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THE OMER CELEBRATION OF MATITIYAHU SHELEM: AN INSTANCE OF CREATIVE JEWISH RITUAL AND ITS RELEVANCE TO REFORM COMMUNITIES TODAY

JODY RUTH COHEN-GAVARIAN

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of
Requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College--Jewish Institute of Religion
New York, New York

March 1984

Referees: Professor Stanley Nash
Professor Lawrence Hoffman

This year I gave birth to two babies: our son, Amitai, and this thesis. I dedicate this thesis to my husband, Jimmy, whose love and support helped make both events possible and pleasant.

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INTRODUCTION

Back in March 1980, as part of the first year of the rabbinic program in Israel, I accompanied my classmates on a tour of the Galilee. We spent an afternoon with Rabbi Shalom Lilker, of Kibbutz Kfar Hamaccabi, who led us on a tour of his and an adjoining kibbutz, Ramat Yohanan. What I remember most about that day is standing in a small, one-room building filled with files and bookcases of holdiay material from various kibbutzim throughout Israel.

The idea of a resource center for holidays on kibbutz intrigued mne. I had just spent a year living on a nearby kibbutz and, primarily due to the lack of holiday and ritual observance there, left it to pursue rabbinic studies. While I was not certain in what capacity I would revisit this fascinating Institute for Holidays and Customs on Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan, I intuitively knew that someday I would return.

As I continued my rabbinic studies in New York the impression that kibbutz society had made on me did not disappear entirely. Rather, as I became more and more drawn to the field of liturgy and the contemporary worship experience, I began to look to kibbutz society

as a parallel to many Reform communities today. Of particular interest to me is how communities create liturgy and celebrate holidays. I believe that prayer and the celebration of holidays are fundamental aspects of Jewish identity. Because we live in an age of high assimilation and intermarriage rates, coupled with a decrease in synagogue participation, I believe we, the professionals, must examine these aspects of Jewish life in order to provide constructive solutions to an increasingly difficult problem.

Originally, I intended to study liturgical texts written by secular kibbutzim in Israel for the celebration of holidays on the kibbutz. However, it soon became apparent that this topic was too vast for the scope of this thesis. It was with great delight and relief that I took the advice of my professor and mentor, Dr. Stanley Nash, who, knowing me and my interests, suggested an in-depth analysis of the Omer ceremony of Matitiyahu Shelem.

I am indebted to Dr. Nash for suggesting such a fitting and appropriate thesis topic. My research into the life and work of one of Israel's foremost composers and poets has led me to a greater understanding of the development of kibbutz society and the renewal of ancient holiday celebrations on some kibbutzim in Israel,

as well as an important role model for liturgical creativity. In addition, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Nash and my other referee and mentor in the field of liturgy, Dr. Lawrence Hoffman, for their patience, advice and interest in this project.

Happily, research for this thesis took me back to the small one-room building on Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan, the Institute for Holidays and Customs, established there by Matitiyahu Shelem. My husband and I spent three invaluable days there, gathering all the material necessary to prepare this study. We would like to thank the following members of Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan whose assistance and generosity facilitated our work greatly; Ela Zebulun, Elisha Shelem, Dafna Shelem, Lea Bergstein and Ya'akov Yaniv.

A special note of thanks is reserved for Rabbi Shalom Iilker. His recent book, Kibbutz Judaism, and personal discussions with him, inspired and excited me to pursue my interest in the celebration of holidays on kibbutz and the materials prepared for those celebrations.

Finally, there are three very special people whom I cannot thank enough for their constant love and support;

my remarkable parents, Vivienne and Robert Cohen, and my understanding husband, Jimmy. Not only did Jimmy endure with me the pain, struggles and joy of giving birth to our son Amitai, he also endured just as many months of laboring with me to complete this thesis. Throughout this project, Jimmy has been my research assistant, my translator and my friend.

To Jimmy, my parents, Dr. Nash and Dr. Hoffman, thank you for believing in and encouraging me to strive to attain the best that is within me.

Brooklyn, New York
March 1984.

CHAPTER ONE - BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

From early childhood, Matitiyahu Shelem developed a propensity for composing. His numerous poems, songs and other writings reveal the life of a man in awe of nature and intrigued by the world around him. One cannot gain a clear picture of this uniquely talented man without delving first into his childhood.

Matitiyahu Weiner was born in 1904 in a small village near Zamocsz, Poland, to a long line of Hasidic families. His father's father was a typical Hasid who studied Torah day and night with the rebbe while his wife worked to support the family. Like her in-laws, Shelem's mother Ethel devoutly observed the religious traditions. The extent of her education included reading the "Techinot," devotional prayers written specifically for women. While Shelem, the child, enjoyed listening to his mother sing and speak to him in Yiddish, he was far more influenced by his father, Shalom, an "enlightened secular Zionist,"[1] who spoke Hebrew at home and discussed Eretz Israel more than any other subject.

Shalom Weiner was the primary role model for Shelem because he was able to function effectively in both the religious and secular worlds. He knew the sacred texts

but also read secular works by such Russian authors as Pushkin, Lermontov and Tolstoy. This and the fact that Shalom had rebelled from the yeshiva as a teenager, believing more in the saving power of Zionism than in his father's prayers, had a profound impact upon the young, impressionable Shelem.

Indeed, Shalom was the major influence on Shelem's life, not just as a father but also as his teacher. Shalom taught Hebrew, in Hebrew, at a local Hebrew day school which Shelem attended. There he gave vent to his fervent Zionist views and taught his students a love for their ancient homeland that included the desire to return there to work the land. In fact, this attitude influenced Shelem to join the "Ha Shomer Ha Za'ir" Youth organization and to emigrate to Palestine at age eighteen.

