31.

[63] Ibid., 25.

Defining Music: *Musikah* and *Hokhmat Ha-Musikah*

R. Lipschitz, as quoted above, reports of members that the previous generation of Prague's cantors were skilled in the "science of music" [*hokhmat ha-musikah*], on which basis they composed new melodies and taught them to their fellows. This term does not define, however, which aspects of Western musical practice were being employed by such cantors. R. Lipschitz himself was familiar with Italian musical sources like Rossi's *Ha-Shirim Asher Lishlomo*, whose five rabbinical approbations included the lengthy responsa of Leon Modena which identified the science of music as an originally Jewish art.[64] He also refers to Yehuda Moscato's *Sefer Nefutzot Yehudah*, which conceives of the science of music as one of the seven sciences,[65] synthesizing Pythagorean music theory and the rules of Western harmony with Jewish sources. As observed in the *Jüdisches Affenspiel* above, the ability to read musical notation was demonstrated by both Prague's cantors and *meshorerim* by the mid-late seventeenth century. Shabtai Meshorer Bass himself incorporated this knowledge into not only his name but his identity as a publisher, printing notated melodies (Fig. 3) on eleven different books from his printing press in Dyhernfurth, Poland.[66]

R. Lipschitz exhorts his colleagues to acquire musical knowledge, stating that "singing without the knowledge of music [*yedi'at ha-musikah*] is like prayer without intention [*kavanah*], and that in many places it is written that the Levites played in the Temple according to music [*al pi ha-musikah*]."[67] He then adds a clarifying statement about the nature of this knowledge as it contributes to the artistry of singing:

> Woe to those who call evil "good" [*ha'omrim lara' tov*] and good "bad;" what is bitter, "sweet," and what is sweet "bitter." For one who sings with the knowledge of music stretches the melody over the word, on which account it is called fair and pleasing. But one who sings without the knowledge of music and does stretch the melody over the word, sometimes speaks words or language with his lips which do not exist in all of the seventy languages [of the world].[68]

Knowledge of music here conforms with the ability of the cantor to apply melodic improvisation or composition to the words themselves, rather than in a vocalise apart from the words. R. Lipschitz may here be pushing back, as he does across his book, against inappropriate practices he observes among his fellow cantors.

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[64] R. Lipschitz referred to Rossi as the "old book [*sefer yashan*]." See Lipschitz, *Teudat Shlomo*, 16a-19b.

[65] These are analogous to the seven liberal arts of the Middle Ages: the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, and logic) and the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music). These were revived in the Italian humanism of the Renaissance and were part of Italian Jewry's engagement with philosophy in the early modern period. See Harrán, *Three Early Modern Hebrew Scholars on the Mysteries of Song*, 47-128, 151-174, 206-253.

[66] For the ten instances of the Bass's publication of the second woodcut (Fig 2b), see Stefan C. Reif, "Again the Musical Title Page" in *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore*, Vol. 10, No. 1/2 (Winter, 1971/72): 57-61.

[67] Lipschitz, *Teudat Shlomo*, 21b-22a. For an early description of the Levitical focus on "מוסיקא (*musica)*," see Yehuda Ha-Levi, *Sefer Ha-Kuzari* (Buenos Aires: Federación Sionista Argentina, 1943): 43 (Chapter 2, §64).

[68] Ibid., 22a.

Such an observation conforms with evidence from 18th-century cantorial manuscripts, which often contain extended vocalises disconnected from liturgical text.[69] This also matches closely with the observations of the contemporaneous R. Hanoch ben Avraham of Posen in his *Tokhehah Megulah*, whose parallel language appears to describe the same phenomenon:

Figure 3. Cover page of Shabtai Meshorer Bass (a) *Pentateuch* (Dyrenfurth, 1680) featuring musical notation for *Az Yashir Moshe*. (b) *Siddur* (Dyrenfurth, 1680), featuring musical notation for *Yigdal Elohim Hai*. This second woodcut was used in ten different publications by Bass. See note 67. (Photo credit: Dr. Abigail Bacon, Klau Library, Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.)

[69] On the cantorial vocalise as developed across the 18th and 19th century in Western Ashkenaz, see Geoffrey Goldberg, *Between Tradition and Modernity: The High Holy Day Melodies of Minhag Ashkenaz According to Hazzan Maeir Levi of Esslingen*, Yuval Music Series Vol. 12 (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 2019): 99-106.

> In every matter of sanctity he sings with a treacherous tongue and stammering speech ("Da Da La La Ra Ra"). Woe, to those who call evil good [*ha'omrim lara' tov*], and do many things like this, and interrupt the words and matters until one is no longer close to another because of these strange voices which alter one's intention [*kavanah*], even in things required by Jewish law, like *Kaddish, Kedushah, and Bar'khu*.[70]

Whereas R. Lipschitz would seem to suggest the Jewish domestication of Western music making, another Bohemian source complicates the potential meaning of *musikah*. *Reiah Nihoah* (1724), a defense of cantors written by Yoel Sirkis (approx.1650/1660-1740), *hazzan* of Česká Lípa (known also as Yoel Hazzan), intimates that it is North African and Turkish Jews who sing "according to music" [*'al pi hamusikah*], whereas Ashkenazic Jews sing in a crying voice [*b'kol tza'akah*]:[71]

ומה שמשבח המחבר ארץ ישמעאל ואפריקה	And in the matter in which the author praises the Land of Ishmael and Africa
שמנגני' ע"פי המוזיקא	Which sing according to *musika*–
בקול נמוך ונעימות	With voices low and melodies pleasing
ע"פי הנשימות	Simply according to the breathing;
זה הוא להם לשבח	This is worthy in their eyes
כמו הלוי על הזבח	Like Levites at their sacrifice.

The Ashkenazic cantorial style defended by Sirkis here casts itself in contradistinction to "*musikah,"* which is the province of other sub-ethnicities of Jews. Elsewhere in his pamphlet, Sirkis hypothesizes that the anonymous polemicist to which he is responding could also potentially be from Italy, where, like in North Africa, they also only sing "according to music.[72]" What unites the three Jewish cultures identified by Sirkis – Italy, Turkey, and North Africa – is perhaps their connection to the Sephardic diaspora and its conversance with the term "musika:" Following Nehemia Allony's detailed study, it can be found most frequently in sources from

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[70] Hanoch ben Avraham, *Reishit Bikkurim* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Andrae, 1708): 29a-b. Cf. Prov. 10:31. This passage is also included (with a slight abbreviation) in Adler, *La Pratique Musicale Savante*, p.247. Ottoman cantors were also known to sing nonsense syllables in the synagogue in this time period, based on the practice from Turkish classical music called "*terennüm.*" This is described in R. Eliyahu Ha-Cohen's well known ethical treatise *Shevet Musar* (Izmir, c. 1712) in his section on cantors (Chapter 34): "There are many people for whom it is difficult for them to sit like they are in prison. Thus in order that they should not come to sin, [the cantor] should not waste his time with melodies to give the congregation a taste of his voice, saying "*tir-tir-tir-tir*" and sometimes "*vay-vay*" for an hour's length." See Eliyahu Ha-Cohen, *Sefer Shevet Musar* (Petrikov: Yehoshua Munk, 1888): Chapter 34, 23a; also see Edwin Seroussi, "*La música sefardí en el Imperio Otomano: Nuevas fuentes literarias*," *Actes del Simposi Internacional sobre Cultura Sefardita*, ed. Josep Ribera (Barcelona 1993): 279-294. My thanks to Dr. Seroussi for identifying the Turkish musical practice in this source.

[71] Yoel Sirkis, *Reiah Nihoah* (Fürth, 1724); 4b-5a; Published in Matthew Klein, *A Pleasant Aroma: Prayer Leadership and Cantorial* Mussar *(Ethics) in the Eighteenth Century* (M.S.M. Thesis, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 2011): 50-51. The land of Ishmael here refers to the Ottoman Empire (possibly as far as Podolia), and "Africa" to Tunisia.

[72] Cf. Klein, *Pleasant Aroma*, 22.

Jews in medieval Spain (and to a significant extent in Provence and North Africa).[73] The term "*musika*" was used to describe learned music, often in the context of Greek philosophy as inherited through medieval Arabic thought. By tying his polemicist to Sephardic centers, Sirkis is perhaps indicating a contradistinction between Ashkenazic prayer and their traditions of *pizmonim* and metrical singing (*al pi ha-neshimot*).[74] From what we know of him, Sirkis was no world traveler. He was born in Poland, and he emigrated westward in his youth, marrying a cantor's daughter from Kolín, and then settled in Bohemia for his entire career.[75] It is possible he had some exposure to Turkish Jews as a youth in Lublin, albeit amidst the horror of the pogroms afflicting that city in the mid-seventeenth century. Whether through personal experience or acquired knowledge of other Jewish groups, Sirkis sees Ashkenazic prayer features such as screaming (and the use of *meshorerim*) as culturally distinct.[76] While defending similar aspects of cantorial practice as his contemporary, R. Lipschitz, Sirkis is perhaps an example of a more conservative approach, seeking to laud and preserve the Ashkenazic soundscape rather than enhancing it with "music" from Eastern Sephardic or Italian traditions.

Cantorial Duties

The nascent musical specialization of the cantors, together with their *meshorerim*, could easily be seen as an obstacle to the cantor's fulfillment of his communal roles. Yet a review of the careers of Prague's cantors reveals that these tensions underlying musical specialization were only in their incipient stages. Abraham Zvi Idelsohn's documentation of Prague's cantors in the 17th-18th centuries reveals that the majority of Prague's cantors were rabbis, if not also scholars, scribes, teachers, *mohalim*, and/or ritual slaughterers.[77] R. Lippman Poppers' (d.1655) noted epitaph reads: "chief of singers [*rosh meshorerim]*, he was learned in Bible and rabbinics, sharp in halakhic debate, head of *mohalim*, the redeeming of captives, and visiting the sick."[78] A Yiddish poem written on the occasion of his death by the prominent Jewish leader Hirsch Tausig further adds that R. Lippman was a scribe and "head of clothing the naked [*gabbai malbish 'arumim*]," characterizing him as a "cantor for the whole world" and a modern high priest.[79] But by the end of the 17th century, R. Shlomo Lipschitz would express

[73] Nehemia Allony, "The Term *mûsîqah* in Mediaeval Jewish Literature (Hebrew)," *Yuval* ed. Israel Adler, Vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1968): יא–לד.

[74] For a Turkish source using the term for the singing of *pizmonim*, see R. Israel Najara, *Sefer Bakashot* (Jerusalem: Levi, 1913): 64a, 67a, 68a-b, 83a.

[75] Yosef Bar-El, through analysis of the Yiddish used by Sirkis, places his birth in Lublin in the 1650s-1660s. For more on Sirkis' biography, see Yosef Bar-El, *Reiah Nihoah / Derekh Tov - L'Toldot Sifrut Mussar Ha'Ammamit Ha-Du L'shonit B-Meah Ha-18* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 1979): 1-2; One R. Yoel Hazzan is also observed in the aforementioned *Affenspiel* (1678), standing on a bench and reciting a *mi shebeirakh* blessing for the Emperor and Empress while all listen and then shout "*Amen*." This intersects with Sirkis' biography; he was likely living nearby in Kolin at the time of the Jewish parade. See *Affenspiel*, No. 51.

[76] Klein, *Pleasant Aroma*, 2

[77] Idelsohn, "Cantors in Famous Communities," 351-361.

[78] Cf. Hock, *Families*, 254.

[79] For an original printing see *Ayn Hipesh Lid fun R. Lipman Hazan* (Opp. 8º 652, Bodleian Library Oxford); the song was reprinted in Wagenseil's commentary on the *Sotah*, see Johann Cristoph Wagenseil, *Sotah. Hoc est: Liber Mishnicus de Uxore Adulterii Suspecta* (Altdorf: Andrae, 1674): 83-88; see also Idelsohn, "Cantors in Famous Communities," 354-356. Idelsohn here mistakenly identifies the melody of the song as ברוגז–ליד *[broygez-lid]*; the correct reading is the "ברונש–ליד [*braunslied*]" a known Jewish adaptation of the early 16th-17th century German melody, "*Braune Farb und Freundlichkeit*." This melody was used for other laments sung by German Ashkenazic

great joy in the unburdening of himself from such communal tasks.[80] This sense of advancement from countryside to city for opportunity belies Edwin Seroussi's characterization of the emergence of a cantorial market: "In this market, supply and demand count, prestige and fame are maintained via extravagant performances, and public opinion is manipulated through gossiping and mutual critique."[81] The community of Prague which R. Lipschitz experienced (and criticized) demonstrated the difficulties of cantorial competition and rivalry, while also generally maintaining a culture of engagement in Jewish communal duties among its cantors.

Reflecting on music in the Jewish centers of Bohemia and Moravia, we can see a growing level of Jewish musical complexity grounded in an increased access to security and self-organization among cantors and *klezmorim*, as well as new familiarity with co-territorial Christian musical contexts and early literacy in notation. We also can see the evolution of an Ashkenazi chorister tradition, the *meshorerim*, with specified roles linked, however still ambiguously, to the practice of learned Western music. In the other great early modern center for Jews, and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, we will see similar musical opportunities for cantors, and yet also a cantorial culture increasingly at odds with its illustrious rabbinate.

III. The Polish-Lithanian Commonwealth

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania became home to the largest Jewish community in the world, marked by legal autonomy and self-organization, institutions of Torah learning, population growth, and economic strength.[82] Jewish and Poles, while living in separate spheres, nevertheless shared core cultural axioms, such as in the realms of political leadership, popular religious sensibilities, architecture, and clothing.[83] Like in Bohemia and Moravia, music-making brought Jews into liminal spaces with Polish musicians and other ethnic minorities, leading to opportunities for new (and often transgressive) musical experimentation. Within the cantorate, this turn towards music was further accelerated by the laicization of the cantor's office and a transformation in Jewish expressive culture brought on by the spread of standardized prayer books.

The Standardization of the *Siddur*, Rabbinical Authority and the Problem of the Cantor

The impact of the standardization of liturgy on the Polish cantorate cannot be underestimated. In the generations prior to the seventeenth century, one of a cantor's principal functions was as a *paytan*, a religious poet, gathering and/or composing

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Jews, including the Yiddish poem *Ayn Shein Lid Oyf Shnei Kedoshim* (Opp. 8º 1103, Bodleian Library, Oxford (Prague c. 1684?). See Diana Matut, Liner notes for *Simchat HaNefesh: Joy of the Soul, Simchat HaNefesh,* recorded 2-4 May, 2014, Benjamin Dressler, 2018, 42-43; Idelsohn also claims that Poppers was a master of musical instruments as well. This is absent in the sources which he quotes. See A.Z. Idelsohn, "Songs and Singers of the Synagogue in the Eighteenth Century with Special Reference to the Birnbaum Collection of the Hebrew Union College," *Hebrew Union College Jubilee Volume* (Cincinnati: HUC, 1925): 411; ibid., *Jewish Music,* 207.

[80] Lipschitz, *Teudat Shlomo,* 9b-10a.

[81] Edwin Seroussi, "Musical Dilemmas of Early Modern Jews" in *The Cambridge History of Judaism* ed. Jonathan Karp and Adam Sutcliffe, Vol. 7 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017): 727-728.

[82] Cf. Moshe Rosman, "Innovative Tradition: Jewish Culture in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth" in *Cultures of the Jews: A New History* edited by David Biale (New York: Schocken, 2002): 510-520.

[83] Ibid., 526-530.

liturgical poetry for the adornment of the service. This function required cantors to have significant adjacent skills of religious and liturgical knowledge. Amidst the swell of *piyyutim*, the sixteenth century saw an increased interest in grammar and pedagogy among rabbinic leaders of Eastern Europe. In 1610, the Council of the Four Lands engaged Rabbi Shabtai Sofer of Przemysl to draft an "authorized daily prayer book," which was published in 1617 with great praise from the Polish and Bohemian rabbinic leadership.[84] The need for a new *siddur* also emerged from a Kabbalistic concern for the mystical importance of precise language – letters, vowels, and cantillation.[85] R. Sofer's academic approach to the law and grammar of the liturgy was paired with venting his anger and critique of cantors – the artistic arch-nemeses of his scholarly project of standardization. In his "Note to *Hazzanim* and Those That Appoint Them," R. Sofer re-articulates the standards of the *shaliah tzibbur*, castigating cantors for their impiety, ignorance of Hebrew grammar and pronunciation, and vainglorious singing, which often deformed the language of the liturgy. These errors were considered by R. Sofer as part of a broader issue of pervasive ignorance throughout society—including cantors, printers, teachers, and the laity, whose divergent (and uneducated) practices this standard *siddur* sought to combat.[86]

A perhaps unanticipated consequence of liturgical standardization sought by rabbinic elites was a significant pivot in the artistic pursuits of prayer leaders themselves. As Nisson Shulman remarks: "The free expression of the *paytan*, the religious poet, became limited and was finally eliminated. The cantor therefore strove to find other avenues through which he could express his inner feelings and in which he could excel. And so he began to emphasize the vocal art by which existing and standardized prayers could be sung, the cantorial art. The basic change was from an emphasis on poetic creation to musical creation."[87] Amid this renewed artistic expression through music, the standardization of liturgy displaced the need for prayer leaders to have the religious literacy required of liturgical poets. This displaced religious literacy can also be observed contemporaneously in the realm of Jewish law. In the century following its publication, R. Yosef Karo's *Shulhan Arukh* (1565) with its Ashkenazic gloss by R. Moshe Isserles (1530-1572) became the normative code of law for Ashkenazic Jews, amplified by a number of rabbinic commentaries (particularly by Polish rabbis).[88] While this codification of law sought to universalize and unite the religious behaviors of Ashkenazic Jewry, it also further professionalized the process of Jewish law, potentially attenuating the need for Talmud study and legal expertise from laymen. This was a sore point of debate between the great Polish halakhist Rabbi Yoel Sirkes (1561-1640) and his cantor.[89] The cantor claimed that Talmud study was now

[84] Stefan C. Reif, *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 231-232.

[85] Cf. A 1618 ordinance of the Council of Four Lands which articulates the religious value of a standardized *siddur* and recommends the replacement of all *siddurim* with the newly published prayer book of R. Sofer. Yisrael Halperin, *Pinkas Va'ad Arba Aratzot* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1989): 34-35, No. 96.

[86] Stefan C. Reif, *Shabbethai Sofer and his Prayer-book* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979): 35-38, 92-95.

[87] Nisson Shulman, *Authority and Community: Polish Jewry in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Yeshiva University Press, 1986): 78.

[88] For an exploration of the questions of Jewish identity and polity arising from this phenomenon, see Joseph M. Davis, "The Reception of the *Shulhan Arukh* and the Formation of Ashkenazic Jewish Identity," *AJS Review* 26(2) (2002): 251-276.

[89] It is likely that these two similarly named figures are related via the same Polish rabbinic family, but I have not been able to confirm this.

unnecessary, since the *Shulhan Arukh* was authoritative and complete with regard to Jewish law; Rabbi Sirkes vehemently disagreed. Their disputes over the issue were protracted, culminating in a heated exchange after which the cantor took R. Sirkes to court for wrongfully excommunicating him.[90] This exchange reveals the antinomian tendencies resulting from the standardization of practice.[91] While there were still great religious and social pressures towards the traditional ideals of the *shaliah tzibbur*, it seems that an Ashkenazic cantor no longer had a practical need to have the Talmud knowledge required for rendering legal decisions, nor the religious literacy required for the composition of *piyyutim*.

With this trend towards liturgical and halakhic standardization, combined with rising affluence in the *kahal* and the limiting of liturgical creativity among Jews to the province of music, early modern Poland-Lithuania became the epicenter of cantorial experimentation. We know this because the antibodies to this viral spread of expressive culture, the rabbinate, erupted with vociferous critiques of cantors and a combination of lament and litigation over their new changes.

As the "representative of the community" in prayer, cantors were appointed by the local Jewish community council [*kahal*]. Since the fifteenth century, Ashkenazic rabbis had been excluded from these councils, which made their own independent ordinances [*takkanot*]. The rabbinate maintained a strong influence over matters of Jewish law, yet rabbinic ideals and communal desires often came to a head over the choice of a cantor.[92] While piety and knowledge were still religious ideals for the position,[93] cantors could now, as we have seen, execute the standardized liturgy without high religious literacy. This situation reflected the Polish Jewish community itself; many Jews spent much of their lives trying to make a living, and were not able to engage regularly in religious studies.[94] Rabbi Joseph ben Eliah, who led the rabbinic court in Zasław in the 1630s, complained that most people did not understand their daily prayers; instead, many unschooled lay people turned to books written in Judeo-German in order to learn Jewish custom and law.[95] The Polish *kahal* now drew more cantors from among its own laity, and were increasingly free to pursue candidates with good voices and musical acumen, but who potentially lacked the religious ideals set forth in rabbinic literature for the cantor's office.

This trend in cantorial appointments began to accelerate in the second half of the sixteenth century, an era in which the Polish rabbinate itself was also undergoing major changes.

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[90] See Elijah Judah Schochet, *Rabbi Joel Sirkes: His Life, Work, and Times* (New York: Feldheim, 1971): 40-42, 171-172; The subversive nature of R. Sirkes' cantor seemed to have been manifold; he accuses him of singing in taverns during the mournful "nine days" period prior to Tisha B'Av. The cantor was reported to justify his behavior by quipping: "I don't need to mourn for Jerusalem – after all, I didn't destroy it!" Cf. Schochet, 171; 175, Note 40.

[91] This disagreement should be seen in light of general opposition to the *Shulhan Arukh* by local halakhic decision-makers whose Talmudic skills and legal authority were subverted by those (like the cantor) who would elect to simply follow this new law code. Cf. Joseph M. Davis, *Yom-Tov Lipmann Heller: Portrait of a Seventeenth-Century Rabbi* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2004): 122-126.

[92] Cf. Edward Fram, *Ideals Face Reality: Jewish Law and Life in Poland 1550-1655* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1997): 48-51.

[93] See *Shulhan Arukh*, *Orakh Hayyim* 53.

[94] See Fram, *Ideals Face Reality*, 47-48.

[95] Ibid, 50, note 8. See also the aforementioned comments of R. Shabtai Sofer regarding systemic ignorance among cantors, printers, and other lay groups *(supra*, note 87).

While at the beginning of the century the rabbinate's authority was confirmed and bolstered directly by the Polish monarchy, the reign of Zygmunt Stary (1508-1548) began the process of transferring jurisdiction over Jews to the local nobility.[96] This change, as Adam Teller points out, instigated a rise in the autonomy of communal leaders, who could negotiate privileges directly with Polish nobles. It further transformed the (now subordinate) Polish rabbinate into a semi-honorary position, whose authority was increasingly derived from wealth and connections over knowledge, reducing its political influence within the Jewish community.[97] Rabbinic frustration over the "cantor problem" thus arose at a time where power was moving away from the rabbinate and towards the *kahal* itself.

In the midst of this shift in rabbinic authority, R. Yoel Sirkes blamed the problem of ignorant cantors on the wealthy, who by the early seventeenth century had almost exclusive power to function as communal leaders.[98] Stymied by the situation, Sirkis lamented that "the hand of the rich prevailed over the sages of this generation."[99] R. Shlomo Luria (1510-1573) also bitterly complained of rabbinic powerlessness to exert influence on the community's choice of cantor:

> "The law requires that the rabbi should choose the cantor from among his students, but should the rabbi dare to exercise this right, his recommendation would be rejected by the congregation. It would be futile for the rabbi to protest. The communities retain for themselves and withhold from the rabbi the power of appointment in order that the cantor should remain accountable to them alone and free from the control of the rabbi. As a consequence, the piety of the reader is subordinate to a pleasant voice and clear diction."[100]

Ultimately, the problem was not one that could be easily overcome. R. Benjamin Slonik (1550-1619) wrote that "he who has the power to rectify the situation in the community should do so. He who is powerless ought to say nothing that the transgression be accidental rather than intentional."[101] Yet by the mid-seventeenth century, the reality of ignorant Polish cantors with good voices was already considered a multi-generational issue.[102]

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[96] See Adam Teller, "The Laicization of Early Modern Jewish Society: The Development of the Polish Communal Rabbinate in the Sixteenth Century" in *Schöpferische Momente des Europäischen Judentums*, ed. Michael Graetz (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 2000): 344-345.

[97] Ibid., 346-349.

[98] Schochet, *Yoel Sirkis*, 153.

[99] *Bayit Hadash* on *Shulhan Arukh*, O.H. 267:3.

[100] *Yam Shel Shlomo Hullin* Ch. 1, No. 49, quoted in Shulman, *Authority and Community*, 77; also Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia Vol. 1*, 132; R. Luria further complains about communities who pick a cantor based on their family connections [*yikhus*] rather than their piety. See Akiva Zimmerman, "Cantors and *Hazzanut* in *Yam Shel Shlomo* and the Responsa of the *Maharshal*" in *Sha'arei Ron: Hazzanut in Responsa Literature and Halakhah* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: *B'ron Yahad*, 1992): 88.

[101] See Shulman, *Authority and Community*. 109.

[102] Rabbi Berachia Berech (1608-1662), describing the election of such cantors, lamented that "this plague has been with us now for several generations, and no one seeks to remove it." See Berachiah Berech ben Yitzhak, *Zera Berech* (Amsterdam: Attias, 1662): Introduction, n.p.; I am grateful to Adam Teller for directing me to this source.

Transgressive Innovation: Extended Singing, Foreign Melodies, and the Science of Music

This new wave of Polish cantors brought more extended singing into the synagogue. Polish rabbis contested this innovation, as it not only was realized through subversion of their authority but potentially led to transgressions of Jewish law. A gripe shared by almost all rabbinic polemicists was that ignorant cantors made frequent technical errors and executed their prayers without *kavanah* (intention). This was partly due to the cantors' lack of familiarity with the prayer text and its grammar, and partly because the musical extension of a word could end up effacing its meaning. Such innovations were seen by the rabbis as being of a populist nature, seeking to please the congregation rather than to serve God.[103]

Another contested practice was the use of foreign melodies in the synagogue, a transgression with long precedent in medieval rabbinic literature. Citing the 14th-century *Sefer Kol Bo*, R. Moshe Isserles called for the admonition and then subsequent removal of a cantor who sings Gentile songs.[104] Such a practice not only invited the halakhic problem of imitating the Gentiles (*ḥukkat ha-goyim*); it also began to compete for the cantor's time at the expense of his other duties. Most cantors in Poland also served as Torah readers, and often were supervised by rabbis as ritual slaughterers,[105] yet the most musical candidates were not necessarily the most adept at executing these other tasks. After inveighing against Poland's cantors for their manifold errors in Torah reading, R. Benjamin Slonik pointed out the cause of the problem – the communal priority on a musical cantor:

> "Moreover, they don't even read one sentence in the Torah with proper cantillation and grammatical punctuation, because the communities choose those cantors who sing the liturgy and *Kaddish* prayers beautifully and at length. From month to month and from week-to-week new melodies are sung which our forefathers never heard or wanted to hear, for they are borrowed from churches and theaters! Yet, no one seems to care. The longer the cantor sings, the better they like it, even if he knows not one law of prayer or of the Torah reading."[106]

This concern with both foreign melodies and cantorial time management was shared by R. Yoel Sirkis. He accused his cantor of being so occupied with learning the Torah reading that he had no time to study, and further added that the cantor was drunk on a daily basis and picked

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[103] For critiques of extended singing, cf. Berachia Berech, *ibid;* Lentschütz, *Amudei Sheish, 66b-67a; Sirkis*, Yoel Sirkis (Bayit Chadash) on *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 267:3; Benjamin Slonik, *Mas'at Binyamin*, Responsum No. 6; Translation quoted from Shulman, *Authority and Community*, 108-109. Yehuda Puchowitzer, *Divrei Ḥakhamim*, Vol. 2 (Hamburg, 1692/93): 13b, No. 53; Despite lay leaders being party to the engagement of these cantors, larger Jewish communal synods still limited the timing and number of melodies that their cantors could use. The Council of Lithuania of 1623 limited cantors to singing three melodies on a regular Sabbath and four on a special one. It also forbade them from singing before the *Shema*, and during the morning call to prayer [*Bar'khu*].See Simon Dubnow, ed. *The Minute Book of the Council of Lithuania* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem, 1969): 12, no. 62. Idelsohn also cites this identically in the minute book of Brisk. See Idelsohn, "Songs and Singers," 404.

[104] "And a prayer-leader who fouls his mouth (ie. uses foul language) or sings non-Jewish songs, we warn him not to do this, and if he does not listen, we remove him [*Kol Bo* page 125, *amud* 4]." Rema (R. Moses Isserles on *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 53:25. Translation by Sefaria https://www.sefaria.org/Shulchan_Arukh%2C_Orach_Chayim.53.25?lang=bi&with=About&lang2=en.

[105] Cf. Rema (R. Moses Isserles, Ibid.; Zimmerman, *Yam Shel Shlomo*, 90-93.

[106] Quoted in Shulman, *Authority and Community*, 108-109.

up melodies he learned drinking in the tavern to use in the synagogue.[107] R. Sirkes, however, held a more nuanced position when it came to melodies heard from the church. He only forbade melodies that were specifically for Christian worship; other Christian melodies he permitted.[108] It is not clear what melodies R. Sirkes considered to be heard in churches yet not a part of worship; one may speculate that these relate to processions or banquets (to which *klezmorim*, at a minimum, would have been regularly exposed).[109] But R. Sirkes explores an intriguing contrary position (which he ultimately dismisses), raising the argument that one might be lenient by considering the science of music as analogous to the sword: legitimate for Jewish use due to biblical precedent, despite its broad use among pagans.[110] The implications of this position echo a long thread of Jewish tradition which considered the science of music as an originally Jewish mode of knowledge.[111] R. Sirkis, in rejecting this position, also intimated that it may have been one that his community had considered.

The idea of Christian music having originated in the Temple was articulated in the works of Italian Jewish humanists like Rabbi Yehudah Moscato (1530-1593), Abraham Portaleone (1542-1612) and Rabbi Leon Modena (1571-1648).[112] While familiar with this strain of thought, he nevertheless rejected the aspects of it that would lead to the direct adaptation of Christian worship melodies. A very similar argument was made contemporaneously by the German rabbi, R. Yosef Hans-Nördlingen (1570-1637):

> "One should not make melodies on Sabbath eve and the end of the Sabbath to the melodies of the non-Jews, such as *Kol Mekadesh* and *Birkhot Ittim.* And all the more so one should not sing these melodies in the synagogue, like those sophists who seek a leniency on the basis that their melodies were stolen from us at the time of the Temple. Consider if we found a pillar that was beloved in the days of the patriarchs; yet because it was made for the Canaanites for idolatry, the Lord hated it and proscribed it."[113]

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[107] R. Yoel Sirkis, *Bayit Hadash Ha-hadashot* (Jerusalem: Safra, 1959): 79-80.

[108] Ibid, *Bayit Hadash HaYeshanot*, No. 127; translated in Solomon Freehof, *A Treasury of Responsa* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1963): 158-159.

[109] Like in Prague, the phenomenon of the *klezmer* guild arose in Polish cities, evident in Lwow in 1629 and Lublin in 1654. The Lwow charter offered the *klezmer* musicians similar privileges to those we saw in Prague; with an annual payment, they were allowed to play at Christian weddings and banquets. See Benjamin Vogel, "There on the willows we hung our…violins: On Old Macewas, Synagogues and *Klezmorim*," *Muzykalia VII/Judaica* 2 (2009), 14-16. For a rich collection of both written sources and iconography regarding medieval and early modern Polish and Bohemian Jewish music, see Vogel, 1-47.

[110] R. Yoel Sirkis, *Bayit Hadash HaYeshanot*, 158-159.

[111] Immanuel of Rome (1261-1335) first articulated this in his *Mahbarot*: "What does the science of music say to the Christians? 'I was surely stolen from the Land of the Hebrews' (Gen. 40:15)." See Immanuel Ha-Romi, *Mahberot Immanuel Ha-Romi* ed. Dov Yarden, Part 1 (Jerusalem: *Mossad Bialik*, 1957): 120, line 341.

[112] Exchanges between Jewish cultures in Poland and Italy were also frequent in this period. See Yaakov Elbaum, "Cultural Connections between the Jews of Poland and Ashkenaz and the Jews of Italy in the 16th century," *Gal-Ed*, ed. Moshe Mishinksy, Vol. 7-8 (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1985): 11-40.

[113] Yoseif Yuspa Hahn-Nördlingen, *Yosef Ometz* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1722): 77a, no. 602; in Adler, *Pratique*, 245. As pointed out by Naomi Cohen Zentner, Nördlingen's legal exchange on the matter goes back 80 years prior to its publication.

Confirming R. Nördlingen's description, Naomi Cohen Zentner has recently identified the origin of the Frankfurt "*Kol Mekadesh*" melody in a German Catholic lied, printed in seventeenth century Catholic hymn books from Hildesheim, Cologne, Würzburg, Mainz and Prague.[114] Reading R. Nördlingen with R. Sirkes, we may consider the "science of music" question in Poland as not connected to polyphony or Western notation, as with the Italian sources, but rather with the use of co-territorial Christian melodies and aesthetics. Looking at these critiques, we should pay attention to the three centers of Jewish-Polish interaction suggested by rabbis as giving rise to the exchange of foreign melodies: the tavern, the theater, and the church. While the activities of *klezmorim* in Christian celebrations, especially weddings, give us some insight into the loci of melodic transmission in Gentile environments, further study on the interactions of Jews and non-Jews and the repertoires of each of these settings could give us yet deeper insight into the nature of their musical transmission to the Polish synagogue.

"The Voice of Screaming:" Vocal Aesthetics of the Bohemian and Polish Jews

Migration between Czech Lands and Western Poland was frequent in the seventeenth century, and particularly increased with the influx of Polish immigrants to Bohemia and Moravia following the Chielmnicki pogroms (1648-9) and Swedo-Muscovite wars (1655). In his aforementioned defense of the "screaming [*tza'akah*]" of cantors, the Bohemian cantor Yoel Sirkes of Ceška Lipa makes a fascinating homiletical connection between the political freedom experienced by Bohemian Jews under the Emperor and Catholic nobility and their freedom to pray loudly –"as our souls move us [*k'avat nafsheinu*]." Yet like Shabtai Bass, Sirkes was a Polish Jew by birth who migrated westward, first stopping in Kolin to marry and then moving to Ceška Lípa.[115] Similarly to Christian observers of Jewish worship in other European lands, visitors to Prague's synagogues in this period wrote frequently of the loud and cacophonous nature of their services. The English traveler, Fynes Moryson, remarked of the service he observed in 1592:

> The whole Congregation did singe altogether, each man having imbroidred linnen cast about his shoulders with knotted fringes to the nomber of the Commandements (which I take to be their Philacteryes), so as the Rabby could not be known from the rest, but by his standing at the Alter. Their singing was in a hollow tone, very lowe at the first, but rysing by degrees, and sometymes stretched to flatt roring, and the people in singing answered to the Rabby, and some tymes bowed their heades lowe, shaking their hinder partes, with many ridiculous tones and gestures.[116]

[114] Naomi Cohn-Zentner, "*Kol Mekadesh Shevi'i*: A Wandering Melody as a Cultural Map," *Jewish Cultures Mapped*, January 27, 2023, http://www.jewish-cultures-mapped.org/#/project/4?_k=heitc5; See also Werner, *A Voice Still Heard*, 100.

[115] Cf. Bar-El, *Reiah Nihoah/Derekh Tov*, 1-2.

[116] Fynes Moryson, *Shakespeare's Europe: A Survey of the Condition of Europe at the End of the 16th Century*, ed. Charles Hughes, 2d ed. (New York: Blom, 1967 [1617]), 491–93. See also Comenius, *Labyrinth* 51; R. Ephraim Lentschütz (1560-1619) blamed cantors who shouted in the synagogue for bringing shame to the Jews in the eyes of frequent Christian visitors. See Lentschütz, *Amudei Shesh*, 63b; also quoted in Shulman, *Authority and Community*, 77.

The use of voice and gesture was addressed by Rabbi Yom Tov Lippman Heller (1579-1674), who spent his formative years in Prague and the second half of his career in Poland-Lithuania. Heller lamented that "It is customary throughout these lands that for *piyyutim* or the like [the people] raise their voices and cry aloud *[tz'oakim b'kol ram*] until the nations mock us on account of this."[117] Heller was at pains to defend this practice on the basis of established custom, stating "the custom of Israel is Torah [*minhag shel yisrael Torah hi*]." In his commentary on the *Rosh*, Heller elsewhere permitted the practice of cantors putting their hands on their cheeks (cf. Figure 3) for the purpose of raising their voices in song, while considering yawning or shaking one's head as forbidden and disgraceful.[118] He nevertheless added that in "other lands" cantors are known to sing with a pleasant voice [*bin'imut kol*] rather than crying and screaming.[119]

Figure 4. Title page of Polish music treatise *Opusculum Musicae Mensuralis (1517) by Sebastian y Felsztyna*. Two singers are shown touching their cheeks, a practice observed among Polish and Bohemian cantors from the 16th-18th centuries. See note 118.

[117] Yom Tov Lippman Heller, *Malbushei Yom Tov*, ed. Isaac Feigenbaum (Warsaw: Baumretter, 1893-5): 46-47, 100:2. R. Lentschütz also complained of the use of *piyyutim* whose meanings were totally obscure as well as cantors who extended their singing only to show their abilities and to please the congregation. See Ephraim Lentschutz, *Sefer Amudei Shesh* (Amsterdam: Pinchas, 1863): 64a; The phenomenon of "screaming" in prayer (צועקין בקול רם) may describe the lands in which Heller dwelled at this time (Prague, where he lived predominantly 1592-1629, or Ukraine/Poland, where he lived from 1629-1654). Joseph M. Davis maintains that Heller's use of the word "מימי" ("I have always wondered") indicates that these observations may extend back to Heller's youth in Wallerstein, Bavaria, thus yielding a more expansive experience of "screaming" in Ashkenazic prayer (Personal communication, Joseph M. Davis).

[118] *Divrei Hamudot* No. 122 on Berakhot *Ch*. 3 in Asher ben Jehiel, *Helek Rishon MiSefer Rabbeinu Asher* (Fürth: Tzvi Hirsch, 1745): 26b; Eduard Birnbaum suggested that putting the hand on one's face while singing is also observable in contemporaneous Polish music-making.This can be seen in Fig. 3, the title page from the Polish music treatise *Opusculum Musicae* (1519), which illustrates choral singers holding their face while interpreting a piece of written sheet music. Cf. Eduard Birnbaum, *Liturgische Übungen: Heft 2* [שלוש רגלים], Wiesbaden: *Verband der jüdischen Lehrer Vereine i.d.R.*, 1912): 4.

[119] Yom Tov Lippman Heller, חלק ראשון מס' רבינו אשר עם פי' מעדני י"ט ודברי חמודות (Fürth: Tzvi Hirsch ben Hayyim, 1745)**:** 25b, No. 122. While it is not clear in this period which Jewish communities are indicated as singing with a "pleasant voice," early 18th-century sources will identify this prayer aesthetic with North African and Ottoman Jewry. Cf. Anonymous. *Shloshah Tzo'akin V'Einan Ne'enin.* Broadsheet, Amsterdam ca.1695; Yoel b. Eliezer Sirkis, *Reiah Nihoah*. Fürth: S. B. Schneur, 1724: 3b-4b.

The phenomenon of "screaming" may also relate to changes in synagogue architecture. Expanding Jewish populations, rising synagogue attendance, and need for administrative space led to the construction of many "great synagogues" in many urban centers like Prague, Krakow, L'viv, and Vilnius. Their Jews largely employed Italian and Polish architects. Their synagogues were created in the popular Italian Baroque style, largely employing stone masonry and sharing common design features with contemporary churches.[120] Among many factors, one may speculate that these changes engendered or encouraged aesthetic change in synagogue worship, requiring a different vocal approach from the cantor in order for him to be heard in a larger space.

The volume of Polish worship was also associated with a powerful emotionalism that became characteristic of Polish-Jewish sonic identity. Hirsch of Ziviotiv, cantor of that community during the Chmielnicki massacres, was reported to have sung an *El malei raḥamim* (memorial prayer) so passionately that he elicited the mercy of the attacking Cossacks and saved three thousand Jews.[121] As Polish cantors emigrated westward over the second half of the eighteenth century, they would be noted for both their volume and emotional power.[122] Writing in 1715, Rabbi Zelig Margoliot waxed rhapsodic about the cantor, Baruch of Kalisch, and the emotive powers of Polish cantors:

> There was nobody in the synagogue whose heart was not struck and moved to repentance—all of them pouring out their hearts like water– the like of which does not occur in other countries that have neither melody (*niggun*) nor emotion (*hit'orerut*); the cantors of our country, however, know well how to arouse penitence by their voices.[123]

Cantor Jokele of Rzeszow was another traveling Polish cantor known in the early 18th century for his tremendous singing; his reputation brought to serve synagogues across Europe, including in Amsterdam, Metz, and Prague. Yet in the case of Jokele, his cantorial career in Metz ended in tragedy during an unfortunate incident. On the second day of *Shavuot,* during the *Shaḥarit* service, the women's balcony of the Metz synagogue gave way, leading to the death of six women. The tragic story became widespread, and sources blamed the calamity on Jokele's error with a word of liturgy.[124] This indictment of Yokele underlies the power of cantorial

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[120] Cf. Barry Stiefel, *Jews and the Renaissance of Synagogue Architecture, 1450-1730* (Oxford: Routledge, 2014): 61-82.

[121] Nathan Hannover, *The Abyss of Despair (Yeven Metzulah): The Famous 17th Century Chronicle Depicting Jewish Life in Russia and Poland during the Chmielnicki Massacres of 1648-1649.* Trans. Abraham J. Mesch (New York, NY: Routledge, 2017): 45.

[122] Schudt describes the reputation of Polish rabbis and cantors, saying: "If the German Jews want something exceptional [*was sonderliches haben wollen*], they get their rabbis and cantors from Poland." See Schudt, *Jüdische Merkwürdigkeiten,* 284; Werner, *A Voice Still Heard,* 129; For an intra-Jewish satire (c. 1675) making fun of German Jews for needing imported Polish rabbis and cantors, see *Di Baschraibung vun Ashkenaz un Polak* (Bodleian Library, Oxford; Opp 10° 1081), published in Max Weinreich, "Two Yiddish Mocking-Songs about Jews [Yiddish]" *Filologishe shriftn,* Vol 3. (Vilna: B. Kletzkin, 1928): col. 544.

[123] Zelig Margoliot, *Hibburei Likkutim* (Venice: Bragadin, 1715): 4-5; Hanoch Avenary, "Music," 673.

[124] The sources differ as to what liturgical error Yokele made, but agree that he was to blame. For sources about the tragedy, see *The Memoirs of Gluckel of Hameln,* trans. Marvin Lowenthal (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1960): 271; R. Shlomo Lipschitz, *Teudat Shlomo,* 15b; Benjamin Ben-David Kreilsheim, *Rishui Nikneset b'Helkat Binyamin*. (Berlin:1722), Frankfurt University Library, Germany - Public Domain.

expression to be associated with both intensely positive and negative consequences; indeed, the experience of communal tragedy led communities to forbid synagogue melodies and *meshorerim* in the service.[125] Though desirable for their reputations and aesthetics, Polish cantors would spark equally animated controversies in Western Ashkenazic communities due to their musical novelty, liturgical errors, and liminal status as immigrants and refugees.[126]

This emotionalism of Polish cantors should further be seen in light of recent scholarship in the aesthetics of Ashkenazic worship. In her seminal book, *The Music Libel Against the Jews*, Ruth HaCohen follows the history of Christian ideas of Jewish sound as "noise," which emerged from both ethnographic observations of Jewish worship and a Christian religious conception of Jewish discord in music as mirroring Judaism's theological disorder and degeneracy. This history of "Jewish noise" is complemented by the work of Judit Frigyesi on the processes inherent in Eastern European Jewish prayer chant. Frigyesi rejects the notion that Eastern European Jewish music is defined by a repertoire of melodies, each evaluated as ancient or syncretic in Jewish character. Alternatively, she identifies Jewish music as a cognitive process rather than a sonic object or product.[127] These processes focused on individual recitation of the liturgy (*davenen*) in the context of heterophony, yielding the same phenomenon observed by HaCohen as Jewish "noise." Thus the use of melodies or specialized "music" in the synagogue are potentially in tension with the cognitive processes and theological commitments which realize this norm of heterophony.

Observations of heterophony and individualized "speech-music," to use Frigyesi's term, are certainly not limited to the Eastern European Jewish communities. One might therefore view the aesthetic developments of this period in cantorial history as yielding a new synthesis between melody and *davenen* – between homophonic and heterophonic elements of the Ashkenazic synagogue soundscape. With the westward migration of Polish cantors, this sonic transformation reverberated across Western Europe. Fertilized by Polish musicality, the Western Ashkenazic practice would recalibrate under new norms of musical expression, yielding the florid, baroque-inflected styles of synagogue music observable in the cantorial manuscripts of the eighteenth-century.

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https://www.europeana.eu/item/09315/urn_nbn_de_hebis_30_2_5785; *Ayn Naye Klaglied af dem Maase HaGadol.* (Bodleian Library, Oxford; Opp 8^{O} 642). I am indebted to Diana Matut for directing me to this last source.

[125] Cf. Idelsohn, "Songs and Singers," 404.

[126] For more on the experience of Polish-Jewish refugees in Western Europe, see Adam Teller, *Rescue the Surviving Souls* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020): 199-292.

[127] Judit Frigyesi, "The Unique Character of Prayer Chant Among the East European Jews: Part I: System, Practice, and Aesthetics—A Preliminary View," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, Vol. 40, Number 2 (West Lafayette, Ind.: Midwest Jewish Studies Association, 2022): 13-37.

IV. Conclusion

By the time our Salamone Rossi partbook passed into the hands of a Moravian cantor, the cantorate to which he belonged had begun to articulate itself as a specialized profession. This change was supported by the long-term economic and cultural flourishing of Jews in Czech lands and Poland-Lithuania in the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries, leading to the rise of organized Jewish music professionals. *Klezmer* guilds in both regions were able to secure privileges to play music in a variety of Christian contexts, deepening their opportunity to exchange musical knowledge, perhaps even transmitting some of it to cantors themselves. The cantorate blossomed under a new musicalization of the service, driven by the waning of rabbinic authority, the broadening of cantorial candidates with the standardization of the liturgy, and the concomitant pivoting of Jewish liturgical creativity away from the poetic realm towards the musical one. These factors coalesced to create a new form of cantorial professionalism with a more articulated focus on music-making over other communal duties, increasing conflict with rabbinic leaders over the cantor's musical innovations and rising communal status. The city of Prague in particular created a rich culture of instrumental, confraternal, and cantorial music, bolstered by a rise in popular mysticism. Prague also became the epicenter of the new *meshorerim* practice featuring specialized singers, who, over the course of the eighteenth century, would join the cantor as paid functionaries and regular fixtures of synagogue music in Western Ashkenaz. The specialization of the cantorate also took concrete form in increased engagement with the "science of music" – a medieval term which among Ashkenazim acquired new meanings related primarily to melodic and rhythmic constructions observable among non-Jews, and, among some more learned Jewish circles, with the use of musical notation.Though the works of Rossi would not re-enter the Ashkenazic synagogue until the nineteenth century, the seeds were already planted in the early modern period for the germination of a professionalzed Ashkenazic cantorate that, as today, would deeply devote itself to music as a spiritual art.

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The Cantor Next Door: Cantor Salomon (Known as Kashtan), His Son Hirsch Weintraub, and the Motif of Hiding in the Next Room

By Daniel S. Katz

It is reported—whether historically or apocryphally—that someone once hid the Russian composer Alexander Glazunov (1865-1936), when he was still a young man, in an adjacent room, while Sergei Taneyev (1856–1915) gave an informal performance on the piano of a symphony that he had recently composed. Immediately afterwards, Glazunov appeared, as if fortuitously. Taneyev was told that Glazunov, too, had a symphony to present, whereupon Glazunov played from memory Taneyev's new composition, which he had just secretly heard from his hiding place.[1]

The motif of hiding to overhear music (rather than for purposes of simple eavesdropping or concealment), or to play music unexpectedly for unsuspecting listeners in a nearby room, is not new. A music treatise from early in the reign of Louis XIV tells the story of a woman, who after recovering from a severe physical illness had remained so depressed that she couldn't get out of bed. Her husband had the connections to arrange for an ensemble—no less than the king's own *24 Violons du Roy*—to come to his house and hide behind a tapestry near his wife's bed. When the ensemble suddenly began to play, the shock and the power of the music took her by surprise, cured her depression, and restored her former jollity and cheerfulness.[2]

It would surely be fun to amass a collection of other examples, but my purpose here is to relate only three, which happily presented themselves in the course of my research on Hirsch Weintraub (ca. 1812-1881)[3] and his biography of his father, Salomon, known by the Kashtan (ca. 1781-1829).[4] Hirsch published the biography in ten installments in the weekly Hebrew newspaper *Hamagid* in 1875.[5]

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[1] Solomon Volkov, ed., *Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich*, trans. Antonina W. Bouis (New York: Harper & Row, 1979; New York: Limelight Editions, 1999), p. 68. Given what is known about Glazunov, the anecdote is plausible. However, this source is unreliable. Here is a better-documented story about Glazunov's memory: "After Borodin's sudden death in 1887, Glazunov (together with Rimsky-Korsakov) became deeply involved in completing and revising the unfinished works left by him. Glazunov's exceptional memory enabled him to write down the overture to *Prince Igor* as he had heard it played by the composer on the piano…." (Boris Schwarz, "Glazunov, Aleksandr Konstantinovich," in Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., 29 vols. [London: Macmillan, 2001], vol. 9, pp. 938-941, here p. 938). For the controversy regarding *Testimony*, see Malcolm Hamrick Brown, ed., *A Shostakovich Casebook* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004).

