Jewish Music

A Concise Study
by
Mehmet Okonşar

[the appendices, containing copyrighted material are removed in this copy]

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Abstract

The very wide subject of Jewish music will be examined in this study from the point of view of the contemporary composer.

I will try here to spotlight some key musical elements like modes, rhythms, *maqams*, timbre etc., show there usage in actual compositions by Jewish and non-Jewish composers like in Prokofieff's *Overture sur des Thèmes Juifs*[1] or in the 13th. Symphony by Dmitri Shostakovich "Babi Yar".

Musical form, prosody, timbre and other aspects of the tgraditional Jewish religious music types *Piyyut, Zemirot, Nigun, Pizmonim, Baqashot* will be shortly examined from a composer's point of view because the author believes they possess a high "inspirational potential".

This essay will first briefly present known archaeological information about the Jewish music in pre-Biblical and Biblical times. It will attempt to collect the most reliable information on the music as it was performed in the Temple of Solomon.

Medieval Judaic musical practices will be searched in the *Michna* and the *Talmud*, those together with the musical score data collected by various researchers like Idelsohn[2][4] or the *Russian Society for Jewish Music*[3] and presently available in ethno-musicological archives in Israel[4] and elsewhere will be used in an attempt to describe a "generic Jewish music vocabulary" with its most characteristic rhythms, modes and musical timbres.

Some contemporary Jewish composers and their music, musical language and backgrounds will be presented.

It is hoped that this material can be of interest to composers, presenting them with resources crystallized from joy, sorrow, despair, horror, dream and faith.

[1]Overture on Hebrew Themes, for Clarinet, Piano and String Quartet, Op 34. Composed in 1919

[2]Abraham Zebi Idelsohn, "Jewish Music: Its Historical Development"

[3]see Appendix:, page:64

[4]The Hebrew University in Jerusalem, see Appendix:, page:66

Introduction: What Is Jewish Music?

There is two kind of general approaches to the subject. One is a very precise and sharp definition of the Jewish music as:

> "Music composed by Jews for the Jews as Jews"[1]

and the other is a composer's point of view:

> It is not my purpose, nor my desire, to attempt a *reconstitution* of Jewish music, or to base my work on melodies more or less authentic. I am not an archaeologist...
>
> It is the Jewish soul that interests me...the freshness and naiveté of the Patriarchs; the violence of the Prophetic books; the Jewish savage love of justice...[2]

The first definition, though somewhat limiting, can be sharply defining the frighteningly wast subject matter of this research.

But, as a composer, I will bend here towards the composer Ernest Bloch's approach.

Jewish music can and is studied from the points of view of historical, liturgical and non-liturgical music of the Hebrews dating from the pre-Biblical times (Pharaonic Egypt); religious music at the first and second Solomon's Temples; musical activities immediately following the *Exodus*[3]; the (seemingly?) impoverished religious musical activities during the early middle ages; the emergence of the concept of *Jewish Music* in the mid-19th century; in its nation-oriented sense as coined by the landmark book *Jewish Music in its Historical Development* (1929) by A. Z. Idelsohn (1882-1938)[**?**] and finally as the art and popular music of Israel.

[1] Curt Sachs in his address to the First World Congress of Jewish Music in Paris, 1957[1]

[2] Ernest Bloch (18801959). Quoted in Mary Tibaldi Chiesa, "Ernest Bloch - The Jewish Composer" in Musica Hebraica, Volume 1-2 (Jerusalem, 1938)

[3] Following the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE

More specific focusing areas can be spotted as the influences of the Hebraic liturgical music at the Talmudic times to the Gregorian chants, the usage and their differentiation of a common *maqam* melodic vocabulary shared by people inhabiting the Israel-Palestine region.

Early emergences of Jewish musical themes and of what may be called "the idea of being Jew" in European music can be examined in the works of Salamone Rossi (1570-1630), in the works of the famous Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn's (1729-1786) grandson: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847). Fromental Halévy's (1799-1862) opera *La Juive* and its occasional use of some Jewish themes can be an auxiliary research subject as compared to the lack of "anything Jew" in his almost contemporary fellow composer Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880) who was actually Jew and grew up in straight Jewish tradition.

The seemingly endless subject can include the St. Petersburg Society for Jewish Music led by the composer-critic Joel Engel (1868-1927) on how they discovered their Jewish roots, inspired by the Nationalistic movement in the Russian music as exemplified by Rimsky-Korsakov, César Cui and others, and how set out to the *Shtetls*[1] and meticulously recorded and transcribed thousands of Yiddish folksongs.

Ernst Bloch's (1880-1959) *Schelomo* for cello and orchestra and specially *Sacred Service* for orchestra, choir and soloists seems to be an attempt to create a "Jewish Requiem".

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968)'s Sephardic[2] upbringings and their influences on his music as they appear in his *Second Violin Concerto* and in many of his songs and choral works; cantatas *Naomi and Ruth, Queen of Shiba* and in the oratorio *The Book of Jonah* among others are worth noting as well.

Many scholars did not missed the borrowed Synagogue motives in George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*. Gershwin biographer Edward Jablonski has claimed that the melody to "It Ain't Necessarily So" was taken from the *Haftarah* blessing[3] and others have attributed it to the *Torah* blessing[4].

---

[1]The Jewish villages of Russia

[2]One of the main Jewish ethnic groups (such as the Ashkenazi, the Oriental and the Ethiopian) based on geographical and cultural identity, Sephardics are originally from the Iberian peninsula and settled from 1492 in the Ottoman Empire, North Africa and western Europe

[3]Jablonski, Edward. Gershwin. New York: Doubleday, (1987). Cited in Benaroya, Adam (May 2000). "The Jewish Roots in George Gershwins Music". I.L. Peretz Community Jewish School.

[4]Pareles, Jon (January 29, 1997). "History of a Nation in Its Song to Itself" . New York Times.

In Gershwin's some 800 songs allusions to Jewish music have been detected by other observers as well. One musicologist detected "an uncanny resemblance" between the folk tune "Havenu Shalom Aleichem" and the spiritual "It Take a Long Pull to Get There"[1].

One can also dig into the works of contemporary Israeli composers such as Chaya Czernowin, Betty Olivera, Tsippi Fleisher, Mark Kopytman, Yitzhak Yedid.

There are also very important non-Jew contributors to the Jewish music, Maurice Ravel with his *Kaddish* for violin and piano based on a traditional liturgical melody; Max Bruch's famous arrangement of the *Yom Kippur* prayer *Kol Nidrei* for cello and orchestra[2].

Sergei Prokofieff's *Overture sur des Thèmes Juives* for string quartet, piano and clarinet clearly display its inspirational sources in non-religious Jewish music. The melodic, modal, rhythmical materials and the use of the clarinet as a leading melodic instrument is a very typical sound in folk and non-religious Jewish music.

Dmitri Shostakovich was deeply influenced by Jewish music as well. This can be seen in many of his compositions, most notably in the song cycle *From Jewish Folk Poetry*, and in the *Second Piano Trio*. However his most outstanding contribution to the Jewish culture is without doubt the 13th. Symphony *Babi Yar*.

[1] Whitfield, Stephen J. (September 1999).

[2] Many versions of that piece exists. It is often performed with viola and piano as well as with clarinet and piano

How Many Jewish Musics?

To grasp the variety of Jewish music one must first look at the world-wide dispersion of the Jews following the *Exodus* and the three main communities who formed. Those branches in their geographical dispersion covering all continents and with their unique relations with local communities have given birth to various kinds of music as well as languages and customs.

The Three Main Streams

Following the exile, according to geographical settlements, Jews formed three main branches: Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Mizrahi.

Roughly they are located as follows: Ashkenazi in Eastern and Western Europe, the Balkans, (to a lesser extend) in Turkey and Greece; Sephardi in Spain, Maroc, North Africa and later in the Ottoman Empire (Turkey); Mizrahi in Lebanon, Syria, East Asia, Iraq, Yemen, Egypt.

The music of those communities naturally entered into contact with local ones and evolved accordingly.

Ashkenazi and the Klezmer

"Ashkenazi" refers to Jews who in the 9.th century started to settle on the banks of the Rhine.

Today the term "Ashkenazi" designate most of the European and Western Jews.

Besides the Hebrew, Yiddish[1] is commonly used in speech and songs.

The traditional Ashkenazi music originated in Eastern Europe and moved to all directions from there and also to North America. It includes the famous *Klezmer* music. *Klezmer* means "instruments of song", from the Hebrew word

[1]Derived from Medieval German in the 10th. century, Yiddish evolved as a unique hybrid of German, Hebrew and other dialects which were in use in that time by those Jews.

klei zemer[1]. The word come to designate the musician himself and it is not unlike the European *troubadour*.

Klezmer is a very popular genre which can be seen in Hasidic[2] and Ashkenazic Judaism it is however deeply connected with the Ashkenazi tradition.

Around the 15th century, a tradition of secular Jewish music was developed by musicians called *kleyzmorim* or *kleyzmerim*. They draw on devotional traditions extending back into Biblical times, and their musical legacy of klezmer continues to evolve today. The repertoire is largely dance songs for weddings and other celebrations. Due to the Ashkenazi lineage of this music, the lyrics, terminology and song titles are typically in Yiddish.

Originally naming the musicians themselves in mid-20th Century the word started to identify a musical genre, it is also sometimes referred to as "Yiddish" music.

Sephardi

"Sephardi" literally means Spanish, and designate Jews from mainly Spain but also North Africa, Greece and Egypt.

Following the expulsion of all non-Christians, forced to convert to Christianism or to the exile in 1492, the very rich, cultivated and fruitful Jewish culture existing in Spain has migrated massively into the Ottoman Empire and thus constitute the main brach of Jews living currently in Turkey.

Their language besides the Hebrew is called *Ladino*. *Ladino* is a 15th. century of Spanish. Much of their musical repertoire is in that language. The Sephardi music mixes many elements from traditional Arab, North African, Turkish idioms.

In medieval Spain, "canciones" being performed at the royal courts constitued the basis of the Sephardic music.

Spiritual, ceremonial and entertainment songs all coexists in Sephardic music. Lyrics are generally Hebrew for religious songs and Ladino for othersf Sephardic songs – topical and

The genre in its spread to North Africa, Turkey, Greece, the Balkans and Egypt assimilated many musical elements. Including the North African high-

[1]Jewish Virtual Library: `http://jewishvirtuallibrary.com`

[2]Hasidism is a religious movement which arose among the Polish Jews in the eighteenth century, and which won over nearly half of the Jewish masses. In its literal meaning the word "asidism" is identical with *pietism*. The asidic teachings assign the first place in religion not to religious dogma and ritual, but to the sentiment and the emotion of faith. Presenting in its inner motives one of the most peculiar phenomena of religious psychology in general, asidism should in Jewish history be classed among the most momentous spiritual revolutions that have influenced the social life of the Jews, particularly those of eastern Europe. Source: `http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/`

pitched, extended ululations; Balkan rhythms, for instance in 9/8 time; and the Turkish maqam modes.

Woman voice is often preferred while the instruments included the "oud" and "qanun" which are not traditionally Jewish instruments.

Some popular Sephardic music has been released as commercial recordings in the early 20th Century. Among the first popular singers of the genre were men and included the Turks Jack Mayesh, Haim Efendi and Yitzhak Algazi. Later, a new generation of singers arose, many of whom were not themselves Sephardic. Gloria Levy, Pasharos Sefardíes and Flory Jagoda.

Mizrahi

"Mizrahi" means Eastern and refers to Jews of Eastern Mediterranean and further to the East.

The music also mixes local traditions. Actually a very "eastern flavored" musical tradition which encompasses Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and as east as India.

Middle Eastern percussion instruments share an important part with the violin in typical Mizrahi songs. The music is usually high pitched in general.

In Israel today Mizrahi music is very popular.

A "Muzika Mizrahit" movement emerged in the 1950s. Mostly with with performers from the ethnic neighborhoods of Israel: the Yemenite "Kerem HaTemanim" neighborhood of Tel Aviv, Moroccan, Iranian and Iraqi immigrants - who played at weddings and other events.

Songs were performed in Hebrew but with a clear Arabic style on traditional Arabic instruments: the "Oud", the "Kanun", and the "darbuka".

Classic Hebrew literature, including liturgical texts and poems by medieval Hebrew poets constitued the main source of lyrics.

Sephardi or Mizrahi?

For many the division is simply East and West. West being known as "Ashkenazi", the Eastern Sephardi and Mizrahi get often mixed in current parlance.

Adding to this, today in Israel there are two major religious delineations each with their own Rabbinate and Liturgy: Ashkenazi and Sephardi. It is true that over the centuries the Sephardi and Mizrahi Rabbinates were much more closely connected than each other with the Ashkenazi one.

While studying Jewish music, distinction must be made between those two Eastern branches since their music shows important differences. The

Mizrahi music is much more close to Eastern musical traditions while the Sephardi music is something like a bridge between East and West.

Genres of Liturgical Music

Music in Jewish Liturgy

There are a wide collection of, sometimes conflicting, writings on all aspects of using music in the Judaic liturgy. The most agreed-upon facts are that the women voice should be excluded from religious ceremony[1] and the usage of musical instruments should be banned in Synagogue service[2].

However some other Rav's dictums soften those positions but not regarding the female voice. In weddings, for instance, the Talmudic statement "to gladden the groom and bride with music" can be seen as a way to allow making instrumental and non-religious music at the weddings but this was probably to be done outside the Synagogue.

The very influential writings of the Spanish Rabbi, also a physician and philosopher, Maimonides (1135-1204) on one hand opposed harshly against all form of music not totally at the service of religious worship and on the other hand recommended instrumental music for its healing powers[1].

Healing powers and mysterious formulæ hidden inside musical scores was commonly sought after in music scores during middle-ages, renaissance and pre-Baroque epochs. Interestingly, in a recently published fiction novel *Imprimatur*[3] by the musicologist Rita Monaldi and co-author Francesco Solti the whole plot is built-up around a composition of Salamone Rossi (1570-1630), an important Jewish composer.

Jewish mystical treatises, like the Kabbala, particularly since the 13th.