Shelem's early years were not always tranquil. From the time he was ten years old until he was a teenager, his family experienced "years of hardship and uprooting."[2] Forced to flee to Russia during World War I, the Weiner family wandered through the Ukraine; this enabled the young Shelem to observe different kinds of Jews for the first time. He also witnessed the October Revolution in Russia and the effects of the 1918

anti-Jewish pogroms in the Ukraine. As a result of these pogroms, and also of an anti-Semitic experience he had as a child--in which he was lashed on the face by a group of non-Jewish boys--Shelem developed a deep sense of pride in being Jewish. This carried over, at a later time, to his pride in being Israeli. Although Shelem rarely spoke about his personal confrontations with anti-Semitism, each incident strengthened his resolve to help create a strong and defendable Jewish nation in Eretz Israel.

When Shelem was fifteen years old, his family returned to Zamocsz. His parents intended for him to become a teacher and in 1922, Shelem was sent off to the Hebrew Academy in Lodz to study education. However, a combination of factors caused a change of plans that would inextricably alter Shelem's life and life's work. The Zionist Jewish activity, the aftermath of World War I, and the growing political trend in the 1920's toward nationalism led Shelem to ask himself, "Where am I and what am I?"[3] (_____) Like many other Jews in the early 1920's, Shelem saw no real future for the Jewish people in Poland. While some Jews turned to other countries, such as the United States, Canada, and South Africa, as solutions, Shelem

believed that for him there was only one choice, Eretz Israel. Thus, instead of entering the Teacher Training Academy in Lodz, at eighteen years of age Shelem joined the "He Halutz" (Pioneer) Movement there and in 1922 began his journey to Palestine.

The seeds of Shelem's strong desire to work the land were planted in his youth and nurtured by his involvement with the Pioneer Youth Movement. He viewed the agricultural and village way of life as a basis for his life in Palestine. A romanticist, he envisioned himself as part of a long chain of Jews dedicated to working the ancient land.

Shelem's dreams were postponed for several months when he learned that the border to enter Palestine was closed. While waiting for it to open, he and the other members of his pioneer group underwent "hachshara," preparation for their future agricultural life in Palestine, in the small Ukrainian village of Leboukvina.[4] As with most experiences in his life, Shelem became personally intrigued by and deeply involved in the life of this rural Ukrainian village. He has written how he saw "villagers and farmers laboring by the sweat of their brow"[5]; how he observed them working the fields, preparing simple meals, weaving their own clothes, and even fashioning their own shoes. The simplicity and

humility of their life, stories, songs and communal celebrations--all performed to the accompaniment of song and dance--left an indelible impression upon the young pioneer. The romanticist in him observed and imbibed the positive attributes of village life. He knew then that he would join one of the new communal, agricultural settlements in Palestine and live and work "in the bosom of nature."[6]

In December 1922 Shelem arrived "in the land of my ancestors"[7] as part of the Third Aliyah movement.[8] Like the poet Tchernikovsky, Shelem believed, "Man is but a construct of the scenery of his homeland."[9] Shelem himself writes that when he arrived in Palestine he felt, "Here I was born anew, from here I'll begin to number my years."[10] That Shelem felt totally renewed in Eretz Israel is evidenced by the fact that shortly after his arrival, he changed his family name from Weiner to Shelem, from the Hebrew root ש-ל-ם, meaning "complete."

Shelem's son Elisha recalls, "from the moment father arrived in Israel he was like a native . . . from the moment his feet hit the ground, he was an Israeli. He never spoke about his past in Poland."[11] In fact, the first time Elisha remembers hearing Shelem speak Yiddish or about his childhood and life in the Diaspora was "when he was bedridden and unconscious during his last few days."[12]

Shelem's initial years in Palestine, with its emphasis on labor and building up the land, learning Hebrew and Hebrew literature and farming, typified life there in the 1930's.[13] Upon his arrival, rather than settle immediately in one place, Shelem chose to traverse the land of his ancestors, which he loved with a passion.

The desire to traverse and work the land stemmed from Shelem's Zionist fervor as well as from his deep love of the Bible. According to Shelem's grandaughter, Dafna Shelem, "Matitiyahu really felt the tie between the Bible and places in Israel."[14] Over the years, Shelem developed a strong, personal attachment to his ancestral homeland, not only by visiting sites mentioned in the Bible, but by actually revitalizing some of the biblical customs and traditions which took place on that very same soil.

During his travels, Shelem decided to live among the Arabs and Bedouin, so as to become intimately familiar with their eastern way of life. Shelem believed that by living among them he would best learn how to live in this new land. In his words, "I came to the east; it was my responsibility to get close to the east, to go to a desolated area and live among the Arabs."[15]

As part of the Kibbush Avodah Movement, a term used to describe the efforts of early Jewish immigrants in Palestine to perform manual labor not done in the Diaspora or usually done by non-Jews in Palestine, (Alkalai Dictionary) Shelem found work building a bridge near the Yarmuk Falls in the Jordan Valley. Shelem was the sole Jew among hundreds of Arab and Bedouin laborers. The director of the project, a Jew from Moshava **Minachmiah,** thought Shelem strange for wanting to work with only Arabs under poor working conditions, with no knowledge of their language. Yet, all of his warning and discouragement only excited Shelem even more, as he persisted in his desire to meet this unusual challenge. Thinking he would last but one day, the director hired him, but Shelem lived and worked with this group for several months. Although the Arab workers were both sympathetic and curious about him, they welcomed this strange Jew into their midst.

Shelem wrote that the time spent with the Arabs and Bedouin "made a deep impression upon me - a new world was before me - eastern customs!"[16] Here the young Polish Jew encountered an entirely new scene. This, more than any other experience, influenced Shelem's work

in music and poetry. For it was here, night after night, that he learned first-hand the music and dance illustrative of Middle Eastern culture. Each evening after work the Arabs and Bedouin would disperse into their different camps. Accepted by all, Shelem would often wander from camp to camp and sit enthralled as each group would sing, dance and shout until well into the night. He, too, became totally absorbed in the beat of the "debka" dance (a Middle Eastern dance step of intricate foot movements), the bewitching melodies emanating from flutes and drums, and the stamping of feet, clapping of hands and high-pitched trills. It was the style of these energetic performances which Shelem internalized and later chose to imitate when he began to compose songs and indigenous holiday celebrations.