[2] "Amazing True Facts" (two stories from Jean Denis' *Traité de l'accord de l'espinette*, 1650, translated by Daniel Katz), *The Lute Society of America Newsletter* 18/3 (Aug. 1983).

[3] At this point in my research, the earliest unequivocal documentation I have for the name "Weintraub" is a notice in the *Lemberger Zeitung* on May 22, 1833 (p. 306). The dates of Hirsch's birth and death will be the subject of another article.

[4] "Kashtan" was a nickname, not a surname: see Daniel S. Katz, "Music that Escaped: Transcriptions of Two Songs of Praise from a Surviving, but Still Hidden, Synagogue Repertory," in *Fiori Musicali: Liber amicorum Alexander Silbiger*, ed. Claire Fontijn with Susan Parisi (Sterling Heights, Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 2010), Detroit Monographs in Musicology / Studies in Music, No. 55, pp. 525-573; here pp. 546-555, esp. pp. 552-554.

[5] Hirsch Weintraub, "תולדות הש"ץ הנודע קאשטאן ז"ל" ("The Life of the Famous Cantor Kashtan of Blessed Memory") in *המגד*, vol. 19 (1875), no. 14 (Apr. 7), p. 122; continued in no. 15 (Apr. 14), p. 130; no. 16 (Apr. 28), p. 140; no. 17

The first story of cantorial hiding is told by Weintraub in Kashtan's biography. Since I have recently treated this passage in detail in a conference paper,[6] which is available on YouTube,[7] it will suffice to outline the story here:

While Kashtan was in Tiktin (Tykocin), about 20 miles northwest of Białystok, another cantor showed up, hoping to challenge him to a competition and to prevail against him. The bass singer Yitzchak Leib, one of Kashtan's *meshorerim* (assistant singers), obtained the cooperation of the local rabbi to defend Kashtan against the cantor. The rabbi invited the unsuspecting cantor to sing for him, while Yitzchak Leib, along with two other *meshorerim*, hid in a side room in order to listen.

It turned out that Kashtan's challenger had a limited cantorial repertory. Everything that he sang was in the form of a dance with variations! After holding their peace for two songs, Yitzchak Leib and his co-conspirators interrupted the third song by bursting into the main room, yelling "hooray!" and dancing around like drunkards to the astonishment and discomfiture of the cantor. Yitzchak Leib then scolded the cantor and forced him to go to Kashtan's house, where all three of them sang before a large public. The cantorial challenger was decisively defeated, but had the grace and decency to acknowledge Kashtan's superior singing before leaving town.[8]

In this story, the motif of hiding in the next room serves a serious purpose. It enables the bass singer Yitzchak Leib to conduct reconnaissance on the intruding cantor, who wished to combat Kashtan. Having discovered his lack of any serious cantorial substance, Yitzchak Leib emerges from his cover to confront the adversary directly and lead him to Kashtan, who will dispatch him after a short skirmish.[9] Although the episode begins in a private setting in the rabbi's house, crowds of people gradually show up, and the subsequent confrontation between Kashtan and the visitor, despite taking place in Kashtan's own accommodations, is very much a public event.

(May 5), p. 148; no. 18 (May 12), p. 160; no. 19 (May 19), p. 168; no. 20 (May 26), p. 176; no. 21 (June 2), pp. 186-187; no. 23 (June 16), pp. 202-203; and no. 24 (June 23), p. 210. I am currently preparing an edition of the biography in Hebrew with an English translation.

[6] Daniel S. Katz, "The Acts and Antics of the Singing Assistants (*meshorerim*) of a Nomadic Cantor in the Russian Empire (Principally Ukraine and Poland) ca. 1820," unpublished paper read at meetings of the International Musicological Society (Athens, Greece, Aug. 2022), the Cantors Assembly (Los Angeles, Nov. 2022), and the Association for Jewish Studies (Boston, Dec. 2022).

[7] The twenty-minute paper cited in n. 6 can be heard in two YouTube videos. The first is a video of a public lecture given at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati on Nov. 8, 2022. In this video, the paper is supplemented by a slideshow and a performance of one of Kashtan's compositions: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OE492iQqO8 The other video shows a private presentation made on Zoom to the "Jewish Musics Analysis Group" on Sep. 20, 2022. In addition to this paper, it includes an unpublished paper about Salamone Rossi, in which I experiment with the use of *t'amei ha-miqra* as a tool for understanding his setting of Psalm 146: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jajJKVCHb-M (I last accessed both videos on August 10, 2023).

[8] For the story in the original Hebrew, see Hirsch Weintraub, op. cit., p. 140, col. A, lines 34-70.

[9] The only language in this story that may have military implications is the cantor's declaration that he will demonstrate the "power" of his singing "against" Kashtan. In another episode of Kashtan's biography, the cantor of the Polish city of Płock, where Kashtan had been invited to officiate as a guest on Saturday morning, arrogantly states his intention to "defeat" him. Hirsch then describes the cacophonous Friday night service, conducted by the local cantor with the help of an oversized party of unrehearsed and raucous *meshorerim*, as a "battle of song." See Daniel S. Katz, "A Chestnut, a Grape, and a Pack of Lions: A Shabbos in Płock with a Popular Synagogue Singer in the Early Nineteenth Century" in *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, vol. 32 (2020), pp. 15-29, here pp. 21-22.

We cannot know if Kashtan himself ever hid behind a door, or to what extent his son Hirsch Weintraub may have been influenced by the story from Tiktin. However, it is documented that Hirsch was happy to engage in this activity himself, albeit under less dramatic circumstances, on at least one felicitous occasion towards the end of his career. I have found two records, one in a newspaper and one in a manuscript, that give the details of this event. The target of the operation this time was not a wayward cantor, but the philanthropist Sir Moses Montefiore (1784-1885).

On Sept. 13, 1872, the *Jewish Chronicle* of London published a "Report of Sir Moses Montefiore's Mission to Russia," where he "had the happiness of personally presenting to His Imperial Majesty, the Czar of all the Russias, at St. Petersburg, ...an address of congratulation on the two-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Peter the Great." The account in *The Chronicle*, which covers nearly two entire pages of a sixteen-page issue, constitutes "the essence" of a report written by Montefiore himself.[10]

After meeting with Alexander II (1818-1881; czar from 1855) and concluding his business in Russia, Sir Moses and his retinue left St. Petersburg by train, "traveling all night in order to reach Königsberg in good time for Sabbath [sic]" and stopping on the way to be greeted by Jewish crowds and dignitaries, particularly at Kovno and Vilna.[11] The *Chronicle* goes on to say that "a pleasing incident occurred in Königsberg…." on Saturday, July 27:

> After dinner [i.e., lunch], on the Sabbath Day, as Sir Moses and his party commenced singing the Sabbath Psalm, they were most agreeably surprised by the charming voices of the Rev. H. Weintraub, First Cantor of the synagogue, and the members of his excellent choir, who had obtained permission to enter an adjoining apartment without the knowledge of Sir Moses; and watching the moment of his commencing to intone the psalm, they took up the next verse, and chanted the whole of it, in the presence of hundreds of people within the hotel and the adjoining garden, all eagerly listening to the charming psalmody.

I found another document, this time in the archives of the Birnbaum Collection, that also reports on this incident.[12] It consists of four pages without any title, heading, or other identification, and was written out by hand in German in the first person (i.e., "After lunch on Saturday, as *we* began to sing…"). It would seem, therefore, that this is a translation, and that it was made not from the article in the *Chronicle*, but from Montefiore's own account of his trip to Russia (which was also the *Chronicle's* source). The German document does not discuss Montefiore's experiences in Russia; it includes only the story of his visit to Königsberg. Here is my translation of an excerpt from the German text, describing the same "pleasing incident" that was cited above:

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[10] *The Jewish Chronicle*, No. 181, New Series, Sept. 13, 1872, pp. 326-327. I have not yet seen Montefiore's original report. The main purpose of his trip was to try to improve the situation of the Jews in Russia. This was his second trip there; in 1846 he had met with Alexander's father, Czar Nicholas I (1796-1855; czar from 1825). See Lucien Wolf, *Sir Moses Montefiore: A Centennial Biography* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1885), pp. 111-136, 215-219.

[11] The article (p. 327) mentions Kovno and Vilna in this order (the reverse of what one might expect).

[12] Klau Library, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Birnbaum Collection, Arch II S, Weintraub 13 (b).

> After lunch on Saturday, as we began to sing the Sabbath psalm, we were very pleasantly interrupted by the harmonizing voices of Mr. H. Weintraub, the first cantor of the synagogue, and the members of his outstanding choir, Messrs. H. Sohn, W. Lowenstein, L. Schnitkin, and L. Loew. These gentlemen had obtained, without my knowledge, permission to enter an adjacent room, and having waited for the moment when we intoned the psalm, started the following verse, and sang it through to the end in the presence of hundreds of people in the hotel and the bordering garden, who were all listening attentively to the magnificent singing.[13]

The German version confirms explicitly that the meal in question, which the British *Chronicle* called "dinner," was lunch (the word *Mittagessen* literally means "mid-day meal"). It also records the names of the four singers who accompanied Weintraub, suggesting that Montefiore took the time to engage with them in conversation. Both the English and the German texts state ambiguously that the choir "chanted the whole of it" or "sang it through to the end." Although strictly speaking the antecedent of "it" is "verse," logically it would seem more likely that the choir sang the rest of the psalm. (If the quintet stopped after the second verse, then who continued the psalm? And perhaps a single verse would have been too short to be worth the trouble, or to attract the crowds of people who lingered to listen.) Finally, the text does not state explicitly which psalm was sung. It may have been Psalm 92, whose heading specifically calls it "a psalm for the Sabbath day," but which would not necessarily be sung right after lunch. Another possibility is Psalm 126, the introduction to *birkat ha-mazon*, the prayers of thanksgiving recited after a meal.

The *Jewish Chronicle* did not print Montefiore's report in its entirety, and the German translation includes some details that are not in the *Chronicle*. In addition to listing the names of the singers, it reveals that Weintraub, described at first as a composer rather than a cantor, was one of the Königsbergers who had greeted Montefiore after his arrival on Friday afternoon, whereas the rabbi, Dr. Bamberger, sent regrets for his "unavoidable absence" from a delegation that visited him the following day.

The German document in the Birnbaum Collection also describes a liturgical performance not mentioned by the *Chronicle*:

> Mr. H. Weintraub, a well-known composer of religious music, offered to provide for us a number of gentlemen, so that we might attend Shabbat services. At the appointed time I had the good fortune to hear the Sabbath hymn, which Mr. W. Loewenstein very beautifully performed before a large gathering.[14]

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[13] "*Nach dem Mittagessen am Sonnabend, als wir den Sabbath-Psalm zu singen begannen, wurden wir sehr angenehm unterbrochen durch die harmonisch ertönenden Stimmen des Herrn H. Weintraub, des ersten Kantors der Synagoge und der Mitglieder seines ausgezeichneten Chors, der Herren H. Sohn, W. Lowenstein, L. Schnitkin und L. Loew. Diese Herren hatten ohne mein Wissen die Erlaubnis erhalten, in ein anstoßendes Zimmer zu treten, und den Augenblick abwartend wo wir den Psalm erstimmten, begannen sie den nächsten Vers und sangen ihn bis zu Ende in Gegenwart von hunderten von Leuten im Hotel und dem daran grenzenden Garten, welche alle dem herrlichen Gesange lauschten*" (ibid., p. [3], line 11 through p. [4], line 5).

[14] "*...Herr H. Weintraub, ein wohl bekannter Komponist religiöser Musik bot uns an eine Anzahl von Herren einzuladen, um der Feier des Sabbath-Gottesdienstes beizuwohnen. Zur bestimmthen Stun an eine de hatte ich das Glück die Sabbath-Hymne zu hören, welche Herr W. Loewenstein vor einer großen Versammlung sehr schön vortrug...*" (ibid, p. [1], lines 12-20).

Since the same document also says, "the next morning [Saturday] we had *minyan* again," it would appear that Montefiore attended services in the hotel on both Friday night and Saturday morning, rather than going to the synagogue, and that Weintraub sent the gentlemen to him in order to make the service possible. We are not told specifically why Montefiore didn't go to the synagogue, but it may have been because he was too tired.[15] Since the text stresses the large number of people who gathered at the hotel, we may deduce that there would have been, between Montefiore's own entourage, the other guests at the hotel, and the locals who were hanging out there, more than enough men to make the *minyan*.

Therefore, I wonder if the gentlemen whom Weintraub sent along with Loewenstein perhaps formed a small choir to sing with him. Loewenstein was named in the previously quoted passage as one of the singers who joined Weintraub in performing for Montefiore after lunch on Saturday. It is not completely clear, though, what Loewenstein and his companions sang on Friday. "Sabbath hymn" would imply the hymn *Lekha dodi*; perhaps, like the expression *Kabbalat Shabbat*, it stands in for the entire Friday night service. After all, we see from Weintraub's and Solomon Sulzer's publications of synagogue music that *Lekha dodi* was the longest and most elaborate musical composition in the service, so it would not be surprising to single it out for special mention.

An additional musical disclosure comes from another archival document in the Birnbaum Collection, which contains three handwritten excerpts copied from German newspaper accounts of Montefiore's visit to Königsberg. One of the items mentions a performance of "the English national melodies," which took place in the hotel's garden on Saturday "after the pious guest had devoutly listened, early in the morning in his room, to the psalmody performed by Chief Cantor H. Weintraub and his singing personnel."[16]

Once again, it is not clear exactly what took place. What were Weintraub and his choir doing in Montefiore's hotel room so early in the morning? Did they go there just to sing some "psalmody"? Or did they sing the entire (or an abbreviated) *hashkamah* ("early") service, then go to the synagogue to sing the main service, and finally return to the hotel to hide in the room next door? Perhaps the term "psalmody" is being used here loosely to refer to the liturgy in general, or perhaps Weintraub and the choir made only a cameo appearance, maybe just singing *Pesukei d'zimra*, the introduction to the morning service, which indeed consists primarily of psalms, whereas the rest of the service, however it may have been conducted, was not considered important or exceptional enough to mention.

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[15] "I hardly need to add that after such a tiring trip, which took a day and a night, I greatly relished the Sabbath's peace and rest" *("...ich brauche kaum hinzuzufügen, daß nach einer ermüdenden Reise, die einen Tag und eine Nacht währte, ich in hohem Maße den Frieden und die Ruhe des Sabbaths genoß");* ibid., p. [1], lines 21-25.

[16] *"Die Teichertsche Concert-Kapelle spielte im Garten von [dem Hotel] Sanssouci am Sonnabend ihm zu Ehren die englischen Nationalmelodien, nachdem der fromme Gast früh Morgens in seinem Zimmer die vom Obercantor H. Weintraub und dessen Sängerpersonal vorgetragene Psalmodie andächtig angehört hatte;"* Klau Library, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Birnbaum Collection, Arch II S. Weintraub 13 (a) p. [1], line 28-p. [2], line 3.

Be that as it may, Montefiore's appearance in Königsberg and Weintraub's appearance at the hotel *were* exceptional, as one more item from the Birnbaum Collection makes clear. This four-page document, written to mark Weintraub's second *yahrtzeit* (1883), has the heading: "Sir Moses Montefiore and H. Weintraub: A Sketch by Ed[uard] Birnbaum."[17] It is a heavily edited draft, and the first two pages, perhaps rewritten elsewhere in a good copy, have been crossed out in Birnbaum's characteristic thick blue pencil. Apparently, Montefiore's visit and Weintraub's role in it—his provision for Loewenstein's singing on Friday evening, and his own appearances with the choir early Saturday morning (openly) and again after lunch (in hiding)—made enough of an impression to be commemorated over ten years later.

To summarize: taken together, the various reports that we have seen tell of three distinct events featuring sacred song during Montefiore's Shabbat in Königsberg. Weintraub arranged for Loewenstein to sing on Friday evening. He himself appeared with his choir twice on Saturday: first early in the morning and then again after lunch. The performance on Friday evening featured the "Sabbath hymn," that on Saturday morning some sort of "psalmody," and the lunchtime episode the "Sabbath psalm." The details of these three events are not clear, but it is evident that the highlight of the day was the sensation and surprise of Weintraub's hiding with his choir in the hotel room next door to Montefiore's.

For a concluding anecdote let us return to Kashtan, to a story that subverts the theme of hiding in a room to perform or overhear music. Hirsch writes:

> My father's procedure, when he visited a city in Russia or Poland, was not ever to go to see anybody, but rather the community leaders always came to where he was staying, and asked him to officiate on Shabbat. In Vilna, though, they did not come to him—because they were proud like the Germans and miserly like the Lithuanians, and since my father didn't go to them, he didn't officiate on his first Shabbat in Vilna. A great crowd, eager to hear some of his melodies, came to the inn where he was staying, and waited in vain in the hopes of listening in on some Shabbat songs. However, my father didn't sing anything. He also told the *meshorerim* not to sing even a single note.[18]

This is quite different from the usual situation. Kashtan is indeed in a hotel room with his entourage, but although he may be concealing himself in a musical, spiritual, or psychological sense, he is not in any way hiding physically: not only do all the Jews in Vilna know exactly where he is, but many of them have come to the hotel to eavesdrop on his Shabbat prayers. Indeed, the public *outside* the room is hiding, hoping to listen in without Kashtan's knowledge or

[17] Klau Library, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Birnbaum Collection, Arch II S, Weintraub 13 (c).

[18] Weintraub, p. 202, col. B, line 49 through p. 203, col. A, line 7:
דרכו של אבי היה כי לא הלך בערי רוססלאנד ופאלען לשום אדם כי פרנסי העיר באו תמיד לביתו וחלו אותו כי יתפלל ביום השבת .אולם בווילנא לא באו הפרנסים לביתו—כי הם היו בעלי גאות כאנשי אשכנז וקמצנים כבני ליטויא, ויען כי לא הלך אבי אליהם נשאר בווילנא שבת-הראשון בלי התפלל, והמון רב העם אשר צמאי לשמוע מנגינותיו באו לבית האכסניא אשר גר אבי שמה והוחילו עד בוש בחשבם אולי ישמעו מה מזמירות-שבת, אולם אבי לא שר מואמה גם להמשוררים צוה כי לא ינגנו אף טאן אחד.

consent. This is the Jewish equivalent of loitering outside of a concert hall or stadium, trying to sneak a peek at the action inside.

In the usual scenario of hiding in a room, one party (e.g., the composer Taneyev, the sick Frenchwoman, the misguided cantor in Tiktin, or Sir Moses Montefiore) is unaware that the other party is there. In this case, there are no secrets. Kashtan, who was famous, as his son frequently reminds us throughout his biography, for never officiating on Shabbat for a fee of less than 100 rubles, knows what's going on and refuses to let the crowd hear even a single note, since the community had not engaged him. By withholding his singing, he increases the public's desire to hear him the following week.

Instead of a sudden outbreak of music, there is an unnaturally continuous silence. Ironically, Kashtan confirms his presence through his silence. His voice will stay concealed, and there is nothing for the tarrying public, hiding out in the open around the hotel, to overhear. Instead of revealing itself by coming forward to meet Kashtan face to face, the public finally retreats. It goes even more deeply into hiding by returning home and withdrawing into the private sphere.

We have seen three variations on the theme of the hidden cantor next door: the cantor who spies on a rival, the cantor who suddenly breaks out into song with no prior notice, and the cantor who thwarts eavesdroppers by not singing at all. Whereas some element of privacy is an obvious prerequisite for hiding, in all three stories the boundary between public and private is eroded: a large crowd comes to hear the cantorial display in Tiktin, even though both parts of it took place in private quarters (the rabbi's and Kashtan's); Weintraub's quintet in Königsberg, although hidden in a room, sings in a public setting, a bustling hotel to which many people had come to honor Montefiore; and the story of Kashtan's visit to Vilna offers the paradox of a public that hides, while an unseen and unheard cantor, who remains in his hotel room, gives a public performance that consists, over a hundred years before John Cage,[19] expressly and entirely of silence.

Daniel S. Katz holds a Ph.D. in musicology from Duke University with a dissertation on music notation in the fourteenth century. A specialist on the history of Ashkenazi liturgical chant, especially in the period before Sulzer, he has written on meshorerim *techniques, the relationship of the* Akdamut *chant to Gregorian chant, and synagogue reform in Denmark, and has published transcriptions of music by Isaac Offenbach, Hirsch Weintraub, and Kashtan. Dr. Katz is a founding member of the German General Rabbinical Conference, as well as a member of the Cantors Assembly. He is currently based at the Martin Buber Institute for Jewish Studies at the University of Cologne, Germany, where his research on Hirsch Weintraub and Kashtan is supported by the German Research Foundation* (Deutsche Forschungs gemeinschaft).

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[19] The piece called *4'33"* by John Cage (1912-1992) was first performed in 1952

CELEBRATING ISRAEL AT 75

Jewish Elements in Israeli Popular Music: A History

By Marsha Bryan Edelman

Years before journalist Theodore Herzl articulated his Zionist vision,[1] Russian Jews fleeing persecution and eager to find a place where they could be fully contributing citizens made their way to *Eretz Yisrael*. These early pioneers called themselves "*Bilu'im*" (from the exhortation in Isaiah 2:5: *Beit ya'akov, lekhu v'nelkha*, House of Jacob, come and we will go) but they were hardly possessed of religious fervor. Instead, the young settlers established Rishon LeTziyon (First to Zion) and advocated for both personal and national revival, but from a perspective that promoted the literature of the *Haskalah* (Enlightenment), rather than the Talmud. They brought with them a repertoire of Russian folksongs, which they quickly translated into Hebrew – yielding odd songs of Cossacks and the Volga River that nevertheless form the earliest contributions to Israel's modern musical heritage.

The second *Aliyah* (roughly 1903-1914) was stimulated by the Kishinev Pogrom (1903) and additional hostilities that accompanied the Russian revolution of 1905. While most of those fleeing Russia opted for the economic opportunities offered by the United States, some idealists made their way to the *Yishuv*, and helped to create agricultural settlements in Palestine, including the first kibbutz, Degania, established in 1909. Despite funding from Baron Edmund de Rothschild,[2] life in these early settlements was difficult, and many of these would-be immigrants ultimately returned to Europe. The songs they left behind, however, reflected their greater connection to Jewish spiritual life, including familiar melodies for *Eliyahu HaNavi* and *Vetaher Libenu*; those who remained lifted their spirits by dancing shoulder-to-shoulder as they sang *El Yivneh HaGalil* (God will build the Galilee.)[3] This period was also marked by the arrival of a small but important group of Yemenite Jews. Unlike their European counterparts, the immigration of these Yemenites was propelled by the religious Zionism that had always been a part of their community. That sentiment was reflected in the *piyyutim* by Shalom Shabazi (1619-1720) that they added to the evolving fabric of Israel's musical culture, including *Esh'ala Elohim* and *Ahavat Hadassah*. (See. Figures 1 and 2).

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[1] Popular convention ascribes Herzl's Zionism to his experiences reporting on the trial of Albert Dreyfus, a captain in the French army, who was falsely accused of espionage and convicted of treason in 1894. In fact, Herzl's diaries reveal that he had prior thoughts regarding the need for a Jewish homeland; the Dreyfus affair seems merely to have focused that earlier vision.

[2] Edmund de Rothschild (1845-1934) was a French member of the wealthy Rothschild banking family. A passionate Zionist, his generous contributions enabled the establishment of many of the earliest settlements.

[3] The script of an Independence Day celebration in 1968 recalled these early days of the pre-State era by describing the indispensability of the *horah* in the life of the *kibbutz*: You can't describe the land of Israel without the *horah*. Plant a tree – dance the *horah*. You plow for the first time – dance the *horah*. After a meeting, we need a *horah*! Your brother comes from the Diaspora – go straight for the *horah*. A financial contribution arrives from the Diaspora—wow, what a *horah*! All day we dance – and who will build the Galilee? God will build the Galilee!

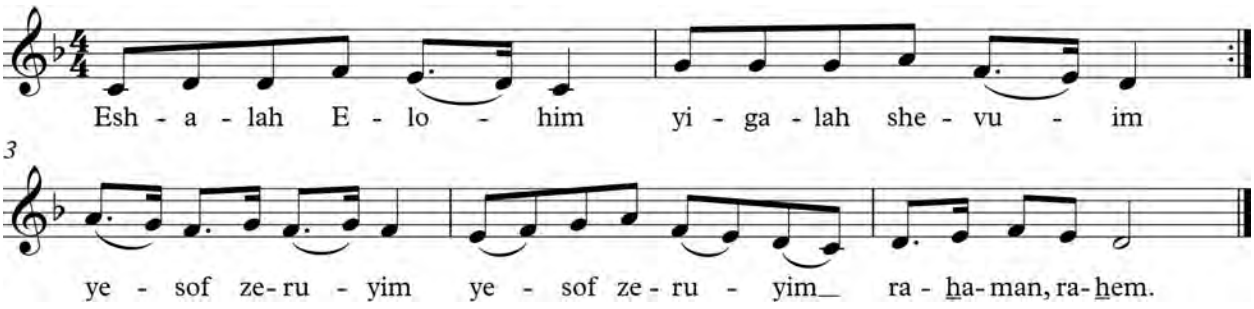

Figure 1. *Esh'ala Elohim*

Eshalah Elohim yigaleh shevu'im	I will ask God, when will he redeem the captives?
Yesof zeruyim,	He will gather the (scattered) seeds.
Rahaman rahem	Merciful One, have mercy.

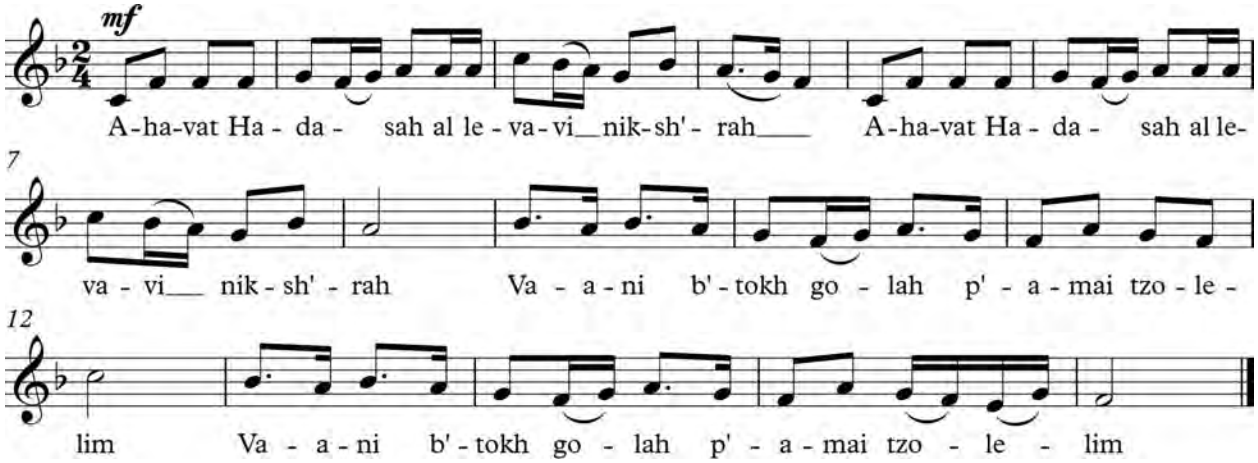

Figure 2. *Ahavat Hadassah*

Ahavat Hadassah al levavi nik'sh'rah	Love of Hadassah (Israel) is on my heart,
Va'ani b'tokh golah,	And I am inside diaspora,
P'amai tzolelim	And my steps are sunk deep in exile.

The music of pre-State Israel remains part of the national culture, at least for those nostalgic for the early pioneering era and the spirit of community that built the country. It is also a model for the contrasting styles and themes of the music that has emerged over the past 75 years.[4] From the earliest days, there have been entirely secular songs written purely for entertainment, and conveying no particular values – Jewish or other. Recently, English has appeared nearly as often as Hebrew in Israel's music, compounding the challenge of finding any

[4] It should be noted that this essay will focus exclusively on lyrics; none of the music we will discuss has any uniquely "Jewish" character about it. Mizrahi music has a distinctive sound that is quite different from Western music, but it is typical of the Middle Eastern region from which it came and not exclusive to the Jewish community. The same is, of course, true of the Jewish music brought to Israel by European immigrants, whether it is the Romanian *horah* or a Hassidic song.

Jewish consciousness in the popular playlist.[5] At the same time, there have also been songs that draw inspiration from Jewish literature, history and values.

The Early Years of Statehood

Not surprisingly, the war years produced many memorable Israeli songs reflecting the excitement and opportunity that Statehood offered. Songs of reclaiming the desert and getting to know the land were favorites, and verses from the Bible were often chosen for song lyrics. Many saw the State (referred to by the rabbis as "the first flowering of our redemption") as the initial step in the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, and as the nation reclaimed its ancient heritage, it sang and danced to sacred texts:

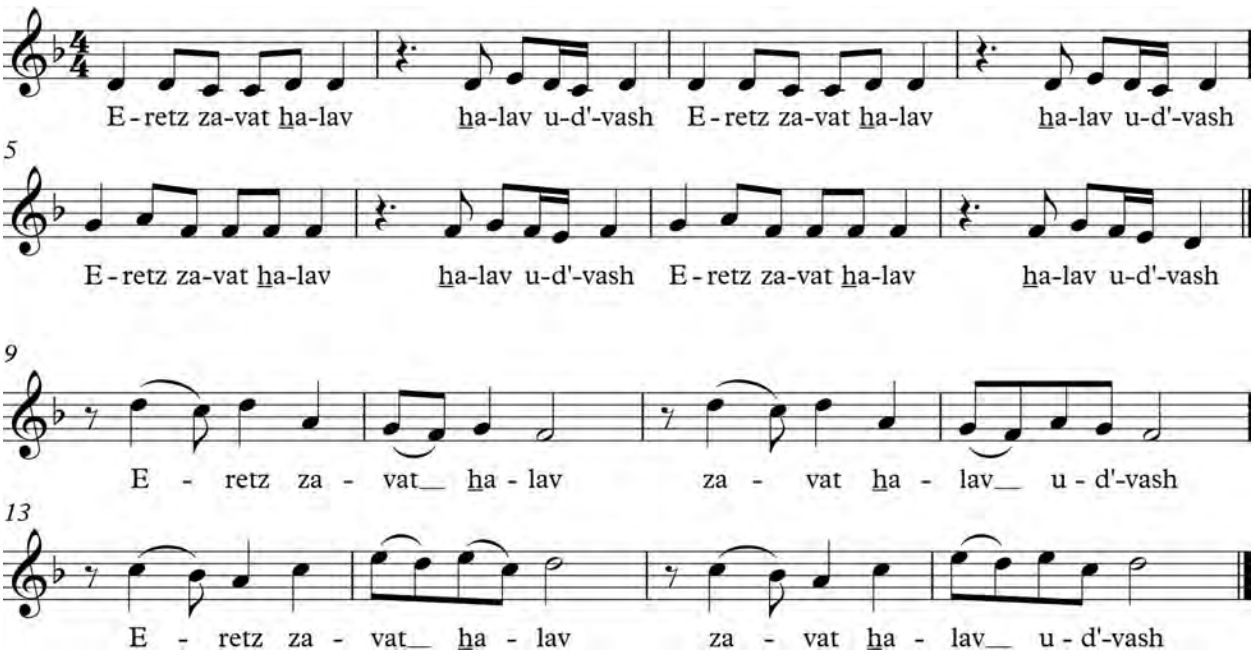

Figure 3. *Eretz Zavat Halav U'dvash* (Ex. 3:8 and elsewhere) by Eli Gamliel

Eretz zavat halav ud'vash A land flowing with milk and honey

[5] Israel's entry in the 2023 Eurovision Festival was "Unicorn," by singer-songwriter Noa Kirel. The bridge contained nine Hebrew words interspersed among English phrases, while the rest of the song was entirely in English.

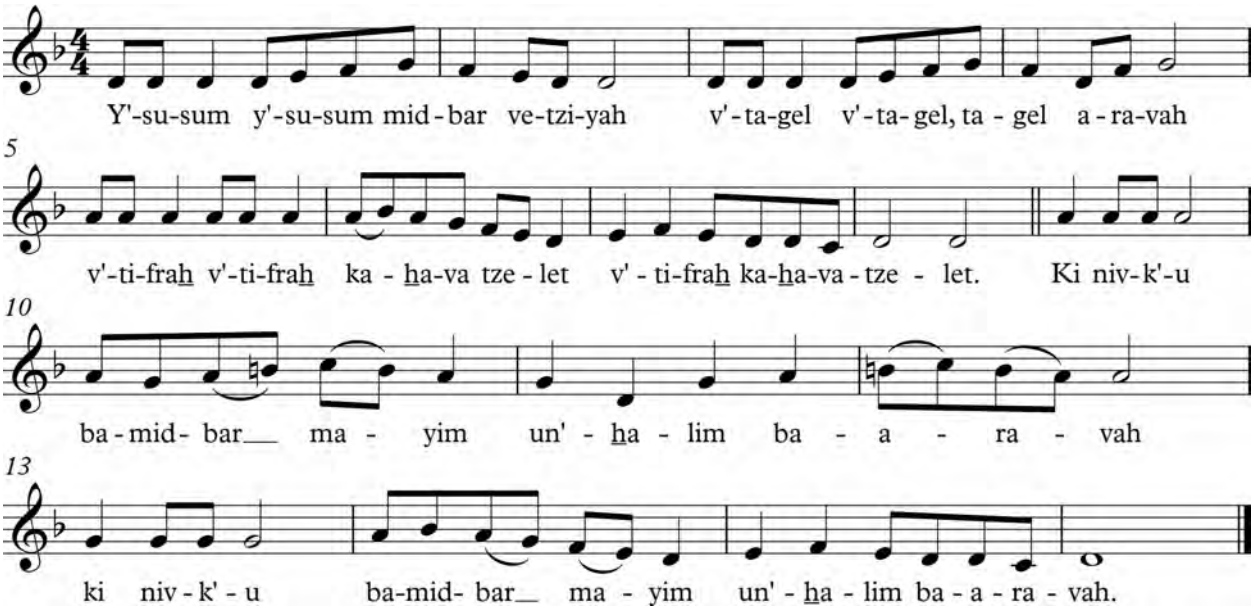

Figure 4. *Y'susum Midbar* (Isaiah 35:1 and 6) by David Zahavi

Y'susum midbar v'tziyah
v'tagel ha'aravah, v'tifrah kahavatzelet
Ki niv'k'u bamidbar mayim
Un'halim ba'aravah.

The wilderness and the parched land shall be glad;
and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.
For in the wilderness shall waters break out
And streams in the desert.

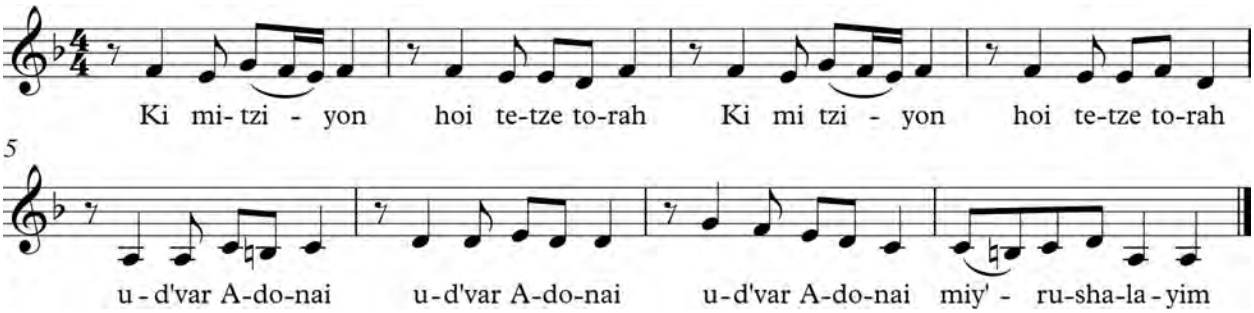

Figure 5. *Ki Mitziyon* (Isaiah 2:3) by Yedidiah Admon

Ki mitziyon tetze torah,
Ud'var Adonai miy'rushalayim

For the Torah will come out of Zion
And the word of God from Jerusalem

Notwithstanding the songs that took their lyrics directly from the Torah, one of the most inspired juxtapositions of Jewish history and Israeli popular song manifested in *Mul Har Sinai*,

written during the brief Sinai Campaign of October 29-November 5,1956.[6] The inspired lyric of Yehiel Mohar (1921-1969) to music by Moshe Wilensky (1910-1997)[7] evokes Moshe's encounter with the burning bush (Exodus 3) and the "flame of God" that was not consumed. This moment was obviously the turning point in the story of Israel's redemption from Egypt; it was here that Moses was assigned to lead the Israelite nation out of slavery, and it was to that spot – the foot of Mt. Sinai – that he ultimately returned to transmit the Torah to the Jewish people. The 1956 "Operation *Kadesh*" was the first time the Jewish nation had returned to the Sinai, and this time, the "flame of God" was burning in the eyes of the young men charged with defending the nation. "It is not a legend, nor a (prophetic) vision; here, opposite Mt. Sinai, the bush burns…" (Fig. 6)

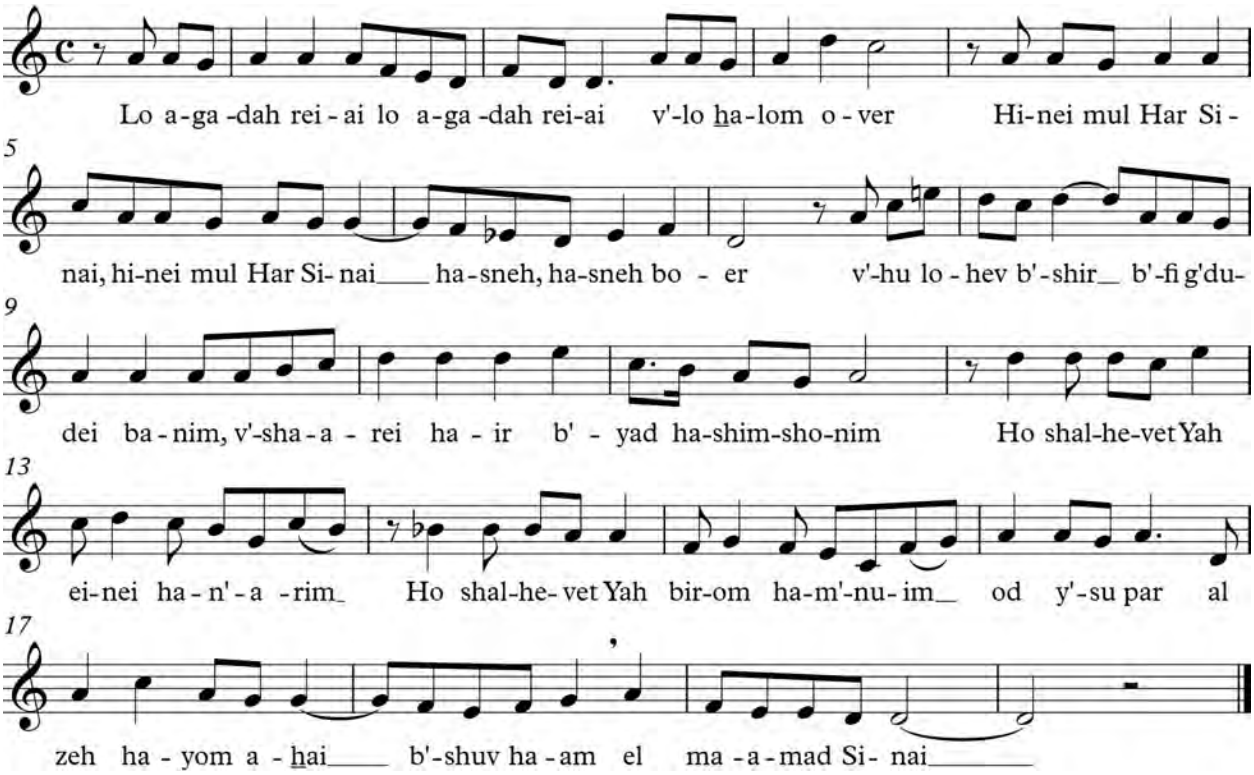

Figure 6. *Mul Har Sinai* by Yechiel Mohar and Moshe Wilensky

Lo agadah re'ai, velo halom over,	It's not a tale, my friends, and not a passing dream
hineh mul har Sinai hasneh bo'er	Here in front of Mount Sinai the thornbush burns
Ve'hu lohev beshir	And it is flashing in song
befi g'dudei banim,	In the mouths of the boys of the regiment

[6] Despite the armistice that ended hostilities following Israel's declaration of independence on May 14, 1948, continuing hostilities inflicted some 1300 Israeli casualties in the years that followed. In 1955, an agreement between Egypt and Czechoslovakia provided Egypt with Soviet-made artillery, and emboldened Egypt to nationalize the Suez Canal, blocking Israeli shipping. In 1956, Egypt followed this action by blocking Israeli access to the Red Sea port of Eilat. Operation *Kadesh* was designed to destroy the bases used by Egyptian infiltrators to inflict terror on Israeli's civilian population; prevent an escalating Egyptian attack by destroying its airfields in the Sinai; and open the Gulf of Eilat to Israeli shipping.

[7] An immigrant from Poland, Wilensky was a prolific composer, regarded as one of the pioneers of Israeli song.

vesha'arei ha'ir	And the gates of the city
beyad hashimshonim.	Are in the hands of the Samsonites

Ho, shalhevet Yah, einei hane'arim	Oh, flame of God in the eyes of the young men
ho, shalhevet Yah bir'om hamenu'im,	Oh, flame of God in the roar of the engines
od yesupar al zeh hayom ehai,	This day will yet be retold, my brothers
beshuv ha'am el ma'amad Sinai	Of the nation's return to the foot of Sinai.

A few years later, in 1960, the Israel Song Festival was established to encourage the creation of a body of music that would both celebrate and inform the national psyche. The first winner, *Erev Ba* (Evening Arrives, by Oded Avishar and Aryeh Levanon)[8] evoked a calm, pastoral scene typical of the ballads known as *Shirei eretz yisrael* (songs of the land of Israel), with a fondness for the Israeli landscape, the simple, quiet life of an agricultural village, and no particular Jewish content whatsoever. The Festival songs that followed in subsequent years[9] were mostly unremarkable – but something very different happened in 1967.

In each Festival the "winner" was selected by votes cast by the thousands of attendees present. It obviously took some time to tally the written ballots, leaving a lengthy interval between the conclusion of the "official program" and the announcement of the winning song. To fill this void, the producers of the 1967 Festival solicited songs from recognized composers, that would not be entered in the competition, but would simply entertain the waiting audience. Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek asked Naomi Shemer (1930-2004)[10] to write a song for Jerusalem, whose holy Old City, in May 1967, remained in Jordanian hands. Shemer at first demurred; she was from Tel Aviv, not Jerusalem, and claimed to lack the affinity for the city that another composer might possess, but she eventually yielded to the mayor's insistent pleas. Unlike the competing songs presented earlier that evening by professional singers with full orchestrations, *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav* was premiered by Shuli Natan, a previously unknown member of one of the military ensembles, who accompanied herself on the guitar. The song immediately captivated the audience, who demanded that the young singer repeat her performance – and enthusiastically joined her in singing the refrain.

Shemer clearly overcame her hesitation to write about Jerusalem – and she did so by quoting the biblical sources that most passionately express our sorrow at her loss and our

[8] Oded Avisar (1918-1976) was an Israeli poet, songwriter and historian. Rumanian-born Aryeh Levanon (1932-2022) immigrated to Israel at the age of 18 and studied conducting and composing at the Tel Aviv Academy of Music. During his army service he was music director of the IDF's Central Command troupe, and went on to compose and serve as music director for Israeli musicals and films. He was also conductor-in-residence for the Israeli Opera. Levanon was awarded the ACUM prize in 2014 his contributions to Israeli music.

[9] Conceived as an annual addition to Independence Day celebrations, the Festival was held irregularly throughout its lifetime (up to about 1980) and especially in the early years. The founding hope that an invitation to the entire population to submit their original songs would yield worthy contributions was quickly quashed when the panel of professional judges brought together to evaluate the songs concluded that few were worthy of promotion; efforts to encourage established composers to submit their work were met with resistance.

[10] Shemer was already a well-established musician, with several popular songs to her credit. She served in the IDF's Nahal Entertainment Troupe and studied music at the Rubin Academy in Jerusalem, and in Tel Aviv.

devotion to her memory. *Ha'ir asher badad yoshevet* (The city that sits in solitude) evokes Jeremiah's description of Jerusalem in the very first line of Lamentations (*Eichah yashvah badad* Alas, she sits in solitude); the very word "*Eichah*," with which she opens the second verse (*Eikhah yavshu borot hamayim*, how the water wells have dried up…) again evokes the misery of the prophet's lament. And in the final verse of the original song,[11] Shemer alludes to the promise of Psalm 137 – *Im eshkacheich Yerushalayim*… If I forget you, O Jerusalem, (may I forget my right hand…)

The response to *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav* was, no doubt, influenced by the remarkable events that followed its premiere, but Israel's continuing love affair with this song far exceeds its historical moment. There was serious talk about *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav* becoming Israel's national anthem,[12] and while that notion was ultimately rejected, the song remains a favorite, within and well beyond the capital city.[13] (Fig. 7)

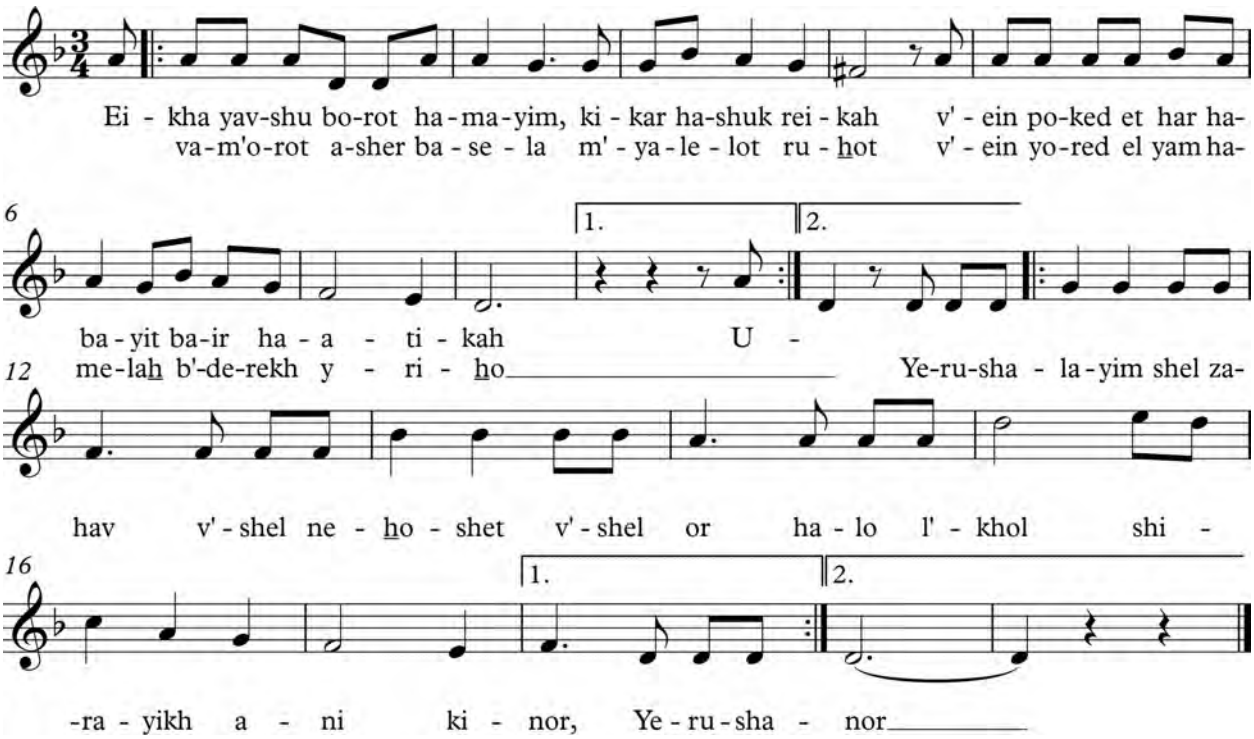

Figure 7. *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav, Verse 2*

[11] Following the capture of the Old City of Jerusalem during the Six Day War only weeks after the song's premiere, the radio broadcast the euphoric sounds coming from the soldiers gathered on the Temple Mount – including their singing of *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav*. At that moment Shemer realized the song needed a new ending, and she added the now-familiar fourth verse, "We have returned to the water wells."