[1] Babylonian Talmud, *Berakhot* 24a[1]

[2] Babylonian Talmud, *Sotah* 48a[1]

[3] The novel, an historical thriller set in Rome in the XVII century, translated in 20 languages and 45 countries, is the most successful Italian historical novel after *The name of the Rose* and one of the most extraordinary literary cases of the last years. It is the September 11th 1683. The Muslims are mustering on Western borders and Vienna is withstanding the siege. The alliance which joins or divides the Pope and the kings or several European countries and the terror by which every citizen of Christianity is gripped are the important factors which trigger the plot of the novel. Source: `http://www.attomelani.net/index.php/english/imprimatur-synopsis/`

century often deal with ethical, magical and therapeutic powers of music. The enhancement of the religious experience with music, particularly with singing is expressed in many places.

Even though there is no unified positions concerning music in the Jewish thought two main ideas seem to emerge. First is that the music is the authentic expression of human feelings in religious life.

In this idea of "feelings" in the religious experience the Hassidic tradition of *Nigunim* singing should have a very special place. In this form of musical expression there is no words, not even religious words. A *Nigun* (plural: *nigumim* is a homophonic choral music sung on "vocalises" like "plum, plum..." or "ai ,ai...". There is a controversy on the matter of: are *nigunim* improvised or composed. Even though some authors claim that *nigunim* are improvised the information I got from observant Jews who have actually sung the *nigunim* is that they are actually composed and learned. Even as they are not polyphonic but homophonic, it would have been still very difficult for gifted but not professionally trained singers to improvise a three or fourth part choral without learning the harmonies, So at least a raw harmonic frame and melodic structure must have been preset and practiced before thus it can not be said to be a real improvisation.

This particular form of musical expression can be seen as a way of communion with God through only feelings. Not "learned" nor practiced phrases and words. In this sense it is the actual opposite of Torah cantillations who are codified, studied and practiced.

The other main idea of music in Judaic observance is that the human voice overrules that of instrumental music[1].

Genres, Instruments and Performers

Generalities

Traditionally twelve male singers, representing the twelve tribes of Israel alongside with a dominant male (solo) singer which will be referred to later on as *cantor* constitute the most non-equivocal constituents of the traditional Jewish liturgical music.

Bible Cantillation

Synagogue chanting, more precisely Torah cantillation is the oldest surviving Jewish religious music genre It have been always present throughout

the history and the importance of the *cantor* in Synagogue service dates back to the First Temple Period.

This is a highly specialized task. Some sort of "notation" was supposed to be set probably during the middle-ages.

Cantillation is rendered according to special sign which can be seen as a pre-musical-notation form. A special scripting of the Tanakh[1] with accents and signs to complement the letters and vowel points is used. These marks are known in English as accents and in Hebrew as "ta'amei ha-mikra" or just "te'amim". This notation is of Medieval origins. For more details on the cantillations signs see section:, page: 20 and `http://www.musicofthebible.com/`

Figure 1: "te'amim" Passage of the *Tanach* with accentuation and markings for the cantillation.

Some medieval manuscripts of the Mishnah also wear similar signs. This example demonstrate the "codified" and specialized nature of the cantillation. Even though this was set probably in the European communities during the middle-ages it can be safely supposed that cantillation has been codified very early in synagogue service.

Three functions are commonly attributed to the cantillation signs:

Syntax The Torah is written without punctuation marks nor chapter, verses divisions. This function is a convenient syntactic subdivision marker.

Phonetics The pronunciation is clearly indicated by marking the syllable where the accent falls

Music Those marks also indicate, to some extend comparable to the earliest plain-chant notation, high-low pitch settings.

It must be kept in mind however that this tradition of cantillation, just like the Muslim Qur'an reading is not considered as "music" but as a form of religious service.

[1]The Tanakh (also Tanach, , Tenakh or Tenak) is the Hebrew name of the Bible used in Judaism. It is an acronym formed from the initial Hebrew letters of the Tanakh's three traditional subdivisions: Torah, Nevi'im and Ketuvim - hence TaNaKh. It is incorporated in the Christian Bibles, where, with some variations, it is called the Old Testament.

Not unlike Gregorian neumes, Masorite editions of the Hebrew text have different symbols attached to the Hebrew letters. One of them is the vowel pointings, as the Hebrew originally does not contain vowels, and the second is the cantillation marks.

Here is a comparative example of the markings:

Figure 2: Comparative markings for vowels and cantillations

Vowel pointings are a great help in the correct pronunciation and understanding of the original Hebrew. The meaning of the words can drastically change with the pronunciation.

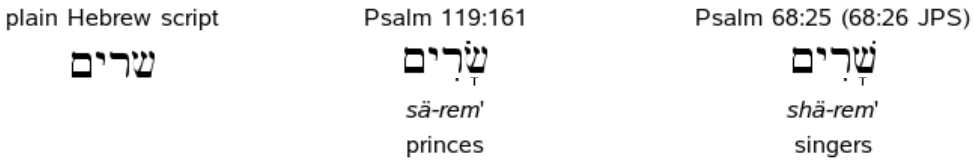

Figure 3: Pronunciation changes according to the vowels pointings

Te'amim, the cantillation marks have two purposes. One is the correct accentuation of the syllables and the second is to provide a ground for proper cantillation.

Usually the vowel pointings and the cantillation marks go together but for the purposes of this short study the examples are given with te'amim only.

There are ten symbols used in the book of Psalms and one sign for the vocal "shake" shown far right in the example below:

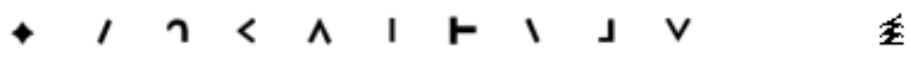

Figure 4: All ten te'amim and the vocal shake symbol (far right)

The Cantor

The *cantor*, hazzan, chazzan or khazn, is a central figure in all traditional religious Jewish Music. He's a jewish musician-synagogue official, trained in vocal arts and his duty includes but sometimes extends beyond leading the community in songful prayer.

This male singer is supposed to lead the congregation in its psalmody of the *Torah*, he was probably "giving the tone" by singing first the verse and his voice ought to be impressive in its beauty and eloquence.

However it is interesting to note that this tradition of a *cantor* has gone underground during several centuries following the *diaspora*. It only re-emerged in the late 19th. century in Germany and organized (or re-organized) in music schools and formal training.

I believe this is a (the?) reason for Dmitri Shostakovich choosing for his 13th. Symphony *Babi Yar* bass vocal solo and male choir.

Only Jewish males can have the role in Traditional Jewish law, other non-orthodox movements do allow women, over the age of 12 to be a "hazzan".Reform Judaism, Conservative Judaism, and Reconstructionist Judaism invest both men and women cantors as full clergy.

In the present day, a "hazzan"s are more likely to have musical degrees, formal training in both music and religious matters. Yet in the more orthodox synagogues the prominent position of the "hazzan" seems to have gradually diminished.

Prayer-Chant

Many prayers from the usual prayer books the *Amidah* and the *Psalms* are usually sung rather than read. Modes, scales (Ashkenazi) and *maqams*(Sephardi

and Mizrahi) are used. Often, scales and *maqams* are fixed for given prayers at given times and Holidays. Some melodies are also set while other prayers are more often improvised.

Piyyutim

A *Piyyut* (plural: *piyyutim*) is a Jewish liturgical poem to be chanted or recited during religious services. They date back to the Temple times and are mostly in Hebrew or Aramaic. *Piyyutim* often has traditional melodies but they vary greatly among different communities. Often there are several melodies for one well-known *piyyut*.

Zemirot

With lyrics taken form rabbis and sages of the middle ages, *zemirot* (singular: *zemer*) are Jewish hymns most often sung around the table on *Shabbat* and Holidays. Mostly in Hebrew or Aramaic they may be occasionally in Ladino or Yiddish as well.

Nigunim

Nigun "humming tune" in Hebrew. They are sung in groups, mostly as *homophonic* chorals. Songs are without any lyrics or words, syllables like "bim-bim-bam" or "Ai-ai-ai!" are often used. Rarely some biblical verses or quotes from other classical Jewish texts are sung in the form of a *nigun* as well.

Hasidism seemed to re-launch an interest in Jewish music.This (rather conservative) Jewish movement is emphasizing "emotional devotion" more than the common "erudical" devotion. Hasidic groups often have their own *nigunim*, composed by their *Rebbe* or leader. It is customary to gather around in holidays to sing in groups. There are also *nigunim* for individual meditation, called *devekus* or *devekut* (connecting with God) nigunim. These are usually much slower than around-the-table nigunim, and are almost always sung without lyrics.

The Baal Shem Tov, founder of Hasidism, spoke of *devekus* nigunim as "songs that transcend syllables and sound." Several tunes attributed to him are still used today.

Iyyun, an Jewish spiritual center located in New York who presents its mission as:

> Iyyun: (ee-YUN) (hebrew) mindful examination; deep exploration; introspection

Figure 5: Nigun by Walter Spitzer

> IYYUN, an organization dedicated to the study and experience of Jewish spirituality, explores the three dimensions of human reality: The Mind, The Heart and The Body.
>
> IYYUN creates opportunities for people of all backgrounds to deeply examine and understand the intellectual, emotional and physical within themselves in the light of Jewish spiritual teachings and the wisdom of the Torah.
>
> IYYUN seeks to unify the disparate intellectual, emotional and physical dimensions of the human experience into a complete whole, empowering men and women to realize their full potential and together, build a global spiritual community.

nicely comments in its web-site on this "emotional" prayer-form:

> Wherein Neitzsche suggested that the "fire magic of music" is to be found in its anti-rationality, and what he sought in music was its "ecstatic irrationality," the Jewish mystic looks to unveil within music its transcendence. Perhaps not the transcendence within the music itself, as some would argue that music is nothing more than "sonorous air" or, as Leibniz had it, "unconscious arithmetic"; rather the reaction to the music, the transcendence reached as one reacts to the music.

A wordless tune-as is much of Jewish mystical song, particularly Chassidic[1]-is the way two individuals can communicate on a soulular[sic] transcendent level. Any breakdown in the verbal communicated mode can be repaired by creating a conduit that transcends words. When a person feels alienated from his Source, or for that manner, from his fellow man, a wordless tune which exists on a realm that defies distinctions, separations, and disharmony, is the most fitting remedy, causing a unity of souls.

Biblical Instrumentarium

Biblical data abounds in the way of how music was performed at those times, however this seems to conflict with the more than meagre archaeological findings[6]. However some instruments are known to be used in the Temple of Salomon.

Figure 6: Coins from the *Bar-Kochba* revolt period.

Shofar The Biblical "horn". It is played in a very specific and religiously meaningful way. It may be considered the instrument who was always present in the Jewish liturgy. Its role was symbolical more than "musical" in the sense that the patterns performed by the *shofar* have very precise meanings and they are always to be played as such, this is no "musical performance" but a religious act. Music as it is commonly understood is made actually by vocals.

Other instruments There are conflicting reports on the use of instruments in the traditional Synagogue services. Some reliable sources ...cite... indicate that some "orchestra" was in use in the Temple of Salomon and the usage of instruments has been banned only later, around middle-ages. Some instruments, specially percussion, worth mentionning[6][2]:

[1] Chassidic another spelling for "Hassidic"

[2] all images in this section are from: `http://www.musicofthebible.com/harp.htm`

- Ási beroshim: Wood clappers. Modern studies interpret it as a cypress-wood clapper. Evidence exists for the use of bone clappers in the shape of the head of the goddess Hathor in Canaan in the late Bronze Age, and it is probable that clappers made of the widespread local cypress were used for ritual and pararitual mass events during the period of the Kings (10th8th centuries bce).
- Halil: It is commonly translated as "flute" but it may also be a double or single-reed instrument. This view is closer to the talmudic literature (Mishnah, Arakhin ii.3), and to the modern musicology (Sachs, 1940; Bayer, 1968; Marcuse, 1975). However some scholars, following the Jerusalem Talmud (Sukkah 55b), use it as a collective term for wind instruments (Gerson-Kiwi, 1957; Sendrey, 1969).

  The instrument is mentionned to be used for rejoicings as well as lamentations. Talmudic texts indicate that the *halil* was made of reed (Mishnah, Arakhin ii.3) or bone (Mishnah, Kelim iii.6). Some archaeological findings shows that it may be sometimes plated with copper or bronze.
- Hassrah: A kind of trumpet. Unlike the shofar the hassrah had an everyday use as attested by the post-biblical literature (Mishnah, Rosh ha-shanah iii.3) and the apocalyptic Qumran scroll "The War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness" (1QM ii.15iii.11 and vii.1ix.9), it had also a war-like function.(Seidel, 19567). For those occasions the played was depicted as "long, drawn-out tone", a "sharp, blaring tone", and a "great warlike noise". The *shofar* and *hassrah* should not be confused in the interpretation of their significance and symbolism. while the *hassrah* was primarily both a ritual instrument and a symbol of sanctioned and institutionalized secular autocratic power, the *shofar*, have always been considered, from ancient times, an instrument with magic and mystical theophanic connotations.
- Kinnor: A lyre as confirmed by archaeological evidence. The are numerous descriptions of lyres dating from the biblical epochs in ancient Israel/Palestine. The lyres of ancient Israel/Palestine constitute a distinct group within southern Levantine musical culture (Dever, 1997) with regard to both social context and performing practice. This instrument was used in both secular and liturgical functions
- Menánem: A pottery rattle. Archaeological finds have provided over 70 intact specimens of such percussion instruments of Is-

Figure 7: Lyres on coins from the *bar Kochba* revolt.

raelite/Palestinian origin. Most have been found in tombs and can be regarded as ritual instruments.

- Mesltayim and slslim: Cymbals and related instruments. The *slslim* (plural), is possibly a metal rattling instrument, appearing in the Old Testament long before *mesltayim* in a scene imbued with pagan frenzy and describing the carrying of the Ark in procession (2 Samuel vi.5); it is then replacedby the *mesltayim* in the parallel passage in 1 Chronicles xiii.8. The instruments are also called *slslei-shama* (sounding *slslim*) and *slslei teruah* (clashing *slslim*) (Psalm cl.5).