Upon completion of his work at Yarmuk Falls, Shelem continued to wander throughout the land he loved. He found short-term employment, from digging ditches to construction on the Carmel, working in an electrical factory in Naharaim, and as a gardener in Armon Ha-Natziv near Jerusalem. For some time he lived around Jerusalem and then headed south, living among the Bedouin tribes there.

By 1925, after years of wandering and much indecision, Shelem and his wife Tova, whom he had known from

his childhood in Zamocsz, joined the newly formed kibbutz Beit Alfa. Nestled in the mountains of Gilboa in the Jezreel Valley, the kibbutz possessed fertile fields and grazing land. These mountains and fields later became the basis for many of Shelem's numerous poems and songs. With the kibbutz in its beginning stages, the members sought a viable means of livelihood. A former member of Beit Alfa recalls that "a wealthy benefactor decided that a Hebrew farm would not be a real farm without Hebrew shepherds and sheep."[17] Thus, the benefactor donated the sheep and the kibbutz requested members to work as shepherds. Shelem was one of the first to volunteer, for he believed that "here we were renewing the work of our ancestors."[18] This theme of renewal underscored the basis for his life and work in Eretz Israel. He found the work romantic and difficult, but enjoyed the long hours of solitude to muse and compose poems or tunes. Work as a shepherd in those early years also meant functioning as a border guard against Bedouin shepherds. While encounters with the Bedouin were not always pleasant, Shelem felt that "despite the tension, the hours in the pasture were pleasant."[19]

The impact of working with sheep, a job he continued well into the 1940's, cannot be underestimated. Shelem was so attracted by his new avocation

that he wrote to his father in Poland, "I am involved in what our ancient ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were involved in!"[20] His father responded, "It is a great privilege for you to go out with the sheep. However, although it is enjoyable for an hour, for a short time, it is doubtful if it is good for all your days."[21] Shalom Shelem believed it would be better to learn one profession and encouraged his son to go to Jerusalem to study music. But that would have meant choosing between his two loves, music and sheep, and Shelem could not decide upon one over the other. Therefore, Shelem wrote back to Poland that he would continue to work in the pasture where he could pursue both loves. For Shelem, being a shepherd represented more than a profession; it signified a way of life. Shelem also felt a strong attachment to this work, for he believed "the ancient shepherds were lovers of music and dance.[22] This identification of sheepherding with music was a characteristic which Shelem held in the highest esteem. Shelem never abandoned his love of the sheep, even when, in later years, he filled other positions on the kibbutz.

Shelem's book of poems, Shepherds in Gilboa, (רועי הצאן בגלבוע), published in 1950 by the Israeli Sheep Breeder's Assocation, extols the world of sheep and the often lonely existence of the shepherd. Many of

these poems became popular folk songs, representing the yearning of the early pioneers to return to the traditions of their ancestors by revitalizing ancient professions, such as shepherding.

One aspect of working with the sheep included the annual sheepshearing which occurred in the spring, usually in the month of May before Shavuot. The kibbutz had an Arab shearer who worked with them and guided them in the intricate shearing process. Over the years, Shelem observed that during the shearing, the Arab would always hum the same tune and then suddenly change the rhythm and add some words. The Jewish shepherds, whose enthusiasm and spirit for this work ran high, also wanted to join in song. Yet they felt that the Hebrew and Yiddish songs of their youth, representing the non-agricultural life of the Diaspora, were inappropriate. This feeling of inadequacy led several members in 1931 or 1932 to suggest to Shelem that they prepare a celebration for the annual sheepshearing. Thus, Shelem wrote, "Perhaps it was the right time to renew the ancient Hag Ha Gez (Sheepshearing Festival) with the end of the season. I was attracted to the idea. It was an excellent subject and an opportunity to do research on the revival of ancient, forgotten holidays. Of course, I leafed through the Bible, and my efforts were in vain."[23]

In this, the first of Shelem's holiday compositions for kibbutz celebrations, he immediately turned to the Bible as the primary source of information. Yet, Shelem's attraction to the Bible is not difficult to understand when one recognizes that Shelem was committed to a lifestyle that meant the revival of ancient Jewish ways on ancient Jewish land. Shelem's attitude is encapsulated in the following quote: "We were shepherds like our ancestors; we will celebrate like our ancestors. Just as they celebrated the end of sheepshearing, it is fitting that we should also celebrate it."[24]

Thus, there ws no doubt in Shelem's mind that what worked for their ancestors could now work for them, although thousands of years had transpired in between, and many of those customs had even disappeared.

The only biblical reference Shelem found for Simchat Ha Gez, (גז שמחת), occurs in I Samuel 25:2-11 and 36, which comprises the sheepshearing celebration of Naval the Carmelite. Shelem expressed disappointment with the biblical sources, because of the lack of detailed description of an actual ceremony. Shelem, who was in charge of the celebration that would entail a feast and program upon the completion of the shearing, was left to his own resources to devise an

appropriate ceremony which would somehow connect these modern shepherds to the folkways of their biblical ancestors. The actual ceremony for Hag Ha Gez consists of three parts: 1) the ceremony of receiving the sheep from the pasture, receiving the wool, welcoming the shepherds and other members of the community, and the dance of the shepherds; 2) the festival meal, including music, readings, and songs; and 3) a play on the biblical subject taken from the life of the shepherds.[25]