[12] *Hatikvah*, with lyrics by Naftali Herz Imber, as sung to a Rumanian folk song, was adopted as the national anthem of the Jewish people at the First Zionist Congress held in 1897, but it was not until an act of the Knesset on November 10, 2004 that it was officially acknowledged as the anthem of Israel.

[13] In a letter Shemer left to be made public following her death, the composer admitted that the melody of the song had been subconsciously borrowed from a Basque lullaby she had heard some years earlier. The revelation did little to alter popular opinion regarding the song.

Eikha yavshu borot hamayim,	We have returned to the cisterns,
Kikar hashuk reikah	To the market and to the market-place
V'ein poked et har haba-yit	A ram's horn calls out on the Temple Mount;
Ba'ir ha'atikah.	In the Old City.
Uva'morot asher basela	And in the caves in the mountain,
M'yalelot ruhot	Thousands of suns shine
V'ein yored el yam hamelah	We will once again descend to the Dead Sea
B'derekh yriho.	By way of Jericho!
Yerushalayim shel zahav,	Jerusalem of gold,
V'shel nehoshet v'shel or	And of copper, and of light
Halo l'khol shirayikh ani kinor.	Behold, for all your songs I am a harp.

Yerushalayim Shel Zahav was hardly the only one of Shemer's songs to borrow traditional Jewish references. One of her earliest hits was the 1958 *Zamar Noded* (Wandering Minstrel), the refrain of which was *Hallelu, Halleluyah, Hallelu*. Songs she wrote for a 1972 theatrical production included *Lo Amut*, with all of its text taken from Psalm 118: 17 and 19. Her *Ein V'Yesh*, recognizing that little Israel does not have all of the geographic or architectural structures that other places boast, did proudly proclaim, in the words of Deuteronomy 8:7 *Aval yesh lanu ayanot ut'homot babik'a v'gam bahar* (But we have "springs and underground water coming forth in valley and mountain.") More directly, her *Akedat Yitzhak* takes God's instruction to Abraham straight from the Genesis text:

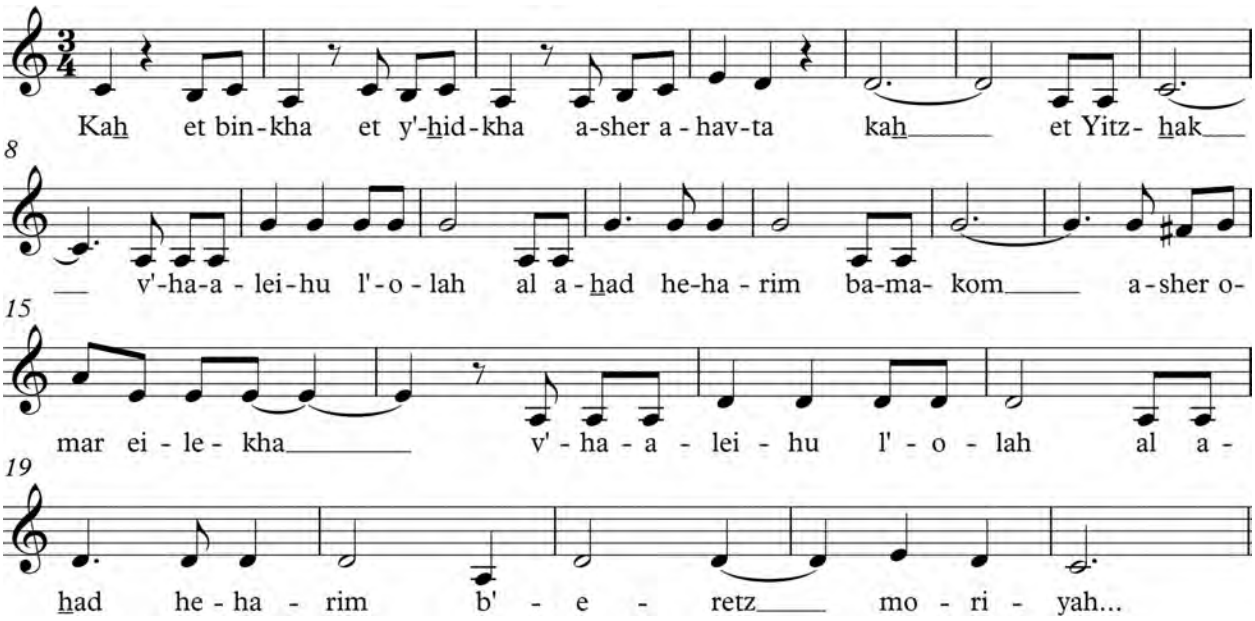

Figure 8. *Akedat Yitzhak*

Kah et binkha	Take your son
Et yehidkha asher ahavta	Your only one, whom you love
Kah et Yitzhak…	Take Isaac
V'ha'aleihu sham al ehad heharim	And bring him up on one of the mountains
(Bamakom) asher omar eilekha	In a place that I will tell you
V'ha'aleihu l'olah al ehad heharim	And bring him up for a sacrifice on one of the mountains
B'eretz Moriah	In the land of Moriah

The song continues with her added text:

And from all of the mountains that are in this land
A great cry will rise up…

She then returns to the biblical text, *Hineih ha'esh, v'hineih ha'etzim* (Here is the fire, and here is the wood) before making an important change to the original source. Omitting Isaac's question (Where is the lamb for the sacrifice?) she answers:

V'hineih haseh l'olah	And here is the lamb for the sacrifice.

And then, rather than quoting the angel who stays Abraham's hand, the text continues with Shemer's own prayer, in the passionate language of the *siddur*:

Ribono shel Olam, hamalei rahamim	Master of the World, the One filled with mercy
El ha'na'ar yad'kha al tishlakh	Do not send out your had against this youth…

Shemer's song is an indictment against war, against the sacrifices that so many Israeli parents have made to assure the survival of the country, couched in some of our most traditional verses. And on behalf of even those who returned home, but who could never forget the peril they experienced, her song concludes:

Gam im sheva nihyeh v'nazkin	Even if we lived seven-fold to old age
Lo nishkah ki hunaf hasakin	We will not forget that the knife was raised
Lo nishkah et binkha	We will not forget your son
Et y'hidkha asher ahavnu	Your only one, whom we loved
Lo nishkah et Yitzhak	We will not forget Isaac

One of Shemer's less familiar, but passionately Zionist – and Jewish - songs is her *Al Naharot Bavel*. The title clearly conjures Psalm 137 (By the waters of Babylon…) and the text of the song, which she recorded on her 1981 collection, *Al Kol Eleh* is a biting indictment of the "*Yordim*," Israeli citizens who choose to live elsewhere: (Figure 9)

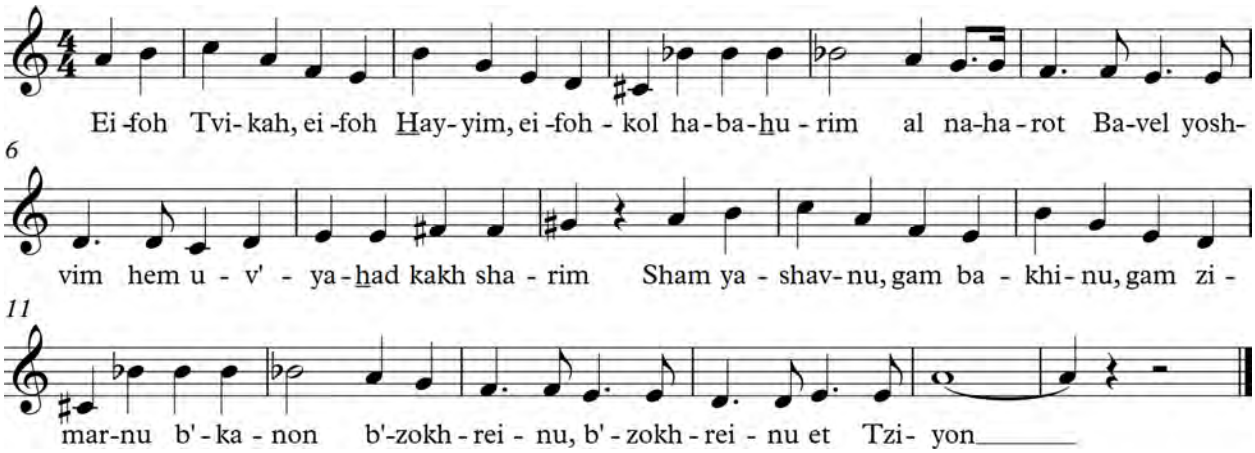

Figure 9. *Al Naharot Bavel*

Eifoh Tzvika, eifoh Hayyim,	Where is Tzvika, where is Hayyim,
eifoh kol habahurim	where are all the boys?
Al naharot bavel yoshvim hem,	They are sitting by the waters of Babylon
uv'yahad kakh sharim:	And together they sing thus:
Sham yashavnu, gam bakhinu,	There we sat, also we wept,
gam zimarnu b'kanon	and we sang in a canon
B'zokhrenu, b'zokhrenu et Tziyon.	When we remembered, when we remembered Zion.

Shemer's *Lu Yehi*, written at the beginning of the Yom Kippur War, bears subtle, but important Jewish content, tied very much to the story of its birth, which actually began in Spring, 1973. At the time, the Beatles' song "Let it Be" was enormously popular, and singer Chava Alberstein asked her friend, Naomi Shemer, to translate the song into Hebrew.[14] Shemer agreed to take on the project, but was busy with other work at the time, so she promised "she would get to it." Spring turned into summer which turned into autumn, and the war began on October 6. On October 8, Shemer received another call from her friend: Alberstein had been invited to perform a concert at an air force base in the north that very night, and thought "Let it Be" would make a good addition to her program. The women agreed to work together on the translation, and they were busily engaged in the project when Shemer's husband arrived home for lunch. He casually asked what they were working on, and when they explained, he immediately objected: "This war needs its own song," he advised. The women recognized that he was right, and immediately started discussing the imagery that would make the song reflect its particular moment. With the holiday of Sukkot looming, several poignant lyrics took shape: (Fig. 10)

[14] In addition to being a brilliant lyricist in her own right, Shemer was also a supremely talented translator who was able to channel texts in several foreign languages into Hebrew without sacrificing any of the original poetry.

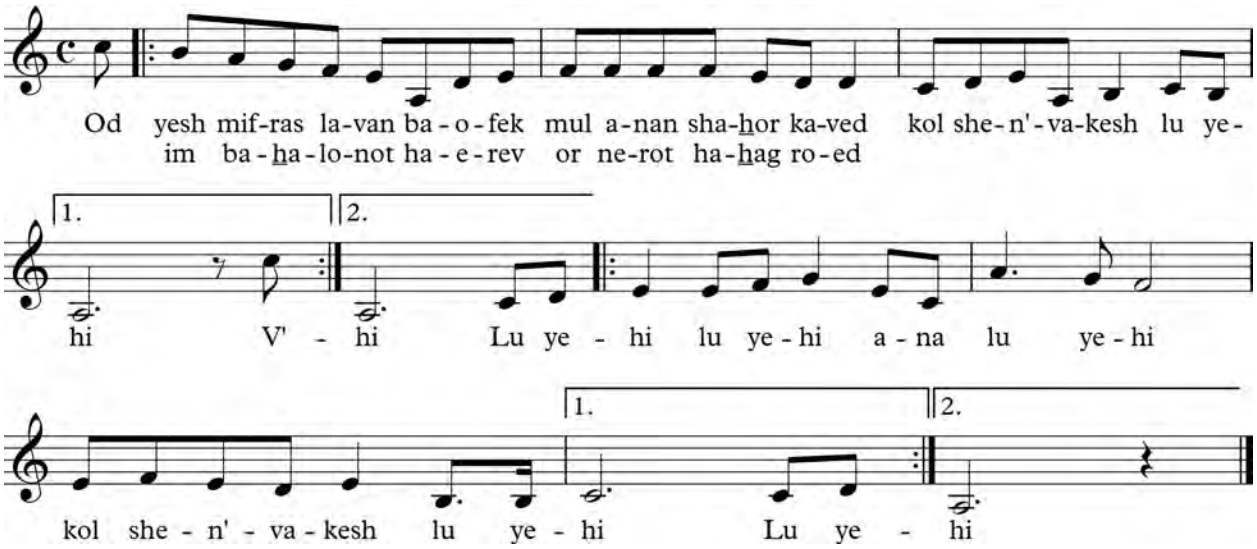

Figure 10. Lu Yehi

Od yesh misran lavan ba'ofek	There is still a white sail on the horizon
Mul anan shahhor kaved	Opposite a heavy, dark cloud,
Kol shen'vakesh, lu yehi	Everything we ask for, let it be

On Sukkot, guests – invited and not – are frequent visitors to our *sukkot.* During war time, however, sometimes uninvited – and decidedly unwelcome – messengers visit homes, carrying news that no one wants to receive.

V'im bahalonot ha'erev	And if in the evening windows
Or nerot hahag ro'ed	the light of the holiday candles flickers
Kol shen'vakesh, lu yehi	Everything we will ask for, let it be.
Im ham'vaser omed badelet	If the messenger stands in the door
Ten milah tovah b'fiv	put a good word in his mouth
Kol shen'vakesh, lu yehi	Everything we ask for, let it be.

There is one other passage in Shemer's lyric that comes, not from the imagery of Sukkot, but from the Torah (Exodus 32:18)

Mah kol anot ani shome'a	What is the answering sound that I hear
Kol shofar v'kol tupim	The sound of the shofar and the sound of the drums
Kol shen'vakesh, lu yehi	Everything we ask for, let it be.

When Moses descends Mt. Sinai bearing the (first) tablets, he is greeted by his faithful aide, Joshua, who has been waiting for him at the foot of the mountain for the past 40 days. Joshua knows nothing about the construction of the golden calf, or the raucous celebration of it. He hears only the shofar and the shouting, and fears that a battle is raging in the camp. Moses answers that it is neither a sound shouting strength, nor a sound shouting weakness: "A sound of distress do I hear!"

The Yom Kippur War came as a surprise to an unprepared Israel. Amid the chaos on the battlefields, the civilian population experienced its own distress, fearing for the lives of its soldiers and for the very future of the nation – just as Moses feared for the future of his nation. Naomi Shemer found strength in the history of our people, and included it in her song to bring strength to her country in its moment of crisis. Like the Beatles' "Let it Be," *Lu Yehi* was a prayer, a secular anthem for a challenging time.[15] (Fig. 10)

If this essay were only about the Jewish content of the music of Naomi Shemer, we could continue with many more examples, but Shemer was far from the only modern Israeli composer to tap into the Jewish consciousness of her audience.[16] The irony is that so many of Israel's "Jewish songs" have been composed by secular musicians.

Jewish Songs for a Secular Public

We noted above the mixed motivations that brought the earliest pioneers to Israel. That divide between the religiously observant and secular communities in Israel continues to exist. In the early decades of Israeli statehood, the two populations lived largely separate lives in demographically segregated neighborhoods. The reunification of Jerusalem in 1967, however, sparked new construction throughout the city that brought the religious and secular communities into closer proximity – and conflict. Some thought that if the two communities knew more about each other, it might be easier to build bridges – and that thought ultimately led to the creation of *Ish Hassid Hayah*. Written by playwright and translator Dan Almagor[17] (b. 1935), the production combined tales of Hassidic life with traditional (and some original) Hassidic songs. The mixed cast of men and women clad in casual attire, appearing on a mostly-bare stage, with only hand-held props to enhance the drama nevertheless captured the affections of the nation. The play won the Culture Ministry's prize for best play in 1968, and by the time the show closed, more than one-third of Israel's citizens had attended performances. Given that the play's audiences had been entirely secular,[18] it was apparent that there was an appetite for this sort of "traditional" music. Producer Miki Peled hoped to tap into this sentiment by creating a "Hassidic Song Festival," soliciting new music with "traditional" lyrics for a competition along the lines of the Israel Song Festival. The first event, in 1969, produced a wealth of still-popular melodies, by a combination of secular and more traditional composers, including *Y'varekh'kha* (by David Weinkranz), *V'ha'er Eineinu* (by Shlomo Carlebach), *Sh'ma*

[15] "Let it Be" did not only serve as the source for the refrain of *Lu Yehi*. The phrasing and meter of the original English song remains very much the inspiration for the new song Shemer wrote, so much so that the Hebrew lyrics Shemer composed can be easily sung to the original Lennon-McCartney melody.

[16] Readers interested in more on the music of Naomi Shemer should refer to "*Haderekh Arukah*: The Songs of Naomi Shemer" by Sam Weiss, which originally appeared in the *Journal of Synagogue Music*, Volume 32, Fall 2007.

[17] In addition to his original work, Almagor has also translated and adapted more than 100 plays for the Hebrew stage, including productions of Shakespeare and Broadway shows like *My Fair Lady, Guys and Dolls* and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

[18] The religious community rejects the idea of men and women performing together, of women wearing pants, and of women singing in public.

Yisrael (by Tsvika Pik) and *Oseh Shalom* (by Nurit Hirsh). Subsequent years (the Festival ran annually through 1992) produced such hits as *Adon Olam* (by Uzi Hitman), *Y'did Nefesh* (by Ehud and Sara Zweig), *Sisu et Yerushalayim* (by Akiva Nof) and *Malkhut'kha* (by the Diaspora Yeshiva Band), tunes that not only captivated Israeli audiences, but made their way to American shores and synagogues as well.[19] Of special note is the popularity of these catchy selections among both secular audiences (as evidenced by their inclusion in the playlists for sessions of *shirah b'tzibbur*, community singing) and the *dati leumi (*Modern Orthodox) communities in Israel.

Another noteworthy moment in the history of Israeli music was the release of the eponymous album by *HaHalonot HaG'vohim* (The High Windows) in 1967. Widely regarded as Israel's first "rock 'n' roll" record, the collection by Shmuel Kraus (1935-2013), Josie Katz (b. 1940) and Arik Einstein (1939-2013)[20] included a satirical song about the prophet, Yehezkel. It also featured *Eifoh Heim Kol Avotenu* (with lyrics by Haim Hefer, 1925-2012) which evoked the biblical figures of Abraham, Joseph, Rachel, Moses and Elijah, concluding with a request that we be blessed in their merit.

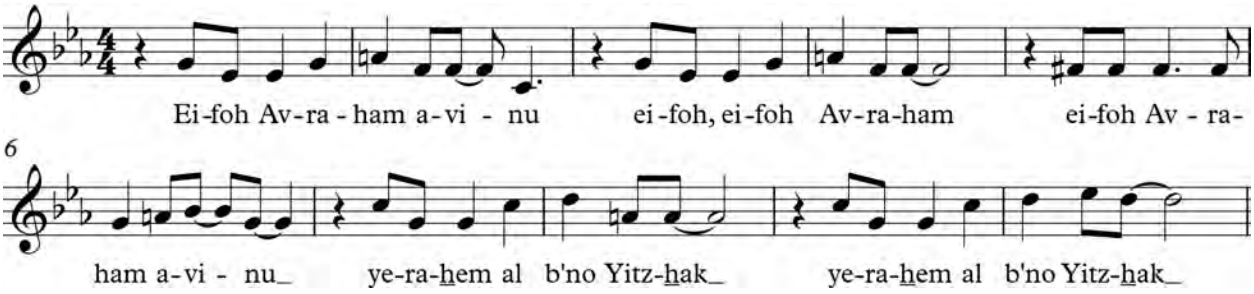

Figure 11. *Eifoh Heim Kol Avoteinu* by Haim Hefer and Shmuel Kraus

Eifoh Avraham avinu	Where is Abraham, our father
Eifoh, eifoh Avraham	Where, where is Abraham
Eifoh Avraham Avraham avinu	Where is Abraham, our father
Yerahem al b'no Yitzhak	He will have mercy on his son, Isaac

[19] Traveling troupes of Israeli performers brought the Hassidic Song Festival to America. Sponsorships by synagogue Men's Clubs, Sisterhoods and youth organizations brought entire families to these appearances. These songs, with liturgical lyrics familiar even to Americans with no real knowledge of Hebrew, became popular first at Jewish summer camps and junior congregations, and eventually made their way into the mainstream of adult congregational singing.

[20] After the band's break-up, all three went on to solo careers, Kraus as a songwriter and Katz as an actress and singer (with much of her work in her native English). Einstein was the most successful and prolific of the three, working as a singer, actor, comedian and screenwriter, winning acclaim as the greatest and most popular Israeli performer of all time.

The Six Day War that had enhanced the popularity of *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav* also inspired a variety of songs with traditional texts that celebrated the Old City, *(Ki MiTziyon,* with text from Isaiah 2:3) and the soldiers who redeemed her. In this latter category came Dov Seltzer's *Lamnatze'ah* (with text from Psalms 66, 68 and 121) and *Yehoshua,* by Uri Sela and Yonatan Zarai, (inspired by text from Joshua 1.) Another important contribution in this vein came at the instigation of iconic actor-singer Yehoram Gaon (b. 1939) who, upon hearing the news of the capture of the Old City, called his friend, Yehezkel Braun (1922-2014) and urged him to respond to the moment.[21] Braun partnered with writer Yossi Gamzu (1938-2020), whose lyric is inspired by traditional texts (Psalm 122 and a well-known paean to Jerusalem by 12th century poet Yehudah HaLevi) yet also reflective of that moment in 1967: The soldiers stand in the gates of Jerusalem and sing songs of praise to her, while drops of blood dot their uniforms and armor. (See Figure 12)

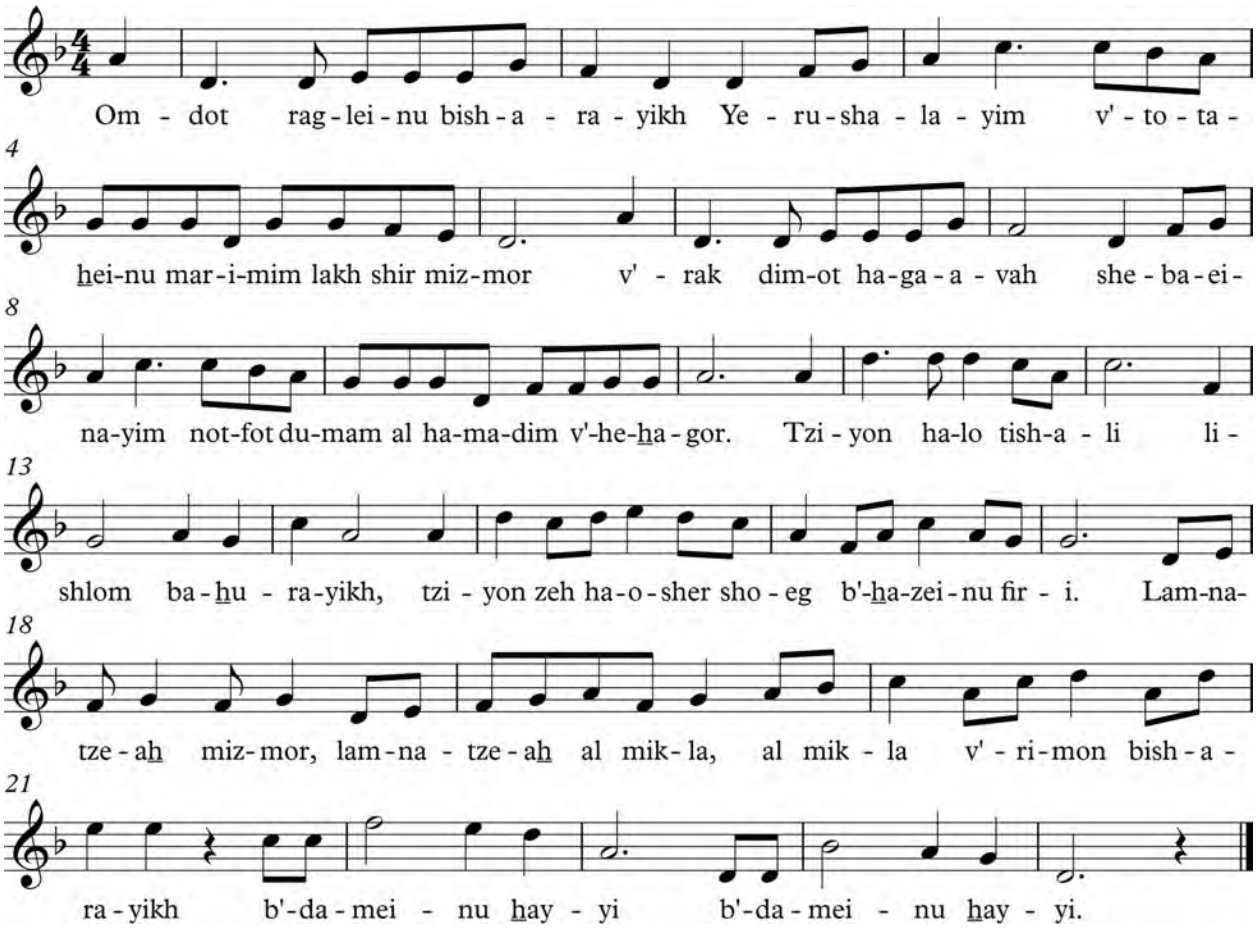

Figure 12. *Bish'arayikh Yerushalayim* by Yossi Gamzu and Yehezkel Braun

[21] Braun is best known as a composer of art music – including a large number of selections with Jewish texts. The story of the interaction of Israel's art music composers with traditional texts is rich and complex, but will need to be the subject of another discussion.

Omdot ragleinu bish'arayikh Yerushalayim	Our feet stood in your gates, Jerusalem[22]
V'totaheinu marimim lakh shir mizmor	and our cannons sing a song of praise to you
V'rak dimot haga'avah sheba'einayim	and only tears of pride that are in the eyes
Notfot dumam al hamadim v'hehagor	fall silently on the uniforms and the belts
Tziyon, halo tish'ali lishlom bakhurayrikh	Zion, when will you seek the peace of your young men[23]
Tziyon, zeh ha'osher sho'eg b'hazeinu fir'i	Zion, it is the happiness roaring in the wild chant
Lam'natze'ah mizmor,	To the conductor, a song [24]
al mikla v'rimon bish'arayikh	of the machine gun and grenade in your gates
B'dameinu hayyi	In our blood, you (Jerusalem) will live...[25]

It is interesting to note that two of the songs of the Israel Song Festival of 1969 seem to have also been in response to this moment:[26] *Behar HaGilbo'a* (on Mt. Gilboa, by Yosef Hadar [1926-2006] with text by Leah Naor [b.1935]) is inspired by the death of Saul, recounted in Samuel I Chapter 31. *Al Kapav Yavi* (by Ya'ir Rosenblum [1944-1996] with text by Yoram Taharlev [1938-2022]), while not directly quoting any specific text, describes several residents of the Old City who have been waiting for the arrival of the Messiah. We noted above the significance of *Lu Yehi* as a contemporary prayer in a moment of national crisis. The Yom Kippur War produced another song that took its inspiration from that unique moment*: P'tah Lanu Sha'ar*, by Moshe Wilensky. The outbreak of war on Yom Kippur was a grave offense against the sanctity of the day and the Jewish commitment to life which the day embodies. While Israel's enemies clearly intended to add this insult to the injury they inflicted upon the Jewish nation on that day (and those that followed), they did commit one error which ultimately enabled Israel to recover: on Yom Kippur, nearly all of Israel's reserve soldiers were in the synagogue, making it easy to pass the word and mobilize their units. As the sun set on that Day of Repentance, the final prayers of the *Neilah* service were left unsaid by many soldiers who were forced to leave the synagogue to rejoin their units. Wilensky, who had written important music for all of Israel's previous wars, took a poignant line from the liturgy, and Yehoram Gaon served as "*hazzan*" on behalf of the soldiers who could not offer these words themselves. (Figure 13)

[22] From Psalm 122

[23] The poem by Yehudah HaLevi asks Zion to seek the welfare of the captives who have been taken into the Diaspora.

[24] Many psalms begin with this prescription (introductory verses, frequently conveying authorship or "stage directions" for performance practice).

[25] Reminiscent of the line from the circumcision ceremony, "In your blood you (the child) will live."

[26] The Israel Song Festival was not held in 1968.

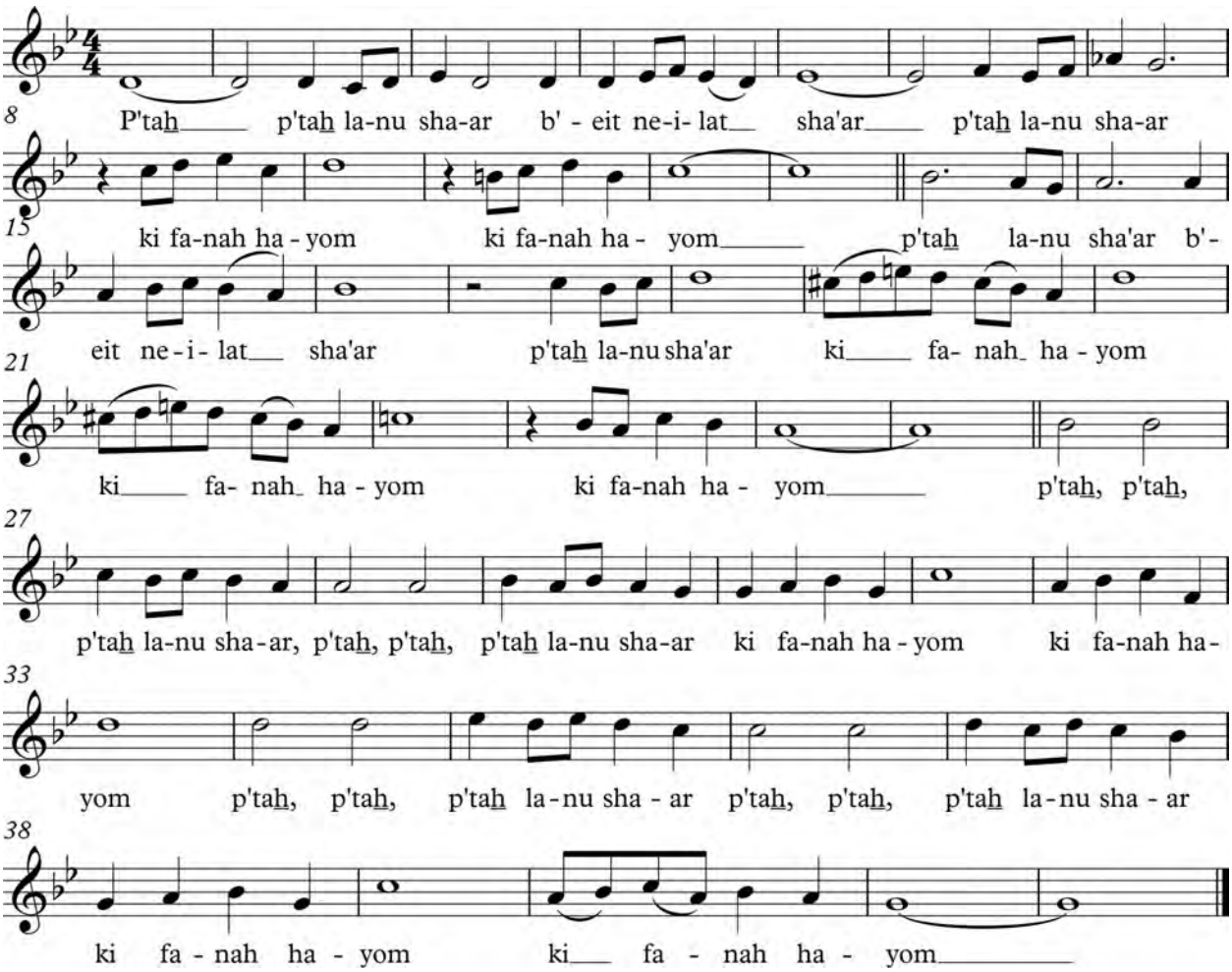

Figure 13. *P'tah Lanu Sha'ar* (Liturgy of *Neilah*) by Moshe Wilensky

P'tah lanu sha'ar	Open the gates for us
B'eit neilat sha'ar	At the time of the closing of the gates
Ki fanah hayom.	For the day is waning.

Lam'natzeah Shir Mizmor: Mizrahi Voices Enter the Mainstream

Other than the popular songs of the Hassidic Song Festival, the 1970's were a somewhat "dry spell" for Jewish-themed music in Israel.[27] The chief source of relief came through the songs of the new *Lam'natzeah Shir Mizmor*: *Festival HaZemer Hamizrahit* – the Oriental Song Festival. The biblical reference in the very name of the Festival demonstrated its commitment to the traditional orientation of much of Israel's Mizrahi population. Modeled after the Israel Song Festival (with a public call for songs, judging by popular vote of attendees in the country's major concert halls, and live broadcast on radio and television), the program was conceived as a response to the exclusion of Mizrahi composers and performers from the more "mainstream" Festival, and the content of its songs hewed toward traditional texts and

[27] An exception was *Mayim L'David HaMelekh* by Akiva Nof (b. 1936), inspired by Samuel 2 23:15, which was one of a relative few Festival songs of the era to achieve any staying power.

attitudes.[28] The fifth Festival, in 1974, produced two contrasting songs: The "winner," *Likrat Shabbat*, by Avi Koren, Avner Tzadok and Avihu Medina,[29], and sung by Yigal Bashan, featured an Eastern-style melody, with a narrow range and a natural minor cadence to cement its claim to authenticity. Its opening verse borrowed text from two *piyyutim: Lekha Dodi*, from *Kabbalat Shabbat*, and *D'ror Yikra*, a familiar Shabbat *zemer*, with just one original line, stereotypically depicting a father leading his family's singing with the "trill" characteristic of Mizrahi singing. (See Figure 14)

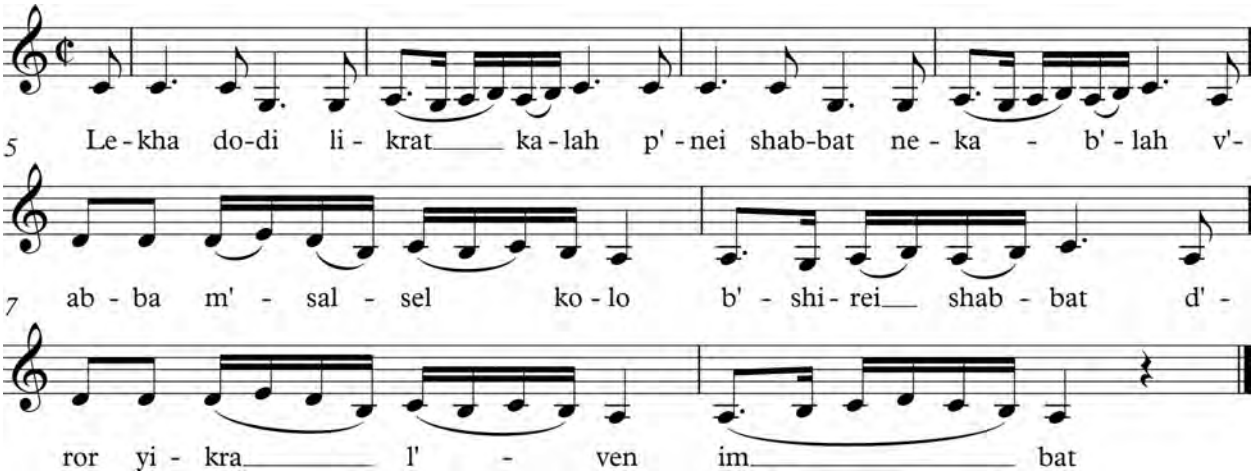

Figure 14. *Likrat Shabbat* by Avi Koren, Avner Tzadok and Avihu Medina

Lekha dodi likrat kallah,	*"Come, my beloved to greet the bride*
P'nei Shabbat nekab'lah	*Let us welcome Shabbat"*
V'abba m'salsel kolo b'shirei Shabbat	*And Father's voice trills with songs of Shabbat*
D'ror yikra l'ven im bat.	*"God proclaims freedom to boy and girl."*

A second song, *Bo Yavo*, by R. Amman, with text by Yoram Taharlev,[30] proved more original (despite its Western-style orchestration), both textually and musically. Focused on the coming of the Messiah, the song asserts its confidence that he will come, and a commitment to join all of Israel in awaiting his arrival. (See Fig. 15)

[28] Since the establishment of the State, Mizrahi artists had complained about the segregation of their culture by the Israel Broadcast Agency and others into limited "ethnic programming" slots far from "prime time."

[29] Avihu Medina (b. 1948) is one of the best-known writers of Mizrahi songs. He was among the early and most vocal critics of Israel's policies regarding Mizrahi music. In addition to the music discussed here, some of his most popular songs include *Barkheinu (…et hashannah hazot*) from the Rosh HaShannah liturgy and *Shab'hi Yerushalayim*, with text from Psalm 147:12-13.

[30] Lyricist Yoram Taharlev (1938-2022) was a prolific songwriter, poet, and author. The composer of *Bo Yavo* is otherwise unknown.

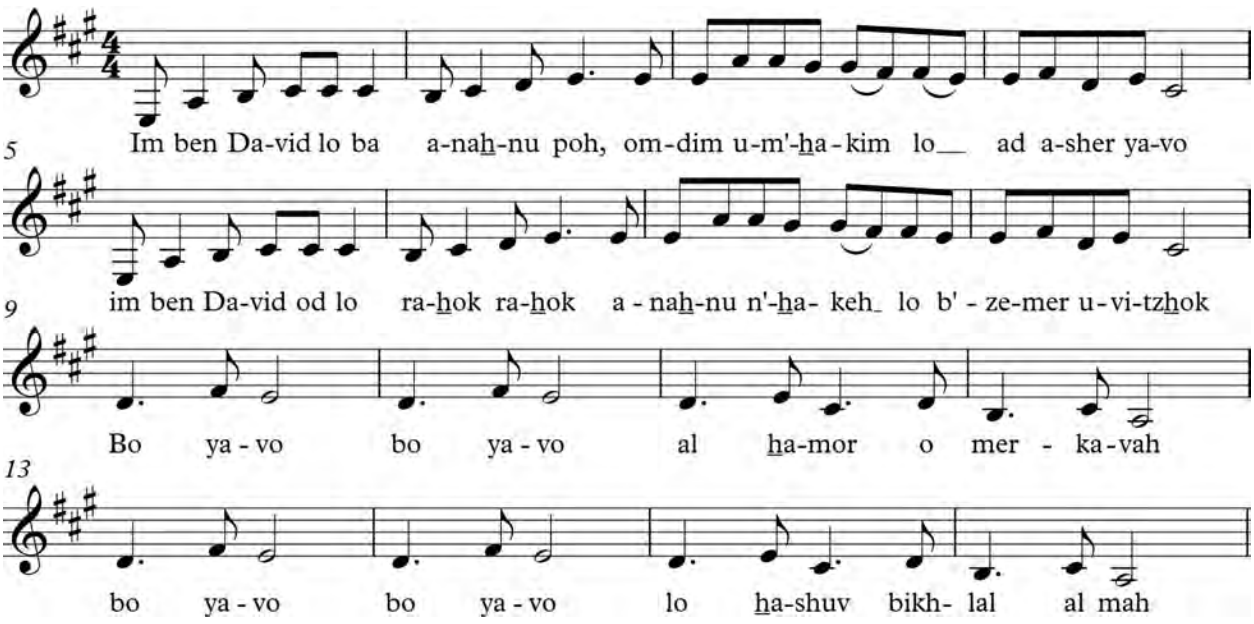

Figure 15. *Bo Yavo* by Yoram Taharlev and R. Amman

Im ben-David lo ba	If the son of David doesn't come,
Anahnu poh	We are here
Omdim umekhakim lo ad asher yavo	We stand and wait for him until he will come
Im ben-David hu od rahok, rahok	If the son of David is still far away
Anahnu n'hakeh lo b'zemer uvitzhok	We will wait for him with songs and laughter
Bo yavo… al hamor o merkavah	He will come – on a donkey or a chariot
Bo yavo… lo hashuv bikhlal al mah	He will come – it's not important on what

One selection from the Oriental Song Festival that seemed to achieve some cross over popularity was *Kinor David*, written by Avihu Medina and Yehudah Badihi. Based on Samuel 1 15:23, the song appeared in the 1978 *Lam'natzeah Shir Mizmor* Festival,[31], where it finished in second place, and achieved international renown when it was choreographed by Australian dancer Fredie Cohen. (Fig. 16)

[31] The Oriental Song Festival continued (under various names) until 1984. By then, the increasing popularity of Mizrahi artists, including Ofra Haza (1957-2000), Haim Moshe (b. 1955), Zohar Argov (1955-1987) and Boaz Sharabi (b. 1947) made a separate event for Mizrahi performers unnecessary.

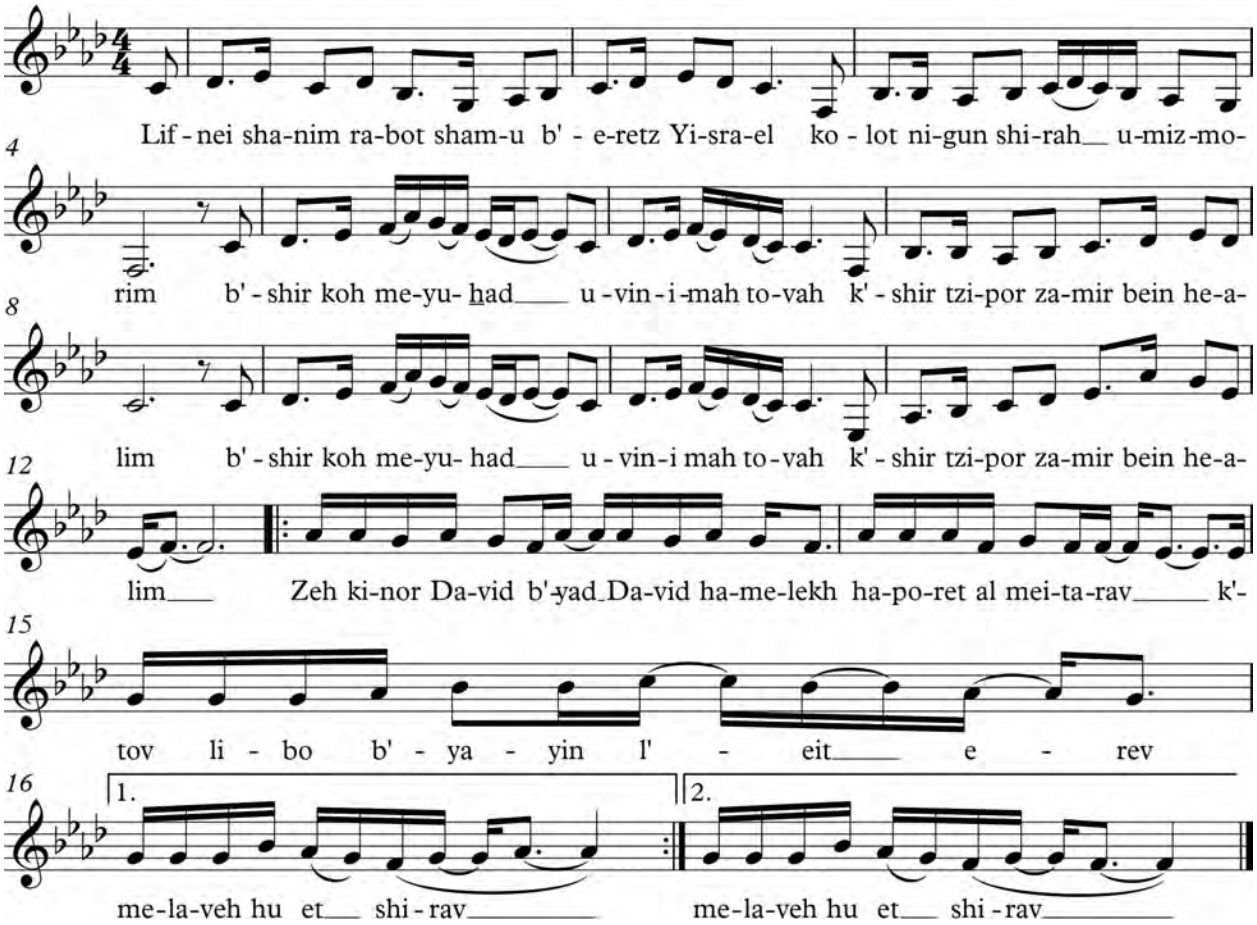

Figure 16. *Kinor David* by Avihu Medina and Yehuda Badihi

Lifnei shanim rabot sham'u b'eretz Yisrael	Many years ago in the land of Israel
Kolot nigun shirah umizmorim	The voices of melody, song and hymns was heard
B'shir koh meyuchad, uvin'imah tovah	With such a special song, and a good tune
K'shir tzipor zamir ben he'alim	Like the song of the nightingale among the clouds
Zeh kinor David b'yad David hamelekh	This is David's harp in the hand of King David
Haporet al meitarav	Plucking on its strings
K'tov libo b'yayin l'eit erev	When his heart was happy with wine in the evening
M'laveh hu et shirav	He would accompany his songs.

***Halleluyah*: A Stage for Secular Prayer**

If the "Ashkenazic" side of Israel produced relatively few traditionally-oriented songs during the 1970's, the decade redeemed itself with "*Halleluyah*," by Shimrit Or (b. 1944)[32] and Kobi Oshrat (b. 1944) [33] The song won the Israel Song Festival of 1979, and thereby earned

[32] An award winning poet and lyricist, Shimrit Or is also the daughter of composer Yaakov Orland.
[33] Kobi Oshrat is an Israeli composer and conductor with more than 1,000 songs to his credit, but *Halleluyah* is by far the most famous.

the privilege of representing Israel in the Eurovision Festival held in Israel later that same year.[34] With "*Halleluyah*" in nearly every line of the lyric (a word that has crossed over into the English language as well as Christian prayer), the song was accessible to a world audience that did not understand Hebrew, and went on to win the Eurovision Festival as well.[35](Fig. 17)

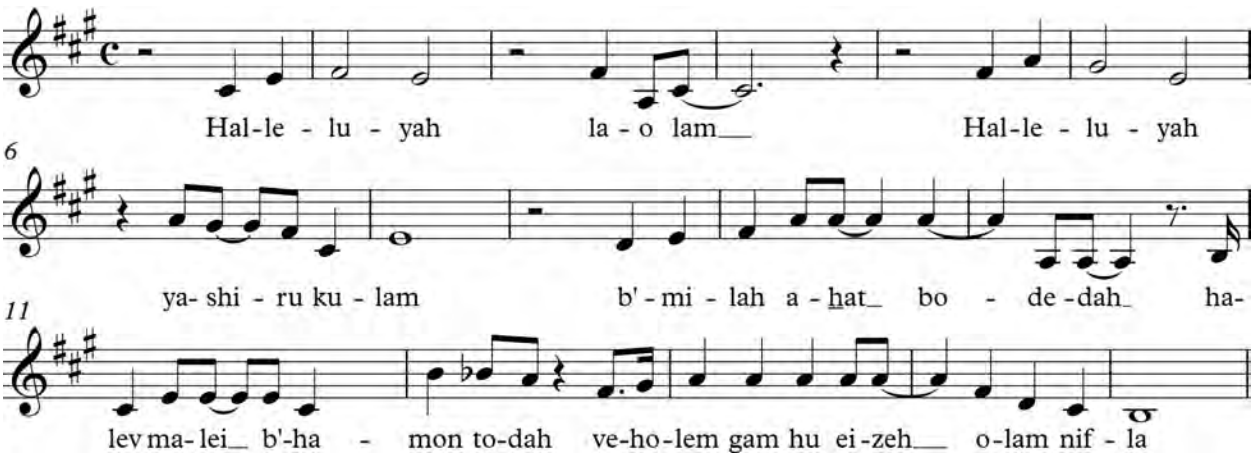

Figure 17. *Halleluyah* by Shimrit Or and Kobi Oshrat

Halleluyah la'olam	Halleluyah to the world
Halleluyah yashiru kulam	Halleluyah, everyone will sing
B'milah achat bodedah	With only one word
Halev maleih b'hamon todah	The heart is full of thanks
V'holem gam hu eizeh olam nifla	And beats as well, what a wonderful world
Halleluyah im hashir	Halleluyah, with a song
Halleluyah al yom sheme'ir	Halleluyah, for a day that shines
Halleluyah al mah shehayah	Halleluyah for what has been
Umashe'od lo hayah, halleluyah.	And what has not yet happened, Halleluyah.

