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Musikah v'Halil, "Music and the Flute":

The Use of Jewish Prayer in Flute and Piano Music

Kathryn L. Rudnik

A Doctor of Musical Arts Document submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts

School of Music

December 2022

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Dedication

This document is dedicated to my number one fans, and largest support system:

Mom and Dad.

For your endless love and support. You are the reason I made it, and words can not express how much I love you both and appreciate everything you have done to help make my dreams come true.

This document is also dedicated to Joan Rudnik (Grandma) and Paul Glassner (Papa)

who saw the beginning but not the end:

You may be gone from my sight, but you are never gone from my heart.

Acknowledgements

There are not enough words to express how grateful I am to those who helped me in achieving my dreams. I will be forever grateful to my teacher and mentor, Dr. Beth Chandler Cahill. The last few years have been hard, in every way possible, but watching and learning from you has been a privilege. Thank you for all your support and encouragement over the last few years.

Many thanks to my other committee members, Dr. Pedro Aponte, Dr. Katherine Axtell, and Dr. Jeanette Zyko for helping me focus my topic and supporting me in completing this project. Additionally, a special massive thank you to Dr. Axtell, who was the best resource and editor I would ask for.

Thank you to my previous flute professors, Dr. Conor Nelson and Dr. Naomi Seidman, who not only encouraged me to play at my highest level but gave me the tools I would need to further my education.

Finally, thank you to my parents for supporting all my musical endeavors since I was little. Nothing would be possible without all of your love and support.

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From « Deux mélodies hébraïques »

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Abstract

Music has been a part of Jewish life since Biblical times and remains an integral part of the culture. Within Jewish music, instruments have also played an important role historically. The flute has been traced through Judaism back to Biblical times; however, it has lost prominence in modern synagogue and religious services. As Western music has developed into the twenty-first century, composers, both Jewish and Gentile, have been exposed to the music of the Jewish communities, some of whom have utilized it in their own compositions. Compositions based on Jewish prayer melodies have brought up the question of whether the music is “Jewish” enough and if they even should be considered “Jewish music.”

Flute music by Jewish composers and/or based on Jewish themes is limited. One route to expansion of the repertoire is through transcriptions of works originally written for other instruments. For this project, three pieces were selected for transcription: *Kaddisch*, for violin and piano by Maurice Ravel, *Prayer, From Jewish Life*, for cello and piano by Ernest Bloch, and *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, for cello and piano by Max Bruch. Additionally, *Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidre with Variations* by David Ehrlich, an original work for flute and piano, was selected for study. These works were chosen because they all feature a connection to the Jewish High Holidays of *Rosh Hashanah* and/or *Yom Kippur*, with the exception of Ravel’s *Kaddisch* which comes from liturgy performed year-round. The liturgies for these observances are especially rich in musical content. Each of the selected compositions is based on a popular Jewish prayer and in some instances, its corresponding melody as well. In order to appreciate the extent of Jewish influence on these compositions, it is important to understand the history, both liturgical

and musical, of these prayers. This document will provide an in-depth look into the relationship between traditional Jewish prayer and Western composition techniques and will offer a route to incorporating the flute into High Holidays observances.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Description and Purpose of the Study

What are the sounds of “Jewish music”? Many people, especially Gentiles, may think first of a *Klezmer* band, with a soulful violin or clarinet in the lead.¹ Others may imagine a blast of the *shofar*, a ram’s horn traditionally blown in the synagogue during *Rosh Hashanah*, the Jewish New Year. Or perhaps the incantations of a cantor come to mind. Whatever the sound, music is central to Jewish faith and culture, to liturgy and community life. It has been said that “Jewish music is the song of Judaism through the lips of the Jew. It is the tonal expression of Jewish life and development over a period of more than two thousand years.”²

During the long, difficult history of Judaism, scholars and congregants have asked important questions about the nature and identity of “Jewish music”: can a Gentile composer truly capture the depth of meaning of a Jewish prayer text? Should melodies with liturgical significance ever be performed in the concert hall? Can “concert music” be part of a meaningful worship experience? Works such as Leonard Bernstein’s *Symphony No. 3: “Kaddish”* or Max Bruch’s *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, for cello and piano, raise these questions. The answers, of course, vary: within Judaism, the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform branches each have different beliefs and practices regarding music. All, however, share a need for musical expression and give music a prominent place in nearly every

¹ Klezmer music refers to “a genera of Jewish music with roots in Yiddish folk traditions;” its etymology stems from the Hebrew words *kley*, “vessel,” and *zemer*, “instrument.” See Henry Sapoznik, “Klezmer” (Grove Music Online, 10 Jul. 2012, <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002224694>), accessed 23 Oct. 2022, and Michael Alpert, “As If It were Yesterday,” *Klezmer Music: A Marriage of Heaven and Earth* Candice Ward, ed., (New York: Ellipsis Arts, 1996), 12.

² Abraham Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development*, (New York, NY, Dover Publications, Inc., 1992), 24.

liturgical service. In this document, Jewish music is defined as a combination of the traditional melodies heard in a Synagogue, ancient prayers and songs, and the influence from the modernization of Western music.

During Biblical times, the *Halil*, “flute,” was “one of the most popular instruments in secular as well as in religious life” and was “used for occasions of extreme joy and gaiety.”³ The famous Psalm 150, well known to Jews as well as to Christians, calls specifically for the flute to be used in praise and worship.⁴ In contrast to its historical and scriptural prominence, however, the flute seldom plays a leading role in Jewish music today, whether sacred or secular.

The objective of this document is to help bring the flute back to the synagogue by creating transcriptions of three works for flute and piano by twentieth-century composers: Maurice Ravel, Ernest Bloch, and Max Bruch. Additionally, this project will address a work written specifically for flute and piano by David Ehrlich. Each composition is tied, through musical and/or textual content, to the liturgy of the Synagogue including High Holy Days and would be appropriate for incorporation into those observances. The remainder of this chapter will review selected scholarship on the history of Jewish music, briefly discuss selected compositions that use Jewish themes prominently, and introduce the works featured and/or selected for transcription in this document.

Chapter 2 discusses some important structural aspects of Jewish liturgical music and practice. Chapters 3 through 6 discuss the history and liturgical connections of each

³ Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development*, 12.

⁴ Ps. 150: 1-6 OBJ.

work and, where applicable, also discuss the process of transcription. A brief Conclusion suggests additional works that also might be transcribed in the future.

Literature Review: History of Jewish Music

One of the most important scholars of Jewish music is Abraham Idelsohn. Idelsohn is considered by many to be the “Father of Jewish Musicology.”⁵ His book *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development* is arguably the most important survey of Jewish music.⁶ Idelsohn discusses the development of Jewish music from Biblical times to the twentieth century, including the use of Jewish themes in classical concert music. His work was based on his own anthropological studies of different Jewish communities around the world. Another of Idelsohn’s publications, *Thesaurus of Hebrew Oriental Melodies*, is a major anthology of historical Jewish themes.⁷ This work is a collection of ten volumes of the melodies Idelsohn collected from 1914–32, and it is organized by the communities from which melodies were collected. According to Linda Ferguson, “Idelsohn’s *Thesaurus* is more than a catalog of Hebrew melodies. It offers to the field of comparative musicology the data for drawing analogies between the ancient Hebrew chants and that of Roman ecclesia.”⁸ While this text is no longer in print, there are digital copies available in the public domain.

Tina Frühauf is a musicologist whose work picks up where Idelsohn’s left off, focusing on Jewish music in modern times. Her book *Experiencing Jewish Music in*

⁵ Judah Cohen, “The Institutions of Jewish Musical Meaning,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Jewish Music*, ed. Joshua Walden, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015), 41.

⁶ Abraham Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development*, (New York, NY, Dover Publications, Inc., 1992), 24.

⁷ Abraham Idelsohn, *Thesaurus of Oriental Hebrew Melodies*, (Berlin, Benjamin Harz, 1925).

⁸ Linda Ferguson, “Thesaurus of Hebrew Oriental Melodies by A.Z. Idelsohn,” in *American Music Teacher*, Vol. 23, No. 4, 1974, 41.

America discusses the use of Jewish music in areas from the American synagogue to popular culture, such as Broadway and television.⁹ As one reviewer, Kenneth LaFave, wrote, the book “provides a deep, informative, thoughtful study of Jewish music in America – its history, its influences, and its many expressions...her commentaries will prompt readers to listen in a refreshing new way to Jewish music, opening the door to understanding.”¹⁰

One of the few recent dissertations dedicated to Jewish instrumental music is Sandra Monsteller’s “‘Jewishness’ in Selected Repertoire: A Resource for Clarinet Music”.¹¹ Monsteller’s work includes information on the history and various styles of Jewish music. Additionally, it provides an extensive catalog of clarinet music that contains “Jewish” characteristics.

Literature Review: Music with Jewish Thematic Content

From short pieces for solo instruments to multi-movement symphonies, there is a wide range of concert repertoire that incorporates melodies and motives with ties to Jewish liturgy. Some of these works employ specific musical elements in a very clear way, through quotation or other types of direct reference; some evoke Jewish material rather than quote it directly; and in still other cases, the link to Jewish liturgy is textual rather than musical. Two of Leonard Bernstein’s symphonies fall into this category: *Symphony No. 1: “Jeremiah”* and *Symphony No. 3: “Kaddish.”* *Symphony No. 1* was composed in 1942 and includes text from the Book of Lamentation in the Hebrew Bible.

⁹ Tina Frühauf, *Experiencing Jewish Music in America: A Listener’s Companion*, (New York, Rowman and Littlefield, 2018).

¹⁰ Kenneth LaFave, in *Experiencing Jewish Music in America*, Tina Frühauf, ix, xi.

¹¹ Sandra Monsteller, “‘Jewishness’ in Selected Repertoire: A Resource for Clarinet Music,” (DMA diss., University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2001), 38.