As the time for celebration approached, Shelem could not locate songs in Hebrew or Yiddish to express adequately the meaning of Hag Ha Gez. Lea Bergstein, a dancer of international renown (also a shepherd at Beit Alfa), who became his lifelong collaborator, asked Shelem to write a song for the holiday, for which she would choreograph a dance. During the week prior to the celebration, Shelem purposefully distanced himself from the other shepherds in order to work on this song, until finally "one day I found myself in high spirits . . the words came to me: "Rejoice, Rejoice, the shearing festival has arrived." (שישו שישו שמחו על חג הגז בגד כבר)[26] Alone in the pasture, as he wanted the song to be a surprise, he sang it out loud over and over. On the evening of the festivities, the entire kibbutz gathered

together, drank sweetened water, ate almond candies, read biblical verses, and sang songs (such as Shelem's "Chic Chac", ("צ'יק צ'אק"). Shelem described what happened next: "With great fear, I began with the new song "Si'su v' Simchu", ("שישו ושמחו"), at first without confidence, but from time to time I became more aroused and finally by the end everyone present accompanied me in the rising and dominant rhythm." Lea the Dancer (i.e., Lea Bergstein) spontaneously began to dance to this song. As usual, I wrote home about my success."[27]

Members of the Habima Theatre Group happened to be on Beit Alfa on the night of this celebration. Chana Rovena, one of Israel's premier actresses, was so moved by Shelem's rendition of his song, "Seh V'Gadi", ("שה וגדי"), that she asked and received permission from him to sing it publicly. Thus, by the early 1930's, Shelem's songs were already becoming popular folk tunes. Shelem's writings in honor of Hag Ha Gez and Israeli shepherds in general were compiled in the collection The Shepherd and His Holiday, published by Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan in 1979. While this collection does not contain all of his works on the shepherd and Hag Ha Gez, it does represent his main works, written in different periods and published in various places on sheep and shepherding.[28]

Shelem and others helped popularize Hag Ha Gez on kibbutzim throughout Israel. Although today Hag Ha Gez has ceased on most kibbutzim due to discontinuation of sheep herds, Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan did continue its celebration with some revisions until their sheep division was eliminated. Even as late as 1961, Shelem expressed the need for this kind of ceremony: "In our days as well, there is a need to express the job of labor, and mutual relations between man and living things, between the shepherd and his sheep."[29] While Hag Ha Gez may have ceased to exist, it signified the beginning of a new process by kibbutzim for the formulation of indigenous holiday celebrations based on ancient, biblical customs. Shalom Lilker maintains, "The decision to initiate this holiday was tantamount to the creation of an entirely new festival."[30] Thus, Hag Ha Gez represented the first major contribution of Matitiyahu Shelem to the creation of a new kind of Judaism, "kibbutz Judaism."

Throughout his early years in Palestine, on Beit Alfa and then on Ramat Yohanan, Shelem lived a life typical of the pioneers of the Second and Third Aliyahs--those eastern European Jews who came to work their homeland with a strong knowledge of traditional texts,

yet with an enlightened world view. What makes Shelem unique, however, is his compulsive need to express, through music, his experiences in Israel, his Judaism, and his religious beliefs. Elisha Shelem believes that his father "saw himself more as a composer than a writer . . . his attitude was that we have to create from anew, even in respect to melody and music."[31]

Shelem's aptitude for music stems from childhood. As a youth in Poland, Shelem would often compose tunes and distribute them anonymously.[32] Lack of technical knowledge did not hinder Shelem's ability to compose. He would simply memorize the tunes and repeatedly sing them aloud to others until they were learned by all and accepted as part of his community. Over the years, many people encouraged Shelem to study music professionally. He hesitated, because he saw himself first and foremost as a member of a communal society dedicated to working the land. However, in the 1930's and 1940's, Shelem took advantage of opportunities to study music in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

Even upon formal completion of his studies, Shelem never viewed music as a real profession. Rather, he was satisfied with the amount of knowledge necessary to create his songs. In the beginning of his musical career, Shelem received help and advice from Yehuda

Sharett of Kibbutz Yagur, another composer of music and of the first kibbutz Haggadah. Professor Shlomo Rozovski also provided professional assistance in the areas of composition and reading notes. Despite his technical training, Shelem never learned to write with ease, for he concentrated long and hard on each song he composed. His entire being was wrapped up in the world of his songs, as he confirmed, "In secret and in hiding, I wrote songs--lyrical and very personal songs."[33]

Shelem usually wrote his own music and texts, occasionally setting biblical verses to music. As a musician, he is considered by many in Israel today to be a "Paytan", a liturgical poet, whose musical stimulus stemmed from his immediate environment and personal experiences. While members of the First Aliyah concentrated on the fervent Hasidic songs they brought from Eastern Europe, musicians of the Second and Third Aliyahs, such as Shelem, realized the need for indigenous songs expressing the life of the pioneer and the kibbutz, set to an Eastern rhythm indicative of their new cultural environment. As one of the founders of Israeli music, Shelem did not have to look far to find themes and incentives for his tunes. His songs are an ode to the nature and landscape of the early Yishuv

(pre-Statehood Palestine); the Jezreel Valley and mountains of Gilboa; the sheep and their shepherds; the pioneers who tilled the ancient soil; children; anti-Jewish experiences which needed expression; and, most important, holidays and communal celebrations. Although he took his music very seriously and often spent long hours researching texts and holidays, most of Shelem's songs represent the optimism, through rejoicing and celebrating, of the Jewish people in their renewed homeland (e.g. _____).

Many of Shelem's songs attained national status and are taught as part of the educational curriculum in Israel. Which Israeli student today does not know the words to "Shibolet Ba Sedeh," (_____)? The songs of Shelem's holiday celebrations, particularly Hag Ha Gez and the Omer Festival, are already an integral part of the Israeli heritage. Besides being popularized by radio, television and film, Shelem's songs are widely used in choirs by famous conductors, such as Wolf, Bik, Brandman and others.[34] His book, Z'marim, contains all of Shelem's songs. Miriam Bar, writing in the newspaper "Davar," calls Z'marim "a summation of the work of pioneer life of one of the first 'searchers' of Israeli melody, a small group of those devoted to this subject who created the music of Israel."[35]

Inspired by his success with Hag Ha Gez, Shelem began to work seriously with the dancer Lea Bergstein. Since then, Lea has been involved in choreographing Shelem's music. Lea, who studied dance professionally in Germany and with Isadora Duncan in Vienna, was also influenced by the purity and spontaneity of eastern music and rhythm. Like Shelem, she envisioned her dances representing the revitalization of an ancient people on its historic land. In this way, she too was contributing to the creation of an indigenous Israeli dance form, which was incorporated in many of Shelem's holiday celebrations.