The 1980's got off to a much more traditional start with the popularity of *T'filah*, by Henry Bratter[36] (b. 1948) sung by Ofra Haza in 1981. The lyric by Betzalel Aloni (b. 1940)[37] borrowed phrases from the *siddur* before continuing with his own text, but the song remained unabashedly prayerful, even with more contemporary language. (Fig. 18)

[34] Perceived problems with the quality of the songs being presented led to the cancellation of the Festival in 1975, and a substitute event held in 1976 and 1977. The Festival was reinstated in 1978, but designated the "Pre-Eurovision Festival," with the goal of identifying the song that would represent Israel in that international song competition. In order to meet the Eurovision deadline, this new event was held earlier in the year, normally between January and March.

[35] The song was quickly translated, and made its English language debut later that year in a performance by Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme on *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson.*

[36] Henry Bratter is a well-known Israeli composer and arranger.

[37] Aloni is an Israeli record producer and composer. He was also Ofra Haza's manager, and is often credited with "discovering" her at age 12.

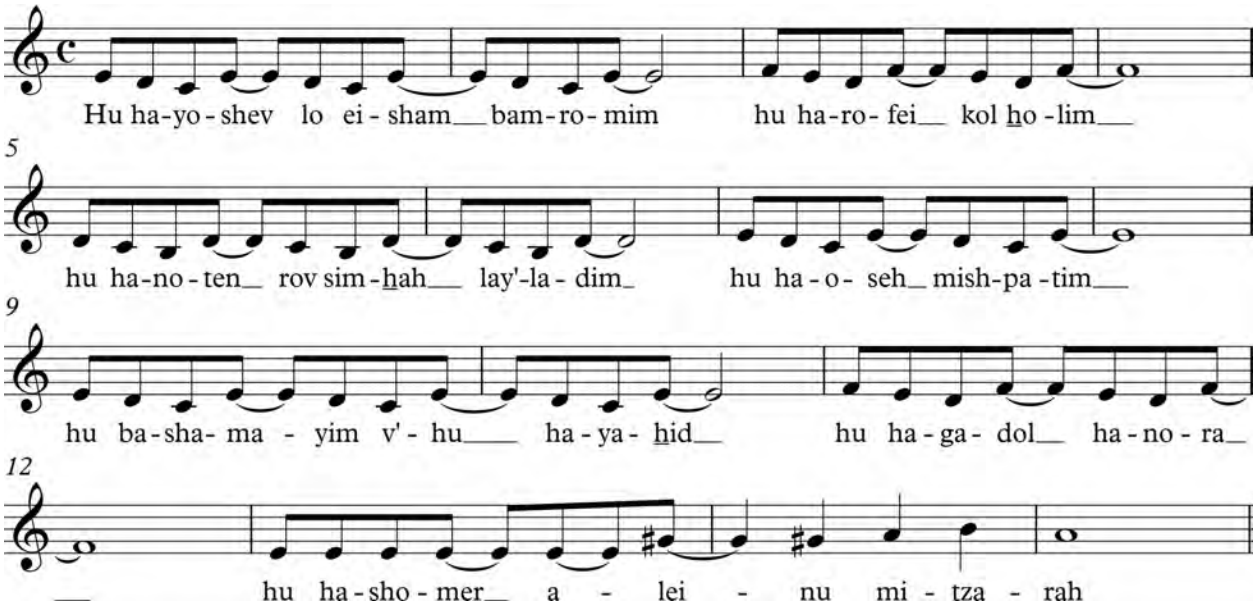

Figure 18. *T'filah* by Betzalel Aloni and Henry Bratter

Hu hayoshev lo ei-sham bam'romim	He Who sits somewhere up there in the heavens
Hu harofe kol holim	He Who heals all the sick
Hu hanoten rov simhah lay'ladim	He Who gives great joy to children
Hu ha'oseh mishpatim	He who makes judgments
Hu bashamayim vehu hayahid	He is in the heavens and He is the Only One
Hu hagadol hanora	He, the great and awe-inspiring
Hu hashomer aleinu mitzarah.	He is the One who protects us from trouble

Haim Moshe's 1986 hit, *Todah*, had a similarly prayerful theme. Originally a Greek song, the Hebrew lyric by Uzi Hitman (1952-2004) [38] captures the simple things in life, and offers abundant gratitude to the One who grants all gifts, but without using any traditional language or overt reference to God. (Fig. 19)

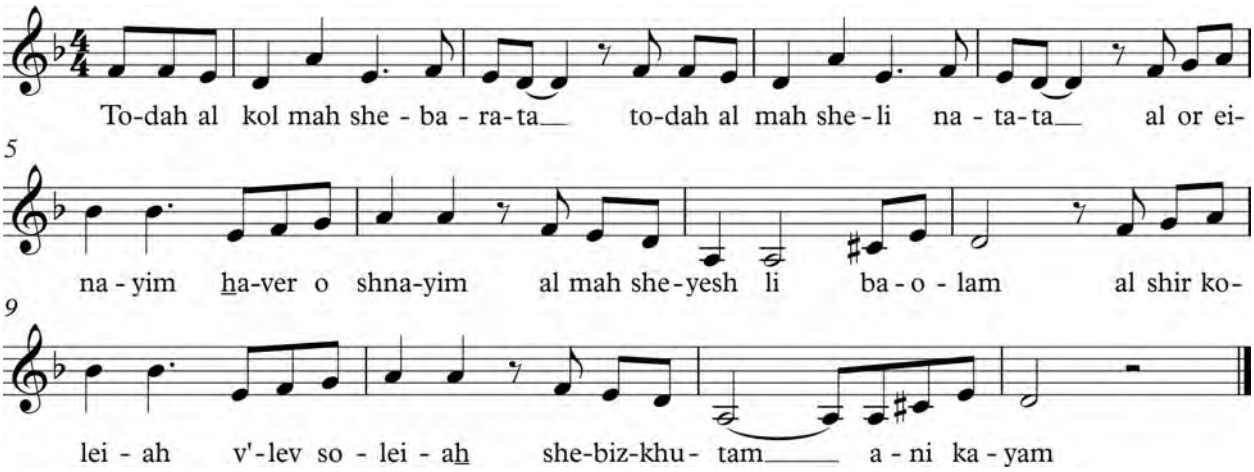

Figure 19. *Todah* by Uzi Hitman and S. Kviomandizis

[38] Uzi Hitman was a prolific artist, accomplished as a singer-songwriter, actor, director, and television personality.

Todah al kol mah shebarata,	Thanks for everything You created
Todah al mah sheli natata.	Thanks for everything You have given me
Al or einayim,	For our eyesight
Haver oh shnayim,	A friend or two
Al mah sheyesh li ba'olam.	For what I have in this world
Al shir kolei'ah	For a song which flows
Velev soleiah	For a forgiving heart
Shebizkhutam ani kayam.	Because of these, I exist.

Still, in the later decades of the 20th century, Jewish themes were more often missing than not in popular Israeli music. One outstanding exception was Israel's 1995 entry into the Eurovision contest, *Amen,* by Moshe Datz (b. 1962),[39] with a heartfelt, liturgically-inspired lyric by Chamutal Ben-Zeev (b. ca. 1960).[40] Earning a respectable eighth place in the competition, the song remains a favorite. (Figure 20)

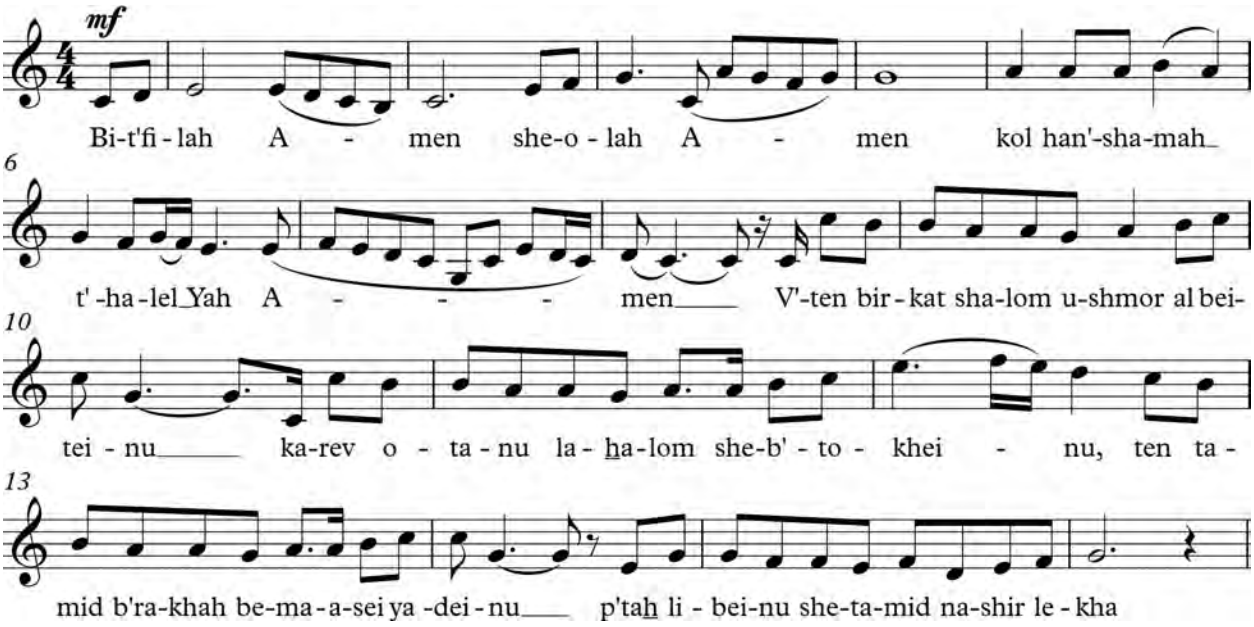

Figure 20. *Amen* by Chamutal Ben-Zeev and Moshe Datz

Bit'filah – Amen	With a prayer, Amen
She'olah – Amen	That rises up, Amen
Kol han'shamah tehalel Yah	Everything that has breath shall praise God[41]
Amen.	Amen

[39] Singer and songwriter Moshe Datz appeared in the Eurovision completion of 1991 with *Kan,* co-written with his then-wife, Orna, but he is better known as an actor.

[40] In addition to writing song lyrics, Chamutal Ben-Zeev has authored children's books, poetry collections, and several plays.

[41] The final line of Psalm 150.

Veten birkat shalom ush'mor al beiteinu	Give us the blessing of peace, and guard our homes
Karev otanu la<u>h</u>alom shebetokheinu	Bring us closer to the dream that is within us
Ten tamid b'rakhah bema'aseh yadenu	Grant blessing to the work of our hands
P'ta<u>h</u> libeinu shetamid nashir lekha.	Open our hearts so that we can always sing to You.

The assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin later that same year shook the nation to its core. The hastily organized concert gathering to mark Rabin's *shloshim* included a retrospective of sad and hopeful songs, but little of a particularly Jewish consciousness.[42] As the collective national mourning gave way to political finger-pointing, the artistic community felt a need to respond to the moment, and in another remarkably collaborative effort, produced *K'tonet Pasim.* This song by Arkadi Duchin (b. 1960)[43] and Meir Ariel (1942-1999)[44] took the biblical story of Joseph's coat and the rancor it produced among the brothers as its inspiration. Both the lyric and the participation of all of Israel's leading performers (notably crossing Ashkenazic and Sephardic, as well as political divides) encouraged Israelis to acknowledge their differences, but not be divided by them.

Lifnei kama v'khamah shnot elef	A few thousand years ago
Nifradnu ani v'a<u>h</u>i	My brother and I separated
Hu lakivun shel <u>h</u>akrerim ha'eleh	He toward these cold (countries)
Ani lidrom mizra<u>h</u>i	I to the south east
Yovlot al yovlot lo hitra'enu	Jubilees upon jubilees we haven't seen each other
Ufit'om nifgashnu kan	And we finally met here
Lo hikarnu,	We didn't recognize each other
Kol kakh hishtanenu	we changed so much
Tov shehish'arnu siman	It's good that a sign remained for us.
Mah hem asu lekha,	What did they do to you?
Ata bikhlal lo domeh li	You don't look at all like me
B'vekhi tza<u>h</u>akti a<u>h</u>i	With a cry I laughed, my brother
Ata lo nireh kol kakh yisraeli	You don't look so Israeli
Beta<u>h</u> shelo tanakhi	Certainly not biblical…

[42] The two-disc CD produced following the event was issued through an historic collaboration agreement among the artists and all of Israel's recording companies.

[43] Duchin was born in Belarus but immigrated to Israel with his family at the age of 15. A singer-songwriter and music producer, he was nominated for the Tamuz Award for Best Male Vocalist in 2002, but lost out to David D'Or, with whom he collaborated on several projects.

[44] Ariel was born on Kibbutz Mishmarot, near Haifa, and produced several albums, as well as songs for Shalom Hanoch (a childhood friend who grew up with him on the *kibbutz*), Arik Einstein and David Broza, among others. After fighting in the battle for Jerusalem in 1967, he wrote *Yerushalayim Shel Barzel* (Jerusalem of Iron), a parody that borrowed Shemer's melody but responded to what he saw as the hyper-patriotism of the era with an acknowledgement of the sadness and divisiveness that followed.

Hen kutonet passim sheli	Oh, my striped coat
Kol pas bi noge'a	Every stripe touches me
Kol pas rotzeh l'kalef li et ha'or	Every stripe wants to peel my skin
Ho passim, passim, passim sheli	Oh stripes, stripes, my stripes,
Ani lo eshtage'a…	I won't go crazy
Rak eten lag'vanim me'at or.	I'll just give the shades a bit of light.

It is telling that, in another moment of national crisis, the song that captured the nation's heart was an overt appeal to God. In 2000, during the early days of the Second Intifada,[45] two Israeli reservists took a wrong turn and ended up in Ramallah, where they were apprehended and lynched, their murder captured on film and broadcast throughout the world. The response was *Sh'ma Yisrael*/*K'shehalev Bokheh* (Hear O Israel/When the heart cries), written by Shmuel Elbaz https://youtu.be/lqWrwie1lCg[46], with lyrics by Yossi Gispin and Arlet Tzfadia,[47] and performed by Sarit Hadad.[48]

K'shehalev bokheh rak Elohim shome'a	*When the heart cries, only God hears*
Hake'ev oleh mitokh haneshamah	*The pain rises from within the soul*
Adam nofel lifney shehu shoke'a	*A man falls before he sinks*
Bitfilah k'tanah hotekh et had'mamah	*With a small prayer he cuts the silence*
Shma Yisrael, Elohai, atah hakol yakhol	*Hear O Israel, my God, You are the Mighty One*
Natata li et hayai, natata li hakol	*You gave me my life, you gave me everything*
Be'enai dim'a halev bokheh besheket	*There is a tear in my eye, the heart cries silently*
Ukhshehalev shotek haneshamah zo'eket	*And when the heart is quiet the soul cries out*
Shma Yisrael, Elohai, akhshav ani levad	*Hear O Israel, my God, now I am alone*
Hazek oti, Elohai, aseh shelo efhad	*Give me strength, my God, that I not be afraid*
Hake'ev gadol ve'en le'an livro'ah	*The pain is great, and I have nowhere to flee*
Aseh sheyigamer, ki lo notar be ko'ah	*Make it stop, because I have no more strength.*

[45] Following the failure of the Camp David summit (that hoped to bring peace between Israel and the Palestinians) and the provocative (if peaceful) visit to the Temple Mount by then-Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, the Palestinians instigated a major uprising against Israel. This so-called "Second" Intifada followed a similar uprising in 1987-1993.

[46] Born in Israel ca. 1966, Elbaz is a versatile musician. In addition to his work as a composer, he performs as a mandolin artist, and as a conductor.

[47] Yossi Gispin is well-known in the Israeli music industry, and was among those consulted in the recent selection of Noa Kirel to represent Israel in the 2023 Eurovision competition. Tzfadia is less well known, but is credited with the lyrics to a few songs that have become popular as dances.

[48] Sarit Hadad was born in Afula in 1978, the youngest of seven children born to parents who made *Aliyah* from Dagestan. Named "Singer of the Decade" (2000's), she has performed in English, Arabic, Georgian, Turkish, Greek and Hebrew, with many of her songs topping the Israeli charts. Although not recognized as one of the many artists to emerge from the national religious or Haredi communities, Hadad does not perform on Shabbat or holidays, and has included occasional songs on her recordings that speak to Jewish themes.

Israel is very much a Jewish state. Although rules that limited public transportation and kept many businesses closed on Shabbat and other holidays have been relaxed in recent years, the Israeli army and El Al, the national airline, serve only Kosher food. Everything from public school vacations to the annual switch between standard and daylight savings time are determined by the Jewish calendar, and buses display *Shabbat shalom* banners on Friday afternoons. While there is a fairly strict demographic divide between Israel's religious and non-religious communities, many otherwise secular Israelis, when asked about their religious leanings, will describe themselves as "traditional." It is this implicit Jewish identity that allows Israeli artists to explore their Jewish roots in public,[49] to borrow traditional texts and vocabulary, and to enjoy a popular receptivity to their invocations of Jewish history, texts and culture as part of the national songbook.

Marsha Bryan Edelman *earned degrees in general music, music education, Jewish music and Jewish studies from Columbia University and the Jewish Theological Seminary, and has taught Jewish music to students of all ages for decades. After nearly a quarter century as Professor of Music and Education at Gratz College outside Philadelphia, she now teaches music history and literature at the H.L. Miller Cantorial School at JTS. In addition, she has been affiliated with the Zamir Choral Foundation in various musical and managerial capacities since 1971, and is currently its Administrator and Director of Education. Dr. Edelman is honored to serve as Editor of the* Journal of Synagogue Music*.*

[49] Meir Banai (1960-2017), Shlomo Gronich (b. 1949) and David D'Or (b. 1965) released albums in the early 2000's that were entirely devoted to settings of traditional texts. For more on the contemporary popularity of music with overt Jewish content, see the article by Ethan C. Goldberg on pages 86-103 of this issue.

Osim mizeh mizmor: The Rise and Broad Appeal of "*Pop Emuni*"

By Ethan Levin Goldberg

The Israeli journalist Zvika Klein recently reported about a remarkable impromptu encounter that occurred during a concert by Hanan Ben-Ari, a religious Israeli singer-songwriter discussed below, to an audience of young Israelis about to embark as emissaries to the Jewish diaspora.

> During the performance of his hit song *Dream Like Joseph*, he asked the audience if any of them was named Joseph. One of the *shlihim* answered positively, and received the honor of singing together with Ben Ari, while standing in the middle of the theater, off-stage. This Joseph, or possibly Yosef, actually sang beautifully and Ben Ari, who was overwhelmed with this young man's charm, asked "Are you single?" suggesting that there may be a potential female partner in the audience, but Joseph actually said, "I'm not single; I have a boyfriend whom I love very much." The crowd cheered; this wasn't the answer Ben Ari, an Orthodox Jew, expected. But he didn't care and gave Joseph a big hug. Ben Ari's uncle, Dr. Michael Ben Ari, established the extreme-right *Otzma Yehudit* party, which promotes a more conservative Israel with regards to LGBTQ rights. Ben Ari studied at *yeshivahs* and is a member of Orthodox communities, but that doesn't cause him to distance himself from a gay Israeli; on the contrary. That may be the secret of his success.[1]

Almost every element of this story would have been unthinkable a generation ago: a religious singer becoming one of the most popular performers in Israel; a song with multiple reverent references to canonical Jewish texts (discussed below) being a smash hit with young people; an openly gay man's relationship cherished by an Orthodox Jew with deep roots in the political far right. What can account for this?

In the period since 2010, music in deep dialogue with Jewish tradition by Israeli Jewish religious artists has achieved remarkable acceptance, popularity and success in mainstream Israeli culture. This trend speaks to significant changes in both secular and religious society. Secular audiences are now more eager to encounter and less suspicious of music with overtly religious themes, and religious artists have embraced the opportunities and challenges of mainstream success, using their platforms to share deeply personal engagement with faith and Jewish tradition.

This article will consider several significant artists in roughly chronological order who have used their artistry as a vehicle to express personal religious sentiments using deeply-rooted Jewish terminology, concepts and texts.

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[1] Klein, Zvika. 2023. "Is a Hanan Ben Ari Concert the Solution for Jewish Divisions? - Opinion." *The Jerusalem Post*. July 5, 2023. https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-748954.

An important precursor to the current moment is the work of Shuli Rand. Rand has lived in both the religious, secular and Hassidic sectors of Israeli society: born into a national-religious family, he became secular and enjoyed a successful career in theater and film before withdrawing from public life and embracing Breslov Hassidism. His self-published debut album, *Nekudot Tovot* in 2008 attracted higher-than-expected attention and was recognized as a platinum album, having sold over 62,000 copies in the small Israeli market.

"אייכה" מאת שולי ראנד — Where are You? by Shuli Rand (2008)

ריבונו של עולם אם נדבר גלויות	Master of the Universe, if we can speak openly
לפעמים אין לי כוח בעולמך להיות	Sometimes I don't have the strength to be in your world
אנה מפניך אסתתר ?	Where can I hide from your face?
מה אטען מה אצטדק	What shall I claim, how shall I justify myself,
מה אדבר?	What shall I say?
חנון ורחום הן לפניך גלוי	Gracious and Merciful, they're revealed before You
כאן יהודי שעל חוט השערה הוא תלוי	Here's a Jew who's hanging on by a thread of hair
נלחם בעצבות בייאוש המכרסם כתולעת	Fighting against sorrow and despair that gnaws like a worm
השמחה נסתלקה ממני וגם הדעת	Gladness left me and reason too
קולות מהעבר לוחשים לי לעצור	Voices from the past whisper for me to stop
אבל אני מוסיף בחושך לחתור	Yet I continue to strive in darkness
ושואל ומבקש, אייכה?!	And ask and request, where are you?!
אותו זקן וכסיל שולח בי חיצים	The same old fool throws arrows at me
אני הולך וכושל הוא הולך ומעצים	I keep failing, he keeps getting stronger
נשמה קדושה אל נא תבכי שבורת כנף	Holy spirit, please do not cry with a broken wing
הן תעידי עליי כמה הייתי נכסף	Please testify how much I was yearning
כשסודות מהעבר פקדו עליי לעצור	When secrets from the past ordered me to stop
אבל אני מוסיף בחושך לחתור	Yet I continue to strive in darkness
ושואל ומבקש, אייכה?!	And ask and request, where are you?!

בסופו של יום הן אפלט אל החוף	At the end of the day, I'll be thrown to the shore
האדמה הרחומה אותי אליה תאסוף	The merciful earth will gather me up to her
ואז אצעק ואצטדק ואספר	And then I will shout and justify myself and tell
איך בחושך הזה הייתי חותר	How in this darkness I was striving
ושואל ומבקש וכוסף! אייכה?!	And ask and request and long! Where are you?!

The song's title is an allusion to Genesis 3:9, of God's question to Adam "Where are you" preceding the confrontation about eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. Here, Rand inverts the question as a statement of longing and search for connection to the Divine. Similarly, "Where can I hide from your face" is an inversion of Psalm 27:9, "do not hide Your face from me." Additional references to canonical texts here include traditional appellations of God (*Ribono Shel Olam, Hanun v'rahum*") and "the same old fool" as a euphemism for the evil inclination as explained in *Kohelet Rabbah* 4:13. There are several references to motion through water (and the album's cover depicts a fully-dressed Rand completely submersed) that create the image of a person rowing or swimming with struggle and determination, eventually reaching the shore and continuing to strive for God. [2]

Shuli Rand's album cover, *Nekudot Tovot*

This song became well-known within many sectors of Israel's significantly fragmented society. The Israeli writer Efrat Cohen explained what she witnessed during a live performance:

"I was amazed to see so many people filling the place, both secular and religious, and they all had a common denominator: When Shuli sang *Ayeka*, there was not a single Jewish listener who remained indifferent. As if something in this song automatically presses a hidden button inside everyone's soul, and wakes it up from its slumber with full force. I could see their souls crying out from inside them, I could see the tears that were shed there...

> In a very symbolic way, towards the end of the performance, crowds of men came on stage, who together with Shuli formed a large circle. In the circle there was one Breslov Hassid; Shuli, who was also dressed like a real Hassid; and around him all the people of Israel: religious, secular Tel Avivians, settlers, ultra-Orthodox, those who have become religious, and those who lack a definition and are still looking for themselves, *kippot* of different colors, and also those without one. But everyone was excited about the same

[2] Peretz, David. 2023. "תרבות". שולי רנד והלחין שכתב 'אייכה' השיר על.il. 2023. https://tarbutil.cet.ac.il/paskol/%D7%90%D7%99%D7%99%D7%9B%D7%94/.

truth. Little by little, without us noticing at all, I think this song became our unshakable anthem... and to me, it was symbolic of what good music is."[3]

In hindsight, the uptake of this song by significant sections of the Israeli public was perhaps a precursor to the proliferation of this kind of material in the 15 years following.

Perhaps the most important contributor to this trend was also one of the earliest: Ishay Ribo. Ribo has enjoyed a remarkable career, from funding his first music video with his own wedding presents through recognition as Singer of the Year multiple times by multiple media outlets. Ribo immigrated to Israel as a child from France and grew up in a cloistered Orthodox environment, where the only secular music he heard was on the bus radio on the way to school. Ribo gradually made his way into songwriting and performing and adopted a slightly more worldly appearance and lifestyle while maintaining his Orthodox commitments. His songs speak of the trials and triumphs of religious life and often include frequent, poetic and deft explicit and implicit allusions to biblical and rabbinic texts.[4]

Ishay Ribo

Ribo first attracted widespread attention with his 2012 song *Tokho Ratzuf Ahavah*. A rock ballad with a rich harmony, the song reworks Biblical and Rabbinic material to craft an ode to Divine love.[5] While less personal than *Ayeka* (no use of first person) and other songs discussed below, the song stands as an example of how individuals can find their own way through the vastness of Jewish tradition to give voice to their own religious sentiments. The annotated translation below testifies to the breadth and depth of sources Ribo weaves together.[6]

Tokho Ratzuf Ahavah — Words and Music by Ishay Ribo

חוֹשֵׂךְ שִׁבְטוֹ, מִבְּלִי לַחְשֹׂךְ אֶת אַהֲבָתוֹ	He spares his rod"[(A)], without sparing his love
מוֹשִׁיט אֶת שַׁרְבִיטוֹ, לְכָל הַפּוֹשֵׁט יָדוֹ	Holds out his scepter,[(B)] to all who extend a hand
עַיִן לֹא מַעְלִים, מֵעַל צֹאן מַרְעִיתוֹ	He hides not his eye away from "the flock he tends"[(C)]

[3] Cohen, Efrat. 2014. "השיר שהפך להיות ההמנון למחפשים תשובה." Www.hidabroot.org. September 16, 2014. https://www.hidabroot.org/article/77371.

[4] Kingsley, Patrick. 2023. "Religious Pop Star Singing of 'God and Faith' Wins over Secular Israel." *The New York Times*, April 15, 2023, sec. World. https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/15/world/middleeast/israel-music-ishay-ribo.html.

[5] Burstyn, Gershon. 2019. "The Great Harmonizer." *Mishpacha Jewish Family Weekly*. December 25, 2019. https://mishpacha.com/the-great-harmonizer/.

[6] The author wishes to thank Rabbi Ben Goldberg for his assistance in identifying these sources.

גַּם כְּשֶׁאָנוּ שִׁבְרֵי כֵלִים, עוֹדֵנוּ כְּלִי חֶמְדָּתוֹ	Even though we are broken vessels,[D] we are still a "vessel of His desire" [E]
תּוֹכוֹ רָצוּף אַהֲבָה, רָצוּף אַהֲבָה	He is "filled with love" [F] filled with love
בֵּיתוֹ צָפוּף לִרְוָחָה, צָפוּף לִרְוָחָה	His house is crowded yet open, crowded yet open [G] He grants us pardon, not only when the gates are closing[H]
מַמְצִיא לָנוּ מְחִילָה, לֹא רַק בִּשְׁעַת הַנְּעִילָה	
לְךָ דוּמִיָּה תְהִלָּה	"To you, silence is praise" [I]
יָדָיו רָב לוֹ, וְאֵין רֵאשִׁית לְרֵאשִׁיתוֹ	"His hands are sufficient for him"[J], and "there is no beginning to his beginning"[K] Even though poetry is "like the sand of the sea"[L], it is but some of His praise
גַּם הַשִּׁירָה כְּחוֹל הַיָּם, הִיא רַק מִקְצָת שִׁבְחוֹ	
לִפְנִים מִשּׁוּרַת הַדִּין, מַנְהִיג אֶת עוֹלָמוֹ	Beyond the letter of the law [M], he rules His world. And before the angels, seeks the peace of His people
וּמִלִּפְנֵי הַמַּלְאָכִים, דּוֹרֵשׁ בְּשָׁלוֹם עַמּוֹ	
עָתִיד הוּא	And he is destined
"לָתֵת פְּאֵר תַּחַת אֵפֶר	"To give [to them that mourn in Zion] a garland instead of ashes,
שֶׁמֶן שָׂשׂוֹן תַּחַת אֵבֶל	Oil of joy instead of mourning
מַעֲטֵה תְהִלָּה תַּחַת רוּחַ כֵּהָה"	A mantle of praise instead of a heavy spirit"[N]

A. Proverbs 13: 24
B. Based on Esther 5:2
C. Psalm 100:3
D. A concept in Lurianic Kabbalah
E. Hosea 13:15. This expression is also found in halakhic literature, for examples, in the *Mishnah Brurah* on *Orakh Hayyim* 47:1b.
F. Songs of Song 3:10
G. Following *Avot* 1:5
H. *El Nora Alila*, a Sephardic *piyyut* for the *Neilah* service on Yom Kippur
I. Psalm 65:2
J. Deuteronomy 33:7
K. *Yigdal*, a hymn that summarizes the 13 Principles of Faith of the Rambam
L.Genesis 32:13
M. A rabbinic concept of going beyond what the law strictly speaking requires for the sake of doing what is right. For example, see BT *Bava Metzia* 30b.
N. Isaiah 61:3

This song helped establish Ribo as a popular singer, especially after Idan Raichel, one of the most successful Israeli singer-songwriters of the 2000s, invited Ribo to perform it at Raichel's concerts. In introducing the performance, Raichel recalls being dumbstruck upon first

hearing it and wondering, "How did I not write this song?" [7] This began a long string of collaborations with other more established artists, including Shlomo Artzi.[8] Ribo recorded and released four studio albums and additional singles and collaborations with other artists from both the secular and religious worlds. Ribo, for a considerable amount of time in the 2010s, was the only artist who had credibility and an organic audience in both the religious and secular communities. This led to some discomfort in both communities, as secular fans wondered why certain shows were gender-segregated, for example, and religious fans questioned his religious bona fides as he became a mainstream success, even as he maintained certain boundaries such as not performing with female singers or writing songs on more conventional subjects for pop music such as (human-to-human) love or celebration.[9]

One of Ribo's best-known songs is *Lashuv Habaitah* (Returning Home) from his 2018 album *Shetah Afor* (Gray Area). The song is firmly in a contemporary pop style: it opens with a single electric guitar accompanied by a simple metronome beat, reminiscent of Justin Bieber's 2015 "Love Yourself." The song is an ode to *teshuvah* (repentance) and encourages the listeners to join in (notice the first person plural "we") and return to religiosity, even if the distance back is great. It combines conventional pop song tropes about auspicious beginnings, the hero's journey, and self-empowerment with traditional Jewish ideas about repentance and forgiveness. There is enough here to assimilate to the worldview of both religious and secular listeners at once. Ribo speaks in a more colloquial way but cannot resist reworking some material from the *siddur* (for example the phrase *mohel v'sole'ah* "forgives and pardons" from the Yom Kippur liturgy and sixth blessing of the weekday *Amidah* liturgy, among other places).

Lashuv Habaitah Music Ishay Ribo and Maor Shoshan, Words Ishay Ribo

הגיע הזמן להתעורר	The time has come to wake up
לעזוב הכל להתגבר	To leave everything- to overcome
לשוב הביתה לא לחפש מקום אחר	To return home- not to search for any other place.
הגיע הזמן להשתנות	The time has come to change,
גם אם פספסנו תחנות	Even if we've missed a few stops,
אפשר לרדת יש רכבת חזרה לשכונות	You can get off, there's a train going back to the neighborhood.

[7] Ribo, Ishay. 2013. "עידן רייכל מארח את ישי ריבו' תוכו רצוף אהבה.'" Www.youtube.com. March 15, 2013. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwTPLmaQLQM.

[8] Shlomo Artzi (b. 1949) is one of Israel's most successful musicians.

[9] Steinberg, Jessica. 2019. "Penitence in Melody from Ishay Ribo, Israel's Favorite Kippah-Wearing Singer." *Times of Israel*. October 8, 2019. https://www.timesofisrael.com/ishay-ribo-israels-favorite-kippah-wearing-singer-channels-yom-kippur-liturgy/.

הכל אפשר רק אם נרצה	Everything is possible only if there's a will,
המחפש תמיד מוצא	The searcher always finds,
גם אם הוא נמצא אי שם הרחק בקצה	Even if he finds himself somewhere at the far end.
דלתות שמיים לא ננעלו	The doors of Heaven never lock,
כשהבן קורא הצילו	When the son calls, “Help!”
אז אבא שבשמיים מגיע אפילו	Then Father in Heaven arrives,
(פזמון)	(Chorus)
אפילו שעשינו משהו רע	Even if we've done something wrong,
הוא מוחל וסולח מוחל וסולח	He forgives and pardons, forgives and pardons,
מושיט ידו לעזרה ונותן ברחמיו	He stretches out His hand to assist, and in His mercy gives
את הכח לתקן ולשוב אליו	The strength to fix, and return to Him
הגיע הזמן להתחרט אם כבר לברוח אז מהחטא אם כבר לקחת אז לקחת בשביל לתת	The time has come to regret, if you've already fled from the sin, if you’re already taking, then take in order to give.
וזה הזמן להתקרב לא לפחד מהכאב	This is the time to draw close, not to fear from the pain,
ואם לתת אז כבר לתת מכל הלב	And if you're already giving, then give with all your heart.
הכל אפשר רק אם נרצה	Everything is possible only if there's a will,
המחפש תמיד מוצא	The searcher always finds,
גם אם הוא נמצא אי שם הרחק בקצה	Even if he finds himself somewhere at the far end.
דלתות שמיים לא ננעלו	The doors of Heaven never lock,
כשהבן קורא הצילו	When the son calls, “Help!”
אז אבא שבשמיים מגיע אפילו	Then Father in Heaven arrives, even if…

Ribo’s notoriety and creative output increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. Within weeks of the beginning of global shutdowns, Ribo wrote and recorded a song (each musician

recorded tracks separately from home) called *Keter Melukha* that tracked the onset of the shutdowns with reference to the weekly Torah portion and expressed the shock and sadness of that unprecedented time. Ribo followed this up in February 2021 with *Sibat Hasibot* (Prime Mover) that attempted to express some hope as the worst of the pandemic waned. In his signature style, perhaps with more of a straightforward pop influence, Ribo mixes allusions to Jewish texts with his own observations and optimistic perspective.[10]

סיבת הסיבות	Prime Mover
תשיב בי את הרוח, תוריד ממני את הגשם	Return the wind to me, remove the rain from me
היה לי ים זמן לנוח, התרגלתי קצת בעצם	I had a sea of time to rest, I even got used to it a bit
ובמרחב הפתוח, רואים באופק את השמש	And in the wide open space, we can see the sun on the horizon
אין ספק אני בטוח, בסוף עוד תתבהר הדרך	No doubt I'm sure, at the end the path will be clear
רק פתח לנו	Just open for us
שערי אמונה, שערי הבנה	the gates of faith, the gates of understanding
שאין לנו מלך...	that we don't have any king...
(פזמון): אלא אתה!	(Chorus): Other than You
סיבת הסיבות, עילת העילות	Prime Mover, Cause of all Causes
נורא תהילות	awe-inspiring glory
ורק לך נאה להודות, על כל הימים וכל הלילות	and only to You is it proper to thank, for all the days and nights
יצאנו מתיבת הנח, אל מציאות אחרת	We came out of this Noah's Ark, to a different reality
לפדות את אסירי הכח ולכודי הרשת	To redeem the prisoners of power and those trapped in the network
גם לקבל את השחור לבן, עם כל צבעי הקשת	Also to accept the black and white, with all the colors of the rainbow
משנה אבות פרק ג', חביב אדם שנברא בצלם	Mishna Avot Chapter Three: Beloved is Man who was created in God's image
רק פתח לנו	Just open for us

[10] Weinberg, Tzipora, and Gordon Dale. 2022. "Shifting Paradigms, Pandemic Realities: The Reception of Ishay Ribo's Music in the American Hasidic Community." *Yale Journal of Music & Religion* 8 (1). https://doi.org/10.17132/2377-231x.1206.

שערי הכלה, שערי התחלה	the gates of containment, the gates of the beginning
כי אין לנו מלך...	since we don't have any other king...
(פזמון): אלא אתה!	(Chorus): Other than You
סיבת הסיבות, עילת העילות	Prime Mover, Cause of all Causes
שומע תפילות	hears prayers
ורק לך!	and only to You
נאה להודות, על כל הימים וכל הלילות	is it proper to thank, for all the days and nights

The title of the song arises out of Aristotelian philosophy[11] and the cosmological argument for the existence of God that entered Judaism both through Maimonides and later in the *Zohar* and other Kabbalistic texts. It appears in the Sephardic liturgy in the *Patah Eliyahu* text from the *Zohar* that functions as an introduction to the morning and afternoon services (רִבּוֹן עָלְמִין אַנְתְּ הוּא עִלַּת הָעִלּוֹת וְסִבַּת הַסִּבּוֹת)[12]. Ribo also uses rain imagery that plays on language from the liturgy before comparing the COVID-19 lockdowns to Noah's Ark. Our duty after this flood, per Ribo, is to rescue those who are trapped in toxic internet discourse. He uses a double entendre of the word *reshet* which means both "net" and "network" and more broadly refers to social media and online discourse. In an unusual move, Ribo cites a rabbinic text and states its source within the lyrics.

Sibat Hasibot clearly resonated with the Israeli public: it was the most-played Israeli song on Israeli radio stations in 2021 and as such was awarded the ACUM prize in 2022.[13] [14] Ribo's career expanded to include more collaborations, international tours (including a concert at Madison Square Garden in New York in September 2023) and considerable influence on those who came after him-both in earnest and liberal citation and collage of Jewish texts in lyrics and even in his French-accented vocal delivery. Ribo's music is a rare meeting place for Israelis of many backgrounds who find his music speaking to them despite their differing lifestyles.

The singer-songwriter Hanan Ben-Ari shares much with Ishay Ribo: both come from a religious Mizrahi background and have achieved notable success in mainstream Israeli culture. Ben-Ari takes significant inspiration from music styles originated by African-Americans such as Gospel, Soul and Funk music, fusing these with lyrics that arise from Jewish tradition as well as other aspects of contemporary Israeli life. While Ribo achieved broad appeal while staying above

[11] Britannica. 2017. "First Cause." Encyclopedia Britannica. April 27, 2017. https://www.britannica.com/topic/first-cause.

[12] Ashuva. 2017. "פתח אליהו הנביא זכור לטוב - סגולה לטהרת הנפש - כולל פירוש." Ashuva. December 25, 2017. https://ashoova.co.il/eliyahu-opened/.

[13] Bin Nun, Sagi, and Nadav Menuchin. 2021. "פרסום ראשון: 'סיבת הסיבות' של ישי ריבו הוא השיר הכי מושמע ברדיו ב-2021." Walla. December 15, 2021. https://e.walla.co.il/item/3477086.

[14] Faiglin, Ariel. 2022. "גם 'סיבת הסיבות' יהיה: אלו הזוכים בפרסי אקו"ם." Arutz 7. August 3, 2022. https://www.inn.co.il/news/573194.

Hanan Ben-Ari

the fray of contemporary identity politics, Ben-Ari faces these issues head-on, writing lyrics that explicitly address stereotypes and misconceptions that Israelis from different sectors often hold about each other, as well as the benefit of breaking free from them. [15] [16]

While some of his songs address this as well as other more typical topics for popular music, Ben-Ari also performs songs that stem directly from Jewish tradition. In the song "Dream Like Joseph," Ben-Ari employs an 80s pop idiom to understand the trials of human existence through the lens of canonical stories.

חולם כמו יוסף
נריה בן ארי

Dream Like Joseph
Neria Ben-Ari

כל אדם מגורש מגן עדן	Each person is expelled from the Garden of Eden
כל אחד עובר מבול	Everyone goes through a flood
לכל אחד יש איזה הבל	Everyone has an Abel
שהוא מקנא בו עד מוות	that they're deathly jealous of
בכל אחת מגדל של מרד ובלבול	In everyone there's a tower of rebellion and confusion
כל אדם הולך לו מבית אבא	Each person goes away from their father's house
כל אחד כמעט עוקד את בנו	Everyone almost binds their son
עמוק בפנים יש סדום קטנה	Deep inside there's a small Sodom
שהוא רק רוצה למחוק כבר	that they just want to erase already
ויש מלאכים שימלטו אותו	And there are angels that will prevent it
וגם אני חולם כמו יוסף	And I too dream like Joseph
כן גם אותי זרקו לבור	Yes I was also thrown into a pit
גלגל חוזר בתוך תחפושת	History repeats itself in disguise

[15] Ofer, Ben. 2015. "רוק בבית הכנסת: המתנחל לשעבר שהפך ליקיר המיינסטרים הישראלי." Ynet. June 15, 2015. https://xnet.ynet.co.il/win/articles/0.

[16] Rindner, Sarah. 2023. "A Religious Musical in Secular Tel Aviv." Mosaic. January 23, 2023. https://mosaicmagazine.com/observation/arts-culture/2023/01/a-religious-musical-in-secular-tel-aviv/.

וכמו דוד אני עושה מזה מזמור	And like David I make a psalm out of it
עושה מזה מזמור	[I] make a psalm out of it
כל אחת מלכה כמו אסתר	Each woman is a queen like Esther
מביסה כמו דבורה כל צבא שרק יבוא	Defeats like Deborah any army that will come
כמו כל אחת גם היא בוכה בסתר	Like everyone she also cries in secret
כמו רחל כמו משה על הר נבו	Like Rachel, like Moses on Mount Nevo
וגם אני חולם כמו יוסף	And I too dream like Joseph
כן גם אותי זרקו לבור	Yes I was also thrown into a pit
גלגל חוזר בתוך תחפושת	History repeats itself in disguise
וכמו דוד אני עושה מזה מזמור	And like David I make a psalm out of it
עושה מזה מזמור	[I] make a psalm out of it
כל אדם נברא בצלם	Each person was created in the Image
גחל בוער סודות ורמזים	A burning coal of secrets and clues
כל אחד הוא חומר טוב לסרט	Everyone is good material for a movie
תפקיד חדש בתוך סיפור עתיק יומין	A new role inside an ancient story

This song is perhaps Ben-Ari's gift to Jewish educators (which he also was before his music career) by giving an example of how to use Bible stories to help an individual understand his own experience. Indeed, "history repeats itself in disguise;" every experience has a precedent from which solace or inspiration can be found.

Similarly, the song "Broken-Hearted" assembles an array of classical allusions to express a personal struggle of faith and longing for connection.

מִי יוֹדֵעַ כָּל כְּאֵב	Who knows every pain
מִי רוֹפֵא לִשְׁבוּרֵי לֵב	who repairs every broken heart
יוֹצֵר אוֹר וָחֹשֶׁךְ	creates light and darkness

עוֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם וּמִלְחָמָה makes peace and war…

מִי יוֹשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא דִּין Who sits on the throne of judgment
מִתְכַּסֶּה בָּרַחֲמִים covered in mercy
מוֹחֵל וְסוֹלֵחַ pardons and forgives
מַבִּיט וְיוֹדֵעַ sees and knows

וּמִי יְרַפֵּא לִבִּי And who will heal my heart
אֶל מִי אֲנִי מִתְגַּעְגֵּעַ For whom am I longing
כְּמוֹ יָם שֶׁאֵין לוֹ חוֹף Like a sea that has no shore
רַק תַּגִּיד לִי מִי Just tell me who
מִי יְחַבֵּק אוֹתִי וְיַבְטִיחַ Who will embrace me and ensure
שֶׁאֲנִי לֹא אֶכָּנַע בַּסּוֹף That I will not give up in the end

מִי הָיָה הֹוֶה וְיִהְיֶה Who was, is, and will be
מִי מֵמִית וּמְחַיֶּה Who takes and gives life
פּוֹתֵחַ יָדַיִם Opens arms
מַצְמִיחַ כְּנָפַיִם Grows wings

וּמִי יְרַפֵּא לִבִּי And who will heal my heart
אֶל מִי אֲנִי מִתְגַּעְגֵּעַ For whom am I longing
כְּמוֹ יָם שֶׁאֵין לוֹ חוֹף Like a sea that has no shore
רַק תַּגִּיד לִי מִי Just tell me who
מִי יְחַבֵּק אוֹתִי וְיַבְטִיחַ Who will embrace me and ensure
שֶׁאֲנִי לֹא אֶכָּנַע בַּסּוֹף That I will not give up in the end.

The central concept of the song arises from Psalm 147:3 “God heals their broken hearts, and binds up their wounds.” It also includes references to Isaiah 45:7 and the traditional liturgy. In addition, the song is in dialogue with the classic Israeli poem “Shores” by Natan Yonatan, famously set to music by Nahum Heiman.[17] In that song, the shore longs for the water, but here, the human heart is like a sea without a shore. The song plays with the dual meaning of the Hebrew word *mi*, which can be both a declarative description (“the one who”) but also a question (“who?”). In the verses, Ben-Ari mixes classical epithets for God with his own descriptions, but the chorus asks for this lofty “Who” to embrace him and encourage him. Typical of Ben-Ari, the studio recording features gospel-style back-up vocals along with a sparse piano accompaniment that Ben-Ari plays himself in the music video.


Narkis

The singer Narkis Reuven-Nagar (usually known by her first name only) has also contributed to this emerging genre. Narkis grew up in a traditional-religious home in the Gaza Strip before studying acting in Tel Aviv and leaving religious life. After a trip abroad, she returned to Israel and to religious living, married and settled in Tzfat. After her divorce, she received a *heter* (permission) from her rabbi to pursue a music career, on the condition that she cover her hair in public, which has led to her signature headscarf incorporated into her fashion-conscious outfits. While she has performed music set to canonical texts (notably the song *Aneini,* which sets a prayer of the 20th century Yemenite Rabbi Shalom Korach) she also performs songs of longing and love with ambiguous subjects, that could just as easily be about longing for God or human romantic love.

One of her early popular songs is 2017’s “Don’t Leave,” which combines Middle Eastern-style melody and vocals with a pop-funk instrumentation to express a longing for love and connection, perhaps to God and perhaps to a human lover. The song is in dialogue with Jeremiah, Psalm 69 and Chapter 5 of Song of Songs. The opening line of the song inverts Jeremiah 2:2, in which God expresses favor over Israel’s devotion and following “in the wilderness, in a land not sown.” Here, Narkis followed the ambiguous “him” through a forsaken desert. The speaker in Psalm 69, discusses feeling *muzar* (strange) due to his faith, and is therefore the object of ridicule by those who “sit in the gate”- language echoed by Narkis in the first verse of the song. The second verse has several echoes and direct allusions to chapter 5 of Song of Songs, notably “I rose to let in my beloved” and “I met the guardians.”[18] [19]

[17] Yonatan, Natan, and Nahum Heiman. 1959. חופים.
https://www.nli.org.il/he/items/NNL_MUSIC_AL990031592590205171/NLI.
[18]Gringrass, Robbie. n.d. “Don’t Leave.” Makom Israel. Accessed July 27, 2023. https://makomisrael.org/songs/dont-leave/.
[19] Gringras, Robbie. 3032. “A Divine Love Song - Exploring Narkis’ ‘Don’t Leave.’” Www.youtube.com. April 20, 3032. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGMnQLn-ldQ.