Regarding the use of a Jewish theme in *Symphony No. 1*, Bernstein writes: “The Symphony does not make use to any great extent of actual Hebrew thematic material...Other resemblances to Hebrew liturgical music are a matter of emotional quality rather than of the notes themselves.”¹² *Symphony No. 3* uses the full text of the Jewish prayer, *Kaddish*, “Holy.” In this work, Bernstein “exploits the dualistic overtones of the prayer: its popular connection as a kind of requiem, and its celebration of life.”¹³

Ernest Bloch, a composer who will be discussed further in Chapter 4, wrote a significant amount of music based on Jewish themes. Since he was Jewish, his religious upbringing influenced a majority of his work. Among his compositions influenced by his Jewish heritage include *Israel Symphony, for Orchestra and Five Voices* (1916), *From Jewish Life: Three Sketches for Violoncello and Piano* (1924), *Abodah: G-d’s Worship* (1928), and *Avodath Hakodesh*, or “Sacred Service.” Of these selected works, *Avodath Hakodesh* is entirely grounded in Jewish liturgical text.¹⁴ According to Neil Levin, a noted Jewish musicologist, “it is a virtual oratorio based on the Sabbath liturgy and a musically sophisticated service for practical use in the context of the aesthetic format of Reform worship that once prevailed in America—a confluence of high art and Jewish sacred music.”¹⁵

¹² Leonard Bernstein, “Leonard Bernstein Office,” *Symphony No. 1: “Jeremiah,”* <https://leonardbernstein.com/works/view/4/symphony-no-1-jeremiah>.

¹³ Jack Gottlieb, “Leonard Bernstein Office,” *Symphony No. 3: “Kaddish,”* <https://www.leonardbernstein.com/works/view/48/symphony-no-3-kaddish>.

¹⁴ In a non-liturgical context, G-d is used instead of the Lord’s name, for once it is written, it cannot be erased. As a sign of respect, *HaShem* or G-d will be used in this document when referring to the name of the Lord.

¹⁵ Neil Levin, *Sacred Service (Avodat Hakodesh)*, Milken Archive, <https://www.milkenarchive.org/music/volumes/view/masterworks-of-prayer/work/sacred-service-avodat-hakodesh/>.

Both Bernstein and Bloch came from a Jewish background so they would have been more aware of the liturgical texts and their roles in a synagogue. Non-Jewish composers were influenced by Jewish music as well. Dmitri Shostakovich wrote *From Jewish Folk Poetry*, Op. 79 (1948), a song cycle for soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, and piano. Sergei Prokofiev wrote *Overture on Hebrew Themes for Clarinet, Strings, and Piano* (1919-20). According to one reviewer, “Sergei Prokofiev’s *Overture on Hebrew Themes* is the offspring of an encounter between a small group of Zionist-oriented Jewish musicians committed to Jewish culture and a non-Jew who will always be counted among the major and most influential composers of the first half of the twentieth century.”¹⁶

Sandra Monsteller’s dissertation on Jewish-themed works for the clarinet illustrates a significant amount of literature. Flutists, unfortunately, have a severe lack of music on Jewish themes that has been composed specifically for their instrument. Some of the most prominent works are *East Wind for solo flute* by Shulamit Ran, *Halil for flute, piano, and percussion* by Leonard Bernstein, and *Achat Sha’alti* and *Ufaratsta* by Paul Schoenfeld.

Shulamit Ran is an Israeli composer who, like many others, uses her Jewish heritage to influence her compositions. *East Wind for solo flute* was composed in 1989 for the National Flute Association. This piece is not influenced by liturgical text or prayer melody but uses the concept that in the *Torah* (Hebrew Bible), the East Wind is said to be a representation of G-d. This piece uses the flute to represent the power of the wind, and

¹⁶ Neil Levin, *Overture on Hebrew Themes*, Milken Archive, <https://www.milkenarchive.org/music/volumes/view/intimate-voices/work/overture-on-hebrew-themes/#credits>.

by association G-d themselves, through extended techniques, abrupt highs and lows, and extended range, all of which signify the unbound characteristics of wind.

Leonard Bernstein wrote *Halil for flute, piano, and percussion*. This piece was dedicated to Yadin Tenenbaum, an Israeli flutist who was killed in action during the 1973 war.¹⁷ Bernstein wrote that “*Halil* is formally unlike any other work I have written, but it is like much of my music in its struggle between tonal and non-tonal forces. In this case, I sense that struggle as involving wars and the threats of wars, the overwhelming desire to live and the consolations of art, love, and the hope for peace.”¹⁸

Dedicated to renowned flutist Carol Wincenc, *Achat Sha’alti* and *Ufaratsta* were arranged from two movements of Paul Schoenfeld’s piano suite *Six Improvisations on Hassidic Melodies*. *Achat Sha’alti*, “One thing I ask,” is based on Hebrew Psalm 27, which is about seeking “to dwell in the house of G-d all the days of my life.”¹⁹ This piece quotes a melody sung in some synagogues. *Ufaratsta*, “You will spread forth,” is a more lively and quick paced movement. This also comes from a Hebrew song, which is about spreading the teachings of the *Torah* throughout the world.²⁰

As this brief discussion makes clear, flute music by Jewish composers and/or based on Jewish themes is limited. One route to expansion of the repertoire is through transcription of works originally written for other instruments. For this project, three pieces were selected for transcription: *Kaddisch*, for violin and piano by Maurice Ravel, *Prayer, From Jewish Life*, for cello and piano by Ernest Bloch, and *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47,

¹⁷ Leonard Bernstein, *Halil, for Flute, Piano, and Percussion*, “Leonard Bernstein Office,” <https://www.leonardbernstein.com/works/view/18/halil-nocturne>.

¹⁸ Bernstein, *Halil, for Flute, Piano, and Percussion*.

¹⁹ Sheila Weinberg, “Psalm 27 – *Achat Sha’alti*,” *Institute for Jewish Spirituality*, Sept. 14, 2009, <https://www.jewishspirituality.org/psalm-27-achat-shaalti/>.

²⁰ Chabad.org, https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/music_cdo/aid/140675/jewish/Uforatzto.htm.

for cello and piano by Max Bruch. Additionally, *Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidre with Variations* by David Ehrlich, an original work for flute and piano, was selected for study.²¹ These works were chosen because they all feature a connection to the Jewish High Holidays of *Rosh Hashanah* and/or *Yom Kippur*, with the exception of Ravel's *Kaddisch* which comes from liturgy performed year-round. The liturgies for these observances are especially rich in musical content. Each of the selected compositions is based on a popular Jewish prayer and in some instances, its corresponding melody as well. In order to appreciate the extent of Jewish influence on these compositions, it is important to understand the history, both liturgical and musical, of these prayers. This document will provide an in-depth look into the relationship between traditional Jewish prayer and Western composition techniques and will offer a route to incorporating the flute into Holiday observances.

²¹ Ehrlich uses *Nidre*, which is used interchangeably with *Nidrei*. Both spellings are correct.

Chapter 2: Structure and Function of Jewish Music

The global Jewish community is diverse in both ethnic origin and theological tradition. There are two main groups within the Jewish diaspora: Ashkenazic Jews and Sephardic Jews. In this document, the focus will be on the Ashkenazic Jewish traditions, whose heritage is rooted in regions of France, Germany, and Eastern Europe. Within theology and philosophy, there are three major branches of Ashkenazic Judaism: Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform. Orthodox communities are the most traditional in their culture and uphold the strictest interpretations of Rabbinic law. They observe clear-cut gender roles and responsibilities, including the physical separation of men and women during worship services, and they may have rigid criteria for community membership. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Reform Jewish communities are more open to incorporating modern ideas into their services and traditions and have the least restrictive standards for who may qualify for community membership. Between the Orthodox and Reform communities, Conservative Jews shape hybrid beliefs and practices.

Whether heard in an Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform synagogue, the liturgical music of Judaism is governed by two core concepts: liturgical modes and cantillation accents. The liturgical modes are typical scale-like patterns similar to the modal system used in Western classical music. Cantillation accents are a set of short motives, based on the liturgical modes, that dictate how to chant or sing a specific passage depending on the liturgical season, the particular worship context (weekday versus *Shabbat*; day or evening service), and the source of the text (*Torah* or an alternate Scripture).²²

²² Monsteller, “Jewishness” in *Selected Repertoire*, 38.

There are variants in the particular melodies used for prayers in different branches of Judaism. Ashkenazic and Sephardic-origin communities, for example, tend to employ different melodies due to their contrasting geographic and cultural heritage. However, the system of modes and cantillation accents links all traditions that can be traced through history. According to Tina Frühauf, scholars who study Jewish music would be able to identify specific sections of a historical service due to the use of similar, if not identical, liturgical modes and cantillation accents. Frühauf states that these scholars “can assume that the sounds the congregants heard during weekly gatherings on the Sabbath were the ritual chanting from the Hebrew Bible – the Psalms, the five books of Moses known as the Torah – as well as the recitation of statutory prayers by a single unaccompanied prayer leader.”²³

There are three main liturgical modes in modern Judaism: *Ahava Rabbah*, *Magein Avot*, and *HaShem Malach*.²⁴ The prayer modes are what is known as *nusach*, or musical traditions of a community, and serve both to identify different types of prayer and to associate those prayers to the time of year or even the time of day in which they are used.²⁵ The remainder of this chapter will briefly review the characteristics of each of these modes and explore their connections to the system of cantillation accents.

²³ Tina Frühauf, *Experiencing Jewish Music in America: A Listener's Companion*, (New York, Rowman and Littlefield, 2018), 2.

²⁴ The word *HaShem*, “the name,” is used instead of the Lord’s name, for once it is written, it cannot be erased. As a sign of respect and in a non-liturgical context, *HaShem* or G-d will be used in this document when referring to the name of the Lord. And Kligman, *Jewish Liturgical Music*, 90.

²⁵ Kligman, *Jewish Liturgical Music*, 89.

The mode *Ahavah Rabbah*, “Great Love,” is shown in Figure 2.1. Its name comes from the blessing that immediately precedes the *Shema*, a daily prayer declaring faith in G-d during the morning service.



Figure 2.1. Kligman, *Ahava Rabbah* mode.

Ahavah Rabbah is considered the most stereotypically “Jewish sounding” of all the prayer modes because of the augmented second interval between the second and third scale degrees. One of the most known Jewish songs among Jews and Gentiles in the *Ahavah Rabbah* mode is *Hava Nagila*, “Let’s rejoice.” *Hava Nagila* is sung at celebrations including weddings and *b’nei Mitzvah*.²⁶

Magein Avot, “Shield of our Fathers,” is the prayer mode that most resembles the Western natural minor scale (see Figure 2.2).²⁷



Figure 2.2. Kligman, *Magein Avot* mode.

