



## About Erin Fulton

### HOMETOWN

Lane County, Kan.

### MAJOR

Musicology

### ACADEMIC LEVEL

Senior

### RESEARCH MENTOR

Ryan Dohoney

*Assistant Professor of Musicology*

## Q&A

### *How did you become involved in doing research?*

I first began to do some musicological research around the age of 11 or 12 when I became curious about the musical traditions of a nearby sect of Holdeman Mennonites. Those first inquiries led me to become interested in the larger tradition of Anglo-American hymnody, and shape-note and dispersed-harmonic music in particular, which remains my primary research interest.

### *How is the research process different from what you expected?*

The unusual resources that turn out to be helpful constantly surprise me. I always expected my research to draw primarily on books and sheet music, but correspondence and ephemera have proven increasingly useful to my recent endeavors.

### *What is your favorite part of doing research?*

I am a bibliophile at heart and love the smell and touch of old books. Working with 19th-century tune books at Spencer Research Library has become one of my fondest memories of KU.

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# Herzlian Zionism and the chamber music of the New Jewish School, 1912-1925

*Erin Fulton*

The stated goals of the St. Petersburg Society for Jewish Folk Music—the organization around which the New Jewish School of composition arose—focused on the creation of opera and large-scale choral and symphonic works. However, the middle period of the New Jewish School (ca. 1912-1925) was dominated instead by chamber music.<sup>1</sup> Previous

scholarship has emphasized ease of performance in encouraging chamber music composition during these years. While smaller works doubtless presented reduced fiscal and logistical challenges, two political factors also contributed to this interest in chamber music.

Firstly, the Society used touring chamber ensembles as propaganda,

presenting compositions inspired by Russian Jewish folk music as an expression of Herzlian Zionism. By programming newly-written works alongside canonic chamber pieces, these composers drew on the perceived importance and profundity of the chamber repertoire to legitimize their own music and the political agenda they supported.

<sup>1</sup>“Chamber music” refers to art music for a small ensemble in which each player is responsible for his or her own part, as opposed to symphonic or choral practice in which multiple performers play or sing the same part. Chamber instrumentations have historically been associated with music intended for private performance, frequently meant for the performers’ rather than an audience’s pleasure. Because of this, chamber music acquired, and to some degree still holds, a reputation for being intricate and erudite, written with a musically literate audience in mind.

Secondly, the reverence in which Herzlian Zionists held Yiddish folk culture led New Jewish School composers to draw on klezmer music, a genre already associated with chamber instrumentations.<sup>2</sup> As Hebraicist ideals that came into vogue with Cultural Zionism in the late 1920s fostered a musical idiom drawing instead on cantorial chant, the importance of chamber music to the New Jewish School correspondingly declined. This examination of the role of Herzlian Zionism in encouraging chamber music composition during the middle period of the New Jewish School further confirms the far-reaching influence of Zionism on the blossoming of Russian Jewish art in the early twentieth century.

Herzlian Zionism took its name from Theodor Herzl, the journalist and political theorist who founded the World Zionist Organization in 1897. Herzlian Zionists rejected assimilation as a viable option for European Jews, claiming that they would never flourish except in a state of their own, preferably in Palestine. Herzlian Zionism found the most favor among Eastern European, and especially Russian, Jews, who did not have the level of emancipation enjoyed by those in Western Europe. Even as the Russian government relaxed some restrictions on Jewish activity and travel outside the Pale

of Settlement, anti-Semitic violence only increased, especially after reports of Jewish involvement in the 1881 assassination of Alexander II.<sup>3</sup>

The aesthetic ideals of Herzlian Zionism centered on creating an independent and distinctly Jewish art that could serve as a legitimization of their political cause; nationalist art was a proof of nationhood. Herzl himself wrote that the Jewish state would be “a model country for social experiments and a treasure house for works of art,” one worthy of the admiration of the established nations whose support he was attempting to garner.<sup>4</sup> As nationalist artists had done throughout the nineteenth century, Zionists turned to their folk culture for inspiration, especially that of Yiddish-speaking Eastern European Jews.