אל תעזוב

מילים ולחן: נרקיס

"Don't Leave"

Words and Music: Narkis

איך הלכתי אחריו במדבר השכוח	How I walked after him in the forsaken desert
איך לקחוני רגליי	How I lifted my steps
אל מקום לא ידעתי נשאוני	To a place unknown was I taken
והנה אך הייתי כמוזר.	And lo I was yet strange
דיבר הוא על ליבי ושמעתי	He spoke to my heart and I heard
איך הבטיח ארץ טובה	How he promised a good land
אך הנה יושבי שער צחקו בי	Yet those at the gate laughed at me
והיה הוא כלא היה	And he was as if he never had been
ימים שלמים חיכיתי לך	Entire days I waited for you
לילות ארוכים שמעתי קולך	Long nights I heard your voice
אל תעזוב לפני שאור ראשון מגיע	Don't leave until the first light arrives
והנה קול מוכר זה שמעתי	Lo I heard a familiar voice
וליבי ניתר כמו ציפור על גג	My heart leapt like a bird on a roof
וקמתי אני לפתוח הדלת	I rose to open the door
והנה שוב נעלם.	And lo once again - disappeared
מצאוני השומרים בדרך	I found the guardians on the way
הראיתם את זה הנעלם	I showed them the disappeared
ימים שלמים חיכיתי לך	Entire days I waited for you
לילות ארוכים שמעתי קולך	Long nights I heard your voice
אל תעזוב לפני שאור ראשון מגיע	Don't leave until the first light arrives

In similar fashion, the 2021 song *Go With You* expresses Narkis' feeling of arrival at a place of comfort and connection after lengthy searching. The lyrics dialogue with Song of Songs 8:7: there, "Vast floods cannot quench love, nor rivers drown it"; here, the rivers have washed away the tears and allowed the speaker to find "you" (perhaps "You"?). The song was awarded the "Song of the Year" prize by the Society of Authors, Composers and Music Publishers in Israel in 2022.[20]

הולכת איתך נרקיס	"Go With You" Narkis
סוף לתהיות	End of reflections
לחיפושי משמעויות	of searchings for meanings
אני יודעת שמצאתי אותך	I know I found you
כל הנהרות	All the rivers
עוד ישטפו את הדמעות	will wash away the tears
אני יודעת שמצאתי אותך	I know I found you
שמע, קולי קורע	Hear, my voice breaks
את הדממה בשיר אהבה	the silence with a love song
וגם עד סוף העולם	And to the end of the world
אני הייתי הולכת איתך הולכת איתך	I would go with you, go with you
וגם עד סוף העולם	And to the end of the world
אני הייתי הולכת איתך הולכת איתך	I would go with you, go with you
ליבי כמו ספר פתוח	My heart is like an open book
תראה אותי	Look at me
ליבי כמו ספר פתוח	My heart is like an open book
תראה אותי	Look at me
סוף לתהיות	End of reflections
לחיפושי משמעויות	of searchings for meanings
אני יודעת שמצאתי אותך	I know I found you

[20] Atias, Amit. 2022a. "N12 - טקס פרסי אקו"ם 2022: כל הזוכים והרגעים הגדולים." N12. September 7, 2022. https://www.mako.co.il/news-entertainment/2022_q3/Article-d2c23fef9b71381027.html.

כל הנהרות	All the rivers
מזמן שטפו את הדמעות	washed away the tears long time ago
אני יודעת שמצאתי אותך	I know I found you
ליבי כמו ספר פתוח	My heart is like an open book
תראה אותי	Look at me
ליבי כמו ספר פתוח	My heart is like an open book
תראה אותי	Look at me

What should we make of this remarkable trend in Israeli music? There are several factors that contribute to the popularity of *pop emuni*. First and foremost is the considerable change in Israel's demographics in recent years. The percentage of Israeli Jews who identify as *Haredi, Dati* or *Masorti* has been steadily increasing, due to both high birthrates and the newly-religious from more secular backgrounds, while the proportion of secular Jews is decreasing due to lower birth rates and emigration, among other factors. These groups have also sought and earned a higher profile in the general consciousness and occupy highly-visible positions in government and military, entertainment and academia.[21]

In addition, a plurality of Israeli Jews now consider themselves Mizrahi, with origins in the Middle East and North Africa.[22] These groups of Jews did not experience the rupture of emancipation and enlightenment like their Ashkenazi peers, and therefore developed neither a self-consciously secular Jewish identity nor a reactionary religious identity, but rather fostered moderate religiosity that does not reflexively shun more mundane or worldly aspects of life. This lack of a strict religious/secular dichotomy is expressed in the output of many of these singers, who write songs about God but also about love, family, and other so-called "secular" topics. The journalist Matti Friedman, writing about Mizrahi popular music adjacent to the music considered here, described this Israel as a place "where Judaism is everything and no big deal and God just another part of life, like sunshine and cigarettes."[23] It seems only natural that popular music would reflect these overall trends.

As popular music has become a global phenomenon, people around the world have been exposed to music from other cultures and countries, including songs in languages they do not speak. This trend decreases the importance of the actual content of the words, and ironically provides an opening for religious material. If the words don't really matter anyway, why shouldn't they be on religious themes, especially if they are phrased in similar ways as other pop songs that discuss self-actualization, the hero's journey and love, (especially love expressed

[21] Pew Research Center. 2016. "Israel's Religiously Divided Society." *Pew Research Center*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2016/03/08/israels-religiously-divided-society/. https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2016/03/08/israels-religiously-divided-society/.
[22] Lewin-Epstein, Noah, and Yinon Cohen. 2018. "Ethnic Origin and Identity in the Jewish Population of Israel." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45 (11): 2118–37. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183x.2018.1492370.
[23] Friedman, Matti. 2015. "Israel's Happiness Revolution." *Tablet.* August 31, 2015. https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/arts-letters/articles/israels-happiness-revolution.

ambiguously towards either a human lover or the Divine)?[24]

Within the religious sectors of Israeli society, producing and consuming popular music has also become a "kosher" activity, as rabbis and laypeople appreciate artists who use their platforms to express and promote religious points of view. As a result, the religious public has become more discerning and has come to expect a higher production value, quality and variety in Jewish music. The artists discussed in this article have all benefited from mainstream media exposure and the publicity and distribution channels previously accessed only by secular artists. They have also adopted the personal narrative feature of pop music to express their points of view while participating in the age-old Jewish poetic method of allusion to and dialogue with canonical Jewish sources.

Part of the appeal for secular audiences also stems from the nature of the religious content. For many Israeli Jews, observance of rituals, active participation in religious community and, increasingly, affirming certain political positions constitute religiosity more so than matters of faith and doubt or personal relationship with God. Large majorities of the secular population say that religion is not important to them and never pray, but a majority also say that they believe in God with some degree of certainty and participate in certain Jewish practices such as the Passover *seder* and refraining from eating pork.[25] The singers and songs that are part of this trend focus not on ritual observance or hot-button political and social issues but rather on personal spirituality and relationship with God. This focus allows the artists to bypass the significant animosity between the religious and secular sectors of the population, and creates a common ground where personal faith and spirituality can move from the background to the forefront and vulnerability and faith can be expressed and affirmed across considerable differences in lifestyle and outlook. A hypothetical pop song extolling the non-use of money and transportation on Shabbat, glorifying *yeshivah* study over army service or that frowns upon homosexuality would certainly not achieve the wide appeal among secular Jewish-Israelis that these songs have.

This article provides just a taste of the music trend crystallizing as "*pop emuni.*" Israeli religious Jews have stepped into the spotlight with songs that engage deeply with the Jewish canon in order to express the longing and spirituality that appeal broadly across Israel's deeply divided society by means of the pop music idiom. This phenomenon reflects the changing face of Israeli society, where old divisions and boundaries recede and the artist steps forward to throw open a broken heart filled with deep spiritual longing and finds a sympathetic yearning in the heart of every type of Jew.

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[24] Moalem, Dor Meir. 2021. "התהליך שעובר על גל הפופ האמוני הוא הדבר הכי טוב במוזיקה הישראלית." Mako. May 16, 2021.
[25] Pew Research Center. 2016. "Israel's Religiously Divided Society." *Pew Research Center*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2016/03/08/israels-religiously-divided-society/.

Education at JTS in 2020. Ethan's professional interests include the intersection of Judaic arts and Jewish spirituality, synagogue transformation, music education and Cultural Zionism. He is the proud and loving spouse of Rabbi Cantor Shoshi Levin Goldberg since 2016 and they are the proud parents of two children. This is his first article for the Journal of Synagogue Music.

The Great Synagogue of Warsaw: Cylkow's *Mahzorim* and Progressive Judaism[1]

By Benjamin Matis

Introduction

While we are aware of the greatness of the *hazzanim* of the Great Synagogue of Warsaw, especially Gershon Sirota (1874-1943) and Moshe Koussevitsky (1899-1966), few of us know what worship there was like. Wikipedia, as well as more than a few historians, have incorrectly defined the Great Synagogue as being Reform, as if it belonged to the Reform movement as we define it in the American sense. This is incorrect. If anything, the congregation was much more like a highly traditional Conservative shul of the 1950s, albeit with separate seating. They called themselves *Postępowi* or "progressive." This paper seeks to clarify, that this was, at best, moderate liturgical change from traditional Orthodoxy.

The Great Synagogue was for many years a bastion of integrationist/assimilationist sentiment and Polish patriotism. Liturgy, except for the prayer for the government, was in Hebrew, and usually with few changes from the traditional liturgy. The language of sermons and the prayer for the government was of course Polish; the preachers were thundering orators who spoke eloquent, perfect Polish. The atmosphere was forbiddingly formal, wherein worshippers were expected to be silent. The congregation was comprised of the highest classes of Jewish Warsaw. One could not attend without having a regularly assigned seat that was paid for, or without a ticket- excepting Simhat Torah and Purim. It was not uncommon for VIPs and major government officials to attend just to hear the cantor and choir, including piano virtuoso-cum-Prime Minister-of-the-Republic Ignacy Paderewski. (1860-1941)

The structure itself was opened on Rosh HaShannah, 1878, and was the largest synagogue in Europe. The acoustics were superb, all the more noticeable due to the silence of the congregation. The choir sat in a loft some two stories above the *bimah*, and the cantor's lectern faced the ark. The choir was as superb as it was large, with nearly 100 boys and men, and was directed by distinguished conductors like Leo Leow (1878-1960) and David Eisenstadt (1890-1942) who also prepared the choir to sing with the Warsaw Philharmonic in performances of Haydn and Handel oratorios.[2]

[1] Please see my article "Theology in Translation: Progressive Judaism in the Kingdom of Poland" in Dynner, Polonsky and Wodzinski (eds.) *Polin* vol 27: *Jews in the Kingdom of Poland*, 1815-1918 (Oxford, 2015)

[2] Nearly all of this was based on reminisces of Dr. Marian Fuks of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. He attended both a Shabbat morning service there as well as a concert by Yossele Rosenblatt. Fuks died in October, 2022 at the age of 108. Additionally, Fuks wrote copiously on the Jewish press in Warsaw.

Modernity and Liturgical Reforms

In the early nineteenth century, many communities that wished to embrace modernity—as well as seek emancipation--began to create synagogues of a completely different sort than had existed before. "Reformers," as they called themselves, sought to apply elements of the *Haskalah,* the Jewish Enlightenment, to the synagogue. Accordingly, they instituted sermons (as opposed to *divrei Torah*) in the national language (German, etc.), made liturgical changes, and tried to establish strict decorum in the worship service. To these "reformers" or "progressives" the path to integration and ultimately emancipation meant shearing off "anti-Christian," "medieval" and "fanatical" elements from worship. Most important to remember is that "reform" in the nineteenth century would refer to virtually any changes in the liturgy or established religious practice and was by no means a "movement" as in the American sense. Reform (really better called changes) could be very minor, or they could be quite radical. More liberally-minded reformers removed texts they found theologically troubling while the more conservative-minded tended to maintain the traditional texts for reasons that ranged from sentimentality to the belief that changes were too difficult to manage for practical reasons.

History of the Great Synagogue

A small group of Prussian Jews migrated to Warsaw after the last partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1796 made much of central Poland into a Prussian province. These Prussian immigrants established their own congregation in 1802 in the home of the Flatau family; this congregation would, after many generations, become the core of the Great Synagogue[3]. Since the original congregation was largely comprised of German-speaking Jews from Prussia, the original language of the congregation was German and remained so until at least 1858. That year, Marcus Jastrow (1829-1903) [4] was appointed as preacher of the congregation and was required to preach in Polish. Indeed, the congregation had become a hotbed of Polish integrationist thinking and Polish nationalism over the generations as the descendants of these Prussian immigrants had become Polonized, or rather, "Poles of the Mosaic Faith."[5] Acquiring the Polish language was a key element in acculturation and integration. Nevertheless, German Jewry highly influenced these self-proclaimed "progressive" Jews. Indeed, all the preachers at the congregation were either German Jews or were at least educated in the German-speaking lands, particularly Berlin.

The first prayerbook officially used at the congregation, which by now had settled into its own building on Danilowiczowska Street, was that of Isaac Noah Mannheimer (1793-1865), creator of the so-called "*Wiener Ritus*" (Vienna rite), and who worked with Salomon Sulzer

[3] The Flatau family was a wealthy banking clan. They created their own *minyan* in a room their home, attended by other German-speaking Jews of the same social class and mindset See A. Guterman, "The Origins of the Great Synagogue in Warsaw on Tlomackie Street," in Bartoszewski and Polonsky (eds.) *The Jews in Warsaw: A History* (Oxford, 1991) 181-211

[4] Jastrow, who emigrated to the United States 1866, would later publish his *Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Bavli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literatupe* (1903), which became and remains a standard English reference work on Talmudic language.

[5] See M. Wodzinski, *Haskalah and Hassidism in the Kingdom of Poland: A History of a Conflict* (Oxford, 2009)

(1804-1890) in Vienna.[6] By the time Jastrow was appointed preacher in 1858, the Mannheimer prayerbooks no longer sufficed as they were in German, and moreover Jastrow advocated a Polish-language version of the prayerbooks of Yechiel Michael Sachs (1808-1864).[7] Interestingly, there were indeed Polish-language translations of the *siddur* available as early as 1822, including Ezekiel Hoge's *Modlitwy Israelitow.* Another was Henryk Liebkind's *Modlitwy dla Izraelitow* (1844) which Jastrow roundly criticized as being a poor translation.[8]

Wiener Ritus and Moderate Liturgical Reform

It seems, given the popularity of the *Wiener Ritus*[9] in many centers (Vienna, Pest, Prague, and Warsaw, among others) and a study of what prayerbooks have survived two World Wars and Communist domination, that changes to the liturgy were for the most part minor and generally followed Mannheimer's approach. While there were no cuts to the statutory prayers, there were occasionally small word changes. Despite being an early advocate of radical liturgical changes, the attitudes of the synagogue board members in Vienna forced him to ultimately adopt only minor changes in creating the Vienna Rite. There were considerable arguments amongst the membership and board. The Imperial government in Vienna took some time to decide on what prayerbook it would even allow for use in what was the only sanctioned Jewish communal house of worship in the 1820s. There would be no organ, no German hymns, and other than a prayer for the Emperor, no German language prayer.[10]

Small word changes as referred to above were often found in the polemic text of *v'lo natato* of the *kedushat hayom* section of the *Shacharit Amidah: l'ovedei fisilim* (idol worshipers) was changed to *l'ovdei zarim* (polytheists,) and *arelim* (uncircumcised) was changed to *resha'im* (evil ones). Another example is in *Birkot hashachar* where the text *shelo asani goy* (who did not make me a heathen) is translated to the German phrase *der mich zu seinen Israeliten gemacht hat* (who has made me an Israelite.[11]) In other places, Mannheimer made minor changes in the German translation but left the Hebrew text intact; in still other places he left the Hebrew text without any translation at all. The biggest changes in Mannheimer's prayerbook was the exclusion of *piyyutim* for the four special *Shabbatot* before *Pesah*, and the exclusion of some more esoteric ones in the Festival and High Holiday liturgies.[12]

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[6] See the unpublished complete version of Sara Zilberstajn's MA thesis (1934) at the University of Warsaw, in the collection of the Jewish Historical Institute of Warsaw. See also M. Galas, "*Rabin Markus Jastrow I jego wizja reformy judaismo*" (Krakow, 2007)

[7] Ibid.

[8] See my "Polish 'Progressive' Judaism and Hungarian Neolog Judaism" in Guesnet, Lupovitch and Polonsky, *Polin* vol. 31 *Poland and Hungary: Jewish Realities Compared.* (London, 2019)

[9] It was in its 7th edition by 1857 and remained in print and in use until 1939.

[10] See Avenary, *Kantor Saloman Sulzer und seine Zeit;* also Letter from Mannheimer to R.A. Wolff, Copenhagen, 1828 in *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*, NS 20/6 (1871) p 276-83

[11] I.N Mannheimer, *Tefilot Yisrael: Gebete der Israeliten*, 7th ed. (Vienna, 1857)

[12] I.N. Mannheimer, *Machzor l'moadei el/Festgebete der Israeliten nach der gottesdienstlichen Ordnung in den Cultus- Templen zu Wien, Prag, Pest, etc*, vol.1 (Vienna, 1840)

Vienna to Warsaw: Izaak Cylkow

Izaak Cylkow (1841-1908) was the preacher at the Danilowiczowska Street synagogue, the "German" congregation that ultimately became the highly Polonized Great Synagogue of Warsaw. He was born into a liberal-minded family and his father, Mojzesz Aaron (1813-1884), was the tutor of the children of the liberal and very wealthy Solomon Marcus Posner (ca. 1766-1848). Posner was a modern thinking progressive who, while highly educated Jewishly, actively sought civic equality and equal rights for Jews in the Kingdom of Poland.[13] Mojzesz Cylkow tutored Posner's sons and his own sons together.

By 1854, the Cylkow family moved to Warsaw where Mojzesz became a teacher of Talmud at the progressive and integrationist Warsaw Rabbinical School. Izaak would be educated there as well. The school educated young Jewish men to be "Poles of the Mosaic persuasion," and instruments of "national integration."[14] Afterward Izaak briefly attended medical school before attending university in Berlin, then ultimately receiving his doctorate at the University of Halle in philosophy and Semitic languages. He returned to Warsaw in 1863 and was chosen as Marcus Jastrow's successor. Given his education in Berlin and elsewhere in the German states, Cylkow was well aware of the conflicts created by the more radical reformers there, saying, "Changes introduced by foreign communities have brought only disorder to the religious service and disputes. The benefits were always doubtful and did not alleviate the harm they brought."[15]

Luckily for us, Cylkow wrote lengthy introductions to both his Rosh HaShannah and Yom Kippur *mahzorim*. In them one can determine his attitudes, which are often subtly expressed. For example, Cylkow's attitude towards the Messianic era is that of a period of universal peace and the end of superstition and prejudice. In envisioning an age of reason and enlightenment, his thinking is far more universalist than specifically Jewish:

> Another motif of Israelite prayer is the plea for the imminent affirmation of the kingdom of God, or the coming of Messianic times, the prophesized era of religious harmony and eternal peace. This era will bring with it better relations in the world, harmony, and the end of prejudice and superstition. The one God, one justice, and one law will be solidified in all hearts and minds and happiness and satisfaction will increase to immeasurable levels. This motif of the future rule of truth and light recurs constantly in diverse forms.[16].

Cylkow continued:

> An oft-repeating motif of prayer is *bekhirah,* the belief that God chose the people of Israel from among all the tribes and tongues of their time, made an eternal covenant with them, blessed them with His commandments so that they would live according to the

[13] After the Napoleonic Wars and the Treaty of Vienna, the Russians were awarded the largest portion of Poland, including most of the territory that had previously been ruled by the Prussians. The Czar then created this "Kingdom" of which he was king.
[14] Antony Polonsky, "The Warsaw Rabbinical School: Agency of National Integration," unpublished.
[15] Cylkow, introduction to his RH *Mahzor* (Warsaw, 1910) translated by Izabela Barry
[16] Ibid.

> rules of truth, virtue, and mercy and cultivate all that is good and lawful within themselves. This, more or less, is the content of the Israelite liturgy which is also permeated by a patriotic motif—a plea for the return of the scattered people to the ancient home of their forefathers, rebuilding the Temple, the renewal of the primeval cult of sacrifice, [and] the resurrection of the priestly and levitic service in all its original sumptuousness and radiance.

Cylkow noticeably ignores the supernatural elements often alluded to in our liturgy, espoused even by rationalists like Maimonides—angelology, resurrection of the dead, and immortality of the soul, writing "[these] are not always a relevant reflection of the beliefs of the enlightened Israelites…in translation they become pale and colorless and cannot be properly judged or reach the heart of those praying."[17] He deftly ignores the nationalistic elements of the Messianic era which he refers to as "a patriotic motif," preferring universalistic elements, as noted above. Paradoxically, Cylkow included his doubts as to the content of the liturgy yet retained them unchanged in the Hebrew text. Given his view that changes in the liturgy rarely had the desired effect, he also espoused the notion that people held on to prayers and liturgy less out of conviction than genuine sentiment. Cylkow wrote, "the very words, evoking impressions of one's youth, the melody bringing back the echoes of long-forgotten memories, resurrected in the worshipper make further reflection impossible," meaning that memory was more important than modernity to the worshipper. We are left then not with a paradox but with the understanding that prayer should remain unchanged at least in Hebrew as the prayers themselves should be read aesthetically, like poetry, rather than literally:

> As far as the external form of these prayers is concerned, it carries the marks of the age in which they were created and cannot at least for an adherent of Judaism be the subject of criticism. The moment a sanctified form is considered rationally it loses its lofty character…As long as the liturgy keeps its age-old Hebrew garment—and for reasons of piety it must retain this—there can be no question as to whether or not it fits the taste, notions or perceptions of the educated [modern reader].

Cylkow sharply disagrees with a literal translation and instead prefers "the moderate paraphrasing or elucidation of the text of certain key passages.[18] Cylkow could be quite creative in his paraphrasing. One example is his "paraphrase" of the *Aleinu* for which he only included the second paragraph in the *Malkhuyot* verses (God's Kingship). Cylkow was sensitive to keep a balance between particularism and universalism, which frequently disturbed more liberally minded reformers[19] by keeping the Hebrew in the original form. However, the "paraphrase," as he called it, was an attempt to circumvent the particularism of the text, especially in the second paragraph:

> May it indeed be our duty, in this congregation of His faithful servants
> To praise the Creator of the Universe; to raise our grateful hands

[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] See J.J. Petuchowsky, *Prayerbook Reform in Europe: The Liturgy of European Liberal and Reform Judaism* (New York, 1968)

That out of the tribes extinguished by the boundless flood
His light illuminated us, His truth has guided us
That He distinguished us from among the pagans, freed us from the bonds of darkness
Revealed to us His covenant and the bright glow of His being.
Oh how beautiful is our role, how liberated are our souls
When the ties of sorcery and error do not restrict us anymore;
We were allowed to stand before the King who Himself governs the world,
To bend the knee and humble ourselves before His majesty
He who stretched out the skies, who laid the foundations of the Earth,
Revealed His teaching and proclaimed His will
So that it became imprinted deep within our minds
That He is alone on the Earth and in the heavens above
As His word proclaims, in your heart you shall affirm
He is the only Lord, and there is no god apart from Him![20]

His choice of words is very telling, if subtle. He writes of pagans and those who existed before the primeval flood—not non-Jews but pagans specifically, and the violent barbaric pagans of the pre-flood world. Notice the emphasis he places on the liberation from superstition ("…how liberated are our souls when the ties of sorcery…"). Even more subtle but highly important is the phrase, "we were allowed to bow before the King," which, in the past tense, suggests that we may have been the first people to bow before God, but certainly not the only people to do so since. This is a major theological statement that strongly reflects his worldview. Not only does Cylkow wish to play down Jewish particularism, but he suggests that all those who worship God, Jewish or not, are enlightened and in a sense, chosen.

This is a radical perspective that circumvents a very particularistic Jewish text in the guise of religious poetry (or "paraphrase" as Cylkow might call it). It reflects Cylkow's knowledge of changes in the German-Jewish world that rejected the particularism of the Jewish people and likely reflected his own feelings regarding Jewish integration into the Polish world.

Cylkow was the product of Polish Jews who sought integration and thereby equal rights in Poland. Furthermore, Cylkow was part of the generation that saw a potential for a rapprochement, a "brotherhood" of Poles and Jews in the early to mid-1860s, during the wave of patriotic demonstrations that swept through Poland in 1861-1862 and culminated in the Polish national insurrection against Czarist Russia in 1863 (the so-called "January Uprising"). With this revolution, Polish separatists appealed for Jewish support and promised full equality as a reward: the Jews were, in fact, given emancipation in Poland during this brief period of Polish self-rule. The 1864 defeat of the January Uprising transformed Polish attitudes from enthusiasm to ambivalence, and soon after anti-Semitism became virtually synonymous with Polish nationalism.[21] By the time of Cylkow's death, integration—and any sense of a brotherhood—had essentially failed.

[20] Op. Cit., p 340
[21] See Opalski and Bartal (eds.) *Poles and Jews: A Failed Brotherhood* (Boston, 1992)

Conclusion

Physically the largest synagogue in Europe and one of the largest in the world, the Great Synagogue was perhaps the greatest symbol of the assimilationist camp of Jewish Poland when it was completed in 1878. By the time of the publication of the Cylkow *Mahzor* of 1908, assimilation via religious reforms had failed miserably and integration had been succeeded by socialism, communism, and Zionism among many Polish Jews. It had long been the most prestigious synagogue in Warsaw because its membership was made up of the cream of the crop of the Warsaw Jewish elite, those most Polonized. By the twentieth century the cantors there were world famous recording stars on both sides of the Atlantic. Its choir was an integral part of the musical life of Warsaw and one preacher, Mojzesz Schorr (1874-1941), would sit in the Polish senate, the Sejm. The Great Synagogue was the last vestige of the Warsaw Ghetto when it was destroyed by the Germans on May 16, 1943.

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Religious reform in Europe happened in fits and starts and was hardly a consistent enterprise. Indeed, almost every reformer had a different idea of how reforms should be made and what should be changed, kept, or discarded, and for a myriad of reasons. Izaak Cylkow, the first preacher of the Great Synagogue, was a reformer who walked a very fine line between the more aggressive reformers and those we might consider moderate or even conservative ones. He understood the romantic notion of attachment to texts and music, and the power of nostalgia, even if he simultaneously wrote translations that were far more radical than the Hebrew text he left unchanged.

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PaRDeS Hate'amim: Listening to the Music Inside the Orchard

By Chani Haran Smith

Introduction

The Torah reveals itself to us in its seventy faces,[1] demanding our attention and saying: Listen! Hear! Engage! In this study I will explore some of the ways in which the process of listening, hearing, and finding meaning, are enhanced by the cantillation accents – the *te'amim*[2]. We often think about the *te'amim* as a guide to how to **read** the Torah. My aim is to use various examples to highlight the way they alter our **listening** and explore the way they engage and draw our imagination to the possibilities the text offers.

The system of vowel points and cantillation accents – *niqud* and *ta'amei hamiqra* (or *te'amim*), was devised by the Masoretes, a group of grammarians, mainly members of the Ben Asher family, who lived in Tiberias between the sixth-ninth century. The Masoretes' aim was to preserve the oral tradition of the biblical text that had existed for over a millennium, yet was in danger of being lost due to the dispersion of the Jewish communities and the passing of time. The biblical text as it appears in the scroll contains only letters that represent consonants,[3] so it was necessary to devise a system that marks the vowels and accented syllables to safeguard exact pronunciation. Furthermore, it was necessary to mark the parsing of each verse to preserve meaning through correct syntax.

The Masoretes simultaneously created two systems for this purpose: the vowel system, *niqud*, and the cantillation accents, *te'amim*. Together they protect the various dimensions of the oral tradition of pronunciation from being lost, i.e., consonants and vowels, accents, and syntax. The Masoretes also wished to pass on the melodic tradition of Torah chanting – its music. However, with regards to music, the picture gets complicated. It is assumed that the biblical text was chanted in public in the synagogue from its earliest days, rather than merely read, as were other sacred texts of nearby religions, though there is no strong evidence to support this.[4] The Talmud certainly states that the Torah should be chanted.[5] While the cantillation accents give some indication regarding how the text should be chanted, the system relies on previous knowledge of the melodic tradition and serves merely as a reminder. It is not a clear musical notation such as in Western music where each sign represents a specific note or a musical motif.

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[1] "שבעים פנים לתורה", מדרש רבה, יג, טז.

[2] The cantillation accents are called in Hebrew *ta'amei hamiqra*, or in short, *te'amim*. In the singular, *ta'am* means taste, flavor, sense, reason, and accent.

[3] Some letters like *vav*, *yod* and *heh* can be indicative of pronunciation, but not in an exact way.

[4] See Avenari, Hanoch, "Masoretic text" in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 11, pp 1099-1100.

[5] See, for example *b*Megillah, 32a: הכתוב אומר: ואמר רבי שפטיה אמר רבי יוחנן: כל הקורא בלא נעימה ושונה בלא זמרה, עליו "וגם אני נתתי להם חוקים לא טובים" Tr.: Rabbi Shefatya said in the name of Rabbi Yohanan: Concerning any who read [from the Torah] or studies [the Mishnah] without a song, the verse states "So, too, I gave them statutes that were no good." [Ezekiel, 20:25]

Thus, a single *ta'am* may denote a melodic motif with one, two or even ten notes, and without prior knowledge of these accepted motifs, the reader cannot apply the music to the text.

The music associated with the *te'amim* diversified over two millennia since the destruction of the Temple and the dispersion of the Jewish people, and nowadays there are numerous musical traditions and variants of Torah cantillation.[6] It is important, however, to emphasize that while the Torah chanting of a Baghdadi congregation may differ greatly in its musical content from a Dutch chanting, all other aspects of the Masoretic system, i.e., the vowels, accents, and syntax, have been universally accepted throughout the Jewish world. Only the music itself evolved, picking up regional elements and influences and developing its own tradition.[7] And while the music may be varied, its presence, in whatever style, is crucial to endowing the biblical text with beauty and meaning and creating a sacred "space in time" in which to resonate.

This article is titled **Listening to the cantillation accents inside the orchard (*PaRDeS Ha-te'amim*).** The term *pardes* (orchard) is well known from the famous Talmudic tale of the four sages who entered *pardes* – a metaphor for a mystical journey into the esoteric realm of the divine. Of the four, only one entered and came out in peace - Rabbi Akiva. The Gemara tells us that of the other three, Ben Azzai, died, the second, Ben Zoma lost his mind, and the third, Elisha ben Avuya, became an apostate.[8] Whichever way you look at this enigmatic story, it contains the message that entering the divine realm of *pardes* is powerful and transformative.

R. Moshe de Leon, the presumed author of much of the Zoharic literature, the canonical work of thirteenth century Kabbalah, wrote a book named *Pardes*.[9] He explains his choice of the name *Pardes* as alluding to four dimensions of interpretation of the biblical text, each one corresponding to one of the four letters of the word פ ר ד ס. The *Pardes* serves as a metaphor for the Torah and its multiple layers:

כפי אשר פירשתי בספר אשר חיברתי הנקרא פרד"ס, וקראתי שמו פרדס על ענין ידוע שחיברתי אותו בסוד ארבעה דרכים בענין שמו ממש ארבעה נכנסו לפרדס, פשט, רמז, דרשה, סוד, ענין פרדס.

> (Tr.: As I have explained in the book that I composed called *Pardes* [lit. "orchard"], and I named it *Pardes* in reference to a well-known concept. I composed it to allude to the mystery of the four paths clearly indicated by its name, "Four entered PaRDeS", *peshat, remez, derashah, sod,* alluding to *Pardes*).[10]

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[6] Ibid., pp 1100-1111.

[7] On the history and development of the cantillation system see ibid., pp 1098-1111; הערך 'טעמים' , אנציקלופדיה תלמודית, כרך כ, עמ' תקצו-תריז, והנספח לערך 'טעמים', שם, עמ' תרצא-תשכו. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development*, Schocken edition, N.Y., 1967 pp., 35-71.

[8] *b*Hagigah 14b.

[9] This book has been lost. Only the reference to it remains.

[10] מתוך תשבי, ישעיהו, *שו"ת לר' משה די ליאון בעניני קבלה*, בתוך "*חקרי קבלה ושלוחותיה*", ירושלים, תשמ"ב, ח"א, עמ' 64.

These four "paths" represent four distinct approaches to the biblical text.[11] We may generalize and say that *peshat* is the literal, plain meaning of the text. *Remez*, as its name suggests, hints to a deeper, less obvious understanding, perhaps a metaphorical one. *Derashah* (or *derash*) is an elaboration of the text by means of *midrash* – which places the text in a wider context and may explicate it by means of an imaginative, Aggadic narrative. The fourth, *sod* (secret), alludes to hidden, esoteric wisdom, Kabbalistic in nature, where the text is interpreted by means of Kabbalistic symbolism, and may refer to the divine realm with its ten potencies, the *s'firot*.[12]

These four hermeneutic tools have a hierarchical order, whereby one moves from the plain, so-to-speak "external" meaning of the *peshat* to more subtle and complex insights contained in the inner layers of *remez, derash* and *sod.*

According to 16th cen. R. Isaac Luria, in order to truly understand the Torah, all four layers of interpretation have to be discovered in one's lifetime. If even one layer is missing, that person needs to return to this world to fulfill this mission through transmigration of the soul:

> הששית היא מצוה פרטיית, והיא לעסוק בתורה, והיא שקולה כנגד כל המצוות, כי ת"ת [תפארת] כנגד כלם. ויש בה ד' פירושים, שסימנם פרד"ס, פשט, רמז, דרש, סוד. וצריך לטרוח ולעסוק בכלם, עד מקום שיד שכלו מגעת, ויבקש לו רב שילמדנו, ואם חסר אחת מארבעתם כפי השגתו, יתגלגל על זה.

> The sixth[13] is a commandment that must be performed by the person himself, and that is to engage in Torah study, which is equal to all other commandments,[14] because *tiferet*[15] equals all other [*s'firot*]. It contains four dimensions of commentary, and the mnemonics for them are PaRDeS, *peshat, remez, derash, sod.* A person must toil and engage with all of them, as deeply as his intellect affords, and find a teacher to teach him. And if he misses, within his capacity to grasp, even one of those four, he will have to undergo transmigration on account of this.[16]

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[11] Gershom Scholem explores the idea of multiple levels in commentary in both Christian, Muslim and Jewish circles during the Middle Ages, and names three contemporaneous Kabbalsits living at the end of the 13th century, R. Baḥya ben Asher, R. Joseph Gikatilla and R. Moshe De-Leon, who each in his way identified four dimensions of hermeneutics. De Leon was the first to give them the name/ acronym PaRDeS. See לום, ג. *פרקי יסוד בהבנת הקבלה וסמליה* ירושלים, 1976, עמ' 52-66

[12] On the ten *s'firot* in the Zohar, see Fischel Lachower and Isaiah Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar* (translated by David Goldstein), London & Washington, 1989, vol. 1, pp. 269-366.

[13] The passage lists various commandments which must be fulfilled, or else the person's soul will undergo incarnation to be given another chance to perform them.

[14] See *m*Peah, 1:1. The Mishnah lists commandments that cannot be measured. The study of Torah equals them all in its value since it leads to them all.

[15] The sixth *s'firah* which represents the center of the *s'firotic* structure.

[16] שער הגלגולים, הקדמה יא.

The classical rabbinical commentators stressed the importance of the *te'amim* when expounding the text.[17] I have identified four categories of *te'amim*-related commentaries that correspond to the four-fold paradigm of *pardes*: *peshat, remez, derash* and *sod*. Some commentaries "work" on more than just one level, and this typology may seem a bit arbitrary, but I hope it will create a nuanced exploration. This is by no means a comprehensive study of such a vast subject. Rather, it is an attempt to highlight the need to "listen" to the Bible through the prism of the cantillation accents, and to draw attention to the potential of music to bring something new to the encounter with the biblical text. For the sake of clarity, I chose just a few examples that demonstrate and highlight each category separately. They are not presented in chronological order, but in the order of categories mentioned above.

Before reflecting on each of the four categories, I would like to make some general comments. The *te'amim* have three main functions: 1) By marking the emphasis on a particular syllable in each word, they determine its precise meaning. 2) They identify each word as either a "connector", i.e., one which connects to the following word, or as a "separator," which is followed by a pause that parses the verse into smaller sections. 3) The musical motifs "color" the words and sentences with their individual characters, for example, slowing the text down or "decorating" it with elaborate melismas[18] comprising many notes that lengthen the word. Each word is highlighted in a particular way by the means of its music. It can be compared to a shining mosaic piece of art. Not only the combined effect of all the stones is appreciated and enjoyed, but also each piece of stone sparkles with its special color.

There are other subtle elements of the *te'amim* system besides its music that create an impression in us when we hear a particular *ta'am*. For example, the graphic shape of a *ta'am* may inspire the imagination. The name given to a particular *ta'am* by the Masoretes may also invoke an image through its meaning or biblical allusions.[19] Some of the rarer *te'amim* have attracted particular attention because of their special music or the words on which they appear.[20] So perhaps we should approach the Torah text in a similar fashion to our ancestors at Mount Sinai and receive it while "seeing the sounds" (Ex. 20:15) – reading with our eyes and simultaneously hearing the music in our inner ear.[21]

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[17] See, for example Ibn Ezra's statement: כל פירוש שאיננו על פירוש הטעמים – לא תאבו לו ולא תשמע לו ("Any interpretation that conflicts with the *te'amim*, do not desire or listen to it"), *Sefer Moznayim* (Offenbach edition), 1791, p. 4. Also Rashi's comment on Ezek. 1:11: אלמלא שראיתי טעם המקרא לא הייתי יודע לפרשו ("Had I not seen the biblical *ta'am*, I would not have known how to interpret the verse").

[18] Melisma is the use of a number of notes per syllable.

[19] See note 77 below about *pazer*.

[20] See, for example, Jonathan Sacks' commentary on the *ta'am shalshelet* that appears only four times in the Torah, and has a lengthy up-and-down melody, which has been associated with inner conflict and hesitation: Sacks, Jonathan, "On trying to be what you are not", in *Lessons in Leadership*, New Milford and Jerusalem, 2015, pp.129-134. (https://www.rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation/vayera/the-music-of-ambivalence).

[21] Ibn Ezra in his commentary on this verse explains: "**וכל העם רואים את הקולות**, כי כל ההרגשות מתחברות אל מקום אחד". This synaesthesia where seeing and hearing are perceived as being connected in one place is a good metaphor for our endeavor.

The Masoretes attempted to faithfully record the oral traditions they encountered. By the time they embarked on their monumental project of adding the vowels and cantillation accents to commit the oral tradition to writing, many centuries had elapsed since the biblical text was canonized, and with the diversity of geographical locations and the timescale of this whole process, the oral tradition itself evolved. It is therefore plausible to assume that on many occasions the Masoretes had to decide which oral tradition to choose from various ones that existed in order to preserve what they thought was the "authentic" text. As a result, it is impossible to say with certainty that the *te'amim* reflect a single, original oral tradition.

After the Masoretic text was accepted throughout the Jewish world in the tenth century, the *te'amim* often served as the basis for commentators such as Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and the Kabbalists.[22] The musical motifs continued to evolve over the centuries, reflecting the now uniform Masoretic accents. As the music of the *te'amim* diversified, it picked up influences from the surrounding cultures, so today we find many variations when we compare the music of *te'amim* that originate in different countries.

Can we find clues to what the melodic content of the *te'amim* was before the Masoretes created their complex system of connecting and separating accents, each with its own tune? The answer is, "not really." The cantillation accents are not by any means a clear indication of the pitch or the rhythm of the notes as found in modern musical notation. The name and shape given to these accents by the Tiberian grammarians may sometimes hint at the nature of each *ta'am*[23]. For example, an *etnahta*, meaning "rest" would indicate some kind of a cadence. A *tevir*, meaning "broken," may indicate a relatively large interval that breaks the melodic line. *Pazer*, meaning "scatter," could suggest many notes in the motif. But these are speculations and the original melodies remain elusive.[24]

In this study that explores the relationship between *te'amim* and commentary, my musical point of reference is mostly the Ashkenazic tradition, both Western and East-European (Lithuanian) that I am familiar with, which accords each *ta'am* its own motif. I am aware that this is a narrow prism through which to approach the subject, and more work is needed before generalization are made about the role of *te'amim* in hermeneutics. My hope is that this paper will pave the way to further studies on this topic in a wider context of other musical traditions.

The Four Dimensions:

1. *Peshat:* Atonement on Yom Kippur

Here is an example for how the *te'amim* highlight a particular understanding of an otherwise confusing text. It is a passage from Leviticus 16:30 about Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement:

[22] See above, footnote no. 17.

[23] Some of the names may capture the hand shape or movement used as a reminder for the reader, for example, *pashta* meaning "stretching," or *tiphha*, meaning "handbreadth."

[24] There have been some attempts to reconstruct the original oral tradition of Torah reading, most notably by Daniel Meir Weil, *The Masoretic Chant of the Bible*, Jerusalem, 1995.

כִּי־בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם מִכֹּל חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי ה' תִּטְהָרוּ׃

Without the *te'amim*, there are a number of ways to parse and translate this verse. One possible reading would place the *etnaḫta*, a major pausal accent that divides the verse into two parts, under *ḫatoteikhem* (your sins). This would make perfect sense and the verse would read: "For on this day He [God] will atone for you to cleanse you **from all of your sins**"; and then a second part is a conclusion: "you shall be cleansed before God." The Masoretic text, however, places the *etnaḫta* under the word *etkḥem* (you). This implies a division into two distinct parts: (1) "For on this day, He [i.e., God] will make atonement for you to cleanse you; (2) **from all of your sins against God** you shall be cleansed."

The Masoretic text creates a distinct category of "sins against God," whereas the non-Masoretic reading proposes that on Yom Kippur God purifies us from **all** our sins: both sins against God and sins against fellow human beings. The Mishnah (Yoma, 8:9), perhaps following an established oral tradition,[25] cites a dictum in the name of R. Elazar that follows the idea echoed centuries later by the *te'amim*, that Yom Kippur atones only for sins against God. We understand R. Elazar to be saying that other sins, i.e., sins against other people, are not atoned for by means of the Day of Atonement alone. Those sins require action on our part in asking forgiveness from the person sinned against.[26]

This is an example of *peshat*, the plain meaning of the text being informed by the *te'amim* or the oral tradition which preceded them and is reflected by them. It gives rise to the halakhic instruction to seek forgiveness from those we sinned against.[27]

2. *Remez:* The Ten Commandments.

"You shall not, murder; you shall not, steal; you shall not, commit adultery" – What does the *tipḫa* tell us about these?[28]

The following commentary on the Ten Commandments is from the *Zohar*. It is included here under the heading *remez* rather than *sod.* Although Kabbalistic in origin, it is not esoteric in

[25] The Gemara, in *b*Yoma 52a, states that there are five verses in the Torah where [as a result of no cantillation accents] the syntax and meaning is ambiguous and uncertain. We can infer from this that in the minds of the Talmudic sages, the oral tradition was so well established as to render the rest of the Torah text unambiguous.

[26] את זאת דרש רבי אלעזר בן עזריה. עברות שבין אדם למקום, יום הכיפורים מכפר. עברות שבין אדם לחברו, אין יום הכיפורים מכפר, עד שירצה את חברו. **(**Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah taught [this point from the verse]: "From all your sins you shall be cleansed before the Lord" (Lev 16:30). [For] transgressions between a person and God, Yom Kippur atones; [however, for] transgressions between a person and another, Yom Kippur does not atone until he appeases the other person).

[27] See, for example, קיצור שולחן ערוך, דיני ערב יום כיפור, סימן קלא 1-2, סעיף ד.

[28] I have indicated the *tipḫa* here by placing a comma before each verb.

nature, i.e., it does not allude to the *s'firotic* structure or Kabbalistic symbolism.[29] It could be argued that the *remez* in this text belongs in the category of *sod* (secret), because it reveals a deep Zoharic idea about the mystery of good and evil, and the necessity to make room for and contain evil in the redemptive process in the context of the commandments. This discussion, however, is beyond the scope of this article, and the example below was chosen to demonstrate the element of "hint" given by a particular *ta'am* which unveils a new and revolutionary insight, without reference to esoteric concepts.

Two parallel oral traditions for cantillation of the Ten Commandments co-existed since before the period of the Masoretes' activity: one of eastern, Babylonian origins, the other from the Land of Israel.[30] The *ta'am elyon* ("upper" *ta'am*), Babylonian in origin, treats each "commandment"[31] as one whole verse,[32] with one exception where the first and second commandments are combined into one very long verse. This combined verse of the first two commandments comprises 59 words.[33] The fourth commandment concerning the Sabbath is also exceptionally long in the *ta'am elyon*, comprising 45 words. These two verses are by far the longest in the whole Bible. By comparison, the sixth, seventh and eighth commandments constitute extremely short verses, consisting of two words each; a shortness found nowhere else in the Bible. The *ta'am elyon* is commonly used for public reading of the Torah and emphasizes the uniqueness of each commandment.

The second tradition, which originated in the Land of Israel and is known as *ta'am taḥton* ("lower" *ta'am*), divides the long commandments into normal size verses, and groups together the short "You shall not" sixth-ninth commandments into one combined verse of normal length. The *ta'am taḥton* is commonly used for study and private reading.[34]

The Masoretes notated both versions of the Ten Commandments with the *te'amim* of both systems appearing together on the same words. The different length of the verses, determined by the divergent approach of each tradition, dictated a unique set of *te'amim* for each version specific to the way the verses are parsed. Thus, the long verses of the *ta'am elyon* require many divisions and subdivisions to indicate the various pausal words and the hierarchy of these

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[29] The term *s'firot* denotes the ten hierarchical divine manifestations of the divine light which are reflected in the world. For an explanation on this central Kabbalistic concept see Scholem, G. *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, New York, 1961, pp. 207-217, Tishby I. and Lachower, F. *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, Vol. 1, pp. 230-366.

[30] The co-existence of these two traditions raises many questions regarding authenticity, as well as which one should use on certain occasions. For a discussion about the two traditions see: ווינפלד, שמואל יהודא, *טעמי_המקרא*, ירושלים, תשל"ב, עמ' ע-ק.

[31] In Hebrew, *dibrot* or *d'varim*, literally "utterances," commonly translated as "commandments" in English.

[32] Jewish tradition presented in *Sifri* on *Shlah lekha* and *b*Makkot 24a groups together the first two, *anokhi…* and *lo yihyeh*, explaining that the children of Israel heard those two pronouncements directly from God while the rest were mediated by Moses.

[33] The Masoretes regard these two commandments as one verse following one rabbinic tradition that the first two commandments were spoken directly by God, while the others were mediated by Moses. See Sifri on *Shelah Lekha*, B. Makkot 24a for early rabbinic sources and a fuller discussion on this subject in שוורץ, ברוך יעקב, "אנכי ולא יהיה לך מפי הגבורה שמענום" מתוך *המקרא* בראי *מפרשיו: ספר זכרון לשרה קמין*, הוצאת מאגנס, תשנ"ד (https://lib.cet.ac.il/pages/item.asp?item=10901) .

[34] There is no halakhic ruling regarding which version should be read on any specific occasion, so there are various other concurrent customs.

pauses. As a result, relatively rare *te'amim*, which appear only when many subdivisions occur, are used, and these are often more musically elaborate then the common *te'amim* that drive the narrative forward in shorter verses and are therefore musically shorter (i.e., contain only a few notes each).

The example before us is from the very short commandments as they appear in the *ta'am elyon.* Here we can see how a *ta'am* can embody and highlight meaning, even when it is quite short and simple in musical terms.

The short verses of the sixth-eighth commandments have only two words each: לא תרצח. לא תנאף. לא תגנב (Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal), The *ta'am sof pasuk*, denotes the end of the verse, while the preceding word *lo* is marked with a *tip<u>h</u>a.* In the hierarchy of the pausal strength of the *te'amim*, *tip<u>h</u>a* is regarded as a fairly strong *ta'am*,[35] even though in some exceptional contexts, *tip<u>h</u>a* may not function as pausal.[36] For our purpose we should note that generally speaking, the commentators treat *tip<u>h</u>a* as a separator even where it does not function as one, and there are instances of such cases, as in the example below, where the *tip<u>h</u>a* gives rise to a commentary based on its "official identity" as separator.

In the following Zoharic commentary on these three verses, the *tip<u>h</u>a* is understood as separating the לא ("you shall not") from the verb that follows. The *Zohar* introduces the radical idea that committing murder, adultery or theft is both "forbidden and permitted," thus challenging the notion that these sins are categorically and completely forbidden. It interprets the separation of the prohibition - *lo* (do not) - from the verbs that follow as an indication that there are circumstances which contradict the injunction "do not…" The *Zohar* opens up those short, commanding statements to questioning. It challenges and undermines the commandments' authoritative tone with a kind of "however…"

The passage explicates how and why these three verses differ from the subsequent ninth and tenth commandments, which also begin with "you shall not," yet do not have *tip<u>h</u>a* under the word *"lo."* It explains that the ninth commandment, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" is said to be binding at all times according to the *Zohar*, with no caveats. As for the tenth, "you shall not covet," the *Zohar* raises a question regarding the desire for Torah which could also be considered a form of coveting. Is that prohibited? The answer given is that desire for the Torah itself is, of course, permitted. The prohibition applies only to those objects specified in the verse, i.e., your neighbor's house, his field etc...