The name of the mode comes from the *Me-ein Sheva* prayer, which directly follows the *Amidah*, the core of every Jewish worship service, in the Friday evening service. The *Amidah* is a collection of nineteen blessings that are recited three times daily. The

²⁶ Kligman, *Jewish Liturgical Music*, 91.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 90.

purpose of the *Amidah* is threefold: first, to praise G-d; second, to request peace, knowledge, and healing; and third, to give thanks. When this mode is used, it is often performed on a single recitation tone, which the cantor uses to chant a large amount of liturgical text. When chanting the *Magein Avot* mode, it is common for the cantor to pivot to the relative major at certain liturgical points, often to highlight a particular line of text.²⁸ The simplicity of both the modes and the associated chanting is meant to reflect the peaceful atmosphere of *Shabbat*.

The third of the primary prayer modes, *HaShem Malach*, or “the Lord Reigns,” consists of a major scale with a lowered (minor) seventh scale degree (see Figure 2.3).²⁹



Figure 2.3. Kligman, *HaShem Malach* mode.

This mode has a majestic sense to it and is used for a number of services that require a grand atmosphere; for example, *HaShem Malach* is used during the *Shofar* service of the High Holidays. In High Holiday contexts, the seventh and tenth scale degrees are often raised, which causes the mode to strongly resemble the classical major scale.³⁰

When chanting in Hebrew, especially from *Torah*, there are specific motives associated with each part of a sentence. These motives are called *Te'amim*, or cantillation accents. The *Te'amim* serve three functions in relation to the text: to indicate the melody to which the words are to be sung, to specify which syllable is to receive the accent, and

²⁸ Kligman, *Jewish Liturgical Music*, 90.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 91.

to serve as an elaborate system of punctuation.³¹ Each *Ta'am*, or singular accent, has multiple motives associated with it; the choice of which motive to use depends on the context, such as time of the year and what is being read. While reading the *Torah*, the accents employed are different than when reading the *Haftarah*, again signaling context. One of the most common accents is called a *Siluk*. Joshua Jacobson, author of *Chanting the Hebrew Bible*, states that “this accent [*Siluk*] appears exclusively and consistently on the last word of every verse of the *Torah*.”³² Figure 2.4 shows the six different motives for *Siluk*.

| | Torah | Haftarah | Lamentations |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|--------------|
| סילוק <i>Siluk</i> | | | |
| | Festival | Esther | High Holiday |
| | | | |

Figure 2.4. *Siluk* accent chart from Joshua Jacobson’s *Chanting the Hebrew Bible*, 768-769.

Besides the chanting of prayers and Scripture, musical instruments can be used during synagogue services to enhance the worship experience. Abraham Idelsohn, in his book, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development*, writes that instruments, “*Halil* [“flute”] was one of the most popular instruments in secular as well as in religious life... and was

³¹ Joshua Jacobson, *Chanting the Hebrew Bible: The Art of Cantillation*, (University of Nebraska, 2017), 29.

³² *Ibid.*

permitted at the service but only on the twelve festal days during the year [i.e., the High Holy Days of *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*] ‘to increase joy.’”³³ Instrumental pieces tend to be most accepted in Conservative or Reform synagogue services. However, it is becoming more common to see both choirs and musicians in synagogue services. The Central Synagogue in New York City has musicians and a choir year-round that aim to enhance the prayer experience. Unlike in Christianity, there is no offering or Communion where an instrumental selection could be placed in a service. However, there is always a way to add instrumental music to a Jewish service, such as during the time for silent prayer. For example, *Kaddish* is a prayer recited every *Shabbat* service and is one of the most well-known prayers among the Jewish people. Perhaps after the silent prayer or even the Rabbi’s sermon, an instrumental work such as Maurice Ravel’s *Kaddisch* could be performed to complement the liturgy.

³³ Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 12.

Chapter 3: Maurice Ravel's *Kaddisch*

Almost every Jewish prayer used in a modern-day synagogue can be traced back to Biblical times. The *Kaddish*, “Holy,” is an ancient prayer in Aramaic, then the common language among the Jewish people, praising G-d.³⁴ During a typical service, the *Kaddish* is recited at several points as a way to mark the divisions of the liturgy. Multiple versions of the *Kaddish* exist; they are used for different purposes and are occasionally recited by different groups. For each version of the *Kaddish*, the core text remains the same, but the prayer has a distinct ending point. The full *Kaddish* consists of three verses and is recited at the conclusion of the main portion of a synagogue service that includes the *Amidah*, a group of prayers petitioning G-d to grant the Jewish people knowledge and understanding. The *Amidah* is said multiple times daily year-round. The full *Kaddish* text is also used for the Mourner's *Kaddish*, an especially solemn moment near the end of a prayer service when congregants who are in mourning recite the prayer together. While mourning an immediate family member, Jews recite the Mourner's *Kaddish* for eleven months following the loss.³⁵ If there are no recently bereaved individuals in a particular congregation, one or more congregants whose parents are no longer living should recite the Mourner's *Kaddish*.³⁶ In some synagogues, the entire congregation recites the Mourner's *Kaddish* in memory of the over six million victims of the Holocaust who had no one to mourn for them. Jews say the *Kaddish* as a community because no one is alone in mourning.

³⁴Maurice Lamm, “About the *Kaddish*,” *Chabad.org*, https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/336516/jewish/About-the-Kaddish.htm.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

Compared to the solemn tone of the Mourner's *Kaddish*, the *Chatzi*, or “half,” *Kaddish*, is chanted at a jubilant, quick pace, approximately 80 beats per minute, used to separate smaller sections of a service.³⁷ The *Chatzi Kaddish*, as stated earlier, has the same core text as the full *Kaddish*, with a different ending point. The text and transliteration of the *Kaddish* prayer is shown in Figure 3.1. The boxed section isolates the different version of the *Kaddish*, the *Chatzi Kaddish*, or Half *Kaddish*.

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'meih raba, | יִתְגַּדַּל וַיִּתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא. |
| b'alma di v'ra chiruteih. | בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתֵהּ. |
| Vyamlich malchuteih b'chayeichon | וַיְמַלִּיךְ מַלְכוּתֵהּ בְּחַיֵּיכֹן |
| uvyomeichon, | וּבְיוֹמֵיכֹן. |
| uvchayei d'chol-beit Yisrael, | וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. |
| baagala uvizman kariv. | בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזְמַן קָרִיב. |
| Vimru: Amen. | וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן. |
| Y'hei sh'meih raba m'varach | יְהִי שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ |
| l'alam ul-almei almaya. | לְעָלְמִי וּלְעָלְמֵי עֵלְמַיָּא. |
| Yitbarach vyishtabach v'vitpaar | יִתְבָּרַךְ וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח וַיִּתְפָּאֵר |
| vyitromam vyitnasei v'vit-hadar | וַיִּתְרוֹמַם וַיִּתְנַשֵּׂא וַיִּתְהַדָּר |
| vyitaleh v'vit-halal | וַיִּתְעַלֶּה וַיִּתְהַלַּל |
| sh'meih d'kudsha, b'rich hu, | שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא. בְּרִיךְ הוּא. |
| l'eila ut-eila mikol | לְעֵלְאָא וּלְעֵלְמָא מִכָּל |
| birchata v'shirata, | בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירָתָא. |
| tushb'chata v'nechemata | תְּשׁוּבַתְּכָא וְנִחְמַתְּכָא |
| daamiran b'alma. Vimru: Amen. | דְאָמִירוּ בְּעֵלְמָא. וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן. |
| Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya, | יְהִי שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא. |
| v'chayim aleinu v'al kol-Yisrael. | וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל. |
| Vimru: Amen. | וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן. |
| Oseh shalom bimromav, | עֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוֵמָיו. |
| hu yaaseh shalom aleinu | הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ |
| v'al kol-Yisrael | וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל |
| v'al kol yosh'vei teveil. | וְעַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל. |

³⁷ Lamm, *About the Kaddish*,

https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/336516/jewish/About-the-Kaddish.htm.

TRANSLATION

Exalted and hallowed be God's great name
 in the world which God created, according to plan.
 May God's majesty be revealed in the days of our lifetime
 and the life of all Israel — speedily, imminently,
 To which we say: **Amen.**

Blessed be God's great name to all eternity.

Blessed, praised, honored, exalted,
 extolled, glorified, adored, and lauded
 be the name of the Holy Blessed One,
 beyond all earthly words and songs of blessing, praise, and comfort.
 To which we say: **Amen.**

May there be abundant peace from heaven, and life, for us and all Israel.
 To which we say: **Amen.**

May the One who creates harmony on high, bring peace to us and to all Israel.
 To which we say: **Amen.**

Figure 3.1. Text and translation of *Mourner's Kaddish* from reformjudaism.org.

The Jewish diaspora, or outward migration of Jewish communities from their homelands to other areas of the globe, have given Gentile composers easier access to the sounds and prayers of the Jewish people. These composers have had an opportunity to experience the context of these prayers and melodies and then incorporate them into their music. One such composer was Maurice Ravel, born March 7, 1875, in a small village on the southwestern tip of France. During his childhood, he was exposed to folk melodies by his mother and grew to love Spanish melodies especially.³⁸ While Ravel was not Jewish, his early exposure to folk melodies included Jewish culture and music. Ravel was intrigued by the “unusual scales, the energetic dance rhythms, and the vocal embellishment “of Jewish music.”³⁹

³⁸ Arbie Orenstein, *Ravel: Man and Musician*, (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1968), 8.

³⁹ Michael Fink, “*Deux Mélodies Hébraïques*,” *Program Notes Camerata San Antonio*, 2021, <https://camerata.org/program-notes-all-ravel/>.

In 1914, Ravel was commissioned by Madame Alvina-Alvi, a soprano in the St. Petersburg opera company, to compose a piece for her. The resulting work was *Deux Mélodies Hébraïques*, “Two Hebrew Melodies,” for voice and piano. The set consists of two portions, *Kaddisch* and *L’Enigme éternelle*.⁴⁰ The first movement, *Kaddisch*, is titled after the prayer text that Ravel set. Although the title *Two Hebrew Melodies* implies that Ravel employed the traditional chant melody from the *Kaddish* prayer, he in fact did not use that melody. Instead, Ravel captured the spirit of the prayer while creating his own melody.

