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An Application of Prayer Chant and Klezmer Modes**

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**An Analytical Study in *Klezmer* Music:
An Application of Prayer Chant and Klezmer Modes**

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Thesis submitted to the
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Abstract

This thesis studies the melodic elements of the *klezmer* music genre. First, the reader will observe the work of *klezmer* scholar Joshua Horowitz, who describes the basis of the *klezmer* genre as a set of four modes. As per convention, these modes are scale-based, but are additionally motivic in nature.

Second, a similar modal system will be examined; that of the Synagogue Prayer Modes, which were identified primarily through the work of Jewish music scholars Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, and later, Baruch Joseph Cohon.

Finally, a set of pieces found on the recording “Hassidic Tunes of Dancing and Rejoicing” will be analyzed both in terms of the *klezmer* and prayer modes. It is through this analytical process that the reader may determine how the motivic patterns within the modes influence the composition of a *klezmer* piece. This process will also highlight the link between the two sets of modes.

First, I would like to thank my supervisors, professors Lori Burns and Rebecca Margolis for agreeing to supervise this project and allowing me to complete this study in *klezmer* music. Your help along the way is much appreciated.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Influence of Synagogue Prayer Chant on Klezmer Music

The purpose of this thesis is to formulate a clearer definition of the elusive genre of “klezmer” music. I will begin by reviewing the literature already published that discusses this particular genre of music. As the literature review indicates, the historical and cultural facets of klezmer music have been studied by scholars while the musical, and more specifically, analytical side of klezmer music has largely been neglected to date. This thesis aims to define klezmer music from a theoretical perspective and to demonstrate the influence of synagogue prayer chant on this musical genre. While clearly many other cultural and ideological influences have made their mark in the distinctive klezmer style, I intend to prove that the ancient prayer chant of the synagogue is indeed the origin of the klezmer genre through close examination of both the prayer-modes of the synagogue and the transcription of an authentic klezmer recording from Mount Meron, the ideological centre of klezmer music, a term that will be defined over the course of this thesis.

Etymology and Origins

The word “klezmer” is derived from the joining of the Yiddish words “*kle*” and “*zemer*,” which translates to “vessels of song.” It can be said to have originated as long ago as the biblical-era from musicians performing in the Temple.

During the latter half of the 1700s, The Hassidic movement influenced the development of the klezmer genre. Religion became more accessible to the general

public and dancing and chanting became an important form of worship. This would be accompanied by the music of the klezmerim.¹

Hybridization of Klezmer Music

The transition to the klezmer music of the modern era began in twentieth-century America. Eastern European Jews migrated to the Americas between 1880 and 1924. Jews of many nationalities each brought their own musical styles with them with the migration to the Americas; from Austria-Hungary to Romania to the Russian empires, the music of numerous ethnicities became fused into the klezmer style.² However, upon migration, a large American stylistic component became incorporated into the genre to a point where many of the stylistic features of klezmer music became distorted. The eastern European was largely abandoned during the 1920s.³

The klezmer genre would come into contact with an even greater damaging force during the Holocaust. With the Nazi's destruction of the eastern European Judaism, the sources of much klezmer were destroyed.⁴

In the Americas during the 1970s, a revival of the klezmer genre began to take place. Several popular performers such as Lev Liberman, Andy Statman and Dave Tarras were then able to bring klezmer music back in America.⁵

¹ Hankus Netsky, "American Klezmer: A Brief History," in *American Klezmer*, ed. Mark Slobin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002), 14.

² Hankus Netsky, "American Klezmer: A Brief History," in *American Klezmer*, ed. Mark Slobin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002), 13.

³ Ibid, 14.

⁴ Ibid, 19.

⁵ Ibid, 21.

Defining Klezmer Music

The vast majority of research within the klezmer music field revolves around the historical context of the musical genre, while the theoretical components of the genre have been largely neglected. While some insight into the theoretical side of klezmer music could be gained through the study of the Jewish cantorial system of modality, with several scholars making reference to the similarities of these two styles, this link has never been clearly defined. Instead, klezmer is defined in many different—and often imprecise—ways. For example, Joel Lewis, klezmer music critic⁶ and author of the article “Heavy Shtetl: The New In-Your-Face Jewish Music” that appeared in *Moment* magazine, offers a definition of the genre in his review of *The Klezmatics* concert in 1995 as being “the Ashkenazic Jewish Folk music known as klezmer.”⁷ This is far too vague a statement to act as a decisive definition of a musical genre. This is the typical attitude in regard to klezmer music. People felt the need to define the genre, while the current definitions neglect the fact that the original use of the term klezmer did not denote a musical genre at all, but rather a professional musician who worked within a specific musical tradition in Eastern European Jewish communities. To accurately reflect the genre’s origins, it should be referred to as “klezmer music.” Marion Jacobson, assistant professor of music and humanities of Union University, addresses this issue in the article “Newish, Not Jewish: A Tale of Two Bands.”⁸ She points out that originally, the term klezmer designated the musicians themselves; however, the term has taken on new meaning in the present day. Jacobson believes that the term klezmer may now refer also

⁶ “Sources,” in *American Klezmer*, ed. Mark Slobin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002), 225.

⁷ Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Sounds of Sensibility,” in *Judaism* 47/1 (Winter 1998), 51, 73.

⁸ “Unpacking Music: Marion Jacobson,” *World History Sources* (Accessed 11 March 2010) <<http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/searchwhm.php?function=find&x=9&y=9&keyword=>>>.

to a genre, a venue or simply a stereotype of expectations held by twenty-first century audiences.⁹ In this study, however, the term “klezmer” is used to refer to the musician who plays in this particular musical style, while “klezmer music” is used to designate the musical genre.

Many bold statements have been made in the effort to define klezmer music. Klezmer music scholar Seth Rogovoy states that klezmer music is the “Jewish instrumental music that was played by professional musicians in Eastern Europe for occasions such as weddings and *bar mitzvahs* - a tradition that dates back at least as far as the Middle Ages.”¹⁰ This definition implies that klezmer music is a phenomenon of the past that cannot possibly be revived and exist in the present day. In contrast, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, professor of Performance Studies and Hebrew and Judaic Studies at New York University, posits that the term klezmer music is actually a contemporary designation. She believes that this musical genre, which is colloquially referred to as klezmer music, is in fact a modern creation due to the fact that the Jewish instrumentalists who played this type of music before the “klezmer revival” of the 1970s never actually characterized their music as klezmer music. Instead, a variety of other terms were used to refer to this genre. For example, reputed mandolinist and clarinetist Andy Statman, whose music is widely accepted as being within the klezmer music genre,¹¹ labels his music as *Hasidic* music rather than klezmer music.¹² He uses this label to acknowledge his belief that klezmer music was originally intended for religious purposes to fulfill the

⁹ Marion Jacobson, “Newish, Not Jewish: A Tale of Two Bands,” in *American Klezmer*, ed. Mark Slobin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002), 187-8.

¹⁰ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Sounds of Sensibility,” 61.

¹¹ “Andy Statman,” *Andy Statman Trio* (Accessed 11 March 2010) <<http://www.andystatman.org/Read.htm>>.

¹² Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Sounds of Sensibility,” 50.

mitzvah of *simkhe*¹³ at Jewish weddings, and the absence of the original social and religious context in which it is intended to function nullifies the meaning of the term klezmer music.¹⁴ Orchestra leader and multi-instrumentalist Rudy Tepel, who specializes in Hebrew and Yiddish wedding music holds an intermediate view on the subject that acknowledges both the past and the current states of the music when defining the genre where “today’s klezmer is a successful, well-trained musician who devotes his full time to weddings.”¹⁵

Functionality

One contributing factor as to why klezmer music cannot be precisely defined is the absence of the role of the traditional klezmer musician in modern society. Historically, an Eastern European Jewish community included families whose occupation consisted of professional musicians called *klezmerim*, a single musician being a klezmer.¹⁶ According to klezmer revival pioneer and musicologist Zev Feldman,¹⁷ this profession evolved as a “caste¹⁸” that governed the professions and social status of its people in Eastern European Jewish societies. The role of the professional musician was handed down through the generations of a family in the caste understood to be the community musicians who play at celebrations and events. *Klezmerim* were seen as a

¹³ Ritual Celebration

Mark Slobin, *Fiddler On the Move*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2000), 29

¹⁴ Ibid, 54

¹⁵ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Sounds of Sensibility,” 63.

Jewish Klezmer Wedding Music and Chassidic Melodies,” *Rudy Tepel and his Orchestra*,” (Accessed 30 March 2010) <www.tepel.org/>.

¹⁶ Walter Zev Feldman, “Bulgareasca/Bulgarish/Bulgar. The Transformation of a Klezmer Dance Genre,” in *American Klezmer*, ed Mark Slobin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002), 84.

¹⁷ “Walter Zev Feldman,” *Central European University* (Accessed 11 March 2010) <http://web.ceu.hu/sun/sun_2003/CV/walter_zev_feldman_2003.htm>

¹⁸ Walter Zev Feldman, “Bulgareasca/Bulgarish/Bulgar,” 84.

low-status group within the Eastern European Jewish society. These families were known to have intermarried with the families of *badkhonim*, or wedding jesters. However, the *badkhonim* were not classified under the same low rank of society as the *klezmerim* since some of the *badkhonim* had been *yeshivah*¹⁹ students, which significantly elevated their status in the community. Klezmer families possessing these social connections may well have gained status through their intermarriages with the higher-status *badkhonim*. However, the opposite end of the spectrum was also present. Some evidence suggests that professional musicians of the Roma community may have entered into Jewish society through the *klezmerim*, as musicians who performed in musical ensembles of mixed ethnicity. These Roma musicians were of the lowest status in Jewish society.²⁰ Some semi-professional and amateur musicians may also have existed in Eastern European Jewish society. Often, these musicians were barbers who worked part-time as *klezmerim* in small communities where the demand for *klezmerim* was not high enough to warrant a full-time klezmer *kapelye*.²¹

The *klezmerim* occupied a similar role in their Eastern European communities as the Roma musicians did in theirs, as well as in the Roma communities of the Balkans. However, musicologist and klezmer revival pioneer Walter Zev Feldman believes the *klezmerim* are unique due to their exclusive performance of often-virtuosic instrumental music that was not shared by musicians of other cultures living in the same geographical area. The dance genres of the *klezmerim* display remarkable similarities such as rhythm and tonality to each other over a wide geographical area including the Jews in the Eastern

¹⁹ A school for study of the Talmud.
 “Yeshiva,” *Merriam Webster Online* (Accessed 5 May 2010)
<http://www.merriam-webster.com>.

²⁰ Feldman, “Bulgareasca/Bulgarish/Bulgar,” 87-88.

²¹ Yiddish for ensemble.

Ukraine, Belorussia, Lithuania, Eastern Poland and Bessarabia. These similarities were also found in both American and European documents of notated material.²²

Klezmer as an Inherited Occupation

Scholar and musician Hankus Netsky, through interviews of Eastern European Jewish immigrants who settled in Philadelphia beginning in the 1880s, explored the hereditary klezmer tradition. Netsky has gained notoriety in the klezmer world as a professor of music at the New England Conservatory, as well as the founder and director of the *Klezmer Conservatory Band*.²³ He claims that these first generation immigrants tried valiantly to maintain their social connections to the “Old World” in Eastern Europe and formed religious congregations, burial societies and *landmanschaften*²⁴. Often, ties were maintained to the professional musicians employed in their former Eastern European cities, therefore aiding in the transmission of this traditional music through generations of klezmer families.²⁵ Netsky’s interview with clarinetist Morris Hoffman displays the phenomenon of inherited musicianship through family lines in the Jewish community.²⁶ Hoffman is a second-generation klezmer whose father, Joseph Hoffman, came from a small *shtetl*²⁷ in the Ukraine called Kriovozer. He passed down the klezmer tradition to his six children by teaching them all to play the music of the *klezmerim*. The

²² Feldman, “Bulgareasca/Bulgarish/Bulgar,” 84.

²³ Slobin, *American Klezmer*, 233.

²⁴ These are social organizations based on members’ common origins in specific cities and towns in the Old World.

Hankus Netsky, “An Overview of Klezmer Music and its Development in the U.S.,” in *American Klezmer*, ed. Mark Slobin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002) 55.

²⁶ Slobin, *American Klezmer*, 59, 71.

²⁷ Meaning “town” in Yiddish.

Hoffman family dominated the music scene in Kriovozer; at least one member of the family was present in the klezmer ensemble at virtually all town events requiring music.²⁸

Michael Alpert, eastern European and Jewish music and dance scholar as well as founding member of the celebrated klezmer band *Brave Old World*, recounts a similar story of hereditary transmission in klezmer musician Ben Bazyler. Bazyler was born in Warsaw, Poland in 1922 to a mother whose family played a central role in the klezmer ensemble *Di Kalushiner Klezmurim*. This ensemble was an influential orchestra in the Jewish folk tradition that operated in Kaluszyn, a town near Warsaw. During the 1920s and 1930s, Bazyler's uncle led the ensemble and while the young Bazyler was discouraged by his father from becoming a musician, he played with his uncle's group from the time he was eight years old. The ensemble played all around central Poland for both Jewish and non-Jewish weddings. Originally, Bazyler played the *puk*, a type of double-headed drum with a brass cymbal and soon also became proficient on the snare drum and drum set. As is consistent with the klezmer tradition, he was taught to play these instruments by other *klezmerim*.²⁹ In 1964, Bazyler immigrated to the United States with his family, where he continued to function as a professional Jewish musician, although he did expand his traditional eastern European repertoire to include American and Jewish American songs. Although he may no longer have performed exclusively in the traditional setting of a Jewish wedding, Bazyler continued to be a successful Jewish professional musician. He also became a part-time barber in his latter years, as was common among the eastern European *klezmerim*. Although he may have expanded his

²⁸ Netsky, "An Overview of Klezmer Music and its Development in the U.S.," 55-6.

²⁹ Michael Alpert, "'All My Life a Musician': Ben Bazyler, A European Klezmer in America," *American Klezmer*, ed. Mark Slobin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002) 75-6.

repertoire to include elements of the new culture in which he was immersed, his old-style *puk* remained in his living room and he played it regularly. Alpert states that the story of Bazyler's life is common among Polish Jews of Bazyler's generation. The process of immigration, but maintenance of one's profession and traditions, as seen in Bazyler's story, aided in the preservation of the klezmer style.³⁰

A Repertoire-Based Approach to Klezmer Music

Mark Slobin defines klezmer music in his book *Fiddler on the Move*. After examining many aspects of the historical and social context of the genre, he looks to the music itself. He begins by agreeing with Walter Zev Feldman's four designations of klezmer music: core repertoire, transitional or southern repertoire, co-territorial repertoire and cosmopolitan repertoire. The core repertoire is characterized mainly by a dance called the *freylekh*³¹, a dance, which shares material from Jewish religious music, as well as other celebratory works, such as the *sher*. The transitional repertoire, also called the southern repertoire, consists mainly of dances that carry Romanian names, such as *bulgarish*, *hongas*, *sirbas*, *horas* and *doinas*. The co-territorial repertoire had a much more limited Jewish content; these dances were often played for non-Jews, but also for Jews in a specific geographical location. These dances include the Polish *mazurka*, Ruthenian *kolomeyka* and Ukrainian *kozachok*. Finally, the cosmopolitan repertoire is music of Western Europe such as the *quadrille*, *polka* and *waltz*.³² Slobin proceeds to address the different issues presented by klezmer music. Slobin turns to klezmer violinist Deborah Strauss to demonstrate the aesthetic of restraint. To a student, she describes the beauty in

³⁰ Alpert, " 'All My Life a Musician' ," 77-9.

³¹ Yiddish for "happy".

³² Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move*, 94.

showing restraint, or holding back. However, Slobin also acknowledges that each musician approaches aesthetic in a different way. While Strauss may value restraint in her music, others may prefer to exhibit a more raw and assertive quality when playing in a klezmer music ensemble. Limits on the two ends of this spectrum are generally agreed upon and adhered to by most players, however there is a great variety in individual styles. This phenomenon may be the result of the discontinuous history of klezmer music; because several interruptions, the Holocaust being a main source of rupture, exist in the performance of the genre, the continuity of performance practice that may have been achieved in other types of music is simply not possible in the case of klezmer music.³³ This may also stem from the belief that performance must display variety, as can be observed in Max Epstein's comment, "Never play it twice the same way - never."³⁴ A core element of klezmer *music* is the desire for the instruments of a klezmer ensemble to imitate the sound of human voices. This notion can be traced back to the nineteenth-century in Yiddish fiction. The fact that this ideal can be traced back to the nineteenth century provides a means of continuity and coherence in the klezmer music genre.³⁵

Religious Connotation

Slobin then discusses the affect of the music, in this case meaning a mood created by a piece of music. It is here that Slobin mentions the Jewish liturgical music's connection to klezmer music, a well-known and often discussed connection that is difficult to define precisely. Slobin suggests that a religious connotation can be found within the instrumental style of klezmer music as religious songs often appear in klezmer

³³ Ibid, 94-5.

³⁴ Ibid, 95.

³⁵ Ibid.

tunes. The presence of these religious implications creates a certain atmosphere within the music. However, in a modern setting, affect appears to be less uniform. Because klezmer bands of the present day take so many liberties with their artistic choices, little continuity can be found in terms of affect in the klezmer music genre.³⁶

Venue

Slobin addresses the function of klezmer music, which has changed throughout history. Klezmer music was typically reserved for Jewish celebratory affairs and its function has changed a great deal in modern times. Klezmer music is no longer confined to the traditional Jewish wedding; it can now be found in the concert hall or in the recording studio as well. Because the realm of klezmer music function has been changing so rapidly, it is difficult to designate its functionality anymore. For this reason, the original function of klezmer music, that of the professional musician playing for local celebrations in the Eastern European Jewish communities, has disappeared and the genre can no longer be defined in this way.³⁷

Style and Genre

Style is perhaps one of the most important features in defining a musical genre, though again, style is a contentious term in musicological study. Allan F. Moore discusses this debate in his article, “Categorical Conventions in Music Discourse: Style and Genre.” He references several other scholars in a survey of opinions on the definitions of style versus genre. Franco Fabbri states that genre is “a set of musical

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

events...whose course is governed by a definite set of socially accepted rules.”³⁸ Philip Tagg agrees and also places style as a subsidiary to the larger context, genre.³⁹ Leonard Meyer, however, offers an alternative perspective. He, instead, places genre as a subsidiary of style claiming that style is a set of choices that are made within certain limitations, precisely opposite to Fabbri’s definitions.⁴⁰ Moore closes by offering his own insights into the matter. He distinguishes several main points from the writings of his fellow scholars. First, style can be a “manner of articulation of musical gestures and is best considered as imposed on them, rather than intrinsic to them”⁴¹ while genre is simply the context in which these gestures are found. Next, he suggests that style can describe the technical features of a particular work, while genre depicts the social constraints on a particular type of work. Finally, Moore articulates another definition of style where style itself acts as a subject from which several hierarchical levels descend.⁴²

Slobin himself defines within the context of klezmer music. He believes that style describes the specific nuances that make a genre identifiable throughout a variety of different pieces. With the great increase in the popularity and availability of klezmer music workshops, institutes and recordings, the transmission of style to the new generation of *klezmerim* has been facilitated. A student now has many models available to them from which to imitate and develop one’s own personal style.⁴³

³⁸ Allan F. Moore, “Categorical Conventions in Music Discourse: Style and Genre,” in *Music & Letters*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (August, 2001) 433.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 433-4.

⁴¹ Ibid, 441.

⁴² Ibid, 441-2.

⁴³ Slobin, 96.

While Slobin does address genre, he relies upon a more narrow meaning of the term than is used in this thesis. Slobin is referring to the individual types of klezmer music pieces within the larger klezmer music genre. Slobin also defines genre as the culmination of affect, style, function and memory of a performance. While certain genres are indisputably more common to klezmer music than others, such as the *doina*, *sher*, *bulgar*, and the *freylekh*, all parts of the core repertoire,⁴⁴ Walter Zev Feldman's study of the development of the *bulgar*, offers an interesting perspective on the genres within the klezmer music realm. The *bulgar* was a highly featured work on the klezmer music scene in New York City between 1920 and 1950. European-born *klezmerim* who had since immigrated to the United States, such as well-known clarinetist Dave Tarras, brought this dance to fruition. Following the Second World War, the *bulgar* occupied a dominant position within the klezmer music genre. This American klezmer dance replaced the more traditional Eastern European dances almost entirely. Feldman points out that this genre was not actually as dominant element in the Eastern European Jewish communities as it became in America. In Eastern Europe, it was discovered that the immigration of Jews to Bessarabia from Ukraine greatly influenced the development of the piece and under the less oppressive government; Jews were able to be prominent musicians in their new territory. The Roma were also present in this territory and it was common for Gypsy and Jewish musicians to mix and create joint ensembles. This mix led to the creation of the Moldavian *bulgareasca* and the Jewish *bulgarish*, the *bulgarish* having developed from the *bulgareasca*. While the Jews rejected some elements of the dance, the influence is still very much evident. The rhythmic patterns show similarities as well as a similar scalar structure; all three sections are in the minor tonality with a

⁴⁴ Ibid.

raised fourth scale degree. Even the cadences show likenesses to Moldavian music; it borrows the cadential formula of the *arcanul*, a West Moldavian dance, with some variation in its harmonic structure.⁴⁵ When the dance was brought to America with the waves of immigrant Eastern European Jews, the name was made to sound more American as the *bulgar* and was very popular. However, Feldman's research indicates that there is very little authentically Jewish about the *bulgar*. Its liberal use of triplets is an element absent for the core klezmer repertoire. It also generally begins with a section in the major tonality, another element foreign to the core repertoire. The motives actually bear far greater resemblance to Gypsy music than to Jewish music. Although one of the key developers of the genre, Dave Tarras, introduced Jewish melodies into his pieces while maintaining the rhythmic structure of the *bulgar*, the genre clearly does not belong solely to the Jewish people.⁴⁶

Medium and Instrumentation

Slobin also discusses the medium through which klezmer music is performed. Since the invention 78 RPM record, the violin, so common in the traditional Eastern European klezmer ensembles, took a backseat to the clarinet. The flute, also a prominent member of the Eastern European klezmer band fell into obscurity in America. The *tsimbl*⁴⁷ only gained prominence on the American klezmer scene when Walter Zev Feldman reintroduced the instrument to the klezmer music world on his 1979 album with

⁴⁵ Feldman, "Bulgareasca/Bulgarish/Bulgar," 97-103.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 103-111.

⁴⁷ Cymbalom; a hammered dulcimer from Central and Eastern Europe.

Andy Statman. Kurt Bjorling, Joshua Horowitz, and Stuart Brotman supported his efforts in pulling the *tsimbl* from obscurity.⁴⁸

Formal Structure

The history and culture behind the klezmer tradition are not the only elements that have been explored to date. Many of the technical aspects that look more specifically at the pieces of music themselves have also been examined to some extent, though this information remains quite limited. These elements include formal structure, intonation, ornamentation, tonality and mode, many of which are discussed by Mark Slobin in his book, *Fiddler on the Move*.