  Various cymbals constitute a large set of archaeological findings: at least 28 finds, with diameters of 712 and 36 cm, have been discovered in 14 cities of ancient Israel/Palestine. They are slightly vaulted discs with a small metal loop at the centre and give a loud and resonant sound.

Figure 8: "Praise Him with melodic cymbals, praise Him with clanging cymbals" - Psalm 150:5

- Nebel: Similar to the *kinnor* As the *nebel* seems to have had 12 strings and was played with the fingers (Josephus, vii.12.3) rather than a plectrum, one may suppose it has more bass. Interestingly the Mishnah limits the numbers of nebel instruments used in divine worship (two to six) by comparision with the numbers of kinnor instruments (no less than nine, and with no upward

limit; Mishnah, Arakhin ii.5). The strings of the nebel were made of thick gut and those of the kinnor of thin gut (Mishnah, Qinnim iii.6); the sound of the nebel could be loud and noisy (Isaiah xiv.11). This supports my assumptin that the *nebel* could be a bass, plucked string instrument.

Figure 9: Biblical Harp: *Nebel* reproduced on coins from the *bar Kochba* revolt period

- Paámon: Jingles and bells which are mentioned in connection with the high priest's purple robe. This sound "shall be heard when he goes into the holy place before the Lord, and when he comes out, lest he die" (Exodus xxviii.35). It is confirmed by archeological findings that bells were attached to cloth (see Braun, MGG2, Biblische Musikinstrumente, Abb.8b), and recently a depiction of bells on the robe of Aaron was discovered in a mosaic from the Sepphoris synagogue (5th century ce; Weiss and Netzer, 1996, p.20).
- Qeren ha-yovel: The Hebrew term qeren () occurs only once in the sense of a musical instrument: In the mythical tale of the destruction of the Wall of Jericho at the blowing of the qeren ha-yovel (ram's horn) the term "animal's horn" appears only once as a musical instrument. Can be considered as a synonym for *shofar ha-yovel*its sense is amplified by the term yovel: "jubilee", "leader".
- Tof : Turkish: *tef* or *def*; tambourine. Often played by women this is non-liturgical instrument sometimes found in orgiastic depictions
- Uǵav: Its origins come from a term denoting a musical instrument like a pipe, bagpipe, lute or harp... However there is no archoelogical evidence to better describe it. The only plausible interpretation seems to be the onomatopoeic effect of the word (u-u), typical of flutes and pipes. The connotations of love attached to the instrument suggest that it was a long end-blown flute of the kind found in neighbouring cultures. The *ney* can be a close approximation of it.

The instruments of "Daniel" Written around 167164 BCE, The Book of Daniel cites in several places a group of musical instruments, sometimes called the *Nebuchadnezzar Orchestra*, names of the musical instruments are given in a mixture of Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew. The nstruments cited are among the ones above.

The phrase "ve-khol zenei zemara", can be strictly translated as "the whole ensemble, and other kinds of singing-songs of praise with instrumental music".

Usage of Musical Terms in Hebrew

An attempt to correctly decipher correctly decipher the music of the Psalm manuscripts must first deal with the Hebrew texts handling of dome musical terms.

There are subtle differentiations in Hebrew, when describing things related to the vocal and instrumental aspects of the music.

Vocal Aspects : The Hebrew word *sher* (basically: song) is the root for words relating to the vocal aspects of music.

English	Reference	Transliteration	Hebrew
SONG - *n., sing., m*	Psalm 96:1	*sher*	שִׁיר
SING - *v., imperative*	Psalm 96:1	*she'-ru*	שִׁירוּ
SINGERS - *n., pl., m.*	Psalm 68:25	*shä-rem'*	שָׁרִים
Example prefixed with the particle preposition *min*			
One of the SONGS	Psalm 137:3	*me-sher'*	מִשִּׁיר

Figure 10: Words related to the root "song". For more information see: `http://www.musicofthebible.com/ssmm.htm`

Instrumental Aspects : Words relating to the instrumental aspects of music like "melody", "playing" etc. are derived from the Hebrew roots *zmr*, basically meaning melody and the root *ngn* meaning string player, to play specifically a string instrument.

This terminology may explain various translations regarding the music making activities cited in the Bible.

English	Reference	Transliteration	Hebrew
MELODY - *n., sing., f.*	Psalm 98:5	*zem-rä'*	זִמְרָה
MELODY - *v., imperative*	Psalm 98:5	*zä-ma-ru'*	זַמְּרוּ
MELODYISTS	Ezra 7:24	*zä-mä-rä-yä'*	זַמָּרַיָּא
Example prefixed with the particle preposition *min*			
One of the MELODIES	Psalm 4:1	*mez-mor'*	מִזְמוֹר

Figure 11: Words derived from the root "zmr". For more information see: `http://www.musicofthebible.com/zmr.htm`

The Biblical *soggetto cavato*

The technique of transcribing letters into musical notes, whose most famous example is B.A.C.H., used by Johann Sebastian Bach, in the Art of Fugue BWV1042 but also by Ferenc Liszt up to A. Schoenberg, has been widely used by such different composers like Robert Schumann (*Carnival* op.9 ca. 1834) or Alban Berg (*Lyric Suite* and other works).

It has its roots in the book of Psalms: Psalm 66:4 "all the earth will worship you and they will play-to You, they will *play your Name* (ya-zä-ma-ru' shem-hä')."

Psalm 9:2 (9:3 JPS) - of David "I will be glad and rejoice in you: I will *play your Name* (ä-zä-ma-rä' shem-hä') Most High."

Psalm 61:8 (61:9 JPS) - of David "so I will *play your Name* (ä-zä-ma-rä' shem-hä') forever, that I may fulfill my vows day-after-day."

Psalm 7:17 (7:18 JPS) - of David "I will thank Yahveh according to His righteousness and I will *play the Name of Yahveh* (vä-ä-zä-ma-rä' shëm Yähvah') Most High"

Psalm 68:4 (68:5 JPS) - of David "Sing to God, 3*play His Name* (zä-ma-ru' shë-mo'), raise Him up who rides upon the desert plains by Yah, His Name, and be joyful before Him."

The Hebrew texts attribute to David the usage of this technique. This long lost secret provided to be the basis upon which Synagogue singers were able to "sing the Name of God" or "to play the Name of God"

The seemingly "unrelated" aspects of a name and its musical notes is actually in accordance with the Semitic believing that the *name* of a thing is actually *the* thing itself. This believing is still perpetuated today in many occasions. Among traditional and Orthodox Jews, it is considered sacrilege to throw away a piece of paper (or a book) containing the Name of God.

Similarly it is believed that naming a child will somehow act on his destiny.

The mapping of the letters to the musical scale must be undertaken with care and some special considerations. The Hebrew *alphbet* contains 22 letters. Our musical scale has 12 notes... The point here is that the Hebrew system of music, like all other Eastern traditional musics, is using quarter tones and do not fit with the recent (invented ca. 1640) Western well-tempered scale.

It is most likely that the octave interval is divided into 22 more or less equal intervals which were forming the basis of the mapping of letters into musical notes.

Summary of the Archaeological Aspects of Jewish Music

Summarizing the known fact on the music of Bible the most salient points, to be of interest to present day composers can be itemized as follow:

- Vocal is the most predominant element in Jewish music
- Man voice *the Cantor* and male chorus have been used since the Early Temple of Solomon times
- There is a vast instrumentarium cited in many places in the Bible. Pipes, percussion (metals and skins), lyres and "harps" were in use. The *shofar* more than an "instrument of music" has and still have a highly symbolic role and is considered more a "religious instrument" rather than a "musical instrument"
- During the Medieval period, instruments were banned from Synagogue service but there is strong evidence that they were used before that.
- A "notational" system exists in the Book of Psalms. This system is highly codified and structured. It served as the basis of the education of cantors for the religious services.

Some Jewish Composers

Jewish music, unlike most Eastern musical cultures, is not a tightly codified system.

Many Eastern musical cultures like Indian, Japanese or Turkish display a "stiff" set of musical rules. Not only the modes *maqams* are set but also the couplings of rhythm "modes" and pitch modes are definitely set. A given *maqam* "can only go with" that rhythm mode and so on... This "overstructuring" is perhaps mostly evident in Indian music.

In Jewish music, except may be for the cantillation marks and the traditional cantor singing, we witness a sort of "open-system". This musical tradition has been permeable to surrounding cultures for thousands of years and was influenced and has influenced them.

As the result of the planet-wide dispersion of the Jews, their music is best seen as a "global" cultural music. This makes particularly difficult, if not impossible and futile, to isolate the "Jewish" in the "Jewish music".

For this matter it seemed to me that focusing on specific composers and works will be more revealing than trying to extract generalities on such a wide and varied domain.

Salomone Rossi (1570-1630)

Rossi who was a Rabbi as well, worked as a talented violinist in the court of Mantua by request of the duchess Isabella d'Este Gonzaga, from 1587 to 1628 where he entertained the royal family and their highly esteemed guests .

A collection of 19 "canzonettes" (released in 1589) was his first published work. Rossi also flourished in his composition of more serious madrigals, combining the poetry of the greatest poets of the day (e.g. Guarini, Marino, Rinaldi, and Celiano) with his melodies.

As a very innovative musician he was one of the first composers to apply to instrumental music the principles of monodic song. His trio sonatas, among the first in the literature, provided for the development of an idiomatic

and virtuoso violin technique. They are mid-way between the homogeneous textures of the instrumental *canzona* of the late Renaissance and the trio sonata of the mature Baroque periods.

Rossi also published a collection of Jewish liturgical music, *Ha-shirim asher l'Shlomo*, (The Songs of Solomon) in 1623.

Even though this was written in the early Baroque tradition and is almost entirely unconnected to traditional Jewish cantorial music, it was still an unprecedented development in synagogal music.

A reproduction of the title page of the alto part-book is given below. In accordance with the practice of Hebrew printing, each part-book opens from right to left. The entire prefatory text is in Hebrew, with the exception of the name of the publisher which appears in Italian. The translation of the title page is as follows[1]:

Alto
The Songs
of Solomon
Psalms, songs and hymns of praise
which have been composed according to the science of music
for three, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 voices
by the honored master Salamone Rossi, may his Rock
keep him and save him,
a resident of the holy congregation of Mantua,
to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing His most
exalted name on all
sacred occasions. A new thing
in the land.
Here in Venice, 1622
at the command of their Lordships
Pietro and Lorenzo Bragadini
in the house of Giovanni Calleoni.
By the distinguished Lords
Pietro and Lorenzo Bragadini

Rossi used many standardized devices of text expression,to elucidate the meaning of some words. For example, a startling chromatic progression depicts the word "wept", a flowing melisma suggests the word "river", and an abrupt change to lively rhythms is used for the word "rejoice".

Rossi found that his musical innovation caused a great deal of controversy. From the correspondence of Rabbi Leone of Modena, we gather the following

[1] `http://www.zamir.org/composers/rossi/rossi-mon.html`

incident which took place in a synagogue in Ferrara in the first decade of the seventeenth century.

Musically elaborate singing, following a "score" was actually quite an innovation.

Music in the Synagogue was a very controversial subject. The composing of a book of motets for the use in a Synagogue was such a audacious thing that Rossi's friend, the liberal Rabbi Leone, himself an amateur musician, supplied as a preface to the collection a lengthy and learned responsum on the subject of music in the synagogue.

> I do not see how anyone with a brain in his skull could cast any doubt on the propriety of praising God in song in the synagogue on special Sabbaths and on festivals... No intelligent person, no scholar ever thought of forbidding the use of the greatest possible beauty of voice in praising the Lord, blessed be He, nor the use of musical art which awakens the soul to His glory.

Also interesting is that this preface to Rossi's collection concludes with a copyright notice that is the first of its kind in protecting the rights of a composer. Its warning was couched in no uncertain terms:

> We have agreed to the reasonable and proper request of the worthy and honored Master Salamone Rossi of Mantua... who has become by his painstaking labors the first man to print Hebrew music. He has laid out a large disbursement which has not been provided for, and it is not proper that anyone should harm him by reprinting similar copies or purchasing them from a source other than himself. Therefore... we the undersigned decree by the authority of the angels and the word of the holy ones, invoking the curse of the serpent's bite, that no Israelite, wherever he may be, may print the music contained in this work in any manner, in whole or in part, without the permission of the abovementioned author... Let every Israelite hearken and stand in fear of being entrapped by this ban and curse. And those who hearken will dwell in confidence and ease, abiding in blessing under the shelter of the Almighty.

Salamone Rossi probably died either in the invasion of Austrian troops, who destroyed the Jewish ghettos in Mantua, or in the subsequent plague which ravaged the area.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Jakob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, born and generally known as Felix Mendelssohn is a German composer, pianist and conductor of the early Romantic period.

Figure 12: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

He was born to a notable Jewish family, the grandson of the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn.

Moses Mendelssohn, for some the "third" Moses (the first being the Biblical lawgiver and the second Moses Maimonides), was the key figure behind the *Haskalah*, enlightenment.

The Jewish Enlightenment, was a movement among European Jews in the late 18th century that advocated adopting enlightenment values. Among them pressing for better integration into European society, and increasing education in secular studies as well as Hebrew, and Jewish history.

Haskalah in this sense marked the beginning of the wider engagement of European Jews with the secular world, ultimately resulting in the first Jewish political movements and the struggle for Jewish emancipation.

Figure 13: Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786)

In a more restricted sense, *haskalah* can also denote the study of Biblical Hebrew and of the poetical, scientific, and critical parts of Hebrew literature. The term is sometimes used to describe modern critical study of Jewish religious books, such as the Mishnah and Talmud, when used to differentiate these modern modes of study from the methods used by Orthodox Jews.

Felix Mendelssohn's work includes symphonies, concerti, oratorios, piano and chamber music. After a long period of relative denigration due to changing musical tastes and antisemitism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, his creative originality is now being recognized and re-evaluated. He is now among the more popular composers of the Romantic era.