Ravel’s Gentile heritage, as well as the impressionist musical idiom for his setting of *Kaddisch*, drew criticism from Abraham Idelsohn, the Jewish musicologist introduced in Chapter 1 of this document. Idelsohn believed non-Jewish composers did not have the ability to capture the entire meaning of Jewish prayer text. One of the more appealing elements of Ravel’s work is that, while it is based on the Jewish prayer, it is open to interpretation while still evoking the essential meaning of the prayer. Arbie Orenstein, who wrote *Ravel: Man and Music*, discussed *Deux Mélodies Hébraïques* and Idelsohn’s objections to it:

The Hebraic melodies form an interesting contrast with the rhapsodic cantorial melisma of the “*Kaddisch*” offset by the folklike simplicity of “*L’Enigme éternelle*.” Although the latter text is no particular import, the Aramaic text of “*Kaddisch*” is one of the masterpieces of the Jewish liturgy. Abraham Idelsohn had criticized Ravel’s setting of “*L’Enigme éternelle*” as “ultramodern...without regard for its scale and the nature of the mode. This observation was made in 1929, and today, of course, the accompaniment no longer appears “ultramodern.” It should be pointed out that in all of his harmonization, Ravel’s sole concern was to write a tasteful accompaniment, and thus any restrictions imposed upon his choice of harmony would have been totally unacceptable. The French texts of the

⁴⁰ Ravel’s title is *Kaddisch*, which is spelled differently from the prayer because of the language of the transliteration used in the piece.

Hebraic melodies were arranged by the composer, after being supplied with a literal translation.⁴¹

Ravel completed the *Two Hebrew Melodies* in May 1914; the premiere, with Madame Alvina-Alvi singing and the composer at the piano, took place in June 1914.⁴² In 1919, Ravel orchestrated the set, and in 1920 it was published by Editions Durand, his regular publisher. In the century since, Ravel's *Kaddisch* has been transcribed for a variety of other instruments, including a very popular version for violin by Lucien Garban. The violin transcription of *Kaddisch* uses Ravel's original music verbatim; only the text is removed. The new transcription of *Kaddisch for flute and piano* presented in this document was inspired by Garban's version and with the knowledge that the flute had been an important instrument to the Jewish people in Biblical times. Since the violin's range differs from that of the flute, the transcription required some registral adjustment; otherwise, every effort was made to maintain the integrity of Ravel's melodic line. Some of the register adjustments were to add to the dramatic effect and emphasize the emotion behind the text. For example, the final phrase in the new flute arrangement, starting at measure 46, Figure 3.2, is written one octave higher than in Ravel's original setting, Figure 3.3.

⁴¹ Orenstein, *Ravel: Man and Musician*, 182.

⁴² *Ibid.*

Figure 3.2. Ravel/Rudnik, *Kaddish*, register adjustment in final phrase, mm. 46-53.

Figure 3.3. Ravel, *Kaddish*, original vocal ending, mm. 46-53.

During this passage, the voice performs a melisma on the syllable “Ah” rather than a passage of the text, which could be emphasizing the translation: “even beyond any earthly prayer or song, any adoration or tribute we can offer.”⁴³ The addition of this syllable is from the “pathogenic-melogenic style, derived from passionate emotion and melody, which permits the interpolation of extraneous nonsense syllables into the text.”⁴⁴

⁴³ “Mourner’s *Kaddish*,” Reform Judaism, <https://reformjudaism.org/beliefs-practices/prayers-blessings/mourners-kaddish>.

⁴⁴ Johanna Spector, “Chant and Cantillation,” from *Musica Judaica*, (American Society for Jewish Music, Vol. 9, 1986), 7.

The vocalist or soloist sings from the soul as if to say, “I am here, G-d, listen to my prayer, for you are my one eternal G-d.” The soloist is calling out to G-d before finally landing and playing the last line in the prayer, “and let us say, Amen.”⁴⁵

As previously stated, two common versions of the *Kaddish* prayer exist: the Mourner’s *Kaddish*, with a lengthy text and solemn manner of recitation, and the *Chatzi Kaddish*, with a brief text and a brighter style of delivery. Ravel set the text that is associated with the *Chatzi Kaddish*, which should be chanted quickly, but the score designates the tempo as *Lent*. This renders the mood of the work closer to the Mourner’s *Kaddish*.

The passage is exposed and soulful; the melismatic melody unfolds over sustained octave Gs in the piano. The opening of the flute arrangement of Ravel’s work is shown in Figure 3.4.

The image shows a musical score for the opening of Ravel/Rudnik's *Kaddish*, measures 1-4. The score is for Flute and Piano. The tempo is marked "Lent". The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The Flute part begins with a melismatic line starting on G4, moving up stepwise with grace notes and slurs. The Piano part consists of a sustained octave G4 in the right hand and a sustained G3 in the left hand, both marked "p" (piano).

Figure 3.4. Ravel/Rudnik, *Kaddish*, opening, mm. 1-4.

Due to the exposed nature of the flute’s line, the opening gives a slight improvisatory feel to the piece. The improvisatory nature of Ravel’s opening gesture calls

⁴⁵ “Mourner’s *Kaddish*,” Reform Judaism.

to mind a style commonly used among cantors from the Ashkenazic tradition.⁴⁶ Jacobson describes: “Improvisation is an important aspect of the oral tradition. The greatest interpreters of folksongs and ‘popular standards’ are renowned for their ability to sing in a way that the listener can feel the expressive power of the lyrics in each and every phrase.”⁴⁷ The combination of the tonality of the music, the exposed solo line, and the slower pace create a reflective melody.

Another aspect of Jewish musical style evident in Ravel’s *Kaddisch* is the melodic contour of the phrase endings. Not surprisingly, since he was setting a text for vocal performance, Ravel modeled his musical phrases to coincide with the structure of the prayer. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the cantillation accent *Siluk* ends a chanted sentence. The structure of the *Ta’am* melody under the *Haftarah Siluk*, an accent used when chanting non-*Torah* text, is a minor descending triad, *Sol-Me-Do*, Figure 3.5.



Figure 3.5. *Haftarah Siluk* accent from Joshua Jacobson’s *Chanting the Hebrew Bible*, 768.

An ornamented version of that triad appears in measure 45 from Ravel’s *Kaddisch*, where, in the vocal score, the text *Kariv*, appears (see Figure 3.6).

⁴⁶ Jacobson, *Chanting the Hebrew Bible: The Art of Cantillation*, 426.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

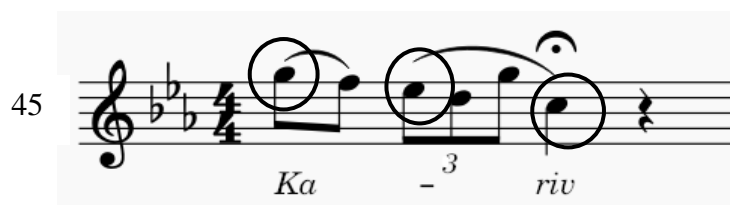


Figure 3.6. Ravel/Rudnik, *Kaddish*, ornamented descending triad, m. 45.

The first important cadence falls on the word “*Kariv*,” which roughly translates as “soon.” Though Ravel adds neighbor and ornamental notes, the outline is that of a descending minor triad. The ornamented cadence that first occurs on the word “*Kariv*” occurs three more times in the piece and always aligns with the sentence structure of the liturgical text and the corresponding *Ta’am*, in this case, the *Haftarah Siluk*.

In reciting the *Kaddish*, traditional practice calls for an alternation between cantor and congregation in some portions of the text. In both versions of the *Kaddish*, the cantor chants the first sentence, which ends with the word *raba*, “great,” and the congregation communally replies with a quick, one-beat “Amen” in eighth notes. In the opening, the role of the cantor would be that of the flute, and the congregation the piano. In measure 6 of Ravel’s *Kaddish*, shown in Figure 3.7, there is a quarter rest in the flute line, where Ravel’s piece gives the illusion of a break for “Amen” to fit into his work.

Figure 3.7. Ravel/Rudnik, *Kaddish*, pause for congregational “Amen,” mm. 5-6.

To help enhance this illusion, the piano line rearticulates the G during the flute's beat of rest, which is symbolic of the congregation's part in the prayer. Ravel's addition of the rest at this point suggests that he is "leaving space" for an imagined congregational "Amen."

Ravel used the text of *Kaddish* to create musical phrases. As previously mentioned, there are cadences that echo the *Haftarah Siluk*, but Ravel's phrases respect the structure of the prayer's text in other ways as well. When comparing the liturgical text and the score, there is a direct correlation between when there is a pause or break in the text and the music. Table 1 identifies where each phrase of the liturgical text ends or pauses, and where it coincides with Ravel's music. The third column indicates what occurs in the music at the corresponding moments. Figure 3.8, below the table, shows the first three entries from Table 1 in context.

Table 1. Ending of Hebrew liturgical phrase and Ravel's *Kaddish* musical phrases.

| End of <i>Kaddish</i> phrase | Measure(s) in Ravel's <i>Kaddish</i> | What occurs in the music |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Raba</i> | m. 6 | Quarter rest (space for "Amen"). Ends on C. |
| <i>Kariv</i> | m. 21 | Descending minor triad. Ends on C. |
| <i>V'im'ru: Amen</i> | mm. 22-23 | Ends on C. |
| <i>B'rich hu</i> | mm. 36-37 | Descending fifth. Ends on C. |
| <i>B'alma</i> | m. 45 | Descending minor triad. Ends on C. |
| <i>V'im'ru: amen</i> | mm. 50-52 | Descending minor triad. Ends on C. |

Maurice Ravel
Arr. Kathryn Rudnik

Lent

Flute

5

9

13

16

20

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

p

f

mp

p

mf

f

p

Figure 3.8. Ravel/Rudnik, *Kaddish*, liturgical phrase endings, mm. 5-23.

At each phrase ending, the music reflects the text by ending on C, which is the tonal center of the piece. Having each of these phrases end on C gives each musical phrase a sense of finality and is a way Ravel relied on the liturgical text when writing his music. When chanting the *Kaddish*, at the end of every sentence the cantor and/or the congregation also concludes on the tonal center. By ending each phrase on C, the tonal center of *Kaddish*, Ravel emulated a chant element through his music.