Lea, who presently lives on Kibbutz Kamat Yohanan, remembers how, during the early years on Beit Alfa, Shelem would "come down from the mountain [after tending the sheep]. . . come to my room, and anounce "I have a song!"[36] Since Shelem had not yet received formal musical training and did not know how to write musical notes, Lea would transcribe his music onto paper. Then he would ask her to put movement to his songs. His enthusiasm for his music and for new forms of worship sparked Lea's creative powers, which remain intense to this day. She called Shelem "rebbe," for "he did not search in foreign fields. He searched the sources and refused to search other areas."[37]

Initially, Shelem and Lea performed only for the members at Beit Alfa. Lea concedes that "Matitiyahu did not have a great voice, but his voice had warmth. He sang with his heart and soul. He also could play the ocarina (a simple wind instrument similar to a flute) very well. He did not like to perform in public."[38] Eventually their reputation spread and they were asked to perform throughout Palestine, particularly on other settlements, such as Degania Alef. Thus, already in the 1930's Shelem began to be recognized as a national poet and songwriter, a (משורר העם .)

By 1940, due to insurmountable political differences within the group at Beit Alfa, Shelem, his wife Tova, their two sons Elisha and Amitai, and others, including Lea Bergstein, moved to Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan. Located in the Zevulun Valley near Haifa, Ramat Yohanan was also in its early stages when the Shelem family arrived. Shelem continued to work with the sheep, "but not for forty years as Rabbi Akiva did in his time!"[39] Over the years, Shelem was called upon to work primarily with youth, instructing and guiding them. From 1944-1946 he attended a special program at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, to become a youth leader.[40] Shelem became particularly involved in the Youth Aliyah Movement and then with relocating young Holocaust survivors. He also worked in the fields, dairy and kitchen. Whenever time permitted, Shelem always managed to go out to the

pasture with the sheep, for it was there that he felt real contentment. Deeply committed to cultural and holiday celebrations, Shelem served as a member of the Cultural Committee from 1946 until his death in 1975.

After his death, perhaps the greatest legacy Shelem left was the Institute for Holidays and Customs, which he founded on Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan. The idea to establish the Institute was prompted by the vast amount of material Shelem discovered on the subject of shepherds and their customs.[41] As he began to compile the material according to topic, Shelem realized the need for one central place to store this growing body of material. The kibbutz provided Shelem with space in the building which formerly served as a Moadon for youth. To this day, that room is known as "Pinat Ha Roeh;" i.e., "The Shepherd's Corner."

As Shelem began to devote more time to the activities of the kibbutz Cultural Committee and to researching and writing his own holiday celebrations, he outgrew the limited amount of space allotted him. At that point, Shelem realized that he needed more than a place to preserve the material he wrote and collected; he needed a place to research and write as well. Shelem envisioned a place which would become a meeting ground for members of other kibbutzim, all busily engaged in the task of creating fixed forms for holiday celebrations on kibbutz. From this idea arose the decision to

establish the Institute for Holidays and Customs.

Located on the grounds of Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan, the Institute consists of a narrow one-room building filled with tables and chairs for those who come to do research there. Hundreds of files arranged according to topic, from Jewish holidays to national celebrations, align the walls and fill two sets of stand-up book shelves. Besides written material, such as holiday Masechtot and folklore, the Institute collects newspaper and magazine articles, music, recordings, holiday decorations, records, films, books, and art work from kibbutzim throughout Israel. While the main purpose is to gather and arrange material pertaining to holidays on kibbutzim, the Institute also makes holiday material available to other kibbutzim and kibbutz institutions. Material is distributed to kibbutzim through inter-kibbutz meetings, often held at the Institute, or through seminars sponsored by the Institute. From time to time, the Institute publishes source material in conjunction with the Inter-Kibbutz Committee on Holidays and Culture or on its own. Staffed today by Ela Zebulun, a very capable former colleague of Shelem, the Institute for Holidays and Customs continues to serve the purpose which inspired Shelem to found it over twenty-five years ago. In the narrow room that now houses thousands of documents on kibbutz holidays, the spirit of Matitiyahu Shelem prevails.

CHAPTER TWO - THE OMER FESTIVAL IN THE TRADITIONAL SOURCES

In 1945, five years after Shelem arrived on Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan and approximately fourteen years after he wrote his first holiday celebration for kibbutz, "Hag Ha Gez," Shelem composed his most famous and intricate holiday piece, "Masechet Ketzir Ha Omer." That Shelem was able to compose such a diverse and complex liturgical creation seems not unusual, for his talents and artistic capabilities are widely known. Yet, the fact that this ceremony, composed in 1945, is celebrated each year on Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan with but minor alterations makes it deserving of further study.

Although he considered himself an enlightened Jew, Shelem remained tied to his Jewish sources. Whenever he began work on a holiday celebration, he faithfully studied the biblical, legal and aggadic sources.[42] His "Masechet for Hag Ha Omer" was no exception. Not only does Shelem use these sources as a basis for his "Masechet Ketzir Ha Omer;" he also quotes directly from them throughout the Masechet. He does so in part to legitimize the revival of this ancient rite in a modern context. Because the Omer festival is central to our discussion, I will present a rather detailed summary of

the textual sources and Shelem's use of them in his "Masechet for Hag Ha Omer."