The formal structure of a typical klezmer work is far less elusive than many other topics discussed thus far. While there certainly is a great deal of variety present within the forms of klezmer music, certain characteristics tend to be prominent across the entire genre. The form that Walter Zev Feldman calls the “core repertoire”⁴⁹ usually contains two or three sections that are repeated in a cycle until an intuitive need to move on to the next melody occurs. Each section tends to be divided into even smaller subunits. Beginnings of sections are often distinctive, as are cadences. Most pieces end with a tonal cadence affirming the tonic key. Slobin goes as far as calling this commonplace cadence the “thumbprint” of klezmer music.⁵⁰ Linking individual pieces in sequence can create larger forms. This was part of the Jewish wedding tradition, as pieces were arranged functionally to accommodate the needs of the wedding. This tradition was largely lost upon the creation of the three-minute 78 RPM recording, as songs were now

⁴⁸ Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move*, 96.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 97.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 98.

separated from each other. With the invention of the compact disc, playing time increased, but the original tradition could not be salvaged throughout the interruption in sequencing caused by the 78 RPM recording device.⁵¹

Intonation

Intonation in klezmer music poses a stark contrast to Western classical music. Klezmer music is simply not meant to be played strictly in tune. The clarinet and violin are well suited to act as the lead voice of an ensemble, as they have much room to bend their pitch and therefore adjust and control their tuning. While it is a well-known fact that strict intonation is not the norm in klezmer music, again, there is no standardized method governing the intonation of the genre.⁵²

Ornamentation

Perhaps one of the most distinctive and recognizable elements of klezmer music is the ornamentation. Certain ornaments have been labeled as standard elements of klezmer music. Some, principally the listeners, have drawn parallels to the cantorial style of the Jewish synagogue of the “golden age.”⁵³ This is consistent with the widely held view that klezmer music is instrumental music that is intended to imitate the voice. Some clues on the exact procedure with which ornaments are added to the music can be derived from Max Epstein: “It’s the melody – you’ve got everything there – and you’re filling in the empty spots.”⁵⁴ While this appears to be a fairly general characterization, it is also

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid, 98-99.

⁵³ A period situated in the first half of the twentieth century.

⁵⁴ Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move*, 100.

important to have a thorough understanding of the style and know what is appropriate to add in terms of ornamentation. Epstein states on this topic, “It’s got to be part of you that you’re expressing...It’s gotta match, it’s gotta fit into its place...”⁵⁵ Epstein cautions against the teaching of proper ornamentation practice in a klezmer work, yet this is a common practice in the present day. Many formal sessions are available on this topic taught by well-known contemporary *klezmerim* such as Andy Statman.⁵⁶ While Epstein may not agree with this method, the two groups are in agreement that proper klezmer style must be observed when adding ornamentation, meaning, within certain boundaries, and that there is a correct and incorrect way in which to employ ornamentation in klezmer music. Slobin adds that ornaments can act as structural markers.⁵⁷ Slobin characterizes ornaments into four categories: a fast note that appears on the beat leading into a longer and lower note; a note begins, a slight departure from this note occurs, but it returns to this pitch on a single beat; the trill’ the most characteristic ornament, the *krekhits* or the *kneytsh*, which involves a fast move upward from a pitch, but only after this note has been established and is considered to be a unique technique on each instrument.⁵⁸

Mode

Many attempts have been made to classify the tonality of klezmer music, but no definitive theoretical model has been created to accommodate the tonality of the genre as of yet. Several attempts to explain this music from a theoretical perspective using

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 105.

“modes” have been made, however, these explanations remain ambiguous.⁵⁹ Mode is yet another contentious term in music scholarship. Harold S. Powers’ entry in *New Grove Music Online* entitled “Mode” offers some insight into the debate. He begins his article with the three main usages of the term: first, a temporal relationship in late medieval music, second a term meaning “interval” in early medieval music theory, and third and most pertinent to this thesis, a classifications system for melodies revolving around both scales and melodies. The further pertinence of this third definition can be seen in Powers association of this particular definition with folksong and non-Western music.⁶⁰

The term “mode” has undergone substantial evolution over the course of music history. Powers divides his article into several sections to best describe the full meaning of the term. For this study, only the latter two sections are pertinent: “Modal Scales and Traditional Music” and “Middle East and Asia.”⁶¹

In the Nineteenth Century mode designated a major or minor scale to Western Art Music composers, as this was simply a reduction of the set of ancient Greek modes. In the popular tradition, however, the evolution took place in a slightly different manner. Here, modes consisted of generalized melodic patterns, small fragments of music that existed even before the ancient Greek or medieval church modes. During the early Eighteenth Century, composers began to integrate musical ideas derived from European folk music into their works. The Nationalist Movement in the Nineteenth Century helped this integration to progress even further. At the beginning of the Twentieth Century,

⁵⁹ Ibid, 98.

Joshua Horowitz, “The Main Klezmer Modes,” *Klezmer Shack* (Accessed 16 September 2008).

<<http://www.klezmershack.com/articles/horowitz/horowitz.klezmodes.html>>

⁶⁰ Harold S. Powers et al., “Mode,” *Grove Music Online* (2007-2010, Accessed 19 June 2010) <www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁶¹ Ibid.

mode proceeded to evolve in two separate directions, the first involving the use of European folk tunes in compositions, while the second included African musical features into compositions. The first branch of evolution is more pertinent in this particular study.⁶²

Over the course of my research, it became clear that klezmer scholars are not in complete agreement as to the precise definition of mode. Klezmer music scholar Joshua Horowitz attempts to define klezmer music from a theoretical perspective by studying the modes and scales found in the music in his article “The Main Klezmer Modes.” Attempts have been made to classify the modes of klezmer music using the tonality of Western classical music, yet this method cannot account for the fact that klezmer modes contain more than seven notes, and therefore cannot be defined simply by a single octave scale. Therefore a set of modes is identified within each scale. Each mode is designed to represent a specific mood and contains its own set of motives, though many similar motives appear in several different modes.⁶³ The klezmer modes, as well as the prayer modes of the synagogue will be discussed in more detail in later chapters.

Authenticity

The term klezmer music remains an elusive category in the musical world today. While most scholars and performers of the present day agree upon certain elements of the style, other elements remain controversial. One of the main arguments discussed in the klezmer music literature is the question of authenticity. Some believe that the tradition cannot possibly exist in the present day without its placement in the original eastern

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Horowitz.

European Jewish context of weddings and other celebrations, while others believe that it is perfectly acceptable to perform this music, as well as klezmer music hybrids, in the concert hall setting. The original existence of co-territorial repertoire of other eastern European cultures that co-existed and fused with the klezmer style further confuses this issue. For these reasons, the term klezmer itself remains difficult to define.

Although Horowitz and other scholars posit that klezmer music holds a strong tie to the cantorial system of the Jewish synagogue, no concrete musical links have been derived as of yet between the two genres. With this thesis, I will prove that while the Jewish cantorial system of modes, the *nusach* system is indeed an integral part of the music and one of its main influences. I will argue, through analysis and comparison, that an essential, if not the most important, source from which the klezmer genre has descended is the ancient music of the synagogue.

Chapter 2 – Justification

Choosing a Musical Source

The reasons behind the choice of recording “Hassidic Tunes of Dancing & Rejoicing” are explained in greater detail in Chapter 2. Several methodological factors did come into play when selecting this particular source. Originally, I had intended to study a much newer musical source: *Suite For Klezmer Band and Orchestra* by Jewish Canadian composer Sid Robinovitch, which premiered in 1990.¹ This hybrid piece, however, would pose many difficulties when acting a source of klezmer music for analytical study. The main difficulty in using this piece is the wealth of musical styles that have been incorporated into its score. This piece could not be labeled a klezmer piece. As is common opinion among klezmer enthusiasts, the klezmer music produced in North America following the “Klezmer Revival” is far from authentic klezmer music; it quickly assimilated much of the popular music of the era into its style.² First of all, the genre originally traveled from Eastern Europe and Israel overseas to North America putting the style into an entirely new context that was bound to be influenced by its surroundings.³ A lull for many years in the popularity of the genre from 1950-1970 and a subsequent revival further obscured the genre.⁴ Further, Robinovitch puts the genre into an entirely unorthodox context; that of the symphony orchestra with klezmer band. Many of the instruments of the orchestra would never have been part of any authentic klezmer ensemble. Not only is the sound and spectrum of musical colours produced by the

Sid Robinovitch, Klezmer, “Suite for Band and Orchestra,” *Klezmer Suite* (Winnipeg, Manitoba: CBC Records, 2001) 1-2.

² Slobin, *American Klezmer*, 7.

³ Alpert, “All My Life as a Musician,” 73.

⁴ Ibid.

symphony orchestra much larger, but the style of writing is also completely different.

While we can assume from the title “Klezmer Suite” that Robinovitch was attempting to compose in a klezmer style, influences of orchestral writing are inevitable.

The numerous outside sources present in Robinovitch’s “Klezmer Suite” makes it very difficult to decipher just which elements are part of the klezmer tradition and what elements have been assimilated along the way to North America in the present day. It is necessary to find a source as authentic as possible to limit the outside influences that have become incorporated in the genre, and to find a source that was earlier in the timeline of the klezmer style, as well as less distant from its place of origin. Function is also an element to be considered: members of families of klezmerim originally performed klezmer at religious festivals, celebrations and other Jewish events. The music was not performed simply to entertain an audience as it is today, but as a means of worshipping and rejoicing.⁵

The recording “Hassidic Tune of Dancing & Rejoicing” came highly recommended by the top klezmer scholars as an essential recording in the study of klezmer music.⁶ The recording does address many of the analytical problems that arose in Robinovitch’s music. The problem of geographic location is rectified as many of the pieces were recorded in their original context, in Israel on Mount Meron. The problem of function is also eliminated as many of the pieces were recorded at authentic Jewish celebrations during the festival of *Lag Ba-Omer*. Finally, some of these tunes even date back to the late 1700s, which addresses the problem of elapsed time.

⁵ Ibid, 73-8.

⁶ Hankus Netsky, e-mail received 2 May 2009.
Joel Rubin, e-mail received 9 August 2009.

The Collection

The recording used as the source of analysis for this thesis, “Hassidic Tunes of Dancing and Rejoicing,” was produced by Smithsonian Folkways Records in 1978. This nonprofit record label, which was founded by Moses Asch in 1948, is a branch of the Smithsonian Institution, a collection of museums and research centres based in the United States of America. The mission of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings is to educate through the principle of supporting cultural diversity and cultural understanding by documenting, preserving and distributing sound recordings that originate from a wide variety of different cultural situations.⁷

“Hassidic Tunes of Dancing and Rejoicing” is a historical recording of music of the eastern European Jewish origins that evolved in Israel. It includes such genres as the *hora* and the *niggun*, two popular Jewish dances, as well as wedding and holiday music. Yaakov Mazor, musicologist and research associate at the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem⁸, and Andre Hajdu, a composer and ethnomusicologist of Hungarian descent teaching at Bar-Ilan University in Jerusalem with research interests in klezmer and Hassidic music,⁹ take credit for recording and producing this material.¹⁰

The mixing of different ethnic musical elements is an essential and distinctive feature of klezmer music, perhaps even a defining factor. The collection of pieces found in the collection *Hassidic Tunes of Dancing and Rejoicing* incorporates various cultures.

⁷ Israel Adler, “Hassidic Tune of Dancing and Rejoicing,” (Jerusalem. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jewish Music Research Centre, in collaboration with The Jewish National and University Library Washington, DC Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 1978), 2 (Accessed 27 July 2009) http://www.folkways.si.edu/about_us/mission_history.aspx

⁸ “Mazor Yaakov,” *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jewish Music Research Centre* (Accessed 30 December 2009)

<<http://www.jewishmusic.huji.ac.il/about.asp?cat=11&in=11&id=81&act=view>>

⁹ “Andre Hajdu” *Israel Composers’ League* (Accessed 27 July 2009) <http://www.biu.ac.il/hu/mu/icl/hajdu.html>

¹⁰ Adler, “Hassidic Tunes,” 2

The collection itself is a mandate of the Jewish Music Research Centre. The recordings were made from 1967 through 1978 and were selected based on a wide variety of criteria in order to ensure the most accurate and broad representation of the Meron¹¹ repertoire as possible. The collection attempts to represent as many styles of music and groups of Hassidim as was feasible. Different regions and dynasties within the Jewish population were taken into consideration when assembling this collection in order to represent the greatest number of separate groups of people and geographic areas as possible. Over half of the pieces were recorded on location as to preserve their actual spiritual or traditional function, while the other half of the works were recorded in the studio, though still performed by authentic Hassidic performers, musicians with much knowledge of the performance traditions of the genre. The collection of musical works also represents many different styles of pieces within the klezmer genre itself. Dance tunes whose sole purpose is to accompany dancing are included in the collection along with tunes of rejoicing designated for specific Jewish holidays in home or Synagogue situations. The instrumental quality of klezmer music is preserved even in cases where the piece is performed by a vocalist; no text exists for these pieces, the singer simply uses syllables imitating the timbre of instrumental music.¹² Each piece has its own separate reasons for being included in the collection, each of which represents a different aspect of the ceremonial occurrences on Mount Meron.

¹¹ The Jewish people make the pilgrimage to Mount Meron in springtime to celebrate the festival of Lag Ba-omer to commemorate the death of Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai.

Eliezer Segal "Fire from Water at Meron," *From the Sources* (Accessed 5 May 2010) <http://people.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/Shokel/090501_Meron.html>.

¹² Adler, "Hassidic Tunes," 4.

For these reasons, each of these pieces will be analyzed and compared, based on several criteria, to the cantorial music of the synagogue. This process and its results will provide the information necessary for this thesis to reach a conclusion.

Justification

My decision to use this specific recording was reached through the consideration of many factors, one of which was the many recommendations I received from the klezmer music community for this specific recording. When discussing my thesis with several well-versed scholars of Jewish music, this source was a frequent and nearly universal recommendation. Joel Rubin, klezmer and Hassidic music performer and ethnomusicologist at the University of Virginia¹³, is among the scholars that recommended this recording to me for my studies of the Meron repertoire.¹⁴ New England Conservatory professor, performer, scholar and Jewish music expert Hankus Netsky¹⁵ agreed that this was indeed an important source for study of the music of Mount Meron.¹⁶

Liner Notes as a Valuable Source of Information

The liner notes accompanying this recording themselves offer a wealth of information on the topic of Hassidic music and its significance in the culture of Mount Meron, as well as other Hassidic communities. The title *Hassidic Tunes of Dancing and*

¹³ "Joel Rubin" *McIntire Department of Music, University of Virginia* (Accessed 27 July 2009) <http://artsandsciences.virginia.edu/music/people/faculty/performance/rubin.html>.

¹⁴ Joel Rubin, email received 9 August 2009.

¹⁵ "Hankus Netsky," *New England Conservatory* (Accessed 19 February 2010) <http://necmusic.edu/>.

¹⁶ Hankus Netsky, email received 2 May 2009.

Rejoicing is clearly appropriate for this collection of works; rejoicing through music and dance embodies one of the basic values of the Hassidim¹⁷. This was not always the case as prior to the eighteenth century, rabbinic ideals did not include the use of music in a religious setting, as it was understood among them that in mourning for the destruction of the Temple, the Jewish people were to refrain from performing music and dance. It, however, became an essential feature of religious practice among the Hassidim at Mount Meron at a later date. These Hassidic tunes, as they are designated as music for “dancing and rejoicing,” demonstrate a clear link to Jewish religious practice that suggest a likely link between this music and synagogue prayer chant. After all, from this principal, it appears that both types of music have a common goal: to promote rejoicing and other faithful acts among the Jewish people.¹⁸

Functional Means of the Meron Tunes

Many of the specific types of tunes found within the *Hasidic* repertoire of Mount Meron have connections to the Jewish faith, often as a functional means of expressing a particular type of worship. One of these specific types of tune, the *niggun*, acts as an expression of inner spiritual feeling that cannot be put into words. Also, this type of piece allows the *zaddiq*¹⁹ to uncover secrets that lie deep within a man’s soul, which will lead him to the state of communion. The average Jew may also benefit from the *niggun* either

¹⁷ The people who practice Hassidic Judaism. The Hassidic movement was founded in the 1700s by Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov in eastern Europe

“Hasidism,” *Jewish Virtual Library* (Accessed 5 May 2010)
<<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Judaism/Hasidism.html>>.

¹⁸ Adler, “Hassidic Tunes,” 2.

¹⁹ A righteous person who heals the sick and aids the needy is called a *zaddiq*.

Liora Sarfati, “Imported Rituals: Zaddiq Veneration in Israel” (June 10, 2004). *UC Transnational & Transcolonial Studies Multicampus Research Group. Graduate Student Conferences: Paper Sarfati* (Accessed 22 September 2009) <http://repositories.cdlib.org/cmcs/mrg/gsc/Sarfati>.

actively by singing, or passively by listening, which are believed facilitate the elevation of the spirit.²⁰ These clear ties to the Jewish faith suggest there may also be a link to the music of the Jewish faith, as both types of music appear to act functionally as an expression of this faith.

Dance, and therefore dance music, also plays an important role in the Hassidic faith. The Hassidim believe that, in order to properly serve God, rejoicing and enthusiasm must be cultivated. Dance acts as a means for creating the power to rejoice and enthuse at the service of God. This concept is associated with several specific elements necessary to the faith, such as the effect on the “upper world,” evoking medicinal and magical power, as well as the liberation of “sacred sparks” that the Principle of Evil has imprisoned.²¹ Some tales of the Jewish faith express the idea that dancing is, in fact, a duty of those who practice the religion. The clear link of this type of music to the Jewish faith becomes even more pronounced in times of turmoil. A doctrine of the faith suggests that non-Jewish songs should be sung instead of songs native to the Jewish people in times of struggle. The non-Jewish songs will attract the attention of God who will then see that his children are suffering at the hands of the non-Jewish population.²² The distinction made between the songs of the Jewish people as opposed to the songs of the non-Jews suggests a clear division between the two types of music, leaving the impression that the songs of the Jewish people are inseparably linked to their faith.

²⁰ Adler, “Hassidic Tunes,” 4.

²¹ Ibid, 2.

²² Ibid, 2-3.

Cultural Influences

This recording source also aids in the explanation of the influence of other eastern European musical traditions on the klezmer genre. The Jewish people were an extremely mobile group at the time of the development of klezmer music. Persecution and economic uncertainties, pogroms and wars continuously necessitated the uprooting of the Jewish people from a certain location and the re-establishment of that community in a new location. This occurred several times. The klezmer genre did not remain static, disregarding external influences through each of these relocations; each time, certain elements of the new culture in which the Jewish population of a certain community was now immersed were assimilated into their music, while still holding on to some elements of the previous culture that surrounded them before the uproot. This can explain why much of the klezmer dance music is similar in nature to the dances native to other European cultures. For example, the marches performed by the *klezmerim* often demonstrate the influence of the Polish march. Waltzes similar to those of the Austro-Hungarian people also become incorporated into the klezmer repertoire. A well-known type of klezmer piece found within the klezmer repertoire of today, the *doina*, actually originated among the Rumanian people. Many Russian and Ukrainian folk songs, Rumanian-Balkan instrumental works, as well as some elements of oriental dance music also became incorporated into the klezmer style through this geographic phenomenon of constant relocation. Turkish and Near Eastern music can also be identified as a source of influence to the klezmer genre, as well as, of course, the cantorial music of the Jewish people themselves sung within Synagogue services. Each time a Jewish population

migrated, a new ethnic musical source became incorporated into the pool of the already culturally diverse style that is klezmer music.²³

Other factors also contribute to the eclecticism of klezmer music. The style became further obscured, or diversified, as certain *zaddiqs*²⁴ attracted followers from different areas. Thus the melding of different cultures was further facilitated. The personal and geographical divisions that occurred among the *Hasidim* themselves due to conflicting ideologies contributed further to the mobility of the Jewish people, and therefore, the melding of ethnically distinct musical styles.²⁵

Walenstein's Niggun

Simply the family of works, the *niggunim*, is popular a feature of the Lag Ba-omer festivities. The *niggunim* performed on Mount Meron for this festival can be divided into two separate categories: that of instrumental tunes typically meant to accompany dancing, and a group of pieces intended for processions. These categories do require some flexibility, as some *niggunim* are simply sung during meals. They are sung at the common meals unique to Mount Meron as part of the *Lag Ba-omer* festivities. The sub-genre has also progressed into a moderately paced tune used to accompany solo dancers at Mount Meron for *Lag Ba-omer*.²⁶

This specific piece, "Walstein's Niggun" is named after an Ashkenazi Jew of Beirut, Avraham Elstein. The Hassidim subsequently morphed "Elstein" into the name found in the title, "Walstein." Elstein made regular pilgrimages to Mount Meron for the

²³ Ibid, 2-3

²⁴ Also spelled "tsaddik" The spelling from the source material is preserved in this case. Adler, "Hassidic Tunes," 2-3

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Ibid

festivities early in the twentieth century. He was known for his frequent requests for this particular tune to be played by the *klezmerim*, at which time he would often dance. This particular example of “Walstein’s Niggun” from the Hassidic *Tunes of Dancing and Rejoicing* collection is performed in binary metre, though performances of the piece in ternary form do exist as well. In the 1920s, this second version appeared, however the work, in this form, became more akin to the *hora* of the Romanian Jews.²⁷ Simply the fact that this piece falls into the *niggun* category that is so frequently performed and is such an essential feature of the Mount Meron festivities at Lag Ba-omer gives reason to include it in the sub-collection of works to be analyzed. The personal ties associated with this work to Mount Meron, however, gives further cause to include it, as it is fairly certain that this was a frequently played tune at Lag Ba-omer. Also, the pilgrimage made by a Jew of non-Israeli origin to request this tune provides an excellent example of the melting pot of cultures that each contribute to the klezmer genre. This particular performance features a solo clarinet with drummed accompaniment, the drum sounding on beats one and three in triple metre.

Hora

This tune was originally popular only among Eastern European *klezmerim*, however, it subsequently spread to Israel and abroad. *Yeshiva* students tend to be quite familiar with this tune, as they often dance the traditional *hora* with this tune providing the accompaniment. The affiliation of the *Yeshiva* student to the *hora* suggests that the piece holds great importance in Jewish worship, and therefore, the synagogue.

²⁷ Ibid, 4.

Similarities to the music of the synagogue, therefore, become a more probable phenomenon.

The two works, “Waldstein’s Niggun” and the “Hora” are each recorded, in this collection, with heterophonic clarinet melodies and supporting accompaniment. The two works occupy a single track on this recording as one piece flows immediately into the next and have similar functions within the festivities of Mount Meron. In this first case, the clarinet was accompanied by a very simple accompaniment on the drums, yet the accompaniment becomes more complex during the Hora. This concept of melody on the clarinet with accompaniment by a rhythm section characterized the instrumental Jewish folk music style during the Nineteenth Century. The rhythmic accompaniment of “Waldstein’s Niggun” even features the drum and the cymbals, a combination that characterized the old klezmer style unique to Mount Meron.²⁸ This particular recording of these two works was made at the *halaqah* ceremony, part of the Festival on Mount Meron at Lag Ba-omer each year. This ceremony encompasses the ceremonial first cutting of a boy’s hair. This occurs at age three. This particular *halaqah* ceremony took place in the courtyard of Rabbi Simeon Yohay’s²⁹ tomb on Meron on May 16th, 1968, the clarinetists being named as Moshe Berlin and Binyamin Barzevsky.³⁰

²⁸ Ibid, 4.

²⁹ Rabbi Simeon Bar Yohay, also known as Rabbi Shimon Bar Yohay is thought to have written the Zohar, a set of reflections on the Torah intended to guide people of high spiritual achievement. The death of the Rabbi is commemorated at the festival of Lag Ba-omer.