In Ravel's setting, the sense of the *Kaddish* prayer is expanded beyond the translation of the text, while his phrase endings and motivic choices create important links to the associated liturgy. Thus, even without the presence of the sung text, a flute and piano transcription connects the Biblical heritage of the flute to a more modern take on one of the oldest and most important Jewish prayers. Regardless of religion, listening to Ravel's *Kaddish* can be a meditative experience.

Chapter 4: Ernest Bloch's *Prayer*

The prayer *Avinu Malkeinu*, “Our Father, Our King,” is a centerpiece of the liturgy for the High Holy Days of *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, as well as during the Ten Days of Repentance between the holidays. *Rosh Hashanah*, the Jewish New Year, is a two-day observance celebrated on the first day of the month of *Tishrei*, according to the Jewish calendar. This is a holiday filled with rejoicing as well as introspection as the Jewish people prepare for another year. When celebrating *Rosh Hashanah*, it is traditional to eat a round *Challah* to symbolize the circle of life, and apples dipped in honey to symbolize hopes for a sweet year.⁴⁸ Another tradition that occurs during *Rosh Hashanah* is the blowing of the *shofar* to welcome in the New Year.⁴⁹

Avinu Malkeinu is a prayer in which the Jewish people confess to G-d that “we have sinned against you” and ask for pardon and protection. Beginning with the first service of *Rosh Hashanah*, *Avinu Malkeinu* is read daily through the conclusion of *Yom Kippur*. The prayer is spoken responsively alternating between the Rabbi/Cantor and the congregation. As Table 2 shows, each line begins with the phrase *Avinu Malkeinu*.

Table 2: *Avinu Makleinu* Transliteration Text and Translation.

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Avinu Malkeinu, sh'ma koleinu</i> | Our Father, Our King, hear our voices. |
| <i>Avinu Malkeinu, chatanu l'fanecha</i> | Our Father, Our King, we have sinned against You. |
| <i>Avinu Malkeinu, chamol aleinu c'al olaleiny v'tapeinu</i> | Our Father, Our King, have compassion on us and our children. |
| <i>Avinu Malkeinu, kaleih dever v'cherev v'ra-av mei-aleinu</i> | Our Father, Our King, make an end to sickness, war, and famine. |
| <i>Avinu Malkeinu, kaleih kol tzar umastin mei-aleinu.</i> | Our Father, Our King, make an end to all oppression. |

⁴⁸ Menachem Posner, “*Rosh Hashanah* Services: What you Need to Know,” *Chabad.org*, https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3750492/jewish/Rosh-Hashanah-Services-What-You-Need-to-Know.htm.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Avinu Malkeinu, kotveinu b'seifer Chayim tovim</i> | Our Father, Our, King, inscribe us in the Book of Life. |
| <i>Avinu Malkeinu, chadeish aleinu shanah tovah.</i> | Our Father, Our King, let the new year be a good year for us. |
| <i>Avinu Malkeinu, hareim karen Yisrael amecha.</i> | Our Father Our King, give strength to your people Israel. |
| <i>Avinu Malkeinu, choneinu va'aneinu, ki ein banu mas-asim, aseï imanu tz'daka vachessed v'hoshi-einu.</i> | Our Father Our King, be gracious and answer us for we have little merit. Treat us generously and with kindness and be our help. |

During the ten days of repentance between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, the full text of *Avinu Malkeinu* is spoken, and the final verse, outlined in Table 2, is sung to a traditional Ashkenazi melody, shown in Figure 4.1.⁵⁰

A - vi - nu Mal - kei - nu cho - nei - nu va' - ani - nu A -
6 vi - nu Mal - kei - nu cho - nei - nu va' - nei - nu ki ein ba - nu mas - a - sim a - sei i - ma -
11 nu tz' - da - ka va - che - sed a - sei i - ma - nu tz' - da - ka va - che - sed v' - ho - shi - ein -
17 nu.

Figure 4.1. *Avinu Malkeinu*, Traditional Ashkenazi Melody.

Due to the period of repentance, the spoken text of *Avinu Malkeinu* could be to emphasize what the Jews are asking of G-d, knowing that we have sinned. The music of the final verse represents the final plea when the Jewish people ask G-d to forgive our sins and “treat us generously and with kindness and be our help.”⁵¹

⁵⁰ Chabad.org, *Avinu Malkeinu*.

⁵¹ *Avinu Malkeinu*, 9-12 (OJB).

In contrast to the simple structure employed for *Avinu Malkeinu* during the ten days of repentance, its treatment for *Rosh Hashanah* is more elaborate, befitting the spirit of the holiday. Instead of being read responsively, the full text is sung; moreover, the festal version often features a melody written in 1951 by Max Janowski. Janowski (1912-91) was a German-born Jewish composer who immigrated to the United States in 1937, settled in Chicago, and served in the United States Navy during World War II. After the war, Janowski composed prolifically for the synagogue. Most of his works, including concert pieces as well as liturgical music, were performed during his lifetime—principally in the greater Chicago area, although a few gained popularity across the country.⁵² Today, a few of Janowski's compositions are staples in Reform and some Conservative Synagogues, including his setting of *Avinu Malkeinu*, probably his best-known work and arguably his most inspired one.

A composer who utilized the *Avinu Malkeinu* as a basis for composition was Ernest Bloch, a Swiss-born American composer whose music is heavily based on Hebrew and Jewish subjects, including material from both folk melodies and liturgical songs. The mixture of melodic styles within his own compositional framework created a distinctive idiom of Jewish-inspired music.⁵³ Jewish composers have suffered throughout history due to sentiments of anti-Semitism, particularly in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Even composers who chose to profess different religions, like Felix Mendelssohn who converted to Christianity, received criticism for their Jewish heritage. Some composers chose to reflect their Jewish heritage in their music by using modality

⁵² Neil Levin, *Max Janowski*, Milken Archive, <https://www.milkenarchive.org/artists/view/max-janowski>.

⁵³ Mosteller, "Jewishness" in *Selected Repertoire*, 33.

and rhythmic inflections similar to the Hebrew language, while others used Biblical cantillation.⁵⁴ Each composer had their own style to express their own interpretation of Jewishness, and Bloch was no exception.

A significant number of Bloch's Jewish compositions were written in the 1920s, including *Prayer, From Jewish Life, for cello and piano* (1924). This piece is the first of a set of three short works that depict scenes from Jewish life. For this project, only the first work, *Prayer*, was selected to be arranged for flute and piano because of its resemblance to a liturgical melody. According to Neil Levin, a Professor of Music at the Jewish Theological Seminary, "The first of these [works], *Prayer*, has indeed the flavor of a fervently sung prayer, or a hymn of petition, in a traditional Ashkenazi synagogue."⁵⁵

Bloch's own words help describe this "flavor":

It is not my purpose, not my desire, to attempt a 'reconstruction' of Jewish music, or to base my work on melodies more or less authentic. I am not an archaeologist. I hold it of first importance to write good, genuine music. It is the Jewish soul that interests me, the complex, glowing, agitated soul, that I feel vibrating throughout the Bible...It is all this that I endeavor to hear within myself, and to transcribe in my music.⁵⁶

There is a strong resemblance between the melodic contours of Bloch's *Prayer* and Janowski's setting of *Avinu Malkeinu*. They share an opening four-note theme, which will be referred to here as the *Avinu* motive. Figure 4.2 shows the *Avinu* motive as it appears in Janowski's prayer setting; Figure 4.3 shows how Bloch uses the same *Avinu* motive at the beginning of *Prayer, From Jewish Life*.

⁵⁴ Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development*, 474.

⁵⁵ Neil Levin, *From Jewish Life*, Milken Archive, <https://www.milkenarchive.org/music/volumes/view/intimate-voices/work/from-jewish-life/>.

⁵⁶ Aaron Marko Rothmüller, *The Music of the Jews: An Historical Appreciation*, (New York, NY, A.S. Barnes and Company, Inc., 1960), 174.

Avinu Malkeinu

Max Janowski

Moderato

1

A - vi - nu mal - kei - nu, sh' - ma ko - lei - nu. A - vi - nu mal -

4

kei - nu. cha - ta - nu - l' - fa - ne - cha. A - vi - nu mal - kei - nu. cha - mol a -

Figure 4.2. Janowski, *Avinu Malkeinu*, opening *Avinu* theme, mm. 1-6.

Andante Moderato ♩ = 72

1

Figure 4.3. Bloch/Rudnik, *Prayer, From Jewish Life*, opening with bracketed *Avinu* motive, mm. 1-4.

As previously mentioned, the text “*Avinu Malkeinu*” appears at the beginning of every line of the prayer, and Bloch reflects this pattern by restating the *Avinu* motive throughout the piece. Moreover, just as in Janowski’s prayer setting, the melody that is associated with the words *Avinu Malkeinu* appears six times between the flute and the piano in Bloch’s work. It could be assumed that Bloch had patterned his *Prayer* after Janowski’s *Avinu Malkeinu*. Recall, however, that Bloch wrote his *Prayer* in 1924, whereas Janowski’s setting of *Avinu Malkeinu* dates from 1951. Neil Levin writes that “the initial four-note motive in the minor mode, together with its elaboration in the

ensuing phrases, sounds as if it might have served as the skeletal model for Max Janowski's now well-known setting of the High [Holiday] prayer, *Avinu Malkeinu*.⁵⁷

Bloch's piece is laid out in standard sonata form, albeit on a small scale; there is a primary theme (*Avinu*), a secondary theme, a development section, a recapitulation, and a coda. Table 3 illustrates the structure of the music and the division of thematic material between the flute and the piano.

Table 1: Form Analysis of Bloch/Rudnik's *Prayer, From Jewish Life*.

| | Mm. 1-11 | Mm. 12-22 | Mm. 22-47 | Mm. 48-58 | Mm. 59-65 |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Flute | Primary Theme (<i>Avinu</i>) | Secondary Theme | Development | Primary Theme (<i>Avinu</i>) | Coda |
| Piano | Accompaniment | Primary Theme (<i>Avinu</i>) | Accompaniment | Secondary Theme | Accompaniment |
| Key | F minor | F minor | C minor | F minor | F minor |

After the opening statement of the *Avinu* motive in the flute, the secondary theme begins in the flute line in measure 12, while the piano takes over the *Avinu* motive, outlined in Figure 4.4.