As with Hag Ha Gez, Shelem began with the principal source, the Bible, which contains three main references to the Omer. Leviticus 23:9-16 comprises the primary biblical source, for it provides the most explicit directions of how the Israelites should enact the Omer, or harvesting of the first spring crops, when they eventually conquer Canaan and settle in the promised land.

> The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:
> Speak to the Israelite people and
> say to them: 10 When you enter the
> land which I am giving to you and
> you reap its harvest, you shall
> bring the first sheaf of your harvest
> to the priest. 11 He shall wave
> the sheaf before the Lord for
> acceptance on your behalf; the
> priest shall wave it on the day
> after the sabbath. 12 On the day
> that you wave the sheaf, you shall
> offer as a burnt offering to the
> Lord a lamb of the first year
> without blemish. 13 The meal off-
> ering with it shall be two-tenths of
> a measure of choice flour with oil
> mixed in; an offering by fire of
> pleasing odor to the Lord; and the
> libation with it shall be of wine, a
> quarter of a hin. 14 Until that
> very day, until you have brought the
> offering of your God, you shall eat
> no bread or parched grain or fresh
> ears; it is a law for all time
> throughout the ages in all your

> settlements.[15] And from the day on which you bring the sheaf of wave offering - the day after the sabbath - you shall count off seven weeks. They must be complete;[16] you must count until the day after the seventh week - fifty days; then you shall bring an offering of new grain to the Lord. (JPS, The Torah, pp. 224-225)

The Leviticus passage includes the injunction to bring part of the Omer (23.10), usually meaning a sheaf of barley or corn, to the priest; the symbolic waving of the sheaf by the priest (23.11); and the time for this action, i.e., "the day after the sabbath" (23.11), (_____ "מִמָּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת"), which was eventually interpreted by the Pharisees to mean the day after the first day of the festival of Passover; that is, the sixteenth of Nisan. Leviticus 23 also details the kind of meal offering to be sacrificed to God from the Omer. Thus, according to the Leviticus 23 passage, the symbolic harvesting of the first sheaf signifies the beginning of the general harvest period in ancient Israel. It stipulates that this law pertains to all generations in all places and enjoins us to count fifty days from the waving of the Omer until the festival of Shavuot.

In the second biblical source, Exodus 16, verses 16, 18, 22, 32 and 33 demonstrate how the term "Omer"

denotes a form of measure in the Bible:

> 16:16,"Gather as much of it as each of you requires to eat, an omer to a person . . .16:18, "But when they measured it by the Omer. . .;" 16:22, "On the sixth day they gathered double the amount of food, two omers for each. . . ;" 16:32, "Let one omer of it be kept throughout the ages . . .;" 16:33, "Take a jar, put one omer of manna in it . . ."

Deuteronomy 16, the third biblical source for Omer, again enjoins the Israelites to observe the Passover holiday during the spring season. In verse 9, which is similar to Leviticus 23:15 and 16, we are told to count seven weeks from the beginning of the harvest until the fiftieth day which culminates in the holiday of Shavuot. Thus, the tradition of counting the period of the Omer was already established in biblical times. From the Deuteronomic citation we deduce that Passover represented the beginning of the harvest and was connected to Shavuot by counting fifty days from the time when the :"sickle is first put up to the standing grain," (_____ "מעמל חרמש בקמה").

The biblical references to the Omer provide no description of a specific ceremony, but rather, general instructions that the first produce of the spring season must be reaped and brought to the priest as an offering.

Thus, from the biblical sources we derive that: 1) the reaping of the Omer harvest occurs in spring and has an agricultural basis; 2) the Omer offering (i.e., the first sheaf of grain) was brought to the priest on "the day after the sabbath," (_____) either literally or meaning the day after the holiday, depending on whether one follows Sadduccean or Pharisaic opinions;[43] 3) fifty days are counted from the day of the waving of the Omer until Shavuot; 4) Omer in Exodus means a form of measure, not a cultic rite or ceremony; and 5) while the Deuteronomic version does not specifically mention Omer, it does describe reaping the Omer and the requirement for counting fifty days from that time until Shavuot.

Only parts of the Leviticus 23 passage, which includes the Deuteronomic injunction to count the Omer, and the reference to the raising of sickles in Deuteronomy 16 are used by Shelem as the biblical basis for his Omer ceremony. As a farmer whose way of life depends upon the success or failure of his harvest, Shelem focuses on the reaping of the spring harvest alluded to in Leviticus 23:9-16.

Shelem begins the actual Omer ceremony with a responsive reading between a member and the assemblage,

based upon Leviticus 23:10, "When you enter the land which I am giving to you and you reap its harvest, you shall bring the first sheaf of your harvest . . . ," which he also puts to music to be sung in a festive spirit (Appendix 1, p. 10.) Leviticus 23:10, as well as verses 14 and 15, are cited in a reading to begin the section entitled, "Likrat Ha Kotzrim" (Appendix 1, p. 13) which sets the stage for the symbolic reaping of the Omer. Because Shelem's Omer ceremony does not include the requisite sacrifice of the Leviticus 23 passage, Shelem freely omits verses 12 and 13 from his ceremony.

From Deuteronomy 16:9, Shelem incorporates the phrase, "When the sickle is first put to the standing grain," throughout section Five of the Masechet. In fact, this deed becomes the basis for the ritual act and dance of the male harvesters; their sickles identify them as the primary players in the drama of reaping the Omer (Appendix 1, p.13, line of Karoz Gimmel and last paragraph of instructions, line 2; p. 14, line of Kotzer Alef after song; and p. 15, paragraph of Instructions after song, line 1.)

