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Modern Interpretation of Ornamentation in Naftule Brandwein's Firn Di Mekhutonim Aheym and Der Heyser Bulgar

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

MODERN INTERPRETATION OF ORNAMENTATION IN NAFTULE
BRANDWEIN'S *FIRN DI MEKHUTONIM AHEYM*
AND *DER HEYSER BULGAR*

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Arts

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College of Performing and Visual Arts
School of Music
Clarinet Performance

December 2017

This Dissertation by: Michael Aaron Gersten

Entitled: *Modern Interpretation of Ornamentation in Naftule Brandwein's Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym and Der Heyser Bulgar*

has been approved as meeting the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Arts
in College of Performing and Visual Arts in School of Music, Program of Clarinet
Performance

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ABSTRACT

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Research on the klezmer revival is wanting both in size and scope. Much of the existing research focuses on extra-musical influences on modern klezmer music with only tangential study of performance practice. This study seeks to inform the body of literature on klezmer performance practice by analyzing and comparing the interpretation of melody and ornamentation in modern performances of *Der Heyser Bulgar* and *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym*, two of famed clarinetist Naftule Brandwein's (1884–1963) most popular tunes.

Analysis of ornamentation in modern performances of the selected recordings reveals a marked shift in modern style when compared to Brandwein's original recordings. When other musical elements were stripped away leaving the focus on ornamentation, the element that most clearly defines klezmer music from other folk musics, significant inconsistencies were found when comparing to Brandwein to modern performances. However, some of these inconsistencies between more recent recordings and those of Brandwein indicated meaningful agreement between modern performers. These findings of a shared aesthetic among modern performers of klezmer music call into question common beliefs about klezmer music's past and present and should have a significant impact on discussions of authenticity.

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CHAPTER I

A BRIEF HISTORY OF KLEZMER MUSIC

Klezmer music has evolved into a diverse and expansive genre over the past few decades. Having faced near extinction following World War II, the klezmer revival began in the 1970s, led largely by a small number of Jewish musicians and scholars. The exact qualities of Old World, pre-World War II music are unknown, allowing many modern musicians significant leeway in interpretation even while maintaining the klezmer designation. While other factors play a role in the uncertainty of traditional klezmer style, none are greater than the near extinction in the practice and dissemination of klezmer music following World War II. This period of time is commonly referred to as the rupture.

The murky history of *klezmerim* (Hebrew: Pl. Jewish folk musicians) and their associated repertoire is epitomized by the usage and definitions of the word used to describe those musicians. Although pronounced differently, the word klezmer is derived from the Hebrew words *k'lei* (כלי) and *z'mir* (זמר) meaning vessel of song, a term possibly first appearing in the Hebrew bible.¹ Despite this early appearance, the meaning of the word as well as its usage throughout history has not been consistent.

Documentation as early as the seventeenth century refers to certain types of instrumentalists as *klezmerim*. The terms *leytsim*, *leytsonim*, or *musikant* were also used

¹ English translation of the verse either references a minstrel or a musician. While some Hebrew translations may use *כלי זמר*, it is more common to see the Hebrew term *m'nagen* (מנגן).

in reference to Jewish folk musicians at various times. Reliable sources are sparse, so it is difficult to gain a sense of when and where many of these terms were in widespread use. The term *leytsim* or *leitzim* appears as early as the thirteenth century in reference to troubadour-like performers, a nearly identical definition to later applications of the term klezmer, but it is difficult to conclude that these terms were in use over a wide area.² There were professional musicians in Jewish society since at least the Middle Ages, so it stands to reason that the term used to describe those musicians has changed frequently over such a large span of time.³ Regardless of the term employed, each was used to refer to a traveling folk instrumentalist and not their repertoire. Using the term klezmer to reference a musical genre, as is done today, is a modern phenomenon that did not come about until the last decades of the twentieth century. There are some earlier, isolated examples which will be discussed at a later point, but evidence suggests that these were not the norm.

One of the earliest uses of the term in scholarly works is by Moshe Beregovsky in his pre-World War II writings where he refers to a klezmer as “the musician who played principally at weddings, [which] usually consisted of melodies of a certain type.”⁴ It is worth noting that there exists almost no documentation on klezmer music before the nineteenth century, and there has not been substantial research on klezmer music until recent decades, so it is difficult to ascertain whether the term may have been in wide use

² A.Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development* [1929] (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), 436.

³ Idelsohn, *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development*, 455.

⁴ Moshe Beregovsky, *Old Jewish Folk Music: The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski*, Edited and translated by Mark Slobin (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 301.

in certain geographic regions and in what capacity.⁵ Hankus Netsky points out that when he began researching klezmer music, English-language sources ranged from “antiquated to totally erroneous.”⁶ A.Z. Idelsohn does include a brief chapter on klezmerim and *badkhnim* (Yiddish [Yid.] Pl. Entertainer who performed mainly at weddings and other celebrations) in his 1929 publication on Jewish music, but the majority is focused on the songs of the *badkhn*. For the purposes of this study, the term klezmer will refer to a singular musician, klezmerim will act as the plural of klezmer, and klezmer music will refer to the repertoire traditionally performed by klezmerim.

The inconsistency in usage of terms highlights a major challenge for any serious discussion of klezmer music and its history. Klezmer music, like most folk musics, was never a single, unified entity, unchanged across time and geographic regions. Speaking of it in such terms neglects the evidence that there existed discernable differences in its performance practice. Despite its religious associations, klezmer music and the musicians that performed it have always been at the mercy of popular taste. Unlike synagogue music which could be tightly controlled and regulated by rabbis, the repertoire of klezmerim was controlled by those who would pay for their services, although even synagogue chant varied to some degree from region to region.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, in its most basic definition, klezmer was the most ubiquitous term for a Jewish musician from Eastern Europe who was on the lower rung of society and performed ritual and entertainment music at Jewish weddings and other celebrations. Up until the mass immigration of Eastern European Jews to

⁵ Joel Edward Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer: Improvisation and Ornamentation in the Commercial Recordings of New York Clarinetists Naftule Brandwein and Dave Tarras 1922–1929* (Ph.D. Diss., City University, London, 2001), 40.

⁶ Hankus Netsky, *Klezmer: Music and Community in Jewish Philadelphia* (D. Phil. Diss., Wesleyan University, 2004), 4.

western Europe and the United States beginning in the 1880s, klezmerim performed as part of a *kapelye* (Yid.: klezmer music ensemble), a mostly familial group that traveled and performed within a limited geographic region. Songs and styles were passed from one generation to the next without notation. In fact, most klezmerim were musically illiterate until the middle of the nineteenth century.⁷ More is known about the culture and lifestyle of these musicians than the music they performed, given to the lack of notated music. It is known that klezmerim had a reputation for familiarity with a large repertoire, a necessity as they were not limited to Jewish audiences.

While many today hold a romanticized idea of the klezmer's lifestyle and his place in society, klezmerim were cast as outsiders and scoundrels in their heyday. It is reasonable to think that klezmerim would have held a special place in Jewish society given their important role in celebrations, but because of the amount of time klezmerim spent on the road, their frequent contact with the non-Jewish world, and their isolationist tendencies, klezmerim maintained a low social status in both Jewish and non-Jewish circles. Yale Strom aptly describes the klezmer's status within the *shtetl* (Yid.: Town, usually in reference to villages within the Russian Empire's Pale of Settlement) community as fluid; an essential, honored part of weddings but reviled when not needed for festivities.⁸ In this way, klezmerim were an oddity in shtetl society which had a clearly demarcated social hierarchy.

In addition to a shady reputation, klezmerim suffered from the proscription against instrumental music in Jewish worship. Jews at the time, and many today, upheld the long-standing Rabbinical ban on instrumental music in the synagogue that was

⁷ Yale Strom, *The Book of Klezmer* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2002), 102.

⁸ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 84.

instituted after the destruction of the second Jewish temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE. There also exists a large body of literature in Jewish teaching that portrays any secular music as dangerous, and instrumental music must be considered secular given the absence of text.⁹ Often quoted is the following passage from Lamentations 3:15: “The elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their music. The joy of our heart has ceased, our dancing has turned into mourning.”¹⁰ Among the most Orthodox of Jews, the absence of instrumental music is a real and lasting reminder of that loss.

Beyond this, there has long been a line of thinking in Judaism that has seen music as somewhat dangerous, or at least controversial. In response to a request from Jews in Aleppo seeking permission to listen to the music of their Arabic neighbors in the twelfth century, Maimonides (Rabbi Moses ben Maimon) reiterated the traditional point of view and included a six-point summary of prohibitions on music, in order of severity:

1. Listening to a song with a secular text, whether it be in Hebrew or Arabic;
2. Listening to a song accompanied by an instrument;
3. Listening to a song whose content includes obscene language;
4. Listening to a string instrument;
5. Listening to passages played on such instruments while drinking wine;
6. Listening to the singing and playing of a woman.¹¹

Since the ban on instrumental music, the subject of music in Judaism has been one of great conflict. Rab Huna, from the Sura academy in third-century Babylonia, took the order to the extreme and prohibited all music from the community. Later, another at the academy took a more lenient approach and permitted the use of instruments for joyous celebrations. Even with these disagreements, it was still universally accepted that the reintroduction of instrumental music to worship should be held off until the

⁹ Netsky, *Klezmer: Music and Community in Jewish Philadelphia*, 33.

¹⁰ “The Complete Jewish Bible,” http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/16461, accessed 20 August 2016.

¹¹ Netsky, *Klezmer: Music and Community in Jewish Philadelphia*, 34.

restoration of the temple. The two exceptions to the ban tended to come with weddings and funerals, although the latter was more common in Middle Eastern communities.¹² Jews today continue to grapple with these directives, with more traditional sects adhering to a strict ban on instrumental music and more liberal sects, especially those in the Reform movement, allowing instrumental music during worship.

The ban on instrumental music essentially forced Old World klezmerim into the secular world, which contributed to their poor reputation. Klezmerim would likely have been held in higher regard if they were seen as being more critical to worship. Regardless of reputation, klezmerim held an important place in Eastern European society which held true up until the middle of the twentieth century when the demand for klezmer music dried up almost completely and the klezmer profession was no longer necessary in Jewish society.¹³

Klezmerim in Central and Eastern Europe

Despite their frequent use in non-Jewish areas, klezmerim and Jewish musicians as a whole maintained a similarly low standing with the non-Jewish population of eastern Europe as they did within Jewish areas. Jews in this region tended to be of low socioeconomic standing, poorly educated in secular subjects, and limited in their knowledge of European languages when compared to their western European counterparts.¹⁴ Despite periods of more favorable treatment, discrimination against Jews and Jewish musicians had a long history throughout Europe and especially eastern Europe, and klezmerim occupied the lower echelon of that group.

¹² Emanuel Rubin, *Music in Jewish History and Culture* (Sterling Heights, Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 2006), 132.

¹³ Joel Edward Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 20.

¹⁴ James Loeffler, *The Most Musical Nation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 9.

While still enduring a long history of anti-Semitic laws, Jews in Western and central Europe faced fewer barriers integrating into society largely beginning in the eighteenth century. The Jewish population in Prague enjoyed relative liberty throughout much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. One of the earliest written sources to use the term klezmer to describe musical instruments comes from Prague in 1678. While Emperor Leopold I of Austria (1658–1705) was paraded through the ghetto in honor of his coronation, a group of Jewish musicians was there to provide music.¹⁵ Those klezmerim performed on violins, *clavicembalo*, *positiv*, trumpets, French horns, kettledrums, and cymbals played by women.¹⁶

Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II (r. 1765–1790) eased many restrictions on the Jewish population of central Europe. Jews were permitted to attend schools and universities, and they were allowed to set up factories and other large-scale businesses.¹⁷ During this time, the Jewish upper-class not only attended public performances but sponsored private performances as well.¹⁸ With these new rights came new regulations forcing Jews within the empire to acculturate by adopting German names, establishing secular schools, and refraining from using Hebrew or Yiddish in all business transactions, a requirement supported by many in the Jewish Enlightenment.¹⁹

Such requirements divided the Jewish population. In general, rural Jews deemed this an affront to their culture and the autonomy of Jewish society, while urban Jews, especially those in Vienna, were more supportive of the measures. Naftali Herz Homberg

¹⁵ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 41.

¹⁶ Here the gender of the performer is noteworthy since women are completely absent from klezmer ensembles in later centuries.

¹⁷ Robert S. Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph* (Liverpool: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2006), 16–22.

¹⁸ Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph*, 9.

¹⁹ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 45.

(1749–1841) was a pioneer of the Berlin *Haskalah* (Heb: Jewish Enlightenment) and supporter of the Emperor's policies. After his appointment as superintendent of German-language Jewish schools in 1787, Homberg vigorously established German-language schools and argued for the assimilation, including barring traditional dress and beards. Homberg met significant resistance among more traditional Jewry and especially in Galicia where local populations resented his staffing of schools with central European teachers.²⁰

As the Holy Roman Empire fell between 1801 and 1806, the Austrian Empire freed the Jewish population of many anti-Semitic laws in its territories. Eastern European Jews were granted the right to vote during the reign of Emperor Franz Joseph (r. 1848–1916), the first time Jews of the region were granted such a freedom. While conducting fieldwork in the Carpathian Mountains, Yale Strom met a man who recalled his father speaking highly of Franz Joseph and using the Yiddish name given to him by many Jews, *Froyim Yosl*, when toasting him on his birthday every August 18.²¹

The result of these contrasting systems is that assimilation took place at a much faster rate in Austro-Hungarian territories compared to Ottoman and Russian territories where Jews were more isolated culturally and geographically. In many cases, measures put forth by the territories' rulers facilitated assimilation.

Jewish populations in eastern Europe remained isolated and persecuted. The epitome of the isolated Jew was in the Russian Pale of Settlement, an over 300,000 square mile area of Czarist Russia stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. By law, Jews, as well as many other Russian citizens, were restricted in their movements

²⁰ Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph*, 17.

²¹ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 67.

throughout the Empire. Regardless of its other effects, the isolation of Jewish populations allowed Jewish traditions to remain relatively safe from outside influence. This meant that, unlike in central Europe, the homogenous, isolated shtetls within the Pale of Settlement were able to sustain a culture that required the use of klezmerim.

While they performed at many Jewish and non-Jewish celebrations and events, no event was more essential to a *kapelye*'s (Yid.: Instrumental music ensemble) livelihood and no *kapelye* more essential to an event than at a wedding in a Jewish *shtetl*. Weddings could last a week or longer with klezmerim playing an integral role in almost every tradition. The music functioned as an organizer, with different pieces being played for each part of the wedding process and the musicians guiding the emotions of those in attendance.²² The bride and groom's parents took good care of the klezmerim during the wedding events. If they were not able to pay much, the musicians received generous amounts of food. Wedding guests could buy dances from the *kapelye* to honor the newlyweds.²³ The klezmerim were rewarded for their essential role in the wedding celebrations, but when the celebrations ceased and the final *zay gezunt* was played, the klezmerim returned to their low standing.

Immigration to the United States and its Effect on the Klezmer's Livelihood

The end of klezmer music as it had been practiced for hundreds of years began in 1881 with the large migration of Russian Jews west, mostly to the United States. After migrating to the United States, eastern European Jews lived side-by-side with other immigrant groups in the mixed neighborhoods of New York and other large cities, gaining access to different cultures. Tin Pan Alley music and vaudeville proved to be

²² Beregovsky, *Old Jewish Folk Music*, 301.

²³ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 87–89.

powerful influences, and many Americans pushed for the assimilation of immigrants. For the first time, many eastern European Jews saw an opportunity to integrate with a dominant culture and no longer to be cast aside as an isolated, disparaged group.

Klezmorim who could read music and perform a wide variety of styles easily found work in both Jewish and mainstream performance venues while those klezmorim who did not have music reading skills ended up out of work.²⁴ Frequently, those Jewish musicians capable of making it in American popular or classical music abandoned Jewish music for more regular work and better pay. Indeed, the competition from and the allure of mainstream American popular music in the early twentieth century is a major factor in the decline of klezmer music.

In addition to the powerful external influences encouraging assimilation. There were few internal pressures not to assimilate. Eastern European Jews arriving in the United States were far from a unified cultural group. Immigrants from Budapest had little in common with those from Vilna except for the Yiddish language and a common socioeconomic status. It is worth noting that the Yiddish language varied significantly between regions, so even that is not a great commonality. The geographical isolation of Jewish communities in the Old World meant that Jewish immigrants had very few cultural ties to one another and less reason to shy away from American culture.

The argument could certainly be made that the desire for Jews to assimilate into American culture doomed any future for the klezmer in his traditional definition as a Jewish musician making a living playing Jewish music for Jewish audiences. Even klezmer music icon and immigrant Dave Tarras raised his children to be American Jews

²⁴ Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 86.

with little connection to Jewish observances and only a few Old World customs. Dave Tarras's son, Sy, remembers:

My father only spoke to us in English but occasionally I heard him speak Yiddish to many of the Yiddish actors who were his friends and came over the house.”... “There wasn't much religious life in our home but my mother made gefilte fish every Friday night. My father loved my mother's cooking and rarely ate out. So we had gefilte fish, *khale*, soup and something like maybe chopped liver or something like that then for the main course chicken or some kind of steak. I was the only one from the three siblings who had a little bit of training in Hebrew and Jewish history. I went to Hebrew school three times a week for an hour after regular school. We rarely celebrated the Jewish holidays. Maybe my mother gave me an apple and a flag for *Simkhes Torah* (The eighth day of the Feast of the Tabernacles celebrating the completion of reading the Torah) but I was never in a *Suke*. (Heb. Booth).²⁵

The move to acculturate by Jewish immigrants was the largest contributing factor to an almost complete break in the klezmer music tradition beginning around the time of World War II and continuing until the klezmer revival of the 1970s.

The number of Russian immigrants arriving in the United States ballooned from 21,590 in 1882 to 215,665 in 1905.²⁶ A large majority of Jewish immigrants settled in New York where Jews represented twenty-nine percent of the city's population in 1920. Most of this population was concentrated on the Lower East Side, sometimes referred to as the Jewish Ghetto. Like the Old World *shtetl*, the Lower East Side obtained almost mystical status, an idealized place with stereotypical figures. Also like the *shtetl*, not much was written about Jewish music or life on the Lower East Side until the turn of the century which allowed for a constructed past sometimes based on little evidence.

One of the earliest studies on the subject was produced by American journalist Hutchins Hapgood. Hapgood was tasked with describing the customs of these new immigrants and the outlook for their life in America. Self-described as “free of prejudice

²⁵ Yale Strom, *Dave Tarras: The King of Klezmer* (Kfar Sava: OR-TAV Music Publications, 2010), 26.

²⁶ John R. Commons, *Races and Immigrants in America* (New York: The McMillan Company, 1907), 71.

or sentimentalism,” Hapgood roamed through the Ghetto, speaking to Jewish immigrants of all types.²⁷ While seemingly free of prejudice, sentimentalism, generalizations, and stereotyping are rampant. Hapgood observes that “what is distinctively Jewish has always been serious. The man hunted from his country is apt to have a serious tone in thought and feeling.” The *badkhn* Eliakim Zunser is described as gathering up “into himself the dignity and pathos of his serious and suffering race, but as one who had gone beyond the suffering and lived only with the eternities.”²⁸ To be fair, performers like Zunser likely played up these stereotypes for the enjoyment of audiences.

John R. Commons’s 1907 book on immigrants in America is also fraught with stereotypes. Commons observes the differences between eastern European Jews:

The Hungarian Jew, who emigrated earliest, is adventurous and speculative: the Southern Russian is orthodox and emotional, saves money, becomes a contractor and retail merchant; the Galician Jew is the poorest, whose conditions at home were the harshest, and he begins American life as a pedler [sic].²⁹

Such stereotyping created an image of the eastern European Jewish immigrant and life in the Lower East Side that was, at best, loosely based on reality.

Modern Definitions of Klezmer

Klezmer music in eastern Europe was already severely diminished by the start of because of the mass migration, but World War II would prove to be the final blow. The movement and extermination of Jewish populations during the second world war nearly wiped out any trace of Jewish culture. According to a Pew Research study, Eastern Europe was home to approximately 4.7 million Jews in 1939 but only 859,000 by 1945. By 2010, that number was down to 70,000. A similar decline is seen in the former Soviet

²⁷ Irving Howe, *Introduction to The Spirit of the Ghetto 2nd ed.* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 1.

²⁸ Hutchins Hapgood, *The Spirit of the Ghetto* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 90–94.

²⁹ Commons, *Races and Immigrants in America*, 94.

states which had a Jewish population of 3.4 million in 1939, 2 million in 1945, and 310,000 in 2010. With the decline of Jewish populations in eastern Europe, the United States, and New York City in particular, became a center for Ashkenazi Jews. As the Old World and its traditions faded from the collective memory of American Jews, so did the klezmer and the associated musical repertoire. Klezmer music was relegated to a few small communities in America until it was rediscovered by musicians and scholars decades later during a time called the revival.

Since the so-called revival of klezmer music beginning in the 1970s, there has been a change in usage of the term klezmer. Currently, the term klezmer generally refers to the style of music and repertoire that was typical of klezmerim, especially the recorded repertoire of the early twentieth century. The use of the term klezmer to describe a musical genre instead of a musician was not widely used until recent decades. There is evidence to suggest that prior to the revival it was considered an insult to be called a klezmer, which is not surprising given the negative Old World associations with the word. Among Jewish musicians prior to the 1970s, a klezmer was someone who could only play the Jewish repertoire, but a *muzikant* (Yid.: Musician) could play any style of music.³⁰ The negative associations with the term klezmer likely contributed to the reluctance of American Jews to embrace klezmer music in the face of assimilation.

The current use of the term klezmer to describe a style of music has its roots in the klezmer revival of the 1970s, but there are signs of earlier usage. In the 1920s, Joseph Cherniavsky used the description of “old klezmer music” as a marketing ploy for his Yiddish-American Jazz Band. The name itself attempts to capitalize on the popularity of

³⁰ The term klezmer held a neutral connotation in Europe but was frequently used or viewed in a derogatory manner. See Rubin, 86–87 for a detailed discussion.

jazz with the American public and the popularity of Yiddish music with Jewish immigrants. Cherniavsky's band also went by the Oriental Syncopators and the Hasidic-American Jazz Band. Adding to the gimmick, he would dress his band up in fake beards and *khasidic* garb, no doubt to play up the exotic appeal.³¹

Defining Klezmer Repertoire

The varying historical definitions of the term klezmer can be difficult to navigate, but defining klezmer repertoire in modern times is an even more convoluted task: some musicians take a dogmatic approach to what constitutes the klezmer repertoire, but arriving at a clear and concise definition of the music is problematic. For clarinetist Max Epstein (1912–2000) there is no such thing as actual klezmer music. A klezmer performs whatever repertoire is necessary to please the customer and receive payment.

There's no such thing as klezmer music. A klezmer is a musician. It made no difference whether he played in the opera or in a symphony, or he played a Polish wedding. ...If you want to analyze it, klezmer music is any kind of music. What does the word klezmer mean?...So if you're a klezmer, if you're a musician, you play anything!... Klezmer music can take in Hungarian music, Polish music, Romanian music; takes in all of that!...The types of music that we played was considered klezmer music, 'cause it wasn't American music. Anything Jewish was klezmer music. Jewish theater? Klezmer music!³²

Pinning down a clear repertoire and style to attach to klezmer music becomes even more difficult when considering the differences in style between regions in the Old World, a distinction not frequently addressed in discussions of klezmer music. Since musicians tended to travel and perform around the area in which they lived, they were heavily influenced by the tastes of local audiences as well as the repertoires of co-territorial cultures. There is evidence that, in 1800, the amount of work for Romani

³¹ Jeffrey Wollock, "Historic Records as Historical Records: Hersh Gross and His Boiberiker Kapelye (1927–1932)," *Association for Recorded Sound Collections* XXXVIII, 45.

³² Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 22.

(Gypsy) musicians in Szeged, Hungary was so overwhelming during carnival that Jewish musicians from Újvidék (Novi Sad) were brought in for assistance.³³ Interactions between Jewish and Romani musicians go back to at least the seventeenth century when some Jewish musicians living in Poland and Lithuania fled to the Ottoman territories to escape violence. Some of those Jewish musicians toured with the region with Romani groups and combined the northern klezmer style with the tuning and modalities commonly found in Turkish music.³⁴

The idea that a klezmer possessed a flexible repertoire and adapted to whatever work was available is backed-up by klezmer music icon Dave Tarras in an account of his family's *kapelye* performing in the Old World before he moved to America:

We traveled for a hundred miles those days playing for the landowners, the Poles, grafs (Yid.: counts), and barons. They used to have balls often. You had to play different music depending on who hired you. For the Jewish people freylekhs and bulgars was their love. For the young Jews at a wedding then they danced a million and one dances more than here. Here (Y.S. America) they only know a fox-trot or rhumba. There in my shtetl they knew beautiful tangos, waltzes, mazurkas, polkas, polka-mazukas, padekaks, padespans, the espan and many more dances. For the rich "Polaks" [sic] we played mostly the mazurka [as] this was their dance. They also had a dance where they change couples called a ballet-mazur. They used to ask for it and dance for an hour and a half to just this one dance. Naturally they were dressed beautifully the women, barons and grafs. Once in a while they asked for an overture like von Suppe's "Poet and Peasant."³⁵

The approach to repertoire taken by Epstein and Tarras makes sense if klezmerim are thought less as Jewish musicians driven by religion and spirituality and more as gigging musicians focused on booking jobs and pleasing patrons while performing largely within Jewish settlements and influenced by klezmer performance practice that had been passed down for generations. This line of thought may not be as romantic as the

³³ Bálint Sárosi, *Gypsy Music* (Hungary: Corvina Press, 1978), 64.

³⁴ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 25–6.

³⁵ Strom, *Dave Tarras*, 12.

picture frequently painted of klezmerim, but it is a more accurate portrayal of how klezmerim worked and approached the music.

Describing the lifestyle and business model of Old World klezmerim proves to be far less challenging than developing a clear and coherent definition of Old World klezmer repertoire. With repertoire, harmony, modality, and style all being dependent on a klezmer's location and clientele, it becomes nearly impossible to produce a clean and precise definition on which all will agree. Yale Strom asserts that by the eighteenth century a klezmer could be defined as a folk musician who primarily performed Ashkenazi dance music, a perfectly vague definition that neither offends nor informs.³⁶ Adding to the difficulty of defining klezmer music is the relative paucity of research prior to the klezmer revival.

Despite the complexities of Old World klezmer repertoire, it is necessary to develop a better understanding in order to track any changes post-revival. In the most complete study of the Old World klezmer repertoire to date, Walter Zev Feldman acknowledges the complexity of the genre and the outside influences on the music. Feldman groups traditional klezmer music into three categories: the core repertoire, the transitional or orientalized repertoire, and the cosmopolitan repertoire.³⁷ The cosmopolitan repertoire was performed for Polish nobility and frequently for Jewish audiences. It consisted of polkas, waltzes, quadrilles, and other popular dances of the time. This category has very little association with klezmer music today as it had little association with Jewish populations at the time it was in regular practice.

³⁶ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 1.

³⁷ Walter Zev Feldman, "Bulgărească/Bulgarish/Bulgar: The Transformation of a Klezmer Dance Genre," in *American Klezmer: Its Roots and Offshoots*, ed. Mark Slobin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2002), 93.