“Haim Zafrani,” *Two thousand years of Jewish life in Morocco*, The American Sephardi Federation with Sephardic House (Jersey City, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 2005) 112.

Bnei Baruch, “What is the Zohar?,” *Bnei Baruch Kabbalah Education & Research Institute* (Accessed 19 February 2010) <<http://www.kabbalah.info>>.

³⁰ Adler, “Hassidic Tunes, 4.

String of Meron Tunes featuring Abu's Hotser

Although this recording features of vocal interpretation of this piece, it is in fact an imitation of instrumental music, characteristic of the klezmer genre. A single male voice is featured singing on syllables with no accompaniment. The first piece on this track, entitled "Abu's Hotser" translates as Abu's Courtyard from Yiddish. This piece, a *niggun*, is used to precede the Lag Ba'Omer Eve festivities. A group of Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews process from the courtyard of the Moroccan Abu family, a rabbinical family, in Safed to Rabbi Simeon bar Yohay's tomb in Meron. The group led by the *klezmerim*, carry the *Torah* scroll to Mount Meron. This function ties this particular work to the festivities of Mount Meron.³¹ While the other pieces within this track may not always be performed in conjunction with "Abu's Hotser" (though the piece immediately following this tune is, in fact, always performed in tandem with it) their stylistic features are remarkably similar; each is performed by a single male voice without accompaniment, singing as if to imitate an instrumental performance.

Amar Rabbi Akiva and Wa'amartem koh le-hay

This pair of dance tunes is sung as part of the *hadlaqah*³² ceremony, a feature of the festive meal on Mount Meron. Within the former work, "Amar Rabbi Akiva", Eastern European influence can be traced, referring to Ashkenazi Jewish traditions within the work, while Sephardic elements can also be found. The contribution from each of these two groups lends a more universal Jewish feeling to the work by encompassing the traditions of many Jewish groups. The influence of several Jewish groups leaves no

³¹ Ibid.

³² Lighting of the bonfire.
Adler, "Hassidic Tunes," 4.

doubt of religious ties, which may present themselves in the synagogue prayer chant. This tune is derived from a prosodic work that is performed as a responsorial text between a single male singer, perhaps imitating the cantor, and a larger group, perhaps representing the congregation of a Synagogue.³³

“Wa’amartem koh le-hay,” while functionally a dance tune is derived from a hymn paying homage to Rabbi Simeon bar Yohay. Several versions of this tune exist; many eastern Jewish communities have their own version of the work, while the Hassidic version presents some slight variants. The Hassidic version preserves some of the original Oriental motives along with the same responsorial structure used in the former work, “Amar Rabbi Akiva.” However, unlike the Oriental version, the Hassidic version allows the soloist considerable liberty to improvise on the melody. This adaptation mimics the freedom of the cantor within the synagogue to add embellishments to the simply structured melodies provided. This feature relates the work back to the prayer chant of the synagogue in its style and execution.³⁴

Turkish Tune

This piece has a definite function within Jewish tradition; it is one of the most popular tunes selected for the nocturnal ceremony at the tomb of Rabbi Yohanan the Shoemaker³⁵ following the lighting of the bonfire on Mount Meron for the festival of *Lag Ba-Omer*. The simple fact that this piece possesses such a definite function in terms of Mount Meron festivities suggests that it is most likely a fairly common klezmer piece.

³³ Ibid, 4-5

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ A Jewish figure from approximately 150 c.e.

Rabbi Carlos A. Tapiero “Yom HaAtzma’ut Message,” *Maccabi World Union* (Accessed 5 May 2010) <<http://www.maccabiworld.org/>>

from this region. Further ties to Jewish tradition, and specifically similarities to the Jewish music written in the cantorial style of the synagogue can be drawn as “Turkish Tune” is often performed at this same ceremony along side the popular cantorial works “*Kol Nidre*” and “*Akdomes*.” This fact, that these pieces are used within a similar context in the *Hasidic* faith, demonstrates that the works occupy a similar role within the celebrations of Mount Meron”³⁶

The fact that the word “Turkish” can itself be found within the title of this piece alludes to one of the most characteristic features of klezmer music, as discussed above: the incorporation and assimilation of the music native to other cultures. The origins of this specific piece can be traced to the Turkish military band repertoire. The *klezmerim* living in this geographic area were exposed to Turkish military band music in their daily lives and subsequently assimilated elements of it into their own musical genre. This is demonstrated by the fact that many klezmer works bear the title “Turkish Tune.” This sub-genre can still be identified within the more modern klezmer repertoire; today’s klezmer musicians, such as Dave Tarras and Naftoli Brandwein, have performed works with the titles “*Terkische*” and “*bulgar*.” Both of these sub-genres are derivations of the original military band tune of Turkey. Two Bratslav Yeshiva students sing on this particular recording of “Turkish Tune” found in the “Hassidic Tunes of Dancing and Rejoicing” collection, rather than the expected instrumental performance characteristic of the klezmer genre. However, no text is used; the two vocalists sing only syllables, not text, which is intended to imitate the instrumental style. For all of these reasons,

³⁶ Adler, “Hassidic Tunes,” 5.

“Turkish Tune” can be judged as a logical representation of the klezmer music of Mount Meron.³⁷

Schaeffer’s Niggun: Meron Dance Tune

Named for Eliezer Schaeffer, this dance tune is traditionally an instrumental work performed at weddings, but can also be used at other festive events. Schaeffer became associated with this tune as this Haifa resident requested this tune of the *klezmerim* for thirty years as he danced to it. The tune has a different function in modern times; it now acts as accompaniment to solo dances and the *hora* of the Yeshiva students. The piece makes use of a formal structure similar to that of many other Meron dance tunes; it contains three main divisions that could be referred to as “episodes” using classical terminology.³⁸

While the history behind Schaeffer’s Niggun offers it as worthy candidate to be a part of the collection, I believe that it may have been mislabeled. The version of Schaeffer’s Niggun present on this recording consists of only two male voices, while the liner notes discuss the use of several instruments, including the clarinet, modern drum set, trumpet and accordion within the work. The notes even offer specific performers names, such as Binyamin Barsevsky on the clarinet, Yehuda Freiman on the accordeon, Samuel Borenstein on the drums and Ze’ev Fenigstein playing the trumpet. Clearly, this is not the case for this particular recordings or only a single melodic vocal line. For this reason, I believe an error was made in the compilation of the album, or perhaps the compact disc

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

itself.³⁹ A vocal tune is provided that is clearly imitating instrumental performance and fits well within the klezmer genre. The recording offers a work similar in melodic, rhythmic and stylistic content as many of the other vocal tracks within this collection. For this reason, this recording, whatever it may be, will still be considered for comparison within this thesis. It is possible that it is, in fact, another version of Schaeffer's Niggun, and will therefore retain this title within the context of this thesis.⁴⁰

Tune for Leading the Bridegroom

While this tune may not be a main feature of the Meron festivities, it occasionally does appear within the program. Originally, the tune was only heard in Tiberias as the bridegroom processed to or from the traditional wedding canopy. Since then, during the 1960's, Israeli *klezmerim* began to incorporate the piece into their repertoire after hearing it performed by Elhanan Silber. It is sung by a single male voice on this recording and bears much resemblance to other Meron tunes of this nature.⁴¹

Mazltov

The liner notes for the collection "Hassidic Tunes of Dancing & Rejoicing" offer a description of this piece as a wedding tune of the Eastern European Jewish communities as a multi-functional part of the Hassidic wedding. The tune became an essential part of the wedding and was henceforth given the title "mazltov," or "good luck." The names of Binyamin Barzevsky, Yehuda Freiman and Samuel Borenstein are given as the musicians behind the clarinet, electric organ and drums, respectively, however, no instruments can

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

be heard on this recording. Instead, a single male voice can be heard at times among a much larger crowd, giving this piece a responsorial quality of alternation between a single voice and a crowd.⁴²

T'hies ha-meysim- Resurrection of the Dead, Brogez Tants

“T'hies ha-meysim” or “Resurrection of the dead” has a dual function as both a standard work at Hassidic wedding and a feature of the Lag Ba-omer festival on Mount Meron. This particular piece actually provides an even more specific function: it is one of only two tunes that are used to accompany the “Brogez Tants” in Hassidic culture. This dance is actually a three-scened pantomime of the fight over beer and money of two men resulting in the death of one. A resurrection follows ultimately resulting in rejoicing over the event. The piece features a partially improvised text, a feature reminiscent of the cantorial style. The actual “T'hies ha-meysim” accompanies the final two scenes, those of the death, resurrection and rejoicing. Two melodies back up this tune, the first a Rumanian *doina*, the second, also Rumanian, but a *hora*.⁴³ This particular recording features clarinets with side drum accompaniment. With its specific function within the *Lag Ba-omer* repertoire, it leaves little doubt that this piece is a common feature of the Mount Meron festivities.

Slow Hora: Instrumental Tune

While this piece has no specific function, it is, in fact, a *niggun*. While the rhythms of this Rumanian *hora* may resemble those of the American *klezmerim* more

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

closely than those typical of the Israeli *klezmerim*, this recording was nonetheless made on Mount Meron at the nighttime ceremony at the tomb of Rabbi Yohanan the Shoemaker. Moshe Berlin, a clarinetist who heard the piece on a 1920's American record, was performing. This *niggun* was well received by the Meron crowd as it did still preserve many of the original Rumanian music patters characteristic of the other works performed for *Lag Ba-omer* on Mount Meron. It is performed on clarinet and drum.⁴⁴

Yearning Tune of the Habbad Hassidim

The function of this particular work lies in the gatherings of the *Habbad* Hassidim and is performed in the Wallachian style. The rhapsodic rhythms of the tune, however, are somewhat reminiscent of the cantorial style. A Rabbi, Rabbi Semuel Zalmenov using only the voice, in fact, performs this particular recording. This tune is known to contain some recitative elements as well, also a feature of the cantorial style, however, this particular recording contains no such passages. The author of the liner notes, Israel Adler also comments on the influence of the Rumanian *hora* on this work, making it of common origin to many of the other works from Mount Meron presented in this collection.⁴⁵

Jester's Tune for the Mitzvah Tants

It is traditional at Hassidic weddings for the *badkhn*, or jester, to be a key feature of the ceremony. At various points during the wedding the *badkhn* performs jokes, praises and other statements all in Yiddish rhymes, some per-determined and some

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

improvised. Typically, these rhymes are performed to certain known tunes of various types called “jesting tunes.” The particular jesting tune featured on this recording is of the improvisatory variety, again, tying it to the cantorial style. These “jesting tunes” are said to have been extremely popular among the Hassidim.⁴⁶

Rejoicing Tune to Lo Tevosi

Instead of a ceremonial function within the *Lag ba-omer* festival on Mount Meron, this tune is more familiar to all Hassidim regardless of whether they have made the pilgrimage to Mount Meron or not. This particular melody is one used for the second section of a prayer, which can be set to many different melodies. The name “Rejoicing Tune to *Lo Tevosi*” is derived from the fact that most Hassidim begin to use the second tune, the “tune of rejoicing” at the sixth stanza of the text of the prayer, where is stated “*lo tevosi*,” meaning “though shalt not be ashamed.” The tune evolved to adopt this title.⁴⁷

In terms of classification, this tune falls into the category of *niggun simchah*, or “rejoicing tune.” These tunes are characterized by being similar to dance tunes in nature and structure to klezmer dance tunes without actually being dance tunes themselves. This concept is demonstrated in this tune; the initial rhythm resembles a typical Hassidic march with its concluding syncopation at the ends of verses. As well, an ABCB formal structure unfolds over the course of the work, also characteristic of the Hassidic dance. The solo voice with only a drummed accompaniment is also reminiscent of many other

⁴⁶ Ibid, 5-6.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 6.

dance tunes played on Mount Meron.⁴⁸ These factors allow this piece to serve as a model of a typical tune on Mount Meron at Lag Ba-omer; therefore, analysis of this work can tell us a great deal about the music of Mount Meron.

Dance Tune (Jerusalem)

There is still debate between the Karlin and the Slonim Jewish dynasties as to where the true origins of this tune lie. Evidence, however, suggests an oriental musical ideology, be it Arab or Jewish, governs the melodic patterns within this tune. To discoverer the influence of oriental cultures is quite common within many Hassidic communities in Israel, notably in Karlin, Slonim and Bratslav communities. Regardless of its origins, this Dance Tune is now sung primarily in the Mea Shearim quarter of Jerusalem as accompaniment to the circle dance.⁴⁹ In this particular rendition of the tune, the clarinet carries the melody, although it may be performed vocally as well. Regardless of the instrumentation, chromaticism and glissandos are characteristic of this tune, which eventually, when used extensively, frees the piece from a standard intonation system. That is to say, the placement of pitches within the work is constantly shifting to the point where it is difficult to say which of the many variations on a particular pitch is that pitch's "true" intonation.⁵⁰ Regardless of which particular Jewish community is behind the origin of this dance tune, we can be assured that it is, in fact, part of the dance repertoire of Jews situated in Jerusalem. It even has a specific function, being an accompaniment to a circle dance. These facts themselves demonstrate this dance tune's place in the klezmer repertoire of Israel.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 6.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Waltz of the Modzhith Hassidim

The “Waltz of the Modzhith Hassidim” is a dance of Polish origin and is specific to a particular community of Jewish people. The Kazimierz were a community of Jewish people in Poland that eventually splintered into other groups, establishing the Modzhith community in the late nineteenth century. While many of the pieces discussed to date have originated in the more eastern Jewish communities, those of Russia and its fellow Eastern countries, this Polish tune offers a contrast in origin and character while still possessing a clear function within the klezmer repertoire; it is performed at the meal portion of a Jewish wedding. As this piece is native to the Polish community of Modzhith, as the *Admorim*⁵¹ typically composed these waltzes, its exposure to Polish military music, as well as the popular music of the day in this country, is evident. Even the genre itself shows influence of popular music; the Modzhith community adopted the title “opera” for these waltzes, as well as marches and longer, more complex works.⁵² While the triple metre foundation is preserved from Viennese waltz, Hassidic waltzes are performed at a slower pace than the former group’s works. Also, the tendency of klezmer musicians to heavily ornament their performances alters the waltz character somewhat.⁵³ Though clearly of Polish origin, this particular work has now spread throughout the larger Jewish community.⁵⁴ It has clearly made its mark within the klezmer repertoire as an important work and worthy of analysis.

⁵¹ Leaders within the *Modzhitz* community.

Adler, “Hassidic Tunes,” 6.

⁵² Adler, “Hassidic Tunes,” 6-7.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

Mitzvah Tants: Mis-sod hakamim, Ya'amo (Jesting), Bore olam be-qinyan

“Mitzvah tants” represents a separate, yet equally important element of the klezmer music of Mount Meron. As the typical function of the klezmer piece is to intensify the rejoicing at a religious celebration, it is only fitting that a traditional wedding piece from a Jerusalem wedding be included in the sub-collection used for analysis in this thesis. This piece does represent the instrumental nature of the klezmer tradition accurately, clarinet is the featured melodic instrument with a band of *klezmerim* also present to act as accompaniment.⁵⁵

Definite ties to Jewish tradition can be found within this work. To perform this dance is said to be a religious duty; the piece is actually given status near that of a religious ceremony. It does contain text, performed by the *badkhn*, of a religious nature. The presence of text places the work slightly outside of the klezmer realm, as klezmer music is, for the most part, solely instrumental. However, it is still considered to be an important piece for the celebrations of Mount Meron, where klezmer music is performed. The presence of text simply offers a stronger link to the cantorial music of the synagogue. “*Ya’a mod*” is pronounced by the *badkhn*, meaning, “let him present itself.” The tie to the synagogue is unmistakable, as this greeting is used to invite a man to read from the Torah in the synagogue. The song imitates the improvisatory style of the cantor as the *badkhn* improvises as he calls each dancer to the floor. Not only is a link to the Synagogue found in this piece, but an actual imitation of the cantorial style in its improvisatory nature. The use of the *badkhn* itself strengthens this tie, as he typically performs one of two types of works: the showpiece or the prayer. In the synagogue, the

⁵⁵ Ibid.

cantor plays a similar role; his pieces are either simple, reflective prayers or extravagant displays of virtuosity, reminiscent of the showpiece genre.⁵⁶

Dance Tune (Meron)

The final piece in the collection, another “Dance Tune,” is the perfect conclusion for the recording as it represents the Hassidic community as a whole. The Hassidim have adopted the title “*Welt Niggunim*,” or “*niggunim* of the world” to describe the set of pieces, of which this dance tune is a part of. While the set is known to be of Hassidic origin, the particular community to which it can be ascribed to is unknown. The origins of these works have become forgotten, as they are now important klezmer works performed within many different Hassidic communities. As I am attempting to study the larger body of klezmer works performed on Mount Meron rather than studying only the works of a particular group of Hassidim, this piece offers a fitting conclusion for my analysis. This particular recording features three clarinets on the melody with a drum for accompaniment, with the drumming being more characteristic of the oriental Jewish style.⁵⁷

Conclusion

Initially, I selected to study the collection of works found on the recording of “Hassidic Tunes of Dancing and Rejoicing” on recommendation of klezmer experts Joel Rubin and Hankus Netsky. My intent was to find a collection of works that could represent the larger body of works performed on Mount Meron. After careful

⁵⁶ Ibid, 8.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

examination of the history, function and characteristics within these collected works, I became more and more convinced of the analytical worthiness of this collection of works for the purposes of my thesis. The question of authenticity is addressed in several way by this collection; the simple fact that this recording was assembled and produced by Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, an offshoot of the Smithsonian national museum of the United States lends credibility to the collection as it is a non-profit record label dedicated to preserving the history behind these works, as well as providing the most authentic sonic representation of these works possible. Secondly, each track is accompanied by liner notes that explain the function of the work, history behind the work, and any other pertinent information, such as performers, time and place of recording. Upon examination of these accompanying words, it becomes clear why these particular works were chosen for the collection. Each selection had a clear and important function within the festivities on Mount Meron for the festival of Lag Ba-omer. Many different combinations of instrumentation and voices appear to represent the diversity of musical ensembles taking part in the celebration. Also several different sub-genres within the klezmer music field are represented on this recording; some pieces are intended as music to accompany dance, while some stands alone as a musical work. I believe that this recording represents a variety of styles, functions and characteristics of the klezmer music of Mount Meron and is therefore a logical choice when trying to paint an accurate picture of what exactly is the klezmer music of Mount Meron. Since klezmer music is a hybrid style with many influences, it seems fitting to represent as much of the klezmer repertoire and varieties as possible.

Chapter 3 – The Klezmer Modes

The Klezmer Modes

Joshua Horowitz is among world's leading expert on klezmer music theory at the present time. Based in Graz, Austria, Horowitz is a member of the successful klezmer band Budowitz, as well as a scholar in the field of ethnomusicology. Horowitz is so well-known and respected in the world of klezmer music that sometimes he is simply referred to as "Dr. Klez."¹ Among Horowitz's scholarly work in the field is an article entitled "The Main Klezmer Modes."² Preceding the article, Horowitz briefly discusses the history of the article and alludes to the fact that he has actually written a much longer, much more detailed article on the subject that was never published. When I inquired about this article, he kindly sent me a copy. Horowitz's article provides a wealth of information on the klezmer modes and is the main source for this chapter.

Rather than the more familiar scalar system used for the organization of Western Art Music, Horowitz instead uses the mode as the main organizational unit for the klezmer music genre. The five modes named by Horowitz are the *Ahava Rabbah*/*Freygish*, *Mi Sheberach*, *Adonoy Moloch*, *Mogen Ovov* and *Yishtabach* modes. Modes of the same names also govern the use of motives in Jewish cantorial music. This sharing of titles between the music of the synagogue and the klezmer genre is the first and most fundamental link between the two genres that we will observe through this thesis.³

¹ "Jewish Music Makers Online," *Klezmershack* (Accessed 30 March 2010) <<http://www.klezmershack.com>>.

² Ibid.

³ Joshua Horowitz, "Main Klezmer Modes," unpublished, 1.

Mode Versus Scale

A mode is more complex than the scale of Western tonal music. A scale simply indicates the pitches that are typically used within a work of a specific key. Although convention leads us to certain rules about how these tones should be used within the piece, there is a great deal of freedom for composers to use these pitches as they please, as well as chromatic pitches, if they choose. The more complex modal system carries much more specific information within its bounds. A. Z. Idelsohn originally brought this type of modal system forth through his extensive musicological research on the synagogue's cantorial system.⁴ For each mode there exists both a "scalar form" and a "motivic scheme."⁵ The scalar form simply contains the pitches typically used within the mode, but they must be placed in scalar order. One of the main distinctions between a Western tonal scale and the scalar form of a klezmer mode is the span of the notes; a scale of the tonal system contains only seven notes, as each octave is identical. This is not so in the klezmer modal system. The placement of semitones, tone and augmented seconds may differ in the octave above as well as the octave below the fundamental octave; the fundamental octave being the main source of melodic material for a klezmer piece. This octave would be the octave characterized by being built on the fundamental tone of the mode. Another distinction would be the high degree of intervallic variability permissible in a klezmer mode, as opposed to a Western tonal scale. While the melodic minor scale of the tonal system does raise the sixth and seventh scale degrees ascending and lower them again descending, the klezmer modal system has a great many tones that may be raised or lowered by a semitone based on various conditions. These tones that

⁴ Baruch Joseph Cohon, "The Structure of Synagogue Prayer chant," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 3/1 (Spring 1950) 17.

⁵ Horowitz, "Main Klezmer Modes," unpublished, 2.

are not fixed are called “variable tones.”⁶ Much of this variability comes from the composer or performers own taste, as well as the underlying construction of the mode.⁷

There is, however, another means of producing these scalar patterns. In his thesis *The Art of the Klezmer: Improvisation and Ornamentation in the Commercial Recordings of New York Clarinetists Naftule Brandwein and Dave Tarras 1922-1929*, Klezmer clarinetist Joel Rubin uses a combination of tetrachords, four of which he labels “lower tetrachords” and four of which he labels “upper tetrachords.” It is through the combination of one or two lower tetrachords with an upper tetrachord that the scalar forms of the klezmer modes are derived.⁸

Motivic Scheme

The motivic scheme provides much more insight into how a piece within a certain mode will unfold. Each mode must create a certain mood. This mood is created through the combination of many small motives as well as the rules that govern how exactly these motives should be used within a piece of a specific mode. The contour of these motives tends to be very similar from mode to mode; it is principally just the actual intervals within that vary among the modes. To add another element to this modal system, cadential formulae are also specified. Given this information, the cantor or klezmer musician is able to improvise, yet in a very structured fashion.⁹ Although this

⁶ Joel Edward Rubin, “Modality and Compositional Processes in the 1920s Solo Recordings of Naftule Brandwein and Dave Tarras,” *The Art of the Klezmer: Improvisation and Ornamentation in the Commercial Recordings of New York Clarinetists Naftule Brandwein and Dave Tarras 1922-1929*, (Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD at the City University, London, Department of Music: September 2001) 196-7.

⁷ Rubin, Thesis, 176.

⁸ Ibid, 176-8.