> לֹא תִרְצָח (*Lo tirtsa<u>h</u>*), *you shall not murder*. לא תנאף (*Lo tin'af*), *You shall not commit adultery*. לא תגנב (*Lo tignov*) *You shall not steal* (Ex 20:13). לא (*Lo*), *Not* – interrupted by an accent [i.e., *tip<u>h</u>a*) in all these three. Otherwise, there would never be social order and we would be forbidden to kill anyone in the world, even if he transgressed the Torah. But being interrupted by an accent, it is forbidden and permitted.

[35] There are two types of *te'amim*: separators (pausal, disjunctive) and connectors (conjunctives). The separators divide into four levels of pausal strength. *Tip<u>h</u>a* belongs to the second degree in terms of its pausal strength.
[36] This anomaly is explained in Jacobson, Joshua R, *Chanting the Hebrew Bible*, Philadelphia, 2002, pp. 67-68.

לֹא תִנְאָף[37] (*Lo tin'af*), *You shall not commit adultery.* Were it not interrupted by an accent, it would be forbidden even to procreate or to delight with one's wife in the joy of *mitzvah.* Yet being interrupted by an accent, it is forbidden and permitted.

> לֹא תִגְנֹב (*Lo tignov*) *You shall not steal* (Ex 20:13). Were it not interrupted by an accent, it would be forbidden even to appropriate the mind of one's teacher in Torah or the mind of a scholar by gazing upon him – or for a judge who adjudicates by listening to claims, who must trick both disputants in order to elucidate the judgement. Yet being interrupted by an accent, it is forbidden and permitted.
>
> לֹא־תַעֲנֶה בְרֵעֲךָ (*Lo ta'aneh*) *you shall not bear false witness against your fellow* (Ex. 20:13). Here, the accent does not interrupt since this is totally forbidden.
>
> In all the words of Torah, the blessed Holy One has placed supernal mysteries, teaching human beings how to follow the path to perfection, as is said: *I am YHVH your God, instructing you for your benefit, guiding you in the way you should go* (Isaiah 48:17).
>
> So too, לֹא-תַחְמֹד (*Lo taḥmod*) *you shall not covet* (Ex. 20:14) is not interrupted at all. Now, you might say, "Even desiring Torah is forbidden, since the accent does not interrupt." Well, come and see: In all of them Torah spoke generally, while here specifically: your neighbor's house, his field, or his servant… (Deut. 5:18) – all things of the world. But Torah is precious constantly, a delight, a hidden treasure of life, length of days in this world and in the world that is coming.[38]

In this passage, the pause caused by the *tipḥa* is interpreted as a hint towards an ambivalence, as though the Torah is saying "No" to the traditional reading and introduces an alternative reading: You should not murder, albeit in certain circumstances, you should.

I would like to suggest that the music of the *tipḥa*, in spite of its brevity and simplicity,[39] plays a role in this impression. The singing voice embodies the word "*lo"* (do not) and creates a perceptible gap between the injunction "do not" and the verb that follows. This is achieved both

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[37] לא תנאף in this context denotes sin of a sexual nature in a broad sense.

[38] לא תרצח, לא תנאף, לא תגנב, לא, פסקא טעמא בכל הני תלת, ואי לאו דפסקא טעמא לא הוי תקונא לעלמין, ויהא אסיר לן לקטלא נפשא בעלמא, אף על גב דיעבור על אורייתא, אבל במה דפסקא טעמא אסיר ושרי:

לא תנאף, אי לאו דפסקא טעמא, אסיר אפילו לאולדא, או למחדי באתתיה חדוה דמצוה, ובמה דפסקא טעמא אסיר ושרי:

לא תגנב, אי לאו דפסקא טעמא, הוה אסיר אפילו למגנב דעתא דרביה באורייתא, או דעתא דחכם לאסתכלא ביה, או דיינא דדאין דינא לפום טענה, דאצטריך ליה למגנב דעתא דרמאה, ולמגנב דעתא דתרווייהו, לאפקא דינא לנהורא, ובמה דפסקא טעמא אסיר ושרי:

לא תענה ברעך עד שקר, הכא לא פסקא טעמא, בגין דאסיר הוא כלל כלל, ובכל מילי דאורייתא קודשא בריך הוא שוי רזין עלאין, ואוליף לבני נשא ארחא לאתתקנא בה ולמהך בה, כמה דאת אמר (ישעיה מח יז) אני יהו"ה אלהי"ך מלמדך להועיל, מדריכך בדרך תלך. אוף הכי:

לא תחמד לא פסיק טעמא כלל, ואי תימא אפילו חמודא דאורייתא אסיר כיון דלא פסקא, תא חזי, בכלהו עבדת אורייתא כלל, ובהאי עבדת פרט, בית רעך שדהו ועבדו וגו', בכל מילי דעלמא, אבל אורייתא איהי חמודה תדיר, שעשועים, גנזי דחיי ארכא דיומין בעלמא דין ובעלמא דאתי.

Zohar II, 93b (trans. Above by Daniel Matt), *The Zohar*, Pritzker edition, Vol 4, Stanford, 2007, pp. 532-533.

[39] The shortness of the *tipḥa's* motif is related to its ubiquity. The *tipḥa* appears twice in almost all verses of the Torah.

because of the descent in pitch on the *tip<u>h</u>a*,[40] and also by the pause in time between the separator and the following word. That short gap is all that is needed to create the moment of incongruity and questioning. Hidden in that momentary gap is the antinomian possibility that murder, theft and adultery may sometimes be required. When the two words of the verse are merely spoken, and they are intoned on the same note, the Zoharic insight is all but lost.

3. Derash: Vayikra veshem Adonai

The example before us is an audacious Talmudic midrash. The *te'amim* sequence on the verse at its heart, marked by the Masoretes centuries later, goes hand in hand with the midrash. However, it is counterintuitive to the plain meaning of the words in the verse. It raises some questions that will be addressed below: What came first? The oral tradition or the written midrash? Furthermore, did the Masoretes follow the midrash or an oral tradition known to them when parsing the verse in the way they did?

The *Midrash* (*b*Rosh Hashanah 17b) expounds on the passage in Ex 34:5, which describes God and Moses meeting by the rock following Moses' request that God will reveal His glory to him. It is the famous encounter that ends with the pronouncement of what we call the thirteen attributes of mercy: *Adonai, Adonai, el ra<u>h</u>um ve<u>h</u>anun* etc. The text is somewhat ambiguous. In the *midrash* God is portrayed in such a stark anthropomorphic image as a *shelia<u>h</u> tzibbur* wrapped in a prayer-shawl, that the Gemara finds it necessary to add an apologetic comment saying that had the Torah not been written in this particular way, one would not be permitted say it:[41]

וַיֵּ֣רֶד ה' בֶּֽעָנָ֗ן וַיִּתְיַצֵּ֤ב עִמּוֹ֙ שָׁ֔ם וַיִּקְרָ֖א **בְּשֵׁ֥ם ה'**׃

> The Lord came down in a cloud; He stood with him there and he proclaimed **the name, God** (Ex. 34:5).

Looking at the verse from a literal approach (*peshat*), it is not immediately clear who is the one standing, and with whom. Is it God standing next to Moses or the other way around? Furthermore, who is calling a name? God or Moses? and is "the name of God" to be understood in a compound form, as it appears elsewhere in Torah, when Abraham, with the same three words, but with different *te'amim*, is calling "the name of God:"

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[40] Looking at a comparative table of the music of the *te'amim* of various communities, in most cases the *tip<u>h</u>a* is very short (2-3 notes) and descending. See Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development*, Schocken edition, N.Y., 1967, p.45.

[41] ראש השנה יז, ע"ב:**ויעבור ה' על פניו ויקרא** [שמות לד, ו] אמר רבי יוחנן אלמלא מקרא כתוב אי אפשר לאומרו מלמד שנתעטף הקדוש ברוך הוא כשליח צבור והראה לו למשה סדר תפלה אמר לו כל זמן שישראל חוטאין יעשו לפני כסדר הזה ואני מוחל להם. (Tr. *And the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed [etc]*. R. Yo<u>h</u>anan said: were it not written in the text, it would be impossible for us to say such a thing; this verse teaches us that the Blessed Holy One drew His robe around Him like the *shelia<u>h</u> tzibbur* and showed Moses the order of prayer. He said to him: Whenever Israel sin, let them carry out this service before Me, and I will forgive them).

בראשית יב:ח: וַיַּעְתֵּק מִשָּׁם הָהָרָה מִקֶּדֶם לְבֵית־אֵל וַיֵּט אָהֳלָה בֵּית־אֵל מִיָּם וְהָעַי מִקֶּדֶם וַיִּבֶן־שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה' **וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם ה':**

From there he moved on to the hill country east of Beth-El and pitched his tent, with Beth-El on the west and Ai on the east; and he built there an altar to the Lord and invoked **the name of God** (Gen. 12:8).

Back to Ex 34:5, it is strange to think that God is calling His own name. It would make more sense to think that Moses, like Abraham, is addressing God. However…

The *te'amim* in Ex 34:5 with the pausal *ta'am tip̲ḥa* under "the name," suggest separating "and he (i.e., Moses? God?) called the name" from the word "God". Whoever is doing the calling is calling a "name," and that name is the ineffable Name, which will be fully spelled out as the thirteen attributes of God in the following verse.

The mystery in the verse regarding the identity of the caller can be adduced from a verse in the previous chapter where God is describing to Moses clearly what will happen during the course of their meeting:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי אַעֲבִיר כָּל־טוּבִי עַל־פָּנֶיךָ וְקָרָאתִי בְשֵׁם ה' לְפָנֶיךָ וְחַנֹּתִי אֶת־אֲשֶׁר אָחֹן וְרִחַמְתִּי אֶת־אֲשֶׁר אֲרַחֵם:

And He answered, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, **and I will proclaim before you the name God,** and I will grant the grace that I will grant and show the compassion that I will show) (Ex. 33:19).

The Gemara understands the verses in Ex. 34:5-6 in the light of this verse in Ex. 33:19, embellishing the encounter scene with a portrayal of God acting as a *sheliaḥ tzibbur* (prayer leader) donning a *tallit* and teaching Moses the words of prayer that will stir God to judge the people favorably.

The unusual sequence of the *te'amim* in this verse reflects an understanding that God is calling God's own name.[42] One may speculate whether there existed an oral tradition of cantillation expressing this insight at the time when the Talmudic midrash emerged, or whether the midrash came first and the oral tradition evolved to express it. While we cannot answer this, it serves as a good example for how the *te'amim* can draw attention to an unexpected new understanding. An awareness of this nuanced order of *te'amim* helps the listener to imagine the scene with all its mystery. Furthermore, the physical engagement with the text through chanting commits to memory an enigmatic scene of human/divine encounter that cannot be fully explained or understood.

[42] A similar interpretation is reflected in the Ex. 33:19 verse quoted above. Using a different pausal *ta'am, tevir* (not a *tipḥa*, but the effect is similar), the Masoretes separate "I will proclaim the name" from "God".

4. Sod

Sometimes the Kabbalists reveal esoteric knowledge by commenting on particular *te'amim* that allude to the divine world and the dynamics within the *s'firotic* realm.

The Kabbalistic texts discussed in this chapter explicitly refer to *te'amim* and recognize their unique flavor. Of particular interest is the musical dimension of these comments. This is a new field of inquiry which presents its own problem, mainly as a result of our lack of records or knowledge regarding the music referred to by the commentators. For example, when examining a Zoharic comment on the *te'amim* from the end of the thirteenth century, we have no manuscript or other records of the exact melodies associated with them. Nevertheless, I would like to introduce a number of passages under this heading of "*sod,"* focusing on two of the *te'amim, pazer* and *zarqa*. Although not unique in that respect, these two *te'amim* belong to a group of somewhat scarce *te'amim*, whose music is marked by relatively elaborate and melismatic motifs that can be found in the traditions of many communities.[43] Both their melodic character and names have attracted commentary, and I present them in this paper as a way of highlighting a perspective of commentary where the *te'amim* and their music are assumed to contain and reveal Kabbalistic terminology, mysteries and insights.

Zarqa

Zarqa occupies a special place among the *te'amim*. Already in the book, the Bahir,[44] considered the first "Kabbalistic" book expounding the ten *s'firot*, the *zarqa* alludes to a certain upward movement from its lowly place[45] to its source very high. And since the *zarqa* was associated in the book Bahir and in subsequent Kabbalistic writings with the *Shekhinah*, the "throwing" of the *zarqa* became a symbol for the ascent of the *Shekhinah* to its uppermost source in the divine world.[46]

> ישב רבי אמוראי ודרש, מ"ט זרקא, כשמו כן הוא דהוא נזרק כגון דבר הנזרק ובתריה אתיא סגולת מלכים והמדינות:
>
> ומאי טעמא היא בסוף התיבה ואינה בראשה, ללמדך שאותה תגא עולה עד למעלה למעלה, ומאי משמע דהאי תגא אבן יקרה היא מכוללת ומעוטרת דכתיב (תהלים קי"ח כב) אבן מאסו הבונים היתה לראש פנה, ועולה עד המקום אשר נחצבה ממנו.
>
> Rabbi Amorai sat and expounded […] What is the meaning of *zarqa*? It is like its name… like something that is thrown (*nizrak).*.. and after it comes "the treasure (*segulta*) of kings and countries.[47] […] And why is [this accent marked] at the end of the word, and not at

[43] From Idelsohn's table it is clear that, on the one hand, the music of the *te'amim* developed independently in various countries, yet on the other hand, there are similarities in terms of complexity or length of particular *te'amim*. See Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development*, pp 44-46.

[44] On the origin and dating of the book Bahir and the significance of the *te'amim* in it, see רונית מרוז,"אור בהיר הוא במזרח – על זמנו ומקומו של מקצתו של ספר הבהיר", דעת, 49 (תשס"ב), עמ' 137-180.

[45] The z*arqa* is associated with the tenth (lowest) *s'firah, malkhut.*

[46] The root Z-R-Q denotes throwing. This is at the basis of this explanation of the z*arqa*.

[47] The two *te'amim, zarqa* and *segol,* are a pair of pausal accents, which always appear together.

the beginning?[48] This teaches us that this crown rises higher and higher. What does that teach us? That this crown is included and crowned, as it is written, "The stone that was rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone" (Ps. 118:22) and it rises to the place from where it was graven.[49]

Among the commentaries that mention the *te'amim* in the canonic Zoharic literature, the *zarqa* occupies a prominent place. One source from *Zohar Hadash* comments on the melody of *zarqa*, by ascribing it joy and gladness:

זרקא, דא איהו ניגונא בחדוה, כד אתי בוצינא דקרדינותא, בההוא בטישו דגו אוירא דכיא דלא אתפס, יהיב חדו וחדוה, וזריק מרחוק, לנגנא בחדוה, למאן דלא ידיע ולא אתפס כלל, וקאים בקיומיה, ולא אתישב למנדע, עד דקריב בסכלתנו יתיר. וכן תנועי כלהו, כל חד וחד כיאות.

Zarqa – joyous melody. When Spark of Darkness appears – in the striking within incomprehensible ether- it produces joy and gladness, casting from afar, chanting joyously to the One who is not known or grasped at all. It is established in its place, but not sufficiently settled to enable comprehension, until it is drawn closer with great understanding. Similarly with all the cadences, each and every one, fittingly.[50]

The *zarqa* is regarded by the Kabbalists as the first among the cantillation accents, a prime position which Cordovero compares to that of the letter *aleph* in the alphabet.[51] The description of the *zarqa*, which is associated with the *sfirah malkhut*, as hewn from the uppermost source in the divine realm may place her paradoxically above all other *sfirot*, even though in the chain of emanation she is placed as the tenth, last *sfirah,*

It is interesting to note that the list of the *te'amim* and their melodies in many editions of the Pentateuch and *Tiqun Qore'im,* is universally referred to as "The *Zarqa* Table". It is not obvious why *zarqa* assumed that status, given that there are other *te'amim* with significantly stronger power to determine the syntax or with outstanding music. Perhaps the passage from the Bahir and consequently Kabbalistic sources about the *zarqa* have contributed to its special status.

There may be other reasons. The actual name *zarqa* and the graphic shape of this *ta'am* hold special meanings for the Kabbalists, as we shall see below. It is also plausible that the melodies associated with the *zarqa* in many traditions made it stand out, although we have no way of establishing what the *zarqa* sounded like many centuries ago at a particular place. As mentioned before, the melodic content of the *te'amim* in various communities across the Jewish diaspora is far from being identical. Thus, when we look at commentaries that mention the

[48] Both the z*arqa* and the *segol* are "post positive" cantillation accents, i.e., they are not marked above the accented syllable like most of the other accents, but at the left corner of the last letter, regardless of the emphasized syllable.
[49] The Bahir,61 (89-91). The source of the z*arqa* is in *keter.*
[50] Translation by Joel Hecker, *Zohar Hadash* (Pritzker edition), 74b, p. 527.
[51] Cordovero writes: "We find that *zarqa* among the *te'amim, and aleph* among the letters are all one and allude to the same thing". See *Pardes Rimonim* ch. 29, 1:6. See also Brakha Zak's comprehensive study of the z*arqa* according to Cordovero in 2006/ו"תשס, *דעת: כתב עת לפילוסופיה, משה קורדובירו' לר שבאילמה במעין עין יעקב הזרקא סוד*. ברכה זק, עמ' 121-142

te'amim and their music from a period that precedes musical notation,[52] we can only guess from the commentary itself something about the nature of that music. Nevertheless, the source cited above gives us a clue, albeit quite a general one: it singles out the melody of *zarqa* as arousing joy and gladness!

***Zarqa* – a sad note**

Having looked at a passage about the *zarqa* as joyous, we come to a paragraph where it represents the opposite emotion – sadness. It is a Zoharic commentary on the *zarqa* over the word *avinu* (our father) at the start of Tzelophhad's daughters' speech to Moses, requesting to inherit their father's land.

אָבִינוּ֙ מֵ֣ת בַּמִּדְבָּ֔ר וְה֣וּא לֹא־הָיָ֗ה בְּתוֹךְ֙ הָֽעֵדָ֔ה הַנּוֹעָדִ֖ים עַל־ה' בַּעֲדַ֣ת־קֹ֑רַח כִּֽי־בְחֶטְא֖וֹ מֵ֥ת וּבָנִ֖ים לֹא־הָ֥יוּ לֽוֹ׃

> Our father died in the wilderness. He was not one of the factions which banded together against the Lord, Korah's faction, but he died for his own sin; and he has left no sons. (Num. 27:3).

It is a two-fold *derash*, commenting on the z*arqa* from two perspectives. The first one refers directly to the music and mode of chanting:

> פתח ההוא ינוקא בריה ואמר, (במדבר כז ג) אבינו מת במדבר והוא לא היה בתוך העדה וגו', אבינו, הא טעמא לעילא אריך מלה ומשיך לה, אי חסידין קדישין, כמה משיכו דצערא במקרי אבינו, לית צערא ולית כאבא דרוחא ונפשא אלא כד קראן הכי, אבינו, בכאבא מלבא.

> His son, the Yenuka, expounded (Num 27:3) **Our father died in the wilderness** etc. **Our father** (*avinu*), the *ta'am*[53] above lengthens the word and pulls it; Aha, holy devotees, how much extension of the sorrow there is in this reading of [the word] *avinu*. There is no such sorrow and aching of spirit and soul except when this word is read in this way [i.e., chanted with the z*arqa*]. *Avinu,* with a pain that comes from the heart. (Zohar lll, 205b)

Although we cannot know what the *zarqa* sounded like, the Yenuka is emphasizing the role its music plays in prolonging the word when chanted and how it conveys the enormous sorrow felt by Tzelophhad's daughters as they confront Moses and their own personal history.

The daughters of Tzelophhad experience at that moment so many conflicting and heart-breaking emotions. They recall the loss of their father, the fact that he died because of his own sin, and on top of it all, they recall the loss of their land as a result of being females who cannot inherit by law. Sadness, bereavement, shame, guilt, and destitution all combine into the simple, word, *avinu,* chanted with a *zarqa.*

Presumably, the daughters endeavor to arouse Moses' mercy towards their father and his sense of justice towards them. For that they need to suspend the moment with music that prolongs and accentuates the effect of their words. The *Zohar* commentator looks at the *zarqa*,

[52] The first sample of the *te'amim* musical notation was published by the monk Johannes Reuchlin in 1518.
[53] That *ta'am* is *zarqa*.

hears it in his head, and imbues the word *avinu* with a unique power that will stir Moses' heart and express the grief and poignancy in their opening word. One may presume that the *zarqa* at the time of this Zoharic commentary was of a relatively long and undulating melody with the power to create such tension and drama.[54] Through the sad rendition of the *ta'am zarqa* on the word *avinu*, the reader experiences those difficult emotions within the "safe space" of the Torah and can process them and find healing while enveloped by the music.

We have hitherto encountered two Zoharic commentaries identifying the *zarqa* first as capable of inducing joy[55] and secondly, as expressing sorrow. Perhaps this ability of the same musical motif to enhance opposite emotions serves as a reminder that music is not a representation of this emotion or another, but rather, as the music philosopher Victor Zuckerkandl[56] puts it: "…that tones serve not to communicate our feelings but to help us share actively in what is said".

The music of the *te'amim* can deepen the meaning of the words it carries because the source of all music is in the depth of inwardness, from which **all** emotions stem. However, for us to label a particular *ta'am* as "joyous" or "sad", in the manner that the *Zohar* is doing, is fraught with potential problems.

Zarqa as snake

What was Tzelophhad's sin that his daughters referred to? In the following passage, the Zohar addresses this question and offers an explanation which focuses on the shape of the z*arqa*:

> **אבינו מת במדבר**, אבינו האי טעמא דאמי לנחש, תלייא על קדליה, ומשיך זנביה בפומיה, בטעמא דההוא דאתמשך עליה לעילא, מת במדבר, במלולא דפומיה.
>
> Our father died in the wilderness. This *ta'am* [z*arqa*] looks like a snake hanging by its neck while pulling his tail by his mouth in the *ta'am* of that which pulls it from above; **died in the wilderness** [*bamidbar*]**,** [meaning] on account of his speech, *bedibbur piv* **(**Zohar III, 205b).

In the Gemara[57] R. Akiva suggests that Tzelophhad's sin was that of breaking Shabbat by gathering wood. The *Zohar* rejects R. Akiva's explanation. It explains that Tzelophhad was neither one of the spies who brought a negative report about the Land of Israel nor one of the

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[54] There are other commentaries based on the z*arqa's* special qualities and power. Another interesting commentary comes from a 16th cen. Kabbalist, R. Meir Ibn Gabai, who explicates the verse from Ex. 34:6, "Then God passed over his [Moses'] face" ("ויעבר על פניו ויקרא"). About the z*arqa* on the word "*panav* - his face" he writes: "The word *panav* which is marked by the *ta'am zarqa* […] In my limited understanding it seems to allude to the overflow of emanation, the abundance of God's glory that was emanated on Moses' face. ומן [...] מלת פניו אשר יש בו טעם הזרקא..." הנראה לפי מעוט שכלי כי הוא מורה על רוב אצילות שפע הכבוד האלהי הנאצל על פני משה." Here the z*arqa* signifies the divine bounty. Perhaps it is a hint at the elaborate melody of the *zarqa* with which Ibn Gabai was familiar.

[55] See above near n. 50.

[56] Victor Zuckerkandl (1896-1965) was an Austrian-Jewish musicologist.

[57] *b*Shabbat 96b

rebels from the Korah faction, two groups that could be surmised from the daughters' speech. According to the *Zohar,* he was part of a third group, comprising those who lodged a complaint in bitter/evil words against God and Moses about the harsh conditions in the desert. As a result, they were punished by snakes and many of them died (Num. 21:5-6).

The *zarqa* has a "snake" shape, similar to the letter "**s"** lying on its side.[58] The Zohar elucidates that Tzelophhad committed the same sin as the snake in the Garden of Eden - the sin of evil speech. He did not learn the lesson from the snake, so had to be bitten by a snake and pay for it with his life.

Tzelophhad died *bamidbar*, in the wilderness, a place associated in the *Zohar* with the s*itra aḥra* – the "other side," denoting evil in Kabbalah. The snake, too, is a representation of that evil side. The *Zohar* reads *"midbar"* as alluding to *dibbur* –speech, and an evil speech at that,[59] thus recalling the snake's untrue and manipulative words to Eve in the Garden of Eden.[60] Instead of "in the wilderness," *bamidbar* is interpreted as "by [evil] speech". The subsequent words "but he [our father] died by **his** sin" is understood as referring to the sin of the snake.

The snake is described in this passage as an ouroboros, an ancient symbol of a snake eating its tail in a perpetual cycle of destruction and renewal.

Zarqa as *Malkhut/Shekhinah*/throwing.

Tiquney Zohar, a late stratum of the Zoharic literature, contains many passages about the *zarqa/malkhut/Shekhinah.*[61] The *zarqa* alludes to the *s'firah malkhut/Shekhinah*—representing the feminine aspect of God. She is sometimes described as a stone, an image taken from the book Bahir[62] based on the verse "A stone rejected by the builders had become the corner stone" (Ps. 118:22), while elsewhere she is described as the sling which catapults the stone.[63] She, the *Shekhinah*, is being thrown (from the verb *z-r-q* to throw) upwards with great force by the Kabbalists, with the aim of reaching the highest recesses of the divine realm to increase harmony in a fragmented divine world. The unique agility of the *Shekhinah* enables her to rise far from her lowly position in the divine structure and reach a position high above the other *s'firot* that lack her special mobility. The ascent of the *zarqa* occurs when the Kabbalists "throw their voice," i.e., chant the biblical words marked with a *zarqa* and project the tones with powerful, focused singing and when they study and pray with the intention to raise the

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[58] The shape of the *zarqa* evolved since the Masoretes' system of the cantillation accents was first developed by the Masoretes around the 6th-9th century before it reached its present printed shape. See, פנקובר, יצחק, ש, "זמן חיבורם של ספר הזוהר וספר הבהיר" הוצאת כרוב, לוס אנג'לס, תשע"א.

[59] Both *midbar* and *dibbur* have the same root, *d-b-r*.

[60] See the *midrash* on this in *Bereshit Rabbah,* 19, 3-4. See also the scene in the Garden of Eden below.

[61] According to Biti Roi there are more than 37 *derashot*. See רואי, ביטי. אהבת השכינה, הוצאת בר אילן, רמת גן, תשע"ז, עמ' 107.

[62] See above, near note 44.

[63] On the symbolism of the "stone" and "sling," see ליבס, יהודה. פרקים במילון ספר הזהר. ירושלים, תשל"ז. ערך 'קירטא', עמ' 383-393. The *Tiquney Zohar* are not totally consistent in their portrayals of the *zarqa*. Sometimes the *Shekhinah/zarqa* is the sling that throws the stone, and in other instances she is the stone itself that throws herself or is thrown by the Kabbalists through their prayers, homilies, and words of Torah. On the *Zarqa* as a symbol and means to elevate the *Shekhinah,* See רואי, ביטי. *אהבת השכינה*, רמת גן, 2017, עמ' 107-108.

Shekhinah. The elaborate and extended nature of the melody of the *ta'am zarqa* is congruent with the great distance the *Shekhinah* has to travel to reach her source on high:

> פתח ואמר זרקא, שכינתא קדישא אנת הוא קירטא קדישא דקודשא בריך הוא, דבה אזדריקו תלת אבנין דאינון סגולת"א, תלת אבנין יקירן דאינון תלת אבהן, ואנת אבן יקרא על כלהו, תגא ברישא דכלהו, עלך אתמר אבן מאסו הבונים היתה לראש פנה. [...] קמו כלהו מארי מתיבתא ואמרו, רעיא מהימנא כמה אנת תקיף לזרקא אבנא, דהא מטא לאתר דלית מאן דידע אתרהא, ומלאכין קדישין שאלין בגינהא איה מקום כבודו להעריצו, דלית מאן דידע מקומו, כד סלקא לעילא באתר דזריקת לה, עד דאמרין כלהו ברוך כבוד ה' ממקומו, ואף על גב דאיהי זעירא לתתא, לעילא לית לה סוף:
>
> He expounded: *Zarqa*, Holy *Shekhinah*, you are the holy sling of the Holy One, Blessed be He, with which the three stones of the *segolta* are thrown, three precious stones that allude to the three fathers, and you are the most precious stone, a crown for all their heads. About you it is said: This is the stone rejected by the builders, which has become the corner stone. […] All of them who gathered there stood up and said: Faithful Shepherd, your stone throwing is so powerful, for it can reach to a [lofty] place that no one knows where it is. And the holy angels ask because of her [the stone/*malkhut/zarqa*], "Where is the place of His glory, in order to worship Him, for there is no one who knows His place, when it ascends to the place where you throw it to." Then they all say, "Blessed is the glory of God from His place." And even though she (the stone/Shekhinah) is very small below, on high she has no end. (*Tiquney Zohar*, *Tiqun* 21, 61 a-b).

The Soundtrack in the Garden of Eden
Or: *Pazer* is a Great and Mighty *Ta'am*

The following example, from *Zohar* on Lamentations, with the *ta'am pazer* at its heart, stands out because of the extraordinary imaginative picture it portrays. It has elements of *remez, d'rash and sod*, and features deconstruction and reconstruction of language in the hands of the mythological snake as part of the battle between good and evil, life and death. It reads like a fantasy tale with Eve and the snake as its stars.

At the base of the Zoharic commentary is the well-known biblical passage from Gen. 3:1-7:

> א וְהַנָּחָשׁ הָיָה עָרוּם מִכֹּל֙ חַיַּ֣ת הַשָּׂדֶ֔ה אֲשֶׁ֥ר עָשָׂ֖ה ה' אֱלֹהִ֑ים וַיֹּ֙אמֶר֙ אֶל־הָאִשָּׁ֔ה אַ֚ף כִּי־אָמַ֣ר אֱלֹהִ֔ים לֹ֥א תֹאכְל֖וּ מִכֹּ֥ל עֵֽץ־הַגָּֽן: ב וַתֹּ֥אמֶר הָאִשָּׁ֖ה אֶל־הַנָּחָ֑שׁ מִפְּרִ֥י עֵֽץ־הַגָּ֖ן נֹאכֵֽל: ג וּמִפְּרִ֣י הָעֵ֗ץ אֲשֶׁ֤ר בְּתוֹךְ־הַגָּן֙ אָמַ֣ר אֱלֹהִ֔ים לֹ֥א תֹאכְל֖וּ מִמֶּ֣נּוּ וְלֹ֣א תִגְּעוּ־בּ֑וֹ פֶּן־תְּמֻתֽוּן: ד וַיֹּ֥אמֶר הַנָּחָ֖שׁ אֶל־הָאִשָּׁ֑ה לֹא־מ֖וֹת תְּמֻתֽוּן: ה כִּ֣י יֹדֵ֣עַ אֱלֹהִ֔ים כִּ֗י בְּיוֹם֙ אֲכָלְכֶ֣ם מִמֶּ֔נּוּ

וְנִפְקְחוּ עֵינֵיכֶם וִהְיִיתֶם כֵּאלֹהִים יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע׃ ו וַתֵּרֶא **הָאִשָּׁה** כִּי טוֹב הָעֵץ לְמַאֲכָל וְכִי תַאֲוָה־הוּא לָעֵינַיִם וְנֶחְמָד הָעֵץ לְהַשְׂכִּיל וַתִּקַּח מִפִּרְיוֹ וַתֹּאכַל וַתִּתֵּן גַּם־לְאִישָׁהּ עִמָּהּ וַיֹּאכַל׃ ז וַתִּפָּקַחְנָה עֵינֵי שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי עֵירֻמִּם הֵם.[64]

> Now the serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild beast that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman: "Did God really say: You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?" The woman replied: "You may eat the fruit of the other trees in the garden. It is only about the tree in the middle of the garden that God said: 'You shall not eat of it or touch it, lest you die.'" And the serpent said to the woman, "You are not going to die, but God knows that as soon as you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like divine beings who know good and bad." When the woman saw that the tree was good for eating and a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable as a source of wisdom, she took of its fruit and ate." She also gave some to her husband, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they perceived that they were naked.

Picture this: The scene takes place in the Garden of Eden. Right at the center stands an attractive tree (תאוה הוא לעיניים) with beautiful, edible fruit (טוב העץ למאכל).Furthermore, the tree seems to be a source of wisdom and understanding, (ונחמד העץ להשכיל) and is therefore desirable. It is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. In other words, it is irresistible. However, God specifically instructs Adam that while he can eat of all the other trees of the garden, he must not eat the fruit of this desired tree, or else he will immediately die. Presumably Adam passed the message faithfully to Eve. Or did he?

Enter our protagonists, the cunning snake and Eve. The snake starts his campaign to tempt Eve. He provokes her by turning God's direct words to Adam upside down, saying, as if in passing: "Even though God forbade you to eat of all the fruit of the garden…." At which point Eve protests: "Indeed we **shall** eat from the fruit of the garden trees". She specifies that only the Tree of Knowledge was forbidden to touch or eat thereof lest she and Adam will die. The last warning, regarding not touching the tree, is new. It is an added prohibition not mentioned by God to Adam. Is it a case of Chinese whisper? Did Eve hear Adam's words inaccurately? Or perhaps it was Adam who added the prohibition not to touch the tree in order to put another "fence" around the tree to protect Eve from getting too close and risking a temptation to pick the fruit and taking a bite? Either way, this additional, fictional warning has fatal consequences.

According to the *Midrash*,[65] the snake then pushed Eve towards the tree. When she touched the tree but did not die, he undermined God's power saying: See, you did not die from touching the tree! Likewise, you will not die from eating its fruit.

Zohar on Lamentations dramatizes the scene,[66] bringing in music and choreography to the stage. Lamentations is the book that expresses the grief of an exiled nation whose Temple was

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[64] The letters *mem, vav* and *tav*, which construct the word מות - death - are highlighted, as is the word האשה – the woman -which is marked with a *pazer*.

[65] Gen. R., 19:3

[66] The passage below is from זהר חדש, *מדרש הנעלם על איכה*, צא, טור ד. I have used Joel Hecker's translation in *The Zohar*, Pritzker edition (Vol. 11, pp. 310-311) as a basis for the translations presented below.

destroyed. It tries to come to terms with the horrific events and make sense of them in religious terms. In looking for an explanation, the *Zohar* identifies the seeds of the Temple destruction and exile at the start of creation, right at the beginning of human history in the garden of Eden. The seeds of calamity are found in the encounter between Eve and the snake (Gen 3:1-6). The moments of their meeting are perceived as the origin of the enmity between good and evil forces that will lead generations later to the Temple's destruction. In Kabbalah, the snake is usually the personification of the "*sitra aḥra"* – the "other side" – the evil forces that always lurk "among the fences" of Torah, waiting for an opening to get close to, tempt and destroy the *Shekhinah* – the tenth *s'firah* - *malkhut* who is the gateway to the divine realm.[67]

In the *Zohar*'s worldview, letters found in Torah are living beings. Together with vowel points and cantillation accents, *te'amim*, they are inspired, animated. In the Garden of Eden scene, music is introduced through the comment on the *ta'am pazer,* which the *Zohar* describes as a "great and mighty *ta'am.*" The letters are described as hovering and surrounding each other in a dance-like movement. It is a scary dance, a dance which leads to death (*mavet*) being introduced and sealed into our human condition:

> ויאמר אל האשה אף כי אמר ה', מיד פתח באף. מהכא, דבתחלת דבריו של אדם ניכר מי הוא. כך הוא פתח באף, להודיע מי הוא.
>
> He [the snake] said to the woman: "Even though (*af*)[68] God said…" – he started with the word *af* [meaning "even though" but also "anger"]. From here we learn that one can deduce a person's identity from the first thing they utter. He started with the word *af* to announce who he [really] is.)[69]

The snake sows the seeds of doubt in Eve. His opening word, *af,* "even though," starts the process of questioning, of challenging her certainty. He will go on to falsify the truth of God's words to Adam which will again unsettle her.

> נטל סימן זה, אם תקבל, אם לא תקבל. והמשיכה בדברים, עד שפתחה באות מ"ם, ואמרה מכל עץ הגן אכל נאכל.[70] מיד נטל הנחש האות, וישם אותה על זרועו השמאלית, והיה ממתין על וא"ו תי"ו מפיה, כדי להיות מו"ת נכון לפניהם.
>
> (He tested her to see if she will respond or not. And he cajoled her with words, till she opened with the letter *mem,* saying: From every tree of the garden we may surely eat (v. 2) (***m****ikol etz hagan akhol nokhel*). Immediately the snake snatched the letter [*mem*]

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[67] While the snake mostly personifies the evil, "other" side, there is an ambivalence to this symbolism in the *Zohar,* and his character sometimes functions in positive ways. This has been explored by Ruth Kara-Ivanov Kaniel in her article, רות קרא-איוונוב קניאל, חוה, איילה ונחש- עלילות אחרית וראשית מיתוס ומגדר. קבלה כ"א, תש"ע (2010), עמ' 255-309. On *Zohar* on Lamentations, see: פדיה, חביבה. '"והשתא אמא לית לן': קווים לגניאולוגיה של השכינה והאם", בתוך: *Perennial Spring: a Festschrift Honoring Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm*, Bentsi Cohen (ed), New York 2013, pp.151-87; אסולין, שפרה. *אהבת השכינה*, רמת גן, 2017, עמ' 134-214; "דיאלוגים על גלות השכינה: זוהר איכה והדיאלוג אתו ובו", *הסיפור המוהרי* א, (תשע"ז):עמ' 156-160. רואי, ביטי.

[68] Here there is a word play on the dual meaning of "אף" as both "even though" and "anger."

[69] See Gen. R., 19:2 on the four who uttered "*af*" and were punished, the snake, the chief baker, Korah and Haman.

[70] This is a misquote. See following note.

affixing it to his left arm and waited for the letters *vav* and *tav* to issue from her mouth, to prepare ***m.v.t*** (***mavet***=*death*) for them).[71]

Now Eve is tempted by the invitation to have a conversation… or maybe by the chance to correct the snake's mistake and prove him wrong… either way she is hooked! Is she aware that this is a power game? At this point in the conversation something of hers - the letter *mem* from the first word she utters - is already lost to her, snatched by the snake, who will keep it very closely, on his left arm, to use when he has a chance to complete his evil mission and win the battle.

התחיל לפתותה, עד דכתיב, ותרא האשה, בטעמא סגי ותקיף. מלמד שפרחו האותיות וא"ו תי"ו, וסלקו להתחבר עם אות מ"ם. ואות מ"ם היתה עולה ויורדת, ולא היתה מתחברת עמהם, עד שנתפתת. ופרחו וא"ו תי"ו, ד' זמנין, ואקיפו לאות מ"ם לד' סטרין. דכתיב, ותקח מפריו ותאכל ותתן גם לאישה ותפקחנה עיני שניהם. הא ד' זמנין ו' ת'. מלמד, שסבבו לאות מ"ם לארבע צדדין, והמ"ם באמצע, מות בכל סטרין כמד"א, כי עלה מות בחלונינו.

He continued to tempt her until, as it is written, [*va-teire ha-ishah*] "and the woman saw" [v. 6], with a protracted, powerful cantillation note. This teaches that the letters *vav* and *tav* flew off, avoiding a bond with the letter *mem.* Meanwhile *mem* rose and fell, evading a bond with them. Ultimately, she was seduced, delivering *vav* and *tav* four times: They surrounded *mem* on all four sides, as in [***va-t****iqqa*<u>***h***</u>], and she took of its fruit, *[****va-t****okhal])*, and ate, [***va-t****itten*], and gave, as well to her husband… [***va-t****ippaqa*<u>***h***</u>*nah*], and [the eyes of the two] were opened (v. 6-7) – four repetitions of *vav* and *tav*. This demonstrates how they enclosed the letter *mem* on four sides, with *mem* in the middle. Death on all sides, as it is written: For [*mavet*] death has climbed through our windows (Jer.9:20).

During the whole time, while the story is told, the music is in the background – the music of the *te'amim.* It is the soundtrack that gives rise to the imaginings of the author of the Zohar. Each *ta'am* has a different tune. As emphasized a few times before, the Masoretic annotations, while uniform in how we understand them so far as the syllabic accent and syntax are concerned, represent many diverse musical traditions. We do not know what melodic rendition the author of this paragraph heard in his mind. However, the text specifically points out that the *ta'am pazer* is used for a purpose and refers to it as "protracted and powerful."

In what sense is *pazer* "protracted and powerful?" Surely not from the point of view of syntax, i.e., its pausal strength, since the *pazer* is one of the weakest in the hierarchy of *te'amim.*[72] So the explanation lies elsewhere.

[71] Death for Adam and Eve, i.e., humanity. This Zoharic *midrash* does not cite the biblical text accurately. In Gen. 3:3 the woman says מִפְּרִי עֵץ־הַגָּן נֹאכֵל, while the *midrash* misquotes מכל עץ הגן אכל נאכל. Since both phrases begin with *mem*, it does not change the point made by the *midrash.*

[72] The word "weakest" denotes its relatively weak power to parse a verse to its segments. There are four levels of pausal strength among the pausal- disjunctive- *t'amim.* The *pazer* belongs to the fourth, weakest group that divides the sub-clauses. On the *te'amim's* pausal strength see Tunkel, V. *The Music of the Hebrew Bible and the Western Ashkenazic Chant Tradition*, London, 2006, p. 24.

The *pazer* is a relatively rare *ta'am* that occurs in long verses where a few divisions into sub-clauses are required. *Te'amim* that are uncommon often seem to acquire longer melodies. When comparing various musical traditions, the *pazer* melody appears to be an elaborate one in most of them, and its relatively many notes take more time to chant.[73] This point may be particularly pertinent to our passage, which describes an event, a dance of sort, containing a number of stages, and quite lengthy in its duration. In what way can the *pazer* with its distinctive lengthy melody provide a "background" for the whole dance? It could be argued that the *pazer* is marked over only one word – *ha'ishah*[74] and affects the way this word alone is perceived. There is truth in this argument, yet the *pazer* becomes a musical focus for the whole scene as evinced by this Zoharic *midrash.*

Slowly and dramatically, as the undulating music of the *pazer* in verse 6 is chanted and lingers on in our inner ear, a "death formation" - ***m**a**v**e**t*** - is constructed from the letters *mem, vav* and *tav* that join the dance, and mortality becomes part of the human existence. With every movement Eve makes, she seals her destiny.

In addition to music, there is also a dance, performed by the snake whose left arm is "decorated" with the *mem* of *mikol* which he snatched from Eve's speech. He is dancing with the letters *vav* and *tav* that surround the *mem*, the four pairs of letters that appear at the beginning of four consecutive verbs in verses 6-7: ***v**a**t**ikaḥ* (and she took), ***v**a**t**okhal* (and she ate), ***v**a**t**iten* (and she gave), ***v**a**t**ipaka<u>ḥ</u>na* (and [her eyes] were opened). The *mem* is in motion, rising and falling, while the four pairs of *vav* and *tav* hover around it four times to create a four-sided formation with the letter *mem* in their midst. At the precise moment when Eve eats and successfully tempts her husband to do the same, ***m**a**v**e**t*-** death becomes theirs and humanity's fate.

Reflecting on the use of the *te'amim* in this passage, we recognize that the music of the *pazer* animates the text, adds visual and musical dimension to the scene, and at the same time suspends and slows down the unfolding events. As mentioned above, the melody of the *pazer* is not played throughout the passage, but only on one word. Yet the *Zohar* comments on the significance of this *ta'am.* I suggest that the commentator hears the melody of the *pazer* in his head and allows it to color his imagination, giving rise to the scene described in the passage.

It should be noted that *pazer* is commented on elsewhere in Kabbalistic writings, and like in the case of *zarqa*, partly also because of its name. As mentioned above, *pazer* means "to scatter,"[75] and it is associated with Joseph, about whom it is said that "He gave freely [lit. "scattered" – *pizar*] to the poor" (פזר נתן לאביונים) (Ps. 112:9).[76] Could the *pazer* in our text

[73] For example, *zarqa* and *segol, shalshelet, merkha k'fulah* and *yare'a<u>ḥ</u> ben yomo* have longer melodies than the more common *te'amim*. See Idelsohn's comparative chart of *te'amim* motifs in Idelsohn, pp. 44-46.
[74] See above, n. 64, verse 6.
[75] See above, after n. 23.
[76] Joseph is associated in Kabbalah with *yesod*, the phallus, who has special relationship with the *Shekhinah* – *malkhut.* The verse alludes to Joseph/*yesod*, who pours/scatters his bounty – his semen – to *malkhut*, who is perceived in Kabbalah as destitute. See *Zohar* I, 208a, Cordovero, *Pardes Rimonim*, gate 29, ch. 2.

represent Eve's state of mind, where her thoughts are "scattered" in conflicting desires and she loses her focus?[77]

Conclusion

In this study, I have chosen the framework of PaRDeS – a metaphor for where the human meets the divine in an attempt to reveal the multi-layered essence of the Torah and its secrets. Examples were chosen to illustrate all four levels of PaRDeS: 1) *Peshat*, where the *te'amim* clarify which sins are atoned for by the Day of Atonement, and lead to a halakhic statement. 2) *Remez*, where the *te'amim* hint to a non-literal and radical understanding of the Ten Commandments. 3) *Derash*, where the way a verse is parsed generates, or perhaps reflects, an anthropomorphic *midrash* about God as a prayer-leader, giving rise to an understanding that the thirteen attributes of God are self-proclaimed by God. 4) *Sod*. A number of examples were discussed in this section to reflect the wealth of Kabbalistic comments on the *te'amim* that opens windows in the text to esoteric knowledge and symbolism, be it through the name, shape, or music of the *te'amim*.

My wish is to develop a perception of the music of the *te'amim* not as an external dimension of the biblical narrative, but rather, as the Kabbalists teach, the life-force which animates the text.[78] And although my musical point of reference to the *te'amim's* music is through the narrow prism of the Ashkenazic musical tradition, I believe that many other musical traditions associated with the *te'amim* work in the same way, i.e., they deepen and enrich whatever words they "carry" because of the inherent power of music to connect us to a physical, inwardly deeper layer where both emotions and imagination stem from. Through chanting, the words of Torah are experienced as "something more" than just words that convey ideas. The music does not "translate" the text into another "language". Rather, it awakens the reader and listener and creates a physical experience where insights are actualized and become present. The music itself becomes a *Torah she-b'al peh*, the oral Torah.

One final point born from experiences of teaching this subject over many years is that the *te'amim* can serve as *aide memoire* for specific understandings of Torah, similar to those found in the examples above. An awareness of a commentary on a particular *ta'am*, gives rise to an

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[77] In the Kabbalistic book *Sefer Hapli'ah*, we find an interesting comment on the *pazer* above "the woman." The *pazer* (lit. "scatter") is interpreted as indicative of Eve's loss of focus and disintegration which leads to her temptation: ראית במלת ותרא האשה פזר גדול שבאותה הראייה נתפזרה כשה פזורה, (You see a great *pazer* on the words: "The woman saw", because by means of that "seeing" she was scattered like scattered sheep). *ספר הפלאה והקנה*, פרעמישלא, תרמ"ד, דף נד ע"א, 3, ד"ה ויאמר אל האשה אף כי אמר אלהים.

[78] See the following Zoharic passage where the Kabbalists compare themselves to the *te'amim* and describe the music of the *te'amim* as the animating power that moves the letters and vowel points: והמשכילים יזהירו (דניאל יב ג) כגוונא דתנועי (נ"א, דטעמי) דמנגני, ובנגונא דלהון אזלין אבתרייהו אתוון ונקודי ומתנענען אבתרייהו, כחיילין בתר מלכיהון, גופא אתוון, ורוחא נקודי, כלהו נטלי במטלניהון בתר תנועי (נ"א, טעמי) וקיימי בקיומייהו, כד נגונא דטעמי נטיל, נטלי אתוון ונקודי אבתרייהו, כד איהו פסיק אינון לא נטלין וקיימי בקיומייהו (tr., *The enlightened will shine* (Daniel 12:3) – like the cantillation accents, whose melody is followed by the letters and vowels, undulating after them like troops behind the king. The letters are body, the vowels, spirit. All of them range in motion after the cantillation accents and halt with them. When the melody of the *te'amim* moves, letters and vowels follow; when it stops, they do not move but stand in place). (*Zohar* I, 15b, translation based on Matt, D. *The Zohar*, Pritzker edition, Stanford, 2006, vol. 1, pp. 114-115).

experience and a memory of that interpretation which can be awakened with every subsequent encounter with the text.