⁵⁷ Levin, *From Jewish Music*, <https://www.milkenarchive.org/music/volumes/view/intimate-voices/work/from-jewish-life/>.

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Prayer' from 'Jewish Life' by Bloch/Rudnik. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It features a Flute and Piano. The 'Secondary Theme' is introduced in measure 11, with the 'Primary Theme' highlighted in a box. The score includes dynamic markings like *mp*, *p*, and *pp*, and a tempo change to 'Poco più mosso' at measure 22.

Figure 4.4. Bloch/Rudnik, *Prayer*, *From Jewish Life*, secondary and development themes, mm. 11-27.

This new theme is in the flute's high register and has a more lyrical and fluid quality to the line.

Compared to the exposition (measures 1-22), the development section has a completely different style (see Figure 4.5).

The image shows a musical score for measures 22-32. The top system (measures 22-27) is boxed and labeled 'Poco più mosso'. It features a Flute (Fl.) part with a melodic line and a Piano (Pno.) part with chords on the downbeat. Dynamics include *mp*, *p*, *pp*, and *mf*. The bottom system (measures 28-32) continues the development with similar textures and dynamics.

Figure 4.5. Bloch/Rudnik, *Prayer*, *From Jewish Life*, development, mm. 22-32.

The development begins at the anacrusis to measure 23, and it is marked *poco più mosso* (“a little bit faster”). This section has a stricter rhythmic pattern, especially the first four measures of the section, where the piano only plays on the downbeat of each measure. This could suggest a mournful march, which could be interpreted as a tribute to the suffering of the Jewish people throughout history.

One aspect of *Prayer*, *From Jewish Life* that does not align with the traditional sonata form is that the development section is in the key of C minor, which is the minor dominant of the original key of F minor. In a traditional sonata form, the secondary theme typically modulates to the dominant or relative major key; in the key of F minor, the dominant is C major, while the relative major is A-flat major. It is possible that Bloch is trying to keep within the typical Jewish modes by remaining in a minor key. In addition to using the minor dominant, Bloch recurrently uses a lowered second scale degree, D-flat, alternating with the diatonic D, illustrated in Figure 4.6.

Figure 4.6. Bloch/Rudnik, *Prayer, From Jewish Life*, alternating D-flat and D-natural, mm. 27-41.

In Bloch's piece, one musical element of note is the use of a Jewish musical mode, discussed in Chapter 2. When thinking about Jewish music, people tend to associate it with a mournful character because most Jewish melodies employ a minor mode. Of the several modes used in Jewish music, one of the most popular is *Magein Avot*, "Shield of our Fathers," mentioned in Chapter 2 and shown again in Figure 4.7. This mode most resembles a natural minor scale, with a lack of a leading tone.

Figure 4.7. Kligman, *Magein Avot* mode.

In isolating the first phrase of *Prayer*, Figure 4.8, there is a strong pull to F minor.

Figure 4.8. Bloch/Rudnik, *Prayer, From Jewish Life*, half cadence in flute line, mm. 1-4.

In measure 4, a half cadence precedes the return of the main theme. The musical phrase continues but instead of cadencing after four measures, which would parallel the previous section, the phrase is extended until it finally lands on a V-I cadence in measures 10 and 11. In relation to the Jewish modes, there is a mixture of the diatonic seventh scale degree, the leading tone of E-natural, as well as the lowered seventh, E-flat. The lack of a leading tone classifies this as natural-minor, which is the *Magein Avot* mode.

In the flute arrangement, there is one alteration to Bloch's work. The cello line in the original version of Bloch's *Prayer, From Jewish Life* concludes on a C minor chord, which is the dominant of F minor, the key of the piece, Figure 4.9. Ending on this half cadence does not sound "final" to the listener.

The image displays a musical score for Cello and Piano (Pno.) from Bloch's *Prayer, From Jewish Life*, measures 61-65. The Cello part (top staff) begins with a sixteenth-note run (measures 61-62) marked with a '6' (sixteenth notes), followed by a triplet (measures 63-64) marked with a '3'. The piece concludes in measure 65 with a C minor chord. The Piano part (bottom two staves) provides harmonic support with chords labeled IV, V, ii°5, and I||p. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat).

Figure 4.9. Bloch, *Prayer, From Jewish Life*, original ending, mm. 61-65.

While Bloch's reasoning for ending on this imperfect authentic cadence is never mentioned, he could have written this ending to prepare the listener for the second movement of the full work. However, the listener's ear is left still searching for complete tonal stability, which can really only be achieved through a perfect authentic cadence, or a cadence in which the tonic is present in the bass line and the solo line. Therefore, in

creating the flute and piano arrangement of this piece, the ending was altered to establish a more finite-sounding ending on a tonic chord. The revised ending in the arrangement for flute and piano derives from Max Janowski's *Avinu Malkeinu*. In Janowski's final statement, the soloist ornaments a descending minor triad (see Figure 4.10).



Figure 4.10: Janowski, *Avinu Malkeinu*, ending statement, mm. 44-45.

This gesture is also present in Maurice Ravel's *Kaddisch* on cadences; as mentioned in Chapter 3, the minor triad constitutes a representation of a *Haftarah Siluk* from the table of *te'amim*, seen in Figure 4.11.

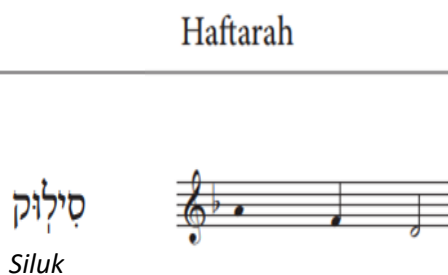


Figure 4.11. *Haftarah Siluk* accent from Joshua Jacobson's *Chanting the Hebrew Bible*, 768.

The addition of this new ending in the Bloch flute arrangement not only makes the piece sound more conclusive as a standalone work, but also ties Bloch's piece even more solidly to Janowski's composition and the liturgical context of *Rosh Hashanah*. The new ending, seen in Figure 4.12, ornaments the descending minor triad to land on the tonic, concluding the piece with a perfect authentic cadence.

The image displays a musical score for Flute (Fl.) and Piano (pno.). The score is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. It is divided into two systems. The first system, labeled '61' on the left, covers measures 61, 62, and 63. In measure 61, the flute plays a sixteenth-note run with a slur and a '6' below it. The piano accompaniment consists of sustained chords. The second system, labeled '64' on the left, covers measures 64 and 65 and is enclosed in a black box. In measure 64, the flute plays a triplet of eighth notes with a '3' below it. The piano accompaniment features a V7 chord. In measure 65, the flute plays a single eighth note with a slur and a '3' below it. The piano accompaniment features a tonic chord (I). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

Figure 4.12. Bloch/Rudnik, *Prayer, From Jewish Life*, revised ending, mm. 61-65.

Though written before Max Janowski's setting of *Avinu Malkeinu*, through the connection of a shared melody, *Prayer, From Jewish Life* represents the soulful and emotional connection to history. While Bloch's Jewish heritage influenced several compositions, including this piece, through creating a flute and piano transcription, the connection to Jewish heritage and history is strengthened.

Chapter 5: Max Bruch's *Kol Nidrei*

Kol Nidrei is a prayer well known to all Jewish people and is used in the liturgy on *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement, considered to be the holiest day in Judaism. *Yom Kippur* falls ten days after *Rosh Hashanah*, on the tenth of *Tishrei*. It is a day of solemn prayer and reflection, and, as written in the book of Leviticus, 23:27, is decreed a strict day of rest.⁵⁸ Those who are able traditionally fast during *Yom Kippur* to aid in cleansing the body and soul. Worship during *Yom Kippur* consists of five services: *Maariv* (Evening), *Shacharit* (Morning), *Musaf* (Additional Service), *Minchah* (Afternoon), and *Neilah* (Final).⁵⁹ The first service, *Maariv*, is often called *Kol Nidrei*, “All Vows,” because the *Kol Nidrei* prayer is recited immediately prior to sunset on the evening of *Yom Kippur*. During the prayer, the Ark, which houses the *Torah* scrolls, is open, and the scrolls are held on each side of the Rabbi or Cantor. The Rabbi or Cantor then invites the congregation to pray, having transgressed against the teachings of the *Torah*. Then the *Kol Nidrei* prayer is recited. The prayer is about admitting our sins and asking for forgiveness.⁶⁰ The ancient text of *Kol Nidrei* is written in Aramaic, rather than Hebrew, due to the popularity of the language in Biblical times. The text translates as follows:

All vows, and prohibitions, and oaths, and consecrations, restrictions, interdiction, or equivalent expression of vows which I may vow, swear, dedicate, or which I may proscribe for myself or for others, from this *Yom Kippur* and the next *Yom Kippur*, which comes to us for good, we regret them all; all shall be hereby absolved, remitted, canceled, declared null and void, not in force or in effect. Let our vows not be considered vows;

⁵⁸ Lev. 23:27.

⁵⁹ Menachem Posner, “What you Need to Know about *Yom Kippur* Synagogue Services,” *Chabad.org*, https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/1965282/jewish/What-You-Need-to-Know-About-Yom-Kippur-Synagogue-Services.htm.

⁶⁰ Naftali Silberberg, “Why is *Kol Nidrei* Considered the Holiest Jewish Prayer,” *Chabad.org*, https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/584901/jewish/Why-Is-Kol-Nidrei-So-Holy.htm.

let our prohibitions not be considered prohibitions; and let our oaths not be considered oaths.⁶¹

The tune of *Kol Nidrei* was written by Louis Lewandowski (1821–94), a German-born Jewish composer who contributed to the “Westernization” of Jewish music through his concert works and new arrangements of liturgical music. Lewandowski studied piano at an early age and continued on to study composition at the Berlin Academy. After graduation, he was appointed choirmaster in the *Neue Synagoge* in Berlin where he created arrangements of ancient Hebrew melodies.⁶² During his time at the *Neue Synagoge*, he wrote *Kol Rinnah u-Tefillah*, which included an updated and modernized version of *Kol Nidre*.⁶³ According to Idelsohn:

The most outstanding talent in Lewandowski was his tasteful and skillful reshaping in modern forms of old material. His recitatives and solos for the Synagogue song have the wonderful quality of being suitable for and easily rendered by any voice of fair quality... He, more than the others of Western Europe, gave proof of the possibility of the re-creation of Synagogue song, and its adjustability to modern musical forms.⁶⁴

While Lewandowski’s setting of *Kol Nidrei* has gone through a few modifications, it remains the version that is most commonly utilized for *Yom Kippur* in synagogues of Ashkenazi origin. Due to the soulful and expressive nature of the prayer, a certain amount of artistic liberty is allowable to reflect the spirit and emotion of the prayer. Similar to Ravel’s *Kaddish* and Bloch’s *Prayer, From Jewish Life*, the soulful and spiritual expression is a vital characteristic of *Kol Nidrei*.