Around 1900, Achad Ha’am established the foundations of Cultural Zionism, which would gradually overtake Herzlian Zionism following the refusal of the Ottoman Empire to relinquish Palestine to Jewish control. Ha’am postulated that, since the establishment of a Jewish state was impossible under the current political circumstances, Jews would have to create a respectable role for themselves within the Diaspora. Cultural Zionists considered their main threat to be not anti-Semitism but the loss of a distinctive cultural identity through

assimilation. Since many Cultural Zionists viewed traditional Judaism as outmoded, they aimed to construct a secular culture—based in the revival of the Hebrew language—that Jews could adopt while still participating in European society.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, a contradiction weighed on the Russian Jewish intelligentsia: a disproportionate number of professional musicians were Jews, yet there was no distinctly “Jewish” art music for them to perform. As a St. Petersburg newspaper stated in 1909,

They say that we Jews are the most musical nation, that the violin is our national instrument; we have given the world composers of genius; we have more professional musicians among us than any other people [...but] you will hardly find another nation whose national music has been so much neglected as ours.<sup>5</sup>

The examples set by Zionism, Russian nationalist art, and the last breath of the Haskalah supported a flourishing of Russian Jewish art and literature in the final years of the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> The work of Marc Chagall in visual art and of Abram Efros in poetry are examples of this burst of activity.<sup>7</sup> After lagging behind the other arts, music blossomed into the New Jewish School of composition.

<sup>2</sup> Klezmer music is a genre of instrumental music typical of the Ashkenazi Jews of Eastern Europe. Small ensembles of four or five musicians known as *klezmerim*, led by a pair of violins, would perform dance music, improvisations, and paraliturgical pieces for holidays and other celebrations.

<sup>3</sup> The Pale of Settlement was an area of the Russian Empire encompassing much of modern-day Ukraine, Poland, Belarus, Moldova, and Lithuania, founded by Catharine the Great in 1791 and dissolved in 1917. Russian Jews were forbidden to permanently settle outside the Pale of Settlement without special permission, frequently requiring conversion to Christianity. Most of the composers of the New Jewish School were such semi-assimilated Jews living outside the Pale.

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah Friedman, “Herzl, Theodor,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2009), 9: 55.

<sup>5</sup> James Loeffler, *The Most Musical Nation: Jews and Culture in the Late Russian Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 7.

<sup>6</sup> The “Haskalah” refers to the so-called “Jewish Enlightenment,” a movement towards increased rationalism and secularism in Ashkenazic thought generally traced back to Moshe Mendelssohn (1729-1786).

<sup>7</sup> Jascha Nemtsov and Beate Schröder-Nauenburg, *Der Eintritt des Jüdischen in die Welt der Kunstmusik: die Anfänge der Neuen Jüdischen Schule, werkanalytische Studien* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007), 18.

Several composers who would eventually be associated with the New Jewish School turned towards Jewish nationalism in music independently and at roughly the same time. Perhaps earliest were a group of students from the Moscow Conservatory who presented an opera for the festival of Purim to the *Zacharievka Kruyok* salon in 1894.<sup>8</sup> Seven years later, Efrayim Shkliar and Shlomo Rosovsky founded *Kinor Tziyon*, a club of St. Petersburg Conservatory students dedicated to the composition of Jewish art music; Shkliar was already experimenting with writing Lieder to Yiddish texts.<sup>9</sup> However, the Society for Jewish Folk Music (founded 30 November 1908), was to be the organization most closely associated with the New Jewish School.<sup>10</sup> Despite its misleading name, the primary concern of the Society for Jewish Folk Music was the cultivation of art music.<sup>11</sup> The Society sponsored the performance and publication of works by Jewish composers, including those who were not or were no longer members. A musician associated with the Society, Mikhail Gniesin, would be the first to attach the label “New Jewish School” to these composers.<sup>12</sup>

Scholars have long divided the music of the New Jewish School into three periods. This view likely originated with Aron Marko Rothmüller, who traces the development of the School thus: first, an initial period focusing on the collection and arrangement of folk music; second, a middle period in which folk melodies become bases for free compositions, almost universally for chamber ensemble; and finally a mature period marked by a preference for larger forms and the abandonment of folk tunes for original themes.<sup>13</sup> If judged by these criteria, the middle period begins with the widespread appearance of free-standing compositions in the Society’s third concert season (1911–1912) and ends with the widespread appearance of large-scale pieces for choir or orchestra around 1925.