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IYYUNIM BIT'FILLAH

Avot, Gevurot and *Kedushat Hashem* of Rosh Hashanah *Musaf*, Day 2

Editor's Note: As part of their cantorial training, students at the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion present annual practica during which they both chant portions of a selected service and offer personal perspectives that provide comment and commentary on the texts. In September 2022, students Kevin McKenzie and Gabriel Lehrman presented their thoughts on Avot, Gevurot *and* Kedushat HaShem *of* Musaf *for the second day of Rosh HaShannah. Their teacher, Rabbi Margaret Wenig, was moved by those presentations, and composed her own "teaching" in response, which she circulated to the HUC faculty. Cantor Jack Mendelson (who teaches at both JTS and HUC) thought that our readers would appreciate Rabbi Wenig's thoughts, and we heartily agreed. In granting permission for us to include her teachings, she felt that the student comments that so inspired her should also be included. We are grateful for the opportunity to share them here.*

Iyyun for *Kedushat HaShem*

By Kevin McKenzie

As many of you know, I was in Australia over the Summer,
but it wasn't Summer on that side of the World.
I had multiple tennis games and hikes in the mountains rained out
thanks to a double La Niña weather pattern
which normally happens every 3-5 years
but this July, this winter,
it happened to occur twice in a row.
Thankfully, I had the opportunity
to lead *an indoor* service
for a congregation in Sydney.
While leading,
I discovered that the World Union for Progressive Judaism's version of *Mishkan T'filah*
has a slightly different iteration of *G'vurot*,
accounting for the weather
worldwide.
Regardless of the season,
that prayerbook prompts the congregation to recite
"*Mashiv haruah umorid hageshem, Mazriah hashemesh umorid hatal*"
Who causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall,
who causes the sun to shine and dew to fall.
A footnote
sums up the reason for this change:
"… In his prayerbook *Minhag America*

Isaac Meyer Wise made the traditionally seasonal mentions of dew, wind, and rain
a *permanent* part of this blessing.

Our formula,
introduced in *Siddur Lev Chadash* (London 1995)
adds a mention of sunshine,
…reminiscent of the phrase *mimizrah hashemesh* "sunrise" in Psalm 113.
Taken together,
such wording connects us
not only to the seasonal cycle in the land of Israel,
but also to people *everywhere*,
reliant directly on the rhythms of nature.
The prayer becomes a reminder
of human dependence on the cycle of nature
around the world
which indeed is a matter of life and death."

The *hatimah* of this *b'rakhah*, *m'hayei hametim*,
speaks to me as much about the life, death and rebirth of *nature*
as it does about the life and death and rebirth of human beings.
Someikh noflim - new shoots rising from the stumps of fallen trees,
V'rofei holim - ecosystems healed during the pandemic when humans temporarily stopped polluting them
Umatir asurim - animals jumping into raging water or in front of predators to save their offspring from danger.

You know the phrase
"Well, we can't change the weather"?
Humanity's impact on the Earth suggests otherwise.
Humanity's impact
has caused water sources to dry up
in places that would normally have ample rainfall,
A hole in the ozone which is intensifying the sun,
and large masses of ice to melt
changing the temperature and water levels of the ocean.
*Humanity **is** changing the weather*.
Un'taneh tokef offers us a warning
and a much-needed dose of reality.
"*umei'eilav yikarei v'hotam yad kol ADAM bo*"
"The signature of every Human being will tell its own story"
Our climate signature, or footprint,
is not something the natural world can change.
That is on us.

and yet:
"*v'khol ba'ei olam ya'avrun*" and ALL who come into this world will pass before you.

"*kein ta'avir, v'tispor, v'timneh v'tifkod NEFESH KOL HAI*"
You, G-d will determine the lifespan of EVERY CREATURE!
"*v'tahtokh kitzvah l'khol briya*".
Will *G-d* determine the fate of all creatures, all of nature?
What is the relationship between the fate of *kol briah,–*
which seems at times to be a function of divine decree
and our own actions?
B'rosh hashannah yikateivun, uveyom tzom kippur yehateimun
Mi yihyeh, umi yamut:
Read not merely Who will Live and Who will Die,
But also: Which will live and Which will die.
Which landscapes? Which creatures?
Which forests? Which lakes?
Which by earthquake and which by Pine Beetle?
Which by flood and which by fire?
Mi b'kitzo, umi lo b'kitzo:
An *untimely* end can come to human beings
and to the natural world as well.

Yet death is also part of a natural cycle for all living things:
We are so much a part of the natural world,
We come from soil, and ultimately, we will return to soil.
We are like a withered leaf,
A flower that fades,
a vanishing cloud.

Yet, at the same time,
our name is somehow imbued with God's
Ushmeinu karata vishmekha:
So we, like God, have a role to play.
Ut'shuvah, ut'filah utz'dakah ma'avirin et ro'ah hag'zeira.
T'shuvah and *T'filah* and *Tz'dakah* will mitigate the worst of the decree.
We are called to mend the damage human beings have caused.
To mitigate *ro'ah hag'zeirah* as best we can
not only for ourselves,
not only for humanity,
but also for the entire natural world.

Kevin McKenzie has recently completed his fourth year as a cantorial student at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. A native of Colorado, Kevin holds a Bachelor's degree in Music and Vocal Performance from the University of Colorado at Boulder and recently interned at Temple Adas Israel in Sag Harbor, NY.

Kedushat HaShem

By Gabriel Lehrman

Yihiyu l'ratzon imrei fi v'hegyon libi l'fanekha. Adonai tzuri v'goali.

[little story voice]
When I was younger,
I used to love a rock band named the Arctic Monkeys.
They released a cover of a song, called "Baby I'm Yours."
Here are some of the lyrics:
"Baby I'm yours, and I'll be yours until the stars fall from the sky,
yours until the rivers all run dry.
In other words, until I die…

Yours until two and two is three,
yours until the mountain crumbles to the sea,
in other words, unto eternity."

Earlier this summer,
NASA published pictures that included stars which were 4.6 billion years old.
These pictures stretched back to a time, according to the WorldAtlas, that preceded mountains by about a *billion* years. These pictures captured a time when the earth didn't even have an atmosphere yet. Think about that. I'll be yours until the mountains crumble to the sea? All of a sudden, the author of this kitschy, sweet love song can no longer claim eternity; only a meager 3.6 billion years of love to their imagined partner.

And still, the song elevates something that such pictures could never capture - the bright-eyed feeling of two young people in love.

"Sometimes
God
feels so close that one experiences the presence of an intimate companion…
but the obverse is also true.
And in *those* moments of absence,
we question whether the experience of presence was only a delusion."
(*Siddur Lev Shalem* pg. 147)

הָעֶלְיוֹן וְעֵינוֹ אֶל יִרְאָיו.
וְכֹל מַאֲמִינִים שֶׁהוּא עָוֹנֶה לָחַשׁ,

> "The One looking down toward us from so far away
> Yet we understand that that One answers
> with a whisper"

Our liturgy shows a God that straddles both sides.
Both as distant as those faint specks of light from 4.6 billion years ago
AND as the One who whispers like two teenagers in each others' embrace.

Our ancient sages try to grapple with this seeming incoherence throughout our prayers, and our recitation of their words is a reflection of us just as much as it is of them.

Our prayers may sometimes seem inadequate to the scope we are trying to reach; there are no words to *praise* the One for whom mountains dance and the One who helped to form us in the womb. But our success is not measured by whether or not we reach that scope. Rather, our success is measured by how we approach this sacred duty with earnestness and humility.

With the poets of our radio hits, the sages of our liturgy, and with ourselves -
Our deepest prayers resonate most when they come from a place of doe-eyed honesty.

Perhaps, for this reason,
there is no better image to express love,
than those sweet nothings
whispered under the impossibly old stars at night.

Gabriel Lehrman has recently completed his fourth year as a cantorial student at Hebrew Union College from Los Altos, CA. He has worked as a cantorial intern at West End Temple in Neponsit, NY, as well as at Temple Micah in Washington, DC, and as the cantor of Congregation Beth Am in Palo Alto, CA, while the full-time cantor was on sabbatical. While at HUC, he has earned several fellowships, including with the Shalom Hartman Institute and Hadar, and has received several awards. As a cantor, Gabriel hopes to help people interrogate their own values while in community and put these values into practice in their day-to-day lives.

אָדָם יְסוֹדוֹ מֵעָפָר וְסוֹפוֹ לֶעָפָר

by Rabbi Margaret Moers Wenig[1]

Auto-antonym, contronym, antagonym
are among the terms
for any word “with *multiple* meanings
of which one
is the *reverse* of [the] ...other.”[2]
This linguistic feature is also called
Enantiosemy.[3]

Consider these examples[4]
in English:

[1] A version to be delivered aloud is a bit shorter. Thank you to Yael Yisraeli for her comments on a draft.
[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auto-antonym
[3] Enantio = opposite. Wikipedia and Prof. Brian Tice, B. Sci., M.Sci.,“Hebrew Enantiosemy” https://adiakrisis.wordpress.com/2017/06/15/hebrew-enantiosemy/.
[4] The examples from English come from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auto-antonym and/or from the other sources footnoted.

Cleave can mean “to cling” or “to split apart.”
Fast, as an adjective, means “fixed in place” or “moving rapidly.”
To sanction means “to permit” or “to penalize.”
To clip is to “attach” or “snip off.”
To buckle means “to fasten” but also “to collapse.”[5]
To weather is “to wear away” and also “to withstand.”[6]
And
the same verb we use
to describe one of the ways we remove
unwanted material from our homes
also refers
to the sprinkling of powdered sugar on a cake –
namely
to dust.

אָדָם יְסוֹדוֹ מֵעָפָר וְסוֹפוֹ לֶעָפָר׃

עָפָר
it turns out
is also an auto-antonym.[7]

עָפָר
is not an origin
that inspires our sense of worth
nor a desired destination,
when it is used to express a wide range of negatives:

When Abraham says of himself וְאָנֹכִי עָפָר וָאֵפֶר ,[8]
he is expressing unworthiness.

Destroying enemies is oft described
as rendering them כֶּעָפָר.[9]

Idols are burnt and ground לְעָפָר.[10]

עָפָר is food for serpents,[11]

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[5] *Forward*, “The Curious Contronym” by Philologos, March 18, 2005 https://forward.com/news/3132/the-curious-contronym/
[6] ibid
[7] עָפָר is not mentioned by Prof. Brian Tice, B. Sci., M.Sci. in his blog, “Hebrew Enantiosemy” https://adiakrisis.wordpress.com/2017/06/15/hebrew-enantiosemy/ or by Philologs in “The Curious Contronym,” the *Forward*, March 18, 2005 https://forward.com/news/3132/the-curious-contronym/
[8] Gen. 18:27. Avraham Even Shoshan, in *המלון החדש* offers אֶפֶס וָרִיק for עָפָר וָאֵפֶר.
[9] Isaiah 41:2, Psalm 18:43
[10] Dt. 9:21, 2 Kings 23:6
[11] Genesis 3:14, Isaiah 65:25

for defeated foes,[12]
and an ingredient in the water of bitterness
given a suspected adulteress to drink.[13]

Sitting in עָפָר [14] or rolling in it,[15]
are signs of shame[16] or punishment.[17]

The humiliated and the despairing dwell there.[18]

The poor too, unless God raises them
מְקִימִי מֵעָפָר דָּל מֵאַשְׁפֹּת יָרִים אֶבְיוֹן. [19]

It is to a degraded city
that God calls:
הִתְנַעֲרִי מֵעָפָר קוּמִי.[20]

How well you know that
when a biblical character sits on the ground,
rends their clothes
וַיְעַלְּוּ עָפָר עַל־רֹאשָׁם
they are in mourning.[21]

יוֹרְדֵי עָפָר are mortal beings[22]
and those who יְשֵׁנֵי אַדְמַת־עָפָר [23] or שֹׁכְנֵי עָפָר [24]
are dead.[25]

אָדָם יְסוֹדוֹ מֵעָפָר וְסוֹפוֹ לֶעָפָר:
--not an origin that inspires our sense of worth
nor a desirable destination.

And yet:

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[12] Micah 7:17
[13] Numbers 5:17
[14] Isaiah 47:1
[15] Micah 1:10
[16] Job 42:6
[17] Psalm 7:6
[18] Ps 44:26, Ps. 119:25
[19] Ps 113:7 God "raises up the poor out of the dust and lifts the needy out of the ashheap." Translation:*Torah, Ne'viim Ketuvim, The Holy Scriptures*, Koren Publishers, Jerusalem, 1992 Very similar: I Samuel 2:8 God "raises up the poor out of the dust and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill," Translation: Koren
[20] Isaiah 52:2
[21] Joshua 7:6, Ezekiel 27:30, Lamentations 2:10, Job 2:12
[22] Ps. 22:30
[23] Daniel 12:2
[24] Isaiah 26:19
[25] עָפָר is sometimes used in parallel to Sheol as in Job 17:16

when God promises to Avram and again to Yaakov
that their progeny shall be
too numerous to count,
God says: I will make your seed כַּעֲפַר הָאָרֶץ.[26]

Bilam, who argues,
"How can I curse whom *God* has *not* cursed,"
asks,
מִי מָנָה
"Who can count
עֲפַר יַעֲקֹב?"[27]

Solomon recognizes
his great responsibility
as a king, ruling over
עַם רַב כֶּעָפָר הָאָרֶץ.[28]

Indeed,
עָפָר can connote something positive
something even more fertile than *Am Yisrael.*

"Who measured the waters with the hollow of … [a] hand," asks Isaiah,
"And gauged the skies with a span,
[Who] meted עֲפַר הָאָרֶץ with a measure
…weighed the mountains with a scale
And the hills with a balance?"[29]

Even the author of the tragic book of Job
who uses the word עָפָר more often
and more negatively,
than any other,
has this to say,

"There is a mine for silver
And a place where gold is refined.
בַּרְזֶל מֵעָפָר יֻקָּח
Iron is taken out of the earth.
And copper smelted from rock
… Earth, out of which food grows
is changed below as if into fire.
Its rocks are a source of sapphires

[26] Gen. 13:16, Gen. 28:14
[27] Numbers 23:10
[28] 2 Chronicles 1:9, Elsewhere, e.g. Psalm 78:27, עָפָר is parallel to sand of the sea
[29] Isaiah 40:12, Translation: *TANAKH The Holy Scriptures: The New JPS Translation According to the Traditional Hebrew Text*, The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia/Jerusalem, 1985

וְעַפְרֹ֥ת זָהָ֗ב לֽוֹ׃
It contains gold dust too."[30]

Based on biblical verses such as these,
the *very first* definition of עָפָר
in Avraham Even Shoshan's 7-volume Hebrew-Hebrew dictionary
is simply
.חומר האדמה

Kevin's translation was right in line with Reuben Alkalay,
in his 6-volume bilingual dictionary,
who, indeed, offers עָפָר
as one of the Hebrew words
for soil, for earth, and for dirt.

And earth, soil and dirt are very far from inert,
very far from dead.

"Dirt is alive,"
teaches the compelling PBS documentary entitled "Dirt,"[31]
[Dirt is alive!] it contains all kingdoms of life, bacteria, fungi, algae, slime molds…"
Cup your hands – in the dirt you can hold in your two open palms
live "tens of billions of micro-organisms."[32]

And together with
,חָצִיר יָבֵשׁ
,וְצִיץ נוֹבֵל
grass that withers,
a flower that fades,
a tree that dies and falls,
and worms that feast,
all these organisms,
in their respiration, digestion,
and decomposition,
add to the earth
and regenerate life.[33]

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[30] Job 28:1-6. *The New JPS Translation.*
To compile this list, I examined every use of the word עָפָר in the Tanakh using *Concordantia L'Tanakh* by Shlomo Mandelkern, Schocken Publishing House, Ltd., Tel -Aviv, 1974 and *Torah, N'viim, Ketuvim*, Koren Publishers, Jerusalem, 1992. I offer my profound thanks to Professor David Sperling, HUC-JIR, NY, for insisting we use a concordance and for inspiring love for concordance work.

[31] https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/documentaries/dirt-the-movie/ based on William Bryant Logan's book *Dirt: The Ecstatic Skin of the Earth*, Norton, 2007 https://wwnorton.com/books/Dirt/about-the-book

[32] Documentary, "Dirt"

[33] Kevin, in his *Iyyun*, interpreted the *Gevurot* blessing in light of this process in nature and included in his program a photograph of a new shoot sprouting from the stump of an old tree.

Alas
humans, can disrupt that cycle:
Monocultural, industrial farming,
pesticides,
excess nitrogen from artificial fertilizers,
and deforestation
can leach the life from עָפָר
and render it more vulnerable to drought, floods and winds,
exacerbated by climate change.
עָפָר can be a "bread-basket"
or
become a "dust bowl"[34]:
alive
or
depleted,
life-giving
or no longer
able
to sustain life.

גְּזַר דִּינָם
A scientist concurs with Kevin:
"The fates
of dirt and of humans
are intimately linked."[35]

In a very real sense
אָדָם יְסוֹדוֹ מֵעָפָר
for we are made
of the very same 5 elements, same molecules
that make up dirt.[36]

And from whence came
these elements?

The American Museum of Natural History
could not be clearer:
"Every atom of oxygen in our lungs,
of carbon in our muscles,
of calcium in our bones,
of iron in our blood –
was created
inside
a star...."[37]

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[34]Documentary, "Dirt"
[35] Documentary, "Dirt"
[36] Documentary, "Dirt"
[37] https://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/permanent/the-universe/stars/a-spectacular-stellar-finale/we-are-stardust

“Every life form, no matter how complicated,”
posts the Planetarium at the University of Southern Maine,
“Every life form, no matter how [simple or] complicated,”
is fashioned of the heavy elements
[which] a[n exploding] supernova conveyed into
a dark nebula”[38]
[that “enormous cloud of dust and gas
…[that is] a nursery for new stars,”[39]]
We …[אָדָם וְעָפָר]
are made of star dust.”[40]

Sometimes it sounds as though an ancient biblical author
understood
such secrets of the cosmos.
The author of Job imagines God asking:

“Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundations?...
Who set the cornerstone
When the morning stars sang together?...
Who closed the sea behind doors…
When I clothed it in clouds…
Have you ever commanded day to break
Assigned the dawn its place?...
Can you tie cords to [the star cluster] Pleiades
Or undo the reins of [the nebula] Orion?...
Conduct the [constellation of the] Bear with her sons?
Do you know the laws of heaven
Or impose its authority on earth?...
Who is wise enough to give an account of the heavens?
Who can tilt the bottles of the sky,
[So that]…עָפָר …[becomes] a [molten] mass[41]
And clods [of earth][42]…[cleave fast[43]] together?”[44]

[38] https://usm.maine.edu/planet/what-does-it-mean-when-astronomers-say-were-all-made-star-dust#:~:text=The%20particles%20in%20our%20bodies,are%20made%20of%20star%20dust.
[39] https://spacecenter.org/what-is-a-nebula/
[40] https://usm.maine.edu/planet/what-does-it-mean-when-astronomers-say-were-all-made-star-dust#:~:text=The%20particles%20in%20our%20bodies,are%20made%20of%20star%20dust.
[41] The root *yud-tzadi-kuf* means to pour, flow or cast.
[42] This noun *r-g-b* occurs only twice in the Tanakh, both times in the book of Job. The BDB *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, translates it as “clod of earth.”
[43] Translation: Koren
[44] Job, 38:4-38, translation JPS, except where specified otherwise

God alone is
מֶלֶךְ
אֵל חַי וְקַיָּם
existing since the beginning of time
אֵין קִצְבָה לִשְׁנוֹתֶיךָ,
וְאֵין קֵץ לְאֹרֶךְ יָמֶיךָ
There is no limit to God's years.
No end to the length of Your days.[45]

Gabriel spoke of the *incomprehensibility* of eternity.
Kevin sang of it:

אֵין לְשַׁעֵר מַרְכְּבוֹת כְּבוֹדֶךָ,
It's impossible to fathom the Cartwheel Galaxy[46] in Your cosmos
וְאֵין לְפָרֵשׁ עִלּוּם שְׁמֶךָ:
No naked eye could plumb the secrets of deep space.[47]

שִׁמְךָ נָאֶה לְךָ
Your primordial essence suits You alone
וְאַתָּה נָאֶה לִשְׁמֶךָ,
and You alone merit that name.
And yet,
וּשְׁמֵנוּ
our name, our essence, the essence of all living things
קָרֵאתָ בִּשְׁמֶךָ. You have linked with Yours.[48]
For "the particles in our bodies
have …existe[d] for billions of years.
[And after our souls return to *their* source]
these particles …will persist for billions of years more. "[49]
אָדָם יְסוֹדוֹ מֵעָפָר וְסוֹפוֹ לֶעָפָר.
And our shared origin is star dust.
Joni Mitchell wrote of it in her own way,[50] and the Australian, Kate Forsyth, in hers:

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[45] From the beginning of "*Ein kitzvah*" the climax of the piyyut *Unetane tokef,* recited on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and at the center of Kevin's practicum.

[46]"The Cartwheel Galaxy Is the Webb Telescope's Latest Cosmic Snapshot," Anastasia Marks, in the *New York Times*, Aug. 4, 2022,
https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/04/science/cartwheel-galaxy-webb-telescope.html?searchResultPosition=5

[47] "Plumb the secrets of deep space" appears in "Five Things Learned From the Webb Telescope's First Image," an article based on earlier reporting by Kenneth Chang, Dennis Overbye, Joshua Sokol and Carl Zimmer, *The New York Times*, July 15, 2022,
https://www.nytimes.com/article/nasa-webb-telescope-images-galaxies.html?searchResultPosition=2
Thank you to Gabriel for bringing us words and images of stars!

[48] The six brief lines of Hebrew just quoted above are the continuation of "*Ein kitzvah*," the climax of *Unetaneh tokef.*

[49]https://usm.maine.edu/planet/what-does-it-mean-when-astronomers-say-were-all-made-star-dust#:~:text=The%20particles%20in%20our%20bodies,are%20made%20of%20star%20dust.

“There's a flame of magic inside every stone & every flower, every bird that sings & every frog that croaks. There's magic in the trees & the hills & the river & the rocks, in the sea & the stars & the wind, a deep, wild magic that's as old as the world itself. It's in you too… and in me, and in every living creature, be it ever so small. Even the dirt I'm sweeping up now is stardust. In fact, all of us are made from the stuff of stars.”[51]

קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ
davened Gabriel,
Holy, holy, wholly other,
ה' צְבָאוֹת
Prime mover of cosmic forces
.מְלֹא כָל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ
whose remote splendor fills the whole earth
כְּבוֹדוֹ מָלֵא עוֹלָם
And whose splendor spans epochs of cosmic time.[52]

Rabbi Margaret Moers Wenig has been teaching rabbinic and cantorial students at HUC-JIR, NY for over 30 years. Though not a musician herself, she has audited a dozen courses taught by Cantors Faith Steinsnyder, Jacob Mendelson, Israel Goldstein z”l*, Azi Schwartz, among others. Along with Hazzan Henry Rosenblum, Wenig leads cantorial students in an exploration of the diverse ways in which musical settings interpret High Holiday liturgy. One of her favorite tasks is helping the fourth-year students, such as Kevin and Gabriel, prepare for their High Holiday practica.*

[50] “We are stardust. We are golden,” from her song, “Woodstock,” known widely by the Crosby, Stills, Nash, & Young version. I thank Circe Dunnell for this reference.
[51] https://bukrate.com/topic/stardust-quotes
[52] “Remote lonely splendor,” and “epochs of cosmic time” are expressions used by Dennis Overbey in an Opinion piece published in the *New York Times*, August 23, 2022 https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/23/science/james-webb-telescope-jupiter-galaxies.html?searchResultPosition=1

NEGINAH L'MA'ASEH

The choral works included here bookend the history of synagogue choral music. Salamone Rossi's setting of *Eileh Mo'adei Adonai* combines the polyphonic sensibilities of the later Renaissance with a homophonic treatment that elucidates the text. On the other end of the historical spectrum we have a similarly homophonic setting of text from the opening verses of Psalm 92 (*Mizmor Shir L'yom HaShabbat* by Rumanian-Israeli composer Sergia Natra (1924-2021). This brief *a cappella* selection comes from his larger *Avodat HaKodesh/Sacred Service*, (1975-1979) commissioned to mark the 125th anniversary of Congregation Emanu-El in San Francisco (the same congregation that commissioned Ernest Bloch's *Avodat HaKodesh*) and premiered there in 1982.

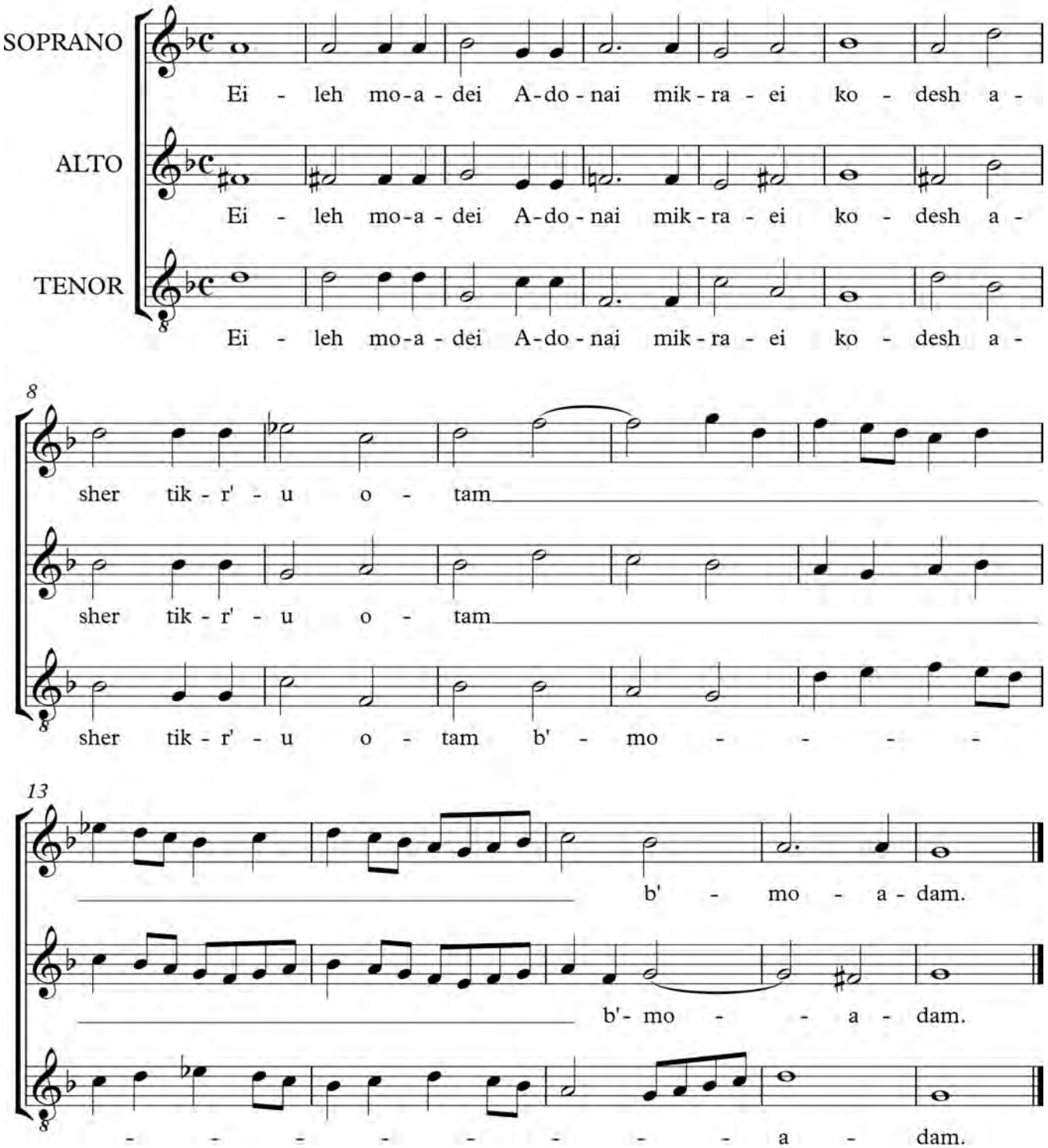
We also include solo settings of *Yih'yu L'Ratzon* by Simon Sargon (sung by Mira Davis accompanied by David Enlow) and *Eil Malei Rahamim* by Ben Steinberg (edited and sung by Charles Osborne, with Ross Inglis on the organ and Susan Piltch, flute.) (You can click on the music of these solo selections to hear them performed). These two composers will long be remembered for their many settings for the synagogue (and beyond) that have already entered the repertoire. We are grateful to their families for permission to include these previously unpublished selections.

Depending on your browser, you may need to download and save the audio file before it will play in its entirety

Eileh Mo'adei Adonai

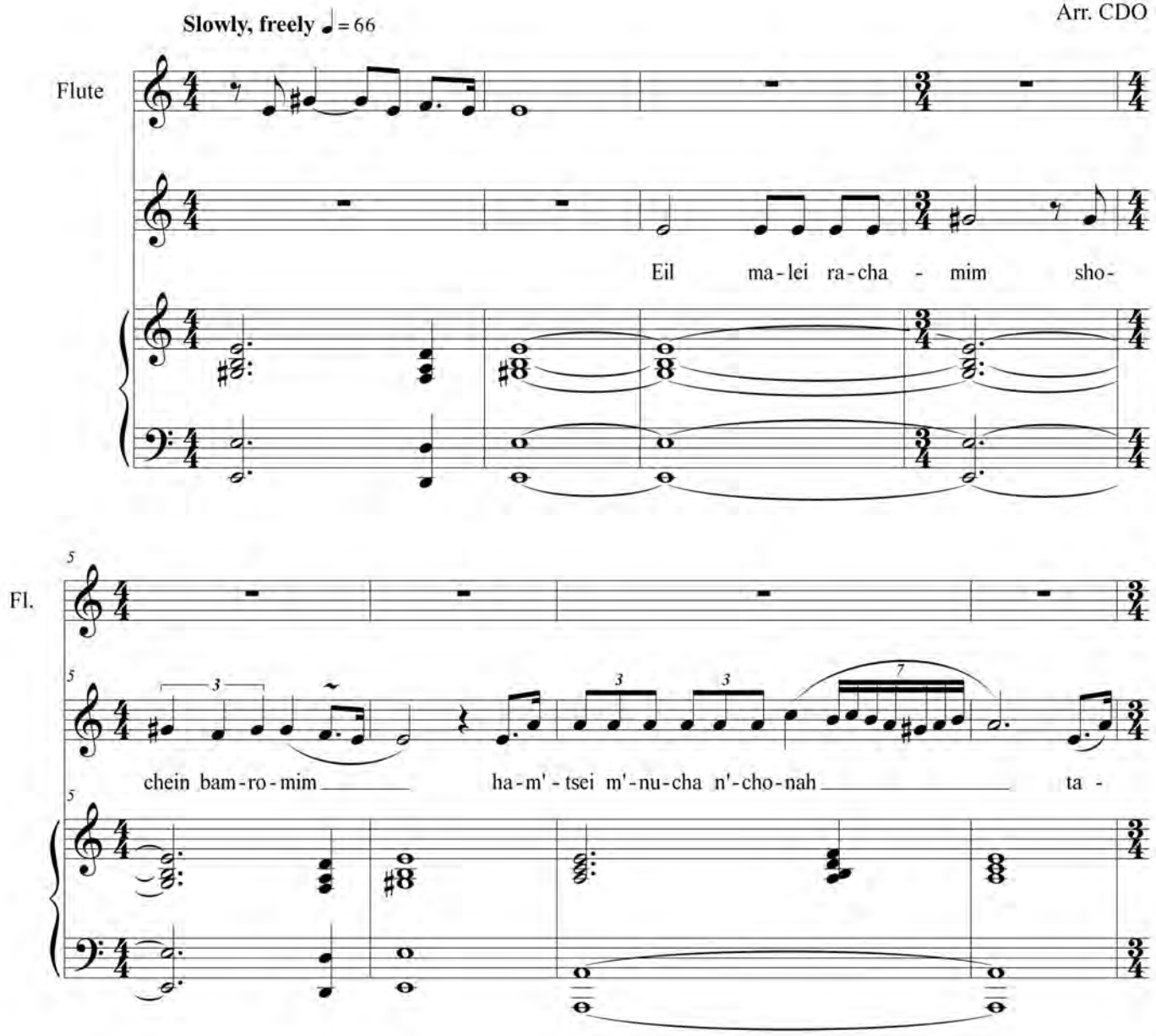
Leviticus 23:4

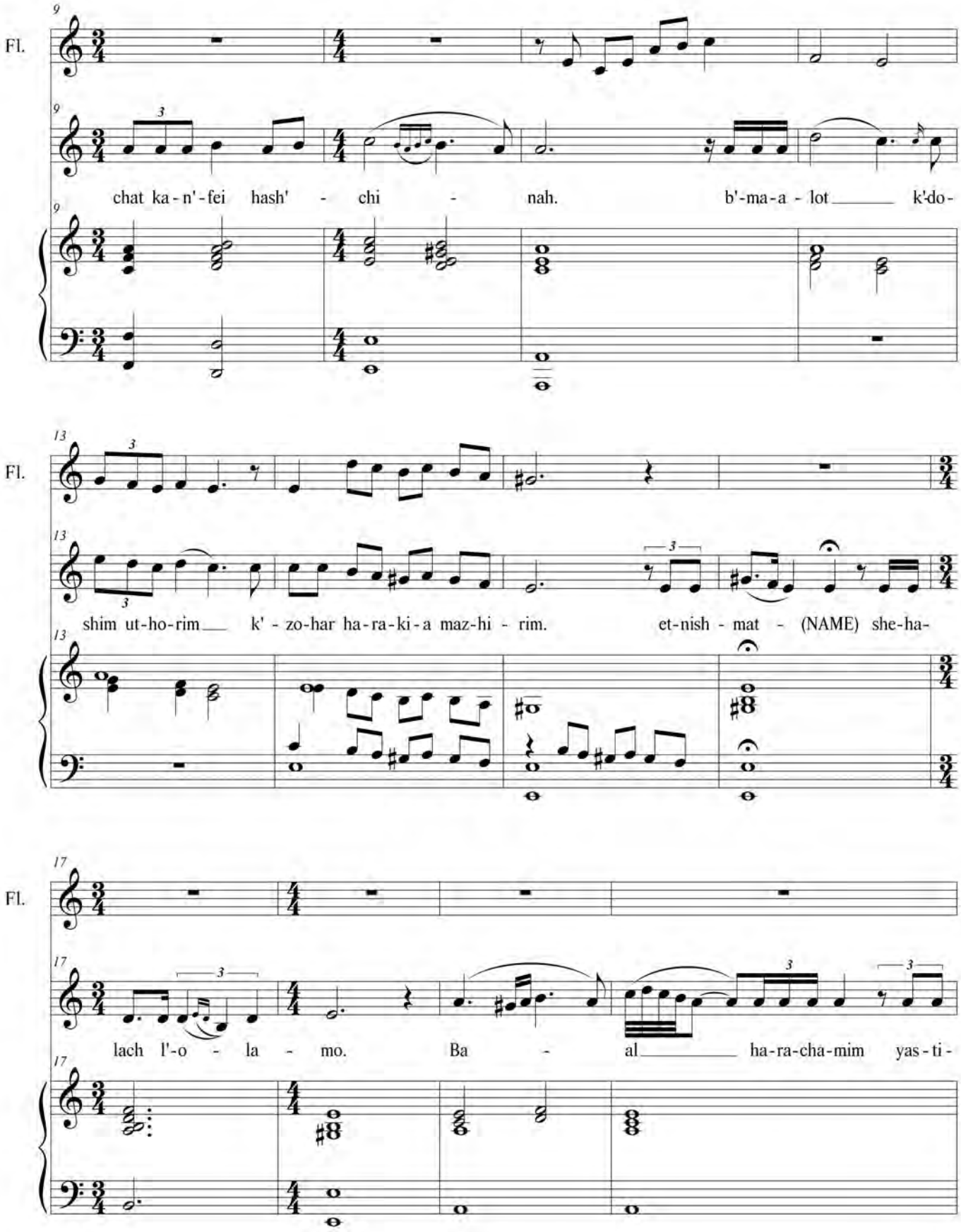
Salamone Rossi

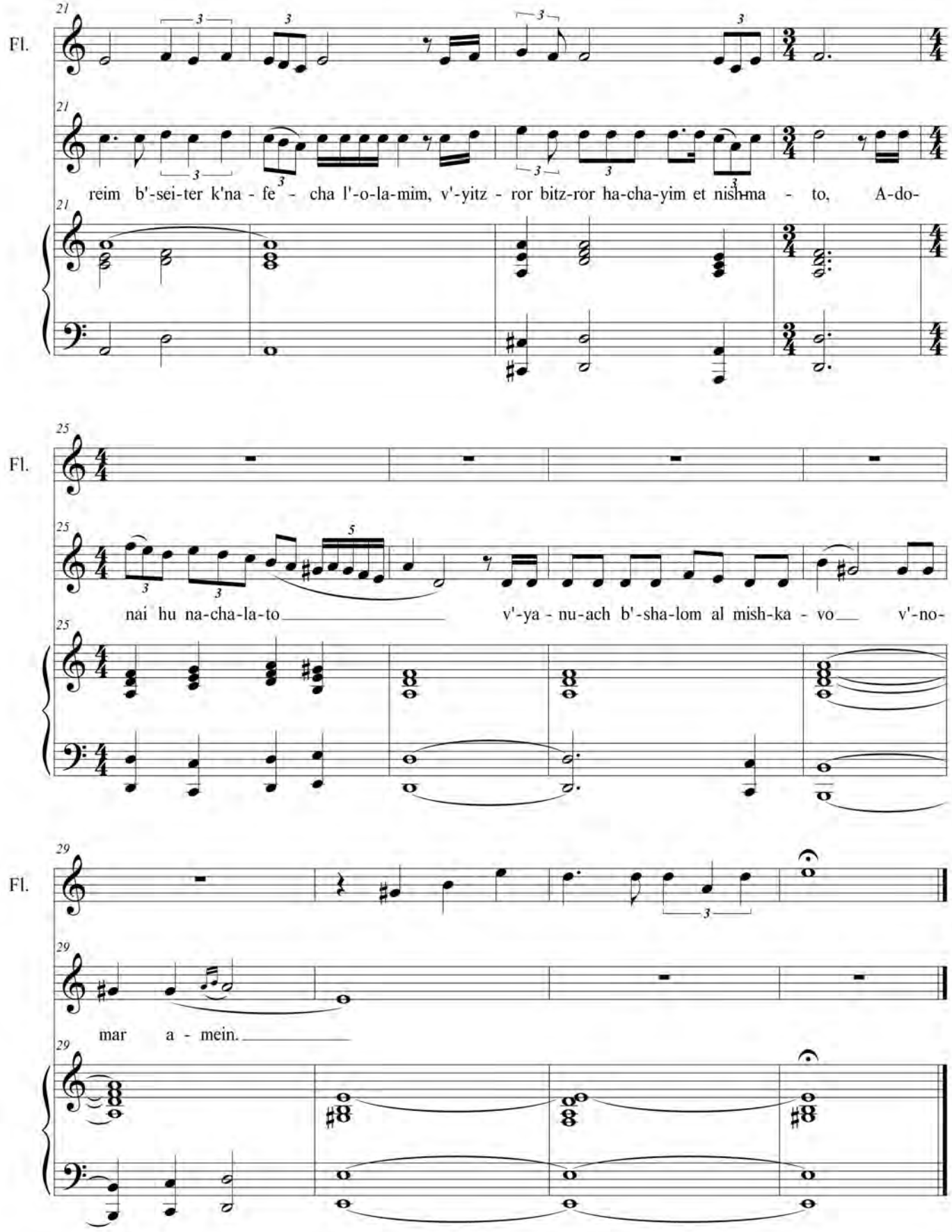


Eil Malei Rahamim

Ben Steinberg
Arr. CDO




Fl.
9
chat ka-n'-fei hash' - chi - nah. b'-ma-a - lot k'-do-
13
shim ut-ho-rim k' - zo-har ha-ra-ki-a maz-hi - rim. et-nish - mat - (NAME) she-ha-
17
lach l'-o - la - mo. Ba - al ha-ra-cha-mim yas-ti-

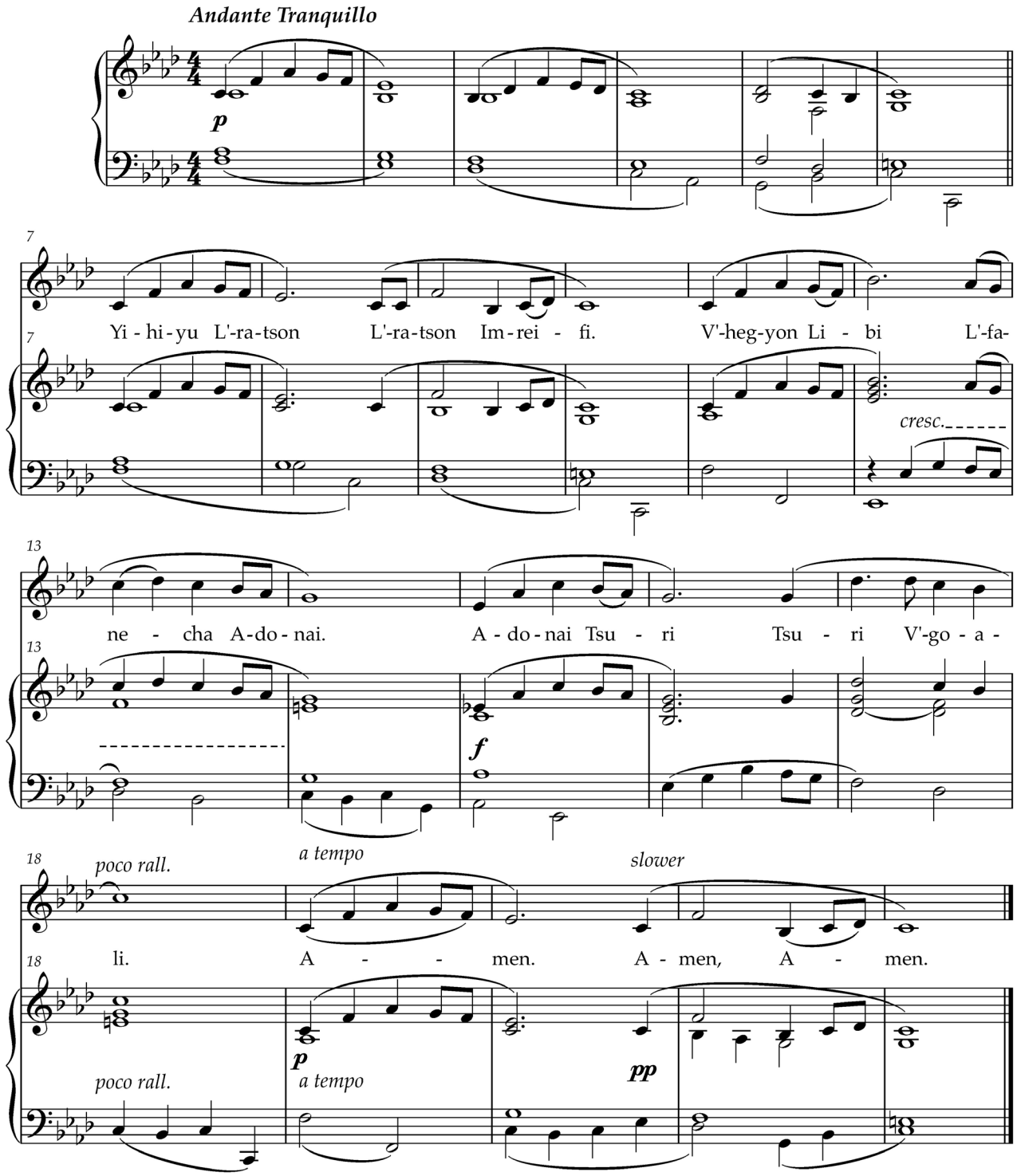

Fl.
21
reim b'-sei-ter k'na - fe - cha l'-o-la-mim, v'-yitz - ror bitz-ror ha-cha-yim et nish-ma - to, A-do-
Fl.
25
nai hu na-cha-la-to v'-ya - nu-ach b'-sha-lom al mish-ka - vo v'-no-
Fl.
29
mar a - mein.