The mishnaic sources elaborate upon the description of the Omer rite set forth in Leviticus 23. From the mishnaic sources we learn not only how the Omer festival was celebrated during the Second Temple period; we also

gain significant insights into the way of life of those Jews and the symbols featured in the Omer rite. The most detailed account of the Omer rite is found in Mishnah Menahot 10:1-9. These passages indicate who participated in the Omer ceremony, when it took place, what props were used, and the actual procedure for the ceremony. Although in Mishnah Menahot 10:1 the rabbis disagree as to how many sheaves should be brought to the priest on a weekday (three) and on a Sabbath (five), we do learn from here that the number three figures significantly (i.e., three sheaves, three sickles, three reapers, and three baskets.) Shelem believed it was not coincidental that things occur in the Omer ceremony in threes.[44] In fact, Shelem incorporates this symbolic number into his modern-day reenactment of the ancient rite. The procession to begin the ceremony is led by three elders and three young men atop horses; the male and female harvesters walk in the procession in groups of threes; and the procession stops at three gates along its route to the field (Appendix 1, p. 3.)

Mishnah Menahot 10:2, which Shelem quotes in the Masechet (Appendix 1, p. 17, Karoz Gimmel,) teaches that the Omer should be taken from a ripened grain crop (preferably barley) near Jerusalem. However, if the

grain in fields surrounding Jerusalem are not yet ripe, the sheaf offering could be taken from any other place in Israel in which it had already ripened. Shelem employs a similar technique by choosing a different site in the closest wheat, corn or barley fields each year for the Ramat Yohanan ceremony.

The actual Omer rite, which forms the basis of the main body of Shelem's ceremony, occurs in Mishnah Menahot 10:3, part of which Shelem cites in the Masechet (Appendix 1, p. 17, Karoz Bet-middle of page.) On the evening of the festival day (i.e., Passover), court messengers would go forth from Jerusalem to a designated site in one of the grain fields outside of the city. They would tie the unreaped grain in small bunches, thereby facilitating the actual harvest. On the day of the festival (i.e., first day of Passover before the seder), the inhabitants from nearby towns would gather at this site so that the reaping would take place amidst much pomp.

As the sun set, a dialogue would take place between the priest and the people. During this dialogue, the priest would call out each question three times (again, note the significance of the number three). On the Sabbath a special section was added which indicates that reaping could occur on the Sabbath:

Priest: Has the sun set?
People: Yes.

Priest: Is this a sickle?
People: Yes.

Priest: Is this a basket?
People: Yes.

Priest: On this Sabbath? (Special section added on Sabbath)
People: Yes.

Priest: Shall I reap?
People: Yes, yes, yes!

The procedure for reaping and bringing the Omer to the priest begun in Mishnah Menahot 10:3 is continued in Mishnah Menahot 10:4. The sheaves are cut and brought in large, straw baskets to the Temple. According to the tradition of Rabbi Meir, the Omer was then roasted in order to fulfill the commandment of "roasting" (_____) depicted in Leviticus 2:14[45]. However, the tradition of the sages was to beat the cut grain with reeds and separate the chaff from the grain. Then it was roasted, ground to flour, and one tenth of an ephah was sifted through thirteen sieves (also in Mishnah Menahot 6:7). The remainder was redeemed by the priest while the tenth of an ephah underwent an intricate ritual process (also in Mishnah Menahot 6:1) of basically an elaboration of Leviticus 23:13 in which it was mixed with various oils. The offering was then

raised and lowered three times by the priests as a form of blessing, so the waving would be sure to be seen by the people. According to the midrash, the waving also represents a magical act whose intent is to eliminate the evil winds which could ruin the spring harvest.[46] The "hanafah", symbolic sifting and waving of the Omer by the priests, signified permission to begin to reap the grain produce throughout Israel (Mishnah Menahot 10:5.)

Shelem's Omer ceremony adheres most closely to the procedure set forth in Mishnah Menahot 10:3 and 4. The early Omer celebrations on Ramat Yohanan were held also on the eve of the festival day, prior to the Passover seder. As described in Chapter Four, the entire kibbutz, including several hundred guests, proceed from the kibbutz to a designated site in one of the nearby fields. There they enact a more intricate ceremony than that of M. Menahot 10:3 and 4, consisting of expanded dialogues, songs and dances. However, the purpose of the ceremony remains the same: to reap and bind together a few symbolic sheaves of ripened grain to signal the commencement of the spring harvest in Israel.

While Shelem does include a symbolic interchange in his ceremony, a kibbutz elder takes the place of the priest, since Shelem's is a non-cultic rite. He also

synchronizes the climactic moment of reaping the Omer with the setting of the sun. Shelem eliminates the process of separating the wheat from the chaff, as well as roasting, grinding and sifting the grain described in M. Menahot 10:4. However, when the Omer is cut and bound into sheaves, it is placed into the wicker basket and raised and lowered several times by the male harvesters, as in M. Menahot 10:4 and 5.

Finally, instead of bringing the Omer to be redeemed by the priest, the male harvesters carry the basket containing the Omer to a kibbutz elder who awaits them on a stage erected especially for this purpose. There, the elder "redeems" the Omer for the Jewish National Fund, which is responsible for the acquisition and maintenance of land in Israel.

Mishnah Menahot 10:9, which Shelem quotes in his ceremony (Appendix 1, p. 17, Karoz Alef) appears to be a summary of the general rules pertaining to the Omer harvest; "the rule of the Omer is that it shall be brought from standing corn; but if this cannot be found it may be brought from the sheaves. The rule is that it shall be brought from fresh grain; but if this cannot be found it may be brought from dried grain. The rule is that it shall be reaped by night; but if it is reaped by

day, it is valid. Moreover, the reaping (of the Omer) overrides the Sabbath." The Tosefta adds "grain of the sabbatical and jubilee years, as well as the after-growth, are retained for Omer allotment."[47]

The Omer ceremony described in Mishnah Menahot 10:1-9 ceased entirely with the destruction of the Temple and loss of dominion over the land. Since the Omer was "prescribed by and rooted in the way of life of a people"[48], the ceremony lost all purpose when not celebrated on the land of Israel or in the Temple. Once the Temple was destroyed, only the custom of counting the Omer (Leviticus 23:15 and 16, and Deuteronomy 16:9 and 10) remained and in fact took on new meaning. It was not until this century, with the help of Shelem and other pioneers, that the Omer ceremony found new purpose in the life and rituals of those who resettled the ancient land.