Core and transitional repertoires make up what is currently thought of as the traditional klezmer repertoire. The core repertoire includes the metrical dance genres *freylekh*, *hopke*, *dreydl*, and *riudl* (all up-tempo group dances), as well as the non-dance metrical genres *dobraden*, *dobranoch*, *kale bazetsen* (in Belorussia), and *opfiren di makhetonim*, and finally the non-dance, non-metrical genres *kale beveynen*, *khupe* tunes (performed during wedding ceremonies), and paraliturgical melodies.³⁸ The transitional repertoire includes the dance forms *volekh*, *hora*, *sirba*, *onge*, and *bulgarish*, as well as the non-dance forms *doina* and other non-dances genres related to the *zhok* (the Romanian version of the *hora*, a moderate-tempo piece in triple meter). Very often, there is no discernible musical difference between these genres. Differences lie in social function and dance. Despite the musical similarities, the functional differentiations were strictly observed in performance. A *skotshne* and a *sher* may sound similar, but one would have never been substituted for the other.

Core repertoire is distinguished from transitional repertoire due to both the varying origin of their respective genres and for whom the differing repertoires were performed. While the core repertoire was limited in development and performance to regions with dense Jewish populations, the transitional repertoire was performed over a wide area and, at the time of Feldman's study, was remembered by klezmerim as being of foreign origins. The transitional repertoire demonstrates interaction between Jewish music and musics outside of Ashkenazi settlements, especially those to the east and

³⁸ Feldman uses *freylekhs* as a broad term that includes the dances *skotshne*, *sher*, and *khosidl*. He argues that these forms only differ in choreography and not music although some *khosidls* sounds like a *freylekh* while others are more similar to the spiritual *nign*.

south. The transitional repertoire also demonstrates why there were significant differences between klezmer style and repertoire in various regions of eastern Europe.

Interactions that would create the transitional repertoire occurred as early as the first decades of the nineteenth century, facilitated by Russia's annexation of the Ottoman Moldavian province of Bessarabia in 1812. The Russian government was less oppressive toward Jews in new territories which led to significant numbers of Yiddish-speaking Jews relocating from Ukraine to Bessarabia. This also allowed Bessarabian Roma to move into Russian territory. According to Feldman, evidences suggests that *lăutai*, the term used by Feldman for Romani musicians, and *klezmerim* sometimes created combined ensembles and were very familiar with each other's customs, as was previously mentioned.³⁹

Interactions with outside musics were not unique to instrumental music. Song was also an important part of Jewish life in eastern Europe, and songs were frequently picked up and traded wherever Jews traveled.⁴⁰ The interactions between Jewish and non-Jewish musicians certainly helped create a varied repertoire, but it also obfuscates a clear definition of Old World klezmer repertoire.

Most of the research conducted by Feldman and others doing similar work relies on accounts from living sources. Working from sources' memories is already fraught with complications since memories frequently change. Another significant problem with working from the memories of living sources is that Feldman cannot speak authoritatively about interactions that may have occurred prior to 1812, and, even then, some of that information comes from sources remembering what an older family member told them. Interactions between Jewish musicians and non-Jewish cultures were likely

³⁹ Feldman, "Bulgărească/Bulgarish/Bulgar," 98.

⁴⁰ Mark Slobin, *Tenement Songs* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 2–3.

commonplace for as long as Jews populated the area. Parts of the Pale of Settlement and the surrounding areas were under Ottoman and Austrian control at different times before coming under control of the Russian Empire, and it was likely that klezmerim adjusted repertoires appropriately.

Furthermore, while Jews were fairly isolated, there were examples where that was not the norm. Odessa fell within the borders of the Pale of Settlement, however the port city maintained a fairly cosmopolitan reputation. The city was home to a popular Italian opera house which was frequented by Jewish audiences in the nineteenth century, and many of the city's Jewish residents received classical music training.⁴¹

The varied repertoire performed by Old World klezmerim and significant regional differences make a clear, concise definition of traditional klezmer repertoire elusive. The near extinction of the klezmer profession during the rupture following World War II ensured limited living sources from whom eager researchers could use as primary sources. Without clarity on past repertoire, modern performers are able to draw conclusions and claim authenticity with minimal evidence. This is the crux of the debate and conflict among those in the modern klezmer scene.

Rupture, Revival, and Authenticity

For better or worse, the rupture has allowed post-revival performers to take klezmer music in new directions while maintaining a perceived connection to the past. It has also allowed modern performers to cultivate individual interpretations of klezmer music's present and past. According to Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, the rupture may have disrupted the dissemination of the art form, but it also has allowed it to be reborn and reinvented in ways that otherwise may have been impossible. She deems the rupture

⁴¹ Loeffler, *The Most Musical Nation*, 10.

in the practice of klezmer music necessary for the music to have been reborn and reach larger audiences and is therefore a true revival.⁴²

Unlike Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, others deny that what has happened was a true revival because the music never actually disappeared. For musician and scholar Yale Strom, the term revival is misappropriated. He does not see himself as revivalist but rather as a *bal-kulturnik* (Yid.: owner or master of culture.) A revival implies rebirth after a period of dormancy; that it has been discovered by those previously indifferent or unaware. According to Strom, Jewish music continued to be performed in the orthodox and khasidic communities of America as well as other isolated pockets around the world. Strom goes further to argue that klezmer tunes were preserved in the singing of liturgy since klezmer musicians tried to mimic the cantilations of the synagogue *khazn* in their performances. Bale-kulturniks of the early 1970s and 80s “re-created a specific kind of klezmer music that existed in east European Jewish culture during the mid-nineteenth century through the eve of World War II” which is not the entirety of klezmer music.⁴³ Whether or not these small pockets of Jewish music are enough to contradict the idea of a rupture and revival, and whether or not khasidic music and synagogue chant should fall under the umbrella of klezmer music, is a significant point of contention.

Clarinetist Andy Statman builds on Strom’s view about klezmer music’s relationship to khasidic music and claims that the wide range of expression in klezmer

⁴² Kirshenblatt-Gimblett argues that the dissemination of klezmer music as it had been practiced for generations all but ceased for a period of time between the end of World War II and the beginning of the Klezmer Revival in the 1970s. She labels this period of time the rupture. See Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Sounds of Sensibility” in *American Klezmer: Its Roots and Offshoots*, Ed. Mark Slobin (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002).

⁴³ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 191

music comes directly from khasidic *nigunim* (Yid.: Pl. Spiritual songs) and that klezmer music is not secular, as most people believe, but is actually religious music.

The music was used as a spiritual vehicle to make the bride and groom happy at their wedding. This was the *mitsve* (good deed) to play for the various honored guests meditative khasidic tunes and rubato songs. And the dance music was not necessarily light music. It was used to entertain but also could induce the dancers into a trance-like state of mind. khasidic dance, which was so common to Jewish weddings in eastern Europe before World War II, was all about spirituality.⁴⁴

Statman, who discovered his khasidic roots and is now a practicing khasidic Jew, goes on to say that klezmer music has been misappropriated in America as secular dance music when that was not its original purpose. He bemoans that no one speaks of the khasidic roots of Dave Tarras or Naftule Brandwein and that, “there is definitely a conspiracy of silence among many klezmer musicians today when it comes to describing the music’s real spiritual roots.”⁴⁵ Statman accurately asserts that Tarras, Brandwein, and many other came from khasidic backgrounds, and that the klezmer repertoire draws, directly or indirectly, from khasidic *nigunim*. However, it is also true that a large portion of the repertoire was developed and performed outside of khasidic communities.

Strom and Statman are correct in the assertion that khasidic Judaism and the *nigunim* associated with that sect played a significant role in the repertoire of klezmer music, and many klezmer families came from khasidic backgrounds. However, they neglect to account for the many klezmerim who lived a more secular lifestyle and only tapped into *nigunim* for the evocative melodies. Tarras, while having been raised in a khasidic family, did not raise his children as such in America. Brandwein also grew up in a khasidic family that was descended from the khasidic dynasty of Rabbi Yehuda Hirsch Brandwein of Stratyn, but Brandwein is well known in klezmer lore for his indulging

⁴⁴ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 191

⁴⁵ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 191

with women and alcohol as well as his relationship with the Mob, far from the pious behavior expected of a practicing khasid.

Furthermore, many of the klezmerim still performing during the rupture clearly distinguished between klezmer music and khasidic music. Tarras, for example, felt that khasidic music was too “cheesy.” Clarinetist and band leader Marty Levitt felt that khasidic gigs were boring and audiences were unappreciative of a performer’s musicianship: “All they wanted was the melody to be loud, repeated ad nauseam, with the percussion on autopilot.”⁴⁶ The attempts to attach klezmer music to khasidim may very well be a response to those who claim that klezmer music has roots in secularism, an equally dubious claim, and co-opted the genre into leftist causes. These types of assertions about the supposed religious roots of klezmer music are, at best, an example of personal belief and practice influencing scholarship and, at worst, a blatant attempt to revise history.

The disparate definitions of klezmer music are understandable given the dearth of reliable sources. The most reliable documentation of traditional klezmer music, except for a small number of interviews, are recordings made in the early twentieth century. Klezmer music researchers often cite jazz research as the model for these analytical endeavors.⁴⁷ One significant pitfall with this approach is that, unlike jazz where recording technology has existed for the entirety of its history, recordings of klezmer music only came about near the end of its use in traditional Jewish culture. This is not the only issue with discography-based research. The early twentieth century klezmer recordings tended

⁴⁶ Strom, *Dave Tarras*, 38–39.

⁴⁷ Jeffery Wollock, “The Soviet Klezmer Orchestra,” *East European Jewish Affairs*, Online version, 2008, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13501670008577918> [accessed 7 November 2014], 1.

to be made by Jewish musicians who were trained in eastern Europe and came either from klezmer families or were familiar with the style. The recordings from this time period may be the best resource available, but they are far from perfect.

Slobin estimates that 90 percent of these klezmer music recordings were made in the United States for marketing to domestic and international audiences.⁴⁸ During this time, the listening repertoire including semi-improvised forms like the *doyne*. Ceremonial music, like the *kale bazetsn*, fell out of favor which left only the dance tunes, which means only a small sliver of the total eastern European repertoire appears on these recordings. Furthermore, the ensembles playing on these recordings were usually made up of immigrant musicians from varying regions, each with their own stylistic intricacies. Some of the most iconic recordings from this time period include Dave Tarras, from eastern Ukraine, and Abe Schwartz, from near Bucharest; places with very different musical characteristics. The heterogeneous groups on these recordings, frequently with instrumentation more common to Yiddish theater than traditional *kapelyes*, create a sound that is characteristic of early twentieth century American klezmer but have little historical significance. Identification of tunes also poses a problem as most titles were thought up by record companies to play up exotic appeal and may be misleading as to the tune's origins.

Radio programs from the first half of the twentieth century present a similar problem. The first regularly scheduled radio program to feature Yiddish music was the Libby Hotel Program that aired from May to August 1926 on WFBH in New York with Joseph Cherniavsky serving as musical director.⁴⁹ While Cherniavsky frequently used

⁴⁸ Mark Slobin, "Scanning a Subculture," *Judaism* 47/1 (Winter 1998): 30.

⁴⁹ Wollock, "The Soviet Klezmer Orchestra," 45.

Jewishness as a marketing ploy, his arrangements were heavily influenced by Yiddish theater music, a westernized, popularized version of Old World klezmer music. The radio show itself was more of a vaudeville program than anything truly representative of klezmer music. Still, recordings of shows like these provide clues and some insight into more traditional styles.

Yiddish theater music is often included in histories, discussions, and recordings of klezmer music despite vast differences in repertoire, style, and practice. Henry Sapoznik devotes only a small portion of his book *Klezmer! Jewish Music from Old World to Our World* to klezmer music in Europe. Instead, the bulk of the book focuses on Yiddish versions of American popular music including Yiddish vaudeville and Yiddish swing. The assumption seems to be that, despite the great differences between this music and that of Old World klezmer music, everything that happened in America is klezmer music because it is the natural continuation of the traditions of European Jews. This line of thought becomes abundantly clear when discussing the changing dance repertoire of American Jewish weddings:

Ritual dance, like the *broyges* and *mitzve tantsn*, were tossed overboard on the transatlantic voyage in favor of the Turkey Trot, the Hesitation Waltz, and the One Step. These new dances, while devoid of ritual meaning, played as important a role in the emigre Jewish world: they were rites of acculturation, arrival, and keeping with Jews' ongoing tradition of being a part of and apart from the dominant Gentile culture.⁵⁰

With this approach, any sort of Jewish music performed in America with even a tinge of klezmer style must be considered klezmer music. While this broadens the scope of klezmer research and creates a seamless narrative in a time of great change, it belies the fact that most of the leading figures in Yiddish theater and Yiddish popular song received

⁵⁰ Henry Sapoznik, *Klezmer! Jewish Music from Old World to Our World* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1999), 41.

training in synagogues and not as klezmerim.⁵¹ There was certainly a considerable presence of instrumentalists from a klezmer background playing in American Yiddish theater pit orchestras and in bands backing up singers, but these were not the stars of the Yiddish-American popular music scene.

With a lack of reliable resources and divergent interpretations by today's leading scholars and performers, it is understandable that the definition of klezmer music seems perpetually in flux. The lack of a clear definition and clear evidence allows modern day performers to easily claim authenticity and bend styles to personal taste. The history of klezmer music presents itself as a sparse patchwork of faded memories and sometimes questionable research. The tendency to speak about klezmer music as if it was ever a homogenous genre with a shared repertoire and performance practice over the span of centuries and across an entire continent is an oversimplification, a reductivist view of a history that is anything but simple.

⁵¹ Slobin, *Tenement Songs*, 3.

CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLARINET AND ITS ADOPTION INTO THE KLEZMER ENSEMBLE

The paucity of primary source material makes determining the general acceptance of the clarinet into the klezmer ensemble across Europe extremely difficult. While there are isolated examples of klezmerim performing on clarinet as early as the eighteenth century, there is little evidence of widespread use until the late nineteenth century. The popularity of the clarinet can be traced through court orchestras and popular performers of the time and its spread from upper to lower-class and from urban to rural populations, but the timeline for musicians on the bottom of the social and economic ladder like klezmerim remains unclear. As problematic as this approach might be, it is the best way to approximate the instrument's dissemination across eastern Europe and into the klezmer ensemble.

An acknowledgment of the clarinet's significant changes in design and capabilities since its invention are necessary before beginning any discussion of its role in the klezmer ensemble since these changes likely impacted the clarinet's inclusion and role in the ensemble. Changes in bore size and shape, key system, and reed position and construction all had a significant impact on tone, intonation, and functionality that likely impacted the acceptance of the clarinet into ensembles and its role within those ensembles. Therefore, it is equally important to understand which version of the clarinet appeared as it is to understand when and where it appeared. Furthermore, certain key

systems and pitches of clarinets are seen as more authentic by those in the modern klezmer community, and the belief exists that certain key systems lend better facilitate klezmer ornamentation. Tracing changes to the clarinet's design over time will provide greater clarity to the validity of these beliefs.

The direct ancestor of the clarinet is the chalumeau, a single-reed instrument only capable of sounding in the fundamental register. The earliest documentation of the chalumeau dates to 1687.⁵² The chalumeau is distinguished by two keys covering two diametrical holes. The position of these tone holes makes any attempt to overblow past the fundamental register futile, leaving the instrument with a range of an octave and a third.⁵³ The chalumeau enjoyed a certain level of popularity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially at the Hapsburg court.⁵⁴ Its appearance in the Vienna versions of Gluck's *Orfeo* (1762) and *Alceste* (1767,) then, is not surprising.⁵⁵

Despite its relative popularity, the chalumeau had significant flaws. In addition to its limited range, it produced, to some, a less than desirable tone. J. Mattheson's *neu-eröffnete Orchestre* (Hamburg, 1713) describes the chalumeau's tone as "somewhat howling" and best heard "from a distance."⁵⁶ The development of the clarinet and improvements to its technical capabilities were certainly the largest contributors to the disappearance of the chalumeau by the end of the eighteenth century. The larger range of the clarinet reduced the need for chalumeau in various sizes, especially once tuning between the registers was improved. There was some preference for the changes in

⁵² Eric Hoeprich, *The Clarinet* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 50.

⁵³ Hoeprich, *The Clarinet*, 45.

⁵⁴ Hoeprich, *The Clarinet*, 52.

⁵⁵ Colin Lawson, "Single Reeds Before 1750," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, ed. Colin Lawson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 8.

⁵⁶ Hoeprich, *The Clarinet*, 46.

timbre that came with the different sized chalumeau but not enough to maintain its relevance.

Somewhere around 1700, J.C. Denner, an instrument maker in Nuremberg, produced a chalumeau-like instrument capable of easily overblowing the interval of a twelfth.⁵⁷ This was likely achieved by placing a speaker key high on the instrument with a small tube entering the bore, although Denner's exact contributions and design are somewhat uncertain.⁵⁸ The first mention of Denner's invention was not until 1730, twenty-three years after his death, in Johann Gabriel Doppelmayr's *Historische Nachricht von den Nurnbergischen*. The instrument is referred to as both the clarinet and the improved chalumeau in Doppelmayr's text, an indication that the instrument existed under multiple names, possibly causing confusion over whether it truly was a new instrument.⁵⁹ Doppelmayr has not always been a reliable source, due to his tendency to inflate the accomplishments of local craftsmen and diminish the contributions of others. Especially dubious is the absence of any details regarding Denner's improvements to the chalumeau or clarinet.⁶⁰ Despite this, Denner seems to be the most plausible creator, and there has yet to be any convincing evidence to the contrary.

There existed a period of time in the early and middle eighteenth century where the clarinet and chalumeau were both in use and where there is sometimes ambiguity over which instrument was actually used in certain cases. There are references to the chalumeau, clarinet, clarionette, and improved chalumeau in numerous works, and it is

⁵⁷ Since the clarinet functions as a cylindrical pipe closed at one end, it only produces odd numbered partials of the harmonic series unlike the saxophone (conical pipe closed at one end) and the flute (cylindrical pipe open at both ends) which are capable of producing each partial.

⁵⁸ Hoepfich, *The Clarinet*, 23.

⁵⁹ Hoepfich, *The Clarinet*, 21.

⁶⁰ Lawson, "Single Reeds Before 1750," 4.

not always clear what differentiates each instrument or, for that matter, if any differences actually existed. In fact, even the term chalumeau was appropriated to other instruments including keyless instruments made of cane and bagpipe chanters.⁶¹

What is clear is that early clarinets had two keys and were typically pitched in C or D.⁶² These instruments had acoustical problems that hindered their acceptance into orchestras and frequently limited composers to use only either the lower or upper register. The most glaring problem was that the instrument was incapable of playing both the chalumeau and clarion registers in tune until improvements were made in the late eighteenth century.⁶³ Therefore, composers essentially treated the clarinet as two separate instruments: early works for the clarinet tend to stay in one register or the other. Works written in the clarion register tend to include trumpet-like figures, and those written in the chalumeau register frequently use the clarinet as a bass instrument. The chalumeau takes this role in Vivaldi's *Sonata per Oboe, Violin, and Organ Obligato with Chalumeau ad libitum*, F XVI, 11, RV 779 (1740) where it plays the bass line of the basso continuo. Handel's *Overture in D*, HWV 424 for two clarinets in C and corno da cassia (1722) utilizes the clarion register. The clarinets play figures evocative of brass fanfares that rarely dip into the highest part of the chalumeau register. The same is true of the concertos of Johann Valentin Rathgeber (1740) and the six concertos written by Johann Melchior Molter (1745), some of the earliest extant concertos for the instrument.

Besides intonation, the early clarinet lacked an evenness of tone that made it impractical for composers to write lines that connected the two registers. The chalumeau

⁶¹ Eric Hoeprich, *The Clarinet*, 45.

⁶² Nicholas Shackleton, "The Development of the Clarinet," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, 17.

⁶³ The chalumeau register encompasses the lowest or fundamental register of the clarinet. Clarion is the name for the third partial or next register above the fundamental.

was popular because it produced a strong sound an octave lower than a recorder of the same length, and the clarion register of the clarinet was popular for its piercing, trumpet-like sound. Each register's tone received adoration, but a clarinet's design could only support one or the other. Nicholas Shackleton notes that most clarinets of the time had a wider bore which was best suited to playing in the chalumeau register, but there were also extant clarinets with a very narrow bore best suited for playing concertos utilizing the range above the fundamental register, like those of Molter.⁶⁴ It is likely that the construction of early clarinets corresponded to its intended use and the music corresponded to the construction of the intended instrument.

The clarinet continued to grow in popularity despite these challenges, and a more standardized, improved design appeared around the middle of the century. The mouthpiece became narrower and the bore smaller to provide more control in the upper register and improve the ability to play lyrically. Jean-Philippe Rameau's 1749 opera *Zoroastre* marks the first time that the clarinet appeared at the Paris Opera, and the instrument would soon be a regular feature at the *Concerts Spirituels*.

The first documentation of a four-key clarinet is from the middle of the eighteenth century. Like its predecessors, it was divided into four different sections, although the composition of each section varied.⁶⁵ It was the five-key clarinet, however, that is generally regarded as the standard clarinet of the Classical era. It was likely developed around 1770 as there are no known clarinets of this kind to have existed before that date. 1770 also seems to correspond with the general acceptance of the clarinet into the orchestral and chamber ensembles. Mozart first wrote for clarinet in the Divertimento in

⁶⁴ Nicholas Shackleton in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, 17.

⁶⁵ Albert Rice, *The Clarinet in the Classical Period* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 11.

E-flat, K. 113 in 1771, and an instrument based on the five-key version was utilized by Mozart in both his Clarinet Quintet, K. 581 and the Clarinet Concerto, K. 622. This is also around the time that the clarinet first appeared as a solo instrument at the *Concerts Spirituels* in Paris with German performer Joseph Beer (1744–1812) providing its introduction. Beer performed at no fewer than twenty-six concerts between 1771 and 1779 before leaving France and moving east to Russia. He, along with a string of highly-regarded clarinetists whom he preceded, helped define the French style of clarinet technique and tone.⁶⁶ Many performers of this time added keys to their instrument which can give the impression of greatly diverse designs, but these extra keys were typically added to better facilitate trills and other ornaments or to improve intonation.⁶⁷ They did little to change the fundamental design of the instrument.

The five-key clarinet would not receive a significant overhaul until the first part of the nineteenth century. Virtuoso clarinetist Iwan Müller (1786–1854) worked with the instrument-maker Heinrich Grenser (1764–1813) in Dresden to create a sixteen-key basset horn in 1808. Around that same time, Müller commissioned a clarinet from the Viennese maker Merklein.⁶⁸ However, it was his collaboration with the Parisian maker Gentellet that drastically improved the capabilities of the instrument. Together they created a thirteen-key soprano clarinet the Russian Müller called *nouvelle clarinett* or *clarinette omnitonique*. The name derived from Müller's claim that this was the first

⁶⁶ David Charlton, "Classical Clarinet Technique: Documentary Approaches," *Early Music* XVI/3 (Aug., 1998), 397.

⁶⁷ Shackleton in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, 17–23.

⁶⁸ Hoeprich, *The Clarinet*, 132–33.

clarinet with the capability to play in all twelve keys, an advancement that would make clarinets pitched in a multitude of keys relatively obsolete.⁶⁹

To this point, the greatest hindrance to adding more keys was the fact that they leaked. Keys were typically fitted with felt pads that sat flat against the tone holes, a process that did not create a good seal. More keys meant more leaks and a more resistant instrument. Müller's instrument addressed this by replacing the felt pads with leather pads stuffed with cotton that fit snugly into countersunk tone holes. This design produced a superior seal that gave Müller and Gentellet the freedom to add further keys without the fear of excessive leakage.

The most significant developments to Müller's instrument, and those most pertinent to the clarinet in klezmer music, are those by the Belgian maker Eugène Albert (1816–1890). Albert built on Müller's thirteen-key clarinet by adding modifications that improved tuning and better facilitated technique. Another Belgian, Adolphe Sax, had already added two key rings to the lower joint of Müller's design sometime around 1840, which addressed some intonation issues by allowing three right-hand fingers to control four tone holes.⁷⁰ Like Müller's instrument, the clarinets produce by Albert beginning in the late 1840s were typically thirteen-key models. In the 1860s, Albert added a mechanism that allowed a player to better facilitate the move from B4 to C-sharp 5 in the clarion register of the instrument. With the Müller-style instrument, both B4 and C-sharp 5 were played by the left-hand pinky and C5 with the right-hand pinky. The C key had to be depressed by the right pinky when playing B4, an action that necessitated an awkward

⁶⁹ Hoeprich, *The Clarinet*, 132–33.

⁷⁰ Deborah Check Reeves, "Albert and the Albert System," *The Clarinet* XXVII/2 (March 2000), 30.

transition between those two notes. Albert's clarinets also differed from Müller's with the inclusion of two rings for the second and third fingers on the right hand.⁷¹

The mechanism itself was not Albert's design. It was patented by the British clarinetist Joseph Tyler sometime around 1860, although a similar mechanism that was not widely adopted was patented by Simon Lefèvre some years earlier.⁷² Tyler sold the patent to S.A. Chappell, the London agent for Albert, for use on Albert's clarinets.⁷³

Albert System clarinets became extremely popular in England and the United States, no doubt helped by the support of famed British clarinetist Henry Lazarus (1815–1895) who played on at least eight different models of Albert clarinets over the course of his career.⁷⁴ While the clarinet designed by the French instrument maker Louis-Auguste Buffet and Paris Conservatory professor Hyacinthe Klosé, now commonly called the Boehm System, gained popularity going into the twentieth-century, the Albert System remained in use. Makers throughout Europe and the United State produced “Albert System” clarinets. Buffet-Crampon produced an Albert System clarinet in B-flat in the early twentieth century. Penzel-Müller, a leading American woodwind maker, also produced an Albert-like clarinet around the same time. American behemoth C.G. Conn produced a double-walled metal clarinet around 1895 that closely resembled Albert's clarinets except for the material use in its construction.⁷⁵

Sometime around the 1930s, the Buffet-Klosé System clarinet achieved near dominance among clarinet players with the exception of those brought up in the German tradition who still favored the Müller-based Oehler System. According to Deborah Check

⁷¹ Hoepfich, *The Clarinet*, 183.

⁷² Deborah Check Reeves, “Albert and the Albert System,” 30.

⁷³ Lawson, “The Development of the Clarinet,” 27.

⁷⁴ Check Reeves, “Albert and the Albert System,” 32.

⁷⁵ Check Reeves, “Albert and the Albert System,” 32.