The middle period of the New Jewish School was marked, as Rothmüller observed, by an abundance of chamber music. The School’s earlier output was not devoid of this genre; a lecture on Yiddish folk music given by Yoel Engel to the Imperial Ethnographic Society in 1900 included several chamber arrangements of folk songs, as did the Society for Jewish Folk Music’s

inaugural public concert in 1909.<sup>14</sup> The emphasis on chamber music only increased in the middle period, when members of the New Jewish School started applying chamber instrumentations to typically large-scale genres. For example, Yoel Engel’s incidental music for Shlomo Anski’s Yiddish play *Der Dibuk oder Tzewishn Tsvey Veltn* is scored for only six players.<sup>15</sup> A similar focus on chamber music is evident in the activities of the Moscow chapter of the Society. After its founding in 1912, chamber music performances were the primary activity of the Moscow chapter. Even when it replaced its St. Petersburg cousin as the Society’s base following the Soviet Revolution, the Moscow public concerts were still being advertised as “chamber music evenings.” The Moscow chapter also sponsored its own string quartet beginning in 1916.<sup>16</sup>

This bulk of chamber music is surprising, since the constitution of the Society for Jewish Folk Music declared that the organization would support orchestral and choral works, making no mention of chamber music.<sup>17</sup> Logistical advantages partially explain this phenomenon, since Society members could perform chamber works themselves without

<sup>8</sup> Albert Weisser, *The Modern Renaissance of Jewish Music: Events and Figures, Eastern Europe and America* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1983), 23. The opera, *Esther*, was by Yoel Engel, A. Spiegel, and Z. Cohen.

<sup>9</sup> Weisser, *Renaissance of Jewish Music*, 43; Israel Rabinovitch, *Of Jewish Music: Ancient and Modern*, trans. A. M. Klein (Montreal: Eagle Publishing Co. Ltd., 1952), 154. *Kinor Tziyon* means “lyre of Zion” or “fiddle of Zion” in Hebrew.

<sup>10</sup> Weisser, *Renaissance of Jewish Music*, 45. The early history of the Society for Jewish Folk Music is obscure; while the Society’s papers date their meetings back to March 1908, the St. Petersburg District Commission did not grant the organization letters of registration until 1909; see Galina Viktorovna Kopytova, “Die ‘Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik’ in St. Petersburg/Petrograd,” in *Jüdische Musik in Sowjetrußland: Die Jüdische Nationale Schule der 20er Jahre*, ed. Jascha Nemtsov and Ernst Kuhn (Berlin: Ernst Kuhn, 2002), 103; Rabinovitch, *Of Jewish Music*, 156.

<sup>11</sup> The organization was intended to have been called “The Society for Jewish Music,” but was forced to adopt its ultimate name upon registering with the St. Petersburg District Commission; see Rabinovitch, *Of Jewish Music*, 155–156.

<sup>12</sup> Jascha Nemtsov, “Die Gesellschaft für jüdische Musik in Moskau (1923–1931),” in *Komponisten unter Stalin: Aleksandr Veprik (1899–1958) und die Neue jüdische Schule*, ed. Friedrich Geiger (Dresden: Hannah-Arendt-Institut für Totalitarismusforschung, 2000), 33; Geiger, *Komponisten unter Stalin*, 7.

<sup>13</sup> Aron Marko Rothmüller, *The Music of the Jews: An Historical Appreciation*, trans. H. S. Stevens (South Brunswick: Thomas Yoseloff, 1967), 183. A similar view is sketched by Weisser, *Renaissance of Jewish Music*, 50 and most current German scholarship on the New Jewish School also accepts the division into three periods.

<sup>14</sup> Loeffler, *Most Musical Nation*, 69; Kopytova, “Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik,” 105.

<sup>15</sup> Weisser, *Renaissance of Jewish Music*, 76. The double bass part is optional.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 50; Nemtsov, “Gesellschaft für jüdische Musik,” 31; Kopytova, “Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik,” 121.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, *Renaissance of Jewish Music*, 45.

recruiting (and paying for) a larger ensemble. This is the explanation Jascha Nemtsov and Beata Schröder-Nauenburg offer: “The astonishing wealth of piano and chamber music is largely explained through the favorable performance opportunities in the concerts of the Society[.]”<sup>18</sup> A symphony concert planned for the 1926-7 season had to be abandoned because of financial concerns, even though the Society enjoyed its highest membership that year.<sup>19</sup> Large-scale pieces were also more expensive for the Society to publish; they printed only one large work.<sup>20</sup> Despite these difficulties, the early activities of the New Jewish School indicate an interest in large-scale music. The first pieces to which the Society bought publishing rights in 1909 included choral music but no chamber music; the organization had its own choir between 1909 and 1911. Finally, despite increasing government disapproval and the eventual disbanding of the Society, the New Jewish School only produced more symphonies, concerti, cantatas, oratorios, and stage works after 1925.<sup>21</sup>