He grew up in an environment of intense intellectual ferment. The greatest minds of Germany were frequent visitors to his family's home in Berlin, including Wilhelm von Humboldt and Alexander von Humboldt. His sister Rebecka married the great German mathematician Lejeune Dirichlet.

His father, Abraham, sought to renounce the Jewish religion; his children were first brought up without religious education, and were baptised as Lutherans in 1816 (at which time Felix took the additional names Jakob Ludwig). The name Bartholdy was assumed at the suggestion of Lea's brother,

Jakob, who had purchased a property of this name and adopted it as his own surname.

Abraham was later to explain this decision in a letter to Felix as a means of showing a decisive break with the traditions of his father Moses: "There can no more be a Christian Mendelssohn than there can be a Jewish Confucius".

The family moved to Berlin in 1812. Abraham and Lea Mendelssohn sought to give Felix, his brother Paul, and sisters Fanny and Rebecka, the best education possible. His sister Fanny Mendelssohn (later Fanny Hensel), became a well-known pianist and amateur composer; originally Abraham had thought that she, rather than her brother, might be the more musical. However, at that time, it was not considered proper (by either Abraham or Felix) for a woman to have a career in music, so Fanny remained an amateur musician. Six of her early songs were later published (with her consent) under Felix's name.

Mendelssohn is often regarded as the greatest musical child prodigy after Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and before Camille Saint-Saens.

As a true intellectual of the enlightenment period, besides music, Mendelssohn's education included art, literature, languages, and philosophy. He was a skilled artist in pencil and watercolour, he could speak (besides his native German) English, Italian, and Latin, and he had an interest in classical literature.

Mendelssohn's own works show his study of Baroque and early classical music. His fugues and chorales especially reflect a tonal clarity and a masterly use of counterpoint.

His great-aunt, Sarah Levy (née Itzig) was a pupil of Bach's son, Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, and had supported the widow of another son Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. She had collected a number of Bach manuscripts. J.S. Bach's music, which had fallen into relative obscurity by the turn of the 19th century, was also deeply respected by Mendelssohn's teacher Zelter.

In 1829, with the backing of Zelter and the assistance of a friend, the actor Eduard Devrient, Mendelssohn arranged and conducted a performance in Berlin of Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. The orchestra and choir were provided by the Berlin Singakademie of which Zelter was the principal conductor.

The success of this performance (the first since Bach's death in 1750) was an important element in the revival of J.S. Bach's music in Germany and, eventually, throughout Europe. It earned Mendelssohn widespread acclaim at the age of twenty. It also led to one of the very few references which Mendelssohn ever made to his origins: "To think that it took an actor and a Jew's son (Judensohn) to revive the greatest Christian music for the world!"[1]

[1]Cited by Devrient in his memoirs of the composer

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Mendelssohn also revived interest in the work of Franz Schubert. Schumann discovered the manuscript of Schubert's Ninth Symphony and sent it to Mendelssohn who promptly premiered it in Leipzig on 21 March 1839, more than a decade after the composer's death.

The oratorio *Elijah* was composed in homage Bach and Handel, whose music Mendelssohn deeply loved.

In contrast to Bach, Handel's oratorios never went out of fashion. *Elijah* is modeled on the oratorios by these two Baroque masters; however, the style clearly reflects Mendelssohn's own natural tendencies as an early Romantic composer.

The work is scored for four vocal soloists (bass/baritone, tenor, alto, soprano), a full symphony orchestra (including trombones, *ophicleide*, and an organ), and a large chorus singing usually in four, but occasionally eight or three (women only) parts. The part of *Elijah* is sung by the bass/baritone and is a major role. Can this be a reference to cantoral singing which is usually in bass tone as well?

Mendelssohn originally composed the work to a German text, but upon being commissioned by the Birmingham Festival to write an oratorio, he had the libretto translated into English, and the oratorio was premiered in the English version.

Given the importance of Elijah in Jewish and Christian tradition, the story of his career occupies remarkably little space. The details are largely contained in 1st and 2nd Kings, with smaller references in 2nd Chronicles and Malachi.

Elijah is introduced in 1 Kings 17:1 as Elijah "The Tishbite". He gives a warning to Ahab, king of Israel, that there will be years of drought, a drought so severe that not even dew will fall. This catastrophe will come because Ahab and his queen–Jezebel–stand at the end of a line of kings of Israel who are said to have "done evil in the sight of the Lord". In particular, Ahab and Jezebel had encouraged the worship of Baal and killed the prophets of the Lord.

Elijah appears on the scene with no fanfare. Nothing is known of his origins or background. His name, Elijah, "My god is Jehovah (Yahweh)", may be a name applied to him because of his challenge to Baal worship. Even the title of "the Tishbite" is problematic, as there is no reference from the period to a town or village of Tishbe.

In what is a characteristic of Elijah, his challenge is bold and direct. Baal was the local nature deity responsible for rain, thunder, lightning, and dew. Elijah not only challenges Baal on behalf of the Yahweh(Jehovah) the God of Israel, he challenges Jezebel, her priests, Ahab, and the people of Israel.

Mendelssohn uses the Biblical episodes, which in the original are narrated in rather laconic form, to produce intensely almost luridly dramatic scenes.

Among the episodes are the resurrection of a dead youth, the bringing of rain to parched Israel through Elijah's prayers, and the bodily assumption of Elijah on a fiery chariot into heaven. Perhaps the most dramatic episode is the "contest of the gods", in which Jehovah consumes an offered sacrifice in a column of fire, after a failed sequence of frantic prayers by the Hebrew people to their favored god Baal. Mendelssohn did not shrink from portraying the episode in its full Old Testament harshness, as the prophets of Baal are afterward taken away and slaughtered.

It is not known if Mendelssohn's own position as a converted Jew, he became a Lutheran at age seven, have had an influence on the libretto; though certainly many scholars have speculated on this issue.

The final section of the oratorio draws parallels between the lives of Elijah and Jesus.

Elijah was popular at its premiere and has been frequently performed, particularly in English-speaking countries, ever since.

A number of critics, however, including Bernard Shaw and Richard Wagner, have treated the work harshly, emphasizing its conventional outlook and undaring musical style. Wagner's opinion, however, may be interpreted in light of that composer's extreme anti-semitism...

Charles Rosen praises the work in general "Mendelssohn's craft easily surmounted most of the demands of the oratorio, and [his oratorios, which also include St. Paul] are the most impressive examples of that form in the nineteenth century." However, Rosen additionally has characterized Mendelssohn as "the inventor of religious kitsch in music". In Rosen's view, Mendelssohn's religious music "is designed to make us feel that the concert hall has been transformed into a church. The music expresses not religion but piety... This is kitsch insofar as it substitutes for religion itself the emotional shell of religion." [1]

Fromental Halévy (1799-1862)

Halévy was born in Paris, the son of a cantor, Elie Halfon Halévy, who was the secretary of the Jewish community of Paris, also writer and a teacher of Hebrew, and a French Jewish mother.

He entered the Paris Conservatoire at the age of nine or ten (accounts differ), in 1809, becoming a pupil and later protegé of Cherubini. After two

[1] Charles Rosen, The Romantic Generation (1995), Cambridge: Harvard University Press, ISBN 0-674-77933-9.

Figure 14: Jacques-François-Fromental-Élie Halévy (May 27, 1799 - March 17, 1862)

second-place attempts, he won the Prix de Rome in 1819: his cantata subject was Herminie.

As he had to delay his departure to Rome because of the death of his mother, he was able to accept the first commission that brought him to public attention - a "Marche Funebre et De Profundis en Hebreu" for three part choir, tenor and orchestra, which was commissioned by the Consistoire Israélite du Département de la Seine, for a public service in memory of the assassinated duc de Berry, performed on March 24, 1820. Later, his brother Léon recalled that the *De Profundis*, "infused with religious fervor, created a sensation, and attracted interest to the young laureate of the institute."

Halévy was chorus master at the Théâtre Italien, while he struggled to get an opera performed. Despite the mediocre reception of *L'artisan*, at the Opéra-Comique in 1827, Halévy moved on to be chorus master at the Opéra.

The same year he became professor of harmony and accompaniment at the Conservatoire, where he was professor of counterpoint and fugue in 1833

and of composition in 1840. He was elected to the Institut de France in 1836.

With his opera *La Juive*, in 1835, Halévy attained not only his first major triumph, but gave the world a work that was to be one of the cornerstones of the French repertory for a century, with the role of Eléazar one of the great favorites of tenors such as Enrico Caruso.

The opera's most famous aria is Eléazar's "Rachel, quand du Seigneur" . Its orchestral ritornello is the one quotation from Halévy that Berlioz included in his Treatise on Orchestration, for its unusual duet for two cor anglais.

Another specialty from the orchestration of *La Juive* is this passage scored for four french horns, two "natural" horns (named "cors ordinaires") and two with pistons ("cors a pistons").

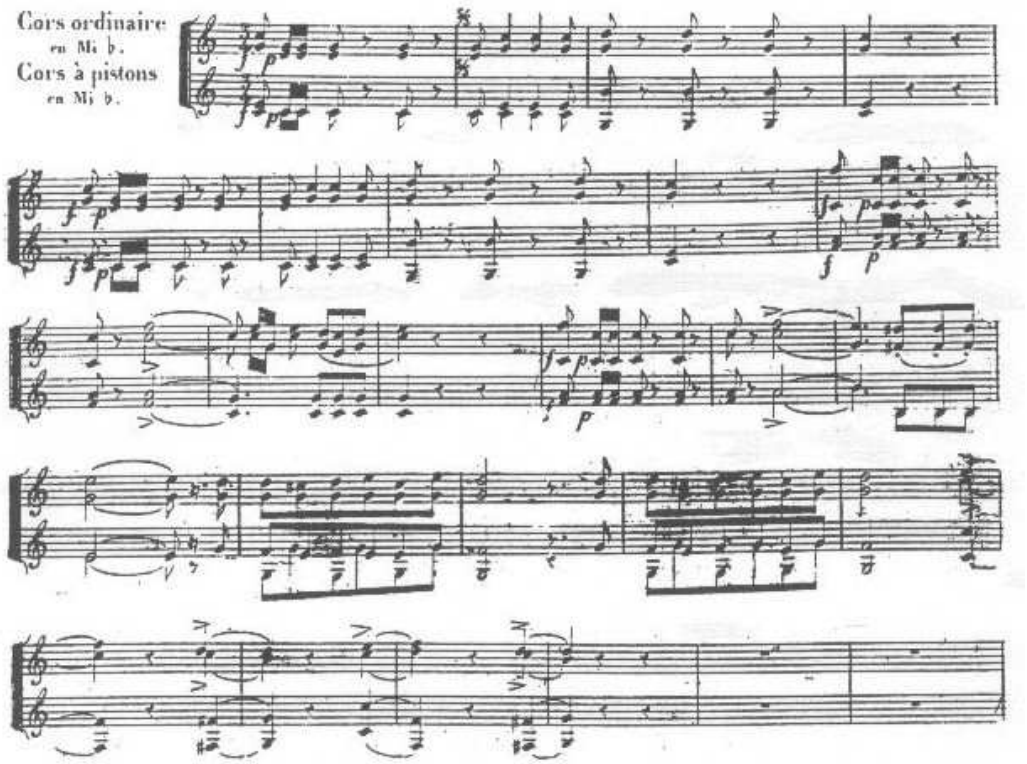

Figure 15: Orchestration sample from *La Juive* with the use of two different kind of horns in parallel

La Juive is one of the grandest of grand operas, with major choruses, a spectacular procession in Act I, and impressive celebrations in Act III. It culminates with the heroine plunging into a vat of boiling water in Act V. Mahler admired it greatly, stating: "I am absolutely overwhelmed by this wonderful, majestic work. I regard it as one of the greatest operas ever created". Other

admirers included Richard Wagner who wrote an enthusiastic review of its premiere for the German press. Interestingly Wagner never showed towards Halévy the anti-Jewish animus that was so notorious a feature of his writings on Meyerbeer.

The libretto was the work of Eugène Scribe, one of the most prolific dramatic authors of the time. Scribe was writing to the tastes of the Opéra de Paris, where the work was first performed - a work in five acts presenting spectacular situations (here the Council of Constance of 1414), which would allow a remarkable staging, a setting which brought out a dramatic situation which was also underlined by a powerful historical subject. In addition to this, there was also the possibility of choral interludes, ballet and scenic effects which took advantage of the entire range of possibilities available at the Paris Opera.

Through the story of an impossible love between a Christian man and a Jewish woman, the work may be seen as a plea for religious tolerance, in much the same spirit as Meyerbeer's Les Huguenots which premiered in 1835, a year before La Juive, as well as the 1819 novel Ivanhoe by Sir Walter Scott which deals with the same theme.

At the time of composition, the July monarchy[1] had liberalized religious practices in France.

Meyerbeer and Halévy were both Jewish and storylines dealing with topics of tolerance were common in their operas. The reviews of the initial performances show that journalists of the period responded to the liberalism and to the perceived anti-clericalism of Scribe's text, rather than to any specifically Jewish theme.

Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864)

Meyerbeer was born to a Jewish family in Tasdorf, near Berlin, Germany with the name Jacob Liebmann Beer. His father was the enormously wealthy financier Jacob Judah Herz Beer (1769-1825) and his mother, Amalia Liebmann Meyer Wulff (1767-1854) also came from the wealthy elite. Their other children included the astronomer Wilhelm Beer and the poet Michael Beer.

Meyerbeer made his debut as a nine-year old playing a Mozart concerto in Berlin. Throughout his youth, although he was determined to become a musician, he found it difficult to decide between playing and composition.

[1]The July Monarchy (1830-1848) was a period of liberal monarchy rule of France under Louis-Philippe. The new regime's ideal was explicated by Louis-Philippe's famous statement in January 1831: "We will attempt to remain in a juste milieu (the just middle), in an equal distance from the excesses of popular power and the abuses of royal power."

Figure 16: Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864)

Certainly other professionals in the decade 1810-1820, including Moscheles, considered him amongst the greatest virtuosi of his period.

In his youth Beer studied with Antonio Salieri and the German master and friend of Goethe, Carl Friedrich Zelter. Realizing, however, that a full understanding of Italian opera was essential for his musical development, he went to study in Italy for some years, during which time he adopted the first name Giacomo.