Reeves, who serves as curator of education at the National Music Museum, the Albert System clarinet was commonly regarded as a starter-level instrument in the early twentieth century, most likely because those instruments were cheaper than Buffet-Klosé System. American clarinetists like Himie Voxman began their musical studies on an Albert System instrument before switching over to a Buffet-Klosé System instrument. The popularity of this progression, at least in the United States, is evident in the 1913 publication by Belgian-born clarinetist Gustave Langenus titled *Twenty-Seven Original Studies: Modern Clarinet Playing* which was meant to help players transition from Albert to Buffet-Klosé System instruments.⁷⁶

Despite the frequent use of the Albert System to describe a certain type of key system, there is significant confusion over what constitutes Albert System clarinets, which are sometimes confusingly called “simple system.” At its most basic definition, an Albert System clarinet is typically regarded as any clarinet that is an improved model of Ivan Müller’s thirteen-key instrument. However, myriad models by multiple manufacturers means that the design and sound of these instruments are far from homogeneous. A look at the collection of historical clarinets at the University of Edinburgh shows clear differences in the number of key rings even on clarinets manufactured by Eugène Albert. A B-flat clarinet from around 1863 has two rings for the second and third fingers on the lower-joint but none on the upper joint, the norm for Eugène Albert clarinets. However, there is also at least one Eugène Albert clarinet from the late 1800s that has key rings for the top two fingers on the upper joint and at least one model without any key rings. Clarinets made by Albert’s sons after his death in 1880 almost always include upper-joint key rings. Another variable is the presence of rollers

⁷⁶ Check Reeves, “Albert and the Albert System,” 32.

between the two right-hand pinky keys meant to facilitate a smoother transition between F/C and A-flat/E-flat that are present on only some models.⁷⁷ It is also worth noting that Albert's sons also produced Buffet-Klosé System clarinets including models in B-flat and A made by E.J. Albert in the first half of the twentieth century, instruments that are stamped with the Albert name but differ from Albert instruments.⁷⁸

So-called Albert System clarinets crafted by other manufacturers only add to the heterogeneity. An Albert System clarinet manufactured by Buffet-Crampon around 1904 includes the patent C-sharp mechanism and other Eugène Albert additions, but it also includes two key rings on the upper joint.⁷⁹ A clarinet in A was produced sometime in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century using the Albert System but including two upper joint key rings and rollers for the right-hand pinky. Distinct from any Albert clarinet, this instrument possesses an F-sharp/C-sharp key to be played by the right thumb.⁸⁰

The production of Albert System clarinets was even present in America where Penzel-Müller was a leading manufacturer of woodwinds. A clarinet in B-flat they produced around 1910 exhibits many characteristics of an Albert System clarinet, including the patent C-sharp key and rollers. However, it adds a third key ring for the right hand as well as three key rings for the left hand, providing a ring for every finger. This is in addition to other mechanisms added in an attempt to improve facility.⁸¹

⁷⁷ The University of Edinburgh, "Musical Instruments Museums Edinburgh," <http://collections.ed.ac.uk/mimed> (2016), accessed 24 December 2016.

⁷⁸ The University of Edinburgh, "Musical Instruments Museums Edinburgh," <http://collections.ed.ac.uk/mimed> (2016), accessed 24 December 2016.

⁷⁹ Check Reeves, "Albert and the Albert System," 32.

⁸⁰ The University of Edinburgh, "CLARINET. NOMINAL PITCH: A.," http://collections.ed.ac.uk/mimed/record/15732?highlight=*: (2016), accessed 24 December 2016.

⁸¹ Check Reeves, "Albert and the Albert System," 32.

Despite being grouped under the same label, there are clearly meaningful differences in the design of these Albert System instruments. An understanding of these differences is essential to break through the sometimes generalized discussions of clarinet systems and avoid dangerous assumptions. Even small differences in key-work can greatly affect performance practice, especially ornamentations produced with the fingers, a subject to be examined in chapter four.

In addition to key-work and its effects on performance practice and ornamentation, there are distinctions in bore-size between Eugène Albert clarinets and Albert System clarinets produced by other makers, which led to differences in tone. While the trend in the mid-nineteenth century was to narrow the bore of the clarinet to achieve a more focused sound, the main bore of a Eugène Albert clarinet made in 1860 measures 15.0mm at the bottom of the upper joint and 17.6mm at the f hole on the lower joint.⁸² An Albert clarinet from around 1875 measures 15.0mm in diameter at the bottom of the upper-joint. For contrast, a Buffet-Klosé System clarinet from 1890 measures 14.7mm.⁸³ Albert's clarinets tend to have a wider bore than their counterparts in his time and today. A 1974 Buffet R13 clarinet measures 14.55mm in diameter, a Selmer Signature measures 14.60mm, and a Buffet Tosca also measures 14.55mm.⁸⁴ Today there are a few clarinets with bores approaching 15mm; exceptions include Luis Rossi clarinets and some jazz clarinets, but otherwise it is exceedingly rare outside of German models.

It is tempting to draw connections between the prevalence of Albert System clarinets in klezmer music and a characteristic tone created by the wider bore. However,

⁸² Lawson, *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, 29.

⁸³ Check Reeves, "Albert and the Albert System," 32.

⁸⁴ Steve Sklar, "ClarinetPerfection," <http://www.clarinetperfection.com/clbore.htm> (2016), accessed 24 December 2016.

the mouthpiece and reed setup also have a significant impact of tone quality. For example, Both the twentieth century English and German clarinets were characterized by a large bore, however the French mouthpiece used on the English clarinet resulted in a significantly different, more flexible tone than that of its German counterpart. This also partially accounts for the great disparity in tone between German classical clarinetists and eastern European folk clarinetists despite both groups typically playing large-bored instruments.

There is a general agreement that Old World klezmerim performed on Albert System clarinets, commonly pitched in C. Even today, playing on such an instrument frequently remains a way to earn credibility when performing klezmer music. However, evidence explaining the prominence of these instruments among this group is limited and the cause is open to interpretation.

A possible explanation for the popularity of Albert System clarinets in klezmer ensembles is simply that they were cheaper and more readily available. This is a likely reason for that clarinet's prominence in early American jazz that was developing at a time when American clarinet manufacturers were creating imitations of English Albert System instruments that were far less expensive than their Buffet-Klosé System counterparts.⁸⁵ Then, because of the prevalence of the Albert System instrument, they became the example and standard for future generations. This seems to be the case for famed American jazz clarinetist Pete Fountain (1930–2016) who grew up listening to Irving Fazola (Irving Prestopnick) play an Albert System instrument with a “big, tremendous

⁸⁵ Rice, *The Clarinet in the Classical Period*, 24.

bore.”⁸⁶ Fazola’s clarinet was then passed down to Fountain after Fazola’s death. Fountain’s other early influence, Benny Goodman, did not play an Albert System instrument but a Selmer clarinet with a similarly large bore. With these early examples, it is no surprise that Fountain favored large-bore instruments throughout his career. It is likely that a similar process took place in eastern Europe. This line of thought will be explored further later in the chapter.

Some suggest that the Albert System clarinet was preferred by both American jazz and eastern European klezmer clarinetists because it had fewer key rings which allow the player more freedom to create ornaments by sliding the fingers. However, one needs to be cautious with this approach. As was previously demonstrated, most clarinets made by Eugène Albert had only two key rings, but the instruments made by his sons added at least two additional rings to their father’s design by the early twentieth century, and other instruments described as Albert System are even more diverse in construction. It is possible that the initial popularity of Albert System instruments was due to fewer key rings, but that does not explain its lasting popularity past the addition of further rings.

Again, considering the parallels with the clarinet in American jazz can provide some insight into the feebleness of the key ring argument. It has been established that Pete Fountain’s early influences likely led to an affinity for large-bore clarinets, and, because of the time period, his early influences likely played on instruments with fewer key rings. It might be assumed, then, that Fountain held a preference for Albert System instruments with fewer rings. However, Fountain heavily favored a six-ring Buffet-Klosé

⁸⁶ Nicholas Compagno, “A Closer Talk with Pete Fountain,” *The Clarinet*, XLIV/1 (December 2016), 39–40.

System model.⁸⁷ While it would not be prudent to extrapolate too much from this one example, it certainly puts a major aspect of that argument into question given the strong similarities between the history of the clarinet in jazz and klezmer music. Still, it is difficult to know if the Albert System clarinet remained popular because of tradition or some other characteristic. One performer's preference cannot speak to larger trends, but it at least questions a leading explanation for Albert System clarinets among klezmerim.

Regardless of the reason for their popularity, the use of Albert System clarinets in klezmer music has likely had an effect on what is considered the ideal klezmer clarinet tone today. Another major influence may be the key in which the instrument is pitched. The clarinet in C is most associated with klezmer performance, but the reasons are unclear. There has long been a distinction between the clarinet in C and the clarinets in B-flat and A in classical music. By the early nineteenth century, the clarinets in C, B-flat, and A were all in regular use. While it is unclear if composers discerned the difference between the clarinets in B-flat and A, there is no such confusion about the clarinet in C as it was commonly regarded as having a rough sound.⁸⁸ R.M. Longyear draws attention to the specialized use of the C clarinet in limited situations. In these cases, it is usually to take advantage of the instrument's unique timbre. Beethoven made use of the instrument in military music and Berlioz in the "Tuba mirum" of his *Requiem*.⁸⁹ It is especially evident that Berlioz chose to use the C clarinet for its characteristic tone.

The clarinet in C mostly disappeared from compositions after Müller's thirteen-key clarinet was widely adopted. However, it continued to be the clarinet of choice in

⁸⁷ Gregory A. Harrison, "The Style and Sound of Pete Fountain," *The Clarinet*, XLIV/1 (December 2016), 42–45.

⁸⁸ R.M. Longyear, "Clarinet Sonorities in Early Romantic Music," *The Musical Times* CXXIV/1682 (April 1983), 224.

⁸⁹ Longyear, "Clarinet Sonorities in Early Romantic Music," 224.

eastern European klezmer ensembles. While the reason why klezmerim went against the trend is unclear, one possibility is that klezmerim preferred the harsher sound of the clarinet in C as it was better able to cut through the ambient noise at weddings and other *simkhes*. The tone of the C clarinet may have become associated with klezmer music by that time and therefore the preferred sound. Another possibility is that the instruments were cheaper, a similar argument for the prevalence of the Albert System among klezmerim. Finally, given the social status of klezmerim, and Jews in general, it is not likely that klezmerim were playing on the newest and most advanced instruments available. Instead, used instruments that recently fell out of favor were most likely the only instruments klezmerim could afford. While timbre, key, and tradition certainly all played a role in the type of clarinet utilized by klezmerim, cost and accessibility almost certainly was the most influential factor.

The Clarinet in Klezmer Ensembles

The dearth of reliable, historical evidence and the significant regional differences that obfuscate the history of klezmer music discussed in chapter one also make determining when the clarinet made its way into the klezmer ensemble nearly impossible. Moshe Beregovski claims at least two thousand klezmerim worked throughout Ukraine in the second half of the nineteenth century. However, despite their seemingly ubiquitous presence across eastern Europe, there exists a “laughable amount of data on klezmer bands.”⁹⁰ In order to assuage this lack of data, study of the clarinet’s development and its acceptance into co-territorial folk musics as well as music of the upper-classes, while it cannot offer complete answers, can provide insight into when the clarinet may have

⁹⁰ Beregovski, *Old Jewish Folk Music*, 536–37.

become a part of the klezmer ensemble and reveal some clues into the role it played in those ensembles.

It has been well established from the studies of Walter Zev Feldman discussed in the previous chapter that klezmerim absorbed music from co-territorial cultures into their own. It is not a stretch, then, to assume they did the same with instruments, in what could be described as a trickle-down effect; an instrument becomes popular in the dominant culture and eventually finds its way into minority cultures' folk music. From Germany, where the instrument originated, the clarinet first spread to urban, upper-class settings before disseminating to rural, poorer populations, a process explored below. Although the earliest transmissions were west to France and England, the clarinet likely spread rapidly once in the hands of klezmerim, Roma, and other traveling folk musicians because of the large areas over which these ensembles occasionally traveled and the frequent interactions they had with musicians of other cultures. While primary sources on the clarinet's spread into different folk musics is wanting, inferences can be made and trends can be identified from its known history in eastern and central Europe.

The Clarinet in Hungarian Folk Music

According to Bálint Sárosi, the clarinet has been characteristic of Hungarian Romani ensembles but not necessarily an essential member of the ensemble. Sárosi speculates that the difficulty of playing clarinet for extended periods of time precludes the clarinet from taking the mantle of lead soloist, an obstacle that did not prevent the clarinet from taking the lead in other folk ensembles. However, he notes possible documentation of a peasant clarinetist who played a wedding in its entirety.⁹¹ Still, the clarinet maintains a strong association with Romani music. At the time of writing *Gypsy*

⁹¹ Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 219.

Music, circa 1978, Sárosi wrote of elderly peasants still referring to the clarinet as the “gypsy pipe.” He also states that it was through Romani that people became familiar with the clarinet.⁹² It is likely that he is referring only to Hungarian peasants as the clarinet was quite popular with the upper-class in the Austrian Empire.

Instrumental folk music was often essential to weddings and other outdoor festivities, requiring instruments that could project in open spaces and cut through noisy crowds. In Hungary, the clarinet replaced the more traditional *zurna*, a double reed instrument.⁹³ The clarinet was well suited for this task and could do so with a more pleasing tone than its doubled-reeded predecessor. Furthermore, as the clarinet became more in vogue within the Austrian Empire during the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, it probably came to be more easily procured than the *zurna*. It is likely that this process occurred with similar traditional woodwind instruments throughout eastern Europe.⁹⁴ Romani bands typically carried one clarinetist. When there were two clarinetists, the clarinets were usually in different sizes and keys with the smaller being in E-flat or D and the larger in B-flat or A.⁹⁵ At this time, the clarinet would have been well-suited for playing over the typical Romani ensemble of violins, cimbalom, and bass.

In one known example, a band led by Jancsi Polturás that played in Vienna in 1828, included nine members of whom two were clarinetists. However, the clarinetists never were allowed to take a leading role.⁹⁶ It is unclear why the clarinet was required to

⁹² Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 219.

⁹³ Hoepfich, *The Clarinet*, 312.

⁹⁴ S.J. Cottrell, “The Clarinet and its Players in Eastern Europe and Greece,” in *The Versatile Clarinet*, ed. R. Heaton, 41.

⁹⁵ Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 221.

⁹⁶ Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 220.

take a subordinate role in the ensemble. The five-key clarinet had been in use for decades by this point. It is possible that these musicians possessed less technically able instruments or that the clarinetists themselves were players not skilled enough to take a leading role. Even with the improved capabilities of a five-key instrument, the clarinet was only able to play comfortably in a handful of keys. Therefore, the instrument may not have been able to play effectively in the ensemble's preferred key. There is also documentation of a group of Romani musicians in Vas county, located on the western side of modern-day Hungary, around 1830. Included in the ensemble is a clarinetist along with a French horn player, bassoonist, and trumpeter, but the clarinetist's role is not made clear.⁹⁷

Many Romani violinists switched to clarinet while serving in the army, and it is likely the same is true of klezmerim.⁹⁸ This is what happened in the Russian Empire's Pale of Settlement where the clarinet seems to appear regularly in klezmer ensembles sometime in the late nineteenth century; a time when the Russian Empire was engaged in a number of conflicts, including the Crimean War (1853–56), the January Uprising (1863–64), and the Russo-Turkish War (1877–78). During the reign of Czar Nicholas I (r. 1825–55), Jews were mandated to serve twenty-five years in the Czarist army. Klezmerim were conscripted and quickly figured out that playing in a military band brought a greatly reduced risk of being injured or killed in battle. Since string instruments were not typical in military bands, these musicians chose to switch to wind instruments, frequently clarinet. Klezmerim brought back these instruments when discharged from

⁹⁷ Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 75.

⁹⁸ Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 138.

their military duties and transformed the instrumentation of *kapelyes*.⁹⁹ There is no clear evidence that this was the case of Hungarian klezmerim, but it is likely that klezmerim in that country encountered a similar situation to their Russian counterparts.

The Clarinet in the Ottoman Empire

Given the clarinet's popularity within the Austrian Empire, it is not surprising that the instrument also received attention from within the Ottoman Empire. The clarinet was likely first introduced to the Ottomans during the rule of Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) when he invited Giuseppe Donizetti (1788–1856), brother of the popular opera composer, to train Turkish military bands in Istanbul sometime in the 1820s. Mahmud II wanted to Westernize Ottoman music. To this end, he brought in Donizetti to develop Western-style military marching bands and disbanded Janissaries in 1826. As part of this process, Donizetti ordered a number of clarinets in G from Germany, most likely Albert System-like instruments, for use in these ensembles. This instrument, sometimes called the clarinet d'amour, is still strongly associated with traditional Turkish music.¹⁰⁰

Donizetti's arrival in Istanbul heralded an era of Western influence in Ottoman culture and music. Ottoman students were traveling to Paris for study as early as 1827, and a student of Hyacinthe Klosé arrived around the middle of the century to teach the Buffet-Klosé System clarinet.¹⁰¹ Donizetti also helped develop and popularize Western-style ensembles and opera. Operas by popular Italian composers soon became commonplace.

⁹⁹ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 98–99.

¹⁰⁰ Boja Kragulj, *The Turkish Clarinet: Its History, an Exemplification of its Practice by Serkan Çağrı, and a Single Case Study* (D.M.A. Diss., University of North Carolina Greensboro, 2011, 3–4.

¹⁰¹ Kragulj, *The Turkish Clarinet*, 3–4.

Although it was introduced to Istanbul in the 1820s, the clarinet did not gain popularity throughout Ottoman territories until later that century. The cost of the relatively new instrument is the most probable culprit in preventing the instrument's dissemination. In addition, difficulty in figuring out how to apply the microtonal system of Turkish folk music to an instrument not designed for such a system may have played a smaller but substantial role in its delayed acceptance.

Once provided access to the instrument, local Turkish musicians were able to adapt the clarinet for performance of traditional folk music and the ornaments and microtones it required, frequently using embouchure manipulation to produce tones outside of Western tuning. The instrument was commonly seen outside of royal settings as early as 1860.¹⁰² As in Romani ensembles, the clarinet most likely replaced the *zurna* in folk ensembles. In a parallel to the Albert System clarinet in klezmer music and jazz, the German clarinet in G remains the most authentic clarinet for Turkish folk music performance today simply because of tradition. When the Buffet-Klosé System instrument is used, it typically is done so by young students whose hands are not yet big enough to effectively handle the larger G clarinet.¹⁰³

It will be discussed in the following chapter that musical forms now considered part of the standard klezmer repertoire, like the *bŭlgarescă*, disseminated from Turkish territories in the south to Russian territories in the north and from non-Jewish to Jewish populations. It is reasonable to suspect that the clarinet may have followed a similar path, starting in a cultural center and disseminating in multiple directions through trade routes. This theory is especially appealing given the evidence suggesting the instrument's

¹⁰² Hoeplich, *The Clarinet* 314.

¹⁰³ Kragulj, *The Turkish Clarinet*, 4.

movement from Turkey south into Greece via Romani musicians.¹⁰⁴ From cosmopolitan Istanbul, the instrument likely spread south into Greece and north into Russian territories.

The Clarinet in Greece

Parts of southern Greece had recently won their independence from the Ottomans when the clarinet was first introduced around 1832. In all likelihood, the clarinet was brought down from Istanbul through the Ottoman controlled territories of Thrace and Epirus.¹⁰⁵ Cost almost certainly was a hindrance to the clarinet spreading beyond the upper-classes in the nineteenth-century. This was the case in Greece where only affluent families were in a position to purchase a clarinet. Those who were not so fortunate continued to perform on its more traditional counterpart until late in the nineteenth century.

As in other areas, the instrument's spread is attributed to Romani musicians, in Greece known as *Tourkogifoi* (Turkish Roma) and *Tourkalvanoï* (Turkish-Albanian Roma.) Also similar to other areas, the clarinet gradually replaced more traditional woodwind instruments, likely because of its ability to project while providing superior technical ability resulting in a more pleasing tone. While the Buffet-Klosé System clarinet is frequently played by classical performers, it is the Albert System instrument that is more prevalent among performers of traditional Greek music.¹⁰⁶

The Clarinet in Russia

The clarinet appeared in Russia over a century before the Russo-Turkish War, but it did not gain widespread popularity until the second half of the nineteenth century. The clarinet does seem to have attained some level of popularity with Russian nobility by the

¹⁰⁴ Cottrell, "The Clarinet and its Players in Eastern Europe and Greece," 50.

¹⁰⁵ Spyros Marinis, "The Clarinet in Greece: Colours in Double," *The Clarinet* XXXVIII/3 (June 2011), 36.

¹⁰⁶ Marinis, "The Clarinet in Greece: Colours in Double," 36.

middle of the eighteenth century. The Polish Count Michael Oginsk (1731–1803) was regarded as a clarinet virtuoso and organized performances as early as the 1760s.¹⁰⁷ The clarinet had begun its push east from Germany, having appeared in a Bohemian court orchestra around 1750. The level of popularity enjoyed by the clarinet east of Germany so early in its development remains uncertain, but its use was likely limited to the noble class.¹⁰⁸

The clarinet was probably introduced to Russian nobility by a series of foreign clarinetists who were employed at the St. Petersburg court or stopped in the country while on tour. The first clarinetists employed at the court in the 1760s were German, and they were followed by a string of clarinetists from Germany, Austria, Bohemia, and Sweden.¹⁰⁹ The famous Bohemian clarinetist Joseph Beer performed in Moscow (1781) and St. Petersburg (1784) after a stint teaching and performing in Paris where he frequently is credited with starting the French school of clarinet playing. After returning to Moscow a year later to much acclaim, Beer accepted the position of solo clarinetist with the St. Petersburg court orchestra.¹¹⁰

Mozart's muse, Anton Stadler, visited St. Petersburg (1794) as part of a five-year tour.¹¹¹ Stadler's tour also included stops in Warsaw (1792), Vilna (1793), and Riga (1794). In addition, Stadler was asked by the Hungarian count Georg Festetics to help found a school of music in Keszthely.¹¹² All three cities listed on Stadler's tour counted

¹⁰⁷ Gerald Seaman, "Amateur Music-Making in Russia," *Music & Letters* XLVII/3 (July 1966), 249.

¹⁰⁸ Rice, *A History of the Clarinet to 1820*, 235.

¹⁰⁹ Pamela Weston, "The First Hundred Years of Clarinetistry in Czarist & Soviet Russia" *The Clarinet*, XXVII/4 (September 2000), 58.

¹¹⁰ Igor Shakhman, "An Overview of the Development of Clarinet Performance in the Moscow Conservatory," *The Clarinet*, XXXI/1 (December 2003), 74.

¹¹¹ Shackleton, "The Development of the Clarinet," 214n.

¹¹² Hoepflich, *The Clarinet*, 116–17.

significant Jewish populations. It is unknown what, if any, effect these performances had toward the clarinet's spread, especially among klezmerim. However, it would be reasonable to assume that greater acknowledgement of the instrument's existence among the populations of those cities and the significant population movement during and following the Partitions of Poland (1772–1795) did a lot to increase the clarinet's notoriety.

There is at least one example of the instrument's increasing popularity among the lower classes. Mikhail Glinka (1804–1857) observed a performance of Bernhard Crusell's Quartet, Op. 2 (published 1811) while visiting his uncle's estate in Smolensk in 1814.¹¹³ The work was performed by serf musicians, which may speak to the instrument's popularity among the lower-classes. It was certainly unusual to see such a work performed by musicians of the lower class, but it also was not uncommon for an owner to require musical training for select serfs so they could perform at his request. Members of Russian nobility were known to identify talented serfs in their service and assign them to work as musicians, sometimes providing travel to Germany or France to attain proper training.¹¹⁴ There were a number of serf orchestras or military bands in which workers might perform at the end of a grueling 12–14 hour workday.¹¹⁵

The clarinet had certainly penetrated Russian musical life by the mid nineteenth century. Instrument makers were producing clarinets in St. Petersburg and Moscow by that time, and production would continue to grow through the end of the century. Clarinet professors were employed at the St. Petersburg Conservatory and the Moscow

¹¹³ Weston, "The First Hundred Years of Clarinetistry in Czarist & Soviet Russia," 58.

¹¹⁴ Richard Sites, *Serfdom, Society, and the Arts in Imperial Russia: The Pleasure and the Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 73.

¹¹⁵ Shakhman, "An Overview of the Development of Clarinet Performance in the Moscow Conservatory," 75.

Conservatory in 1862 and 1866, respectively.¹¹⁶ Most telling of the clarinet's dissemination is that Cherkassk (Starocherkasskaya), a town near the northeast shores of the Sea of Azov, was home to a theater orchestra with four clarinets no later than 1840.¹¹⁷ Cherkassk sits firmly within the Pale of Settlement, so it is safe to assume the clarinet had been introduced to klezmerim at this point, even if it had not yet become a regular sight in *kapelyes*.

Conclusion

There are a few significant commonalities between the clarinet's dissemination in the above areas: (1) The instrument was first introduced in urban centers to the upper-classes before making its way to the lower-classes; (2) the clarinet had achieved widespread popularity by the middle-to-late nineteenth century; and (3) traveling folk musicians played an important role in spreading the instrument outside of urban centers. Especially noteworthy is that the clarinet had achieved widespread popularity in all of these areas around the same time even though its introduction to those areas varied greatly.

The common timeframe possibly arises from the confluence of the clarinet's general rise in popularity across Europe and the development of improved clarinets. It has been established that folk musicians, because of their lower social and economic status, rarely perform on the most recently developed instruments. Instead, they largely rely on instruments that have become affordable after more advanced instruments are introduced to the market. The mid-nineteenth century saw some of the most significant advances to the clarinet. Adolphe Sax added key rings to Müller's model in 1842, the Buffet-Klosé

¹¹⁶ Weston, "The First Hundred Years of Clarinetistry in Czarist & Soviet Russia," 58.

¹¹⁷ Sites, *Serfdom, Society, and the Arts in Imperial Russia: The Pleasure and the Power*, 72.

model clarinet premiered the following year, Carl Baermann (1810–85) and Georg Ottensteiner (1815–79) produced their improved Müller-style clarinet around the same time as Albert circa 1860. With the glut of improved instruments entering the market, klezmerim, Roma, and other lower-class musicians were certainly able to purchase the now affordable previous generation of clarinets.

Unfortunately, the time at which the clarinet finally made its way into klezmer ensembles across eastern Europe was also a time of great change and upheaval in Jewish communities. The 1870s saw the beginning of a mass migration of Jews from the Pale of Settlement west toward western Europe and the United States, as discussed in chapter one. Pogroms targeting Jewish communities surged following the assassination of Alexander II in 1881. This also marks a period of modernization in eastern European Jewish society which encroached on isolated *shtetls* and their traditional customs that had sustained the klezmer profession for so many generations. Each happening contributed to the transformation of Jewish society throughout the continent.

The clarinet has maintained its stature as an essential melody instrument in klezmer music. However, unlike older klezmer instruments, the clarinet did not have a lot of time to establish itself in the klezmer ensemble and Jewish culture while Jewish communities remained relatively isolated and Jewish populations were relatively stationary. The substantial geographic and social changes that occurred make it even more difficult to determine a timeline and characteristics unique to the clarinet in klezmer music.

The clarinet likely reached klezmerim in the Pale of Settlement by traveling west from Vienna, north from Istanbul, and east from St. Petersburg and Moscow.

Understanding when the clarinet arrived and became popular in these areas gives an approximate timeline for when the instrument became popular among klezmerim.

Beyond a timeline, it is likely that musical style also followed these paths of transmission and impacted klezmer repertoire and performance practice.