⁹ Cohon, “The Structure of Synagogue Prayer chant,” 17-32.

explanation comes partially from Idelsohn's research on the synagogue prayer modes, klezmer modes function in the same way.¹⁰

The Nominal Tone or the Tonic

The nominal tone, as Horowitz calls it, or the tonic according to Joel Rubin is a very strong force within any klezmer piece. Most of these pieces begin with a tonic chord, however, this is not necessary. The final chord of each sentence then gives the strongest indication of a tonic.¹¹

General Melodic Tendencies

We will first examine how the modes as a collective tend to behave. The melodic movement within any mode tends to be conjunct; however, should a leap larger than a fifth occur, we may expect to exit this leap by contrary and conjunct motion. We have no choice but to move in conjunct motion when approaching or leaving the lowest sub-tonic note. If disjunct motion does appear, it tends to be either a triad outlining the nominal note (the nominal note being analogous to the tonic in the tonal system) or a triad establishing the "key" at a cadence point.¹²

Modulation

Within pieces written in each of the klezmer modes, sub-modes may also appear within a piece of a different mode; the process of changing from one mode to another within a work is called modulation. Modulation in klezmer music is a process much the

¹⁰ Horowitz, "Main Klezmer Modes," unpublished, 2.

¹¹ Rubin, Thesis, 201-2.

¹² Horowitz, "Main Klezmer Modes," unpublished, 2.

same as modulation within the Western tonal system; a piece begins with a principal mode which can then modulate through a series of common tones to a new mode. The common tones change function according to their context and allow for a smooth transition to the new mode. This process is similar to the first means of modulation described by Joel Rubin, where the key signature of a work stays the same, but the tonal centre switches from the tonic, or nominal tone, to another scale degree. The chordal accompaniment will therefore change and the function of each scale degree is altered based on the new temporary tonic.¹³ The second means of modulation described by Rubin is the “interchange of the modal scale.” In this case, the tonic is left unaltered however the intervals surrounding it now change. This is to say, a separate mode with the same tonic as the original mode now governs the music.¹⁴

Specific rules govern the employment of sub-modes and explain which sub-modes may be used in each context. For example, when a principal mode with a nominal tone is designated, a list of possible sub-modes and their keys can be generated. Though given the label “sub-mode,” strictly speaking, sub-modes share precisely the same characteristics as the main modes; it is simply their context within a klezmer piece that designates each as a sub-mode or a principal mode. That is to say that a mode is called a sub-mode when it plays a subordinate role within a piece of music.¹⁵ A mode is given the title of “sub-mode” rather than “principal mode” based on several criteria. A mode may be called a sub-mode if another principal mode has already been established. A sub-mode offers contrast to the principal mode; a sub-mode tends to have a character opposite

¹³ Rubin, Thesis, 203.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Horowitz, “The Main Klezmer Modes,” *KlezmerShack* (Accessed 16 September 2008) <<http://www.klezmershack.com/articles/horowitz/horowitz.klezmodes.html>>.

that of its principal mode. Finally, a third characteristic helpful in identifying a sub-mode within a klezmer piece is that it tends to govern the music for less time than does the principal mode.¹⁶

Ahava Rabbah Mode

The *Ahava Rabbah* mode is known under several other titles as well, such as the *Freygish* mode, the Mode of Supplication, or the Altered Phrygian mode. The label *Freygish* is a Yiddish word of German origin, while the title “Mode of Supplication,” was derived from the text of the prayer to which pieces constructed of motives from this mode are set. Renowned ethnomusicologist Moshe Beregovsky suggests a50Confidential, Page 50, 7/9/2010Confidential, Page 50, 7/9/2010Confidential, Page 50, 7/9/2010 fourth label for the mode, “altered phrygian” because the typical lowered third scale degree of the Phrygian scale is in fact raised in this mode.¹⁷ The title *Ahava Rabbah*, meaning, “abounding love”¹⁸ refers to the words of prayer in the Shabbat Shacharit, or morning, service. It originates from the Yiddish classification imposed on the cantorial system of synagogue music by Jewish music scholars such as Abraham Zvi Idelsohn and Baruch Joseph Cohon. By using this label, Horowitz establishes a link from the cantorial music of the Jewish Synagogue to the klezmer genre.¹⁹

Example 3.1, below, according to Joshua Horowitz, depicts a) the scalar form b) certain key motives within the mode and c) a typical cadence.

¹⁶ Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” unpublished, 9.

¹⁷ Ibid, 2.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid, 3.

Example 3.1²⁰

a)



b)



c)



As we can see from Example 3.1 a), a klezmer scale contains more than the seven notes we are accustomed to in the Western tonal system. The notes of the tonal scale are said to have “octave equivalency,” as each letter-named note will have the same function from octave to octave as well as the same accidentals. This is not so in the scales of the klezmer system. A certain pitch is named as the “nominal tone,” or the “fundamental,” which in this case would be D, indicated by a whole note. This nominal tone is analogous to what we would call the tonic in the Western tonal system. Notes below this fundamental pitch are labeled as the “sub-tonic tone group” seeing as they lower in pitch than the nominal tone. These notes do not necessarily carry the same accidentals as their counterparts one octave higher. As we can see, this is that case in this example; while a

²⁰ Ibid, 4.

B-flat is employed in the octave above the nominal tone, a B-natural appears in the sub-tonic tone group.²¹

However, the scalar form of the *Ahava Rabbah* mode lacks important information concerning the use of these particular pitches within a work written in this mode.

Example 3.1b) provides a clearer idea as to how these pitches are used. Three motives are pictured here and indicate the basic contour of the motives used in this mode.

However, as this music is performed in an improvisatory style, these motives are simply a guide from which the musician may improvise and decorate as they see fit. Although Horowitz's unpublished article indicates several B-naturals, in this thesis they have been altered to B-flats to conform to the *Ahava Rabbah* scalar form. Finally, Example 3.1c) illustrates a typical cadence in this mode which concludes on the nominal tone, as occurs in every mode.²²

This musical example provides us with a fairly accurate example of types of melodic patterns and pitches that would appear in a piece written in this mode. However, one must bear in mind that klezmer music takes a far more liberal and intricate approach to intonation than does Western classical music. As described in the introduction to this thesis, the intonation of klezmer music varies a great deal; there is no standardized system governing intonation for klezmer music and therefore the pitches depicted in the musical examples are only an approximation. The limitations of Western musical notation do not allow for the pitches to be identified exactly as they are performed. Though microtonality is not used in the strict sense that pitches intermediate between semitones can be identified as separate pitches, pitch-bending as well as other ornamental

²¹ Ibid, 2.

²² Ibid.

figures is are key features of the klezmer style, so many variants on a note within the span of a semitone are likely.²³

Mi Shebarach Mode

The second mode, the *Mi Sheberach* mode may also be known under several different titles due to its background of mixed cultural origins. These words, *Mi Sheberach*, carry the meaning “he who blessed.”²⁴ However, one may also refer to this construction as the Ukrainian mode, Altered Ukrainian mode, *Doina* mode, Altered Dorian mode or the *Ov Horachamim* mode. This mode, as can be observed from its title, is often used in the well-known klezmer music form called the *Doina*. The *Mi Sheberach* mode also displays a multicultural background; Romanian and Ukrainian origins can be identified within the mode, as well as the Jewish elements also present within it.²⁵

Example 3.2 depicts a) the scalar form, b) six motives that illustrate the typical behaviour of these pitches, and c) a typical cadence in the *Mi Sheberach* mode. Example 3.2a) illustrates the various possibilities for tones in the *Mi Sheberach* mode; D is the fundamental tone with a C-sharp in the sub-tonic tone group below. Typically, there is a G-sharp above the tonic, yet a G-natural is also a possibility in this mode, typically in descending passages, though not exclusively. The C above the fundamental may also be raised to C-sharp, with this happening most often in ascending passages. Example 3.2 b) illustrates six motives typically found in this mode. One may observe the altered fourth

²³ Ibid, 3.

²⁴ Ibid, 5.

²⁵ Ibid.

degree of the scale in a descending passage in the first motive and the raised seventh scale degree in examples 3 through 6, each time ascending to a D to resolve.²⁶

Example 3.2²⁷

a)



b)



c)



Adonoy Moloch Mode

The third klezmer mode, the *Adonoy Moloch* mode, is an essential feature of the prayer chant of the Synagogue, as well as being a klezmer mode. The Ashkenazi cantors use the same title as the *klezmerim* while the Sephardic cantors know this mode as the

²⁶ Ibid, 5.

²⁷ Ibid.

Tefillah modes. The words mean “the lord reigns,”²⁸ again, referring to the Jewish liturgy. Some Arabic origins can be traced within this music as well. This mode is often used as a sub-mode of *Ahava Rabbah* or *Yishtabach* pieces, a sub-mode being a mode to which pieces written principally in a different mode may modulate. It’s strength as a sub-mode comes from its lighter mood, which acts as a contrast to the *Ahava Rabbah* and *Yishtabach* modes.²⁹

Example 3.3, below, illustrates a) the scalar form, b) seven motives used within this mode and c) two cadences common to this mode. D is, again, the nominal tone, as seen in Example 3.3 a). Typically, a G natural will appear above the nominal tone, though a G-sharp is also a possibility, most often in descending passages. We also have the option of the typical C above the nominal tone or a C-sharp, most commonly found in ascending passages.³⁰

Example 3.3³¹

a)



b)



²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid, 6.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.



c)



Mogen Ovos Mode

The fourth mode, the *Mogen Ovos* mode is also borrowed from the Jewish liturgy as one of the oldest synagogue modes and translates to “our forebears’ shield.”³²

Because of its importance in the Shabbat service as a teaching device, it can also be called the Didactic Mode. Scalar references are made when Horowitz describes it as similar to the natural minor scale used in the Western tonal system, as well as *Bayat-Nava* and *Bayat*, two *Makamat* of Middle Eastern origin. It also often follows the cadential patterns of the *Yishtabach* mode, as they are related. The main function of this mode is in pieces of greeting and parting, as well as music for dance music.³³

As seen in Example 3.4 a) the scalar version of the *Mogen Ovos* mode contains several choices in terms of accidentals. The typical E above the nominal tone, D, is sometimes lowered to E-flat, most often in descending passages. The B-flat and C above the nominal tone may also be altered, but in this case they are raised to a B-natural and C-

³² Ibid, 7.

³³ Ibid.

c)



Yishtabach Mode

The final mode to be identified within this chapter, the *Yishtabach* mode is named for the prayer to which it is set, which begins; “it shall become superb.”³⁷ Its character is derived from the often-lowered second and fifth degrees. Controversy still surrounds this mode, however. Well-known cantor Joseph Singer (1841-1911) classifies this mode as identical to the modern *Ahava Rabbah* mode. Pinchos Minowsky (1859-1924), the last to hold the post of cantor at the celebrated Broder Synagogue in Odessa holds a conflicting view, stating the this mode is simply an ascending Aeolian and descending Phrygian scale,³⁸ while Jewish folk music scholar Moshe Beregovsky holds a view similar to Horowitz concerning the mode’s lowered second and fifth degrees.³⁹ Joshua Horowitz is in agreement with Beregovsky’s definition describes this mode as a relative of the *Yishtabach* mode.⁴⁰

The scalar form of the *Yishtabach* mode is illustrated below in Example 3.5 a). Several alterations are possible in this mode. The C-sharp below the nominal tone, D, can be lowered to C-natural. This tends to occur in descending passages. Immediately after the nominal tone, the second scale degree E-natural can also be flattened, most often

³⁷ Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” *KlezmerShack*

³⁸ “Zavel Zilberts,” *Naxos* (Accessed 15 April 2010)

<yiddishmusic.jewiverse.info/jassinowskypinchos/index.html>

³⁹ Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” unpublished, 8
Mark Slobin “Fiddler on the Move,” 8

⁴⁰ Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” *KlezmerShack*

in descending passages. An alteration may occur on the fifth scale degree, A, which can be lowered by a semitone, usually in ascending passages. Similarly to the melodic minor scale in the Western tonal system, the sixth and seventh degrees above the nominal tone may be raised by a semitone from B-flat and C-natural to B-natural and C-sharp, respectively.⁴¹

From Example 3.5 b), we may observe just how similar the *Yishtabach* mode is to the *Mogen Ovos* mode as many of the melodic patterns are either similar or identical to those of the *Mogen Ovos* mode. Horowitz makes a note saying “IV Freygish” next to melodic pattern 9. While this is fairly consistent with consistent with melodic pattern 3 of the *Freygish* or *Ahava Rabbah* mode transposed up a perfect fourth (as indicated by the “IV”), the author believes it is also consistent with the melodic patterns of the *Yishtabach* mode, as it follows the guidelines provided by the scalar form. Finally, in Example 3.5 c), two possible cadences are provided, the second being shared with the *Mogen Ovos* mode.

Example 3.5⁴²

a)



⁴¹ Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” unpublished, 8.

⁴² Ibid.

b)



c)



Modulation in the *Ahava Rabbah* Mode

While this chapter will not go into great detail on the subject of the sub-modal system, we will use the *Ahava Rabbah* mode as an example of how this system works. If that *Ahava Rabbah* mode is being used within a piece of music with the nominal tone of D, the following modes may be applicable as sub-modes: VII *Adonoy Moloch* mode, VII *Mi Shebarach* mode, VII *Mogen Ovos*, as well as several others. These modes have been transposed from their models shown above with nominal tone, D. With these

transpositions, these modes have similar accidentals to that of the *Ahava Rabbah* mode based on D, and the similarity allows common-tone modulation with ease.⁴³

Formal Structure

There is no set number of sentences, or phrases, that a klezmer piece must have, though there are certain patterns to which klezmer pieces seem to adhere. Out of Joel Rubin's sample of thirty-one klezmer tunes, he found 49% of these tunes to be constructed of three sentences, with the next most common pattern being a piece of four sentences. A few of these pieces consisted of two sentences while only a single piece was found to have one sentence, as well as five sentences. Each sentence tended to be repeated once, though there are a great many variants in this aspect of the formal structure as well.⁴⁴ Sentence lengths vary a great deal as well. Within this same sample, over half of the sentences were sixteen measures long, while the next most common sentence structure was eight measures, while the sentence length varied from four to thirty-two measures.⁴⁵

In conclusion, before even examining the particular pieces found on the "Tunes of Dancing and Rejoicing" recording, scholars have pointed out a great many similarities exist between the music of the synagogue and the music of the *klezmerim*.

⁴³ Ibid, 9-10.

⁴⁴ Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 178-9.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 179.

Chapter 4 – The Nusach System

This chapter will consist of a general overview of the work of musicologist Baruch Joseph Cohon in his article “The Structure of Synagogue Prayer-chant,” which was published in the spring of 1950 in the *Journal of the American Musicological Association*. He states that he has undertaken the task of completing the work of Jewish musicology pioneer Abraham Zvi Idelsohn who was the first to analyze the Jewish prayer modes in order to classify and systemize them. However, Idelsohn’s work was left incomplete upon his death to be taken up by Cohon.¹ This chapter provides the reader with a basic understanding of the system of synagogue prayer modes. The motives within these prayer modes are illustrated below for comparison within the *klezmer* pieces. All motives illustrated in Cohon’s article appear within this chapter, but their behaviour within the modes will only be discussed to a limited degree. I will classify the motives in broad categories of beginning, middle or ending phrases. However the details of which phrases are typically used together in sequence and a particular motive’s detailed properties will be omitted. For the purposes of this study, it is of greater importance simply to be able to identify the influence of prayer chant motives within the *klezmer* pieces, as it would be very difficult to determine whether the particular function of the motive between the two genres was identical.

¹ Baruch Joseph Cohon, “The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant,” in *JAMS* 3 (1950), 17.

The History of *Nusach* System

The music of the Jewish synagogue has been developing throughout the entire existence of the institution, which dates back to biblical times. The notation of this vast repertoire only began to be recorded at the beginning of the late 1800s, with most notable advances in the field of synagogue chant notation developed by the Russian musicologist Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, whose career included extensive research in the field of Jewish music.² Yet, even in this relatively short time, many distinct and recurring musical patterns have been observed within this repertoire by many Jewish musicologists, including and especially by Idelsohn. The recognition and repetition of these musical ideas allows for the classification of these patterns within the music through the development of a system entitled *nusach*.

The *nusach* system involves a set of scales, which, in turn, are divided into modes, or *steiger*, that contain phrases used in the Jewish liturgy. These phrases are essentially melodic fragments that are used in specified ways for each different type of piece within the synagogue services. Each mode has its own distinct character and is used only in its appropriate place in the Jewish calendar, meaning that each mode has its own specific religious function. These collections of phrases are pieced together, allowing for a distinctly Jewish piece to emerge and providing the framework for the vast repertoire of Jewish music that exists today.³ The term *nusach* is the term that designates the fixed system, which governs the rules of the Jewish prayer chant. It is a fairly flexible system of scales, modes, motives and patterns that allow for much improvisation

² Edith Gerson-Kiwi and Israel J. Katz, "Idelsohn, Abraham Zvi," *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed 20 June, 2009), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.

³ Baruch Joseph Cohon, "The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant," in *JAMS* 3 (1950), 17-19.

to be performed by the cantor, the cantor being the singer in the Jewish synagogue.⁴ His role in the performance of a prayer during a synagogue service is essential. The cantor is expected to be greatly familiar with the *nusach* system and can therefore improvise, often in an extremely virtuosic manner, within its limitations.⁵ This chapter will offer an introduction to the music of the Jewish synagogue, and insight into the structural and melodic content of the prayers. This brief introduction will allow for comparison of pieces composed within the Jewish prayer chant tradition with those of *klezmer* origins.

Abraham Zvi Idelsohn's Work

Though the prayer chant of the synagogue can be traced back to the cantillations of the Bible⁶, the classification of these pieces only began with the research of Idelsohn, who divided the chants into the modes in which the prayers were written.⁷ However, one of his most important discoveries was the link of the early Yemenite Hebrew music to that of the Byzantine, Jacobite and Gregorian Christians. These similarities represent the discovery of the Jewish *nusach*.⁸ Idelsohn traces the prayer chant back to the *Trop*, meaning the cantillations contained within the Bible. It was Idelsohn himself who then proceeded to break down the system into its component parts, which consist of very short musical fragments, which are then pieced together in specific ways to create the work as a whole.⁹ The phrases within each *steiger* represent the building blocks of a Jewish liturgical work. Each phrase is non-metrical, and therefore notated values are

⁴Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in its Historical Development* (Schocken Books: New York, 1967) 109.

⁵ Cohon, "The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant," 17.

⁶ The setting of the words of the Bible to music.

⁷ Gerson-Kiwi and Katz, "Idelsohn."

Cohon, "The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant," 17.

⁸ Gerson-Kiwi and Katz, "Idelsohn."

⁹ Cohon, "The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant," 17.

approximate, especially the first and last notes of each phrase which are adjusted in order to allow for the more or fewer syllables that are contained in each separate text. The basic outline of each phrase remains the same through all of its usages; however, the cantor may embellish each phrase as he chooses, within this framework. Accented notes must be followed strictly, though, without variation, as an accented note is always coupled with a word of great importance within the liturgical text used for the prayer. They are therefore left unaltered to demonstrate their importance within the text.¹⁰

Baruch Joseph Cohon's Classification System

Idelsohn's work was left incomplete upon his death in 1938, and the systematic classification of the Jewish prayers was left to musicologist Baruch Joseph Cohon. His contribution to the understanding of the Jewish prayer chant is also great. Using Idelsohn's work, he organized the material and represented it graphically, allowing for a very clear understanding of the assembly of a particular prayer. He organized the motives by displaying in which part of the prayer they are to be used, be it the beginning, middle, or end of the prayer. This graphic method also allows for the specific function of certain motives to become evident. For example, phrases used for pausal sections (small sections that end in a somewhat of a musical breath, or comma) are organized into a separate column from modulatory phrases (in the context of this chapter, the term modulate is used to indicate a modulation from one prayer mode to another, unless otherwise indicated) to show how they function differently within the prayer. Each motive is therefore assigned a function and placed within its designated column. The most important motives are also clearly indicated, since these are the motives that must

¹⁰ Ibid, 19-20.

be used in every piece written under that mode. The lettering and numbering systems within the columns are also essential, as they demonstrate how some motives may have more than one function. Certain motives may fit under more than one column, designating their multiple functions. Finally, a system of roman numerals is also employed which demonstrates the progression of the piece. Motives to be used in the first section of the prayer are labeled with the Roman numeral I, the subsequent motives with Roman numeral II and so on. Cohon's graphical organization of these musical fragments proves to be a very effective means of communicating the *nusach* system and demonstrating its formal structure.¹¹

The Work of Other Musicologists

Several other musicologists have been involved with the task of classifying the elements of synagogue prayer chant as well. Abraham Baer's knowledge of the Jewish modes allowed him to complete the annotation of a full year of music for services in the synagogue in his work *Baal T'fillah*.¹² This was the first attempt at notation for these specific prayers. Jewish musicologist Baruch Joseph Cohon believes this annotated version of the prayer chants to be quite faithful to the original music, although some alterations were inevitable as the rhythmic structure of ancient Jewish music is far less strict than the Western system in which it was notated.¹³

Louis Lewandowski also proves his strong knowledge and command over the Jewish prayer modes in his work *Kol Rinnah*, which allows complete synagogue services

¹¹ Ibid, 17-20.

¹² Baer, A, *Baal t'fillah: oder 'Der pratischer Vorbeter': vollständige Sammlung der gottesdienstliche Gesänge und Recitative der Israeliten*, Leipzig, 1883.

¹³ Cohon, "The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant," 17.

to be performed from this single book.¹⁴ This work is of tremendous value to cantors in all areas of the world who may now perform an entire year of synagogue services from the contents of a single book. It does, however, also contain a certain weakness, as the *nusach* system is given no explanation whatsoever within the contents of the book. That is to say, while all phrases essential to the synagogue service are contained within this book, less musical liberty may be taken within the each piece, as the rules of improvisation and ornamentation of the prayer chants are not discussed at all. For an experienced cantor well acquainted with the *nusach* system, however, the lack of discussion should not act as a hindrance. In general though, this creates a far more generic service with little room for the individual style of the cantor to be displayed. As well, far fewer virtuosic displays may take place, a trait for which cantors in general are known for, and therefore is considered a key feature of the musical style.¹⁵

Another scholar of importance to the development of the *nusach* system is F. L. Cohen, an Australian musicologist who produced a list of the scales which he considered to be essential to the prayer chant of the synagogue service, as well as designating which services each scale is appropriate for. This information can be found in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*.¹⁶ He then excerpted musical examples from the prayers themselves, and gave them the title of Prayer Modes. From these scales, other musicologists could further break down Cohen's ideas to uncover which particular motives in each prayer are essential to that particular piece. Although fellow musicologist Baruch Joseph Cohon believes Cohen has failed to find the true definition of the synagogue Prayer Modes

¹⁴ Lewandowski, *Kol rinnah u't'fillah: ein und zweistimmige Gesänge für den israelitischen Gottesdienst*. (Berlin, 1871).

¹⁵ Cohon, "The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant," 17.
Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 281.

¹⁶ *Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York and London, 1905) 122.

within his examples, his findings are still considered to be of importance and are widely regarded among the Jewish musicological community.¹⁷

Organization of the *Nusach* System

The organization of the *nusach* system begins with the identification of the particular scales used as a framework for the synagogue Prayer Modes. The scales of the *nusach* system are separate from the modes of the system, although both elements being an essential feature to the system as a whole. While a scale within the system is simply a group of notes, a mode is more specific in that it contains ordered groups of notes from the scale that are arranged into musical fragments. These fragments are each given specific functions within the particular mode. These ordered groups of notes, or fragments, are derived from the modes of the Bible, yet are far more flexible, allowing for more alteration and improvisation to take place in the chant of the synagogue than within Biblical prayer chant. Unlike, the music of the Christian church, very few Jewish pieces have an actual fixed rhythm and meter. Only songs that have become popular, such as *Hatikvah*, which has become the national anthem of Israel, tend to have a fixed rhythm, without variation, attached to them.¹⁸

Major Versus Minor Tonality

However, there is also evidence that links Jewish prayer song to Christian prayer song in what can best be described in Western terms as tonality. The Christian cantillations are chanted primarily in a major tonality, or at least in a mode that contains a

¹⁷ Cohon, "The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant," 17-8.