The also adopted the "Meyer" in his surname after the death of his great-grandfather. It was during this time that he became acquainted with, and impressed by, the works of his contemporary Gioacchino Rossini.

Meyerbeer's name first became known internationally with his opera *Il crociato in Egitto* this is also the last opera ever to feature a castrato.

He became virtually a superstar with *Robert le Diable* (Robert the Devil), produced in Paris in 1831 and regarded by some as the first grand opera, although this honor rightly belongs to Auber's *La muette de Portici*.

The fusion of dramatic music, melodramatic plot and, as customary at this time, sumptuous staging proved a sure-fire formula which Meyerbeer repeated in *Les Huguenots* (1836), *Le prophète* (1849), and *L'Africaine*, (produced posthumously in 1865).

All of these operas held the international stage throughout the 19th century, as did the more pastoral *Dinorah* (1859).

However, because they were expensive to stage, requiring large casts of leading singers, and subject to consistent attack from the prevalent Wagnerian schools, they gradually fell into desuetude.

Meyerbeer's immense wealth (increased by the success of his operas) and his continuing adherence to his Jewish religion set him apart somewhat from many of his musical contemporaries. That also gave rise to malicious rumours that his success was due to his bribing musical critics...

Richard Wagner accused him of being only interested in money, not music. Meyerbeer was, however, a deeply serious musician and a sensitive personality. He philosophically resigned himself to being a victim of his own success.

The abrasive campaign of Richard Wagner against Meyerbeer was to a great extent responsible for the decline of Meyerbeer's popularity after his death in 1864.

This campaign was as much a matter of personal spite as of racism - Wagner had learnt a great deal from Meyerbeer and indeed Wagner's early opera *Rienzi* (1842) has, facetiously, been called "Meyerbeer's most successful work"...

Meyerbeer supported the young Wagner, both financially and in obtaining a production of Rienzi at Dresden.

However, Wagner resented Meyerbeer's continuing success at a time when his own vision of German opera had little chance of prospering.

After the May Uprising in Dresden of 1849[1], Wagner was for some years a political refugee facing a prison sentence or worse in Saxony. During this period when he was gestating his *Ring* cycle he had few sources of income apart from journalism and benefactors, and little opportunity of getting his own works performed.

The success of *Le Prophète* sent Wagner over the edge, and he was also deeply envious of Meyerbeer's wealth. After Meyerbeer's death Wagner reissued his 1850 essay "Das Judenthum in der Musik" (Jewry in Music)[2],in 1868, in an extended form, with a far more explicit attack on Meyerbeer. This ver-

[1]In Germany, revolution had begun in March 1848, starting in Berlin and spreading across the other states which now make up Germany, calling for a constitutional monarchy to rule a new, united German nation. On March 28, 1849 the Assembly passed the first *Reichsverfassung* (constitution) for Germany, and in April 1849, Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia was offered the crown.

[2]"Das Judenthum in der Musik" ("Jewishness in Music", but normally translated "Judaism in Music"),spelled after its first publication "Judentum", is an essay by Richard Wagner, attacking Jews in general and the composers Giacomo Meyerbeer and Felix Mendelssohn in particular, which was published under a pseudonym in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (NZM) of Leipzig in September 1850. It was reissued in a greatly expanded version under Wagners own name in 1869. It is regarded by many as an important landmark in the history of German antisemitism.

sion was under Wagner's own name - for the first version he had sheltered behind a pseudonym - and as Wagner had by now a far greater reputation, his views obtained far wider publicity.

These attacks on Meyerbeer (which also included a swipe at Felix Mendelssohn) are regarded by Paul Lawrence Rose as a significant milestone in the growth of German anti-Semitism.

Ernest Bloch (1880-1959)

The composer of what may be called a Jewish Requiem in the usual concert music sense of the word, Ernest Bloch was born in Geneva. He started studied violin and soon started composing as well.

He had the chance to study with the celebrated Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe in the Brussels Conservatory. After some moves in Europe he settled in the United Statesin 1916 and took American citizenship in 1924.

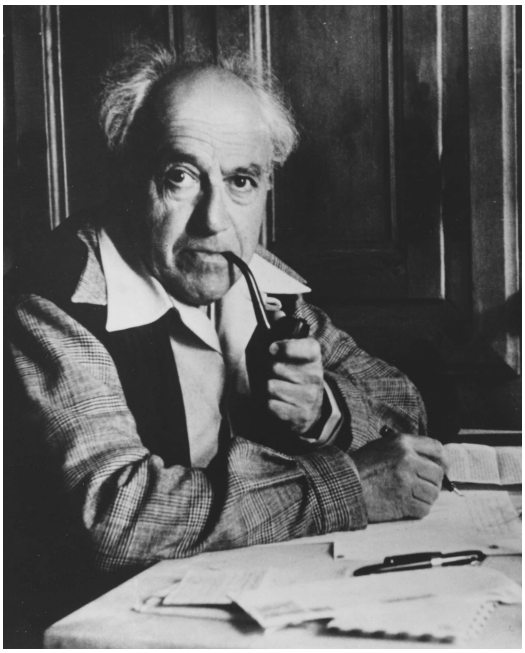

Figure 17: Ernest Bloch (1880-1959)

As a teacher he had some illustrious students, among them: George Antheil, Frederick Jacobi, Bernard Rogers, and Roger Sessions.

He was the first Musical Director of the newly formed Cleveland Institute of Music, and later he was director of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music until 1950.

In 1941 Bloch moved to the small coastal community of Agate Beach, Oregon and lived there the rest of his life.

He died in 1959 in Portland, Oregon, of cancer at the age of 78. The Bloch Memorial has been moved from near his house in Agate Beach to a more prominent location at the Newport Performing Arts Center in Newport, Oregon.

He has managed to mix the French impressionism with the Germanic school of Richard Strauss in his early works, including his opera *Macbeth*, 1910.

His best known pieces of his mature period draw on Jewish liturgical and folk music as well as Jewish culture in general. These works include *Schelomo* (1916) for cello and orchestra, which he dedicated to the cellist Alexandre Barjansky, the *Israel Symphony* (1916), *Baal Shem* for violin and piano (1923, he later arranged it for violin and orchestra), The *Jewish Life Suite* for Cello and Piano and *Avodath Hakodesh* (Sacred Service, 1933) for baritone, choir and orchestra which can be considered a "Jewish Requiem" in the tradition of Mozart and Brahms even though the Judaism does not have anything like a Christian Requiem as a religious music or service.

Other pieces from this period include a violin concerto written for Joseph Szigeti and the rhapsody *America* for chorus and orchestra.

His composition of the last period, after World War II, are a little more varied in style, though Bloch's essentially Romantic idiom remains, somewhat like a mixture of Richard Strauss and Claude Debussy. The Jewish theme remains such as in the *Suite hébraïque* (1950), some other works, like the *Second Concerto Grosso* (1952), display an interest in neo-classicism (though here too the harmonic language is basically Romantic, even though the form is Baroque). The late string quartets include elements of atonality.

He was and educated and prolific photographer as well. The Western Jewish History Center, of the Judah L. Magnes Museum, in Berkeley, California has a small collection of photographs of Ernest Bloch which document his interest in photography.

Many of the photographs Bloch took, over 6,000 negatives and 2,000 prints, are in the Ernest Bloch Archive at the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona in Tucson along with photographs by the likes of Ansel Adams, Edward Weston and Richard Avedon.

Schelomo

This "Rhapsodie hébraïque pour violoncelle et grand orchestre" was completed during Bloch's "Jewish Cycle," which lasted from 19121926.

In the composition, the Jewish heritage and culture seem to be more influential than specific Jewish melodies. Bloch

Bloch wrote,

> It was this entire Jewish heritage that moved me deeply, and was reborn in my music. To what extent it is Jewish, to what extent it is just Ernest Bloch, of that I know nothing. The future alone will decide.

The Book of Ecclesiastes is reported to be the main source of inspiration for the piece. First drafted for voice and a meeting with the cellist Alexandre Barjansky inspired him to give the solo voice to the cello, which Bloch wrote was "vaster and deeper than any spoken language." In program notes that Bloch wrote for a performance of Schelomo in 1933, he established that the solo cello is the voice of King Solomon while the orchestra represents the world surrounding him.

A wide-scale lamentation in the solo cello at the beginning leads into a cadenza in the low range of the instrument. The orchestration is thick and uses many out-of-common orchestral colors and effects. many unusual chord progressions, *col legno* in the strings, and bold brass statements makes the work out of commonly followed paths. The first section ends with a powerful orchestral climax leading into the central section of the work.

The second theme is a rhythmic figure stated first by the bassoon and soon after by the oboe. The cello repeats the cadenza of the first theme while the second theme continues as a counter melody in the woodwinds and brass. The solo cello continues to reiterate the first theme but is overwhelmed by the swelling and increasingly frenzied orchestra.

The third section begins with material first presented in the first and second sections. A forceful orchestral climax gives way to a hushed, tense mood where the cello makes its final statement, ending on a resigned low D.

The Italian critic Guido Gatti wrote of *Schelomo*,

> The violoncello, with its ample breadth of phrasing, now melodic and with moments of superb lyricism, now declamatory and with robustly dramatic lights and shades, lends itself to a reincarnation of Solomon in all his glory. The violoncello part is of so remarkably convincing and emotional power that it may be set down as a veritable masterpiece; not one passage, not a single beat, is inexpressive; the entire discourse of the soloist, vocal rather than instrumental, seems like musical expression intimately conjoined with the Talmudic prose.

Georges Gershwin (1898-1937)

The solo clarinets *glissando* at the very beginning of the *Rhapsody in Blue* is looked on by some observers as a Ashkenazic-Yiddish-Klezmer(ish) musical effect.

Actually a *glissando* is a high "klezmer-sounding" string of notes, ending on a high "screeching" note. For the anecdote; it was done accidentally at a practice by the soloist. Gershwin told the soloist that he liked it and should play it like that.

Figure 18: Georges Gershwin (1898-1937)

While researching Gershwin's life one is struck with the fact that his music was deeply influenced by him being Jewish. His interest in the Yiddish theatre is known. He has even planned writing a Jewish opera. He actually wrote some sketches for the work which was to be called *Dybbuk*. He gave up the project when he heard that the rights for the original play was owned by the Italian composer, Lodovico Rocca.

Borrowings from the traditional Synagogue music into the most famous songs of Gershwin has been noted by many scholars.

Examples are numerous, among them: is the famous tune *S Wonderful*. It shows many similarities to Goldfadens Jewish tune, *Noachs Teive*. Both songs have almost exact copies of the same tune, and partly even the same

notes. Another of Gershwins songs that has resemblance to Yiddish music was *My One and Only* from the 1927 show of *Funny Face*. *Seventeen and Twenty-One* from *Strike Up The Band* has a similar melody to *Der Pach Tanz* and *Schuster and Schneider Tanz*.

The predominance of the melody over other components, which can be thought as "normal and usual" in songs, when combined with his favoring the minor keys added with the uncanny resemblances to commonly known Synagogues chants, and downright borrowing many of them in *Porgy and Bess* and other most important works makes Gershwin a "Jewish" composer.

Some of George Gershwins songs even resemble Biblical prayer chants. An example of this is *It Aint Necessarily So* from Porgy and Bess. This song is similar to the prayer that one chants after one reads the Torah in *bar (or bat) mitzvah* and at every Sabbath.

Musical plays are also an important facet of the Jewish musical culture. See *Musical Plays on the Hebrew Stage*, an excellent article by Dan Almagor[1]

Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951)

Moses und Aron and *Jacobsleiter* are the best known Jewish-inspired music by Arnold Schoenberg. We should not forget to mention *A Survivor from Warsaw*, Op. 46.

However there is also a much lesser known work: Kol nidre for Chorus and Orchestra, op. 39 (1938). That famous prayer-chant of *Kol nidre* is surely a source of inspiration for many Jewish and non-Jewish composers.

Moses und Aron (Moses and Aaron) is a two-act opera by Arnold Schoenberg with a third act unfinished. The German libretto was by the composer after the Book of Exodus.

The opera has its roots in Schoenberg's earlier play, *Der Biblische Weg* (The Biblical Way, 1926-27), which represents a response in dramatic form to the growing anti-Jewish movements in the German-speaking world after 1848 and a deeply personal expression of his own "Jewish identity" crisis.

This began with a face-to-face encounter with anti-Semitic agitation at Mattsee, near Salzburg, during the summer of 1921, when he was forced to leave the resort because he was a Jew, although he actually converted to Protestantism in 1898.

It was a traumatic experience to which Schoenberg would frequently refer, and of which a first mention appears in a letter addressed to Kandinsky (April 1923):

[1] `http://www.jewish-theatre.com/visitor/article_display.aspx?articleID=342`

> I have at last learnt the lesson that has been forced upon me this year, and I shall never forget it. It is that I am not a German, not a European, indeed perhaps scarcely even a human being (at least, the Europeans prefer the worst of their race to me), but that I am a Jew[1].

Schoenberg's statement echoed that of Mahler, a convert to Catholicism, some years earlier:

> I am thrice homeless: as a Bohemian among Austrians, as an Austrian among the Germans, and as a Jew throughout the entire world. I am an intruder everywhere, welcome nowhere.

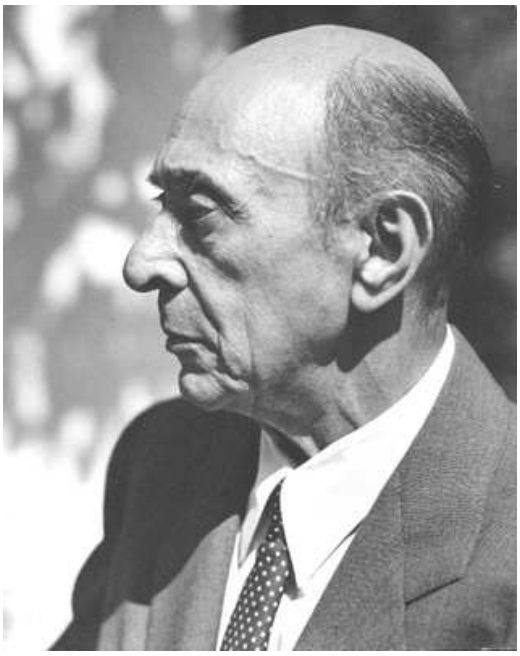

Figure 19: Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951)

It is generally accepted that this event prepared for his return to Judaism in 1933 for the rest of his work and life.