CHAPTER III

KLEZMER: HISTORICAL PERCEPTION, REVIVALIST PHILOSOPHIES

Scholarly work on klezmer music was not produced in earnest until the 1990s, and works that were produced after 1990 tend to prioritize traditional, or pre-World War II, klezmer music. Only a small subset concentrate on the klezmer revival that began in the 1970s, and of those works, the focus tends to be on definitions of klezmer music by revival musicians, influences and motivations of performers, and the performance contexts of practicing musicians. When discussed, musical analysis and performance practice tend to be rather general and take a back seat to the more provocative but familiar questions of authenticity, motivation, and intent. The world of Yiddish music is unique in that many scholars are also popular performers, and many performers have become de facto scholars. These performer-scholars have a vested interest in how the public views the authenticity of modern klezmer music and often paint a picture where their own interpretation of klezmer music is the standard of authenticity, frequently relying heavily on personal narrative. Consequently, disagreement over what constitutes traditional klezmer music is not new. Opinions of performers and scholars on the subjects of authentic style, repertoire, performer intent, and context have been, in past and present, easily influenced by personal experience, education, and politics, both individual and societal. These issues are evident in current klezmer music literature, contributing to a

convoluted and sometimes contradictory picture of traditional klezmer music and authenticity in modern performance.

In *Fiddler on the Move*, Mark Slobin examines the context and motivation behind modern American klezmer music. He acknowledges the difficulty of studying a “constantly morphing and expanding musical system with no surviving homeland, as played by insiders with outsider mentalities and outsiders with uncanny intuitions about how the music works.”¹¹⁸ He divides the discussion into klezmer as heritage music, klezmer as an urge, klezmer as community, and klezmer style as statement. While each system is discussed separately, Slobin again addresses the complexity of the subject and points out that music systems overlap. No single system exists on its own.¹¹⁹ Each section explores the personal and societal influences on performers of modern klezmer music. Most pertinent to the current study is the discussion of klezmer as heritage, in which the focus is on modern performers’ connection, perceived or otherwise, to the past.

Micromusics are a focus of Slobin’s discussion of klezmer as a heritage music, and he defines them as driven by either a dominant system that is continuously built and rebuilt, or as small groups that constantly struggle with consensus culture.¹²⁰ These small groups each have a unique style or approach, a micromusic. Klezmer is its own entity, but it operates and evolves within a network of micromusics. There are numerous subgroups under the umbrella of klezmer music with just as many varied approaches and styles, but there is a common thread that makes them distinctly klezmer. That all Yiddish music is intertwined is a familiar trope in klezmer music research. Folk songs, liturgical melodies,

¹¹⁸ Mark Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move: Exploring the Klezmer World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 5.

¹¹⁹ Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move*, 4–7.

¹²⁰ Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move*, 11.

Khasidic melodies, and klezmer tunes are all seen as strands of what Slobin calls the same musical tapestry, “woven by a shared aesthetic.”¹²¹ There is an element of truth to such a statement; one cannot completely separate the different musical categories within a culture. However, one also must be careful not to place such categories under too large an umbrella. Doing so may obfuscate meaningful differences in musical style and cultural practice.

According to Slobin, micromusics are primarily influenced by two social forces: outside pigeonholing from beyond the minority group and inner needs from within. Outside pigeonholing is caused by influence from states and corporations, what Slobin calls the components of the superculture. These entities have a strong interest in creating categories and do so through grants and other funding sources as well as laws and marketing. Categories are created and reinforced by the superculture and not the minority group. Essentially, the minority is labeled by the majority in a way that may or may not be justified. Inner needs occur when a group takes on the label of a minority and demands representation.¹²² Slobin asserts that once a minority is labeled by the majority, they will respond in one of two ways: the minority may demand economic or political representation, or they may become isolated and create social barriers to separate themselves from outsiders.

There are certainly examples of this system within klezmer music today. Government institutions like the National Endowment for the Arts as well as private donors have limited funding. With those funds, they amplify certain voices, certain

¹²¹ Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move*, 7–8.

¹²² Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move*, 12.

regions, and certain cultures over others. The same can be said for record labels and even klezmer music festivals who define klezmer music for the public through curation.

In addition to these internal and external influences, micromusics exist within and overlap with a number of heritage music types: national, exotic, diasporic, post/diasporic/rediasporic, and traditional transitional, each of which carries strong influence over how the music is perceived by those who produce and consume music. Slobin borrows Barbara Krishenblatt-Gimblett's definition of heritage: it is a cultural production taking place in the present but with a connection to the past.¹²³

Slobin demonstrates the complex and sometimes contradictory spheres in which modern klezmer music performers operate, especially in his discussion of klezmer music as a national heritage. He defines national heritage as “the nation-state implied by ‘national dance troupe,’ usually a blend of selected ‘traditional’ styles,” or “the recent European trend to identify a set of named subcultures as official nations.”¹²⁴ Frequently, the latter definition is used in place of the term “minority.” This proves problematic for klezmer music, especially in Europe, where, according to Slobin, there are many versions of Jewish heritage:

1. The Jews as an ancient, pre-European nation;
2. the Jews as a pre-World War II nation within older national boundaries (strong in Central Europe);
3. the Jews as the victimized nation;
4. the Jews as the phantom nation, needing representation but nearly absent (again strong in Central Europe, particularly Poland);
5. the Jews as a transnational nation (at worst, an international conspiracy), especially including the United States;
6. the Jews as a multinational nation, including Israel; and

¹²³ Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move*, 13.

¹²⁴ Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move*, 14.

7. the Jews as a representative multicultural nation in the new European order.¹²⁵

In Slobin's view, Jewish national heritage in the United States only aligns with the ancient and multicultural definitions above. Additional versions in the United States not listed above include a socially invisible, recently deracialized nationality within the majority population, a possibly victimized nation in need of special treatment, a politically powerful, possibly conspiratorial nation, and the diasporic nation tied to the replacement homeland of Israel.

Liner notes of albums and books on klezmer music frequently evoke one or more concepts of heritage. Common are references to the importance of music and instrumental performance in Jewish religious practice evidenced by biblical passages or writers insisting on klezmer music as means for Jews worldwide to connect to one another and to the Israeli homeland. As a whole, Slobin's analysis is a useful exploration of influences and performer intent, but it does little to tease apart stylistic differences or examine what, if any, impact these influences have on performance practice.

In *The Essential Klezmer*, Seth Rogovoy explores the klezmer revival with a similar approach to Slobin but focuses on bands' biographies and discographies. Most notable is his assertion that the revival can no longer be thought of as one entity. Instead, the revival has unfolded in two parts: (1) an initial revival from about 1970 to the 1990s when the emphasis was on discovering and recreating early twentieth century klezmer music, and (2) a subsequent klezmer renaissance in which bands began to expand

¹²⁵ Slobin, *Fiddler on the Move*, 23.

horizons and create hybrid musics.¹²⁶ A flaw in his approach, however, is the false implication that revival bands prior to the year 2000 produced a more authentic music than more modern bands when bands of that initial revival were most certainly inserting other musical traditions into klezmer music performance.

Rogovoy takes great care to categorize musicians and bands ranging from traditional to avant-garde, frequently including musicians in multiple categories. He organizes albums similarly, including designating essentials for those starting a collection. While he spends a great deal of time placing performers into categories, there is very little explanation of the musical criteria that justify those placements. Rogovoy's categorization acknowledges the hybrid nature of modern klezmer music but goes into no musical detail.

Klezmer music as a hybrid is a fairly uncontroversial topic. Especially in modern klezmer music, it seems to be universally understood that the idea of pure klezmer is pure fiction. Slightly more controversial is the idea that klezmer music has always been a hybrid music, constantly adapting to and absorbing surrounding cultures. Feldman focuses on this idea as he traces the *bŭlgarească* from a Bessarabian dance with limited popularity to the Jewish-American bulgar, a form that overtook the remainder of the klezmer repertoire in pre-World War II America.¹²⁷

Feldman emphasizes population movement as a catalyst for musical adaptation and adoption going back to the early nineteenth century when the *bŭlgarească* first spread beyond southern Bessarabia. As Jews and other groups moved around eastern Europe, the

¹²⁶ Seth Rogovoy, *The Essential Klezmer: A Music Lover's Guide to Jewish Roots and Soul Music, From the Old World to the Jazz Age to the Downtown Avant-Garde* (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill), 107.

¹²⁷ Feldman, "Bulgărească/Bulgarish/Bulgar," 85.

bŭlgarescã picked up a characteristic rhythmic structure from Moldavia that was gradually integrated with Jewish melody, rhythm, and types. The mass migration of Jews from eastern Europe to America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries receives particular attention. Immigration to the United States meant that musicians had access to previously isolated repertoires, both Jewish and non-Jewish, and it was likely a necessity to learn the repertoires of other regions in order to maintain gigs.¹²⁸

In the new environment of Jewish America, weddings and other celebrations moved from the *shtetl* (Yid.: village) to the catering hall and from multiple days down to one. Consequently, most of the klezmer repertoire that accompanied wedding traditions was rendered obsolete. This reduced the klezmer repertoire solely to dances, a repertoire that became known to performers as the bulgars. The bŭlgarescã went through a number of changes to become the popular American bulgar, including the elimination of more exotic Turkish and Romanian melodic structures. Furthermore, performance shifted from ensemble oriented to soloist oriented.¹²⁹ This idea highlights that definitions of klezmer music have always been fluid and cuts against those who argue for a strict definition of traditional klezmer music.

Michael Anklewicz's 2009 dissertation focuses on hybridity in modern klezmer music. Like Feldman, he asserts that the hybrid nature of modern klezmer music is nothing new, and it is a misconception that the music was ever homogenous. Anklewicz argues that instead of modern klezmer music branching from one source, as many believe, it had multiple roots leading to multiple branches. That is to say, the major changes over time have not been from homogeneity to heterogeneity but changes to the

¹²⁸ Feldman, "Bulgãreascã/Bulgarish/Bulgar," 89.

¹²⁹ Feldman, "Bulgãreascã/Bulgarish/Bulgar," 104.

context in which klezmer music is performed and passed on. Klezmerim no longer train through apprenticeship as they once did, and musicians now usually come to klezmer music already proficient in other musical genres, although workshops and festivals have substituted somewhat for the older apprenticeship system.¹³⁰ Gatherings like these allow interested parties to learn from the most talented and knowledgeable performers and scholars in the field.

The heart of Anklewicz's study is a discussion of what he calls "contemporary klezmer scenes," how the music is learned, and how personal experiences affect style. He has a strong emphasis on workshops and festivals and their role in disseminating klezmer style. As opposed to the klezmer music in the Old World with geographically isolated styles, modern klezmer workshops create a centralized community where musicians and scholars from across the world can spend a few days in a "utopian alternate reality."¹³¹ Anklewicz points out that all of the major workshops across the globe pull from the same group of performers and instructors. The homogeneity of klezmer workshops conflicts with his contention that the contemporary klezmer scene, with easy access to countless other musics, is too diverse for definition. If workshops create a centralized community, and all of the major workshops pull from the same group of musicians, then there should be a lack of diversity in the contemporary klezmer scene. This raises an interesting question: How does one balance these contradicting realities? Anklewicz does not address this directly, but he does attempt to demonstrate the hybrid nature of modern klezmer music by analyzing representative repertoire of notable bands of the revival and contemporary klezmer scene.

¹³⁰ Michael Anklewicz, *Musical Hybridities and the Klezmer Revival* (Ph.D. Dissertation, York University, 2013), 6–7.

¹³¹ Anklewicz, *Musical Hybridities*, 230.

In a study that focuses so much on the circumstances from which modern klezmer stems, it is difficult to develop a thorough discussion of the music itself. Anklewicz attempts to briefly delve into all aspects of the music. While the examples highlight the author's arguments, the lack of depth of analysis and comparison to traditional klezmer music necessary to understand the musical elements falls short.

In order to understand the multifarious nature of modern klezmer music, it is important to understand the causes of such disparate approaches to the genre. Folklorist Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett presents some definitions of klezmer music that seemingly contradict with each other in her article "Sounds of Sensibility" before delving into the causes of such contrary thinking. Definitions presented by Kirshenblatt-Gimblett belong to those active on the modern klezmer music scene like clarinetist and early revivalist Andy Statman. Statman emphatically argues that klezmer music is religious music and has always been religiously mandated.¹³² As mentioned earlier, Statman has also become a practicing khasidic Jew and claims that the music he performs is not klezmer music but khasidic music, although how these repertoires and styles differ is never clarified. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett also presents the view of clarinetist Giora Feidman, who insists that klezmer music is not Jewish music, instead implying that it exists on a lower level than religious Jewish music. Feidman has spent his klezmer-playing career trying to elevate klezmer music to something higher than a fringe folk music.¹³³ Feidman's classicized arrangements of traditional klezmer tunes seem to be an attempt to legitimize the genre by bringing it into the concert hall.

¹³² Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Sounds of Sensibility" in *American Klezmer: Its Roots and Its Offshoots* ed. Mark Slobin (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press), 131.

¹³³ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Sounds of Sensibility," 151.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett places these definitions of klezmer music within the context of defining the klezmer revival as a whole. The bulk of her article hinges on what she calls the rupture and how it changed klezmer music from a traditional music to a heritage music. As mentioned earlier, the rupture refers to the break in practice and dissemination of klezmer music that occurred after World War II, during which it went from a traditional music that was part of everyday Jewish life to a heritage music that was revived and displayed but no longer maintained an essential role in Jewish culture.¹³⁴

Most importantly, according to Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, the rupture created an absence of living models of traditional klezmer music, making it especially difficult for those attempting to recreate what had been historically an oral tradition. Early revivalists had only the memories of a few elderly klezmerim and a number of 78s recorded in the early twentieth century from which to draw conclusions about authenticity.¹³⁵ This lack of continuity in dissemination has allowed klezmer music to be reborn to a new generation, but it has also changed the way the art form is learned, consumed, and defined. While the rupture may not be the focus of many klezmer music scholars, it is fundamental to the vastly different, occasionally conflicting views of klezmer music and its history taken by modern performers and scholars.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett differentiates between heritage and tradition in the following way: Klezmer music was a tradition prior to World War II where it was part of, if not essential to, everyday life for eastern European Jews. When the revival began in the 1970s, klezmer music and the musicians who performed it were no longer necessary. Jews, as a whole, had fully assimilated to American culture. Klezmer music became a

¹³⁴ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Sounds of Sensibility," 129.

¹³⁵ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Sounds of Sensibility," 145.

heritage music at this point, brought back as an artifact, a relic of a past music and culture. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett considers this rupture necessary for klezmer music to have been reborn and reach larger audiences.¹³⁶ For the music to be embraced as folklore it must first be rejected. Like fashion, something must go out of style for it be consciously reconstructed.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett contends that modern musicians have a need to root present practice in a meaningful past, which is different than searching for roots. “A sense of rootedness does not require musical monogamy.”¹³⁷ She appears to agree with those who argue that anything can be klezmer music as long as the performer’s intent is such. To have a sense of rootedness, a performer would only need to feel that their music is connected to Jewish music of the past, whether that past is real or perceived.

A connection to Jewish music of the past is a common tenet of modern klezmer performers and a common justification for the authenticity of their music. However, how that connection is understood and the subsequent effect on the music varies greatly. Early klezmer revivalist Henry Sapoznik devotes a large portion of his book, *Klezmer! Jewish Music from Old World to Our World*, to the klezmer revival, emphasizing his significant role. Sapoznik speaks of growing up in a Yiddish speaking home, attending *yeshiva* (Heb.: an Orthodox Jewish school), and being around Yiddish music and culture his entire childhood. Despite the environment, he steered clear of this culture out of a “nagging desire to be more American.”¹³⁸ Sapoznik became engulfed in the American folk movement of the 1970s. He was doing field work in Appalachia when a subject asked him about the music of his people which led him to investigate his family history.

¹³⁶ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Sounds of Sensibility,” 140.

¹³⁷ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Sounds of Sensibility,” 139.

¹³⁸ Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*, 182.

Eventually, this inquiry took him to the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research where he sifted through and catalogued the numerous 78 records in the YIVO archives and began a continued focus on Jewish music.

While not a great resource on the revival as a whole, Sapoznik's book is full of anecdotal insights into how one of the first revivalists approached the music, both philosophically and practically. He creates a clear distinction between a past when the term klezmer was unambiguous and modern day when klezmer has been changed in definition and practice.¹³⁹ The importance of thoroughly understanding klezmer music of the past is evident when modern klezmer music has divided itself into myriad sub-genres.¹⁴⁰ During his discussion of the "downtown scene" started by John Zorn, Sapoznik writes that Zorn, who creates music that is perhaps only tangential to Yiddish or klezmer music, "helped craft a music movement that lets composers and performers express personal/historical and political Jewish themes with little actual understanding of Jewish music."¹⁴¹ According to Sapoznik, this articulates the underlying belief of the Radical Jewish Music scene: that one's Jewish self is inherent and needs only to be released.

Sapoznik relies more on his own perspective and opinions than on musical analysis, so discussions on modern klezmer are occasionally tinged with personal bias. There is clear animosity toward Zorn for integrating Jewish music with avant-garde jazz, but the integration of klezmer music with bluegrass in his own recordings is discussed more positively. Music is addressed in only the most general terms, although an appendix is included that briefly explains common modes and dance forms in klezmer music.

¹³⁹ Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*, 243

¹⁴⁰ Sapoznik labels performers orthodox, conservative, and reform, paralleling sects of Judaism. It is clear that the groups deemed orthodox are held in higher regard by Sapoznik, and reform groups are chided for their supposed lack of understanding of traditional Jewish music.

¹⁴¹ Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*, 253

Sapoznik is not alone in his interpretive research on klezmer music. The collection of articles in *American Klezmer*, compiled by Mark Slobin, is divided into writings on traditional klezmer music and revival klezmer music, clearly exhibiting the many definitions of klezmer music in recent decades. The articles on the revival focus largely on why performers have taken on the art form and how those performers view traditional and modern klezmer music through the lens of personal experience. As seen below from the examples from *American Klezmer*, definitions are based largely on personal experience, political affiliation, and musical preference. Like Sapoznik, music is addressed in the most general terms, but these articles provide insight into how some of the most prolific performers of klezmer music today define authenticity, perceive their role in advancing the art form, and allow personal opinion to color their views of klezmer music in the past and present.

For trumpeter Frank London, best known for his time with the Klezmatics, klezmer and authenticity are overused terms, thrown about to increase record sales and develop an image. According to London, in order for something to be klezmer music, a musician must understand from where the music came; simply playing an augmented second does not make it klezmer music.¹⁴² While arguing that a klezmer musician must be well rooted in tradition, London rejects the terms “tradition” and “authenticity” calling them “politicized power terms,” a sign of London’s embrace of the counterculture wing of modern klezmer music.¹⁴³ The seemingly contradictory stances of embracing the study of traditional music while rejecting the terms “tradition” and “authenticity” may just be

¹⁴² Frank London, “An Insider’s View of How We Traveled from Obscurity to the Klezmer Establishment in Twenty Years” in *American Klezmer: Its Roots and Offshoots* ed. Mark Slobin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London 2002).

¹⁴³ London, “An Insider’s View,” 210.

London justifying his approach to the music which blends immense knowledge of older recordings and strong influence from jazz and other modern styles.

Violinist and fellow Klezmatics member Alicia Svigals shares a similar point of view in her article “Why We Do What We Do.”¹⁴⁴ She blends strong ties to Jewish music of the past with modern musical styles in her playing, and embraces the liberal wing of the klezmer music scene. In her so-called klezmer “manifesto,” Svigals expresses a need to study klezmer music as a language, and believes that study of klezmer music provides a link to a Jewish past and helps define Jews in the present. That music and culture is a way to connect to one’s Jewish roots without participating in strictly religious activities is a common thread, especially among secular Jewish musicians like Svigals and Zorn but runs counter to Statman. Like London, Svigals is skeptical of those who use authenticity to create an air of superiority. Instead, she argues that the correct definition of authenticity is being true to oneself, which provides a performer with both stylistic freedom and a claim of authenticity. In this way, London and Svigals define klezmer music in a similar manner: it is whatever music emanates from a musician’s instrument, so long as that musician has studied klezmer music and has attached that label to what they are playing. London and Svigals’ concept of klezmer music stipulates, at its core, that modern klezmer music is a hybrid genre, a little klezmer and a little something else, but also risks diluting the definition of klezmer music beyond any useful measure.

Yale Strom’s biography of Dave Tarras (1895–1989) only tangentially discusses traditional klezmer music and the revival, but it provides an account of the changes to klezmer music in the twentieth century and the rupture in traditional klezmer music

¹⁴⁴ Alicia Svigals, “Why We Do This Anyway: Klezmer as Jewish Youth Subculture” in *American Klezmer: Its Roots and Offshoots* ed. Mark Slobin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London 2002).

through the career of one of the music's most notable performers.¹⁴⁵ Strom follows Tarras's career from his time performing with his family's kapelye in eastern Ukraine through his arrival to the United States and dealings with a musical tradition that was quickly assimilating to and being overshadowed by American popular music.

Quite useful to those studying twentieth century klezmer music are the comparisons in playing style between Tarras and other significant clarinetists of the early twentieth century, including how those clarinetists viewed each other. Many times, musicians' descriptions and opinions of each other are contradictory, and sometimes statements contradict the musician's own previous statements. Tarras expressed a fond opinion of Brandwein in later interviews, expressing admiration for his playing, but according to Tarras's son, Sy, this was not the case:

My father did not like Naftule - he thought he was a wild player, a Gypsy, and shouldn't be playing Jewish clarinet. He did not like his behavior as a performer on the stage and he never considered Naftule to be any kind of competition for him. Naftule's tone on the clarinet was rougher and he was all about doing his tricks on the clarinet while fooling around on the stage. My father's playing was pure, there was no fooling around in his playing. He never fooled around with his instrument. His playing was direct and according to the music with very little ornamentation. In the later years as people began to look for those things he began to add a few of these "dreydls" (Yid.: twists, klezmer ornamentations) and things like that but he was more of a straight clarinet player, a straight klezmer player, an eastern European player.¹⁴⁶

It is entirely possible that Sy Tarras plays up statements his father made in order to diminish the only other klezmer clarinetist from that time period who has ascended to a high level of popularity. Guiding memory in such a way is not uncommon. Many stand to gain from pushing a particular view of traditional klezmer music.

¹⁴⁵ Strom, *Dave Tarras*, 26–29.

¹⁴⁶ Strom, *Dave Tarras*, 19–20.

Brandwein is not the only victim of contradiction. Tarras is held up as an icon of traditional klezmer music by Strom, but he includes Walter Zev Feldman's assertion that Tarras actually played a Bessarabian repertoire and style. Feldman's father was born in Yedinitz, Bukowina (Romania) and was well aware of the style of local klezmerim, although was probably not acquainted with the differing styles in other parts of eastern Europe. Feldman argues that Brandwein's repertoire was closer to what klezmerim in eastern Europe actually played. Unlike Brandwein, Tarras favored the dance repertoire over display pieces. Tarras was a prolific composer, and Feldman suggests that Tarras's ambition was to "Bessarabianize" Jewish dance music, as exemplified by his "Ternovker Sher."¹⁴⁷ Pete Sokolow, who played with Tarras, states that Tarras had a more Jewish, cantorial quality to his playing contrasting with Brandwein's Turkish style.¹⁴⁸

Sokolow's description of Tarras's playing as Jewish compared to Brandwein's Turkish style illustrates the tendency to allow personal taste to color discussions of authenticity. Since Sokolow played with Tarras, he views Tarras's playing as authentic. Describing Brandwein's playing as Turkish is an attempt to ensure Tarras's place as the singular icon of traditional klezmer clarinet. Feldman suggests the opposite by asserting that his repertoire was more Bessarabian than Jewish. To label something Jewish is to label it authentic. To label it anything else is to declare its lack of authenticity.

Battles over authenticity are not a creation of modern scholars. Even among those who lived and trained in the Old World, it is clear that the definition of Jewish or klezmer style was largely dependent on a musician's origins and personal preferences. Certainly there are ample similarities between these different styles, but the fact that Tarras and his

¹⁴⁷ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 161.

¹⁴⁸ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 20.

generation saw such clear distinctions should give modern performers and scholars pause when claiming the existence of one truly authentic klezmer music.

Strom takes a broader view of the revival in *The Book of Klezmer*, especially in his discussion of the rupture and questions of authenticity. Like the other scholars presented, he focuses on the cultural and personal influences that have shaped performers and modern klezmer music. However, he emphasizes the changes in geography and population that have occurred since the late nineteenth century. He laments that there is no more “Yiddishland,” no more places with a concentrated Jewish population able to carry on the traditions of their Old World ancestors: apathy, intermarriage, anti-semitism, and low birthrates have deprived the world of a sufficient Jewish population.¹⁴⁹ Strom describes the difficulties caused for klezmer music scholars by the dwindling Jewish population in eastern Europe and romanticizes the largely oppressive lives led by Jews in the Old World. Despite any romanticizing, the heart of his argument rings true. The practice and dissemination of klezmer music in eastern Europe mostly stopped following World War II, so there is no place modern klezmer scholars can go to find “untainted” klezmer.

As mentioned earlier, Strom believes there was not a true revival. Rather, he calls those who have decided to take on the study and practice of klezmer music “*bal-kulturniks*,” masters or owners of culture, and avoids using the terms ‘revival’ and ‘revivalists.’. According to Strom, the music would need to be completely extinct and subsequently brought back in order for a true revival to occur, but klezmer music remained alive in Jewish clubs, synagogues, and *simkhes* (Yid.: celebrations).¹⁵⁰ No

¹⁴⁹ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 261–62.

¹⁵⁰ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 188.

matter the label, Strom develops a useful definition and avoids elusive questions of authenticity. By his definition, the so-called “revival” was a return to a specific kind of cultural milieu that recreated a specific kind of klezmer from 78s recorded in the first few decades of the twentieth century. He acknowledges that klezmer music heard on early twentieth century recordings is likely not the same as was heard decades earlier in eastern Europe, but it is the most authentic source material for modern practice.

Strom bemoans that bal-kulturniks operate at a disadvantage in their quest to master and maintain Yiddish culture. There is no homeland, at least not one that still sustains a large Jewish population, to which bal-kulturniks can return and immerse themselves in the culture. In fact, Strom points out the irony that one must now travel west to the United States to study Yiddish language and culture.¹⁵¹

Strom’s conception of a missing homeland, a place where the artform was created and practiced uninterrupted, parallels Kirshenblatt-Gimblett’s idea of on the rupture. The fact that the culture in which klezmer thrived for centuries in eastern Europe no longer exists allows performers of modern klezmer music a large degree of freedom when expressing Jewishness both musically and non-musically. Some musicians, like Andy Statman, have become more religious as a result of their foray into klezmer music; others have embraced their Judaism in more secular ways, like learning Yiddish or incorporating the music into preexisting personal politics. As discussed, Statman connected with his khasidic roots and eventually began performing only khasidic music, asserting khasidic music was behind klezmer music the entire time.

Musician Jeff Warschauer, an active member of the klezmer scene, places an emphasis on Yiddish vocal music. This is common in modern times despite its absence

¹⁵¹ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 261.

from the repertoires of Old World klezmerim. Warschauer includes the Yiddish vocal repertoire as klezmer music simply because it feels “more fulfilling.”¹⁵² While a somewhat startling declaration, Warschauer shares a similar sentiment to Svigals’s open definition of klezmer music.