⁶¹ *Kol Nidrei* Translation from *Mahzor*, Chabad.org.

⁶² Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development*, 277.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

Lewandowski's *Kol Nidrei* can be traced to the oldest known musical setting of *Kol Nidrei*, composed in 1765 by Ahron Beer.⁶⁵ In both settings, the opening phrase is a palindrome. The melody begins on tonic, then descends a minor second, followed by a descending major third. Then the line ascends by a major third and then a minor second until landing on tonic once again. A comparison of the opening melodies by Beer, Figure 5.1, and Lewandowski, Figure 5.2, shows a similar contour of the phrase.

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Kol nidre' I **A. BEER, 1765 (?)**

1 ³⁷ _{m2 M3 M3 m2 m3}

6 ^{7 tr} ^{tr}

Figure 5.1. Beer, *Kol Nidrei*, from Abraham Idelsohn's *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development*, 154, mm. 1-10.

1 _{m2 M3 M3}

5 _{m2 m3}

Kol *nid - rei* *ve-e-so - re* *va-cha-ro - mei* *va-ko-no -*
me *ve-chi-nu - ye* *ve-chi-nu - se - ush - vu - ot.*

Figure 5.2. Lewandowski, *Kol Nidrei*, opening theme, mm. 1-8.

This pattern occurs in Beer's 1765 melody, recurs in Lewandowski's of 1871, and also appears in a work further explored below, Max Bruch's *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47.

⁶⁵ Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development*, 160.

Max Bruch (1838-1920) was a skilled German-born composer and teacher who wrote over 200 works, including *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47. Several of Bruch's works drew on folk material, as he wrote to his publisher in 1875, "the influence of folksong upon my melody is unmistakable – happily so!"⁶⁶ The influence of folksong lasted throughout his career. During his time in Berlin, he wrote two works, *Scottish Fantasy*, Op. 46, and *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, both of which have elements of traditional folk songs. While some may not classify *Kol Nidrei* as a "folksong," it is possible that his mention of the influence of "folksong upon my melody," may also refer to traditional Jewish melody.

Bruch's *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, for cello and piano, was composed in 1880. This work is comprised of two different melodies. Though Bruch was not Jewish, during his time in Berlin, he was most likely exposed to the music of the synagogue, specifically the music of Louis Lewandowski and his version of *Kol Nidrei*. In a letter to his friend Emil Kamphausen, Bruch described how he came upon the material for the work:

The two melodies are first-class – the first is an age-old Hebrew song of atonement, the second (D major) is the middle section of a moving and truly magnificent song 'O weep for those that wept on Babel's stream' (Byron), equally very old. I got to know both melodies in Berlin, where I had much to do with the children of Israel in the Choral Society. The success of *Kol Nidrei* is assuring, because all the Jews in the world are for it *eo ipso* ["by that itself"].⁶⁷

During Bruch's time, his works for violin were popular, and cellists had been requesting that he write for their instrument as well. One who asked was Robert Hausmann, and it was he who was rewarded with the dedication of *Kol Nidrei*. Bruch wrote to his publisher, "I have written a cello work with orchestra for Hausmann, on the

⁶⁶ Fifield, *Max Bruch: His Life and Works*, 47.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 169.

finest Hebrew melody, ‘*Kol Nidrei*.’”⁶⁸ While preparing for the premiere, Hausmann wrote to Bruch saying, “there is no doubt that they killed the *Adagio* artistically stone dead in the orchestral session with an insanely slow tempo.”⁶⁹ Since Bruch was not present for the rehearsals, the orchestra may not have understood how the music should sound. Christopher Fifield, author of *Max Bruch: His Life and Works*, describes his interpretation of Bruch’s use of the *Kol Nidrei* prayer:

The melody of *Kol Nidre* is a haunting traditional one and has long exerted a great emotional impact on Jews. It is traditionally sung on the eve of *Yom Kippur*, during the service of Atonement, and its elements of remorse, resolve, and triumph, corresponding to the three stages of repentance, are mirrored in the way Bruch breaks up the long-breathed Jewish melody into groups of three notes, interrupting each group with an emotional sigh by the insertion of a quaver rest.⁷⁰

Bruch’s piece is based on the *Kol Nidrei* melody from Lewandowski’s version of the prayer melody. During *Yom Kippur*, when *Kol Nidrei* is intoned, the opening sentence is sung three times at increasing volume.⁷¹ The threefold repetition may have developed as a way for Jews who had been forced to convert to Christianity to nullify those professions of faith.⁷² According to a ninth-century prayer book:

The first time [the *hazzan (cantor)*] must utter it very softly, like one who hesitates to enter the place of the king to ask a gift of Him whom he fears to approach; the second time he may speak somewhat louder; and the third time more loudly still, as one who is accustomed to dwell at the court and to approach his sovereign as a friend.⁷³

In addition to the original version for cello and piano, Bruch arranged his *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, for many other instrumental combinations, including violin and piano,

⁶⁸ Fifield, *Max Bruch: His Life and Works*, 170.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 169-170.

⁷¹ Deborah Cannizzaro, *A Brief History of the Kol Nidrei Prayer*, ReformJudaism.org, September 17, 2018, <https://reformjudaism.org/blog/brief-history-kol-nidrei-prayer>.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

viola and piano, piano and harmonium, solo piano, cello and organ, and solo organ.⁷⁴ In 2004, James Galway arranged the work for flute and piano.⁷⁵ Galway's version departs in certain places from Bruch's original, whereas a new transcription presented in this document strives to remain as faithful as possible to the original composition. As with the transcription of Bloch's *Prayer*, there was a need for some adjustments to register due to the differing ranges of the flute and the cello.

This flute arrangement features more dynamic specifications than Bruch had provided. As mentioned earlier, each statement of the *Kol Nidrei* liturgical text crescendos to increase the intensity and emphasize the words, "our vows are to you, G-d, and we pledge to uphold your teaching."⁷⁶ In Bruch's original work, there are no dynamic markings in the *Kol Nidrei* that would identify any statement as louder than the previous. One interesting feature of Bruch's setting is the addition of a fourth statement of the *Kol Nidrei* theme. In this flute arrangement, the four successive statements are marked *p*, *mp*, *mf*, and *f*, respectively.

Figure 5.3 shows the flute opening of the flute and piano arrangement of Bruch's *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, with bracketed segments of the *Kol Nidrei* theme.

⁷⁴ Fifield, *Max Bruch: His Life and Works*, 170.

⁷⁵ Max Bruch, James Galway, *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, for flute and piano, (Theodore Presser Co., King of Prussia, Pa, 2004).

⁷⁶ *Kol Nidrei* Translation from *Mahzor*, Chabad.org

Kol Nidrei Op. 47

Max Bruch
Arr. Kathryn Rudnik

Adagio ma non troppo

Flute

Fl. **A** m2 M3 M3 m2

p *espress*

13

Flute and piano arrangement based on the following:

Kol Nidrei, Op. 47, for Cello and Piano
By Max Bruch
Edited by Leonard Rose
© 1959 (Renewed) International Music Co.
[Catalog Number: 1682]
This Arrangement © 2022 International Music Co.
www.internationalmusicco.com

Figure 5.3. Bruch/Rudnik, *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, opening *Kol Nidrei* theme, mm. 1-16.

The second of the two themes, *O' Weep for Those*, comes from Lord Byron's poem, mentioned previously. This specific poem was set to music by several composers, including Isaac Nathan, who published his version of *O' Weep for Those* in 1815 in his collection "A Selection of Hebrew Melodies." The text of the second verse of the poem, used in Bruch's *Kol Nidrei*, is as follows:

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?
And Judah's melody once more rejoice
The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly voice?

It is Nathan's melody that Bruch used in *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47.⁷⁷ Specifically, Bruch used the second verse of the poem.⁷⁸ Figure 5.4 shows the relevant passage from Nathan's composition, and Figure 5.5 shows the appearance of the melody in the flute line of Bruch's work, with the addition of the text from Byron's poem.

25 where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet. And

Figure 5.4. Nathan, *O' Weep for Those*, mm. 25-28.

66 And where shall Is-ra-el leave her bl-ee-ding feet. And

71 when shall - Zi-on-'s songs a - gai - n seem sweet?

Flute and piano arrangement based on the following:

Kol Nidrei, Op. 47, for Cello and Piano
 By Max Bruch
 Edited by Leonard Rose
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 [Catalog Number: 1682]
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Figure 5.5. Bruch/Rudnik, *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, secondary theme, *O' Weep for Those* with text, mm. 62-74.

⁷⁷ Sheila Spector, *The Liturgical Context of Byron-Nathan 'Hebrew Melodies*, In *Studies in Romanticism*, Fall 2008, Vol. 47, No. 3.

⁷⁸ Fifield, *Max Bruch: His Life and Works*, 169-170.

This secondary theme is first heard in the piano before it is passed to the flute. Following the second theme, the flute continues with a sequence of sixteenth notes that gradually ascend in register to build intensity. Once the peak of the phrase has passed, *O' Weep for Those* returns in the solo line. This time the accompaniment is more stagnant and has a thinner texture when compared to the earlier statement of Isaac Nathan's melody. This creates an intimate atmosphere, adding spiritual and emotional connection to the music.

The *O' Weep for Those* theme fits into a condensed sonata form within the larger form of Bruch's work. Table 4 shows the layout of the secondary theme, and how it fits into a sonata form outline, complete with transitions, a recapitulation, and a coda.