¹⁸ Ibid, 19.

major third above the tonic pitch, rather than a minor third. The Pentateuch in its entirety, the books of Ruth, Esther, and Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, and parts of the Prophets all contain this characteristic major third above the tonic. Much of the *nusach* system also contains this major third, and therefore leads at least some of the Jewish musicological society to believe that the two systems are derivatives of each other. How the presence of a major third differs from the traditions of Western music; however, is that the major third does not necessarily reflect joy in the hearts of the Jewish people. Although many Western music listeners are filled with happiness from the major scale, and feel sad from the sound of the minor scale, the opposite tends to be true of the Jewish people who can hear the major mode as a tearful and solemn mood.¹⁹

Motives

The motives contained within the Jewish prayer modes were not originally notated, as were the Biblical cantillations, however, the Jewish musicologist Abraham Baer adapted them to fit into a notation system in his *Baal T'fillah*, although modified slightly to fit within a Western context. As the rhythmic structure of Jewish prayer chant is much more flexible than its Western equivalent, Baer's notation is as authentic to the Jewish tradition as is possible, taking into account the limitations of Western musical notation.²⁰

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid, 17-20.

Adonoy Moloch Scale

The first scale that is examined is the *Adonoy moloch* scale. This is also sometimes referred to as the *Tefilla* mode, yet for the purposes of this chapter, it is not strictly a mode. Instead it will be classified as a scale, since this example contains a set of notes, rather than a set of motives. The scale is constructed from the Pentateuch mode, a mode derived from the Pentateuch texts that make up the primary sections of the *Tefilla*, meaning prayer.²¹ This scale is very similar to the Western major scale, and is characterized by the major third above the tonic, as is much Jewish music; however, it also contains the intervals of a minor seventh and a minor tenth, unlike the major scale of the Western tonal system. It is also often referred to as the mixolydian scale because of its similarity to the Western church mode of the same name, according to musicologist Hanoch Avenary.²² It can also be called the Hypodorian scale, according to Idelsohn.²³ The Ashkenazic version of the scale is actually identical to the Western mixolydian scale due to the addition of two whole tones below the tonic, demonstrating its European influence. The Oriental Jewish version of this scale also shows European influence with its obvious similarity to the fourth Gregorian mode.²⁴ Many modes used for the Sabbath prayers, the High Holy Days, and several special chants, such as the *Akdomus* use the setting of the *Adonoy moloch* scale.²⁵ The name of the scale was derived from its opening text in Psalm 93, “Shield of our Fathers,” used in the Friday evening service.²⁶

²¹ Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 73.

²² Hanoch Avenary, “The Concept of Mode in European Synagogue Chant,” in *Yuval* (no. 2, 1971), p. 13.

²³ Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 73.

²⁴ John A. Emerson, with Jane Bellingham and David Hiley, “Plainchant,” *Grove Music Online* (Accessed 26 June 2009) <www.grovemusic.com>

²⁵ Cohon, “The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant,” 19.

²⁶ Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard...The Sacred Songs of the Ashkenazic Jews* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), 48.

Ahava Rabbah Scale

Another scale present within the *nusach* system is the *Ahavoh Rabbah* scale. The major third above the tonic of the Western major scale is still preserved, however this scale also contains a minor second and a minor sixth interval above the tonic, the former creating the augmented second, for which much Jewish music is so well known. The *Abavoh Rabbah* scale is used for the *steiger* of the Sabbath morning service, weekday services, and a few modes used for the High Holy days. Although the scale has also been called the Arabian *Hedjaz* scale, it is mainly used by Russian cantors, and for many Jewish folk songs. It is used primarily in Eastern Europe and is virtually unknown in Western Europe. This scale is also the only scale within the *nusach* system that is not derived from the Biblical cantillations.²⁷ It received its name from a portion of the *Shema* morning prayer, which states, “With Great Love hast Thou Loved Israel”, when translated from the Hebrew text. Usually this scale encompasses the prayers that are pleas for the mercy of God, or the prayers for the deceased.²⁸

Steiger

Within the scales afore described, the *steiger* are a collection of phrases that each have their own specific function within their own respective mode. While each mode has certain phrases that are exclusive to the modes, many motives are shared among two or more different modes. Certain phrases are designated for the beginning of the prayer, while others are assigned to the middle or ending sections of the prayer. Each of these

²⁷ Cohon, “The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant,” 19.

²⁸ Werner, *A Voice Still Heard*, 48-50.

placement classifications is governed by the rules and structure of the particular *steiger* in which the prayer falls.²⁹

Kabolas Shabos Mode

Example 4.1

Adonay moloch scale³⁰



The *Adonay Moloch* scale is depicted in Example 4.1. The first *steiger*, or mode, derived from the *Adonay Moloch* scale is called the *Kabolas Shabos*.³¹ Phrases used for the beginning of a sentence of the piece are seen in Example 4.2, as phrases 1 and 2. These two phrases are essential to every composition within this mode. While Cohon states that phrase 1 is used for the beginning of every sentence of a piece, while phrase 2 is used for the last sentence within the section. Phrase 10 may also be used as a musical phrase to begin a sentence, as is phrase 8. The “intermediate phrases,” Cohon divides into two separate categories: pausal phrases and modulatory phrases. The pausal phrases, phrases 3 through 9 of Example 4.2, provide a point of rest for the music at the end of each of these small motives.³² Modulatory phrases provide a means for the cantor to impose motives that originate in other modes within a composition of another mode. Each of these phrases ends with a passage that easily flows into motives of another mode,

²⁹ Scale and mode examples are taken from Baruch Joseph Cohon’s work “The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant;” however, the examples are transposed so each scale begins on C to allow for facilitated comparison.

³⁰ Cohon, “The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant,” 20.

³¹ Literally, “Receiving the Sabbath,”

Cohon, “The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant,” 20.

³² The term motive is used interchangeably with the term phrase in this context as Cohon uses the term phrase when each of these phrases also act as motives that can be found within the compositions.

allowing a so-called “modulation” to take place. The phrases that carry out this function within the *Kabolas Shabos* mode are numbers 10 through 13 of Example 4.2. Finally, phrases 14 through 17 bring conclusion to mode sentences and larger paragraphs within this mode.

Example 4.2

Kabolas Shabos mode motives³³



P'sukey D'zimroh Mode

The second mode within the *Adonoy moloch* scale is employed in the prayers of the Sabbath morning service. It is called the *P'sukey d'zimroh* mode, or “Verses of Song.” The phrases that comprise this mode are depicted in Example 4.3. In this mode, only phrases 3 and 4 of musical Example 4.3 are required to be employed within the piece. The piece must start with either phrase 1, 2, 3 or 4 with each phrase being employed for a different function. Phrase 1 is derived from a Biblical chant, the Song of the Sea; whereas phrase 2 is used instead when the text contains a short sentence. Phrase

³³Cohon, “The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant,” 20.

2 also allows modulation to other modes. Phrase 3 is very useful in changing the mode into the tonality of the Western major scale, which is quite common for this type of music. In these cases, phrase 3 would take the place of either phrase 1 or 2. Phrases 4 through 7 are used for the middle section of prayers within the *P'sukey d'zimroh* mode, and gradually increase in complexity, until phrase 7, which typically marks the end of the middle section of the prayer. Within the middle sections of pieces written within this mode, none of the phrases are used for modulation to another mode, as this mode is used almost exclusively for short responses within the service, and therefore, seldom extend far enough to modulate into another mode. Of the two concluding phrases, phrase 8 is used when the cantor wishes to end on the dominant degree of the scale, which is, in fact, characteristic of this mode. However, many cantors prefer phrase 9, which provides an ending to the prayer on the tonic, as was done in the Biblical Song of the Sea, which provided much of the inspiration for this mode. Example 4.3 illustrates some of the phrases used within the *P'sukey d'zimroh* mode.³⁴

Example 4.3

P'sukey d'zimroh mode examples³⁵



³⁴ Ibid, 20-2.

³⁵ Ibid, "20.

Y'kum Purkon Mode

The third mode, whose phrases can be seen in Example 4.4, is also used for the morning service of the Sabbath, but is called the *Y'kum purkon* mode, and is used specifically for the *Chazoraz hashatz* portion of the morning Sabbath service. Within this mode, every composition must include the phrases 6 and 11. Every composition used for the *Chazoraz hashatz* must also include the phrases 1, 5 and 10. Of the two beginning phrases, 1 and 2, phrase 1 is used for *Chazoraz hashatz*, and the beginning of the final sentence, the *Chasimoh*, and phrase 2 for the *Y'kum purkon* prayer. This mode offers a considerable amount of flexibility in its intermediate phrases, and will even borrow material from other modes; however, phrases 3 to 7 are unique to this mode. These phrases, along with phrase 8, phrases 4 and 8 of the *Kabolas Shabos* mode act as pausal phrases within this mode. Unlike the *P'sukey d'zimroh*, the *Y'kum purkon* places much importance on modulation to the other modes, and has several phrases designated to aid it in doing so, phrase 9 exclusive to this mode, as well as phrases 11 and 13 of the *Kabolas Shabos* mode. Example 4.4 illustrates only the additional phrases of this mode that are not present in the previously discussed modes.³⁶

³⁶ Ibid, 21-3.

Example 4.4

Y'kum purkon mode phrases³⁷



Yomim Noroim Maariv Mode

The fourth mode within the *Adonoy Moloch* scale, the *Yomim Noroim Maariv* mode, is used for the evening services of the High Holy Days of the Jewish calendar, most specifically for the Jewish New Year, *Rosh Hashonoh*, as well as the Day of Atonement, *Yom Kippur*. This mode bears resemblance to the Western major scale, especially in the melodies used for the holiday of *Rosh Hashonoh*. Only one phrase, labeled phrase 1 as seen in Example 4.5, is employed at the beginning of the prayer of the Jews of Eastern European origin; however Jews of German origin may substitute phrase 4 within the prayer. No modulation takes place within pieces written in this mode; however, it can be characterized by its most interesting use of rhythm, which is used to capture interest as an alternative to modulation. The intermediate phrases of this mode, phrases 2 through 4, as well as phrase 4 of the *Kabolas Shabbos* mode help to develop the character of the work, which has similar character as the Western major scale. Of the two concluding phrases, phrase 5 and phrase 6, phrase 5 offers a strong ending in a major tonality, which is quite characteristic of this music. The additional phrases not mentioned

³⁷ Ibid, 21.

in previously discussed modes within the *Yomim noroim Maariv* mode can be observed in Example 4.5.³⁸

Example 4.5

Yomim noroim Maariv mode phrases³⁹



Akdomus Mode

The *Akdomus* mode, the last of the *Adonoy moloch* modes, is reserved exclusively for the morning of the *Shavuot* service, and for only a few poetic prayers within the synagogue. This mode is characterized by the fourth degree of the scale, and therefore all of the beginning phrases, phrases 1 through 4, emphasize this particular scale degree. The phrases of this mode are depicted in Example 6. This is a very simple mode that uses no modulation and often simply concludes on the tonic, as seen in the two concluding phrases, phrases 11 and 12, though phrase 4 may also act as a conclusion even though it does not end with the tonic. Because no modulation takes place within this mode, the beginning and concluding phrases are linked with only pausal phrases, phrases 5 through 7, and pre-concluding phrases, phrases 8 through 10. The additional phrases of this mode are found in musical Example 6.⁴⁰

³⁸ Ibid, 21-4.

³⁹ Ibid," 21.

⁴⁰ Ibid," 21-4.

Example 4.6

Akdomus mode phrases⁴¹



This concludes the discussion on the modes contained within the *Adonoy moloch* scale.

The four other scales of the *nusach* system are also divided into modes, which are, in turn, composed of beginning, middle, and ending phrases.

The Ahava Rabbah Scale

The second scale contained in the nusach system is the *Ahava Rabbah* scale, as seen in Example 4.7. The modes found within this scale are used for weekday services as well as the Sabbath service and a few portions of the High Holy Day services. With so many varying religious purposes within this single scale, the type and function of a piece is distinguished by the degree to which the cantor embellishes the prayer. The phrases found within the modes of the *Ahavoh rabbah* scale are designed to be very flexible in order to accommodate the varying degrees of ornamentation required of the cantor. The more religiously significant the day is, the more virtuosity is expected from the cantor in the prayers for that day.⁴²

⁴¹ Ibid, 21.

⁴² Ibid, 24-5.

Example 4.7

Ahava Rabbah scale (transposed)⁴³



Sabbath Mode

The first mode within the *Ahavoh rabbah* scale is called the Sabbath mode. The phrases used to form works in this mode can be observed in Example 4.8. The mode is used for the Sabbath service as well as the services of the High Holy Days. This mode makes extensive use of the major triad of the Western tonal tradition of music. Within this mode, the tonic acts as the beginning and final note of most compositions. The fifth degree of the scale is given the role of reciting note, meaning that a cantor may repeat this note to allow for extra syllables or words within the text, and each word will be repeated on this specific pitch. The seventh degree of the scale is also used to increase yearning for the final resolution of the tonic. When a pause arises in the music, the phrase often rests on the third degree of the scale. Modulation to the *Adonoy moloch* scale is common, but usually the piece will return to the tonic of the home scale.⁴⁴ Within this mode, phrases 1 through 6 are used to begin a piece; phrases 7 through 20 build the middle section, while phrases 21 through 29 act as conclusions to the piece. Within the middle section phrases, phrases 7 through 11, Cohon labels as “pausal phrases,” phrases that can be used to give the piece a resting point, while still not concluding. Phrases 12 through 16 are used for modulation to other modes. Because of this feature, these phrases often

⁴³ Ibid, 25.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 24-5.

exhibit more chromaticism than other types of phrases. Phrases 17 through 20 are reserved for use immediately before a concluding section, as they offer a transition into these concluding phrases, 21 through 29.

Example 4.8

Sabbath Mode, transposed⁴⁵



Within the *Ahava Rabbah* scale, a mode used exclusively for the weekday services is contained, which will simply be labeled as the Week Day mode. With the exception of one, which can be seen in the musical example below, all of the phrases contained within it are not exclusive to this mode, although far fewer phrases are included in this mode. Phrases 1, 2 and 5 of the Sabbath mode act as beginning phrases for this mode as well. Phrases 7 and 11 of the Sabbath mode provide respite to the piece by acting as pausal phrases, while phrase 12 of the Sabbath mode may also be used in the Week Day mode for the purpose of modulation. Prior to a concluding phrase, either the

⁴⁵ Ibid, 25.

one phrase unique to this mode, or phrase 17 of the Sabbath mode will appear, to conclude on either phrase 21 or 22 of the Sabbath mode.

Within the context of this particular mode, the phrases are left as they are. That is to say the cantor may perform little or no embellishment on these phrases. Modulation from one mode to another is also restricted within this mode.⁴⁶ Another characteristic of this mode is that nearly all of its phrases designated for use just prior to the conclusion, with the exception of one, move to the seventh degree of the scale below the tonic, instead of to the regular second scale degree or dominant note. From the seventh degree it then resolves to a concluding phrase.⁴⁷ Each mode within this scale tends to reserve one concluding phrase for the *Chasimoh*, which means that as the words, "*Boruch attoh adonay*" are stated; a musical phrase reserved exclusively for this portion of text will sound. These words translate to English as "Blessed are You God, Our Lord."⁴⁸

Example 4.9

Additional Weekday Mode Phrase⁴⁹



The Week Day mode is characterized by its plain and simple phrases that allow for very little modulation to take place. It also contains a special phrase unique to the mode reserved specifically for the *Chasimoh*.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Ibid, 25.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 24.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 24-5.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 25.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Whereas the *Adonoy moloch* and the *Ahavoh rabboh* scales share a very recognizable similarity with the presence of a major third above the tonic in both cases, the *Mogen ovos* and the Psalm-mode scales both make use of the minor third above the tonic, also a common feature of Western tonal music. This tends to promote a more joyful feel within the music, as the more “minor”-sounding modes, to use Western tonal terminology, as most often associated with joy to the Jewish people, while the more “major”-sounding modes tend to evoke a mournful atmosphere among the Jews, a concept analogous, yet opposite to the concept of emotion in Western tonal music. The German Jews tended to favour the “major”-sounding scales, while the “minor”-sounding scales tended to frequent Eastern European music far more often.⁵¹ The *Mogen ovos* scale is actually identical to the Western natural minor scale. All recitations within these modes use the fourth and fifth scale degrees. These notes are used by the cantor for recitation of passages that are still sung, but have a more speech-like quality to them, as they are intoned on a single pitch. The cantor improvises the rhythm of the passage.⁵²

Example 4.10

Mogen Ovos Scale (transposed)⁵³



There are seven modes contained within the *Mogen ovos* scale, the first being the *Birkos hashachar* mode. This mode is used for weekday morning services and is characterized by its ending phrases of each section of the Pentateuch. It is often

⁵¹ Ibid, 26.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

coupled with a major mode, and acts as the conclusion of a section by modulating to the minor tonality. The phrases of the mode are kept very plain during performance, as they are used in the weekday services, which make use of much less embellishment than the prayers of more celebrated days. Its beginning phrases, phrases 1 and 2, all rise immediately to either the fourth or fifth degree of the scale, following a short tonic. The intermediate phrases, phrases 3 through 5, are extremely plain, the plainest of all modes. Phrases 3, 4 and 5 all act as pausal phrases, while phrase 3 also doubles as a pre-concluding phrase. The composition can become very dull if the cantor does not take some liberties and add ornamentation to them. This mode has no means of modulation whatsoever, therefore no modulatory phrases are included in this mode. Finally, sections conclude with either phrase 6 or 7. Of the seven phrases included in this mode, only phrases 3 and 7 must be present in each and every composition within this mode.⁵⁴

Example 4.11

Birkos Hashachar mode⁵⁵



The *T'filloh* mode is also used for weekday morning services, and is used for the reading of the Prophets, also known as the *Haftoroh*. It is often considered a pentatonic mode, and is based on the second benedictions of the reading of the Prophets, which takes place every week. The third, fourth and fifth degrees of the scale are emphasized in this mode. The fifth degree is often contained in the beginning phrases, phrases 1 and 2;

⁵⁴ Ibid, 27-8.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 26.

the third degree acts as a resting place, and the fourth degree, the reciting tone of the mode. Modulation may occur within this mode, and often does venture to the *Adonoy moloch* scale. This is accomplished through the use of phrase 6, an intermediate phrase that permits modulation to occur. The German tradition of modulation begins to appear here as this is not simply modulation between modes, but takes place on a larger scale, since it modulates to a different scale. Phrases 3 through 5 offer rest in the music, as they are intermediate pausal phrases, according to Cohon, and finally, phrase 7, the only phrase essential to each and every composition within this mode, will appear as a pre-concluding phrase to either phrase 8 or 9, the two concluding phrases of the mode. The mode can be characterized by a conclusion on the third of the scale.⁵⁶

Example 4.12

T'filloh mode (transposed)⁵⁷



The *Mogen ovos* mode is also contained within the *Mogen ovos* scale, and its use is reserved for the evening service of Friday, the beginning of the Sabbath. This mode offers an atmosphere of peace to represent the peace that accompanies the arrival of the Sabbath. To conclude the prayer on the fifth degree of the scale is quite common within this mode, and is meant to symbolize eternity. This symbolism is analogous to its interpretation using Western analysis, as the fifth degree, or the dominant, is considered

⁵⁶ Ibid, 28.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 26.

to be a resting place instead of a true conclusion, whose employment donates the impression of continuation forever. This mode contains a single beginning phrase, labeled as phrase 1. Phrases 2 through 8 can be found in the middle of these compositions acting as pausal phrases. Phrases 2 and 6 must be present in each composition of this mode. Modulation may occur, and takes place by means of phrase 9, the single modulatory phrase exclusive to the *Mogen ovos* mode, or by means of phrase 11 of the Festival Maariv mode, shown in a subsequent musical example. The fifth degree often acts as a pivot point for modulation to the *Ahavoh rabbah* mode. Phrases 10 through 12, the set of pre-concluding phrases of this mode, lead into the three concluding phrases, phrases 13 through 15. Of these six phrases, only phrase 11 is essential to every composition in this mode.⁵⁸

Example 4.13

Mogen Ovos mode (transposed)⁵⁹



This mode is actually a repetition of the *Amida* prayer, the reason for the duplication being that the cantor is expected to perform with much more embellishment the second time. This mode is considered to be of such importance that R. Mosheh Gaon

⁵⁸ Ibid, 28.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 26.

and R. Natronai Gaon have stated, “whoever heard the precentor⁶⁰ recite *Me’en Seba* (an alternative name for this prayer), is as if he himself had prayed.”⁶¹

The *Bor’chu* mode is quite similar to the *Mogen ovos* mode; however, it employs several addition phrases, and is used for the Sabbath morning service. Phrase 1, a phrase exclusive to this mode, or phrase 2 of the *birkos hashachar* mode, are used as beginning phrases to initiate pieces written in the *Bor’chu* mode. Phrases 2, 3, and 4 function as pausal phrases for this mode, while the one additional intermediate phrase, phrase 5, allows the piece to modulate. Phrases 6 and 7, as well as phrase 7 of the *birkos hashachar* mode are used to conclude sections of these pieces. The only requirements for this mode in terms of motivic content is that phrases 4 and 7 exclusive to this mode are present.

Example 4.14

Bor’chu mode (transposed)⁶²



The *Minchoh* mode is most similar the *Birkos hashachar* mode, and likewise emphasizes the fourth scale degree with additional strength given to the tonic of the scale

⁶⁰ An alternate term used to describe the cantor.

⁶¹ Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, “The Mogen-ovos mode: A Study in Folk-lore,” in *Hebrew Union College Annual*, (xiv, 1939), p. 559.

⁶² Cohon, “The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer Chant,” 27.

(the *mogen ovos* scale.)⁶³ The *minchoh* mode is used in the service on the afternoon of the Sabbath. Reciting notes are of much less importance within this lyrical mode, as very few static sections can be isolated; the whole mode seems to flow continuously leaving little opportunity to emphasize any single note. The tonic and the fourth scale degree act as important points of reference; however, their presence is often avoided for extended periods of time. Idelsohn's research determines that the origins of the mode come from the Pentateuch and the Prophets.⁶⁴

The *minchoh* mode consists of ten phrases. Phrases 1 and 2 act as beginning motives for pieces in this mode, while phrases 3 to 8 are all found in middle sections, phrases 3 to 6 being used as pausal motives, while phrases 7 and 8 prepare for conclusion. This mode does not consist of any motives used for modulation, so it can be concluded that modulation is not permitted within the mode. Sections may either end with phrase 9 or phrase 10; each finishes on the tonic, giving a strong feeling of conclusion and centricity. Each piece written within this mode must make use of phrases 3, 4 and 7.

Example 4.15

Minchoh mode (transposed)⁶⁵



⁶³ Ibid, 28.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 27.