This is considered one of his works he held very close to his heart. The biblical aspects and facing the Jewish "problems" in the modern world is the subject of an excellent article by Aaron Tugendhaft available at `http://`

[1] Arnold Schoenberg, Letters, ed. Erwin Stein, trans. Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser, (London, 1964), p. 88.

humanities.uchicago.edu/journals/jsjournal/tugendhaft.html and reproduced *in extenso* at Appendice , page: 78

Schoenberg always intended to finish the work, and the two acts were not performed until after his death. There was a concert performance in Hamburg on 12 March 1954 with Hans Herbert Fiedler as Moses and Helmut Krebs as Aron, conducted by Hans Rosbaud. The first staging was in Zurich at the Stadttheater on 6 June 1957, again with Hans Herbert Fiedler as Moses and conducted by Hans Rosbaud, but with Helmut Melchert as Aron.

Georg Solti conducted the first performance at the Royal Opera House, London on 28 June 1965. The singers were Forbes Robinson (Moses) and Richard Lewis (Aron). The American premiere was produced by Sarah Caldwell's company in Boston Back Bay on 30 November 1966 with Donald Gramm and Richard Lewis, conducted by Osbourne McConathy. (The Metropolitan Opera did not stage it until 1999.)

In 1973, the work was also made into a film by Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet (although not released in the US until 1975).

The oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter* (Jacob's Ladder) marks his transition from a contextual or free atonality to the twelve-tone technique anticipated in the oratorio's use of hexachords[1]. Though ultimately unfinished by Schoenberg the piece was prepared for performance by Schoenberg student Winfried Zillig at the request of Gertrude Schoenberg.

The piece is also notable for its use of developing variation. Developing variation is a formal technique in which the concepts of development and variation are united in that variations are produced through the development of existing material.

Though the term was coined by Schoenberg, he felt it was one of the most important compositional principles since around 1750[2]:

> Music of the homophonic-melodic style of composition, that is, music with a main theme, accompanied by and based on harmony, produces its material by, as I call it, developing variation. This means that variation of the features of a basic unit produces all the thematic formulations which provide for fluency, contrasts, variety, logic and unity, on the one hand, and character, mood, expression, and every needed differentiation, on the other hand– thus elaborating the idea of the piece.

[1] A six-note segment of a scale or tone row. The term was adopted in the Middle Ages and adapted in the twentieth-century in Milton Babbitt's serial theory.

[2] Haimo, Ethan. 1990. Schoenberg's Serial Odyssey: The Evolution of his Twelve-Tone Method, 1914-1928, p.73n8. Oxford [England] : Clarendon Press ; New York : Oxford University Press ISBN 0-19-3152-60-6.

> Similarly, as in the case of *Die Jakobsleiter*, here also all main themes had to be transformations of the first phrase. Already here the basic motif was not only productive in furnishing new motif-forms through developing variations, but also in producing more remote formulations based on the unifying effect of one common factor: the repetition of tonal and intervallic relationship.

Haimo applies the concept to vertical (pitch) as well as horizontal (rhythm and permutation) transformations in twelve-tone music on the premise of "the unity of musical space" after suggesting that Schoenberg reconciled serial organization and developing variation in the twelve tone technique.

A Survivor from Warsaw, Op. 46 is a work for narrator, men's chorus[1], and orchestra written in 1947.

The initial inspiration for the work was a suggestion from the Russian emigrée dancer Corinne Chochem for a work to pay tribute to the Jewish victims of the German Third Reich. While the collaboration between Chochem and Schönberg did not come to fruition, Schönberg continued to developed the idea for such a work independently. He then received a letter from the Koussevitzsky Music Foundation for a commission for an orchestral work. Schönberg then decided to fulfill this commission with this tribute work. He wrote the work from 11 August 1947 to 23 August 1947[2].

Kurt Frederick, conductor of the Albuquerque Civic Symphony Orchestra, had heard about this new work, and wrote to Schönberg to ask for permission to give the premiere. Schönberg agreed, and stipulated that in lieu of a performance fee, he asked that the New Mexico musicians prepare a full set of orchestral and choral parts and send those to him.

The work lasts a little more than 6 minutes. Richard S. Hill published a contemporary analysis of Schoenberg's use of twelve-tone rows in this composition[3].

Jacques-Louis Monod prepared a definitive edition of the score, which was published in 1979[4]. Beat A. Föllmi has published a detailed analysis of the narrative of A Survivor from Warsaw[5].

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[1] it is interesting to note here as well as in Shostakovich's 13th. Symphony the usage of man's voice

[2] Michael Strasser, "A Survivor from Warsaw as Personal Parable" (February 1995). Music & Letters, 76 (1): pp. 52-63.

[3] Richard S. Hill, "Music Reviews: A Survivor from Warsaw, for Narrator, Men's Chorus, and Orchestra by Arnold Schoenberg" (December 1949). Notes (2nd Ser.), 7 (1): pp. 133-135.

[4] Richard G. Swift, Review of newly revised edition of Arnold Schoenberg, A Survivor from Warsaw (September 1980). MLA Notes, 37 (1): p. 154.

[5] Beat A. Föllmi, "I Cannot Remember Ev'rything". Eine narratologische Analyse von

This is the story of a survivor from the Warsaw ghetto during the Second World War, from his time in a concentration camp. The narrator does not remember how he ended up living in the Warsaw sewers. One day, in the camp, the Nazi authorities held a roll call of a group of Jews. The group tried to assemble, but there was confusion, and the guards beat the old and ailing Jews who could not line up quickly enough. Those Jews left on the ground were presumed to be dead, and the guards asked for another count, to see how many would be deported to the death camps. The guards ask for a faster and faster head count, and the work culminates as the Jews begin to sing the prayer *Shema Yisroel*[1] . The creed ends with Deuteronomy 6,7 "and when thou liest down, and when thou riseth up."

Conclusion on Jewish Composers

Even though some of them (Mahler, Bernstein and others) were omitted in this review one may wonder "what those (all great) composers do have in common?" They are from different epochs, cultures and styles and they are all Jew. Can we point on some "trademark" of being a Jewish composer?

Actually there are than a few common points among them. They are adventurous, sometime straight revolutionary although they never claimed to be so. Schoenberg was always claiming that he is the "natural continuation" of the German romantic tradition, Gershwin never advertised he is a "revolutionary" composer, yet he was... in his own way. Rossi has innovated many of his epoch's musical forms and norms.

Mendelssohn, even if he has not "innovated" the musical language of his epoch, a language he knew like few other musicians, still "re-created" J. S. Bach and doing so influenced many of the most important composers of his time.

Composers of the "Opera de Paris" style, Meyerbeer, Halevy, did used very effective and unusual orchestration and staging procedures were none was required for being successful in a rather "conservatively looking for things new" period of "Gaité Française".

Bloch, even not a revolutionary composer have also created some extremely interesting and varied instrumental and sonic textures in his best

Arnold Schönbergs Kantate "A Survivor from Warsaw" op. 46" (1998). Archiv für Musikwissenschaft, Jahrgang LV (Heft 1): pp. 28-56 (article in German).

[1]Shema Yisrael (or Sh'ma Yisroel or just Shema) are the first two words of a section of the Torah (Hebrew Bible) that is used as a centerpiece of all morning and evening Jewish prayer services and closely echoes the monotheistic message of Judaism. It is considered the most important prayer in Judaism, and its twice-daily recitation is a mitzvah (religious commandment).

works.

Another aspect I find striking is the high intellectual range of those composers. From Rossi to Mendelssohn and from Meyerbeer to Schoenberg, descendants from a culture who sets the education as an activity as high as serving God this is no surprise.

Jewish Music by non-Jewish Composers

Some Jewish music has been composed by non-Jewish composers as well. The richness of this culture spanning a period of more than 3000 years has inspired many great composers with among them Max Bruch, Maurice Ravel, Sergei Prokofieff, Dmitri Shostakovich.

Max Bruch and *Kol Nidrei*

Max Christian Friedrich Bruch (1838-1920) also known as Max Karl August Bruch, was a German Romantic composer and conductor who wrote over 200 works, including three violin concertos, one of which is a staple of the violin repertoire. His *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, is a popular work for cello and orchestra transcribed for many instruments including viola and clarinet, its subtitle is "Adagio on Hebrew Melodies for Violoncello and Orchestra". This piece was based on Hebrew melodies, principally the melody of the *Kol Nidre* prayer, which gives the piece its name. The success of this work has made many assume that Bruch himself had Jewish ancestry, but there is no evidence for this.

Kol Nidrei

The evening service on the Eve of Yom Kippur is preceded by the chanting of Kol Nidrei ("All vows"), a formal annulment of vows.

The worshipers proclaim that all personal vows and oaths made between themselves and God during the year that not have not been fulfilled should be considered null and void. In Jewish tradition, the nullification of vows can only be performed by a religious court, which always consists of at least three judges and is convened only on weekdays. The recitation of Kol Nidrei is therefore begun before sunset; two distinguished congregants, holding Torah scrolls, stand next to the Cantor in order to constitute a court.

Figure 20: Max Bruch (1838-1920)

Translation[1]:

> All vows, prohibitions, oaths, consecrations, vows, vows, or equivalent terms that we may vow, swear, consecrate, or prohibit upon ourselves – from the last Yom Kippur until this Yom Kippur, and from this Yom Kippur until the next Yom Kippur, may it come upon us for good - regarding them all, we regret them henceforth. They all will be permitted, abandoned, cancelled, null and void, without power and without standing. Our vows shall not be valid vows; our prohibitions shall not be valid prohibitions; and our oaths shall not be valid oaths.

The origins of the ritual and the text of Kol Nidrei remain obscure[7]. The first references to Kol Nidrei as a collective declaration-prayer are found in the *responsa* of the Babylonian *geonim* (8-10th century scholars)[2]; the *geonim* vigorously opposed the practice of chanting the declamation, which they claimed originated in unspecified "other lands." For those "other lands"

[1] `http://www.jhom.com/calendar/tishrei/kolnidrei.html`

[2] Jewish Online Heritage Magazine, `http://www.jhom.com`

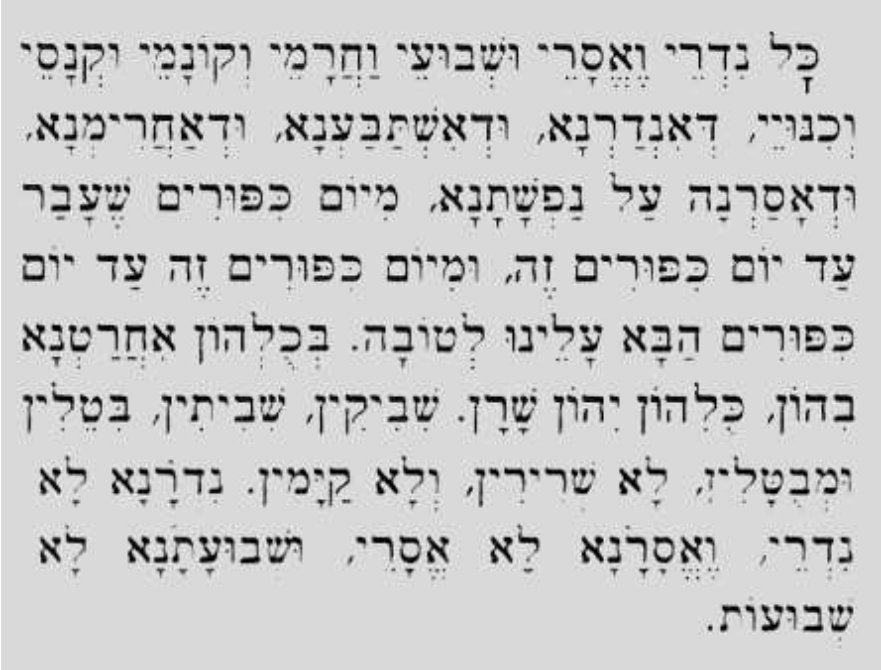
כָּל נִדְרֵי וֶאֱסָרֵי וּשְׁבוּעֵי וַחֲרָמֵי וְקוֹנָמֵי וְקִנָּסֵי
וְכִנּוּיֵי, דְּאִנְדַּרְנָא, וּדְאִשְׁתַּבַּעְנָא, וּדַאֲחַרִימְנָא,
וּדְאָסַרְנָה עַל נַפְשָׁתָנָא, מִיּוֹם כִּפּוּרִים שֶׁעָבַר
עַד יוֹם כִּפּוּרִים זֶה, וּמִיּוֹם כִּפּוּרִים זֶה עַד יוֹם
כִּפּוּרִים הַבָּא עָלֵינוּ לְטוֹבָה. בְּכֻלְּהוֹן אִחֲרַטְנָא
בְּהוֹן, כֻּלְּהוֹן יְהוֹן שָׁרָן. שְׁבִיקִין, שְׁבִיתִין, בְּטֵלִין
וּמְבֻטָּלִין, לָא שְׁרִירִין, וְלָא קַיָּמִין. נִדְרָנָא לָא
נִדְרֵי, וֶאֱסָרָנָא לָא אֱסָרֵי, וּשְׁבוּעָתָנָא לָא
שְׁבוּעוֹת.

Figure 21: Kol Nidrei prayer

Palestine is an obvious candidate, none of the surviving ancient Palestinian prayer texts include Kol Nidrei[8].

Around ca.1000 C.E., Kol Nidrei was totally integrated in the liturgy, mostly by popular demand.

Geonic texts of Kol Nidrei speak of annulling vows made "from the previous Day of Atonement until this Day of Atonement." Authorities in early medieval Europe (12th century) did not accept this version and amended the text to refer to future vows made "from this Day of Atonement until the next Day of Atonement." Different communities adopted different versions and some have incorporated both.