However, factors other than the availability and affordability of large ensembles influenced the interest of New Jewish School composers in chamber music; one of the most important was Herzlian Zionism, the dominant ideology among composers of the School during the middle period. The School used touring chamber ensembles as a form of Zionist propaganda. From its earliest days, the New Jewish School had been entwined with Zionism. The *Zacharievka Kruyok* salon in which Yoel Engel made his first forays in Jewish music included Zionist agitators, as did *Kinor Tziyon*.<sup>22</sup> Israel Rabinovitch, one of the first historians of the movement, thought the School arose directly from a combination of Zionism with Russian nationalist art, even making direct comparisons between Engel and Theodor Herzl:

The first herald of a musical renaissance in Jewry, Joel Engel, was, like the first builder of political Zionism, Dr. Theodor Herzl, a Jew obliviously at ease in an assimilated environment when he heard, as through some mystical communication, the call to return to his

own people and with might and main to put himself in their service.<sup>23</sup>

Yoel Engel and Alexander Krein both left accounts identifying their first interest in Jewish music as an expression of ethnic identity. Krein in particular advocated nationalist music to resist absorption into Russian culture, calling his compositions a “turning towards Jewish melody as a protest against persecution and assimilation.”<sup>24</sup> One performer associated with the New Jewish School went so far as to say that “music by Jewish composers – even if it contains historically Jewish melodic material—cannot be called ‘Jewish music’ if it lacks the spark of a nationalist awakening.”<sup>25</sup> Outside observers also noted the School’s political streak; the first pieces the Soviet government forbade from appearing on the concerts of the Society for Jewish Music were banned because of associations with Zionism.<sup>26</sup>

These political influences encouraged composers of the New Jewish School to write music that could be played by touring

<sup>18</sup> “Die erstaunliche Fülle von Klavier und Kammermusik erklärt sich größtenteils durch die günstigen Aufführungsmöglichkeiten in den Konzerten der Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik[.]” Nemtsov and Schröder-Nauenburg, *Eintritt des Jüdischen*, 16. All translations from German are my own. See also Nemtsov, “Gesellschaft für jüdische Musik,” 31.

<sup>19</sup> Nemtsov, “Gesellschaft für jüdische Musik,” 36, 37.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 31. This work was Moishe Milner’s Yiddish opera *Di Himlen Brenen* (1923), which was immediately banned due to perceived Zionist sympathies.

<sup>21</sup> Kopytowa, “Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik,” 104, 105, 108; Nemtsov and Schröder-Nauenburg, *Eintritt des Jüdischen*, 16. The Society also engaged choirs, apparently not their own, for concerts on 10 March 1912 and 31 January 1916 during the early period (Kopytowa, “Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik,” 110, 120).

<sup>22</sup> Weisser, *Renaissance of Jewish Music*, 23; Rothmüller, *Music of the Jews*, 149; Lazare Saminsky, “Lazare Saminsky’s Years in Russia and Palestine: Excerpts from an Unpublished Autobiography,” *Musica Judaica* 2, no. 1 (1977), 11.

<sup>23</sup> Rabinovitch, *Of Jewish Music*, 145.

<sup>24</sup> [eine] Hinwendung zum jüdischen Melos als Protest gegen die Verfolgungen und gegen die Assimilation.” Nemtsov and Schröder-Nauenburg, *Eintritt des Jüdischen*, 89. Engel’s statement may be found in Loeffler, *Most Musical Nation*, 61. Sabanayev noted a major change in Alexander Krein’s musical style upon his adoption of Zionism; see Lenoid Sabanayev, *Modern Russian Composers*, trans. Judah A. Joffe (New York: International Publishers, 1927), 182.

<sup>25</sup> Simeon Bellison writing in *Der Forwarts* (a New York City-based Yiddish-language newspaper) in 1925; quoted in Neil W. Levin, “The Russians are Coming! The Russians Have Stayed! A Little Known Episode in the History of the New Jewish National Music School: The Tour of the Palestine Chamber Music Ensemble ‘Zimro,’” in *Jüdische Kunstmusik im 20. Jahrhundert: Quellenlage, Entstehungsgeschichte, Stilanalysen*, ed. Jascha Nemtsov (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006), 74.