Warschauer is not alone in labeling vocal music as klezmer despite its absence in the repertoire of Old World klezmerim. Kapelye, the Klezmer Conservatory Band, and many other popular, modern klezmer groups include vocal music under the guise of klezmer music even though most popular Yiddish songs stem from the Yiddish theater repertoire, an offshoot from the klezmer repertoire, but a different tradition nonetheless. A common theme running through this post-revival era is the view that “klezmer” is frequently just a synonym for “Jewish,” and it is unnecessary to prove the music descended from Old World klezmerim. A feeling of Jewishness can be enough. If a feeling of Jewishness is enough for something to be klezmer music, then the influences on klezmer music can come from almost anywhere and need not be justified.

The sheer number and variety of influences on klezmer music, its performers, and its consumers is dizzying. The music can be religious or secular. It can connect to an American past or a European past. The claims made by those in the modern klezmer world are colored by a justification of one’s personal style, a desire to be deemed authentic, or to connect with a market. The very idea of authenticity, its meaning and even relevance, is debated by performers and scholars alike. Disagreements are not just on the periphery of klezmer music’s definition but at its very core, and such opposing philosophies can create confusion for those new to the genre and cause skirmishes among those most embedded.

¹⁵² Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 263.

Musical analysis seems to be lost in this vigorous debate. In many ways, modern recordings within the klezmer genre are strikingly dissimilar. For example, the hip-hop infused sampling and beats on David Krakauer and Socalled's *Bubbemeises: Lies My Gramma Told Me* is about as far as one can get from the early twentieth-century style of the klezmer revival group Kapelye. Perhaps the musical differences are so pronounced and obvious that musical analysis is too mundane to garner attention. Yet, for all the differences, there remains something distinctly recognizable as klezmer music, like different dialects of the same language. Perhaps the common language is so recognizable and blatant that any musical analysis would be superfluous. Yet careful study of the music can indeed provide a clearer picture of modern klezmer music's connection, real or perceived, to the past as well as a more detailed view of how it has been blended with modern styles. Musical analysis provides insight without the bias and emotion that can seep into discussion of the subject. A connection, or lack of connection, to older klezmer music should be evident in the music, and any changes in performance practice should be evident.

CHAPTER IV

**PERFORMANCE PRACTICE IN EARLY
TWENTIETH CENTURY KLEZMER
RECORDINGS**

This study analyzes the ornaments in two source recordings by Naftule Brandwein, *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym* and *Der Heyser Bulgar*, and compares them to ornamentation in recordings of the same two tunes that have been produced since the klezmer revival. While many studies on the klezmer revival look at the integration of external musics into the entirety of a performance, the focus of this study is solely on how modern clarinetists ornament these two melodies and any similarities or differences to that of Brandwein and early twentieth century performance practice as exemplified by Brandwein and Dave Tarras.

While this study focuses on ornamentation, one of the more distinctive characteristics of klezmer music, it is important to acknowledge that no single characteristic is exclusive to the genre. What Moshe Beregovski calls the altered dorian scale is commonly found in the Jewish folk music he collected, but it is also present in the folk music of Ukraine, Moldavia, and Romania.¹⁵³ Other characteristics, from harmony to ornamentation, are present in other types of Jewish music as well as many types of non-Jewish music. Yale Strom insists that modern klezmer music can be grouped into two musical styles: Polish-Ukrainian and Romanian-Turkish. In addition to the areas referenced in the names, Polish-Ukrainian klezmer music is also influenced by

¹⁵³ Beregovski, “The Altered Dorian Scale” in *Old Jewish Folk Music*, 551.

Belorussian, Slovakian, and Russian music. Romanian-Turkish klezmer music receives influence from Hungarian, Galician, and Carpathian-Ukrainian music.¹⁵⁴ Whether or not these are useful classifications, it clearly demonstrates the way folk and vernacular musics are influenced by myriad factors. In short: it is complicated. Klezmer music does not necessarily share all of the same characteristics. However, when enough of these characteristics combine, the result is something unmistakably klezmer.

Joel Rubin contends that the klezmer repertoire is the result of a process of centonization, composing with pre-existing material.¹⁵⁵ Klezmer music is made of a finite number of typical motives that are strung together in various ways to create melodies. Those melodies are then ornamented by the performer using a finite number of typical ornaments. The process is evident in every aspect of composition and performance and results in a somewhat predictable convention of melody and ornamentation.

A similar process takes place in Jewish liturgical music, one of many similarities despite the secular nature of klezmer music. The cantillations of the synagogue's *khazn* (the synagogue's cantor) are dictated by a series of symbols called *tropes* or *te'amim*, the former term originating from the Greek *tropos* and the latter from the Hebrew *ta'am*. Each symbol represents a certain melodic pattern. The *tropes* are arranged to create a melody that emphasizes the structure of the text. The resulting melody is akin to recitative in Western art music. Those chanting cantillation have the freedom to ornament as appropriate. This ornamentation can vary depending on region, cultural influences, and

¹⁵⁴ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 101.

¹⁵⁵ Joel Rubin, "Heyser Bulgar (The Spirited Bulgar): Compositional process in Jewish-American dance music of the 1910s and 1920s," <http://joelrubinklezmer.com/writings/book-chapters-writings/2006/06/heyser-bulgar-the-spirited-bulgar/> (2006), accessed 20 January 2015.

personal taste.¹⁵⁶ Ornaments in Jewish cantillation are not necessarily inserted for musical effect but to emphasize a particular word or phrase in the text, typically adding an emotional and expressive effect. This is a primary function of the *khazn*. Ancient texts describe the ideal *khazn* as a modest and needy person whose personal troubles will make for more moving and expressive prayer better able to convey the sorrows of the congregation.¹⁵⁷

Ornaments serve a similar function in klezmer music. While there is no text to highlight, ornaments in klezmer music emphasize important moments within a musical phrase or piece or might serve to demonstrate a player's technical ability. Klezmer music ornaments also tend to be sorrowful and heighten the expressiveness of a piece. Yale Strom describes the *krekht* (Yid.: groan, moan), one of the most popular and distinctive klezmer ornaments, as moaning, achy long notes usually used by the violinist and clarinetist to evoke a lament.¹⁵⁸ Like synagogue chant, the ornaments are left up to the performer and are influenced by regional and cultural norms as well as personal taste. However, despite some variation, there is a clear klezmer vernacular in which certain ornaments are used at particular moments and in particular combinations. Such parallels with Jewish liturgical music are not surprising. Despite the secular nature of klezmer music and the non-pious reputation of klezmerim, Old World Jewish society revolved around religion and study of *Torah*. Influence from synagogue music and the singing style use to chant *Torah* were inevitable.

¹⁵⁶ Amnon Shiloah, *Jewish Musical Traditions* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), 87–89.

¹⁵⁷ Shiloah, *Jewish Musical Traditions*, 89.

¹⁵⁸ Strom, *The Book of Klezmer*, 120.

While not a written rule, a typical placement of ornaments within a melody was understood by Old World klezmerim.¹⁵⁹ In his dissertation comparing ornamentation in the recordings of Dave Tarras and Naftule Brandwein, Rubin meticulously labels and categorizes every ornament in these two musicians' recordings from 1923–1929 and notes common usage. Rubin's study is an attempt to codify the standard performance practice of New York City klezmerim in the 1920s through detailed transcriptions of ornamentation in recordings during the given time period.

Tarras and Brandwein were two of the most popular and prolific klezmer musicians of the 1920s, and Rubin's findings serve as a glossary of early twentieth century klezmer vernacular with which modern performance practice can be compared. This study builds on Rubin's work by applying his methodology to modern recordings and comparing ornamentation by modern performers to typical ornaments used by Brandwein and his contemporaries. Since Rubin's methodology serves as a model for this study, it is necessary to fully understand his processes. His approach and findings are broken down by musical characteristic and presented throughout the chapter.

While Rubin utilized the repertoire of both Brandwein and Tarras, the present study concentrates on music associated with the former. Tarras's prolific recording career spanned decades and makes pinpointing style difficult, but Brandwein's relatively brief career proves beneficial for that purpose. Brandwein recorded prolifically in the 1920s but very little in the following decades, largely due to his unfavorable reputation, and he died in 1963, before those at the forefront of the revival went looking for elderly klezmerim to act as mentors. This was not the case for Brandwein's contemporary Dave

¹⁵⁹ Yale Strom, preface to *The Absolutely Complete Klezmer Songbook* (New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 2006), xxvii.

Tarras. Tarras had an active recording and radio career well into the 1940s that reflected the growing influence of American popular music. As popular tastes changed, so did Tarras's style.

When modern klezmer musicians perform the music of Tarras, there are decades' worth of recordings and interviews from which to draw inspiration and information. With musical style of source recordings reflecting changing tastes, it would be an extremely difficult task to compare a modern recording of a Tarras tune to Tarras's playing style since it evolved significantly over his long recording career. A musician performing the music of Brandwein frequently has only one recording to use as source material. Such is the case with *Der Heyser Bulgar* and *Firn di Mekhutanim Aheym*. While Rubin notes that there are other tunes and recordings that share similar material, Brandwein is the only known performer to have recorded these two tunes prior to the revival. If a modern musician is performing a tune with one of these titles, Brandwein's 1923 recordings are almost certainly the source. However, *Der Heyser Bulgar* was twice recorded by Tarras under two different titles, and those recordings are also analyzed in the present study.

Scales and Modes

Scales and modes in klezmer music can be difficult to organize. Specific terms for ornaments, scales, and other musical elements were absent from the klezmer lexicon prior to the 1970s.¹⁶⁰ With the absence of set terms, those in the modern klezmer world reach to familiar areas such as Jewish liturgical music, Western art music, or Jewish folk music utilizing Hebrew, English, and Yiddish, respectively. For example, the natural minor scale is labeled as such by Sapoznik but is labeled Magen-Avos, a liturgical mode, by Strom. The Adonoy-Moloch mode is described both as the synagogue mode and the

¹⁶⁰ Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*, 15.

western mixolydian by Sapoznik but described as Lydian with a lowered seventh scale degree by Strom. The various labels all correctly describe the given scales, but discussions of the musical elements in klezmer music become far more difficult without a standard set of terms. The Hebrew terms used by Sapoznik and Strom come from synagogue modes named by A.Z. Idelsohn after the prayers with which they were associated. Neither Strom nor Sapoznik explains the inclusion of Yiddish and English terms to describe the same modes. This is likely an acknowledgement that Idelsohn's labels are not widely used among modern klezmer performers.

Furthermore, almost all klezmer scales derive from chant or prayer modes of the synagogue, but the names and organization of those modes varied depending on the location. This explains some variation within the klezmer community today. The Mixolydian mode, from the European Church, is the prayer mode Adonoy Molokh in Ashkenazi communities, but there were variations made to these modes across Ashkenazi areas.¹⁶¹ As far as prayer modes are concerned, the origin of the researcher's source material may very well determine what is deemed correct.

Rubin does away with these labels and splits each eight-note scale into a lower half and an upper half, each containing four tones. There are four possibilities for the lower half (A1–A4) and four possibilities for the upper half (B1–B4). Rubin uses a broad definition of “tetrachord” commonly used among ethnomusicologists, four pitches spanning the interval of a fourth. Rubin uses this classification only for ease of identification and not to imply any theoretical or harmonic function.¹⁶² Using a letter and

¹⁶¹ Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 136–37.

¹⁶² Rubin, *The Art of the Klezmer*, 176.

number for each scale half simply does away with any confusion caused from having multiple names for the same scale.

Each scale has certain tones that are set and others that are variable. In the recordings by Tarras and Brandwein studied by Rubin, he found that every note other than tonic was variable under certain circumstances, another opportunity for confusion.










A1		B1	
A2		B2	
A3		B3	
A4		B4	
		B5	

Figure 4.1. Lower (A) and upper (B) tetrachords

Cadences

Rubin found that cadences were built upon tetrachords A1–A4 as well as a fifth type of cadence with a lowered second scale degree that he labels A5. Each cadential phrase is made of two parts: a prefix and a root, each part usually equal in length. Again, Rubin’s terminology is a bit confusing. A root, as Rubin defines it, outlines the tonic chord and is the final part of a cadence. It is preceded by the prefix, which is without such strict guidelines.



Figure 4.2. Tetrachord used in A5 cadences



Example 4.1. A1 cadential phrase

Ornaments

Rubin categorizes clarinet ornaments present in his study into two groups: those made by changing fingerings, with or without the use of the tongue, and those made using the tongue, throat, or in other changes without the assistance of the fingers.¹⁶³

Table 4.1. Ornament groupings

Group One: Changes to fingerings	Group Two: Changes without fingerings
Three-tone groupings	Single-tone bends
Single- and two-tone graces	Slides between two tones
Trills	
Other ornaments (mordents, turns, and arpeggios)	

The most common ornament group in Rubin's study is the three-tone group which is comprised of a grace-note placed between two principal tones. He divides the three-tone groupings into four basic intervallic configurations. The term neighbor is not to be taken in its traditionally narrow sense since intervals between principal tones and grace-notes vary. A neighbor tone may be greater than a step away from the principal tone. In addition, due to intervallic fluctuations, more specific labels for three-tone groupings must be reserved for specific instances. For example, the UUN in figure 4.3 is an escape

¹⁶³ Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 257.

tone, but that is not always the case. The grace-note could be any interval above the first principal tone. The grace-note is typically connected to one of the two principal tones so either the grace-note or the second principal tone will be articulated. The articulation has no impact on the classification.





Lower-upper neighbor (LUN)	The first principal tone is a lower neighbor to the second principal tone; the grace-note is at least a minor second higher than the second principal tone.	
Upper-upper neighbor (UUN)	The first principal tone is an upper neighbor to the second principal tone; the grace-note is at least a minor second higher than the first principal tone.	
Lower-lower neighbor grouping (LLN)	The first principal tone is a lower neighbor to the second principal tone; the grace-note is at least a minor second lower than the first principal tone.	
Same-pitch grouping with upper neighbor grace (SPU)	The first and second principal tones are of the same pitch; the grace-note is at least a minor second higher than both principal tones.	

Figure 4.3. Three-tone groupings¹⁶⁴

If the first principal tone falls on a downbeat or emphasized beat of a measure, Rubin calls it stressed. If it does not fall on an emphasized beat, it is non-stressed. Only three of the possible eight combinations occurred in Rubin's sample with significant frequency: Lower-upper neighbor stressed (LUN-S), lower-upper neighbor non-stressed (LUN-N), and same-pitch with upper neighbor grace non-stressed (SPU-N). Three-tone groupings were the most commonly used ornament in Rubin's sample and were the focus of his study.

¹⁶⁴ The examples listed come from Rubin's study. While the examples show the grace-note only slurred to the first principal tone, the grace note may be slurred to either the first or second principal tone.

In LUN-S, the principal tone most often acts as an appoggiatura with the second principal tone fitting with the harmony. Adding to the appoggiatura effect is the fact that the distance between the first and second principal tones is almost always a minor second in Rubin's sample. Rubin's use of the term "appoggiatura" could be taken to imply that the grace-note is a non-harmonic tone that resolves to the second primary tone. While that is common, it is not always the case. Most three-tone groupings can occur on any scale degree, and either the first or second primary tone can be a harmonic tone. Rubin categorizes these ornaments as ascending, descending, or circular based on the contour of the melody in which they are present.

Descending		
		
Ascending		
		
Circular		

Figure 4.4. LUN-S figures

Grace-notes are almost always a major second or minor third above the second principal tone, although Rubin found that some of these were created using non-traditional fingerings thereby producing pitches that are outside the usual duodenary western tuning. Therefore, it is possible to have grace notes of an interval smaller than a minor second and larger than a minor third. Rubin believes that personal taste and ease of

fingering plays a significant role in ornamentation. The latter may play a more significant role with modern performers, especially those who perform tunes in the original key.

Based on photographic evidence and interviews, Brandwein most likely used an Albert System clarinet in the key of C.¹⁶⁵ Most modern klezmer clarinetists, in contrast, perform on clarinet in B-flat with Buffet-Klose or Oehler system fingering setups, as was discussed in chapter two.

Rubin identifies three descending LUN-N figures (figure 4.5). A three-tone figure with a descending minor third followed by an ascending minor second or a descending major third followed by a descending major second; a three-tone figure with a descending perfect fourth followed by an ascending minor second; and a four-tone figure with the basic pattern of two descending steps followed by one ascending step in scalar motion. Both ascending and descending LUN-N figures are similar to their LUN-S counterparts with the shifted stressed note as the most significant difference.

Descending		
		
Ascending		
Circular		

Figure 4.5. LUN-N figures

Four descending SPU-N note figures (figure 4.6) have been identified by Rubin:

(a) a four-tone figure of a descending second followed by a repeated tone and another

¹⁶⁵ Joel Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 108.

descending second with the SPU-N between the first two repeated tones of the figure; (b) a five-tone figure with a descending second followed by a repeated tone, a descending second, and another repeated tone with the SPU-N including the second and third as well as the fourth and fifth principal tones of the figure; (c) another five-tone figure with a descending second followed by a repeated tone, a descending minor second, and a descending major second with the SPU-N between the second and third principal tones; and (d) a four-tone figure with a descending minor second followed by a descending major or augmented second and a repeated tone with the SPU-N between the third and fourth principal tones. All of these figures descend in scalar motion with either the second and third tones of the same pitch in a four or five-tone figure or the third and fourth principal tones of the same pitch in a four-tone figure.

Rubin only identified one ascending SPU-N figure: a five-tone figure with an ascending minor or major third followed by a repeated tone, a descending minor or major second, and a repeated tone with the SPU-N on the fourth and fifth principal tones of the figure. There were also a number of tone groupings that Rubin identified in his sample that did not appear with frequency sufficient enough to designate as typical.¹⁶⁶ Rubin identifies two articulation types in three note groupings: One in which the grace note is ended with the tongue, and one in which all three notes are slurred.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 294.

¹⁶⁷ Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 276.







Descending (a)	
Descending (b)	
Descending (c)	
Descending (d)	
Ascending	
Circular	

Figure 4.6. SPU-N figures

Grace-notes

When grace-notes occur singly, they are played before the beat. Also preceding the beat are those double grace-notes that often ornament a stressed beat. All of the notes in the double grace-note figure are slurred with the exception of the first, which may either be tongued or slurred. As with upper neighbor grace-notes, the pitch of the latter of the two grace-notes is variable, depending on the performer's taste and preferred fingering.¹⁶⁸

Rubin found three uses of double grace-notes (figure 4.7): one in which the first grace-note is the same pitch as the principal tone and the second is an upper-neighbor; a

¹⁶⁸ Rubin uses the term performer-composer when referring to klezmer musicians, an acknowledgement of a performer's ability to completely transform a melody with the use of ornamentation improvised during performance.

second in which the first grace-note takes the place of the first principal tone in the LUN-S grouping; and a third in which the two grace notes anticipate a trill.



Figure 4.7. Double grace-notes

In a small number of examples, two by Brandwein and one by Tarras, a pedal grace-note is used by attaching the same grace-note to consecutive primary tones to create the effect of a pedal tone accompanying the melody.



Example 4.2. Pedal grace-note

Trills, Mordents, and Turns

The use of trills was widely varied in the music studied by Rubin, used frequently in some tunes and not at all in others. Almost all are simple trills consisting of a principal tone and an upper neighbor. The number of tones in the trill is dependent on the length of the principal tone as well as the speed of the trill itself. Within individual meters, there are certain note values which are trilled more than others. In duple meter, eighth notes and dotted eighth notes are most frequently trilled. The trills themselves range from three tones, the equivalent of a mordent, to as many as fifteen tones although most trills in the sample contain five. Mordents and turns are absent from Brandwein's recordings in Rubin's sample, and rarely used by Tarras.

Trills (figure 4.8 and 4.9) begin on either the upper neighbor with a grace note before the beat or begin on the beat with the principal tone. Trill variants that occur less frequently are appoggiatura trills, syncopated trills beginning on the second sixteenth

note of the beat, trills that begin before and end after the stressed beat, and trills that begin before a stressed beat and end on it. The final two trill types appear only in 3/8 examples, a meter used in klezmer forms that allows more flexible phrasing.¹⁶⁹ The interval between the principal tone and the upper neighbor is a major or minor second, except in the case of some three tone trills where the upper neighbor can be at the interval of a minor third. In most cases, the trill lasts for the entirety of the note length but will occasionally stop early and hold a single pitch for the remainder of the duration.



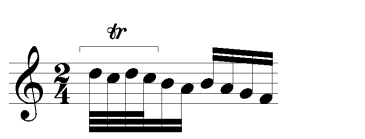
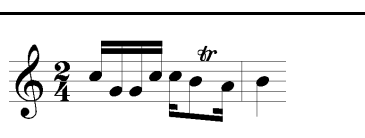
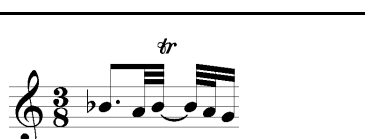
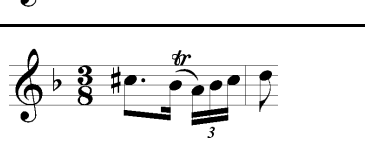
On beat main tone trill	
Pre-beat grace-note trill	
On beat upper-tone trill	
Syncopated trill	
Straddling trill	
Non-stressed off-beat trill	

Figure 4.8. Trill types

¹⁶⁹ Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 300.



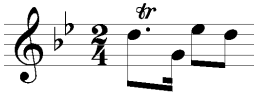

Notated	Played
 <p>Musical notation in 2/4 time, treble clef. A descending scalar pattern of four notes (G4, F4, E4, D4) is shown. A trill is indicated by a wavy line under the first note (G4).</p>	 <p>Musical notation in 2/4 time, treble clef. A descending scalar pattern of four notes (G4, F4, E4, D4) is shown. A trill is indicated by a wavy line under the first note (G4), which is also marked with a triplet '3' above it.</p>
 <p>Musical notation in 2/4 time, treble clef. A cadential figure consisting of a dotted quarter note (G4) followed by an eighth note (F4) and a quarter note (E4) is shown. A trill is indicated by a wavy line above the dotted quarter note.</p>	 <p>Musical notation in 2/4 time, treble clef. A cadential figure consisting of a dotted quarter note (G4) followed by an eighth note (F4) and a quarter note (E4) is shown. A trill is indicated by a wavy line above the dotted quarter note, which is also marked with a '5' below it, indicating a five-note run.</p>

Figure 4.9. Trill notations

Rubin identifies four basic patterns for trills in his study, with many trills falling into multiple patterns. The first pattern is when the trill occurs on one of the final three or four notes of a descending scalar pattern of at least three notes. The second is part of a descending sequence of thirds followed by an ascending second, the same as LUN-N figures. The third pattern ornaments stereotypical cadential or pre-cadential figures. The final trill pattern adds intensity or stress to particularly important scale degrees or metrically-stressed tones. There are also occasional ornaments that approximate the essence of a trill. On a few recordings in the sample, Brandwein trills on a resonance fingering which creates a timbre trill, and both Tarras and Brandwein utilize an intense vibrato that can have a similar effect to a trill.¹⁷⁰

Tone Bends and Slides

What many modern klezmer music practitioners call a *krekhits* Rubin designates as tone bent at end of note duration (TBE). This ornament (figure 4.10) produces an effect much like a yodel that simulates the cracking of the human voice. The ornament itself consists of a quick glissando at the end of the tone stopped abruptly by some combination of changes to the throat, embouchure, and tongue. Rubin identifies three

¹⁷⁰ Resonance fingerings alter the timbre and occasionally the tuning of a note without significantly altering the pitch. They are commonly used by classical players to improve clarity and pitch in certain situations.

uses of TBE. The first (1) is to add energy and activity to a static section. The second (2) is an alternate method of articulation, mostly used in scalar motion or sequences of a descending third followed by an ascending second. The third (3) use is to begin a cadential or cadential-like pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. Finally, the TBE is frequently used to conclude LUN-S figures and also as an impetus for a trill.

The opposite of the TBE is the tone bent at beginning of note duration (TBB). In this ornament, the tone begins below the intended pitch and is bent up, usually rather quickly, to pitch. The ornament is similar to the scoop used in jazz performance practice. Rubin identifies four specific uses for this ornament in his sample. The first (1) is to separate the metrically-stressed higher note of a disjunct interval which often starts a new phrase. The second (2) use is on the first note of a phrase if it begins on an off-beat. The third (3) use is on the first note of a descending line of sixteenth notes. The final (4) use is to mark the end of an ascending passage of eighth or sixteenth notes.

A third type of tone bend is the tone bent in mid-duration (TBM) in which a note lasting at least one beat is separated with a note bend before returning to the original pitch. This pitch bend can span an interval as large as a minor second. The TBM is used in two specific ways in Rubin's sample. The first (1) is to connect two phrases. In this case, it demarcates the end of one phrase from the beginning of another. The second (2) use is as an alternative form of articulation to separate two notes of the same pitch. Similar to the TBM is the tone bent twice in mid-duration (TBT) in which a single note is bent twice over its duration.

A slide between two tones (SBT) is when two tones of different pitches are connected, ascending or descending, by a glissando. Occasionally, this type of ornament

has a structure that begins similarly to a TBM. It first moves downward from the first note before ascending up to the second note. Most commonly, slides cover the interval of a second or third when ascending and a second when descending, although Rubin identified examples where larger intervals were used in both directions. This ornament is most commonly used as a way to connect two slurred notes.

The SBT ornament has four specific uses in Rubin's sample. The first (1) is to connect two notes slurred across a barline in ascending or descending motion. The second (2) is to connect an ascending chromatic passing tone to the resolving note. The third (3) is to connect the final two notes of syncopated figures that follow the shape of LUN-S. The final (4) use is more general and is used to connect two slurred notes.






TBE (1)	
TBE (2)	
TBE (3)	
TBB (1)	
TBB (2)	
TBB (3)	
TBM (1)	
TBM (2)	
SBT (1)	
SBT (2)	
SBT (3)	
SBT (4)	

Figure 4.10. Typical uses of TBE, TBB, TBM, and SBT

Ornament Combinations

Brandwein and Tarras frequently linked together different ornament types. Rubin found that these ornament combinations usually consisted of only Group Two ornaments (without changes to fingerings) or Group Two and Group One ornaments (with changes to fingerings) together, which is understandable since it would be difficult for a performer to produce successive ornaments without the use of the fingers. It was determined that ornament combinations occur in four possible instances: (1) When two or more ornaments embellish the same note, (2) when at least one ornament type embellishes a series of repeated tones, (3) when one ornament ends a note and another one begins the following note, and (4) when a stressed tone immediately preceding a non-stressed, three-note ornament is embellished. In Rubin's sample, it was more common to see ornament combinations begin with group Two ornaments produced without the fingers.

Of all the possible ornament combinations there are a surprisingly small number that occur with such frequency to be considered typical of either Brandwein or Tarras's performance style. These units combinations are: TBE+TR, TBB+TBM, SBT+TR, LUN-S+TBE, and LUN-S+TBM. There are also certain ornament combinations that are favored by only Tarras or Brandwein in Rubin's sample. Ornament units favored by Brandwein are: TBE+TBB, TBB+SBT, and TBM+TBE. Ornament units favored by Tarras are: SBT+TBE, LUN-S+SBT, STG+TBE, TTG+SBT, and TTG+TR.

Recordings in the Present Study

As was previously discussed, many klezmer music performers and scholars discuss bands on a spectrum of early revival to contemporary and authentic to unauthentic. While the exact labels may differ from person to person, bands are

commonly affixed these labels by record labels, commentators, or the bands themselves. Therefore, it would be expected to see a marked difference in ornamentation and melodic interpretation. The recordings listed below represent a wide variety of bands' recordings under the klezmer designation.