The two remaining modes contained within the *Mogen ovos* scale are each used for fairly specific purposes. The first, the Festival *maariv* mode is employed in the evening services of the High Holy Day of *Pesach*, *Shavuot* and *Sukkoth*. The fifth scale degree is greatly emphasized, as it is used as the reciting note here. This mode consists of 16 motives, which includes two motives that have been borrowed from previously described modes. Phrases 1 and 2 each begin and end on the tonic note, and are used as beginning phrases. This mode makes extensive use of a variety of pausal phrases; phrases 3 through 8, as well as phrase 7 of the *mogen ovos* mode, and phrase 4 of the *bor'chu* mode all serve this purpose. Modulation may take place within this mode; this occurs through the use of phrases 9 and 10. Phrase 11 leads to a conclusion, while phrases 12, 13 and 14 all conclude sections. While this mode consists of an extensive repertoire of motives, Cohon does not designate any one motive as being a necessity within this mode.

Example 4.16

Festival maariv mode (transposed)⁶⁶



⁶⁶ Ibid.

The last mode derived from the *mogen ovos* scale, the Study mode, is reserved for readings from the Talmud, and can be characterized by fluidity of melody and the emphasis placed on the tonic, third and fifth of the Western tonal minor triad. The cantor is allowed much leeway in his improvisation within this mode. Generally, this mode bears a strong resemblance to the Western tonal natural minor scale, and can modulate to *Ahavoh rabboh*.⁶⁷ This mode consists of eight motives with most demonstrating the importance of the tonic note in some fashion. Phrase 1 is an excellent example of the featuring of the tonic, third and fifth; it consists of only these three pitches and acts as an opening phrase for pieces within this mode. Phrases 2, 3, 4 and phrase 8 of the *mogen ovos* mode each act as a pausal phrase, while phrase 5 permits the afore-mentioned modulation to take place. No specific phrases are designated to be used immediately before a concluding phrase; phrase 6 and phrase 7 of the *birkos hashachar* mode are simply designated as concluding phrases.

Example 4.17

Study mode (transposed)⁶⁸



The final scale found in the *nusach* system is simply given the title Psalm-mode scale. This scale differs from the *Mogen ovos* scale, as it contains many accidentals

⁶⁷ Ibid, 29.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 27.

Example 4.19

Psalm-Mode⁷²



A mode called *Bor'chu* can also be found as a derivation of the psalm-mode scale, yet in the context of this scale, it is used for the Sabbath service as well as for Festivals. This mode is characterized by the many accidentals found within. Accidentals within the other prayer modes are extremely rare, while they appear quite frequently within this mode. Many notes are raised, and the scale in which the mode lies contains raised notes itself. This is a chief means of differentiation from the other scales. In this *bor'chu* mode, 11 motives are used. The first three motives are used to begin sections of pieces in this mode. Phrases 4 and 5 provide a brief respite with their function as pausal phrases, while phrase 6 provides a means for modulation to other modes. Before the concluding phrases, 8, 9 and 10, we can expect to see phrase 7 or phrase 2, that doubles as a pre-concluding phrase within this mode.⁷³

⁷² Ibid, 30.

⁷³ Ibid.

Example 4.20

Bor'chu Mode⁷⁴



The *K'rovoh* mode is similar to the *Bor'chu* mode in that it is also used for the Sabbath service and for festivals, although this mode is used for the morning services, rather than the evening services. This mode displays a great deal of influence from the Biblical cantillations with its simplicity. It is a mode that consists of only five motives, phrase 1 being the single opening motive, phrases 2 and 3 being the pausal phrases. Phrase 4 serves as a pre-conclusion, while phrase 5 serves as a conclusion. No means of modulation is provided in this mode.⁷⁵

Example 4.21

K'rovoh mode⁷⁶



The *Amidoh* mode for festivals is also contained within the Psalm-mode scale and is used for the morning services on the holidays of *Pesach*, *Shavuoth*, and *Sukkoth*. This

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 29.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 30.

mode contains one of the most unusual and distinguishing features of any of the prayer modes; although the compositions within the mode are still based on the tonic, the piece concludes on the subdominant below the tonic, identifying the piece as a festive prayer. Those familiar with the synagogue service would easily recognize this unusual ending, and are therefore able to recognize and associate more importance to the particular prayer. Each holiday is therefore linked to a specific motive, a technique later utilized by many late romantic composers, such as Hector Berlioz with his love's leitmotif in his *Symphonie Fantastique* and Richard Wagner with his repeated use of a leitmotif in many of his compositions.⁷⁷ This mode also reserves a specific phrase exclusively for the *Chasimoh*. The *Amidoh* mode consists of 10 motivic phrases, the first three function as beginning phrases while the next three function as pausal phrases, along with phrase 4 of the Psalm mode. Phrase 7 brings us to the end to conclude on either phrase 8 or phrase 4 of the *S'lichoh* mode. In the case of this mode, Cohon designates 3 motives, phrases 1, 4 and 8 as being essential to each composition.⁷⁸

Example 4.22

Amidoh Mode for Festival Mornings⁷⁹



⁷⁷ Ibid, 29-30.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 31.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 30.

The *P'sukey d'zimroh* mode is also found within the Psalm-mode scale but in this case, it is especially linked to the final mode of the scale, the *S'lichoch* mode. This mode is used exclusively for prayers of penitence. The motives in this mode are derived from the chants contained in the lessons of the Prophets, the *Haftarah*.⁸⁰ This mode is both major and minor in character, yet the minor version is once again more prevalent in the music of the Eastern European Jews than in the Germanic tradition. Like the *Amidoh* mode, the *P'sukey d'zimroh* mode is one of limited motivic repertoire; only six phrases are contained within this mode. The mode offers one beginning phrase, phrase 1, two pausal phrase, phrases 2 and 3, one pre-concluding phrases, phrase 4, and two phrases for conclusion, phrases 5 and 6. No modulatory phrases exist within this mode.⁸¹

Example 4.23

P'sukey d'zimroh Mode for High Holy Days⁸²



A second *K'rovoh* mode occurs within this scale with 11 motives to work with, only in this context, it is used on the High Holy Days of the New Year, also called *Rosh Hashannah*, and the Day of Atonement, *Yom Kippur*. This mode contains the intervals of both a major and a minor seventh, the minor seventh functioning as the subtonic in combination with the major sixth. Pieces within this mode usually conclude with phrases

⁸⁰ Werner, *A Voice Still Heard*, 50-1.

⁸¹ Ibid, 32.

⁸² Ibid, 31.

taken from the *piyutum*, the ritual poetry of the Jewish people. The first phrase provides a means to begin compositions and is required to be present in all works of the mode, while phrases 2 and 3, as well as phrase 4 of the Psalm mode and phrase 6 of the *Amidoh* mode provide resting points. Modulation may take place in this mode, and can do so by using the modulatory phrase, phrase 4. Phrase 5 serves as a pre-conclusion, as well as a necessity to all works in this mode. Phrases 6 through 9 function as concluding phrases, with phrase 6 being the only necessary to every composition.⁸³

Example 4.24

K'rovoh mode⁸⁴



The *Amidoh* mode is also appears a second time within the Psalm-mode scale, though with a different function and only two thirds the amount of motivic material of the other *amidoh* mode. This time, the mode is used for the *Yom Kippur* and *Rosh Hashannah* morning services, as is the *K'rovoh* mode is. Modulation characterizes this mode through the use of phrase 4, and pieces within this mode often move to the *Ahavoh Rabboh* mode to give the cantor more flexibility. Influence from the *S'lichoh* and *K'rovoh* modes is also evident. Only six phrases exist within this mode, the aforementioned modulatory phrase, phrase 1, a beginning phrase, phrases 2 and 3 as pausal

⁸³ Ibid, 32.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 31.

phrases, with phrases 5 and 6 function as a pre-conclusion and conclusion, respectively.

These latter two phrases are required in all compositions within this mode.

Example 4.25

Amidoh Mode for High Holy Days⁸⁵



The final mode within the Psalm-mode scale is the *S'lichoh* mode, which is used in several of the penitential prayers. Both the major and minor scales can be found within this mode, but in the Eastern European Jewish tradition, the minor scale tends predominate, as usual. The Ukrainian Dorian scale can also be found within this mode. This mode contains once of the largest repertoires of motivic material of all modes. It contains four beginning phrases, phrases 1, 2, 3 and phrase 1 of the first *K'rovoh* mode and 12 pausal phrases, phrases 4 through 12, as well as phrases 3 and 4 of the Psalm mode and phrase one of the *S'lichoh* mode that doubles in function. Modulation may take place through one of five ways: either phrases 13, 14, 15, 16, or phrase 4 of the second *k'rovoh* mode may be used. The pre-concluding phrases consist of phrase 17, 18, and 19, with phrase 8 of the second *k'rovoh* mode also in this function, though this phrase tends not to appear in its entirety. Finally, one of six concluding phrases may be used, either phrase 20 unique to this mode, or phrases 10, 11 or 13 of the Psalm mode or phrase

⁸⁵ Ibid, 31.

7 or 9 of the second *k'rovoh* mode. Although 31 motives can be used in this mode, only phrase 1 is required in every composition.⁸⁶

Example 4.26

S'lichoh Mode⁸⁷



Through this system of simple phrases grew the vast repertoire of music created by the Jewish people over thousands of years. Thanks to the tireless work of Idelsohn, many of the mysteries of the Jewish prayer chant have been uncovered and its basic system of melodic construction is now easily accessible to the entire world. The *nusach* system clearly displays the construction method used for all Jewish prayer chant.⁸⁸ While this chapter does not explain all of the intricacies of the *nusach* system, a thorough overview of the collection of motives within the Jewish prayer modes is provided. This is the most essential feature for the purposes of this thesis. With this information, the reader may apply these motivic elements to the pieces being analyzed as a means to understand the musical hierarchy therein.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 32.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 31.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 17.

Chapter 5 – Methodology

In this thesis, the study being undertaken examines the origins of the melodic material within a set of klezmer pieces. With a fair amount of musicological research having been completed in the klezmer field, this thesis will delve more into the theoretical side of the genre. The main melodic, as well as harmonic building blocks of the klezmer genre are motives that combine to form a piece of music in the style. They also combine to form a theoretical basis for the analysis of klezmer music in a system that has been labeled as “modality.” Finally, the similarities to a similar modal system, that of the synagogue prayer chant style may also yield insight into the construction of klezmer pieces as well as the origins.¹

Transcription

As no musical scores of this recording exist to my knowledge, the next task at hand was to transcribe the pieces from sound to musical notation. There were several obstacles in completing the transcription of the klezmer pieces.

One of the main problems that arose continually was that of pitch notation. While some pieces, especially instrumental pieces tended to follow the division of the octave into twelve semitones, the intonation of klezmer music is very different from that of Western music. The klezmer style takes a much more liberal approach toward intonation; this is especially true of the unaccompanied vocal piece on the recording. Many of the pieces seemed to continually modulate unintentionally simply from tuning that gradually

¹ Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” unpublished, 1.

changed the function of the pitches by slowly rising or falling. This makes transcription very difficult; one must choose one of two options: either continue the transcription in the key that the analyst believes was intended or to change pitch gradually as the music does. The second option is impossible to notate in standard music notation unless the pitch moves as far as a semitone immediately. Unless otherwise indicated, the first option will be used in the transcription of these pieces.

A second major issue that arises with transcription of the klezmer pieces is that of metre. Some of the pieces do adhere to recognizable time signatures, but many do not; they are performed in free metre at the discretion of the performer. With these types of pieces, precise values of notes cannot be notated as there are an infinite number of increments of time that subdivide the basic unit of time, whatever that be. Therefore, time values within these pieces are approximated.

Techniques of Transcription

Several tools were used to aid in transcription. The piano played a major role in transcription. Small sections of the recording were played and were then matched to pitches on the piano. Occasionally the ornaments and some of the very fast passages were too difficult to decipher at regular speed. In these instances the computer program “Transcribe!” was used to slow the music down to a speed where it could be easily transcribed.

The Modal System of Klezmer Music

To understand the basic structure of klezmer music, several articles were used to summarize the modal system. The main source of information for this section is Joshua Horowitz's unpublished article entitled "The Main Klezmer Modes." A second important source used is Joel Rubin's dissertation *The Art of Klezmer*.

The Modal System of Synagogue Prayer Chant

A similar procedure to the klezmer modality summary of Cohon's work was undertaken, though in this instance with the intent not of identifying the motives to determine the structure and content of klezmer music, but to observe the influence of the Prayer Modes on the klezmer genre. In this instance the main source is Joseph Baruch Cohon's article "The Structure of Synagogue Prayer Chant."

Analysis

The next step involved applying the modal models, those of Horowitz and Cohon to the transcribed pieces.

First, the analysis focused on determining the tonality of each piece. For the purposes of this study the tonality will be defined as the scale on which the piece is based. In most case, there are several scales that fit the work. An attempt is made in every case to determine if there is a scale in the Western tonal system that lends itself well to the piece's pitch content, as well as a klezmer scale and a prayer chant scale. In several cases, there were no scales that fit the pitch content exactly so a judgment had to be made as to which pitches were the most essential to define the tonality. Priority is

given to notes that appear in the opening sections of the piece. This is because klezmer works often modulate to other modes within a single piece, yet the nominal mode is whichever mode appears first in the piece. For example, the “Slow Hora” begins with a key signature of five flats but midway through progresses to a key signature with no flats or sharps. In this case, it is the pitch content of the first section that will be given priority when determining the tonality.

Sometimes even within the opening section of a piece, the pitch content still does not lend itself to a single scale. For example, in “Walenstein’s Niggun,” there is not one single klezmer scale that fits the pitch content of this piece exactly. The analyst must then decide which scale degrees are most essential to define the tonality of the work. The nominal tone of the piece is D, however, a G-sharp plays a melodic role in an otherwise *Mogen Ovov* context. The *Mi Shebarach* mode accommodates the raised fourth scale degree, but creates another discrepancy. Few B-naturals are found in this piece, they are mostly B-flats. The *Mi Shebarach* mode makes use of a high sixth scale degree. In this context, that would correspond to B-natural. One of these discrepancies will have to be ignored when determining the tonality. In this case, the raised fourth scale degree is a more prominent feature than the low sixth scale degree, so the *Mi Shebarach* mode is chosen. When too many or too significant discrepancies arise, a scale is not assigned.

Once the scale on which the pieces are based have been determined, the next step is to identify instances of the klezmer motives described by Horowitz within the transcribed pieces. The presence of motives within the particular mode determined by its scale assignment will confirm the modal and scalar classification as well as demonstrate how the motives are used compositionally within klezmer pieces.

One major problem with making motivic comparisons between klezmer pieces and Horowitz's motives is that the motives of the klezmer system are so general that instances of their presence does not necessarily represent a correlation to the mode. For example, Motive 7 of the *Adonoy Moloch* mode is an extremely common melodic pattern. The motive is seen immediately below.

Example 5.1



This is simply a step-wise descent from dominant to tonic. The majority of tonal pieces in any type of repertoire would contain this motive or a variation on this motive. Therefore, its identification within a cadence of “*Amar Rabbi Akiva*” is likely not to show a strong correlation to the mode. In all likelihood, this simply means it behaves like a typical tonal piece. Most of Horowitz's motives are so generic that their presence within klezmer pieces loses its significant. This is made worse by the fact that Horowitz also does not attach a rhythmic pattern to any of the motives.

Next, the piece was searched for evidence of prayer chant motives. These motives are much more complex; they contain a wide variety of intervals, rather than the almost exclusive step-wise motion of Horowitz's motives as well as specific rhythmic patterns. This fact does make for fewer instances of motives appearing in the pieces, yet those utterances that can be identified are more significant for the same reasons. When these links are found to exist between the motives of the prayer chant system and the

klezmer pieces, it confirms the presence of a correlation between the two genres other than simply having modes of the same names that often differ greatly in content.

Chapter 6 - Analysis

The purpose of the analysis undertaken in this chapter is to find concrete links between the prayer modes of the synagogue and the melodic features of the chosen klezmer works through the comparison of melodic lines.

Minor Mode in the Synagogue and Klezmer Music

From the music chosen to represent the klezmer collection, it appears that the use of a mode in the minor tonality in klezmer repertoire is far more common than the use of a major tonality. This is certainly the case for the pieces recorded on “Hassidic Tunes for Dancing and Rejoicing.” In the Jewish tradition, the minor mode actually represents happiness, with the major tonality being reserved only for solemn occasions. This concept is certainly contradictory to perceptions held in the Western art music realm. This characteristic is present in music of the synagogue as well. Major modes are used in synagogue prayer chant to commemorate solemn occasions and to intensify the worship; modes in the minor tonality are also present within the *nusach* system that governs the composition of synagogue prayer chant and typically accompany less austere occasions within the services. Because klezmer music tends to be incorporated into life’s joyous occasions, such as the wedding, and is generally present at festive celebrations, it seems fitting that most klezmer music is written in a minor tonality. This suggests a link to synagogue prayer chant through the sharing of this principle.

By building on and organizing the work of musicologists and ethnomusicologists before him, especially that of Idelsohn, Baruch Joseph Cohon has constructed a

systematic model demonstrating the structure of synagogue prayer chant through the use of small motives organized into groups with rules governing their use within this group. Each group of motives together with the rules of placement of these motives within a work is collectively given the title of “mode” by Cohon. Each of these modes is derived from one of four scales present in the *nusach* system: the *Adonoy moloch* scale, the *Ahavoh rabboh* scale, the *Mogen Ovos* scale and the Psalm-mode scale. While the *Adonoy Moloch* scale and the *Ahavoh Rabboh* scale begin with the characteristic major third between the first and third scale degrees, the latter two scales, the *Mogen Ovos* scale and the Psalm-mode scale will be more useful in this study, as a minor third is present above the tonic instead of the major third.¹ This leads to the feeling of a minor tonality when composing within the bounds of these scales, a tonality far more common than the major tonality in the klezmer repertoire.

Summary of the Tonal and Modal Structure of the “Hasidic Tunes of Dancing and

Rejoicing” Recording

Provided here is a table summarizing the tonality and modality of each klezmer piece, in this author’s opinion. This will demonstrate the most basic links between the synagogue prayer modes and the chosen klezmer pieces.

¹ Cohon, “The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer chant,” 17-31.

Table 1- Summary of the Tonal and Modal Structure of the “Hasidic Tunes of Dancing and Rejoicing” Recording

Title	Tonality	Modality
1. Walenstein’s Niggun	D Natural Minor with occasional raised fourth scale degree; <i>Mi Shebarach</i> Scale (roughly); No Prayer chant Equivalent	Does not adhere to the motivic patterns of the <i>Mi Shebarach</i> mode, but does not share properties of any of the Prayer chant modes
2. Hora	<i>Ahava Rabbah</i> Scale with Nominal Tone D in both the klezmer and Prayer chant systems	Contains variants of motives from the <i>Ahava Rabbah</i> mode of the klezmer system and a strong connection to the Sabbath mode of the <i>Ahava Rabbah</i> scale in Cohon’s Synagogue Prayer chant system
3. String of Meron Tunes featuring Abu’s Hotser	C-Sharp Natural Minor; <i>Mogen Ovos</i> Scale in the klezmer and Prayer chant systems	Some motivic patterns from the klezmer mode present, no strong motivic ties to the Prayer chant system
4. Amar Rabbi Akiva	B-Flat Major; <i>Adonoy Moloch</i> Scale in the klezmer system, <i>Adonoy Moloch</i> Scale in the Prayer chant system, but less precise	Some motivic patterns from the klezmer mode present, few motivic ties to the Prayer chant system
5. Turkish Tune	B-flat Harmonic Minor; <i>Mogen Ovos</i> Scale in both the klezmer and Prayer chant Systems	One motivic link to a klezmer motive, but no strong motivic ties to the Prayer chant system
6. Schaeffer’s Niggun	A-Sharp minor (roughly); <i>Yishtabach</i> Scale; No Prayer chant Equivalent	No strong motivic presence
7. Tune for Leading the Bridegroom	B Major; <i>Ahava Rabbah</i> Scale (roughly) in both klezmer and Prayer chant Systems	No strong motivic presence
8. Mazltov	B-Flat Major; <i>Adonoy Moloch</i> Scale in both klezmer and Prayer chant systems	No strong motivic presence
9. T’hies ha-meysim-	B Natural Minor; <i>Mogen</i>	Limited motivic ties to the

Resurrection of the Dead, Brogez Tants	<i>Ovos</i> Scale in both klezmer and Prayer chant systems	klezmer motives, virtually no resemblance to the Prayer chant motives
10. Slow Hora: Instrumental Tune	<i>Mi Shebarach</i> Scale (roughly) in the klezmer system with nominal tone B-flat, No Prayer chant equivalent	Motivic presence from <i>Mi Shebarach</i> mode
11. Yearning Tune of the Habbad Hassidim	D-Flat Major; <i>Adonoy Moloch</i> scale (roughly) in both the klezmer and Prayer chant systems	No strong motivic presence
12. Jester's Tune for the Mitzvah Tants	Indistinguishable (reasons discussed below)	Indistinguishable (reasons discussed below)
13. Rejoicing Tune to Lo Tevosi	<i>Ahava Rabbah</i> Scale in both klezmer and Prayer chant systems	Some motivic resemblances from the klezmer mode, no Prayer chant resemblance found
14. Dance Tune (Jerusalem)	C Natural Minor (roughly); <i>Mogen Ovos</i> Scale in both klezmer and Prayer chant systems	Some motivic patterns of the <i>Mogen Ovos</i> klezmer mode found, no significant link to the Prayer chant system
15. Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim	C-sharp Natural Minor; <i>Mogen Ovos</i> Scale of the klezmer and Prayer chant systems	Principally the <i>Mogen Ovos</i> mode; perhaps some evidence of the <i>Bor'chu</i> mode
16. Mitzvah Tants	G Harmonic Minor; <i>Mogen Ovos</i> Scale in klezmer system, <i>Mogen Ovos</i> (roughly) in the Prayer chant system	Motivic connections in the <i>Mogen Ovos</i> modes of the klezmer and Prayer chant systems
17. Dance Tune (Meron)	C Natural Minor (roughly); <i>Mi Shebarach</i> Scale, No Prayer chant equivalent	Some motives from the <i>Mi Shebarach</i> mode present, none from a Prayer chant mode

Tonality

The concept of the minor tonality acting as the predominating mood in klezmer repertoire is consistent with the recording source used for this study. While these pieces

may not adhere exactly to the Western tonal system's minor scale, the characteristic minor third above the tonic is always present.

Tonality in "Walenstein's Niggun"

"Walenstein's Niggun" begins solidly in D minor with no alterations. As the piece progresses, some accidentals appear that often create the interval of an augmented second which is characteristic of klezmer music, yet the principal melody that unifies the work is clearly in D natural minor. The inconsistency with D natural minor arises as the piece continues in a D minor, yet a G-sharp appears in the melody. This would be a raised fourth scale degree, while still in the minor tonality. There is a klezmer scale that accounts for the minor tonality with the raised fourth scale degree; this would be the *Mi Shebarach* scale. One small inconsistency still arises, though. The B-flat that frequents this work, according to Horowitz's template, should always be raised to B-natural, however only a few B-naturals appear in the work. This is still the best fit for this particular piece of music.

From a prayer chant perspective, there really is no equivalent scale that would lend itself to this piece. The closest would be the *Mogen Ovov* scale, as it conforms to this piece with the exception of the raised fourth scale degree. This indicates that this element of klezmer music may have been adopted from the musical system of another culture.