<sup>26</sup> Nemtsov, “Gesellschaft für jüdische Musik,” 36. An example of a mainstream Russian reaction to the School’s political associations is Lenoid Sabanayev’s remarks on the importance of Zionism in the work of Alexander and Grigori Krein; see Sabanayev, *Modern Russian Composers*, 182, 187.

ensembles intended to spread Zionist ideas, and small chamber groups were best suited to such wide travel. The Zionist press of the time had already identified music as an important source of propaganda. One newspaper stated in 1909, "There is no such thing as nationalism without music and song," pointing out that a vibrant shared culture could serve as the necessary unifying force for a nation that, as yet, had no homeland.<sup>27</sup> Correspondingly, the Society for Jewish Folk Music sponsored touring ensembles that visited Zionist organizations in Germany, Austria-Hungary, Lithuania, and Russia beginning in 1909. Special mention was given to the chamber music tours as one of the Society's primary achievements at the organization's third anniversary session, indicating the importance its members placed on this activity.<sup>28</sup> An observer at such a concert given in the Pale of Settlement in 1912 noted "the excited activity before and after the event on the part of the local Zionists. The artists were [...] made a symbol of the autonomous and sanguine hopes of the folk."<sup>28</sup>

A more explicitly Zionist agenda surrounded the Zimro Ensemble. This clarinet quintet with piano<sup>30</sup> was founded in 1918 under the

auspices of the Society for Jewish Folk Music; some of its members had been involved in the Society's previous chamber music tours. The ensemble's goal was to perform for Zionist organizations in Asia and North America, use their proceeds to travel to Mandatory Palestine, and "contribute potentially to the revival of the Jewish Nation and cooperate with the development of Jewish art[.]"<sup>31</sup> The Eastern European Jews who most staunchly supported Herzlian Zionism could never have hoped to produce the funds necessary to buy Palestine out of Ottoman hands without the aid of more affluent Western Europeans and Americans, and the Zimro Ensemble was intended to court their support. The ensemble's tour began in December 1918, touching on Russia, China, Japan, and the Dutch East Indies before their arrival in Chicago for the annual convention of the American Zionist Federation in September 1919. There they hoped to win support from the AZF and other American Zionist organizations, to which they donated much of their profits.<sup>32</sup> The Zimro Ensemble never reached Palestine as a group, but their other goal was realized; according to a contemporary review

in the *Chicago Herald Examiner*, "The Zimro Ensemble has been a great asset in reviving the nationalism of the Jew by appealing to his deepest sentiment."<sup>33</sup>

The Zimro Ensemble's programs indicate another attraction chamber music presented Zionists. While the ensemble mainly played music written by members of the School, it juxtaposed these newly-written pieces with respected chamber works.<sup>34</sup> Neil W. Levin suggests that this combination was intended to elevate the newer repertoire, drawing on the perceived importance and profundity of canonic chamber pieces to legitimize the works of the New Jewish School.<sup>35</sup> This approach was again successful; the Russian musical world began to take the New Jewish School seriously only with the turn to chamber music that marked the opening of its middle period. A review of the Society's first chamber music concert in the Russian newspaper *Den'* stated,

This concert marks an important step in the life of the organization: the young Jewish composers obviously already feel some ground under their feet through five years' experience in collecting and arranging folk melodies; with their best works they create serious artistic value, interesting not merely Jews alone.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Pinchas Minkovskii writing in *Shirei 'Am*, quoted in Loeffler, *Most Musical Nation*, 57.

<sup>28</sup> Kopytowa, "Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik," 108, 111, 113, 120; Levin, "The Russians are Coming," 75.

<sup>29</sup> Weisser, *Renaissance of Jewish Music*, 47.

<sup>30</sup> i.e., two violins, viola, cello, clarinet, and piano.

<sup>31</sup> Levin, "The Russians are Coming," 76.

<sup>32</sup> "Jewish Musicians Arrive: Party from Russia Here on a Long Journey to Palestine," *New York Times*, Sep. 8, 1919; "Zimro Ensemble Plays for Fund," *New York Times*, Apr. 25, 1920.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in Levin, "The Russians are Coming," 79.

<sup>34</sup> "Jewish Musicians Arrive."

<sup>35</sup> Levin, "The Russians are Coming," 75-76, 80.