Yihiyu L'ratzon

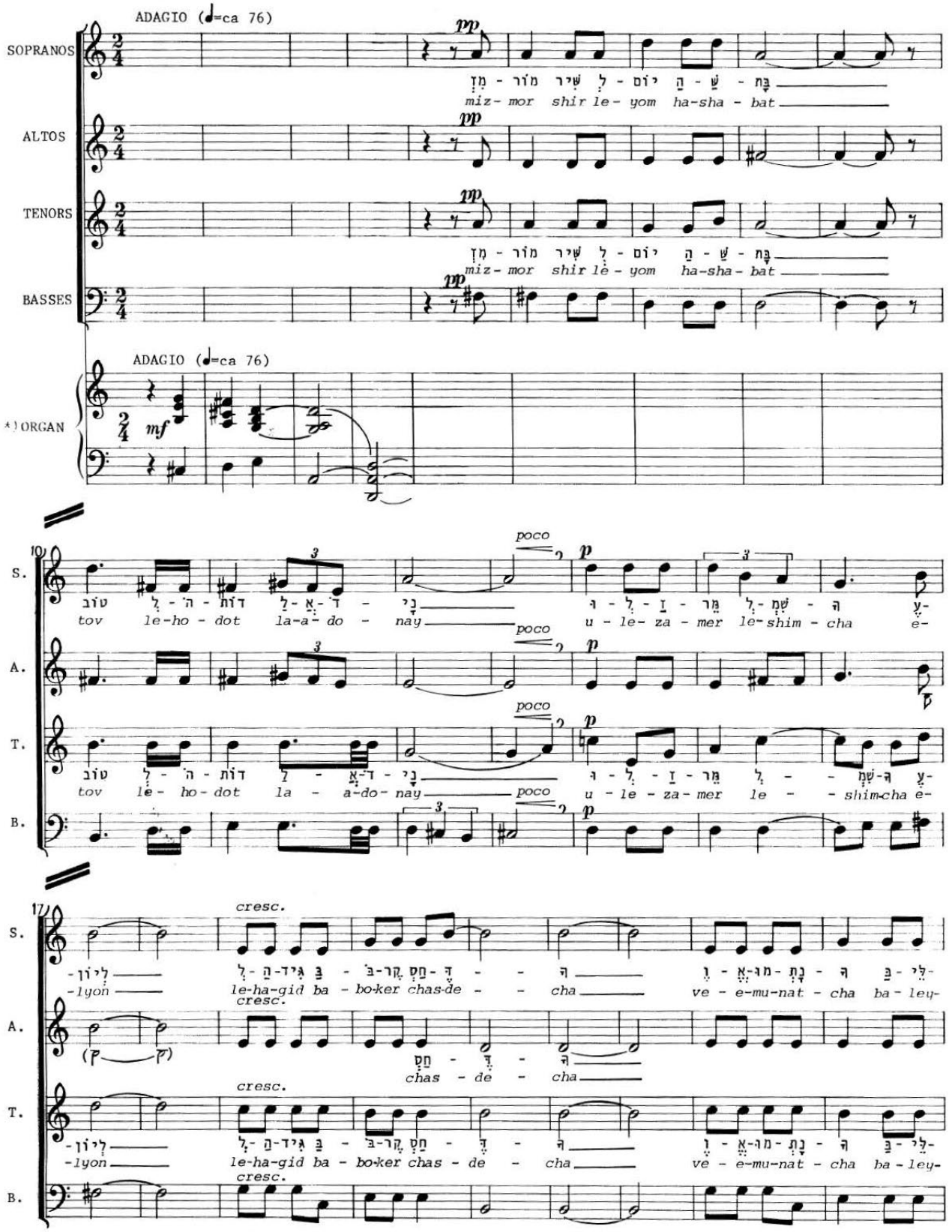
for solo voice or unison choir

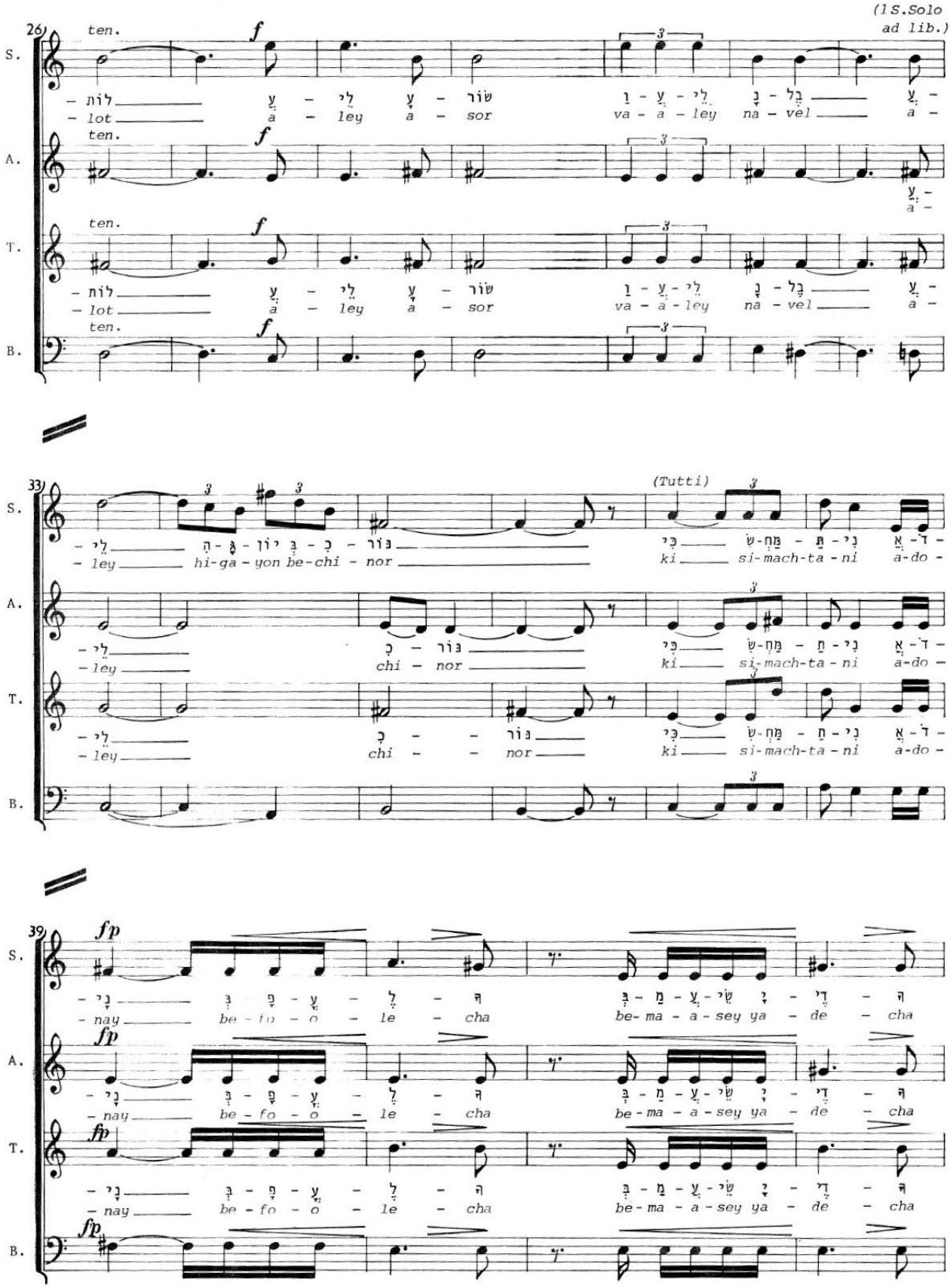
Liturgy

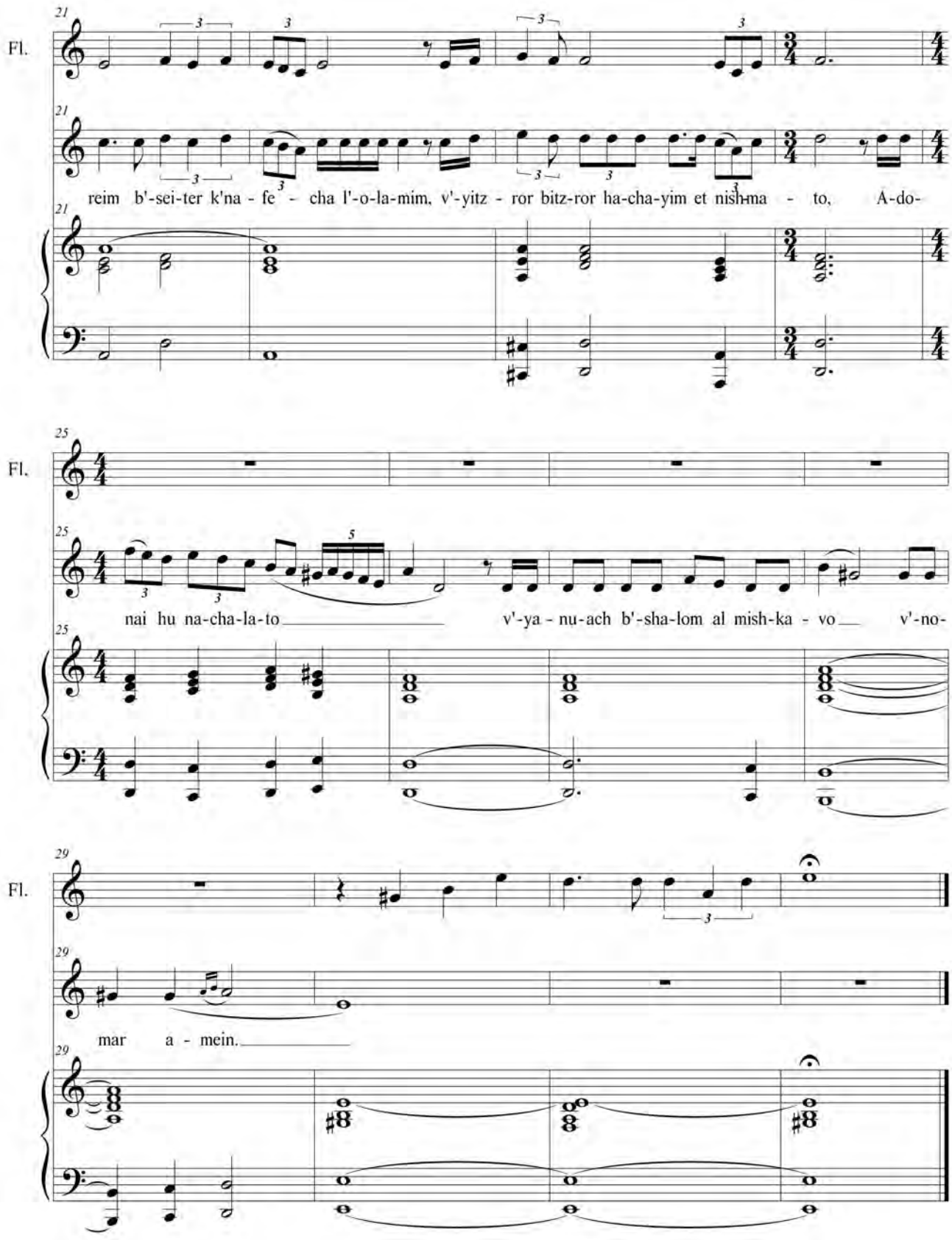
Simon Sargon



MIZMOR SHIR 2 מזמור שיר




(1S.Solo ad lib.)
26
ten.
f
S.
A.
T.
B.
לוֹת עֲלֵי עָשׂוֹר וַעֲלֵי נָבֶל עֲ-
lot a-ley a-sor va-a-ley na-vel a-
33
(Tutti)
לַי הִגָּיוֹן בְּכִנּוֹר כִּי שִׂמַּחְתָּנִי אֲדֹ-
ley hi-ga-yon be-chi-nor ki si-mach-ta-ni a-do-
39
fp
נָי בְּפִיעֲלֶךָ בְּמַעֲשֶׂיךָ דָּה
nay be-fo-o-le-cha be-ma-a-sey ya-de-cha


Fl.
reim b'-sei-ter k'na - fe - cha l'-o-la-mim, v'-yitz - ror bitz-ror ha-cha-yim et nish-ma - to, A-do-
Fl.
nai hu na-cha-la-to v'-ya - nu-ach b'-sha-lom al mish-ka - vo v'-no-
Fl.
mar a - mein.

MAILBOX

Redirecting the Jewish Music Research Centre at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

By Edwin Seroussi

Established by the late Professor Israel Adler sixty years ago as a unit of the Faculty of Humanities of the Hebrew University, the Jewish Music Research Centre (JMRC) set forth three inter-related goals: 1) the systematic documentation of oral and written sources pertaining to the musical cultures of all Jews in the past and present; 2) the study of these cultures in their widest historical and social contexts; and 3) the publication of sound and printed studies of high academic standards. Considering these goals, the JMRC was, since its inception, naturally embedded within the Jewish National and University Library (JNUL), then an integral unit of the Hebrew University located on the Givat Ram (today, Safra) Campus. All raw materials collected by researchers of the JMRC or acquired through its funds, such as field recordings, manuscripts, archival materials and rare books, became part of the newly created Department of Music (that included the Sound Archives) of the JNUL. The acquisition of the New York-based Jacob Michael Collection of Jewish Music parallel to the establishment of the JMRC was a landmark in the process of creating one of the major repositories of Jewish music in the world. The JMRC produced several renowned publications, all under the name of *Yuval*, as well as the Anthology of Music Traditions in Israel, a unique record label consisting of representative selections of the center's field recordings. In 2003, the JMRC launched its first website, a pioneer presence of Jewish music research in the emergent Internet.

Six decades after its founding, the JMRC is changing its face as well as its historical location. After 2012, JNUL became the National Library of Israel (NLI) by a law of the Knesset. The Hebrew University transferred its assets, including its music collections, to the State of Israel, and the government committed itself to maintain and protect the library. Since 2012, a colossal new facility was erected for the NLI outside the Hebrew University Campus. NLI devoted itself to the care and development of the Jewish music collections as well as to the massive digitization that will allow easy access to these music treasures online.

With the movement of the NLI to its new premises in November 2023, a chapter in the history of the JMRC comes to an end. Relocated now to the Itzhak Rabin Building of the Mandel Institute for Jewish Studies, a new and exciting era in the JMRC trajectory opens at the historical Mount Scopus Campus of the Hebrew University, where the Department of Musicology is also located. This new era, however, is not marked exclusively by a physical move. After the launching of the first JMRC website two decades ago, there was a gradual shift in the work of the institution towards digital media. As more JMRC publications started to appear only online, and much of the developing efforts and fundraising focused on the website, a new approach emerged whereby the JMRC is closing its "store." In other words, the JMRC stopped selling its publications, offering them now free of charge online for downloading, while downsizing its remaining physical stock by giving it away to the public at no cost while supplies last.

A brand new JMRC website will be launched in the fall of 2023, reflecting these structural and conceptual transformations. The new website will be accompanied by a unique digital humanities application, Jewish Music Mapped (made possible now by the support of the Azrieli Foundation). All ongoing research projects of the JMRC will be posted at the center of the new website, even prior to their formal publication, and the database will continue to expand. The peer-reviewed *Yuval – Studies of the JMRC* will also be prominently featured on the new website as the flagship of the JMRC publications. The "CD" series will appear as scholarly annotated playlists open to the public for free listening. All these transformative steps will not alter the premises upon which Prof. Israel Adler and his colleagues founded the JMRC sixty years ago, i.e. to provide a solid platform for the study of Jewish music and to transform this knowledge into accessible publications of the highest possible quality.

Edwin Seroussi is the Emanuel Alexandre Professor of Musicology and Director of the Jewish Music Research Centre at Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

REVIEW

From New York to Jerusalem, A Memoir by Avraham Feder

By David F. Tilman

In October 1957, my parents and I joined the newly formed Conservative congregation Temple Israel in Albany, New York. We had celebrated my Bar Mitzvah at a smaller synagogue, and we were advised by my teachers that the only place to receive a superior Jewish education was at the new Temple Israel. This congregation, formed by the merger of two older Conservative congregations, was blessed with a wonderful new building, visionary lay leadership, and an inspiring professional staff including Rabbi Chayim Kieval, Shraga Phillip Arian, the dynamic educational director, and the youthful and talented hazzan, Cantor Herbert Feder. Cantor Feder was 28 years old, multi-talented, charismatic, and dedicated to teaching meaningful Jewish musical experiences to his new congregants and their children.

After my first Shabbat morning at Temple Israel, Cantor Feder came to me as we were descending the stairs to the Shabbat *Kiddush*. I remember the moment and place as if it were last week! Still wearing his clerical garments and six pointed cantorial cap, he said to me in his dramatic baritone! "David, I hear you are a musical fellow! Why don't you come to the youth choir rehearsal this afternoon at 3 pm?" I ran home and reported to my parents that Cantor Feder had invited me to join his teenage choir. I told them that I was going, and at 2 pm, I ran out of our home to return to *shul* with all the energy I could muster!

My first rehearsal at the Temple Israel Youth Choir marked the beginning of my personal journey into the world of Jewish music and choral experience, a procession that is still ongoing!

Cantor Feder became my mentor, my guide, and my lifelong friend until he died in 2017. I shared with him every personal life experience, educational achievement, musical event, concert, triumph, and disappointment with him. Wherever he was, I sought his counsel. I was therefore thrilled to receive from Tzipora Feder, his widow, Rabbi Feder's massive 250 page memoir written during the last few years of his life. Because it is dedicated to his six grandchildren, all of whom reside in Israel, Feder translated the entire work into Hebrew. Tzipora Feder has published this superb and large volume, profusely illustrated with photographs from every era of his life.

Rabbi Feder's saga was filled with countless journeys, both real and spiritual. Rabbi Feder has written his life story in a formal and straightforward style, filled with prodigious details of time, place, and personalities. The book relates his many transitions: familial, professional, ideological, and educational. Born on the Lower East Side of New York City in 1930, Feder was raised in an Orthodox Jewish home. His father was both a *hazzan* and businessman. The oldest of three sons, he was educated in New York public schools, graduating from Stuyesant High School. He also attended ESHI, a rigorous after-school Jewish program, and was an active participant in the school's *Hazzanim* Club, learning as a teenager *Nusah hat'fillah* for the entire liturgical year.

Feder was educated at City College of New York, studying English literature, but his true calling was *Hazzanut*. After a short period teaching in New York City schools while serving as a part time cantor in a few New York Orthodox and Conservative synagogues, he accepted his first full time cantorial position at Temple Israel in Albany in 1954, where I met him.

His next pulpit was in suburban New Haven. In 1963, he enrolled at the Jewish Theological Seminary Rabbinical School, commuting daily into New York City for two years. He was ordained as Rabbi at JTS in 1966. Rabbi Feder served as the founding Rabbi of Beth Tikvah Congregation in Willowdale, Ontario, until making *aliyah* to Israel in 1981. At Beth Tikvah, he worked together with Srul Irving Glick, the noted Canadian Jewish composer, who served as choir director.

In Israel, Rabbi Feder held several teaching positions, including teaching JTS cantorial students. Ultimately he was appointed Rabbi of Congregation Moreshet Yisrael, the Masorti/Conservative congregation in center city Jerusalem. He never stopped singing, and singing beautifully. He auditioned for Maestro Zubin Mehta, and was invited to sing the baritone role in Haydn's *Creation*, conducted by Mehta, with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

Of great interest for our musical colleagues, Rabbi Feder described clearly his davening style. With great care and much forethought, he merged his traditional prayer leading skills with a heightened sense of drama derived from *Peirush hamilim*, comprehension of the complex liturgical texts. He brought to his *bimah* heightened intensity, much emotion and dynamic variations based on his study of German *lieder* and European art songs taught to him by Maestro Siegfried Landau, conductor of the Brooklyn Philharmonia and professor at the Cantors Institute during the 1950's. He skillfully inserted multiple Israeli melodies into his davening to emphasize major themes in the liturgy and his passionate Zionist values. All of this he integrated into every service, along with great dynamism, intense joy, and beautiful singing. Rabbi Feder tells his readers all about his artistic growth, and his voice teachers, both successful and frustrating.

Rabbi Feder wrote a very readable and highly detailed account of his life story. Unfortunately, his inherent humor and great charm are not revealed in his prose. Of course, the reader also cannot hear his beautiful lyric baritone and innate spirituality that so moved his congregants in every synagogue he served.

Rabbi Feder had a great love of the Broadway stage, baseball, Shakespeare, and English literature. He combined all of these diverse elements in his passionate sermons. Since he was, for major periods of his professional life, both the rabbi and *hazzan*, he never was concerned about the length of his sermons impeding the cantorial role, since he was fulfilling both responsibilities. Blessed with great humor, charm, eloquence, and prodigious memory for diverse topics, his sermons had a profound impact on all who heard his teachings. He would frequently make his points by singing lines from Broadway songs, quotations from a Shakespeare play, or summaries from movies that he loved.

Feder's multifaceted professional life, academic achievements (cantorial and rabbinic ordination, doctorate in moral philosophy), his musical accomplishments, and his three published

books and multiple articles, are all detailed in this volume. Rabbi Feder concluded with moving and sensitive tributes to his two wives (he married his high school sweetheart, Leona, who died at age 71), his children and his grandchildren. For his children and grandchildren, he wrote complex statements of his commitments to Torah, to God, and to the Zionist ideal. He wrote about his own philosophical belief systems with much fire and drama as inspirational messages to his family. These are among the most emotional sections of the volume.

In the Fall 2006 issue of this *Journal*, Rabbi/Hazzan Feder summarized his philosophical approach to the role of *Sheliah tzibbur* before God Almighty, and the requirements the *hazzan* is compelled to bring to his/her work in order to succeed. "As an authentic *sheli'ah tsibbur* with the special gifts of the artist, the *hazzan* will bring to the prayer: a) a beauty of sound; b) an expert musicianship; c) a mastery of the *nusha'ot*; d) interpretive insights into the text; e) a readiness to bring the congregation regularly and often into the music; f) a capacity to bring all these attributes together in an artistic whole; and then, g) the yearning to reach beyond, aiming for that aesthetic rainbow which points — if one is worthy — to the Gates of Heaven (*sha'rei shamayim*)."[1]

Rabbi/Hazzan Feder internalized his own teachings and accomplished all of these goals whenever and wherever he led davening, with great joy and passion!

Of course, his prayer leading, his singing, his charm and energy can never be captured by the printed word. There are recordings of his singing, including two professionally produced discs and many tape recordings that should be reissued.

Rabbi/Cantor Feder has lived within me since I was 13 years old. Indeed, he described in the book our musical interactions from that formative time in both our lives. I often asked him if he could have succeeded as a Jewish professional if he had never pursued rabbinic training and continued exclusively as *hazzan* and Jewish art singer. The numerous published tributes to his life and career testified to his profound success in every endeavor he pursued. His congregants, friends, and colleagues have all agreed that his synthesis of Judaica, davening, scholarship, and dynamism of personality influenced generations of Jews in North America and in Israel. I am sure you will both enjoy and learn from his wonderful memoir.

The volume is available from Tzipora Ne'eman Feder. Upon personal request, she will send you the English manuscript. Contact her at tziporanf@gmail.com.

David F. Tilman was born in Albany, NY, where he met Rabbi/Hazzan Avraham Feder. He has earned degrees from Columbia College, the Miller Cantorial School of JTS, and the Juilliard School, earning a Masters degree in Choral Conducting. He served 36 years as Hazzan of Beth Sholom Congregation, and is now Hazzan Emeritus, He is now choral director and pastoral outreach professional at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel. Hazzan Tilman created the "Sing Hallelujah" concert at Verizon Hall of the Kimmel Center in Philadelphia, bringing together six choirs of 175 singers to present the music of the Jewish people. On April 26 he conducted this ensemble together with Israeli superstar Noa in a program celebratiing Israel 75.

[1] Feder, Avraham H. "The Problems A Modern Jew Faces in Prayer" in *Journal of Synagogue Music* (Volume 31, No. 1, Fall 2006) p. 145.

IN MEMORIAM

Cantor Simon Hass (1925 – 2022)
Remembered by David Prager

Cantor Simon Hass, who passed away at the age of 97 on the eve of *Hoshanah Rabbah*, Saturday, October 13, 2022 in London, was widely admired and respected as one of the finest cantors in the world, representing his congregants at the Heavenly court with vocal brilliance combined with humility, prayerful majesty and devotional intensity.

He was born in 1925 in Jaroslav, Poland into the distinguished Hassidic family of Sarah and Reb Moshe Hass. His father was a prominent member of the Jewish community, a scholarly and musical wine merchant, and a highly competent *ba'al tefillah*. The environment into which Cantor Hass was born was infused with communal leadership, charity, learning and music. Simon's eldest brother, Jacob, a student at the prestigious Chachmei Lublin Yeshivah, became a pre-war child prodigy singer and at the age of 13, was invited to intone the memorial prayer in front of a crowd of thousands of mourners in 1933 when famed Rabbi Meir Shapiro, Member of the Polish Parliament, Head of the Chachmei Lublin Yeshivah and founder of the international, synchronized page-a-day system of Talmud study (*Daf Yomi*) passed away. Simon was similarly gifted, and during his studies at the Belz, Tarnow and Lubavitch *yeshivot* he displayed strong academism, independence of mind and great musical talent.

Following the outbreak of the Second World War, Jaroslav was occupied by the Germans and Jewish life became increasingly subject to Nazi terror. Because of his status as a community leader, Reb Moshe Hass was arrested and held hostage as a prominent Jew, facing imminent torture and/or death. Sarah Hass, with the 10 Hass children in tow, immediately and bravely negotiated with the arresting Nazi officer to secure his miraculous release. Afterwards, the family managed to reach Soviet-occupied Lvov (now Lviv, Ukraine) where they had relatives. The respite was short, as they were subsequently deported by the Soviet authorities to Siberia as "bourgeois Polish aliens." One sister succumbed to the harsh conditions. Simon found some distraction from the permanent hunger he experienced through singing in the terribly tough, cold conditions, and even managed to find, in a fellow deportee, a *hazzanut* teacher. An older sister

was employed by the Soviet military authorities and enabled Simon to receive altered papers showing that he was born in 1927 and thus not yet of military age.

After the war, the family returned to Poland to find that the wider family had been murdered and the large pre-war communities had been destroyed. For a short time, Simon enrolled in the Lodz conservatory as the only Jewish student. Realizing that no realistic future lay for them in Poland, the Hass family moved on to Paris where, again, Simon enrolled in the conservatory.

Four Hass siblings were to become cantors: Jacob obtained a cantorial post in New York, identical twins David and Benjamin journeyed to British Mandate Palestine, suffering internment in Cyprus before subsequently pursuing military careers in Israel and music studies leading to a range of posts. The majority of the family moved on to London where they re-established their lives. Tragically, Sarah Hass died shortly afterwards at the age of 49.

Simon began a career presenting charity concerts in the United Kingdom, starting with his London debut concert in February 1950 to benefit *Mifal Hatorah* in support of refugee Jewish clergy and their families. He was soon appointed Cantor of Hendon United Synagogue as successor to Cantor David Kusevitsky. There, Simon met his beloved life partner, Elaine, and the couple were married later in 1950. He continued his studies in London, obtaining a degree in operatic and classical singing and enrolling in the cantorial studies program at Jews' College under world-renowned Hazzan Salomo Pinkasovitch.[1] This enabled him to operate with expertise in a variety of styles from *Nusah Anglia* to the Hassidic melodies he learned from his father. He also joined his colleagues in the unique 45-voice London Hazzanim Choir under the baton of Rev. Leo Bryll.[2]

On hearing Simon in Hendon, Sir Isaac Wolfson[3] approached him and persuaded him to apply for the post of Cantor at the Central Synagogue, London, a position which he held with distinction for over 40 years. Here, he re-introduced midnight choral selichot services which were well attended by cantorial aficionados from near and far and which were unofficially known as "Midnight Hass". His long tenure was marked by the enduring love and support of this prestigious congregation, where his co-religionists from all walks of life, including leading figures in Anglo-Jewry, were moved by his dignified and highly professional style. In return, Cantor Hass loved his flock and declined many offers of high-profile posts abroad. His appearances at the annual Warsaw Ghetto memorial events in London where he recited the *kaddish*, remain as some of the supreme moments of prayerful emotion in Anglo-Jewry. Later, in discussing their careers, his brother David readily recognized that Simon's vocal prowess and musical professionalism were in a superior league.

[1] Salomo Pinkasovitch (1886-1951) began his musical journey as a boy soprano accompanying an itinerant cantor. He studied singing and composition at the Odessa Conservatory and served a series of congregations across Europe and in South Africa before finally settling in England, where admiring fans revered him as the "Jewish Caruso."

[2] Leo Bryll (1906-1985) was an award-winning singer, and served as *hazzan* in a series of prominent London synagogues. He was also a highly-regarded accompanist, a prominent conductor and a lecturer in *Hazzanut* at Jews' College for more than 32 years.

[3] Isaac Wolfson (1897-1991) was a British financier and philanthropist.

Elaine and Simon were a devoted couple and raised three children, Stuart, Naomi and Sarah.

Cantor Hass' voice was unique. He had an enormously wide range with phenomenal and thrilling quality of golden timbre preserved at the high and low extremes, encompassing tenor and baritone ranges, supported by breath control worthy of a top opera star. His diction, especially in *sprechstimme*, was striking and meticulous. As a *hazzonishe zogger*, (cantorial singer) his ability to infuse meaning into each syllable of prayer, was outstanding. At his command were modes of sweet lyricality, Hassidic *niggun* and dramatic boldness. He could entreat and demand as the prayer required. For a voice of such magnitude, the flexibility of his coloratura was impressive. He made beautiful use of falsetto as a further arrow in his quiver.

Simon Hass observed the Talmudic dictum of "Say little and do much" (*Avot* 1:15). Through personal contacts, charm, concerts and record sales, he raised enormous funds for charities, especially Lubavitch, whose selfless work in alleviating the situations of deportees from Siberia during the Second World War he never forgot. Whereas he spoke little of his musical opinions and background, he produced an astounding array of recordings. These included choral "*Hazzanut haseder*" (ordered cantorial works) eg. masterpieces of Sulzer, modern American works such as by Rumshinsky, masterpieces of *hazzanut haregesh* (emotional cantorial art) including original cantorial compositions, *yeshivah* melodies, Yiddish folksong classics, poignant Ghetto songs and Israeli repertoire. The records feature dramatic orchestrations and beautiful piano accompaniments by his gifted friend John Gunter, and include elegant arrangements of works made famous by Golden Age cantorial luminaries such as Gerson Sirota, Yossele Rosenblatt, Pierre Pinchik and Moshe Oysher.

Hass concertized in the US, Israel and throughout the United Kingdom, including at the Royal Festival Hall. Invariably, he received rave reviews.

His steely inner strength in having endured terrible adversity early in life provided a munificent reservoir of love to cheer his congregants, friends and family in times of difficulty. In addition to all these qualities was his absolute fluency in Jewish texts. A book of Jewish learning was never far from his side.

Now he has been called to the Heavenly choir. He was the last surviving sibling and his passing represents the end of an era. At his funeral, his inspirational life was lauded by British Chief Rabbi Mirvis together with Rabbi Barry Marcus (formerly of Central Synagogue), son Stuart, daughter Naomi and his sons-in-law. Rabbi Marcus noted the severe risk that his passing might also represent the demise of inspirational *hazzanut*. The large attendance at the funeral (despite its rapid scheduling before *Sh'mini Atzeret*) included numerous former congregants who, despite not having heard his voice for decades, were still visibly moved on recalling the spiritual intensity they had experienced many years earlier on hearing him lead services.

Rev. Hass is survived by his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Now he is reunited with his beloved Elaine, who passed away tragically early in 1995.

Yehi zikhro barukh. May his memory be blessed.

Edward Klein (1921-2022)
Remembered by Bill Lieberman

Hazzan Edward "Eddie" Klein passed from our midst on December 9, 2022, at the age of 101. He was the beloved husband of the late Adrienne ("Eidel," as she was lovingly called), and devoted father to five children, eleven grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

My good fortune was to begin our more than twenty-year friendship shortly after arriving in Weston, Florida to serve congregation B'nai Aviv. I fondly remember Eddie's presence at High Holy Days services and for the *b'nai mitzvah* of his twin grandsons, Ethan and Spencer. He enjoyed sharing his musical compositions and recordings, and, fortunately, I was the beneficiary of his vast cantorial knowledge, especially for many car rides to lunch, where he would enjoy his favorite gin martini and recount recent golf games, which he played every week well into his 90's.

Born in New York City in 1921, Eddie grew up in Spring Valley, NY. He and his beloved Adrienne met in high school. They enjoyed 57 years of marriage following his discharge from the army on December 15, 1944. Eddie not only had a great ear for music, but he could also easily learn languages, quickly mastering Farsi during his army assignment in Persia. With his knowledge of *hazzanut*, he was often asked to lead the Jewish services. His proficiency for languages got him a dangerous undercover assignment. When it did not go as planned, the British military quickly whisked him out of Iran, which landed him in, of all places, Casablanca. Sounds like the makings of a great movie, don't you think? In 1943, towards the end of his military tour, and during an unplanned three-month ship ride home to the U.S.A., his father passed, which Eddie unfortunately did not learn of until his arrival home.

Under the G.I. Bill, Eddie was accepted to a combined program at the Jewish Theological Seminary and the prestigious Juilliard School of Music, perfecting his cantorial, vocal, and composition skills, which would serve him well throughout his professional career. Following his first, part-time position as cantor at the Nanuet Jewish Center near his hometown of Spring Valley NY, Eddie and Adrienne moved to Miami Beach, where, from 1952-1998, he faithfully served Temples Menorah and Ner Tamid, until his retirement at the age of eighty. His synagogue concerts sold out every year. Shabbat services were like concerts and included his wonderful choir. Eddie did countless shows at the hotels, and his reputation as the "Swinging Cantor" was only surpassed by his nickname, "the Frank Sinatra of Miami Beach."

Eddie was a proud WWII veteran. His family was privileged to have a United States Army honor guard take part during the interment service. One of Eddie's proudest moments was

his participation in Honor Flight South Florida, an organization that helps transport veterans to Washington, DC, to visit their respective memorials—especially WWII veterans, who waited over sixty years for a memorial to be built to recognize their service and accomplishments.

Hazzan Edward "Eddie" Klein exemplified a life of dedication to family, to his beloved profession, and to Jewish music. His was a life of bravery and service to his country, especially in time of war. *Yehi zikhro barukh*– may Eddie's dear memory be an eternal blessing and may his gift of voice and song abide and abound as an enduring inspiration to his family and colleagues.

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Bradlee Kurland (1954-2023)
Remembered by Linda Shivers

We have lost another sweet singer of Israel, and too soon. Hehazzan Dov Yitzhak ben Mordecai v'Haya, Cantor Bradlee Kurland grew up in Swampscott, MA. I met Brad at the Cantors Institute on our first day of classes there in 1980. We studied together all four years. Brad recorded everything important on cassette tapes, and saved it all. Whenever he saw me, he started by singing "*Linda de mi corazon.*" He even started with those words on an email to me. It made me feel good every time; he was good at making people feel good.

After Brad graduated from the CI, he went to his first and only pulpit at Herzl-Ner Tamid in Seattle, WA and faithfully served there for 39 years. Brad earned a Masters degree in counseling from Hebrew College and spent two sabbaticals in Israel.

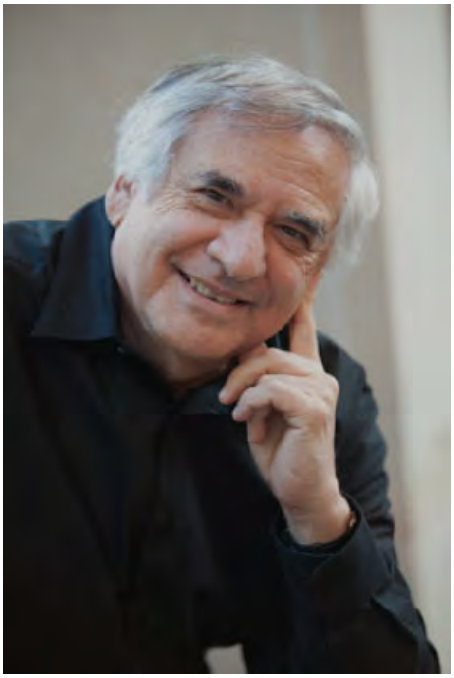
Cantor Brad was known for sing-alongs, and his love for children, Israel, the Seattle Mariners, dancing and cooking. (His parents ran a diner, so Brad may have acquired his love of cooking there.) He expertly played the accordion and was fluent in Hebrew and Yiddish.

The shul was packed for the funeral and additional people attended on Zoom. As Rabbi Jay Rosenbaum (his rabbi for 17 years) said, "It was easy to love a loving person." And he was loving! Many people said "He was the heart and soul of Herzl-Ner Tamid."

He left behind his devoted wife, Sandy Samuels, his three children, Akiva, Talya and Noam, and a large congregation of admirers. He had warmth and humor and was a traditional Jew. His memory will certainly be a blessing to all those whose lives he touched.

Simon Sargon (1938-2022)
Remembered by the Sargon Family

On December 25, 2022, Simon Sargon, composer, pianist, conductor, educator, and luminary in the world of Jewish music, passed away of pancreatic cancer at the age of 84. Simon established himself as a major creative figure in contemporary American Jewish music during his 27-year tenure as Director of Music at Temple Emanu-El in Dallas, Texas. During this period he brought the Temple Emanu-El Adult Choir into prominence, recording a CD of High Holiday music, touring extensively in the U.S., Israel, Mexico City, Toronto, London, Dublin, Birmingham, Paris, Amsterdam, Vienna, Prague, and Budapest, and conducting the Choir in performances with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. His voluminous catalog of liturgical and Jewish-themed compositions includes large-scale works and a multitude of settings of works for choir, soloists, orchestra, chamber ensemble, instrumentalists, and youth ensemble, embracing Hebrew, Yiddish, and Ladino texts and styles.



Simon's music was well-known to congregations throughout the U.S. through numerous commissions and Composer-in-Residence weekends, and to cantors through programs at the School of Sacred Music at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and Jewish choral festivals and conferences. The prestigious Milken Archive of Jewish Music includes several of his works in its collection of albums pertaining to the American Jewish experience. As a member of the Guild of Temple Musicians, Simon served for many years on the jury for the GTM's highly influential Young Composer's Award, and in 2003 the American Conference of Cantors declared him an Honorary Member in recognition of "his outstanding contributions to Jewish Music and Jewish Life." Having moved in recent years to the Washington D.C. area to be with family, Temple Sinai commemorated his 80th birthday with a concert of his music, and, in November of 2021, he introduced the world premiere of his hauntingly beautiful and dramatic multi-movement choral work, *Azkara: A Jewish Requiem,* with Cantor Azi Schwartz and the Park Avenue Synagogue Choir in New York.

Simon's influences were cross-cultural. He was born in what is now Mumbai, when Britain still ruled India, to a family with Sephardi, Indian-Jewish and Eastern European Ashkenazi roots. His family moved to Boston (after a short stop in Washington, DC) when he was an infant, and raised him there in what he called "an intensely Zionistic household." A classically trained composer and pianist, he studied with Darius Milhaud, Irving Fine, Vincent Persichetti, Miecyslaw Horszowski and Sergius Kagen, and obtained degrees from Brandeis

University and the Juilliard School. He accompanied famed mezzo-soprano Jennie Tourel on tour, and went on to teach at Sarah Lawrence College and Juilliard before serving as Head of the Voice and Opera Department at the Rubin Academy of Music (now the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance) on a grant from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation. While in Dallas, in addition to his position at Temple Emanu-El, Simon served on the music faculty of Southern Methodist University as director of the Opera Theatre and Professor of Composition, regularly performing and collaborating with the wider professional musical community and recording several CDs featuring his compositions with himself at either the podium or the piano.

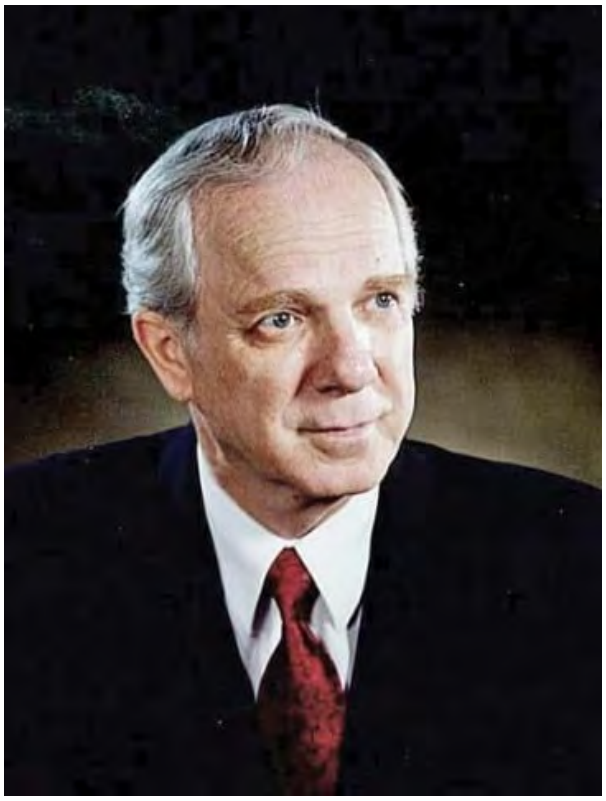
Though Simon's body of work draws inspiration from a rich multitude of sources, Jewish themes figure prominently and comprise some of his most passionate and ambitious compositions. *Symphony No. 1: Holocaust*, *Elul: Midnight - A Cantata of Penitence*, and *Tapestries*, a four-movement orchestral work based on his opera, *Saul, King of Israel*, were all performed by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra to critical acclaim. Other examples include *Azkara: A Jewish Requiem*, *KlezMuzik* for clarinet and piano, *A Voice Called*, based on the writings of Hannah Senesh, *Shema*, settings of five poems by Primo Levi, and *Ash un Flamen*, a song cycle of five Yiddish poems of the Holocaust. Of *Elul: Midnight*, a critic wrote, "it transcends sectarian limits and takes on a universal significance; it may be regarded (to borrow a phrase from Ernest Bloch) as part of the 'gift of Judaism to the whole of mankind.'"

More than these external accomplishments, however, Simon was known for his warmth, humor, and desire to educate and uplift. In his eulogy, Cantor Richard Cohn stated: "All around Simon, wherever he was, a web of resonant relationship was spun from all the beautiful strands of music intermingled with his qualities of leadership: kindness, generosity, patience, humor, and a rigorous insistence that the music and its texts, along with the people who sang and played, would become fully known and understood." Temple Emanu-El's Senior Rabbi David Stern writes: "Simon's enduring impact on our congregation is inestimable: His creative gifts of heart and mind and his deep Jewish soul shaped our congregation's sense of the holy within the worship experience and beyond it. He nurtured a culture of love, devotion, and artistic promise within our Temple choir. He was a major creative figure in American Jewish music, but just as much, friend and teacher to all of us here at his Temple home. He was a true artist and a true *mensch*, with a remarkable ability to channel, shape and share the sound of the Jewish heart."

Simon explained his aspirations and creative process with these words: "We all have God Divine inside of us, and what I try to do is bring out the divineness inside of me, so that it will draw out that divine inside the listener. That's my goal, even in the lighter music. If I can get to that pure essence of who I am as a unique human being, with a soul that God has implanted in me, if I can express that truly and honestly and sincerely, then that will speak to your honest and sincere soul."

Simon leaves behind his wife of 63 years, Bonnie, a singer who performed many of his works, as well as his daughter, two siblings, and two grandchildren. May his memory be a blessing and may his legacy continue through the music he created.

Ben Steinberg (1930-2023)
Remembered by Charles Osborne



There are undoubtedly thousands of stories to be told about how Ben Steinberg touched people's lives: as a lecturer and teacher, as a conductor, through his glorious musical compositions, as a scholar of global reputation and impact, as a sage advisor, or as an advocate for the best possible music for the synagogue, and for the importance and continuing role of the cantorate. A lifetime of accomplishment lived with unfailing positivity, good humor, and kindness.

Here in Toronto, however, casual conversation about the man has less to do with the fact that he was artist-in-residence for the City of Jerusalem, and more to do with how someone had played cello in one of Ben's high school orchestras. One of my congregational choir members recalls how, as an eight year old, he sang in Ben's children's chorus at Holy Blossom for the installation of Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut.

Here are a few of my recollections:

May, 2011: at the annual Cantors Convention, walking down a hallway in the hotel in downtown Toronto one morning, and hearing a cheery and quite familiar voice behind me saying: "Well, there's my old friend Charles Osborne!" I turn and see Ben and his wife, Machi, walking towards me. We had a lovely visit that day. A few days later, after breakfast on Thursday morning, I distinctly remember pulling out of the parking garage for the long drive back to my home in Pennsylvania and thinking to myself: "I wonder what it would be like having a job in a city like this?"

Almost exactly one year later, it was another Thursday, this time in the afternoon. Walking towards my truck in the parking lot at Hebrew College in Newton, MA after a day of teaching, my phone rings. On the line is the then Director of Placement for the Cantors Assembly, Hazzan Robert Scherr, who asks me: "How would you like to interview at Ben Steinberg's place?"

I recall my earliest exposure to Ben's music singing in various New York-area synagogues in the 1970's, and most likely in Hazzan Henry Rosenblum's choir at Oheb Shalom

in South Orange, New Jersey. Ben's settings of *Eilu D'varim* and *Adon Olam* based on a tune from the Island of Djerba became staples of my duet repertoire, while Ben's classic *Shalom Rav* was always a welcome addition to Shabbat evening services.

I believe Ben and I first met in person at the Zamir Choral Foundation's very first North American Jewish Choral Festival. There were a number of wonderful choirs represented, and precisely two congregational choirs in attendance: Temple Emanuel of Newton Centre, MA conducted by Cantor Charles Osborne, and Temple Sinai Congregation of Toronto, Ontario conducted by Dr. Ben Steinberg.

By the time I interviewed at Temple Sinai in Toronto in spring of 2012, Ben had already been retired some 16 years, after having served that congregation as its Director of Music for a quarter century, but still maintaining his office in the building with the title Composer-In-Residence. If Ben had established his reputation in synagogue music at Holy Blossom, he and Machi had established a home at Sinai, the place where they raised their children, and their children raised their grandchildren. Universally loved and admired, Ben was an integral part of the community. He would, for example, host Temple Sinai's Yiddish Night, sharing the dais with another Temple Sinai celebrity, actor Harvey Atkin (*Meatballs*, *Cagney and Lacey*, *Law and Order*).

I still chuckle to myself remembering my audition/interview at Sinai. Machi was on the selection committee; Ben was not only not on the committee, he spent the evening reminding everyone that he was not on the committee, as he "worked the room" as my self-appointed advocate.

Moving into my office six weeks later, there were a couple of things that were impossible to ignore about Ben's office, located right across the hall: 1. Ben was one of the most amazingly well-organized people I've ever met. Having worked with any number of extraordinary musicians who maintained a desk or a table in their office piled high with a jumble of music and books (sadly, a practice I have perpetuated), there was none of that with Ben. His music files consist of two huge filing cabinets containing copies of all his works, as well as copies of the music of every other composer he ever utilized, all in matching yellow hanging folders, filed alphabetically, with typewritten tabs. It is a wealth of music and has proven an invaluable resource; 2. Ben was blessed with the gift of handiness. Possessing superior carpentry and furniture building ability, as well as a fully equipped woodworking shop at home, Ben had fashioned for himself an outsized music desk for his office piano, perfect for use by a composer to notate music. I was so taken by the idea that I made one for myself to fit on my office piano.

Preparing for my first High Holidays at Sinai, I was exposed for the first time to a line up of music selected by Ben, and representing the cream of 20th century synagogue composers: besides himself, Binder, Freed, Lazar Weiner, and a fair bit of Max Janowsky.

Janowsky was someone Ben and I spent a fair amount of time discussing. Janowsky and Ben became friends towards the end of Janowsky's career, and the beginning of Ben's. Ben readily admitted that Max Janowsky was a controversial figure ("People either loved him or

hated him."), but he, like Ben, was also a great proponent of the use of the organ in synagogue worship.

Ben was a firm adherent to the adage: If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything. He would spend conventions dodging certain composers anxious to get an opinion of their work from the great Ben Steinberg, knowing that he would have nothing positive to say to them. This is not to say, however, that he couldn't or wouldn't get his point of view across, and with more than a little wit. Two favorite examples: on witnessing a job interview by a less than impressive candidate who touted six years' experience in their chosen field: "There's a lot of difference between having six years of experience, and having six one-year experiences." And this response, when asked about the topic of a High Holiday sermon delivered by an interim rabbi: "Good is better than Evil because it's nicer."

The son of a *hazzan* and an avid scholar, Ben was exceptionally knowledgeable of Jewish music, and synagogue music especially. Like Moses, he was the humblest of men, but he also had a healthy ego, once admitting to me that, as a young man, he not only liked the feeling of knowing everything, he liked the feeling of being perceived as knowing everything!

Ben was also helpful in verifying certain historical facts. For example, he verified without a doubt, and in contrast to certain scholarly works on the subject, that it was Mike Isaacson who started the Jewish camp music movement, as Ben had been the *Rosh Musica* at that camp that particular summer.

Ben not only inherited a love of *Hazzanut* from his *hazzan* father, but also a very pleasing tenor voice, which I heard him put to excellent use during a concert at Holy Blossom, when, in his mid-80s, he more than held his own singing his duet setting of *Niggun Talmidei Besht* with Hazzan Beny Maissner.

As Ben got older, his creative musical skills were devoted to revoicing the accompaniments of his published vocal works from organ to piano, and putting together care packages for me of books and music he thought I might find of interest. And as the years went by, it was my pleasure to bring guests and friends down to the front lobby of our building, and show them the four portraits hanging there: Ben Steinberg; my current Rabbi, colleague and friend Michael Dolgin; our late Cantor Emeritus Severin Weingort; and our congregation's founding Rabbi, Jordan Pearlson. It was Rabbi Pearlson who brought Ben to Temple Sinai, and gave Ben *carte blanche* to pursue his creativity. It was while at Temple Sinai that Ben was artist-in-residence of the City of Jerusalem, and made the trip to Japan that created the extraordinary bond between Temple Sinai and the Ayelet Hashachar Choir of Japan. So many of Ben's pieces are dedicated either to Rabbi Pearlson or to Temple Sinai, and it is with great pride that I serve in the Sanctuary where much of this music was first heard.

In time, Ben gave up his office in the building, and sometime soon after the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic he and Machi moved to The Terraces, an assisted living facility at Toronto's Baycrest Hospital. For the longest time, visiting was out of the question for anyone, and, after a while, only available to registered caregivers. I would call when I could, but it was

not nearly often enough. If it is true that a person loses their emotional filters as they decline, and that their true personality emerges, then Ben had to have had the personality of an angel.

The last time I saw Ben was Friday, December 15, 2022, 8th Day of Hanukkah. Our Temple staff accompanist Sue Piltch and I were giving an impromptu Hanukkah concert in the lobby of the Terraces when Machi and Ben walked in. I sat down at the piano and played and sang *Shalom Rav*, possibly the last time he heard it. After, Sue and I sat down with Ben and Machi for a most pleasant visit. Ben may not have been able to hold up as much of his end of the conversation as he would have liked, but he was very much himself: outgoing and personable, and for a little while again we were two old friends enjoying each other's company

I was on a brief holiday when Rabbi Dolgin called to alert me that Ben had a heart attack, and would not be leaving the hospital. Returning to Toronto, my first act was to start a list of the organizations and persons I thought should be alerted immediately. My second act was to start preparing the music for the funeral. The family had requested organ and flute be used at the service. I spent the day on Friday, February 10 going through Ben's music files at the Temple. It was just about sundown that I learned of Ben's passing.

The family had requested Ben's *Esa Einai* and *Shalom Rav*, leaving the rest to me. I decided to use his *Oseh Shalom* and *Azi V'zimrat Yah* as prelude music, and start the actual service with the *Esa Einai*. One of our former assistant cantors, Katie Oringel, returned from her current position in Larchmont, New York to be with us, so I asked her to sing that, as well as a duet version of *Shalom Rav* I had created for the event. I had also come across two handwritten vocal line manuscripts of Ben's: an *Eil Malei Rahamim*, which I arranged for cantor, organ and flute, (see pp. 149-151) and an *Adonai Roi*, which I sang *a cappella* as we recessed out of the sanctuary. In addition to Rabbi Dolgin and Cantor Oringel, I was joined by Sue Piltch on flute, and our High Holiday choir conductor Ross Inglis on organ. It was a labor of love for all of us, and an expression of thanks for having known this extraordinary man, Ben Steinberg.

OUR SEPTEMBER 2024 ISSUE
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Advice from an Eighteenth Century Cantor:
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by David Berger

Uncovering the Music Theory of Ashkenazi Liturgical Music:
***Adonai Malakh* as a Case Study**
by Boaz Tarsi

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