Table 4: Form Analysis of Bruch/Rudnik's *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, Secondary theme, *O' Weep for Those*.

| Measures | 59-66 | 67-74 | 75-79 | 80-90 | 90-95 | 96-103 | 103-113 |
|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|---------|
| Flute | Piano Theme: <i>O' Weep</i> | Theme (<i>O' Weep</i>) | Transition | Development | Retransition | Theme (<i>O' Weep</i>) | Coda |
| Key | D Major | D Major | Transition | A Major- E Major- B Major | D Major | D Major | D Major |

With the pairing of the *Kol Nidrei* theme and a second Hebrew melody, Bruch's piece appears to be a worthy representation of the combination of Jewish liturgical music and Western compositional style. However, not all musicologists believe this piece represents the Jewish faith. Similar to how he criticized Ravel's *Kaddisch*, Abraham Idelsohn wrote this about Bruch's *Kol Nidrei*:

Bruch utilized the *Kol Nidrei* theme to create a fine piece of music but one that is German-European in spirit and style. He did not express as a background, the tune, the *milieu* out of which it sprang, the religious emotions which it voices: awe, repentance and hope. In Bruch's conception, the melody was an interesting

theme for a brilliant secular concerto. In his presentation, the melody entirely lost its original character. Bruch displayed a fine art, masterly technique and fantasy, but not Jewish sentiments. It is not a Jewish *Kol Nidrei* which Bruch composed.⁷⁹ This controversy raises the question, what makes something “Jewish?”

Though Idelsohn believed Bruch’s piece to be less about the liturgical context of the prayer, the sentiment of the prayer is retained in the melody. Most Jewish people would recognize the prayer on which this piece is based within the first three notes of the melody. Having the knowledge of the prayer and what it means to the Jewish community, and the addition of this new flute arrangement, there can be a new experience when listening to Bruch’s masterpiece, one potentially filled with “awe, repentance, and hope.”⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development*, 466.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

Chapter 6: David Ehrlich's *Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidre with Variations*

While Ravel, Bloch, and Bruch all composed their pieces based on Jewish themes for instruments other than the flute, David Ehrlich wrote a piece for flute and piano based on a Jewish prayer melody. *Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidre with Variations for flute and piano* was composed and self-published in 1916, but little is known about Ehrlich's work or life.⁸¹ Nancy Toff, one of the most important flute scholars today, wrote in her article, "Who is David Ehrlich?," "I hypothesize[d] that only a Jew would write variations on *Kol Nidre*, the solemn *Yom Kippur* prayer."⁸² Her research led to the discovery that Ehrlich was buried in a Jewish Cemetery in New York City, which confirms his Jewish heritage.

David Ehrlich was a composer, flutist, and artist. He was born in Austria in 1848 and immigrated to the United States in 1879.⁸³ Subsequently, he published a treatise on German shorthand, *Prof. D. Ehrlich's brieflicher unterricht im schonschreiben und in der stenographie*, "Prof. D. Ehrlich's epistemological instruction in calligraphy and shorthand."⁸⁴ Eventually Ehrlich changed professions, as indicated by a 1901 newspaper advertisement he placed for "Flute Instruction (Boehm system) given by an [anonymous] expert flutist."⁸⁵ According to Nancy Toff's article, the location where the lessons would take place was Ehrlich's address.⁸⁶

⁸¹ *Nidre* and *Nidrei* are both correct and proper spelling and can be used interchangeably. Ehrlich's title is *Kol Nidre*, which is spelled differently from the prayer and Bruch's piece.

⁸² Nancy Toff, "Who was David Ehrlich?," *New York Flute Club Newsletter*, January 2019, 4.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidre with Variations (Grand solo for flute or violin, with piano accompaniment) comprises exactly what the title indicates, “*Kol Nidre* with variations.” Through the variations the primary *Kol Nidre* theme is still prominent in the flute part. Similar to Bruch’s, Ehrlich’s piece is based on Lewandowski’s version of *Kol Nidrei*, shown in Figure 6.1.⁸⁷

Figure 6.1. Lewandowski, *Kol Nidrei*, opening theme, mm. 1-8.

Figure 6.2 illustrates the first hint of the *Kol Nidre* theme in Ehrlich’s work. The first measure of the piano introduction employs the same descending minor second that characterizes both Beer’s and Lewandowski’s *Kol Nidrei*. The majority of observant Ashkenazi Jews likely would be able to recognize the prayer on which this piece is based from this motive alone.

⁸⁷ Beer and Lewandowski both use *Nidrei* in the title of their pieces.

D. EHRLICH

Adagio con molto espressione

Flute
or
Violin

1

Piano

Figure 6.2. Ehrlich, *Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidre with Variations*, opening motive, mm. 1-4.

Figure 6.3 and 6.4 offer an example of how Ehrlich's *Kol Nidre* theme is slightly varied from Lewandowski's. In Figure 6.3, Lewandowski used triplets to fit the natural speech pattern of the text. Since Ehrlich's *Kol Nidre*, Figure 6.4, was an instrumental piece, he was able to use eighth notes instead of triplets while maintaining the same contour of the *Kol Nidrei* theme.

1

Kol nid - rei ve-e-so - re va-cha-ro - mei va-ko-no -

Figure 6.3. Lewandowski, *Kol Nidrei*, opening phrase triplet syllables, mm. 1-4.

Theme

1

Kol Ni-dre-i v' - esa-rei v'-chara-mei v' - kona-mei

m2 M3 M3 m2 m3

Figure 6.4. Ehrlich, *Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidre*, Theme, mm. 1-4.

Ehrlich's variations on the *Kol Nidre* melody are straightforward. Variation 1 (Figure 6.5) adds grace notes to the melody, providing simple ornamentation.

Variation 1

1

Kol Ni - drei v' - esarei v'-charamei v' - kona'mei

m2 M3 M3 m2 m3

Figure 6.5. Ehrlich, *Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidre with Variations*, Variation 1, mm. 1-4.

Variation 2 is an inversion of the theme, demonstrated in the opening three notes rising instead of falling (Figure 6.6). Before the variation begins, the piano has a short statement of the *Kol Nidrei* theme to remind the listener of what will be varied.

Variation 2

1

Kol Ni-drei v' - ³es-a-rei

Figure 6.6. Ehrlich, *Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidre with Variations*, Variation 2, mm. 1-2.

The third and final variation is comprised of rhythms that are almost completely eighth note triplets. It is more difficult to isolate the *Kol Nidrei* theme in this passage; however, the opening motive could be interpreted as a melismatic ornamentation of the first two words of the prayer, *Kol Nidrei*, as depicted in Figure 6.7.

Figure 6.7. Ehrlich, *Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidrei with Variations*, Variation 3, mm. 1-2.

As mentioned in Chapter 5, Bruch's *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, uses the *Kol Nidrei* theme in four statements throughout the piece. While it is tradition on *Yom Kippur* to recite the opening sentence three times, Bruch's addition of a fourth statement reinforces the theme. Ehrlich does something slightly similar in his variations. He begins with a statement of the *Kol Nidrei* theme with little to no deviation from Lewandowski's theme. Thereafter the *Kol Nidrei* theme is presented three more times in variation, each growing in intensity.

Each of Ehrlich's variations is linked to the others through a common ending motive. Ehrlich alters this motive in the final variation and adds a brief virtuosic flourish to conclude the piece. Figure 6.8 shows the final two lines of the flute part.

Figure 6.8. Ehrlich, *Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidrei*, final statement of common variation ending with added virtuosic flourish, mm. 7-13.

This final statement begins the same as in the other two variations, with an ascending G major scale and then ornamented sixteenth notes leading to D3. Ehrlich then showcases the flutist's technical ability at the climax of the piece with a *forte* G3. The flute then descends down the scale, *con fuoco*, then reverses direction, broadens the tempo, and hovers around the tonal center of G. An ornamented *Mi-Re-Do* leads to a perfect authentic cadence.

Ehrlich's piece takes the liturgical context of the prayer and expands the traditional melody through variation, though it is still recognizable. Ehrlich was Jewish, unlike Bruch, and likely understood the liturgical context of the prayer. Having knowledge of the flute, as well Jewish culture, Ehrlich wrote a piece that relates Jewish history with Western music, and one that will invite the flute back into the synagogue.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

People create songs as a means of intensifying the emotional and dramatic impact of their words. In a wide range of forms from folksongs to madrigals, from popular songs to opera, composers have used music to heighten the theatricality of a powerful text. And for listeners who may not be able to understand the meaning of the words, music can convey the emotions in a nonverbal mode.⁸⁸

Joshua Jacobson believes that, through music, powerful texts, such as the prayers discussed in this document, can be amplified beyond words on the page. Music has always been profoundly important in the Jewish community. The music of the synagogue ranges from *Torah* incantations to hymns of praise, ancient to modern, simple to elaborate. For centuries, composers of Jewish and Gentile backgrounds alike have been inspired by the beauty and profundity of the music of Judaism. Particularly as works based on liturgical music have made their way into concert halls, questions about the nature and identity of “Jewish” music have arisen. What makes music Jewish? Tina Frühauf offers one answer:

Whether one defines it [Jewish music] as music made by Jews, for Jews, or in a Jewish style (whatever that may be) or music with Jewish subject matter, there will always be counterexamples for any such singular definition... Some insist on a Jewish ritual context and traditional languages (Hebrew, Yiddish and Ladino) or melodies; others see the Jewish heritage of the musicians as sufficient even when non-Jewish musical influences are dominant, and still other embrace music by non-Jewish musicians based on Jewish themes.⁸⁹

For a faith and a cultural tradition with roots in the Bronze Age, a contemporary global diaspora, and a great diversity of theology from congregation to congregation, Frühauf’s broad definition is fitting. Ravel’s *Kaddisch*, Bloch’s *Prayer, From Jewish Life*, Bruch’s *Kol Nidrei*, Op. 47, and Ehrlich’s *Oriental Prayer: Kol Nidrei with Variations* all qualify as Jewish music. More importantly, each of these works has a deep

⁸⁸ Jacobson, *Chanting the Hebrew Bible*, 8.

⁸⁹ Frühauf, *Experiencing Jewish Music in America*, xvii.

and distinctive connection to Judaism that goes beyond its title or its composer's identity. With these works arranged for flute and piano, the flute can once again be heard in the synagogue in observances of High Holidays, "for occasions of extreme joy and gaiety."⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development*, 12.

While the flute and piano arrangements are not included in full in this document, if you are interested in them, please contact this author/arranger at k.rudnik1992@gmail.com.

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