Tonality in “Hora”

The melody of the “Hora” does not follow any standard Western scale. Again, this is due to the presence of an augmented second between scale degrees 2 and 3 that makes this piece unable to be defined by any Western tonality. However, this piece does fit well into the scalar form of the *Ahava Rabbah* mode. This scale features the interval of an augmented second between scale degrees 2 and 3, an obvious feature of this piece. Within the scales of the Synagogue Prayer Chant system, this piece would also be placed within the *Ahava Rabbah* scale. This is an instance in which the equivalent scales of the klezmer system and Prayer Chant system are identical in pitch content. This fact alone creates a strong tie between the two modal systems, suggesting that much of the melodic material may be derived from a common source.

Tonality in “String of Meron Tunes featuring Abu’s Hotser”

In his book *Fiddler on the Move*, author Mark Slobin discusses the intonation in the klezmer genre. He states that klezmer music is not intended for performance using perfect intonation; there must be room for the pitches to bend. While this is a perfectly acceptable practice in the world of klezmer performance, it poses a great deal of analytical difficulty.² “String of Meron Tunes” is a perfect example of this phenomenon. The male voice singing the melody leaves a great deal of ambiguity in the pitch structure of his performance. One especially noticeable ambiguity is that of scale degree 2 in this piece. Within the first few measures it becomes evident that the piece is in some kind of a C-sharp minor tonality, yet in the descent down from scale degree 4 to scale degree 1 at the beginning of the piece, it is unclear whether scale degree 2 is sung as a D-sharp, as

² Mark Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) 98-99.

would be consistent with the C-sharp minor tonality, or if it is in fact a D-natural that is sung, indicating a lowered second scale degree. It is therefore advisable to consider the other more definite scale degrees first when determining the tonality of this work, and then determine just how the questionable scale degrees fit into the melodic picture.

If we consider the second scale degree to be a D-sharp rather than a D-natural this work fits nicely into the C-sharp natural minor tonality. In terms of klezmer scales, this scale follows the *Mogen Ovos* scale pattern; a scale that, in its most basic form (without the possibly altered tones), is identical to the Western natural minor scale. In this case, the *Mogen Ovos* mode of Cohon's Prayer chant system also fits this piece, as it is also identical to the natural minor scale.

The ties to the Synagogue Prayer Chant system are twofold in this example; first, we discussed the lack of perfect intonation in the performance of "String of Meron Tunes." This is largely a result of the performance of the tunes by a solo voice with no accompaniment. This effect is also common in Synagogue Prayer Chant, as there too the performance is carried out by solo voice with no accompaniment. The common instrumentation and tuning style in addition to the modal similarities between this klezmer piece and the Synagogue Prayer Modes allows for an audible connection between the two sets of modes.

Tonality in "Amar Rabbi Akiva"

In terms of Western tonality, this piece is very straightforward. It is simply in B-flat major; it is indicated with both scalar and arpeggio patterns with a key signature of two flats and not a single accidental throughout the piece. We must therefore consider

the major-type scales (that is, scales that utilize the major third above the nominal tone rather than the minor third), which are far more scarce in the klezmer repertoire than minor-type scales. The klezmer scale that best fits this work is the *Adonoy Moloch* scale. While the scale offers the option of a raised fourth, the piece does not employ this feature; it uses only the most basic form of the scale, that is to say, the scale with no alterations.

In terms of Synagogue Prayer chant scales, there is no precise match, however the closest would also be the *Adonoy Moloch* scale, though the lowered seventh degree present in the scale cannot be accounted for in “Amar Rabbi Akiva.”

Tonality in “Turkish Tune

“Turkish Tune” features the augmented second so characteristic of the harmonic minor scale, in this case, B-flat harmonic minor. This piece is constantly transitioning in tonality; it contains the raised leading tone alongside the subtonic, the lowered version of the seventh scale degree, as well as a significant amount of accidentals, often leading to chromaticism. However, the accidentals occurring in the middle section of the piece appear to lead the song into another tonality. For this reason, we mainly consider only the “A section,” this being roughly the beginning to measure 14, to define the tonality of the work as a whole. To define the exact “A section” is difficult, as the measures in this piece, though the vast majority have four quarter note beats within them, they occasionally deviate from the established common time signature.

In terms of klezmer scales, this piece appears to be based on the *Mogen Ovov* scale. The scale features the option of a raised sixth and seventh scale degree, though

these scale degrees may appear in their natural form as well. In this work, there are examples of each case, the ascending passages often feature the raised sixth and seventh scale degrees; G- and A-natural, while the flattened form tends to appear in descending passages. This is consistent with the treatment of scale degrees using the *Mogen Ovos* scale. We also have a few instances of the lowered second scale degree, in this case, C-natural becomes C-flat. This flattened scale degree 2 is also a feature of the *Mogen Ovos* scale.

The *Mogen Ovos* scale of the Synagogue Prayer chant system, however, poses certain difficulties. The majority of the scale is consistent with the treatment of notes in this piece; however, there is no option of a raised seventh scale degree in the pure scalar form illustrated by Cohon. This appears to be a problem, though upon examining the motivic scheme of the *Mogen Ovos* mode, there are instances of a raised scale degree, which confirms that the *Mogen Ovos* mode can indeed fit this musical work.

Tonality in “Schaeffer’s Niggun”

At first glance, this work appears to be set in C-sharp minor with a lowered second scale degree (D-sharp is lowered to D-natural) however, it soon becomes apparent that D-sharp and D-natural are both important elements in this piece. Several melodies, or variants of these melodies, repeat themselves throughout the piece, though some instances use the D-sharp, while an analogous passage may used the alternate lowered D-natural. As the piece progresses, a descending line points the tonality more toward A-sharp minor as there is a descent from scale degree 3 to scale degree 1 in that key, which

is held under a fermata. This can be observed in Example 1. The opening will therefore be classified as roughly an A-sharp minor tonality.

Example 6.1

A cadence from “Schaeffer’s Nigun”



With reference to the klezmer scales, I will place this work within the *Yishtabach* mode scale. This scale can account for the general natural minor feeling within the piece, but it offers the option of a lowered fifth scale degree. This option accounts for the D-sharp and D-natural both being present within this work.

The piece does not first quite so simply into a Synagogue Prayer chant scale. While the *Mogen Ovov* scale accounts each scale degree with the exception of scale degree 5, the fifth scale degree is too prominent and unusual a feature to simply be ignored; it lends much character to the piece. Therefore, I will propose that there is no Prayer chant equivalent for the work, as no scale within Cohon’s system can combine the minor third above the nominal tone with the lowered fifth scale degree. This suggests that this is perhaps a feature unique to klezmer music and that it may be a feature that has originated from a different cultural influence, as is very common in the klezmer genre, rather than its prayer chant roots.

Tonality in “Tune for Leading the Bridegroom”

“Tune for Leading the Bridegroom” is a tune that fits very accurately within the B major scale. It contains all five sharps of the key of B major with no accidentals and a tonal centre on B-natural. This corresponds most closely to the *Ahava Rabbah* scale of both the klezmer and Synagogue Prayer chant systems; though each carries some small inconsistencies when compared to the modal systems. The klezmer scale implies that there should be a lowered second scale degree, which does not appear in this work. Also, within the *Ahava Rabbah* scale of the Prayer chant system, there is no raised seventh scale degree. However, together, the *Ahava Rabbah* scales of both the klezmer and Prayer chant systems can account for each pitch in the piece.

Tonality of “Mazltov”

The song “Mazltov” poses a few significant challenges for the analyst. First, the nature of the instrumentation of the work makes it difficult to pick out a single melody. The piece alternates between a single male voice and a large crowd. The group, though evidently singing the same song, is always singing in unison in terms of pitch or rhythm. The analyst must decide on an overall melody, which will inherently not account for every pitch or rhythm sung by the crowd, but will be the strongest voice at that particular instant.

Secondly, maintaining a single tonal centre in a large group of people while singing *a capella* can pose some difficulties in terms of intonation. Because of the nature of this type of singing, the tonal centre of this piece appears to modulate to different tonalities, though this may simply be caused by a gradual rise or fall in intonation that

eventually becomes so great that the pitch on which it is based changes. This is certainly the case in this work. Because of this, I will only consider the first few phrases when determining the intended tonality of the work.

Using the opening three phrases of the work, it is clearly in B-flat major. Not all scale degrees are present in this small span of time; however, dominant to tonic motion lends itself to a strong feeling of B-flat major. This would correspond to a klezmer and Prayer chant classification under the *Adonoy Moloch* scales.

Tonality in “T’hies ha-meysim- Resurrection of the Dead, Brogez Tants”

This piece lies in B natural minor. No accidentals complicate this tonality; it clearly fits the B natural minor scale. This corresponds to the *Mogen Ovos* scale in both the klezmer and Prayer chant systems.

Tonality in “Slow Hora: Instrumental Tune”

With one main exception, the “Slow Hora” falls in the B-flat harmonic minor category; the main exception being the raised fourth scale degree, in this case, E-natural instead of the standard E-flat. Two other small inconsistencies arise. In the second phrase the G-flat is raised to G-natural. Also there are a few incidences where, in descending passages, an A-flat will sound instead of the regular raised seventh, A-natural. However, these small discrepancies do not have a great effect on the overall tonality.

With the exception of the G-natural (raised sixth scale degree), all of the discrepancies from B-flat harmonic minor disappear when considering this piece as a

composition based on the B-flat *Mi Shebarach* scale. Here, the fourth scale degree may be either raised or not, explaining the E-natural and E-flats present in the piece. The minor tonality is consistent with the minor third above the nominal tone as well, as a raised seventh scale degree, A-natural in the context of this work.

Because of the fourth scale degree being a prominent feature of this work, it is difficult to classify this work within one of the Synagogue Prayer chant scales. No scale contains the raised fourth, so we will leave this work with a classification under only the tonal system and klezmer scale system.

Tonality in “Yearning Tune of the Habbad Hassidim”

The pitches themselves in “Yearning Tune of the Habbad Hassidim” are difficult to distinguish for several reasons. First, the music is very fast. Secondly, in this quick tempo, the voice, which carries the melodic line of this piece, tends to approximate pitches rather than land on them absolutely. A very liberal approach to intonation is taken in this context, so, in reality, very few definite pitches exist. To further obscure this melody, two voices are singing a single line with each voice approximating intonation in a slightly different way. We are presented again with the problem of voices singing *a cappella* with no accompaniment to encourage a single tonal centre. Because of this, there is a gradual and most likely unintentional shift in tonal centre. All of these factors together make for a fairly ambiguous tonality. If one were to label this work with a particular tonality, it would be D-flat major. The D-flat is repeated several times at the beginning of many measures and arpeggios, and scalar passages within the key are dispersed throughout.

When considering all of these elements, there is no single klezmer scale that can fit with all of the accidentals throughout the work, but the *Adonoy Moloch* scale offers the closest approximation in the case of both klezmer and Synagogue Prayer chant scales. The accidental on the second scale degree, changing an E-flat to an E natural remains a problem, as only an E-flat should be present in the *Adonoy Moloch* scale. There is also the issue of the raised fifth scale degree, in this case raising an A-flat to an A-natural. Though these small inconsistencies exist, they do not play a prominent role in the tonality of the piece. In fact, they are mostly used as passing or neighbour tones in order to create a chromatic line.

Tonality in “Jester’s Tune for the Mitzvah Tants”

I will not even attempt to label this piece within a certain tonality, or even mode. The piece consists of one principal male singer and a large crowd, which sing in alternation. Judging from the sound quality, it appears as though this was recorded at a great distance as neither the principal male have focused sound, one factor that makes the distinguishing of pitches difficult.

Secondly, this appears to be performed in a style of mixed singing and speaking. One could compare it to a style called “*sprechstimme*” used by Arnold Schoenberg in his famous work “Pierrot Lunaire.” To translate the term “*Sprechstimme*” directly into English, one may use the term “speech-voice,” where only musical contours are indicated for the voice, no definite pitches.³ “Jester’s Tune for the Mitzvah Tants” does not take this technique quite as far as Schoenberg, one may still call this work pitch-based, yet

³ “Sprechstimme.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 2010. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. 23 April 2010 <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/561251/Sprechstimme>>.

there is an obvious element of speech and indistinguishable pitches within this work making it impossible to classify in this manner.

Tonality in “Rejoicing Tune to Lo Tevosi”

This piece does not fit into any standard Western tonal scale; there are simply too many elements that do not fit the model. Any effort to classify the piece in these terms would be fruitless. The tonal centre can be identified as C-sharp, however neither C-sharp major nor C-sharp minor scales can accommodate the treatment of pitches in the piece. The piece does fit well into the klezmer and Synagogue Prayer chant genres, though. It is an example of the *Ahava Rabbah* scale put into practice in both the klezmer and Prayer chant systems. This is due to the fact that although there is a major third above the tonic which suggests a major tonality, the second, sixth and seventh scale degrees have been lowered from what we expect. In this case, this alters D-sharp, A-sharp and B-sharp to D-natural, A-natural and B-natural, respectively.

Tonality in “Dance Tune” (Jerusalem)

In general, this dance piece adheres to a C natural minor tonality. The only exception would be the occasional lowered second scale degree, in this piece D-natural becoming D-flat. This piece can be analyzed more accurately by using a klezmer scale: the *Mogen Ovos* scale. While the *Mogen Ovos* scale is generally identical to the natural minor scale, it leaves open the option to lower the second scale degree. This is precisely what occurs in this piece. While the *Mogen Ovos* scale of the Synagogue Prayer chant is

generally identical to the *Mogen Ovov* mode, Cohon does not identify the option to lower the second scale degree.

Tonality in “Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim”

This piece is written in the key of C-sharp minor. While there are two instances of a B-sharp appearing (the raised seventh degree of the harmonic minor scale), the piece, for the most part uses B-natural instead. This fact would indicate that the work is built on the C-sharp natural minor scale. Within the klezmer and Prayer chant scale systems, it can be stated that this piece follows the *Mogen ovov* scale pattern.

Tonality in “Mitzvah Tants”

The selection “Mitzvah Tants,” for the most part, adheres to the g harmonic minor scale, although many accidentals are scattered throughout the work as well. This tonality corresponds most closely to the *Mogen ovov* scale. Accidentals within this minor-sounding scale allow a greater combination of intervals to be incorporated into the work. This scale clearly demonstrates the presence of the minor third above the tonic, as well as the possibility for the raised leading tone found in the harmonic minor scale. The minor third above the tonic, G to B-flat, plays a crucial role in defining the tonality of this klezmer piece. So does the F sharp, which acts as the raised leading tone, promoting the harmonic minor feel. The option for a sub-tonic seventh scale degree to be present rather than a leading tone, however, also presents itself in “Mitzvah’s Tants.” We are faced with the problem that the strict *Mogen Ovov* scale of the Synagogue Prayer chant system

does not include a raised seventh scale degree, however, it is still consistent with the motivic features within the scale.

Tonality in “Dance Tune” (Meron)

Similar to the “Dance Tune” from Jerusalem, this piece, exhibits, for the most part, a C minor tonality, although the alterations made to the C minor scale are different from the above “Dance Tune.” In the case, the second scale degree occurs just as we’d expect it to in C minor, as a D-natural, but it is the fourth scale degree, which behaves in an unexpected way. The piece features F-sharp, a raised fourth scale degree, rather than the regular F-natural. This fact suggests that this “Dance Tune” is composed using the *Mi Shebarach* scale. This piece does not show strong tonal ties to the Synagogue Prayer chant as the raised fourth scale degree in an otherwise natural minor setting cannot be accommodated.

Modality

Already, when determining the tonality of each work, the reader may observe, in most cases, a scale of the same name both from the klezmer system and Synagogue Prayer Chant system being assigned to each klezmer piece. Most of the names of scales are common to both systems and have very similar structures. Based on scale degree usage alone, we may already observe striking similarities between the klezmer modes and the Synagogue Prayer Chant modes.

While determining the tonality of these pieces gives us some insight into the behaviour of the modes, it is important to consider the motivic schemes as well as the

scalar forms of the modes. From the scales, we can determine which pitches are used, but the melodic behaviour of these pitches remains a mystery. To delve further into the actual compositional processes used to construct the klezmer pieces, we must now examine the how the motives come into play.

I will be looking for examples of the motives within the pieces, as well as slight variations on these motives. It is important to remember; however, that the klezmer style, as well as the style of Synagogue Prayer chant involves a great deal of improvisation. This is important to take into consideration as well that we will not be able to account for every last pitch in these pieces; some motives will be stretched beyond recognition from various techniques, perhaps from embellishments or rhythmic augmentation or diminution to name a few. I therefore predict that motivic influence will be obvious in some cases, though other passages will appear completely disparate. I will not attempt to demonstrate every single instance of klezmer or Prayer chant motives in the following works; rather, I will demonstrate these correlations with a few key examples.

Modality in “Walenstein’s Niggun”

“Walenstein’s Niggun” appears to follow scalar form of the *Mi Shebarach* mode closely with the exception of scale degree 6; however, this mode appears to be unique to the klezmer mode, as no Prayer chant equivalent can account for the raised fourth scale degree that appears throughout the piece. Although this piece may conform somewhat to the *Mi Shebarach* mode in its scalar form, this compliance does not extend to the mode in its motivic scheme. Simply put, none of the seven motives in the motivic scheme can be found in any significant way in this piece. This is not surprising as even the scalar form of the mode shows some divergence within the piece. We cannot even consider the

motives of the synagogue as the piece does not even conform to a scale within the system.

This piece clearly has many klezmer elements within it, but some key elements do not conform to the expected behaviour. We can conclude that there are outside influences at play; that is to say, influences from other cultures have penetrated into the composition of this piece. In motivic terms, this piece is not particularly useful for the study at hand, as it does not conform to a klezmer or a Synagogue Prayer chant mode.

Modality in “Hora”

The “Hora” has been classified as an *Ahava Rabbah* modal piece. The most prominent example of motivic construction comes from motive 1 of the *Ahava Rabbah* mode. This motive is depicted in Example 6.2 a).

Example 6.2

a) Motive 1 of the *Ahava Rabbah* Mode of the klezmer system⁴



Examples 6.2b) through 6.2 e) show examples of this motive within the context of the “Hora.” While none of these examples are completely literal, in other words, none of these examples contain the exact same scale degrees as the motive brought forth by Horowitz, yet they are still examples of the same melodic pattern of two descending

⁴ Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” 4.

intervals of a second followed by an ascending second. Although Example 6.2 e) concludes with a ninth in place of a second, it will still be put into the category of motive 1, as a ninth is simply a second displaced by an octave.

b) Measure 3 of “Hora”



c) Measure 7 of “Hora”



d) Measure 21 of “Hora”



e) Measure 25 of “Hora”



The *Ahava Rabbah* scale also exists in Cohon's theoretical system to analyze Synagogue Prayer chant. There are only two modes constructed from this scale, and with the exception of one motive unique to the Week days mode, all Week days motives can also be found within the Sabbath mode. The Sabbath mode, however, has many original motives. Motive 2, found in both modes, is present in both the pitch and rhythmic senses. This motive is seen in Example 6.2 f). It consists of an eighth note on scale degree 1, followed by dotted eighth, sixteenth and quarter notes on scale degrees 3, 4 and 5 respectively. Cohon leaves the return to scale degree 3 in parentheses, which, in this study, has been interpreted to indicate an optional note. In Example 6.2 f), the optional return to scale degree 3 will not be considered, this motive will simply consist of scale degree 1, 3, 4 and 5.

f) Motive 2 of the Sabbath and Week days Modes, transposed down one whole tone for ease of comparison⁵



The “Hora” contains probably the most blatant tie to the Synagogue Prayer chant tradition that we have seen to date, as seen in Example 2 g). The opening melody to the “Hora” contains literally the same pitches as well as the same rhythm as the motive put forth by Cohon. This tie to the Prayer chant tradition is unmistakable. This klezmer work is clearly showing its influence by the motives of the music of the Synagogue.

⁵ Cohon, “The Structure of Synagogue Prayer Chant,” 25.

g) Anacrusis measure and first beat of measure 1 of “Hora”



Another melodic similarity between the “Hora” and the *Ahava Rabbah* mode of the Synagogue can be found with comparison of this work to Motive 19 of the Sabbath mode, seen in Example 6.2 h). We will be considering only the bracketed portion of this motive for the purposes of this comparison.

h) Motive 19 of the Sabbath mode, transposed down one whole tone for ease of comparison⁶



Measure 3 of the “Hora” contains a passage with unequivocal resemblance to the motive pictured immediately above. Both passages consist primarily of a descending line from scale degree 6 down to scale degree 3 in, for the most part, eighth note motion, followed by an ascent of to eighth notes concluding on a note of longer value back to scale degree 5. The comparative passage of the “Hora” is pictured below in Example 6.2

i)

⁶ Ibid.

i) Measure 3 of “Hora”

Modality in “String of Meron Tunes featuring Abu’s Hotser”

These tunes will be considered as one, as all are of the same mode and are recorder as a single track. Also, there is much repetition. Only a few melodic passages permeate this track; length is mostly derived from repetition. One of the few passage contained in this work is a derivative of Motive 5 of Horowitz’s *Mogen Ovos* mode motives. This is seen in Example 6.3 a).

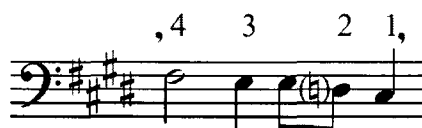
Example 6.3a) Motive 5 of the *Mogen Ovos* Klezmer Mode⁷

It is unclear whether the motive seen in Example 6.2 b) is a literal utterance of motive 5 or a slight variant. The note in question is the second scale degree; it is unclear whether the singer is singing a D-sharp, as would conform to C-sharp minor, or if it is a D-natural. The D-natural would indicate a second scale degree lowered by one semitone,

⁷ Ibid, 26.

as occurs in motive 5. In either case, however, there is a strong resemblance between the passages.

b) A Phrase in “String of Meron Tunes”



This work does not have particularly strong ties to the Prayer chant system in terms of motives from Cohon’s research; however, evidence of the reciting tone tradition of the cantor in the Synagogue can be found. Often, during a prayer, the cantor will recite most of the text on one repeated “reciting tone.” A technique similar to this is employed in this piece. In the second section of this track, a phrase appears that leaps from the dominant to tonic, which proceeds to repeat itself. This pattern then repeats itself three more times. One can observe the resemblance to a cantor in the Synagogue reciting a line of text on a single pitch.

c) A Phrase from “String of Meron Tunes”

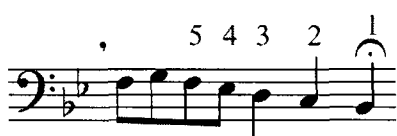


Modality in “Amar Rabbi Akiva”

This is another piece consisting of a limited amount of melodic material that repeats itself often. One of these passages is used several times as a way to bring the piece to a cadence on the tonic. This passage is seen in Example 6.4 a).

Example 6.4

a) Cadence in “Amar Rabbi Akiva”



This is a literal presentation of Motive 7 of the *Adonoy moloch* klezmer mode, seen in Example 6.4 b). While this is a simple descending line from dominant to tonic, it is made more significant by the fact that it always appears in instances of the strongest cadence in the work: perfect authentic cadences.

b) Motive 7 of the *Adonoy Moloch* Mode⁸



This is not a piece that is particularly laden with motive references from the Prayer chant system either. One can be found, though, between the opening motive of the piece and the second motive of the Eve of High Holy Days mode, seen in Examples

⁸ Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” unpublished, 6.