<sup>36</sup> "Das Konzert war eine wichtige Etappe im Leben dieser Gesellschaft: Die jungen jüdischen Komponisten fühlen offensichtlich durch fünfjährige Erfahrung beim Sammeln und Bearbeiten von Volksmelodien schon etwas Boden unter den Füßen, mit ihren besten Werken schaffen sie ernsthafte künstlerische Werte, die nicht nur Juden interessieren." Nemtsov and Schröder-Nauenburg, *Eintritt des jüdischen*, 87.

The implication is that the first works of the New Jewish School—the folk song arrangements mentioned by the reviewer—were merely of ethnographic or cultural interest. Only with the production of chamber music of “serious artistic value” could the School be considered worthwhile by non-Jews.

Like other artistic expressions of Herzlian Zionism, the middle period of the New Jewish School had its aesthetic basis in Yiddish folk culture. Therefore the main musical influences on the School were Yiddish-language folk song and klezmer dance music. The chamber music of the middle period recalls the small dance ensembles typical of klezmer, particularly because both tend to rely on strings and clarinet.<sup>37</sup> Yoel Engel even noted in one of his early lectures that instrumentation and timbre are the primary points of distinction between Russian Jewish folk music and the musics of surrounding Eastern European cultures.<sup>38</sup>

Klezmer influences are readily identifiable in the works of the School: Zimro’s repertoire even included one *bona fide* klezmer work, a *taksim* or improvisatory prelude attributed to the Ukrainian klezmer and clarinet virtuoso Abraham Kholodenko of Berdichev.<sup>39</sup> Alexander Krein’s

*Esquisses Hébraïques* (1909), one of the first pieces of chamber music written for the Society, was modeled on the playing of Krein’s *badkhn* father: “The form was improvisational, after the manner of my father’s extemporizations on the violin.”<sup>40</sup> The dance movements in Yoel Engel’s incidental music for *Der Dibuk* (1922) also allude to klezmer improvisation.<sup>41</sup> Joseph Achron’s *Hebrew Dance* (1912) is based directly on a klezmer tune collected in one of the Society’s ethnographic expeditions. Klezmer models are also hinted at in the names of pieces like Kopyt’s *Freilichs* (1912) or Joseph Achron’s *Tanzimprovisation über ein hebräisches Volkslied* (1914) and *Scher* (1917).<sup>42</sup>

The loss of this Yiddishist orientation is at least partly responsible for the decline of chamber music as more members of the New Jewish School began to favor Cultural over Herzlian Zionism. Originally the Society for Jewish Folk Music had been concerned equally with sacred and secular music, as their constitution makes clear.<sup>43</sup> However, Cultural Zionism and the privilege it lent the Hebrew language came into increasing influence among Russian Jews in the late 1910s. This change of focus impelled a reevaluation of cultural orientation

within the New Jewish School: should the School continue in the Yiddishist path it had been struggling to establish, or find new inspiration in Hebrew liturgical music?

During 1915 and 1916, Lazare Saminsky and Yoel Engel argued this issue in the papers *Razsvet* and *Evreiskaia Nedelia*. Saminsky, who had been researching *trop* as early as 1911, posited that Hebrew synagogue music was more authentically Jewish than Yiddish folk music because its scales showed less influence from surrounding cultures and were shared by both Eastern European and Caucasian Jewish communities.<sup>44</sup> He applauded those members of the School who were already writing music based on the scales or motives of cantorial music and moving away from secular models. Engel countered these assertions from a Herzlian perspective by arguing that the Jewishness of a melody stemmed from cultural associations rather than musical structure, and that shared characteristics of Ashkenazic and other Eastern European musics were a sign of adaptability rather than assimilation.<sup>45</sup> When Engel and Saminsky ceased their argument by mutual agreement in 1916, consensus had not yet been reached among the members of the New Jewish School.

<sup>37</sup> These instruments continued to be unusually prevalent even after the middle period; all the concerti written by members of the New Jewish School are for violin, cello, or clarinet; see Nemtsov and Schröder-Nauenburg, *Eintritt des Jüdischen*, 16.

<sup>38</sup> Loeffler, *Most Musical Nation*, 68.

<sup>39</sup> Levin, “The Russians are Coming,” 76.

<sup>40</sup> “Die Form war improvisationsartig nach Art der Geigenimprovisationen meines Vaters.” Nemtsov and Schröder-Nauenburg, *Eintritt des Jüdischen*, 80–90. A *badkhn* is a musician-jester who performs at weddings.