Although all Jewish sources and interpretations of Kol Nidrei agree that the formula covers only vows between the individual and God, many anti-Semites have taken Kol Nidrei as evidence that a Jew's oath is worthless[1].

The standard Ashkenazi melody for Kol Nidrei is an example par excellence of the Jewish musical tradition[9]. It is not a melody in the usual sense, but rather a collection of motifs in the general musical style of the High Holy Days.

Figure **??** is a piano arrangement by Sam Englander (1896-1943) from

[1] `http://www.jhom.com`

Figure 22: Introduction from Kol Nidrei by Max Bruch

`http://www.chazzanut.com/englander/englander-14.html`.

They include both solemn syllabic "proclamations" and virtuoso vocal runs. Many cantors and communities developed their particular variations of the basic musical material and many synagogue composers have made their own arrangements.[3] It remains an open question whether the solemnity and importance of the text shaped the musical rendition of Kol Nidrei, or whether the stature of the text was heightened by the extraordinary effect of the music. The source of the melody is still a subject of research, and the frequent attempts to relate it to the Sephardi traditions have not been successful.

The Sephardi and Oriental Jewish communities each have their own Kol Nidrei traditions: Sephardi, Moroccan and Yemenite.

Example *RealMedia*™files can be listened to at: `http://www.jhom.com/calendar/tishrei/kolnidrei.html`.

Abraham Zevi Idelsohn, author of the first and landmark book on Jewish music: "Jewish Music: Its Historical Development"[4] wrote:

> There is hardly any other traditional Jewish tune that attracted so much attention from the composers of the last century. Innumerable are the arrangements for voice with piano, organ or

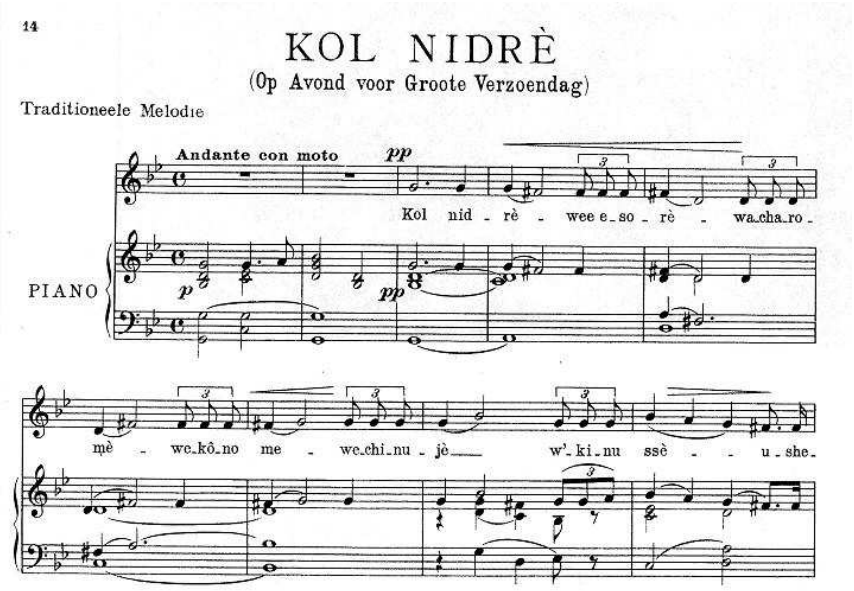

Figure 23: Kol Nidrei, piano arrangement
labelpiano-kol-nidrei

violin accompaniment and violoncello obligato. We have the exalted melody prepared for choir and small orchestra. And last but not least is the concerto by Max Bruch. In the first bars of Beethoven's C♯ minor quartet, the opening theme of Kol Nidrei is recognizable. Thus has the music world come to consider this the most characteristic tune of the synagogue.[5]

Max Bruch himself wrote the following on Kol Nidrei[1]:

" [...] I became acquainted with Kol Nidre and a few other songs (among others, *Arabian Camel*) in Berlin through the Lichtenstein[2] family, who befriended me. Even though I am a Protestant, as an artist I deeply felt the outstanding beauty of these melodies and therefore I gladly spread them through my arrangement. [...] As a young man I had already [...] studied folksongs of all nations with great enthusiasm, because the folksong is the source of all true melodics(sic) - a wellspring, at which one must repeatedly renew and refresh oneself - if one doesn't admit to

[1] in a letter to cantor and musicologist Eduard Birnbaum (4 December 1889)

[2] The cantor-in-chief of Berlin, who was known to have friendly relations with many Christian musicians of that time. Max Bruch was introduced to several Jewish melodies by Lichtenstein.

> the absurd belief of a certain party: "The melody is an outdated view." So lay the study of Jewish ethnic music on my path[1]"

Bruch's arrangement of Kol Nidrei is actually an "arrangement" not a transcription, unsurprisingly it did not made to the taste of Idelsohn:

> [Bruch's] melody was an interesting theme for a brilliant secular concerto. In his presentation, the melody entirely lost its original character. Bruch displayed a fine art, masterly technique and fantasy, but not Jewish sentiments. It is not a Jewish Kol-Nidre which Bruch composed[4].

As Bruch indicated in his letter, quoted above, he himself did not consider his Kol Nidrei to be a Jewish composition, but just an artistic arrangement of a folk tune. So, to Bruch, his Kol Nidrei was just one of the many arrangements he made of European folk songs.

Idelshon in a letter dated January 31, 1882, to Emil Kamphausen (translation by Fifield[2]), comments as follows:

> The two melodies [in Bruch's Kol Nidrei] are first-class. The first is an age-old Hebrew song of atonement, the second (D major) is the middle section of a moving and truly magnificent song "O weep for those that wept on Babel's stream" (Byron), equally very old. I got to know both melodies in Berlin, where I had much to do with the children of Israel in the Choral Society. The success of "Kol Nidrei" is assured, because all the Jews in the world are for it eo ipso.

Another interesting historical arrangement[3] for male chorus is worth looking at[4]:

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) and *Kaddish-Deux Mélodies Hébraïques*

Maurice Ravel has composed one of the most beautiful Jewish music of all times. The mourning songs *Kaddish* (Two Hebrew melodies) with their minimal piano accompaniment, declamatory (often close to a *recitativo*) style

[1] Translation kindly provided by Richard Schoeller. Source: `http://www.chazzanut.com/bruch.html`

[2] http://www.chazzanut.com/bruch.html

[3] Made available by courtesy of the Shelf to Shul Project-1998

[4] `http://www.shulmusic.org/sulzer/sulz_494.htm`

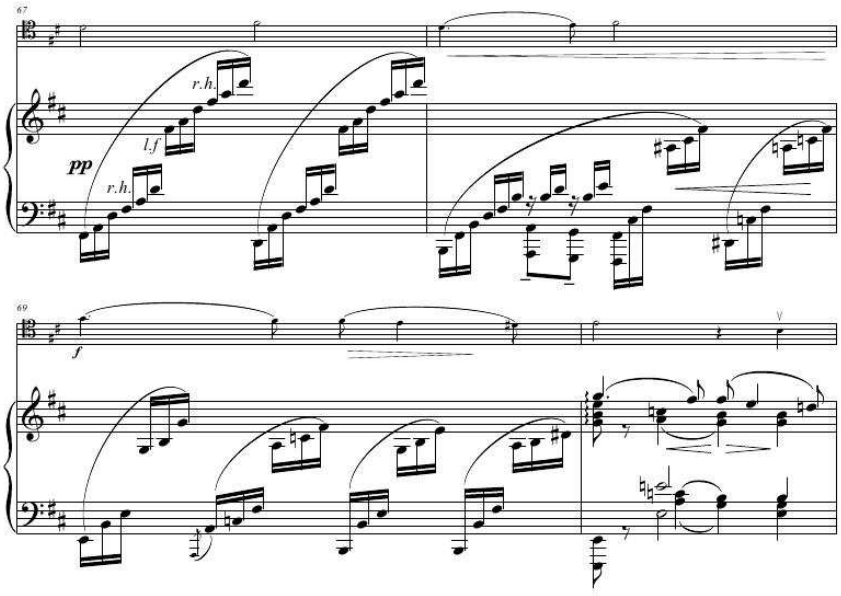

Figure 24: The second theme of Max Bruch's Kol Nidrei

and long melismas bringing the climax there is no doubt that Ravel has listened to some Synagogue music and cantors.

Actually the name "Kaddish" is the title of the first of those two songs which form a cycle named *Deux Mélodies Hébraïques*. The lyrics of the first song *Kaddish* are in Aramaic and come from a Jewish prayer book. The second of those songs, called *L'Énigme éternelle* is based on a Yiddish verse.

They were first performed in June 1914 by Alvina Alvi (who commissioned them) with Ravel at the piano. Ravel orchestrated the songs in 1919-1920.

The main idea behind the very important and central prayer in Jewish liturgy which is *Kaddish* (Aramaic: "holy") is the magnification and sanctification of God's name. It is very often said in mourning.

In the liturgy, several variations of the Kaddish are used functionally as separators between various sections of the service. The term "Kaddish" is often used to refer specifically to "The Mourners' Kaddish," said as part of the mourning rituals in Judaism in all prayer services as well as at funerals and memorials. When mention is made of "saying Kaddish", this unambiguously denotes the rituals of mourning.

The opening words of this prayer are inspired by Ezekiel 38:23, a vision of God becoming great in the eyes of all the nations. The central line of the kaddish in Jewish tradition is the congregation's response "May His great

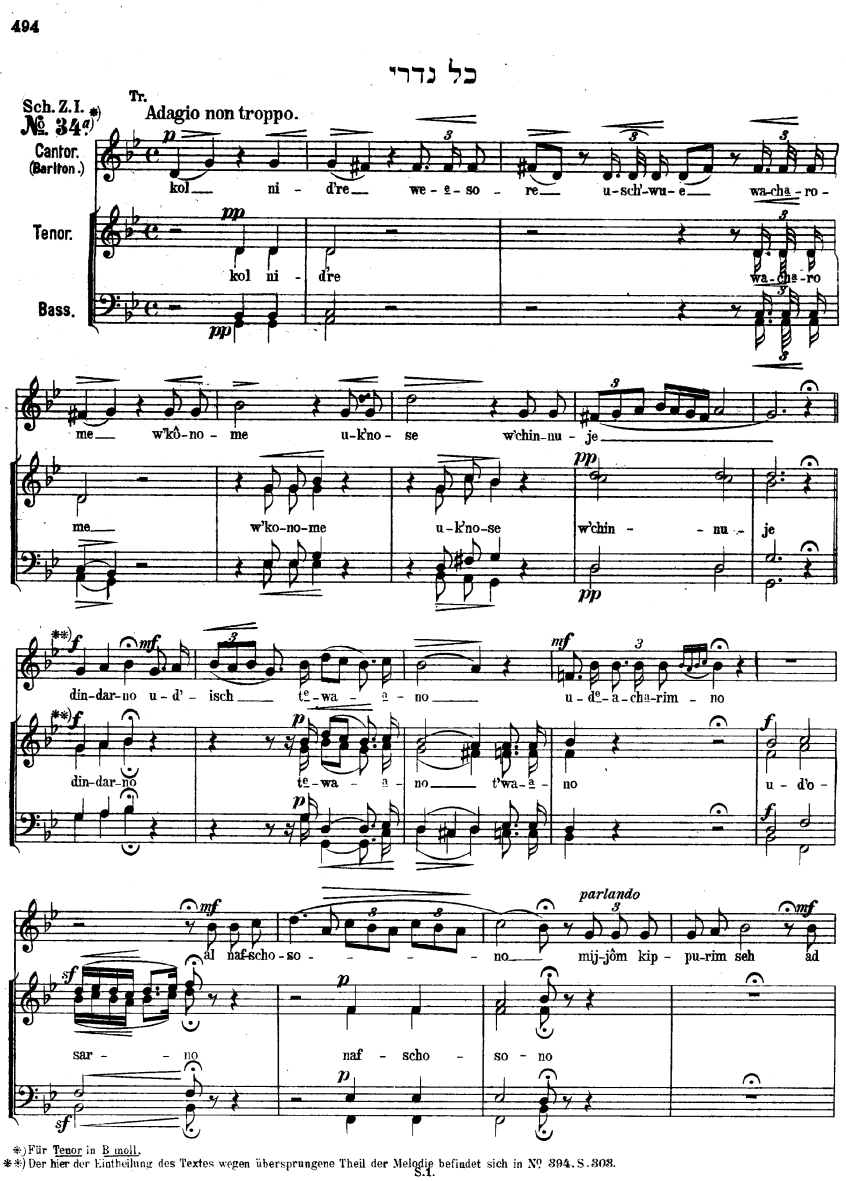

Figure 25: Male chorus arrangement of Kol Nidrei

name be blessed forever and to all eternity", a public declaration of God's greatness and eternality.[1] This response is a paraphrase of part of Daniel 2:20.

The Mourners', Rabbis' and Complete Kaddish end with a supplication for peace, which is in Hebrew, and comes from the Bible.

Along with the Shema and Amidah, the Kaddish is one of the most im-

Figure 26: Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

portant and central prayers in the Jewish liturgy.

> Written in a mixture of Hebrew and Aramaic the Kaddish is about a half-page long text, primarily magnifying and glorifying God, as well as expressing a wish for a speedy coming of the Messianic era. It is recited primarily in the synagogue service after principal sections of the liturgy or at the beginning of such sections. In most occasions the service leader sings the Kaddish, with some congregational responses[10][1].

Dr. Tarsi (op.cit.) gives the following approximate translation of the text of the *Kaddish* as used by Ravel:

> Magnified and sanctified be the name of God throughout the world which He has created according to His will.
> May He establish His kingdom during the days of our life and the life of all speedily and soon and let us say Amen.
> *(Here normally comes a congregational response, which is missing from Ravel's setting).*

[1] A complete translation abd the original Aramaic-Hebrew text can be seen at: `http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaddish`

Exalted and glorified, lauded and praised, acclaimed and honored
be the name of the Holy One blessed be He,
praised beyond all blessings and hymns,
beyond all tributes that mortals can express and let us say Amen.