6.4 c) and d), respectively. If we exclude the first pitch of the motive, we are left with an analogous structure in both passages.

c) Opening Motive of “Amar Rabbi Akiva”



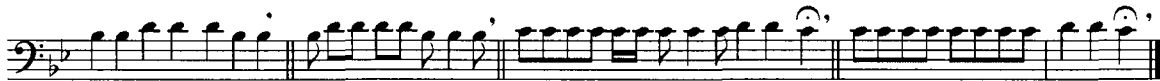
d) Motive 2 of the Eve of High Holy Days Mode⁹



With only one motive of the Prayer chant system that can be found within the piece, it does appear to be especially linked to the synagogue; however, as we have seen before, there is a resemblance to the reciting tone phenomenon within the work. Toward the end of the piece are several passages of a single pitch being repeated several times. Again, this bears resemblance to the recitation of prayers by the cantor primarily on one pitch. This is reinforced by the fact that this is a duet between a solo male voice and a crowd that sing in alternation. The sections assigned to the crowd tend to move constantly in step-wise motion while the single male voice, perhaps the cantor, tends to sing passages of varied rhythm but few pitches that continuously repeat themselves. This would be analogous to the style of music performed in the synagogue.

⁹ Cohon, “The Structure of Synagogue Prayer Chant,” 21.

e) Reciting examples within “Amar Rabbi Akiva”



Modality in “Turkish Tune”

In terms of scales, this tune has been judged to follow the *Mogen Ovos* scale in both the klezmer and Prayer chant systems. Motive 2 of the klezmer system’s *Mogen Ovos* mode shows a motive of an ascending line from scale degree 5 to 8, as seen in Example 6.5 a).

Example 6.5

a) Motive 2 of the *Mogen Ovos* Mode¹⁰



This motive also appears in the second measure (as well as being repeated many times) of “Turkish Tune.” This passage can be seen in Example 6.5 b).

b) Measure 2 of “Turkish Tune”



¹⁰ Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” unpublished, 7.

There is no strong resemblance of the motives in this piece to any of the Prayer chant motives within the *Mogen Ovov* scale.

Modality in “Schaeffer’s Niggun”

Although “Schaeffer’s Niggun” has been classified as a *Yishtabach* mode piece, there were several inconsistencies with this classification. It is therefore not surprising that no significant instances of *Yishtabach* motives appear in this work. This could perhaps suggest that this piece has a greater dependence on outside musical sources for its construction, rather than turning to the Synagogue Prayer chant system for a basis.

Modality in “Tune for Leading the Bridegroom”

Neither the motives nor cadences of the *Ahava Rabboh* klezmer mode seem to play a significant role in the construction of this piece. The same is true of the Synagogue prayer modes, with the exception of one small motivic tie. Motive 1 of the Sabbath mode, labeled as a “beginning phrase” by Cohon is shown Example 6.6 a). The opening melody of this incorporates the ascending line to scale degree 3 as well. This is seen in Example 6.6 b). Whether or not this resemblance has any significance is questionable. It is a very short motive that could be found just about anywhere, and as well, one of the two melodic intervals present does not match up. I am inclined to conclude that this piece does not contain any strong motivic ties to either modal system.

Example 6.6

a) Motive 1 of the Sabbath Mode¹¹



b) Opening Melody of “Tune for Leading the Bridegroom”



Modality in “Mazltov”

In terms of motivic material in the *Adonoy moloch* mode of the klezmer system, there are few influences that can be found within this piece. This is perhaps because this piece functions more as a string of small statements rather than one coherent whole. There are very few motives and those that are present are either repeated a number of times or do not have a role that conforms to functional tonality. There are even parts of this piece where the pitch cannot be determined at all; there is only a line contour that we can decipher, but no absolute pitches.

This work functions less as a song than as a recitation that alternates between a solo singer and a large crowd. From previously completed analysis we can decipher a pattern applicable to pieces of the solo versus crowd in alternation genre. These pieces tend to contain small, step-wise passages within the crowd, while the soloist tends to sing with a recitative quality, often using a single pitch and repeating it many times as if it

¹¹ Cohon, “The Structure of Synagogue Prayer Chant,” 25.

were a reciting tone. This piece is no exception; we see this patten come in to play once more.

On more hindrance to the search for motives in this piece is the approximated intonation with which the piece is performed. Exact pitches are sometimes very difficult to decipher.

Modality in “T’hies ha-meysim- Resurrection of the Dead, Brogez Tants”

The motives of the klezmer system in the *Mogen Ovov* mode focus mainly on ascending and descending step-wise lines. This figure we can find in abundance in “T’hies ha-meysim- Resurrection of the Dead, Brogez Tants.” The opening motive has an underlying structure of a descending line, as seen in Example 6.7 a). Example 6.7 c) illustrates another example of the descending lines that permeate this piece.

Example 6.7

a) Opening Motive of “T’hies ha-meysim- Resurrection of the Dead, Brogez Tants”



b) Rhythmic reduction



c) End of Measure 5 to measure 6 of “T’hies ha-meysim- Resurrection of the Dead,

Brogez Tants”



This being said, even though there are many descending lines that appear throughout the work are isolated examples of the motives, which contain a step-wise descending line of four or five notes. This is either a descent from scale degree 8 down to scale degree 4, or scale degree 4 down to scale degree 1.

When searching for Prayer chant modes embedded in the piece, it is obvious right from the beginning that few will be found. The rhythmic and melodic complexities that are found in most of the motives of the modes in the *Adonoy moloch* scale do not occur in the simple writing of this tune.

Modality in “Slow Hora: Instrumental Tune”

Only klezmer motives will be found in this work has no equivalent Prayer chant mode exists in Cohon’s system. The fit to a klezmer mode is also not perfect as there are small discrepancies from the sixth and seventh scale degrees for the mode to the piece.

One very noticeable similarity, however, is the raised fourth scale degree. This creates a very distinct mood that is common to both the piece and the mode.

Motive 2, seen in Example 6.8 a), and variants of this motive can be found in the “Slow Hora.”

Example 6.8

a) Motive 2 of the *Mi Shebarach* mode¹²



The first appearance of this motive in the piece is in measure 3, seen in Example 6.8 b).

b) Measure 3 of “Slow Hora”



A variant of this motive appears in measure 7. This passage is illustrated in Example 6.8 c). The correlation is weaker than Example 6.8 b) as the scale degrees differ, but still present as a descending line of 5 notes.

¹² Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” unpublished, 5.

c) Measure 7 of “Slow Hora”



A literal presentation of motive 4 is present in the piece at measure 12. These two passages are shown in Examples 6.8 d) and e), respectively.

d) Motive 4 of the *Mi Shebarach* mode¹³

e) Measure 12 of “Slow Hora”

Modality in “Yearning Tune of the Habbad Hassidim”

This short piece consists of three small sections that alternate, not necessarily in a discernable pattern. Because these sections are so short, the motivic material they contain is quite limited. There is no strong correlation between the motives of the *Adonoy moloch* klezmer or Prayer chant mode and “Yearning Tune of the Habbad Hassidim.”

¹³ Ibid, 5.

Modality in “Jester’s Tune for the Mitzvah Tants”

Because of the inability of this piece to fall into any of the scalar patterns of the modes, no motivic correlations could be deciphered.

Modality in “Rejoicing Tune to Lo Tevosi”

“Rejoicing Tune to Lo Tevosi” is constructed in much the same way as “Yearning Tune of the Habbad Hassidim.” Both pieces are made up of small sections that continuously alternate to create the work. This being said, “Rejoicing Tune to Lo Tevosi” is also a piece with limited melodic material.

Both the klezmer and Prayer chant systems appear to fit this work most closely in the *Ahava Rabbah* scale. There are some motivic ties as well. Motive 1 of the klezmer *Ahava Rabbah* scale is depicted in Example 6.9 a).

Example 6.9

a) Motive 1 of the *Ahava Rabbah* mode¹⁴



The cadence to the first phrase of this piece does not employ the same scale degree pattern as seen in Example 6.9 a), yet it still contains two descending intervals of a second, which then ascend by a second. This is seen in Example 6.9 b). Another instance of this motive within the piece can be seen in Example 6.9 c), however this

¹⁴ Ibid, 4.

passage is less convincing as a utterance of the same motive as it overlaps two separate phrases.

b) Cadence of the first phrase in “Rejoicing Tune to Lo Tevosi”



c) An instance of motive 1 in “Rejoicing Tune to Lo Tevosi”



As has occurred in several of the previous examples, the Synagogue Prayer chant motivic resemblances are much more difficult to pick out as the simple rhythms in the piece do not conform readily to the complex rhythmic and intervallic motives of the Prayer chant *Ahava Rabbah* scale.

Modality in “Dance Tune (Jerusalem)”

Even with numerous ascending and descending passages, which resemble the motives of the *Mogen Ovos* klezmer mode, few are functionally similar enough to be considered utterances. One instance of a melodic similarity is with Motive 1 of the mode and the opening melody of “Dance Tune,” seen in Examples 6.10 a) and b), respectively. Each consists of an ascending line of two major seconds followed by a minor second.

Another instance of this motive is found in measure 29 of the piece. This is pictured in Example 6.10 c).

Example 6.10

a) Motive 1 of the *Mogen Ovos* Mode¹⁵



b) Measure 1 of “Dance Tune”



c) Measure 29 of “Dance Tune”

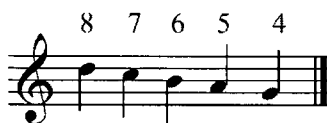


Motive 4 of the *Mogen Ovos* mode is also embedded in this piece in measure 37.

In this utterance, precisely the same scale degrees are used between the two passages; both consist of a step-wise descending line which falls from scale degree 8 to scale degree 4. Motive 4 and measure 37 of “Dance Tune” can be seen in Examples 6.10 d) and e), respectively.

¹⁵ Ibid, 7.

d) Motive 4 of the *Mogen Ovos* Mode¹⁶



e) Measure 37-38 of “Dance Tune”



In motivic terms, there are very few instances that link this piece to the modes of the *Mogen Ovos* scale in the Synagogue Prayer chant system, none of them significant.

Modality in Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim

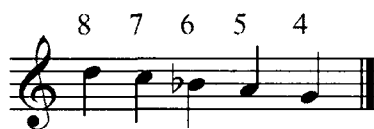
First, we will examine the motivic structure through analysis of Horowitz’s motivic scheme within the Meron tune “Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim.” We can immediately observe that motives 5, 6, and 7 of the *Mogen ovos* motivic scheme will not play a large role in this work, as these three motives feature the lowered second scale degree, an attribute common to the klezmer genre, but not found in this particular work. The most obvious motive to appear in this work would be the fourth motive of Horowitz’s model. This motive, a simple descending scalar passage presents itself as the opening theme to this work and repeats itself many times. We can observe in Example 6.11 a) that Horowitz’s motive consists of a descending scalar passage from scale degree 8 down to scale degree 4. We can see this exact pattern in the second phrase of “Waltz of

¹⁶ Ibid.

the Modzhitz Hassidim.” Not only is this exact motive present, but it is emphasized by the fact that it switches direction immediately after scale degree 4. This indicates that it is not a simple descending scale, a feature found in a great number of musical works, but it is actually present as a framed descent of only scale degree 8 down to scale degree 4, as motive 4 indicated should be present in a work of this mode. This passage is illustrated in Example 6.11 b).

Example 6.11

a) Motive 4 of the *Mogen Ovos* mode¹⁷



b) Second phrase of “Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim”



A variant of this motive occurs as the opening theme to this work. While the exact scale degrees 8, 7, 6, 5 and 4 may not be present in this motive, we do have a descending scalar passage of five pitches, this time, however, on scale degrees 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1. Here again, the resemblance to the fourth motive of the *Mogen Ovos* mode as described by Horowitz is unmistakable. This can be seen in Example 6.11 c).

¹⁷ Ibid.

c) Opening theme of “Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim”



Several other variants of motive 4 also appear in this piece, though these examples adhere less precisely to the motive described by Horowitz. In Example 6.11 d) we can see a descending line from scale degree 7 down to scale degree 2. Here, we have a scalar descent of six notes rather than the descent of five notes that occurs in motive 4. While there are clearly still similarities between a scalar descent of five notes and a scalar descent of 6 notes, it can also be said that the scale degree 2 D-sharp is not part of the main contour of this passage, but simply a neighbour tone decorating the scale degree three E natural. If this becomes the case then we, again, have a scalar descent of five notes, as in motive 4.

d) Measures 7-8 of “Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim”



In measure 11 of this piece is another variant of motive 4. Though the motive contains a descending passage of 5 notes from scale degree 8 down to scale degree 4, this excerpt is only four notes long, but incorporates most of motive 4 by descending from scale degree 7 down to scale degree 4. This can be seen in Example 6.11 e).

e) Measure 11 of “Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim”



By looking at these excerpts, the *Mogen Ovos* mode of the klezmer system seems to fit this piece in both the scalar and motivic forms. We will now see how this piece relates to the modes of the synagogue. Here, again, we are presented with a scale as well as motivic patterns. However, in the case of the Synagogue Prayer chant, there are several motivic schemes for each within the system. Within the *Mogen Ovos* scale, for example, are the *Birkos hashachar* mode, the *T'filloh* mode, the *Mogen Ovos* mode, the *Bor'chu* mode, the *Minchah* mode, the Festival *Maariv* mode and the Study mode.

Though the *Mogen Ovos* scale of the prayer chant system is slightly different from the *Mogen Ovos* scale of the klezmer system, both versions are consistent with “Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim.” The Prayer chant version of this scale does not give the option of a lowered second scale degree or a raised seventh scale degree. Also, the sixth scale degree does not have the option to be raised as it does in the klezmer version of the scale. However, even without these options, there is still no raised second scale degree in this piece, nor is there a raised sixth scale degree. While there are two instances of a raised seventh scale degree in this piece, raising the B-natural to a B-sharp, the vast majority of the time, only the B-natural appears.

In terms of its motivic content, it appears that certain motives of the *Mogen Ovos* mode, as well as the *Bor'chu* mode fit within this piece. The third motive of the *Mogen Ovos* mode features a scalar descent from scale degree 7 down to scale degree 4, as seen

in Example 6.11 f). This corresponds to the passage found in Example 6.11 e) in this piece.

f) Motive 3 of the *Mogen Ovos* mode¹



In motive 7 of the *Mogen Ovos* mode, we can find the familiar descent from scale degree 8 down to scale degree 2 featured prominently in this piece. This can be seen in Example 6.11 g).

g) Motive 7 of the *Mogen Ovos* mode²



Though this piece does certainly contain evidence of the *Mogen Ovos* mode motives within it, motive 4 of the *Bor'chu* mode can also be said to have presence within the work. This occurs in the form of the familiar 8, 7, 6, 5, 4 descending motive, as seen in Example 6.11 h).

¹ Cohon, "The Structure of Synagogue Prayer Chant," 26.

² Ibid.

h) Motive 4 of the *Bor'chu* mode³



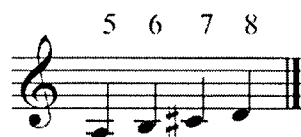
Finally, it also seems fitting to examine the cadences of this piece for consistency within the *Mogen Ovos* mode. When looking at the final cadence of the piece, we can see that there may be some relation to one of the cadence models named by Horowitz. There are some similarities in the basic contours of the second cadence provided by Horowitz and the final cadence of “Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim.” In both instances we can observe a descent from scale degree 3 down to scale degree 1. In the sample cadence, the first scale degree is decorated with a lower neighbour going back up to scale degree 1. After this a leap back up to scale degree 3 leads another descent down from scale degree 3. While only one instance of decoration occurs in the cadence of the waltz, that of a repetition of the scale degree 1 to the scale degree 5 leap; the basic contours, once all decorations are removed, are the same. However, even if we do consider these decorations to be an important part of the structure, we must remember that Horowitz himself labels Example 6.11 j) as a sample cadence, meaning it is not literally what will appear in every piece in this mode.

³ Ibid, 27.

i) Final Cadence of “Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim”

j) Sample Cadence from the *Mogen Ovos* Mode⁴Modality in “Mitzvah Tants”

The choice of the *Mogen Ovos* scale to represent the underlying melodic elements of this piece is bolstered through the presence of several examples of motivic similarities. Motive 1 of the *Mogen Ovos* klezmer mode can be seen in measures 4-5 of “Mitzvah Tants, which are depicted in Examples 6.12 a) and b), respectively. A variant of this motive can also be found in this piece in measures 6-7, as seen in Example 6.12 c). The scale degree in this example differ from the motive, but the basic pattern of an ascending line of four notes remains the same.

Example 6.12a) Motive 1 of the *Mogen Ovos* Mode⁵

⁴ Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” unpublished, 7.

⁵ Ibid.

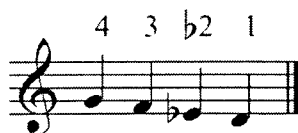
b) Measures 4-5 of “Mitzvah Tants”



c) Measures 6-7 of “Mitzvah Tants”



An ornamented version of motive 5 of the *Mogen Ovos* klezmer mode can be found in measure 11 of this piece. Both consist of a descending line from scale degree 4 to scale degree 1. Motive 5 and measure 11 are illustrated in Examples 6.12 d) and e), respectively. There is a small discrepancy between the two passages; the motive brought forth by Horowitz contains a second scale degree, which has been lowered by one semitone. This does not occur at this point in “Mitzvah Tants;” however, the basic function of all the scale degrees remains the same.

d) Motive 5 of the *Mogen Ovos* Mode⁶

⁶ Ibid.

e) Measure 11 of “Mitzvah Tants”



One motivic similarity can be traced from motive 15 of the Prayer chant *Mogen Ovos* mode to measures 1-2 of “Mitzvah Tants.” Cohon has indicated that motive 15 is to be used as a concluding phrase. This is analogous to its placement in “Mitzvah Tants;” here too it is used as a cadence. In this case, it is also rhythmically identical. Motive 15 and measures 1-2 of “Mitzvah Tants” can be seen in Examples 6.12 f) and g), respectively.

f) Motive 15 of the *Mogen Ovos* Mode (Prayer chant System)

g) Measures 1-2 of “Mitzvah Tants

Modality in “Dance Tune (Meron)”

This piece is very difficult to notate as well as observe motivic connections in this “Dance Tune;” the first five minutes of this piece are largely improvisation on the part of the clarinetist. However, the performer does improvise on the *Mi Sheberach* scale in a

cantorial-like style of free metre. The piece begins with the dominant note, G, sustained and re-articulated many times on which the clarinetist improvises with great emphasis on the raised fourth scale degree, F-sharp. Following one of these embellishments of the dominant, the performer repeats a certain melodic passage 5 times. This passage happens to correspond to motive 2 of the *Mi Sheberach* mode, a descending line from scale degree 8 to scale degree 4. The motive is played four times, unfinished each time, only to conclude on the fourth scale degree the fifth time. The motive and the passage in “Dance Tune” can be observed in Examples 6.13 a) and b), respectively. This motive repeats itself in the metric section later in the piece as well.

Example 6.13

a) Motive 2 of the *Mi Sheberach* Mode⁷



b) Improvisatory passage in “Dance Tune”



Because there is no scale to fit this piece in the Prayer chant system, the search for motives in this work will end here.

⁷ Horowitz, “Main Klezmer Modes,” unpublished, 5.

Summary

In each case the scale that best fit the piece was determined through comparison of pitches within each entity. This process aids the analyst in determining which set of motives, through the theories of Jewish music scholars, should be present in each work. The presence of motivic material from Horowitz's klezmer mode system within the piece confirms the analyst's choice of scale determined to represent the piece. Next, the Synagogue Prayer Modes are factored into the analysis. The analyst must then determine which motives of the Synagogue Prayer Chant modes are present within the klezmer piece. Any motivic influence from the cantorial modes confirms the suspected link between the two genres. Several clear links between the synagogue prayer modes and the chosen klezmer works have been demonstrated

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

Historical Implications

Even without considering the genre of klezmer music itself, one can already observe the similarities between it and the genre of Synagogue Prayer Chant. Both genres were not performed solely for the purposes of creating through the arts traditionally; both genres are functional types of music in their origins. Klezmer music has changed to become a concert hall art form in modern times. Klezmer music traditionally plays a pivotal role in marking joyous occasions such as weddings. Though it has become a concert hall genre in modern times, originally klezmer music was a means of worshipping and rejoicing in Eastern European communities. The term klezmer referred to the profession of being a musician rather than a musical genre. In the synagogue, prayer chant is used as a means of worship where each mode perpetuates a certain mood, a mood that emphasizes the particular type of prayer being proclaimed.

Both klezmer music and Synagogue Prayer Chant were originally created for a common function. And the Ashkenazi Jews would have been intimately familiar with both genres and both of the musical genres are heavily incorporated into their daily lives. The Ashkenazi Jewish people traditionally spent a large amount of time in the synagogue, as there were three prayer services per day with additional services on the Sabbath and holidays. Klezmer music was also a part of daily life as the klezmerim had the task of accompanying all ritual celebrations. It is therefore not surprising that a great deal of overlap exists between the two genres.

The Klezmer Modes and Prayer Chant Modes

As discussed earlier in this study, Joshua Horowitz and Baruch Joseph Cohon followed in the footsteps of Abraham Zvi Idelsohn. Baruch Joseph Cohon has compiled material from Abraham Zvi Idelsohn's research in order to create a classification system called *Nusach*. Horowitz provides an explanation of the principal modes from which the melodic content of klezmer music is derived and has named both a scalar form and a motivic scheme for each of these modes. The systems are fairly similar: they consist of scales that are, in turn, divided into modes made up of small melodic patterns, which permeate all pieces in the genre.

Influence of Prayer Chant Motives

This thesis had the main goal of applying both of these afore mentioned modal systems to a specific set of klezmer repertoire. Even before the study began, it was a given that klezmer music is heavily influenced by the klezmer modes; however, through this comparative study of analysis, it was found that one may also deconstruct a klezmer piece into prayer chant motives. Although the modes may share common titles and similar scale structures between Horowitz's klezmer modal system and Cohon's description of prayer chant modality, the motives themselves still differ greatly between the two systems. The motives of the klezmer system are much less specific; no rhythm is specified for each motive and the melodic patterns are fairly simple making it difficult to judge exactly which connections are meaningful and which are not. The motives of the prayer chant system are numerous and distinct through melodic and rhythmic means

allowing significant connections between the motives and the pieces themselves to be observed.

It is true that many of these connections could be made between the prayer chant system and the klezmer pieces. The most significant pieces in terms of prayer chant motivic involvement are the “Hora” and “Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim.” In the “Hora,” not only are there numerous commonalities between the Prayer Chant motives and the piece, but many of these occurrences involve a literal statement of a motive that contains a very specific melody and rhythm. In this piece, the presence of prayer chant motives is unmistakable. “Waltz of the Modzhitz Hassidim” may not contain such blatant instances of prayer chant motives, yet the repetition of the motives found within gives validity to the argument. The *Mogen Ovov* mode plays a large role in this piece.

Motivic Unity

The idea of motivic construction is a very familiar idea that permeates many types of music. For example, in the Romantic Era composers began to write larger works in a cyclic form: a form in which motives presented early on in the work repeat themselves and permeate the rest of the work as well. The motives need not appear in exactly the same form at each reoccurrence; variations still represent the return of the original motive. This concept behind the cyclic piece acted as a large influence on this study. In much the same way as the composers of the Romantic Era applied their motives, this thesis attempted to uncover the motivic development within a different set of repertoire.

Through this study we have gained some insight into the construction and origins of the klezmer music of Mount Meron. It is clear now that strong ties exist between the

prayer chant of the synagogue and klezmer music. Though much study may still need to take place, tracing the melodic origins of these pieces takes us one step closer to understanding the fundamental hierarchy that exists in Jewish music.

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