Table 4.2. Modern recordings of *Der Heyser Bulgar* used in study

Date	Band	Album	Clarinetist
1981	The Klezmerim	Metropolis	David Julian Gray
1981	Klezmer Conservatory Band	Yiddishe Renaissance	Don Byron
1990	Klezomatics	Rhythm + Jews	David Krakauer
1990	Di Gojim	Klezmerim	Jaap Mulder
1995	David Krakauer Trio	Klezmer Madness	David Krakauer
1996	Maxwell Street Klezmer Band	You Should Be So Lucky!	Shelly Yoelin
1998	The Burning Bush	Klezmer and Hassidic Music	Ben Harlan

Table 4.3. Modern recordings of *Firn di Mekhutanim Aheym* used in study

Date	Band	Album	Clarinetist
1978	The Klezmerim	Streets of Gold	David Julian Gray
1979	Zev Feldman and Andy Statman	Jewish Klezmer Music	Andy Statman
1991	Di Gojim	Grine Medine	Jaap Mulder
1993	Klezmer Conservatory Band	13th Anniversary Live!	Ilene Stahl
1994	Maxwell Street Klezmer Band	You Should Be So Lucky!	Jeff Jeziorski
1998	The Burning Bush	Klezmer and Hassidic Music	Ben Harlan
2001	Margot Leverett	The Art of Klezmer Clarinet	Margot Leverett
2008	Souls of Fire	Firedancing	Duncan Brown

The present study uses what Anklewicz calls descriptive transcriptions, detailed analysis of ornamentation, tempo, and melodic structure of the recordings.¹⁷¹ Descriptive transcriptions of modern clarinet players are compared to the source recordings and performance practice of early 20th century clarinetists as documented by Rubin. The

¹⁷¹ Anklewicz, *Musical Hybridites*, 16.

ornament types and ornament combinations utilized by modern players, as well as their placement within phrases, will help illuminate whether or not the language of klezmer ornamentation has remained unchanged in the past hundred years.

CHAPTER V

MODERN ORNAMENTATION IN *DER HEYSER* *BULGAR* AND *FIRN DI MEKHUTONIM* *AHEYM*

Analysis of ornamentation in these two works can provide insight into the language of today's klezmer clarinet performers and indicate any shift in aesthetics since the early twentieth-century. As outlined above, Joel Rubin identified striking similarities in ornamentation by both Dave Tarras and Naftule Brandwein using recordings from the 1920s.¹⁷² Given their stature in the world of klezmer music at the time, it is likely that this was the standard style at least among elite klezmer performers and possibly serves as the template upon which modern performances are built. The following chapter discusses the ways in which ornamentation in modern performances of *Der Heyser Bulgar* and *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym* compares to performance practice outlined by Rubin. Modern performances are held up against Brandwein's 1923 recording as well as two recordings made by Tarras. Tarras recorded the tune once in 1925 with Joseph Cherniavsky's Yiddish American Jazz-Band under the title *Chasene Nigunim* (wedding songs) and again in 1929 with the Abe Schwartz Orchestra under the title *Gelebt und Gelacht* (live and laugh). Comparisons are made by calculating the frequency and rate of ornamentation, determining the prevalence of ornament types, and addressing ornament use in specific phrases.

¹⁷² Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 406.

Ornament Frequency and Type

To begin, it is beneficial to understand general trends in frequency of ornamentation as well as distribution of ornament types. Doing so can speak to any significant departures from 1920s klezmer style and any existing similarities among modern performers.

Table 5.1. OPM in *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym*

Ensemble	Ornaments per measure	Difference from Brandwein	Approx. bpm
Brandwein	0.724	0	172
Burning Bush	0.227	-0.497	136
KCB	0.16	-0.564	130
Klezmorim	0.479	-0.245	144
Leverett	0.856	0.132	110
Maxwell Street	1.195	0.471	143
Souls of Fire	0.098	-0.626	139
Statman	0.4	-0.324	148

The majority of modern recordings of *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym* analyzed for the present study contained a fewer number of ornaments per measure (OPM) than that of Brandwein.¹⁷³ Logic would dictate that OPM would be inversely proportional to tempo. Faster tempi and shorter note durations leave less space in which to add ornaments, so it would make sense that a greater number of ornaments would appear at a slower tempo. However, the density of ornaments in Brandwein's recording exceeds most of the recordings in this study, despite the significantly faster tempo, and one of the two modern recordings with a greater OPM than Brandwein is played at a significantly slower tempo.

¹⁷³ OPM is calculated by dividing the total number of ornaments by the total number of measures.

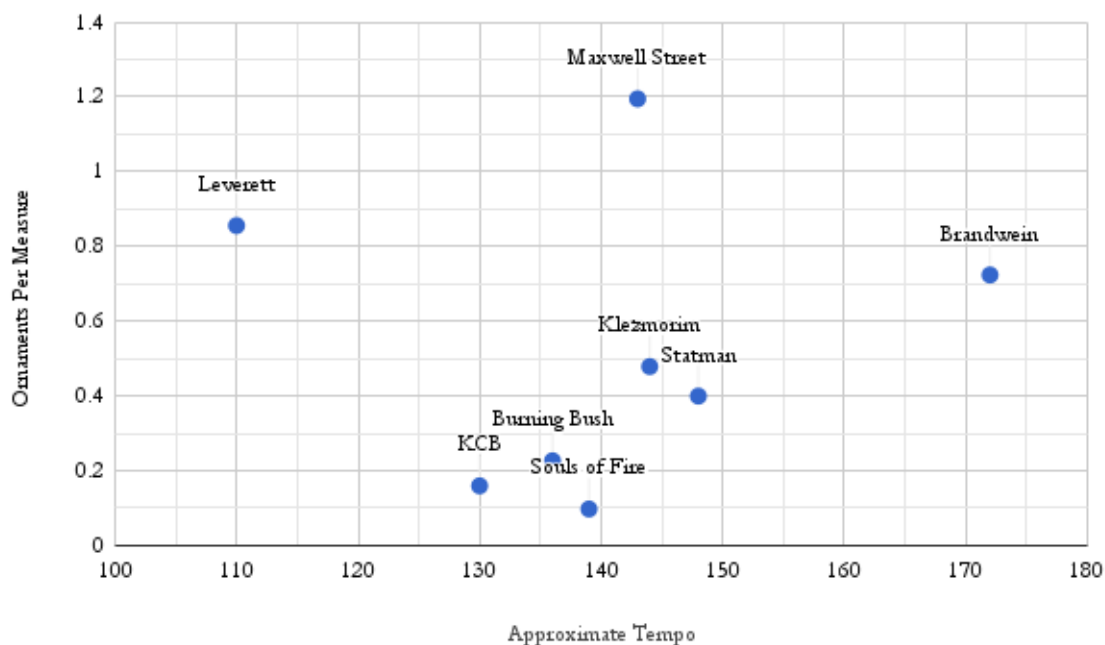


Figure 5.1. OPM vs. tempo in *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym*

Modern recordings of *Der Heyser Bulgar* also deviate significantly in both OPM and tempo from that of Brandwein.

Table 5.2. OPM in *Der Heyser Bulgar*

Ensemble	Ornaments per measure	Difference from Brandwein	Approx. bpm
Brandwein	0.611	0	138
Burning Bush	0.421	-0.19	133
Cherniavsky (Tarras)	0.801	0.19	168
Di Gojim	0.395	-0.216	176
KCB	0.486	-0.125	176
Klezmatics	0.657	0.046	144
Klezmorim	0.477	-0.134	153
Krakauer Trio	0.703	0.092	146
MSKB	0.592	-0.019	156
Schwartz (Tarras)	0.896	0.285	144

Again, the density of ornamentation in Brandwein's recording exceeds that of the modern recordings included in the study, except for those by The Klezmatics and the David Krakauer Trio. Both of Tarras's recordings of *Der Heyser Bulgar* contain a greater concentration of ornaments than Brandwein, surprising considering the recording he made with Joseph Cheriavsky's ensemble is at a significantly faster tempo. The fact that performances by Tarras and Brandwein demonstrate the greatest frequency of ornamentation would seem to indicate that ornamentation was generally denser in the 1920s.

Brandwein's tempo is significantly slower than all but one of the included modern recordings, and Tarras's recording with Abe Schwartz also ranks among the slowest. This suggests that modern klezmer performers may be less beholden to more traditional dance tempi, but the latter cannot be considered a new phenomenon. The Cherniavsky recordings is a tempo too fast to dance a traditional *bulgar*, and that would have been known to the performers.

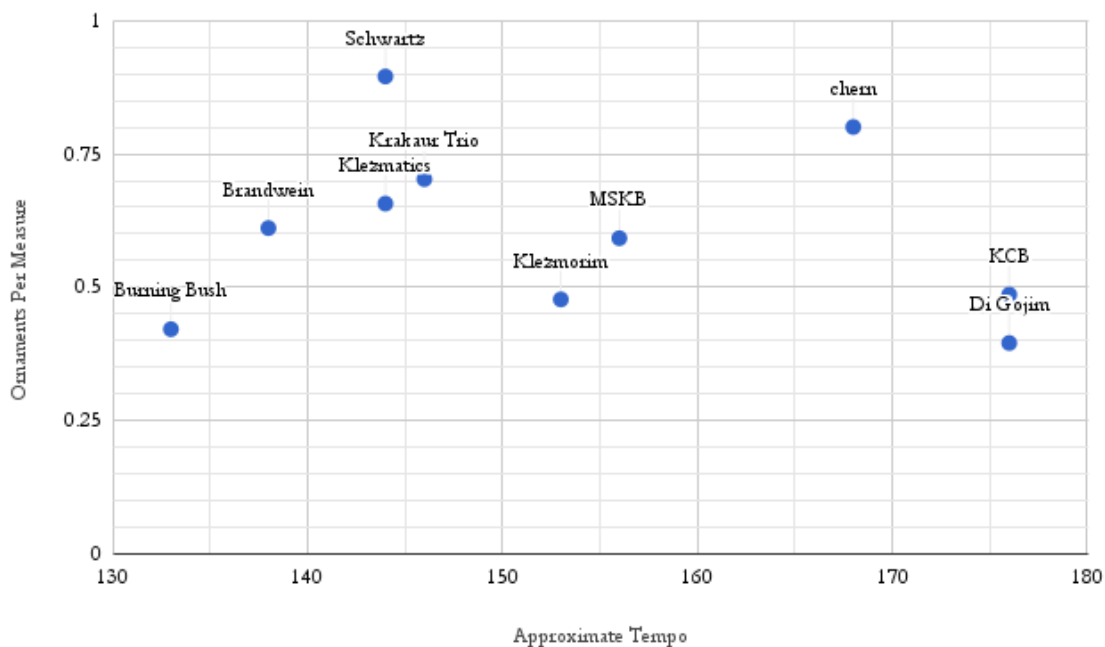


Figure 5.2. OPM vs. tempo in *Der Heyser Bulgar*

In general, the faster a performer takes the tune, the fewer ornaments they are likely to include. The Pearson's correlation coefficient measures the linear correlation between two values with -1 indicating a strong negative correlation, 0 indicating no correlation, and 1 indicating a strong positive correlation. The correlation between tempo and rate of ornamentation for each tune demonstrates essentially no correlation for *Firn di Mekhutanim Aheym* ($r=0.055$) and only a weak negative correlation for *Der Heyser Bulgar* ($r=-0.213$.) However, the sample size is small enough that one or two outliers can have a significant impact on the calculation. If The Burning Bush and Cherniavsky's recordings of *Der Heyser Bulgar* is removed from the data set, the correlation coefficient increases to -0.715 indicating a moderately strong negative correlation. After excluding the recordings of *Firn di Mekhutanim Aheym* by Margot Leverett and the Maxwell Street Klezmer Band, the correlation coefficient indicates a very strong positive correlation ($r=0.906$). If those recordings are not outliers, then there is no clear relationship between

tempo and ornament density. If those recordings are not outliers, then the two tunes suggest opposing relationships, and there is still no clear trend.

In addition to differences in OPM, the type of ornament employed varies greatly from performer to performer and frequently contrasts significantly from Brandwein. A comparison of Group One and Group Two ornaments in each piece shows Brandwein relying on Group One ornaments more heavily (64.08%) than most of the more modern performers (average 49.43%) in *Mekhutonim*. The same is true in *Der Heyser Bulgar*, although the differences are less pronounced from performer to performer. Only the performance of Di Gojim relies on ornament group to a greatly higher degree than the other on *Heyser*. It is worth noting that Tarras also relies on Group Two ornaments to a slightly greater degree than Brandwein.

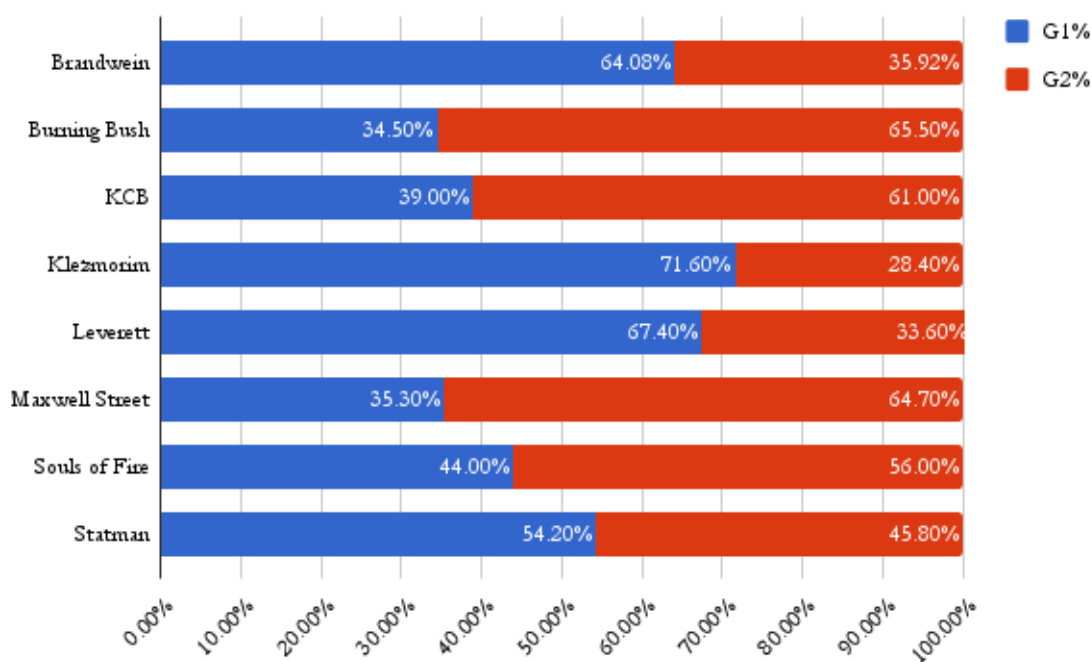


Figure 5.3. Group One vs. Group Two ornaments in *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym*

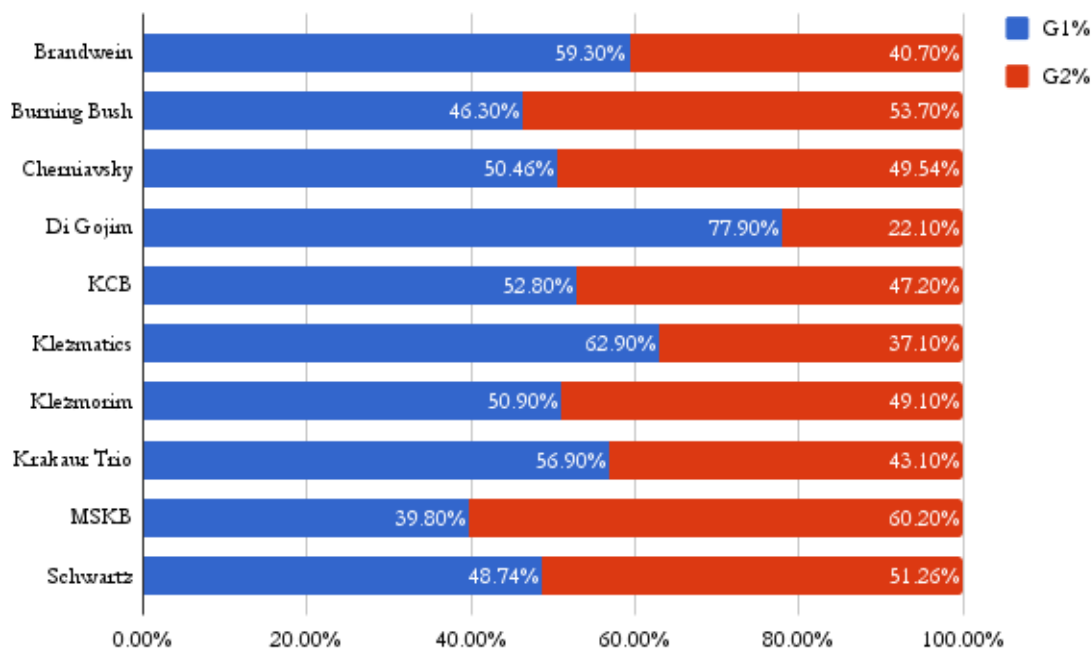


Figure 5.4. Group One vs. Group Two ornaments in *Der Heyser Bulgar*

While the exact proportion of ornaments varies from performer to performer, most of the included performers demonstrate a greater proclivity for Group Two ornaments than Brandwein. However, Group Two ornaments generally make up a greater share of total ornaments in *Mekhutonim* (median of 50.9%) compared to *Heyser* (48.15%). This is likely explained by the technical demands of each piece. *Der Heyser Bulgar* is more technically demanding and leaves less space for ornaments when compared to *Mekhutonim*. Group Two ornaments, which involve manipulation of the tongue and oral cavity, typically take longer to execute. Group One ornaments, many of which can be executed with the simple flick of a finger, tend to take much less time.

If the above were true, it would be expected that performers who chose faster tempi would skew more toward Group One ornaments. Both Di Gojjan and The Klezmer Conservatory Band took *Der Heyser Bulgar* at approximately 176 beats per minute. Don

Byron of the Klezmer Conservatory Band utilizes Group Two ornaments 47.2% of the time, which is only slightly above the mean of 44.45%. Jaap Mulder of Di Gojim falls far short of the average by utilizing Group Two ornaments 22.1% of the time. A similar situation exists in *Mekhutonim* where Leverett's approximate tempo of 110 bpm is at least 20 bpm slower than any other included performance, yet she utilizes Group Two ornaments at a lower proportion than all but one other clarinetist studied. The discrepancy is most likely the result of personal preference for or comfort with certain ornaments.

The trends found in the above data may speak to a changing aesthetic among modern performers. Not surprising are the clear differences in tempo that suggest modern performers are less concerned or less aware of the traditional dance tempi with which these tunes are associated. However, the greater density of ornamentation in the recordings of Tarras and Brandwein runs counter to a common belief, expressed by Max Epstein in chapter three, that modern performers over-ornament. Less conclusive is the distribution of group one and group two ornaments. There is some evidence to suggest that modern performers rely more heavily on group two ornaments, but the data are far from conclusive.

Further exploration of ornament types shows significant variation in the specific ornaments employed by each performer. While both Brandwein and Margot Leverett use Group One ornaments approximately 65% of the time in *Mekhutonim*, more than half of the Group One ornaments used by Brandwein were lower upper neighbors (LUN) and same-pitch upper neighbors (SPU), and more than half of those used by Leverett were non-stressed off-beat trills (NSOB) and double grace notes (DG). In fact, no included

modern recording of *Mekhutonim* demonstrates Brandwein's preference for the LUN ornament, and only one other recording demonstrates Brandwein's preference for the SPU ornament. Instead, nearly all modern recordings included in the study show a clear preference for the on-beat main-tone trill (OBMT). This ornament is present in Brandwein's recording but only accounts for twelve out of ninety-one Group One ornaments.

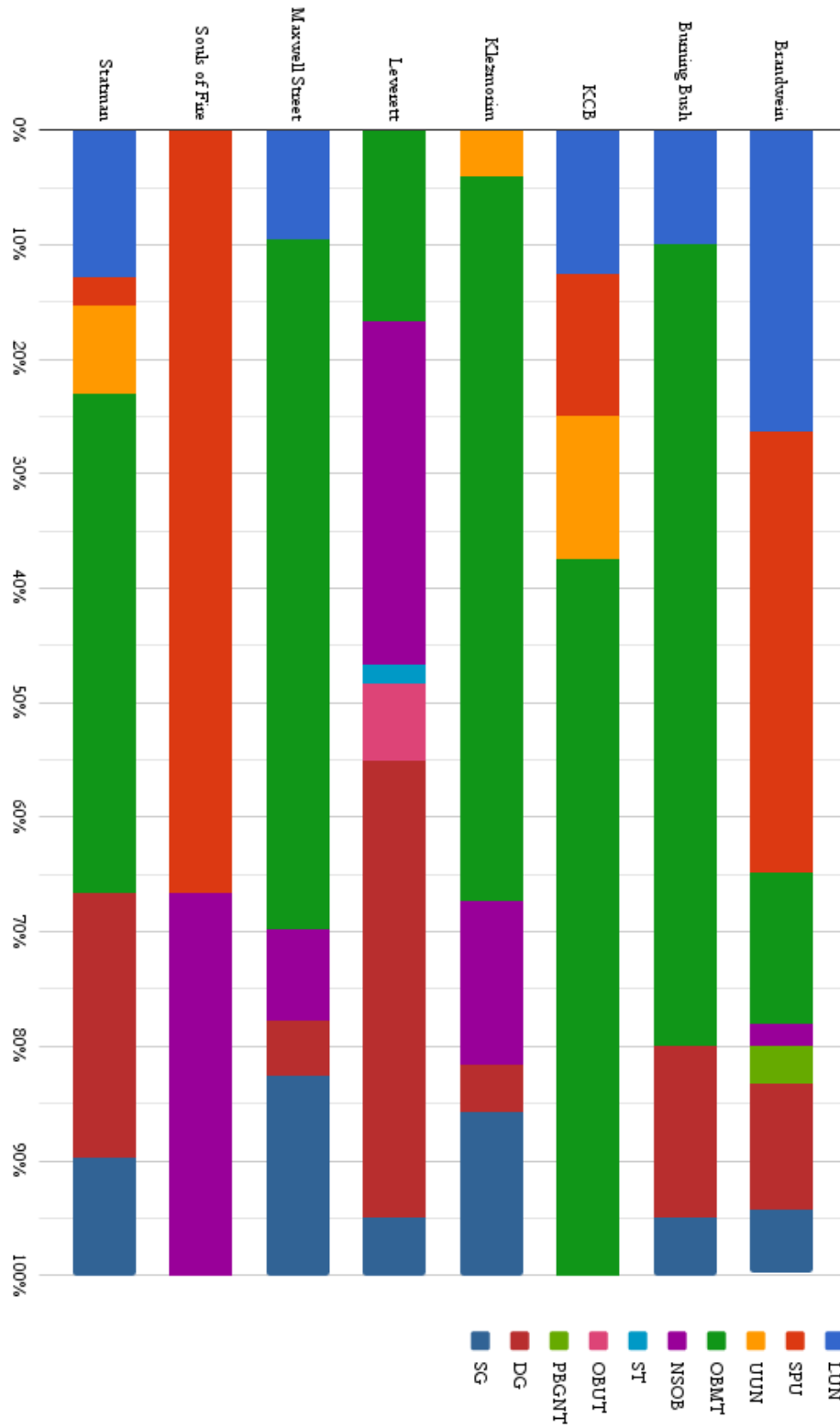


Figure 5.5. Group One ornaments in *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym*

The distribution of Group One ornaments in *Der Heyser Bulgar* displays a much greater degree of homogeneity than *Mekhutonim*. While OBMT seemed to be a clear preference for modern performers on *Mekhutonim* and that this would lead us to believe in a general difference between modern and historic performance, in *Heyser* both Brandwein and most of the modern performers prefer the OBMT and, to a lesser degree, the LUN. The OBMT ranks as the most popular ornament for each performer and the LUN second most prevalent for all but two.

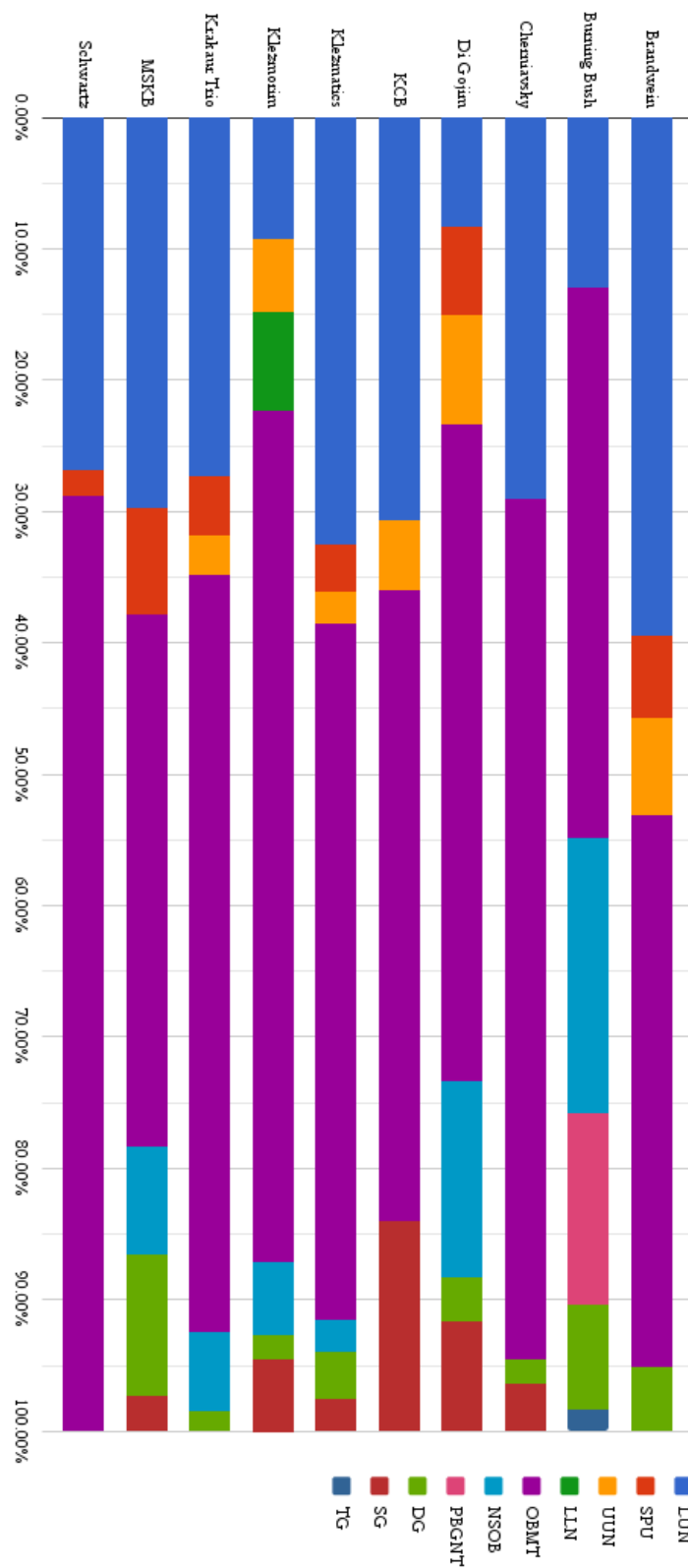


Figure 5.6. Group One ornaments in *Der Heyser Bulgar*

The similarities here may draw some influence from Brandwein, but that cannot be the sole contributing factor. It is possible that the similarities in Group One ornament distribution in *Heyser* are mere coincidence. The OBMT ornament is easily the most popular Group One ornament among included modern performers in *Heyser* and five of the seven included modern performing in *Mekhutonim*. This may indicate a preference for the OBMT among modern klezmer clarinetists. It is possible that modern performers are drawing upon Tarras's ornament choice as he demonstrates a clear preference for the OMBT in both recordings. However, it is unlikely that modern performers are channeling Tarras given the strong association between Brandwein and *Der Heyser Bulgar*.