<sup>41</sup> Weissner, *Renaissance of Jewish Music*, 77.

<sup>42</sup> Joseph Achron, “Hebrew Dance, Op. 35, No. 1,” in *Hebrew Melodies for Violin and Piano*, ed. Eric Wen (New York: Carl Fischer, 2001), 106. The *sher* and *freylekhs* are both klezmer social dances associated with wedding celebrations.

<sup>43</sup> Nemtsov and Schröder-Nauenburg, *Eintritt des Jüdischen*, 41.

<sup>44</sup> Lenoid Sabanayev, “Saminsky the Contemporary,” in Domenico de Paoli, et. al., *Lazare Saminsky: Composer and Civic Worker* (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1930), 17; Kopytova, “Gesellschaft für jüdische Volksmusik,” 109; Joseph Yasser, “The Hebrew Folk Society of St. Petersburg: Ideology and Technique,” in Irene Heskes and Arthur Wolfson, *The Historical Contribution of Russian Jewry to Jewish Music* (New York: National Jewish Music Council, 1967), 36. *Trop* refers to the chanting of the *Tanakh* (Hebrew scriptures) generally and more specifically to the symbols—representing short musical motives—with which the chant is notated.

<sup>45</sup> Loeffler, *Most Musical Nation*, 178–188; Sabanayev, “Saminsky the Contemporary,” 20. Nemtsov and Schröder-Nauenburg, *Eintritt des Jüdischen*, 35ff. quotes Saminsky’s arguments at length.

For a time, one of the publishing houses associated with the school specialized in Yiddish-influenced music, while the other issued music inspired by *trop*.<sup>46</sup> Despite Engel's counter-argument, the Hebraicist view expounded by Saminsky continued to burgeon, eventually overtaking the Yiddishist perspective that had been so suited to chamber music.

The New Jewish School's first large-scale works were written in 1923 and 1924 by Moishe Milner, Grigori Krein, Joseph Achron, Mikhail Gniesin, and Alexander Krein; Saminsky had been writing symphonic pieces even earlier, although none of them seem to have been performed.<sup>47</sup> The Society's first symphonic concert was in 1926.<sup>48</sup> Under the pressure

of increasing anti-Jewish legislation from the Soviet government, the organization formally dissolved on 22 March 1930. Most of the composers associated with the New Jewish School emigrated to Mandatory Palestine or the United States.<sup>49</sup> Many of them, including Lazare Saminsky, Yoel Engel, Joseph Achron, Shlomo Rosovsky, Jacob Weinberg, and Joachim Stutschevsky, continued to compose large-scale choral and symphonic music in a musical idiom based on cantorial chant. However, the influence of the middle period never left the New Jewish School: the composers who would present Jewish art music to an international audience learned their craft writing chamber music.

The middle period of the New Jewish School does not merely represent a continuance of the nineteenth-century chamber music tradition, but was intended, at least in part, as an expression of political goals based in Herzlian Zionism. This phenomenon shows the pervasive influence of Zionism on Russian Jewish artistic life in the early twentieth century and more generally demonstrates that music, like all art, reflects and at times propels the intellectual environment from which it arises. Hopefully this research can form the basis for more enquiries into the ideological underpinnings of this little-studied school of composition.

<sup>46</sup> Jascha Nemtsov, "The History of the Jewish Music Publishing Houses Jibne and Yuwal," trans. Elliott Kahn and Verena Bopp, *Musica Judaica*, 18 (2005): 1-42.

<sup>47</sup> "Chronologisches Verzeichnis der musikalischen Werke Lazare Saminskys," in Nemtsov and Kuhn, *Jüdische Musik in Sowjetrußland*, 293-294.

<sup>48</sup> Nemtsov and Schröder-Nauenburg, *Eintritt des Jüdischen*, 117.

<sup>49</sup> Nemtsov, "Gesellschaft für jüdische Musik," 36-37; Joseph Dorfman, "Die jüdische Komponistenschule in Russland und ihr Einfluss auf die jüdische Musik im 20. Jahrhundert: Ein Überblick," in Geiger, *Komponisten unter Stalin*, 25-28. Barbara von der Lühe, "Ausgewandert nach Palästina—vergessen in Europa? Hommage an drei Komponisten," in *Verfemte Musik: Komponisten in den Diktaturen unseres Jahrhunderts*, ed. Joachim Braun.

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