Sergei Prokofieff and *Overture sur des Thèmes Juifs*

This chamber music piece by Prokofieff deserves much more wider recognition. It is scored for a string quartet, clarinet solo and piano; the usage of the clarinet is typical in a Klezmer tradition.

Typical in a Ashkenazi-Klezmer style the piece begins on a V-I alternating bass: The choice of C minor, a minor tonality as it was noted above for

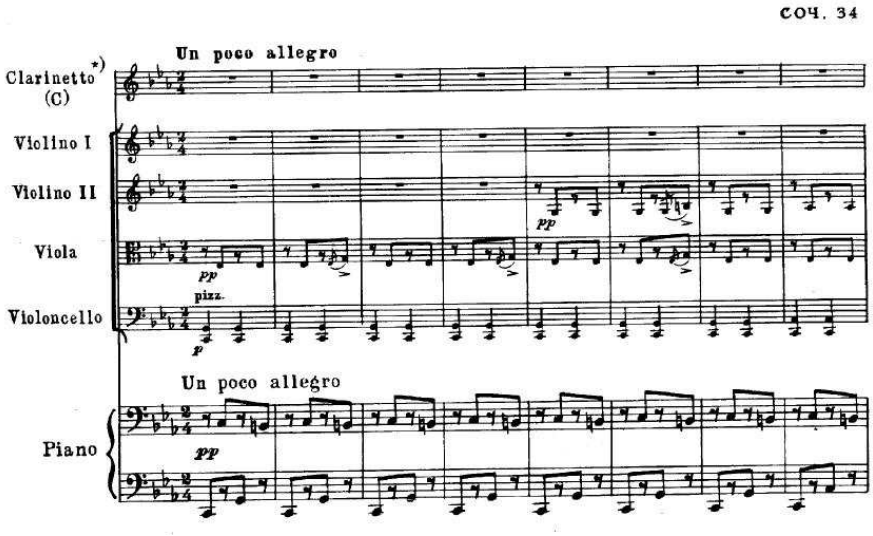

Figure 27: S. Prokofieff, Overture sur des Thèmes Juifs, beginning

most of Gershwin's songs is worth noting. Unlike Western cultures, the minor tonality in most Middle-East cultures actually serves a "happy" role! The clarinet solo[1] is also very typical "klezmerish" sounding, the augmented second intervals should be noted as well. The interplay of several descending augmented seconds in the piano part with the E♭ and C♯ clashes at the third bar, violins 1 and 2 with the viola added to the pedal tone C on the bass , sparingly and masterfully creates the desired rejoicings atmosphere in a Klezmer style.

[1] notated in C

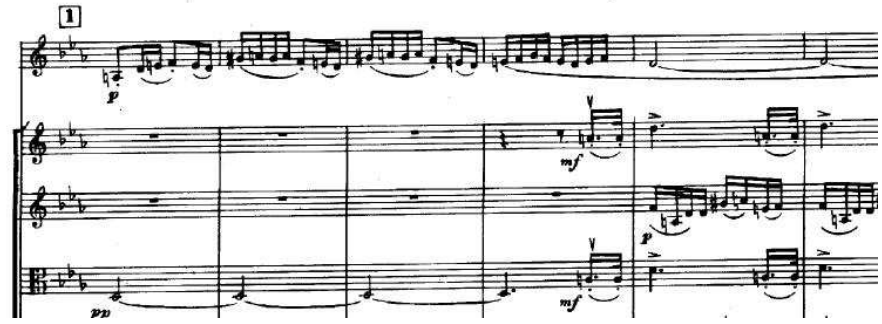

Figure 28: Main theme on clarinet, a typical Klezmer setting accentuated with the violins

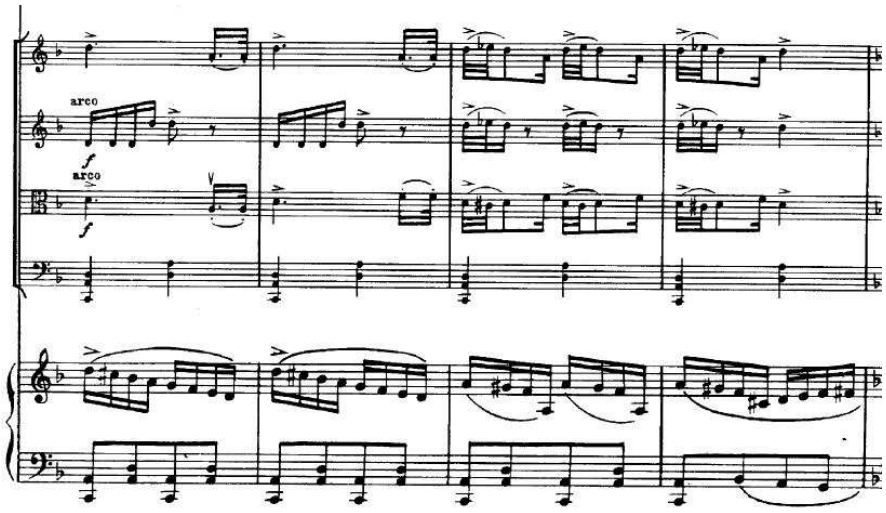

Figure 29: A very middle-eastern sounding passage

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) and Babi Yar

Babi Yar is a ravine in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine.

In September 29 and 30, 1941, a special team of German Nazi SS supported by other German units and Ukrainian police murdered 33,771 Jewish civilians[1].

The Babi Yar massacre is considered to be "the largest single massacre in the history of the Holocaust"[2].

[1]A Community of Violence: The SiPo/SD and Its Role in the Nazi Terror System in Generalbezirk Kiew by Alexander V. Prusin. Holocaust Genocide Studies, Spring 2007; 21: 1 - 30.

[2]From Berlin to Babi Yar. The Nazi War Against the Jews, 1941-1944 by Wendy

Figure 30: The Babi Yar monument and its Menorah

In the months that followed, thousands more were seized and taken to Babi Yar where they were shot. It is estimated that more than 100,000 people, mostly civilians, of whom a significant number were Jews[1], were executed by the Nazis there during World War II.

In today's Kiev, Babi Yar is located at the juncture of Kurenivka, Lukianivka and Syrets raions, between Frunze, Melnykov and Olena Teliha streets and St. Cyril's Monastery.

On September 28, leaflets in Russian, Ukrainian and German languages were posted in Kiev. The Russian announcement read (From the Russian translation):

> All Jews of the city of Kiev and its environs must appear on Monday, September 29, 1941, by 8:00 AM on the corner of cemetery). You are to take your documents, money, valuables, warm clothes, linen etc. Whoever of the Jews does not fulfill this order and is found in another place, shall be shot. Any citizen who enters the apartments that have been left and takes ownership of items will be shot.

More than thirty thousand of Kievan Jews gathered by the cemetery, expecting to be loaded onto trains for deportation. The commander of the *Einsatzkommando*[2] reported two days later:

Morgan Lower, Towson University. Journal of Religion and Society, Volume 9 (2007). The Kripke Center IS.S.N 1522-5658

[1]Babi Yar. Extracts from the Article by Shmuel Spector, Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, Israel Gutman, editor in Chief, Yad Vashem, Sifriat Hapoalim, MacMillan Publishing Company, 1990

[2]*Einsatzkommando* is a German military term with the literal translation of "mission commando", roughly equivalent to the English term "task force".

Все жиды города Киева и его окрестностей должны явиться в понедельник 29 сентября 1941 года к 8 часам утра на угол Мельниковой и Доктеривской улиц (возле кладбищ).

Взять с собой документы, деньги и ценные вещи, а также теплую одежду, белье и пр.

Кто из жидов не выполнит этого распоряжения и будет найден в другом месте, будет расстрелян.

Кто из граждан проникнет в оставленные жидами квартиры и присвоит себе вещи, будет расстрелян.

Наказується всім жидам міста Києва і околиць зібратися в понеділок дня 29 вересня 1941 року до год. 8 ранку при вул. Мельника — Доктерівській (коло кладовища).

Всі повинні забрати з собою документи, гроші, білизну та інше.

Хто не підпорядкується цьому розпорядженню буде розстріляний.

Хто займе жидівське мешкання або розграбує предмети з тих мешкань, буде розстріляний.

Figure 31: Public announcement

> Because of "our special talent of organization", 'the Jews still believed to the very last moment before being executed that indeed all that was happening was that they were being resettled[1]

According to the testimony of truck driver Hofer:

> I watched what happened when the Jews - men, women, and children - arrived. The Ukrainians led them past a number of different places where one after the other they had to remove their luggage, then their coats, shoes and over-garments and also underwear. They also had to leave their valuables in a designated place. There was a special pile for each article of clothing. It all happened very quickly and anyone who hesitated was kicked or pushed by the Ukrainians to keep them moving[2].

The estimated total number of dead at Babi Yar during the Nazi occupation vary. The Soviet estimation stated that there were approximately 100,000 corpses lying in Babi Yar[11].

In 1946, the Soviet prosecutor L. N. Smirnov cited this number during the Nuremberg Trials, using materials of the Extraordinary State Commission set out by the Soviets to investigate Nazi crimes after the liberation of Kiev in 1943.

According to testimonies of workers forced to burn the bodies, the numbers range from 70,000 to 120,000.

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[1]Martin Gilbert (1985): The Holocaust: A History of the Jews of Europe During the Second World War. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. ISBN 0030624169 p.202

[2]Statement of Truck-Driver Hofer describing the murder of Jews at Babi Yar cited in Berenbaum, Michael: Witness to the Holocaust. New York: Harper-Collins. 1997. pp. 138-139

Many artists created on this massacre. The poem written by the Russian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko; was set to music by Dmitri Shostakovich in his Symphony No. 13.

An oratorio was composed by the Ukrainian composer Yevhen Stankovych to the text of Dmytro Pavlychko (2006). A number of films and television productions have also marked the tragic events at Babi Yar, and D. M. Thomas's novel *The White Hotel* uses the massacre's anonymity and violence as a counterpoint to the intimate and complex nature of the human psyche.

In a recently published letter to the Israeli journalist, writer, and translator Shlomo Even-Shoshan dated May 17, 1965, Anatoli Kuznetsov commented on the Babi Yar tragedy:

> In the two years that followed, Russians, Ukrainians, Gypsies, and people of all nationalities were executed in Babyn[sic] Yar. The belief that Babyn Yar is an exclusively Jewish grave is wrong. [...] It is an international grave. Nobody will ever determine how many and what nationalities are buried there, because 90 percent of the corpses were burned, their ashes scattered in ravines and fields[1].

This symphony, no. 13, in B flat minor, Op. 113 was first performed in Moscow on December 18, 1962 by the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra and the basses of the Republican State and Gnessin Institute Choirs, under Kirill Kondrashin (after Yevgeny Mravinsky refused to conduct the work). The soloist was Vitali Gromadsky.

The Soviet authorities refused to admit the existing but hidden anti-semitism and the lyrics were considered heretic by politicians.

The work has five movements:

1. Adagio (Babi Yar) A criticism of Soviet anti-Semitism and official indifference to the Holocaust.

2. Allegretto (Humour) Humour is personified as a mischievous rascal who constantly eludes official attempts at censorship and silencing.

3. Adagio (In The Store) An ode to the hard-working women of the Soviet Union, always tired from standing in long lines at the store, often in bitter cold.

4. Largo (Fears) This movement recalls the pervasive atmosphere of dread during the Stalin era.

[1]The Defection of Anatoly Kuznetsov by Prof. Yury Shapoval, Ph.D.

Figure 32: Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

5. Allegretto (A Career) A celebration of Galileo's refusal to recant his discoveries about the nature of the heavens, even in the face of censorship and threats from the authorities.

For an English translation of the poems see: Appendice, page:90.

In The Twenty-first Century

Diversification

The 1930s saw an influx of Jewish composers to Palestine, among them musicians of stature in Europe.

These composers included Paul Ben-Haim, Erich Walter Sternberg, Marc Lavri, Oeden Partos, and Alexander Boskovitch. They were all concerned with creating a new Jewish identity in music, an identity which would suit the new, emerging identity of the Zionist state.

While the response of each of these composers to this Nationalist challenge was intensely personal, there was one distinct trend to which many of them adhered: many of these and other composers sought to distance themselves from the musical style of the Klezmer, of eastern European Jewry, which they viewed as weak and unsuitable for the new national ethos. Many of the stylistic features of Klezmer were abhorrent to them. "Its character is depressing and sentimental," wrote music critic and composer Menashe Ravina in 1943. "The healthy desire to free ourselves of this sentimentalism causes many to avoid this . . . "[1]

Perhaps the most radical in his search for a new Jewish identity was Alexander Boskovitch. His *Semitic Suite* for piano, written in 1945, draws much from Arabic music: it is non-polyphonic, almost homophonic. He uses repeated notes to imitate the sound of a Kanun.

From these early experiments has grown a large corpus of original Israeli art music, much of it specifically seeking roots in Jewish musical tradition. Notable among modern Israeli composers are:

- Betty Olivera, composer in residence at Bar Ilan University. Olivera takes traditional Jewish melodies both Ashkenazic and Sephardic and sets them in complex, profoundly dissonant contexts. The result, surprisingly, is not something sounding ultramodern, but rather a natural

[1] Menashe Ravina, The Songs of the Land of Israel, monograph published by the Intitute for Music, Ltd., Jerusalem, 1943

extension of the folk traditions she draws on. Her work Serafim for soprano, clarinet, violin, cello and piano is a good example of this.

- Tsippi Fleischer, who has composed vocal works that merge contemporary Western compositional techniques with the modal, quartertone scales of Arabic music.

- Mark Kopytman, whose compositions draw heavily on both Eastern European Klezmer and Oriental Jewish sources.

- Yitzhak Yedid, who has composed mostly for chamber groups, strives to combine classical genres with improvisation and Eastern and Jewish styles.

- Chaya Czernowin Chaya Czernowin (1957) is currently residing in Austria. She is the lead composer at the Schloß Solitude Sommerakademie, a biannual international academy of composers and resident musicians at the landmark Schloß Solitude, in Stuttgart, Germany.