The distribution of Group Two ornaments is not as diverse as the distribution of Group One ornaments, but there are also far fewer types of Group Two ornaments from which a performer can choose. Brandwein makes use of all four Group Two ornament types, but it is the Tone Bent at End of Note Duration (TBE) and, to a lesser degree, the Tone Bent at Mid-Duration (TBM) that appear most frequently in both *Heyser* and *Mekhutonim*. In his two recordings of *Der Heyser Bulgar*, Tarras demonstrates a similar proclivity toward the TBE and the TBM. There is no modern performer in the study who favors both of these ornaments to the same degree as Brandwein or Tarras. However, there are modern performers who frequently rely on either the TBE or TBM. It makes up at least 30% of all Group Two ornaments played by The Maxwell Street Klezmer Band, The Klezmer Conservatory Band, and Margot Leverett and just short of 30% of Group Two ornaments played by The Burning Bush. The TBM makes up 23.53% of Brandwein's Group Two ornaments, which is a similar distribution to that of Souls of Fire (28.57%) and Andy Statman (33.33%).

The most significant commonality among the modern performances is the increased use of the slide between tones (SBT). When compared to Brandwein and Tarras, the SBT ornament makes up a far greater share of Group Two ornaments played by modern performers.

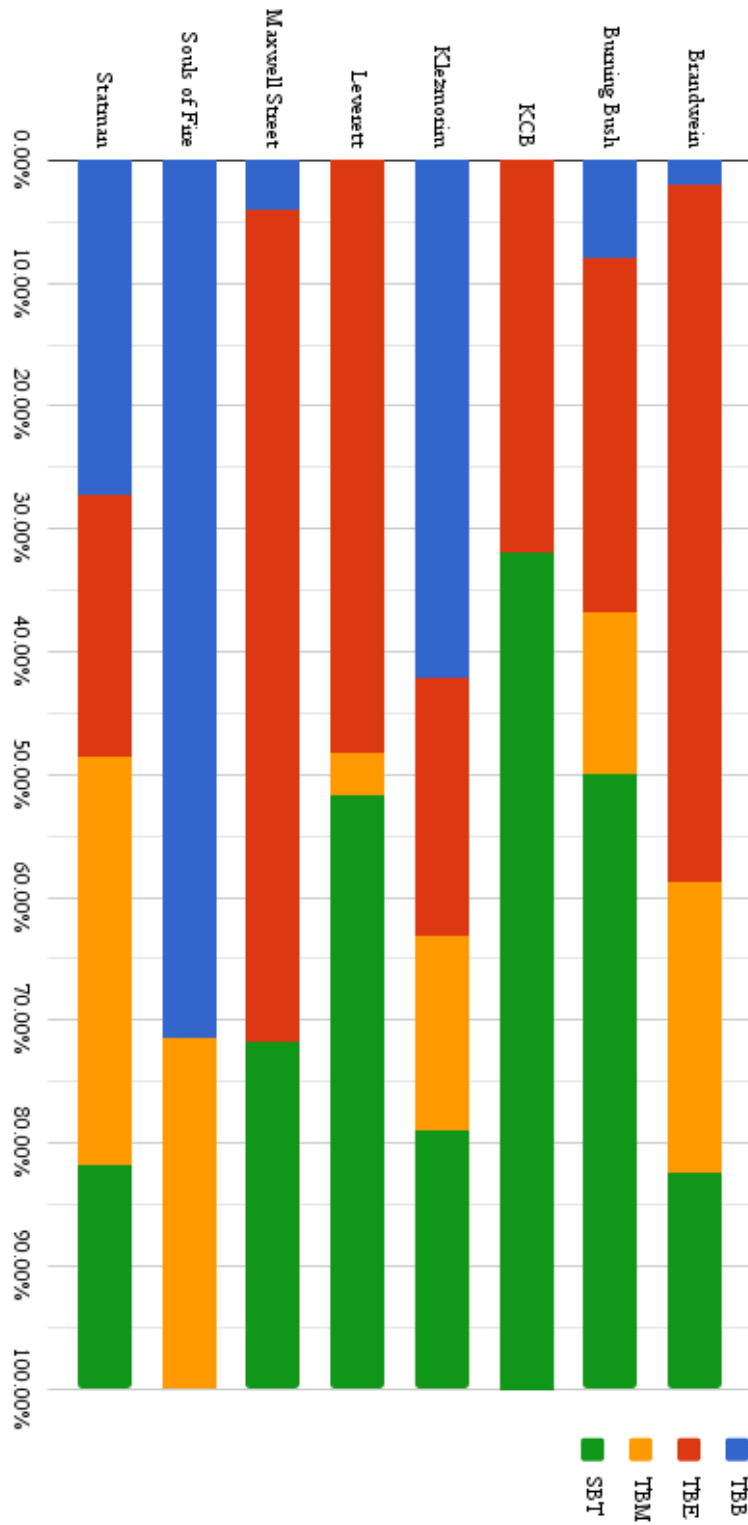


Figure 5.7. Distribution of Group Two ornaments in *Firn di Mekhutunim Aheym*

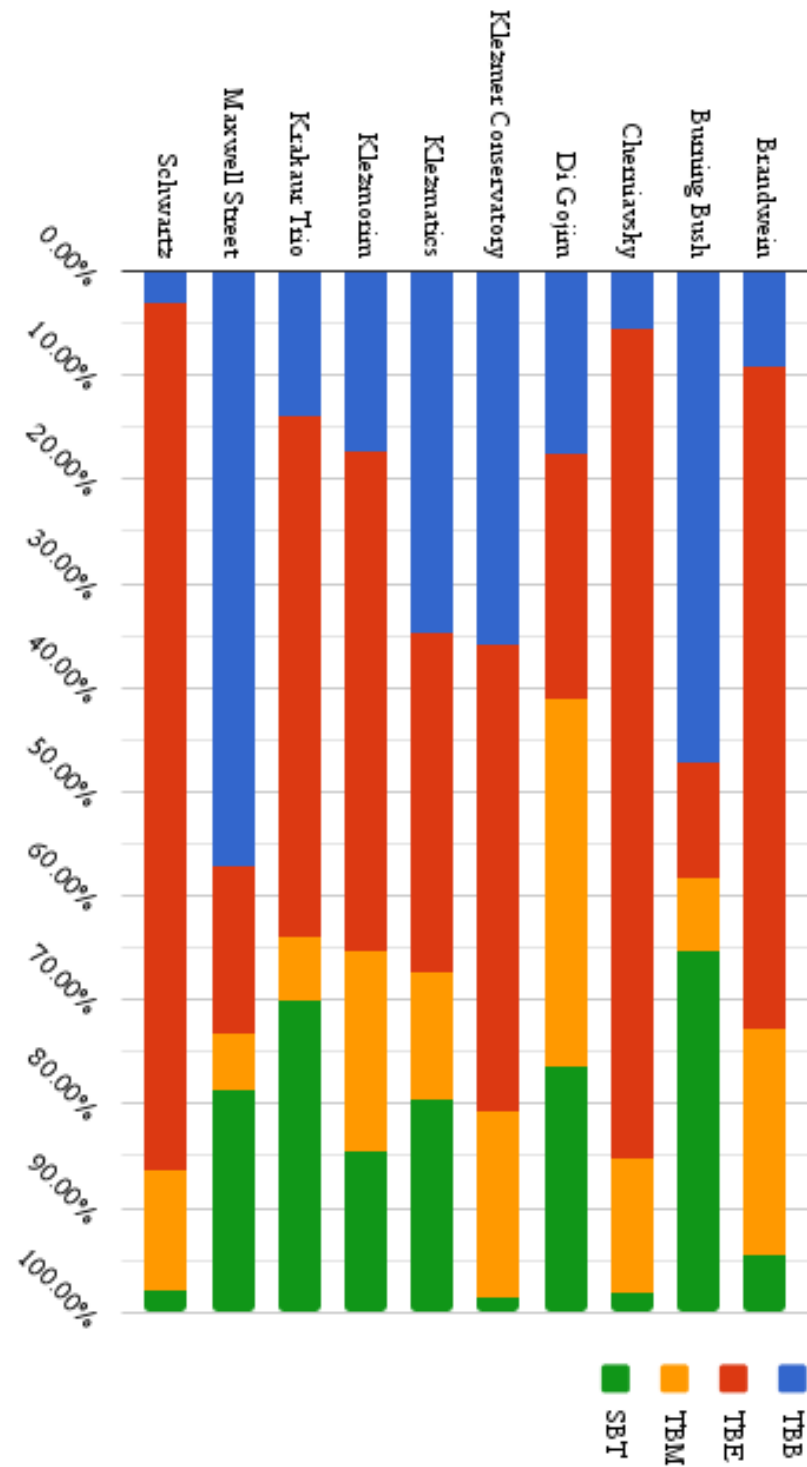


Figure 5.8. Distribution of Group Two ornaments in *Der Heyser Bulgar*

Specific Usage of Ornaments

Comparing the performance of identical phrases exposes both similarities and differences in each performer's approach when compared to Brandwein as well as the group as a whole.¹⁷⁴ Example 5.1 displays each performer's interpretation of the second half of the B section of *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym*. The repetitive nature of the melody implores the performer to ornament, and most oblige. However, performers differ on the type of ornament employed as well as the specific placement. When Brandwein uses a Group One ornament, it is most frequently an SPU placed between the fourth and fifth sixteenth note of the measure. Souls of Fire makes use of the SPU ornament but much less frequently than Brandwein.

The most popular Group One ornament for this excerpt in the rest of the sample is the mordent, which is classified as an OBMT. Margot Leverett, the Maxwell Street Klezmer Band, the Klezmorim, and the Burning Bush all use mordents on repeated pitches. Andy Statman uses double grace notes and a rhythmical variation that both create a similar effect to a mordent. Maxwell Street and the Klezmorim place mordents on the third and fifth sixteenth notes, while Leverett places mordents on the fourth sixteenth note in addition to double grace notes between the third and fourth sixteenth notes. Where Brandwein uses the LUN figure, Statman places a double grace note before the downbeat of the fourth measure. Statman's rhythmic variation divides the fourth sixteenth note into two thirty-second notes which happens in the same place as Brandwein's SPU figure. This passage clearly demonstrates a shared aesthetic. Each performer knows that this passage calls for ornamentation, and each performer makes use

¹⁷⁴ The following transcriptions are written in concert pitch. Andy Statman's performance of *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym* is a whole step below that of Brandwein, and the Burning Bush's performance of the same piece is played an octave below Brandwein.

of similar ornaments in similar locations despite being recorded in different eras. Yet, for all the similarities, significant differences in execution signal the existence of a very individualized style.

Brandwein makes frequent use of the TBE ornament in his performance, but the figure appears sparingly in the rest of the sample. Figures 5.7 and 5.8 confirm this trend in the sample as a whole. Statman uses the ornament but to a lesser degree. Maxwell Street and Burning Bush both use Group Two ornaments in this passage, but they make use of the SBT and TBB figures. The SBT and TBB ornaments also are prevalent in jazz which may explain these performers' inclination to use the SBT and TBB instead of the TBE.

The image displays a musical score for the B section of the piece "Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym". The score is arranged in two systems, each containing eight staves. The instruments are listed on the left of each staff: Brandwein, Leverett, Maxwell Street, Statman, Burning Bush, Klezmer Conservatory, Klezmorim, and Souls of Fire. The first system is labeled "1st" and the second system is labeled "2nd". The music is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, such as eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also dynamic markings like *tr* (trill) and articulation marks like *acc* (accents). The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs.

Example 5.1. Performances of B section of *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym*

The beginning of the C section provides another example of a place where the melody seemingly begs the performer to ornament. The long sustained tones leave ample time for ornamentation, and Brandwein demonstrates a clear preference for Group Two ornaments in this situation, making use of the TBM and SBT figures. The use of the TBM on the sustained tone is shared by Statman and the Klezmerim. Leverett and Maxwell Street opt for rhythmic or melodic variation instead of a Group Two ornament in this location. Maxwell Street's use of melodic variation and ornamentation on the second iteration is so severe that it renders the melody briefly unrecognizable.

Additionally, a few performers engage what shall be termed a vibrato trill. This is a very fast, exaggerated vibrato that mimics a trill executed with the fingers. The vibrato trill is strikingly similar to Brandwein's typical vibrato, although Brandwein plays this passage mostly straight-tone. The Burning Bush is the only performer who relies on a Group One ornament by making use of the OBMT. The use of a vibrato trill by some performers and a finger trill by another is likely an example of a similar sensibility executed differently as both ornaments serve a similar function.

As the passage descends, Brandwein relies more on Group One ornaments or rhythmic variation that gives the impression of a Group One ornament, in this case a single grace tone. The modern recordings rely almost entirely on variation with the occasional use of ornamentation. While the variation itself differs, Statman, Burning Bush, and Souls of Fire all include variations in similar locations to Brandwein and in a way that reflects his interpretation. In this descending passage, the single grace notes used by the Klezmerim, while not metered like Brandwein's variation, come closest to mimicking that original performance.

This musical score is for a klezmer ensemble, featuring eight parts: Brandwein, Leverett, Maxwell Street, Statman, Burning Bush, Klezmer Conservatory, Klezmorim, and Souls of Fire. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes a first ending for Brandwein and a second ending for Souls of Fire. The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Notable musical techniques include vibrato trills, triplets, and quintuplets. The notation includes slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. The score is presented on a page numbered 114.

2
23 [Title]

34

Example 5.2. Performances of C section of *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym*

There appear to be enough similarities in placement of ornaments in the previous examples to again suggest a similar aesthetic, even while the execution of ornaments demonstrates differing sensibilities. Likewise, analysis of *Der Heyser Bulgar* further indicates the likelihood of a shared aesthetic, demonstrated by some degree of agreement in ornament placement.

Example 5.3 shows the opening measures of *Der Heyser Bulgar*. To begin, Brandwein places an LUN figure on the first downbeat. Tarras does the same in his recording with Cherniavsky. Five of the seven modern performers place an ornament in the same location. The Klezmatics use the same LUN figure while Maxwell Street and the Krakauer Trio use a single grace (SG) note that has a similar effect as an LUN. Burning Bush uses a TBB and Klezmer Conservatory a TBE. In the second iteration of this melody, Brandwein precedes rhythmic variation with an SG. An SG is also used by the Klezmatics and the Krakauer Trio, who use nearly identical figures in the second and first iterations, respectively.

The tenth and eleventh measures provide another example of modern performers ornamenting a passage similarly to Brandwein. Brandwein places an OBMT on the first eighth note of measure ten and an OBMT on the downbeat of measure eleven. Every performer uses trills in at least one iteration of this passage, most including multiple trills in each iteration. Clearly, there is agreement on the treatment of this passage.

Despite some agreement in the ornamentation of the above passage, there remain significant differences. Overall, Brandwein demonstrates a clear preference for Group One ornaments in this passage while the modern performers use Group Two ornaments in greater frequency. This mirrors the overall trend displayed in figures 5.2 and 5.4.

Especially interesting is the SBT frequently used by the modern performers in the sixth measure. Brandwein does not use a Group Two ornament here in any iteration, but that ornament group is nearly ubiquitous among the rest of the sample.

Both the Klezmorim and Krakauer use an SBT in the sixth measure to connect two notes the interval of a fourth apart. Furthermore, The Burning Bush, The Klezmatiks, and Maxwell Street all make use of other Group Two ornaments in the same location. According to Rubin, using the SBT in this manner was not common in the recordings of Brandwein or Tarras who rarely played an SBT spanning greater than a third. However, there is one instance in *Der Heyser Bulgar* in which Brandwein uses that ornament to connect two notes an octave apart, but that is atypical in his body of work.¹⁷⁵ The ornament is found far more often in the included modern performances of both tunes and seems to be a fairly common way for modern performers to connect adjacent notes spanning at least the interval of a fourth.

In the recordings of Tarras and Brandwein, large intervals were more frequently ornamented with a TBB on the upper note.¹⁷⁶ The evidence here suggests that the SBT has supplanted the TBB in these situations. The different ornament choices clearly indicate a shift in sensibility among modern klezmer performers, but the similar placement to the TBB suggests some level of aesthetic continuity from then to now.

¹⁷⁵ Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 313.

¹⁷⁶ Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 307.

1st

Brandwein

Cherniavsky

Burning Bush

Krakauer Trio

Klezmorim

Di Gojim

Klezmaties

Maxwell Street

Klezmer Conservatory

Schwartz

13 2nd

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is a multi-staff arrangement for 11 klezmer bands. The top section, labeled '1st', contains ten staves for the following bands: Brandwein, Cherniavsky, Burning Bush, Krakauer Trio, Klezmorim, Di Gojim, Klezmaties, Maxwell Street, Klezmer Conservatory, and Schwartz. The bottom section, labeled '13 2nd', contains ten staves for the same bands. The music is written in a 2/4 time signature with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features intricate rhythmic patterns, including frequent triplets and trills. The notation includes various ornaments and articulations characteristic of klezmer music. The first ending concludes with a double bar line, and the second ending begins at measure 13.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the opening of *Der Heyser Bulgar*. The first system, labeled '3rd', consists of eight staves. The second system, labeled '4th', consists of eight staves. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, triplets (indicated by a '3' over a group of notes), and trills (indicated by a 'tr' above a note). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The music is written in a complex, multi-measure format, with many notes beamed together in groups. The overall style is characteristic of traditional Balkan folk music.

Example 5.3. Performances of opening of *Der Heyser Bulgar*

The opening of the B section in *Heyser* is another example of general agreement between Brandwein, Tarras, and modern performers in ornament placement. As in *Mekhutonim*, the sustained tone provides an opportunity for a performer to ornament, and every performer in the sample includes an ornament or variation in each iteration, with the exception of Di Gojim on the third iteration. Both of Tarras's recordings demonstrate a striking similarity to Brandwein by placing a lower neighbor on the downbeat and making use of the TBM. Brandwein's choice of the TBM is by far the most popular ornament among the modern performers as well. However, Maxwell Street is the only modern performer who also includes a lower neighbor on the same downbeat as Brandwein.

Measures three and four of example 5.4 provide the clearest evidence of modern performers taking influence from Brandwein's original recording. Brandwein uses an LUN figure on the first beat of measure three. Tarras plays an LUN-like figure in each iteration with Cherniavsky does not do so in his recording with Schwartz. The same figure is used in the first and second iterations by the Kakauer Trio, Maxwell Street, and the Klezmatics. Furthermore, Burning Bush and the Klezmer Conservatory Band both use a rhythmic variation that is a metered version of the LUN figure. Di Gojim places a mordent on the second eighth note of the third measure in the first and second iterations but employs the LUN ornament on the third and fourth iterations.

Brandwein's use of a trill on the downbeat of measure four is, again, nearly universally present in the sample. The Klezmer Conservatory Band is the only performer that does not once place a trill or trill-like figure on that downbeat.

1st

Brandwein

Burning Bush

Chemniavsky

Krakauer Trio

Klezmorim

Di Gojim

Klezmatics

Maxwell Street

Klezmer Conservatory

Schwartz

2nd

This musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system, labeled '1st', contains ten staves for the following bands: Brandwein, Burning Bush, Chemniavsky, Krakauer Trio, Klezmorim, Di Gojim, Klezmatics, Maxwell Street, Klezmer Conservatory, and Schwartz. The second system, labeled '2nd', contains ten staves for the same bands. Each staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 2/4 time signature. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Trills are indicated by 'tr' above notes. Triplet markings are shown as '3' above groups of notes. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of the second system.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the B section of 'Der Heyser Bulgar'. Each system consists of eight staves, with the top two staves of each system containing a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first system is labeled '3rd' at the beginning, and the second system is labeled '4th'. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Specific musical ornaments are marked with 'tr' (trill) and '3' (triplet). The score is presented in a standard musical notation style with a clear staff layout.

Example 5.4. Performances of B section of *Der Heyser Bulgar*

It is difficult to say whether passages such as these point to modern performers working from the same source recording or if it speaks to a similar language among the majority of modern klezmer performers. There are discernible similarities in ornament placement and type between modern performers and Tarras and Brandwein. However, there are also enough similarities between modern performances that are not shared by Tarras and Brandwein to suggest a shift in style over time. The internal conflict between remaining grounded in the past while forging new paths is a common theme among those who study modern klezmer music. Example 5.4 seems to be a microcosm of that internal conflict.

Instrument and Key

It has been established that personal preference for particular ornament types and the instrument itself can have a significant effect on ornamentation. The former is beyond the scope of the present study, but the latter can be explored. Every modern performer in the study was queried on the pitch and key system of the clarinet on which they performed for the selected recordings. Responses were received from about half of the performers. It is likely that the remaining performers recorded on Böehm-system clarinets. Publicity photos and photos of performances seem to confirm this suspicion, but it is difficult to know for sure without verification from the performer.

Table 5.3 lists the type of instrument known to be played by each performer on the recordings listed for *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym*, and table 5.4 lists instruments on recordings of *Der Heyser Bulgar*. Brandwein likely recorded both of these pieces on an Albert-system clarinet in C. The only performer in the present study to have definitively recorded on an Albert-system clarinet is David Julian Gray of the Klezmatics. However,

Gray recorded on a clarinet in E-flat while still performing each piece in the key of D as in Brandwein's original recording. That setup would have Gray performing in the transposed key of B and negotiating different fingerings than Brandwein.

Andy Statman studied with Dave Tarras, who gifted Statman his own Albert-system clarinet in C, and Tarras likely performed on such an instrument for his included recordings. However, it is unlikely that Statman is performing on such an instrument for *Mekhutonim*. Statman's performance is a whole-step below that of Brandwein, possibly because Statman is performing on a clarinet pitched in B-flat. The transposition would place him in the key of D, allowing Statman to use the same fingerings as Brandwein. Again, while the key of the piece provides insight into the pitch of the instrument, it is impossible to know the key system of the instrument without the performer's confirmation.

Table 5.3. Instruments Performed on *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym*

Band	Clarinetist	Instrument
The Klezmerim	David Julian Gray	Albert-System in E-flat
Zev Feldman and Andy Statman	Andy Statman	Unknown
Di Gojim	Jaap Mulder	Buffet-Klose system
Klezmer Conservatory Band	Ilene Stahl	Unknown
Maxwell Street Klezmer Band	Jeff Jeziorski	Unknown
The Burning Bush	Ben Harlan	Unknown
Margot Leverett	Margot Leverett	Buffet-Klose system
Souls of Fire	Duncan Brown	Unknown

Table 5.4. Instruments performed on *Der Heyser Bulgar*

Band	Clarinetist	Instrument
The Klezmerim	David Julian Gray	Albert-System in E-flat
Klezmer Conservatory Band	Don Byron	Unknown
Klezomatics	David Krakauer	Buffet-Klose system
Di Gojim	Jaap Mulder	Buffet-Klose system
David Krakauer Trio	David Krakauer	Buffet-Klose system
Maxwell Street Klezmer Band	Shelly Yoelin	Buffet-Klose system
The Burning Bush	Ben Harlan	Unknown

Example 5.5 compares transcriptions of performances of *Firn di Mekhutanim Aheym* by Andy Statman, David Julian Gray, Duncan Brown, and Naftule Brandwein with specific focus on ornamentation and how it relates to instrument and key choice. Brandwein performed this in the key of D and almost certainly on an Albert system clarinet in C. The instrument utilized by Brown is unknown. While he also performed this piece in the key of D, he played it an octave lower than other performers.

The most obvious difference is the diminished number of ornaments in Harlan's rendition. His is the only performance in the sample that plays the melody in a lower octave, making it much more difficult to manipulate the sound without the use of the fingers. It is therefore not surprising that Group Two ornaments are absent in this excerpt. Fourteen Group Two ornaments appear in his entire performance, averaging to 0.05 Group Two ornaments per measure, a number that pales in comparison to Brandwein (0.26), Statman (0.18), and Gray (0.14) who are all playing in a higher register.

In addition to difficulty of sound manipulation without the fingers, Brown's choice to play the melody in a lower octave also places it around a register break, which can create awkward fingerings and diminish the ability to easily execute Group One ornaments. This is a possible cause for the lower density of Group One ornaments in

Browns's performance (0.04 OPM) compared to Brandwein (0.46), Statman (0.22), and Gray (0.34). Choice of range has a clear effect on ornamentation in this example.

In another example, it is notable that the density of ornamentation between Gray and Statman is similar even while they are performing the piece in different keys (adjusted for instrument transposition). While example 5.5 does show Statman adhering more closely to Brandwein's original interpretation, Gray's ornament choice is clearly derived from Brandwein as well. The SBT employed by Gray to connect the first two notes and repeated throughout this selection is the same SBT used by Brandwein and Statman in measure seventeen. In measures three and nineteen, Gray makes use of Group Two ornaments like Brandwein and Statman but uses a TBB on the second and third eighth notes instead of a TBE. The TBB on beat three that begins above the main note also is out of place compared to common practice in Brandwein's era. It is possible that Gray recognized this as a place where klezmer performance practice dictated the use of an ornament but executed the ornament in a way more common to jazz than klezmer. The result is that there is a lot of similarity here.

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Firn di Mekhutunim Aheym" performed on four different clarinet models: Brandwein, Statman, Gray, and Brown. The score is organized into four systems, each containing four staves. The first system (measures 1-8) shows the initial entries for each instrument. The second system (measures 9-16) features a complex rhythmic pattern with frequent triplets and sixteenth-note runs. The third system (measures 17-24) continues this pattern with some melodic variations. The fourth system (measures 25-32) concludes the piece with a final melodic flourish. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/8. Various performance markings such as trills (tr), accents (^), and slurs are present throughout the score.

Example 5.5. Performances of *Firn di Mekhutunim Aheym* on various clarinets

For all the differences in the above performances, the similarities in ornament placement and execution suggest that the type of instrument has little impact on his or her ornament choice. Group Two ornaments are executed through the manipulation of the throat and oral cavity, so any differences in keywork should be insignificant in this regard. Furthermore, whether this is performed in the key of D on a clarinet in C, the transposed key of E on a clarinet in B-flat, or the transposed key of B on a clarinet in E-flat, the melody lies in such a way that the performer is not frequently forced to engage side keys or other fingerings that would limit Group One ornaments. Certainly, keywork does have some influence on ornamentation, but the influence is likely less than might be expected.

The similarities in ornamentation, despite differences in instrument key, provide a strong argument for a connection between 1920s ornamentation and more modern ornamentation in klezmer music. More importantly, they put to rest any misconceptions about the influence the instrument has on ornamentation. The key system and pitch of the clarinet may influence a performer's ornament choice, but this suggests it is not a strong influence.

Conclusions

As discussed in chapter three, modern performers and scholars of klezmer music frequently consider some performers to be more authentic than others. Since the klezmer revival began in the 1970s, modern performers have made attempts to brand themselves as authentic. In his book *The Essential Klezmer*, Seth Rogovoy provides a discography that, among other things, categorizes klezmer groups into different styles. Groups included in the present study are frequently assigned multiple styles including, “avant-

klezmer,” “classical-klezmer,” “jazz-klezmer,” “neo-Hasidim,” “progressive-klezmer,” “revivalist,” “world-beat klezmer,” and “Yiddishists.”¹⁷⁷ Rogovoy’s categories may be based more on marketing and identity than musical characteristics but, nonetheless, suggest clear stylistic differences. Yet, when it comes to ornamentation as studied here, the labels are inconsequential.

Rogovoy indicates that much of the Klezmer Conservatory Band’s repertoire comes from old 78s, a sentiment relayed in Hankus Netsky’s liner notes for the album *Yiddishe Renaissance*.¹⁷⁸ However, it is clear from the recordings in the present study that their performances are not simply transcriptions played out on stage. Even the tempo choices, 138 bpm for Brandwein and 176 for KCB in *Der Heyser Bulgar* and 172 for Brandwein and 130 for KCB in *Firn di Mekhutanim*, indicate that even musicians who study source recordings will make individual artistic decisions.

Analysis has demonstrated ways in which modern performers deviate from the original recordings. Modern performers in the study took *Der Heyser Bulgar* at a faster tempo and *Firn di Mekhutanim Aheym* at a slower tempo than Brandwein, and modern performances typically contained a lower density of ornaments. The distribution of Group One and Group Two ornaments also illuminates difference. On *Firn di Mekhutanim Aheym*, no one played a significantly higher proportion of Group One ornaments than Brandwein, but just over half played a significantly lower proportion. The differences were less pronounced in *Der Heyser Bulgar*, but, with the exception of Di Gojim and the Klezmatics, all modern performers still utilized Group One ornaments to a lesser degree than Brandwein.

¹⁷⁷ Rogovoy, *The Essential Klezmer*, 247–48.

¹⁷⁸ Hankus Netsky, notes to Klezmer Conservatory Band, *Yiddishe Renaissance* (1981), CD, Vanguard Records VCD 79450.

More focused analysis of specific ornament types further highlights differences and similarities with Brandwein. The distribution of specific Group One ornaments demonstrates little similarity between Brandwein and the modern performers in the study but does indicate a preference for the OBMT among modern clarinetists. Five of the seven modern performers used the OBMT ornament at least 40% of the time in *Mekhutonim*. The same is true of all modern performers in *Der Heyser Bulgar*, only now it is more in line with Brandwein's 40.98%.

With Group Two ornaments, Brandwein shows a propensity for the TBE over other Group Two ornaments in both pieces. Trends among the modern performers are not as clear among Group Two ornaments as they were for Group One. However, in neither piece was there a single modern performer who utilized the TBE ornament to the same degree, proportionally, as Brandwein. All modern performers favored the TBB more than Brandwein in *Der Heyser Bulgar*, and all but one performer favored the SBT more than Brandwein in *Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym*. All but one modern performer favored the SBT more than Brandwein in *Der Heyser Bulgar*. The modern preference for the TBB and SBT in comparison to Brandwein's preference for the TBE again strongly speaks to a shift in sensibility between klezmer clarinetists from before and after the klezmer renaissance.

Rubin studied the music of Tarras and Brandwein with the idea that it is a musical language and found a "remarkable stylistic coherence" between the two performers, despite any differences they may have had in repertoire, tone, and personality.¹⁷⁹ He compares the two clarinetists to storytellers, each telling a different story but using a nearly identical language. The question here is not whether modern performers tell the

¹⁷⁹ Joel Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 406

same story as Brandwein and Tarras but whether they tell a unique story with the same language. At issue is whether modern performers utilize similar ornaments in a manner comparable to Brandwein and early twentieth century performance practice or if modern performers have developed an aesthetic unique to that of Brandwein's time.

No performance is identical to Brandwein's, but that is to be expected. Rubin notes that variation is common between multiple iterations of a melody by a single performer: "Only rarely do they play it exactly the same way twice or completely differently each time."¹⁸⁰ If there is variation in an individual's performance, there certainly will be variation between multiple performers. Rubin was not able to identify any rational explanation for why Tarras or Brandwein chose to vary a particular passage. Answering why a performer makes a particular artistic decision is a highly speculative endeavor and is not within the scope of this study. However, even with variation within a performance and between performers, trends are found.

These results speak to a clearly evolving language rooted in, but not anchored to, the past. The similar placement of ornaments signals a shared understanding of the music and performance practice from before the revival. Learning from old recordings could be seen as a continuation of the tradition by which Old World klezmerim did not study rules dictating the placement of ornaments but understood them from experience. While Brandwein and Tarras are clearly held in high regard among modern performers of klezmer music, their recordings are not taken as dogma.

Modern performers likely share a similar approach to David Krakauer whose mantra is "one foot in the past and one foot in the future."¹⁸¹ Like Rubin, Krakauer uses

¹⁸⁰ Joel Rubin, *The Art of Klezmer*, 346.

¹⁸¹ David Krakauer, personal email, 22 March 2017.

the language metaphor to describe his approach to klezmer music: “It's like speaking a language with the correct accent but at the same time retaining one's own instantly recognizable individual voice.”¹⁸² Krakauer, like other modern performers, is using the language of klezmer music in a way that is clearly identifiable as klezmer music, even as he takes a unique approach.

There is a great deal of continuity in the ornamentation of klezmer music from Brandwein's time to today, but there are also signs that the language has shifted across the board. Stripping away the other musical elements and only focusing on ornamentation, the characteristics that most clearly define klezmer music from other folk musics, every modern performer in the study displayed inconsistencies when compared to Brandwein. However, some of these inconsistencies with Brandwein indicated meaningful agreement between modern performers.

The conclusions of the present study should encourage a change in the dialogue that sometimes surrounds klezmer music which seeks to anoint certain performers as more authentic than others. If the heart of klezmer music is ornamentation, then modern performers are remarkably uniform in the ways they both adhere to and deviated from early twentieth-century practice. To return to the language metaphor, there is nothing to suggest that any performer is speaking the language more authentically than most others. The ornament placement of modern performers remained strikingly similar to that of Tarras and Brandwein. However, there is ample evidence to suggest that modern performers are gravitating toward different ornaments than Brandwein and Tarras, signaling an overall shift or evolution in klezmer performance practice. Starting from this

¹⁸² David Krakauer, personal email, 22 March 2017.

point should lead to a more nuanced and accurate discussion of modern klezmer performance.

Future Study

The performers included in the sample are considered elite and influential performers within the world of klezmer music, and trends found among this sample likely speak to trends in the community as a whole. Given the metamorphic nature of klezmer music, it is necessary to continue tracing the development klezmer performance practice. Studies like these will document the style as it continues to develop and expose trends that are revealed over time.

The consistency among the modern performers, especially in ornament distribution, suggest that there might have been a shift in klezmer style. If so, from where is this new style derived? If there is a shifting from the language of Brandwein and Tarras to a new dialect, when did that shift begin, and what was its impetus? David Krakauer's explanation of his own development suggests of course of future study.

It could be said that *Rhythm and Jews* (and possibly that track [Clarinet Yontev] in particular) launched the 2nd klezmer revival of the late 80s-early 90s where a group of us started to consciously move away from mere re-creation, and more towards original material: both in terms of new compositions plus arrangements that redefined the repertoire that we had all learned from recordings made by early 20th century Eastern European Jewish immigrants. My bass clarinet solo (from my own vantage point) really combines 'traditional' klezmer (learned from old recordings) with the vibe of a blues singer or a wailing electric guitar. "Synagogue Wail" takes the basis of a klezmer improvisation (doina) and combines that with a whole host of my other [twentieth-and twenty first-] century musical influences ranging from Coltrane to Steve Reich to Jimmy Hendrix to the Ellington brass plunger mute sounds to James Brown to Bechet, etc., etc.¹⁸³

Krakauer's recordings of *Der Heyser Bulgar* with the Klezematics and the David Krakauer Trio were made in 1990 and 1995, respectively, and there are clear differences

¹⁸³ David Krakauer, personal email, 22 March 2017.

in ornamentation between the two. The earlier recording contains a higher number of motivic similarities to Brandwein than the later trio recording, which suggests closer adherence to Brandwein in Krakauer's earlier klezmer playing. That being said, the distribution of ornaments suggests a more complicated picture. Figure 5.9 shows the distribution of Group Two ornaments in Krakauer's two recordings compared to those of Brandwein and Tarras. It is the later recording of Krakauer that comes closer to Brandwein and Tarras's reliance on the TBE ornament in this case. Even if those ornaments do not appear in the same locations, the similar distribution suggests a continued connection to Brandwein's original recording, despite Krakauer's less traditional mindset. Is there an explanation for the increased use of the SBT or the decreased use of the TBB from one recording to the next? The present study avoided mixing analysis and biography in order to avoid a performer's story from influencing the analysis. However, a study mixing analysis and biography, if conducted properly, could help illuminate a modern performer's process for interpreting klezmer music and help determine the underlying causes of the changes in ornamentation outlined in the present study.

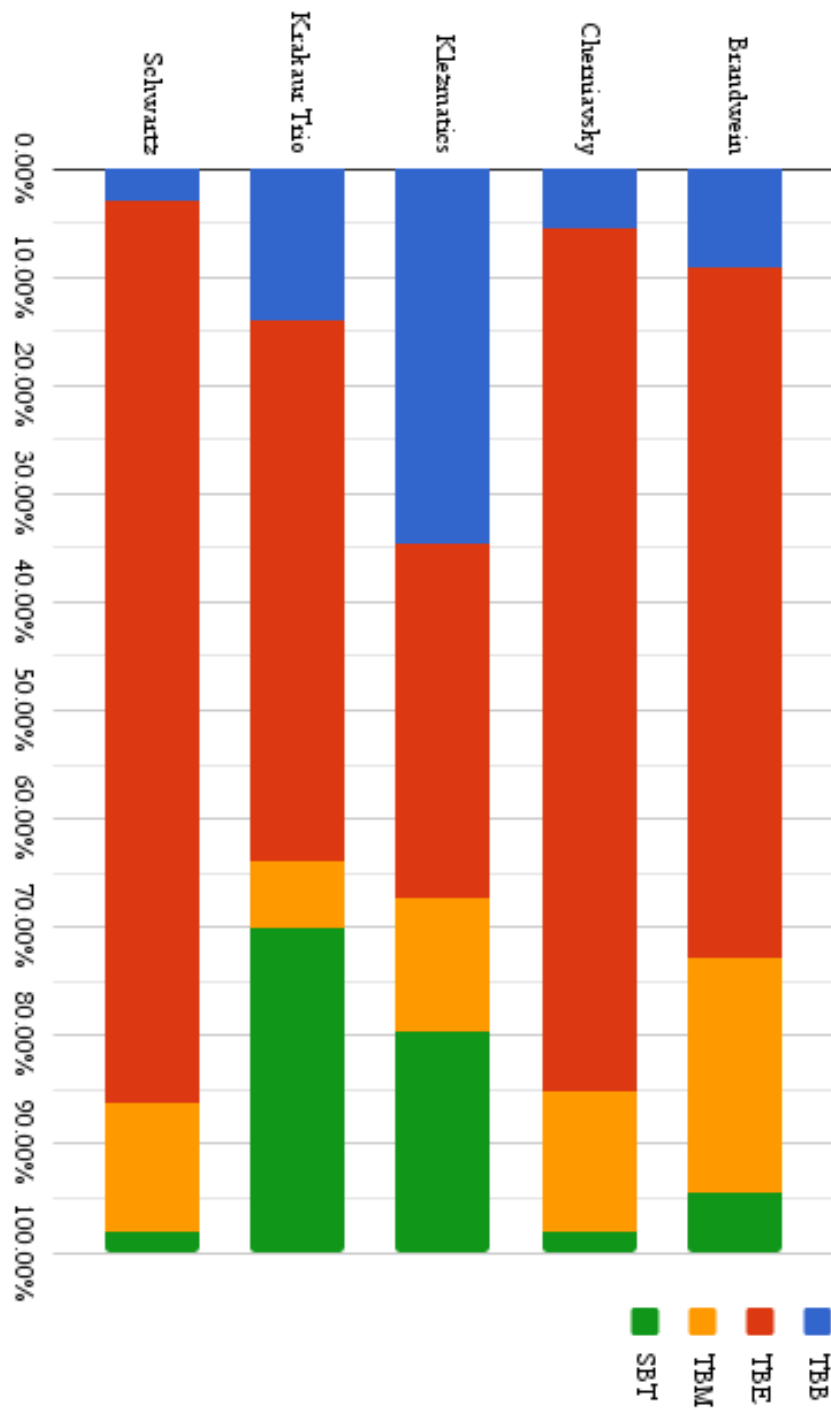


Figure 5.9. Distribution of Group Two ornaments in performances of *Der Heyser Bulgar* by David Krakauer, Naftule Brandwein, and Dave Tarras

It is possible that a performer as influential as Krakauer will influence future klezmer clarinetists more than Brandwein, Tarras, or anyone else from the early twentieth century. Young clarinetists today may see performers like Krakauer as the models of traditional klezmer music. The search for a unique voice by Krakauer and others like him may actually be playing a role in shifting the modern klezmer aesthetic.

Ornamentation is the characteristic that most distinguishes klezmer music from other musics, but that does not mean changes in other characteristics are not worthy of study. This study has shown that modern performance tempi of the two included pieces differ significantly than that of Brandwein. It would not be surprising to see an overall shift in tempi among klezmer musicians. After all, the klezmer repertoire was traditionally meant for dancing, so performers had to take dance steps into account when deciding on a performance tempo. That is no longer a consideration for most klezmer musicians. Does that mean *bulgars* and *freylekhs* are getting faster, and *horas* and *zokhs* are getting slower? Such a trend would have a significant impact on modern ornamentation and aesthetic.

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APPENDIX A**TRANSCRIPTIONS OF FIRN DI MEKHUTONIM AHEYM**

Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym

Naftule Brandwein

11

24

35

48

58

72

83

98

111

124

2

Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym

Musical score for the piece "Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym". The score is written in a single system with ten staves, each containing a line of music. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Trills are indicated by a 'tr' symbol above certain notes. Triplet markings (the number '3' below a group of notes) are used throughout the piece. The score begins at measure 136 and ends at measure 248. The notation includes various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) and articulation marks (accents, slurs).

Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym

Burning Bush

With violin first time

The musical score is written for violin in 3/8 time, key of B-flat major. It consists of 119 measures, divided into 10 systems of 12 measures each. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, trills, and slurs. The first system starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/8 time signature. The piece begins with a series of eighth notes, followed by a triplet of eighth notes. The melody continues with eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped in triplets. Trills are used as ornaments on several notes. The piece concludes with a final triplet of eighth notes.

2

Fim di Mekhutanim Aheym

Musical score for 'Fim di Mekhutanim Aheym', page 2. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. It consists of ten staves of music, each starting with a measure number. The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Many notes are grouped in triplets, indicated by a '3' below the group. Trills are marked with 'tr' above the notes. A specific section starting at measure 186 is labeled 'acel trill' above the staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the final staff.

128

139

152

163

176

186 *acel trill*

199

210

226

239

252

Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym

Klezmer Conservatory Band

11

23

34

48

58

72

83

98

111

124

2

Fim di Mekhutunim Aheym

Musical score for 'Fim di Mekhutunim Aheym', page 2. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. It consists of ten staves of music, each starting with a measure number: 135, 145, 157, 170, 181, 194, 205, 221, 231, and 248. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and frequently uses triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes). Trills are also present, marked with 'tr'. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the final staff.

Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym

Klezmorim (David Julian Gray)

12

25

36

48

60

72

85

99

111

122

137

Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym

Margot Leverett

10

19

28

39

47 vib. trill

56

66

74 vib. trill

84

93

101

Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym

Maxwell Street Klezmer Band

9

18

26

36

48

57 *Freely*

67

77 *Vibrato trill*

90

100

110

122

Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym

No 8va

Souls of Fire

12

25

36

48

58

71 Vib. trill

82

97

109

123

2

Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym

Musical score for the piece "Firn di Mekhutonim Aheym". The score is written in a single system with ten staves, each beginning with a measure number. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and is characterized by frequent triplets. The notation includes stems, beams, and various accidentals (sharps and naturals). The final staff (measure 256) ends with a double bar line.

136
146
158
171
181
194
204
218
229
245
256

Firn di Mekhutunim Aheym

Andy Statman

11

22

33

44

53

65

74

87

98

112

Vibrato trill

2

Fim di Mekhutunim Aheym

Musical score for 'Fim di Mekhutunim Aheym' in G minor, 3/4 time. The score consists of five staves of music, starting at measure 122 and ending at measure 175. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and ornaments (trills). Measure numbers 122, 134, 146, 157, 169, and 175 are indicated at the beginning of their respective staves. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fifth staff.

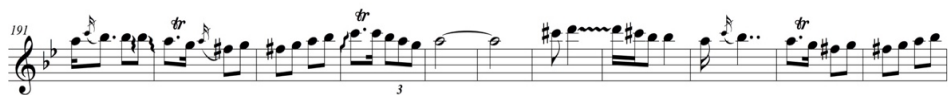
APPENDIX B
TRANSCRIPTIONS OF DER HEYSER BULGAR

Der Heyser Bulgar

Naftule Brandwein

Musical score for 'Der Heyser Bulgar' (Naftule Brandwein). The score is written in G minor (one flat) and 2/4 time. It consists of ten staves of music, with measure numbers 10, 19, 30, 40, 50, 61, 71, 82, 92, and 103 indicated at the beginning of their respective staves. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Trills (tr) and triplets (3) are used throughout the piece. The melody is characterized by its lively and rhythmic nature, typical of a Bulgarian folk dance.

2



Der Heyser Bulgar

Burning Bush

The musical score is written in a single system with ten staves. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and triplets. Trills are indicated by a 'tr' symbol above notes. Slurs are used to group notes, and a 'slow gliss' instruction is present above a slur on the eighth staff. Measure numbers 11, 21, 32, 42, 53, 64, 74, 84, 94, and 105 are marked at the beginning of their respective staves. The piece concludes with a final flourish on the tenth staff.

2

Der Heyser Bulgar

116 *tr*

125

135 *tr*

146 *tr*

156 2nd Time *tr*

167

176 *tr*

184 *tr*

195 *tr*

205 *tr*

215

226

The musical score consists of ten staves of music in a single system. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The time signature is not explicitly shown but appears to be 2/4 based on the note values. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, trills (tr), and slurs. The piece is marked '2nd Time' at measure 156. The system ends at measure 226.

Der Heyser Bulgar

3

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Der Heyser Bulgar'. It consists of seven staves of music, each starting with a measure number: 237, 248, 258, 269, 278, 288, and 310. The music is written in a single melodic line on a treble clef staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/8. The score is characterized by frequent triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes) and various ornaments such as trills (tr) and grace notes (indicated by a small 'v' above the note). The piece concludes with a final measure on the 310th staff, ending with a double bar line.

Chassene Niginim (Der Heyser Bulgar)

Joseph Cherniavsky (Dave Tarras)

9

19

28

38

47

57

67

78

88

99

2

Chassene Niginim (Der Heyser Bulgar)

Musical score for Chassene Niginim (Der Heyser Bulgar), measures 108 to 127. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and includes trills and slurs. Measure 108 starts with a trill on G4. Measure 118 features a trill on G4. Measure 127 ends with a trill on G4. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Der Heyser Bulgar

Di Gojim

Musical score for "Der Heyser Bulgar" by Di Gojim. The score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of ten staves of music, each starting with a measure number (11, 21, 30, 40, 49, 59, 70, 80, 89, 98). The music features various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs, and includes trills and slurs.

2

Der Heyser Bulgar

Musical score for "Der Heyser Bulgar" in G minor, 2/4 time. The score consists of eight staves of music, starting at measure 107 and ending at measure 187. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb), and the time signature is 2/4. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several trills (tr) and triplets (3) throughout the piece. The score concludes with a double bar line at measure 187.

Der Heyser Bulgar

Klezmer Conservatory Band (Don Byron)

10

22

31

42

52

63

74

85

94 *rit.* *freely*

104

2

Der Heyser Bulgar

113 *rit.* *freeley*

123

133

144

153

164

174

185

196

206

215 *rit.*

The musical score is written in a single system with ten staves. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, trills, and triplets. The first staff (113) begins with a 'rit.' (ritardando) and 'freeley' (ad libitum) marking. The piece concludes with another 'rit.' marking at the end of the tenth staff (215).

Der Heyser Bulgar

3

Musical score for "Der Heyser Bulgar" in 3/4 time, measures 225-285. The score is written in a single system with six staves. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked "rit." (ritardando) at measure 234. The score features various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs. Trills are indicated by the symbol *tr* above notes in measures 244, 254, 265, 274, and 285. The piece concludes with a double bar line at measure 285.

Der Heyser Bulgar

Klezmatrics (David Krakauer)

10

18

25

35

45

55

65

76

86

96

2

vibrato trill

Der Heyser Bulgar

The musical score is written in a single system on a grand staff (treble clef). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The piece is titled "Der Heyser Bulgar" and includes a performance instruction "vibrato trill". The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 109, 125, 137, 147, 157, 167, 177, 187, and 197 marked at the beginning of their respective lines. The music consists of a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped in triplets. Trills are indicated by a small 'tr' symbol above the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line at measure 197.

Der Heyser Bulgar

Klezmorim (David Julian Gray)

11

21

32

42

53

64

75

86

97

110

2

Der Heyser Bulgar

Musical score for 'Der Heyser Bulgar' in G minor, 2/4 time. The score consists of nine staves of music, starting at measure 120 and ending at measure 219. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb), and the time signature is 2/4. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Notable features include:

- Measures 120-121: A triplet of eighth notes.
- Measures 130-131: A triplet of eighth notes.
- Measures 142-143: A triplet of eighth notes.
- Measures 152-153: A triplet of eighth notes.
- Measures 162-163: A triplet of eighth notes.
- Measures 173-174: Trills (tr) over eighth notes.
- Measures 183-184: A triplet of eighth notes.
- Measures 195-196: Trills (tr) over eighth notes.
- Measures 207-208: Trills (tr) over eighth notes.
- Measures 219-220: A quintuplet of eighth notes.

Der Heyser Bulgar

David Krakauer Trio

11

20

31

40

51

62

73

85

98

108

2

Der Heyser Bulgar

Musical score for 'Der Heyser Bulgar' in G minor, 2/4 time. The score consists of five staves of music, starting at measure 118 and ending at measure 159. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, trills, and slurs. Measure numbers 118, 129, 138, 149, and 159 are indicated at the beginning of their respective staves. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fifth staff.

Der Heyser Bulgar

Maxwell Street Klezmer Band

The musical score for "Der Heyser Bulgar" is presented in ten staves. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The piece is characterized by its rhythmic complexity, featuring numerous eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped in triplets. Trills are used as decorative elements throughout the melody. The score includes measure numbers 10, 18, 29, 39, 48, 60, 69, 79, 89, and 99. The notation includes various ornaments such as trills (tr) and grace notes (accents), and dynamic markings like accents (^) and slurs. The piece concludes with a final cadence in the tenth staff.

2

Der Heyser Bulgar

Musical staff 106-117: Treble clef, key signature of one flat (B-flat), 2/4 time signature. The staff contains a melodic line with several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' below the notes) and various rhythmic values including eighth and sixteenth notes.

Musical staff 118-126: Continuation of the melodic line from the previous staff, featuring more triplet markings and rhythmic patterns.

Musical staff 127-137: Labeled "Trombone melody". The staff shows a melodic line with triplet markings and rhythmic patterns.

Musical staff 138-143: Labeled "Clarinet". The staff contains a melodic line with triplet markings and rhythmic patterns.

Musical staff 144-157: Continuation of the melodic line, featuring triplet markings and rhythmic patterns.

Musical staff 158-165: Labeled "With trumpet". The staff shows a melodic line with triplet markings and rhythmic patterns.

Musical staff 166-177: Labeled "With trombone". The staff contains a melodic line with triplet markings and rhythmic patterns.

Musical staff 178-187: Continuation of the melodic line, featuring triplet markings and rhythmic patterns.

Musical staff 188-188: A single measure at the end of the staff, consisting of a whole note chord.

Gelebt und Gelacht (Der Heyser Bulgar)

Abe Schwartz feat. Dave Tarras

11

22

31

42

52

63

73

83

92

104

2

Gelebt und Gelacht (Der Heyser Bulgar)

Musical score for 'Gelebt und Gelacht (Der Heyser Bulgar)'. The score is written in a single system with ten staves, each containing a line of music. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Trills are indicated by 'tr' above notes. Slurs are used to group notes. Triplet markings (the number 3) are present under several groups of notes. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of the tenth staff.

APPENDIX C**GLOSSARY**

Ashkenazi. Jewish people with origins in eastern or central Europe.

Badkhn. Wedding jester.

Bal-kulturnik. Master of culture. A term derived by Yale Strom to describe those who continue klezmer traditions post World War II.

Bulgarish. A dance played at a fast tempo.

Dobraden. (Russian: good morning) A metrical piece played at the end of wedding celebrations, which frequently went through the night.

Dobranoch. (Russian: good evening) A metrical piece played at the end of an evening's celebrations.

Dreydl. (Yiddish: spinning top) An up-tempo group dance.

Freylekh. (Yiddish: happy) A broad genre of up-tempo dances.

Kasidim. A sect of Orthodox Judaism with origins in eighteenth century Europe to whom song and dance play a significant role in religious practice.

Hopke. An up-tempo circle dance with origins in Russia in which one dancer danced within a circle of dances.

Hora. A dance in 3/8 meter.

Kale beveynen. Known as kale bazetsen in Ukraine. Music played while seating the bride before the wedding ceremony.

Khazn. The synagogue's musical leader, cantor.

Khupe. Wedding canopy.

Klezmer. A Jewish folk instrumentalist.

Lăutai. Romani people.

Leytsim. A term for Jewish folk musicians that precedes usage of klezmer.

Muskiant. A term for Jewish folk musicians that precedes usage of klezmer and later used to describe a musician who played both classical and klezmer music.

Nigun. (Yiddish: Melody) A wordless song popular among Khasidic Jews.

Onge. A moderate-tempo line dance in 2/4 with origins in Bessarabia.

Opfiren di makhetonim. Music played to escort the in-laws home following wedding celebrations.

Polka. Up-tempo dance in 2/4 with origins in central Europe.

Quadrille. A dance for multiple couples with sections in 2/4 and 6/8 meters.

Riudl. (Reydl, Yiddish: Wheel) An up-tempo group dance.

Sher. (Yiddish: Scissors) A group dance similar to the American square dance that mimics the act of sewing.

Sîrba. An up-tempo circle or line dance with origins in Romania.

Ta'amim. (Tropes) Symbols that represent motivic figures used in liturgical chant.

Volekh. (Vulekh) A semi-improvised, non-metrical instrumental showpiece.

Waltz. Couple dance in triple meter.

Yiddish. (Yiddish: Jewish)