The few Talmudic passages pertaining to the Omer festival do not provide actual descriptions of the rite as found in Mishnah Menahot. Rather, from the three main Talmudic passages we learn: 1) the rabbis adopted the Pharisaic interpretation of the term "the day after the first day of the festival" (_____) (Menahot 64b-66a and Rosh ha Shanah 7b); 2) reaping the

Omer represents a religious obligation (Rosh ha Shanah 9a); and 3) the Omer rite occurs at the Passover season, because according to Rabbi Joshua, "Just as in regard to the new moon there is something distinctive at the commencement of the counting, so with the feast of Weeks, there is something distinctive at the commencement of the counting, namely, the festival of Passover." (Menahot 65b).

The Talmudic references do contain some additional information presumed to explain the harvesting of the Omer in ancient Israel. For example, in Pesachim 55A, "Rabbi Judah said: In Judea they used to do work on the eve of Passover until midday while in Galilee they did not work at all." Yerushalmi Shekalim and Midrash Leviticus Rabbah 28:4-5 agree that the people of Israel were worthy of possessing the land of Israel because they would fulfill the commandment to reap the Omer. However, it is not explicitly clear from the Masechet that Shelem used the Talmudic passages as the basis for or as part of his ceremony.

Another ancient source which discusses the Omer is found in Part III of the Antiquities of Josephus in which he concurs with the Pharisaic tradition which Shelem also follows, "On the day after Passover on the

sixteenth day, they take from the fruits which were reaped, because until now they did not touch them (because it is forbidden to reap before the Omer) and they bring the first fruit of the barley in this manner."[49] Josephus' description of the procedure for preparing the Omer offering in the Temple reiterates that which is depicted in Mishnah Menahot 10:4.

Some scholars identify Hag Ha Omer with the ancient Hag Ha Matzot and view it primarily as a nature holiday. They find within it remnants of Canaanite worship, such as the symbolic waving of the Omer offering to eliminate the "evil winds."[50] Yehezkel Kaufman adamantly denies the possibility of Canaanite origins for the Israelite Omer rite. Kaufman argues that while many scholars believe Passover, Omer, and Shavuot may have originated with the Canaanites and from contact with them during the early part of Israel's history in Canaan, he sees no proof for this contention. Rather, Kaufman contends that every nation maintains agricultural holidays and there is no reason to believe the ancient Israelites could not have developed independent foundations for their holidays.[51] In his article, "L'Hidush Hag Ha Omer" ("Renewing the Omer Ceremony"), Shelem, who agrees with Kaufman, also attempts to refute accusations that the Omer ceremony contains pagan elements. In fact,

like Kaufman, he is eager to prove that these were indigenous Israelite ceremonies enacted solely on Israelite land, which therefore legitimates use of them in modern times.[52]

Thus, based upon the ancient halakhic sources used by Shelem in his Masechet for Hag Ha Omer, the picture that we derive of the Omer festival points to a fundamental nature ceremony held during the spring season in conjunction with the festivals of Passover and Shavuot. The symbolic reaping and ritualistic lifting of the Omer, which signified the beginning of the spring harvest in ancient Israel, performs the same role for Shelem in modern Israel. Whether then or now, the Omer ceremony represents the Israelites' gratitude for a season of growth, the hope for a successful harvest, and the removal of old grain to be replaced by new seeds and new grains in the next harvest.[53] Shelem's renewed celebration of this ancient ritual shows that the Omer festival constitutes a time of public gathering, a season of reaping, and an optimistic offering in expectation of a prosperous harvest.

CHAPTER THREE - THE RENEWAL OF HOLIDAYS AND THE OMER CELEBRATION IN ISRAEL

During the period of the Mishnah, the Omer festival expressed a definite agricultural theme. Yet, from the time the holiday was decreed in ancient Israel until it was revived in modern Palestine, there occurred a break in agricultural life. As Jews began to return to the "promised land" in large numbers during the early 1900's, the need to renew ancient holidays increased, particularly those promoting an agricultural message. New forms for ancient ceremonies described in the Bible, Mishnah, and Talmud were required to complement the lives of these pioneers, who were dedicated to reworking the land.

A major theme for their renewed holdiays focused on the agricultural context, especially the variation in seasons which, like their ancestors also experienced, tied them to the success or failure of seasonal harvests. It is not surprising, then, that the Omer festival, with its intrinsic ties to spring and the reaping of the first spring produce, played a dominant role in the renewal of ancient holiday forms in Palestine during the early 1900's. However, before focusing on the renewal of the Omer ceremony itself, it is necessary to understand the development of holidays and

renewed holiday forms in general in Palestine at that time.

The years of the First Aliyah (1880-1930)[54] were difficult ones, with the emphasis on laying the foundation for the future establishment of a Jewish state. Most participants were young idealistic Jews of Eastern Europe origin. They rejected the material values and staid orthodoxy of their parents. In the new untamed homeland, they sought to create a new type of society based on communality, sharing, and a break from the old established patterns of society, including religion.

These first pioneers concentrated on forming secular communal settlements, planting vineyards, and making Zionism their only form of religion. Any attempts at holiday celebrations usually took place in the form of parodies, (e.g., early Passover Haggadot) or through songs and dances. Aharon Schurer contends that eventually these young settlers discovered the emptiness inherent in this approach and began to realize the need to identify more seriously with Klal Israel.[55]

By the 1930's and 1940's, much of the initial idealism diminished once the land was conquered, houses built, a new generation of children born, and a daily routine established. Typical of this swing in attitude was Shelem's own kibbutz, Beit Alfa. Shalom Lilker posits that once Kibbutz Alef settled the land and

formed Kibbutz Beit Alfa, "Beit Alfa became so grimly efficient that it was emotionally poverty-stricken."[56] Shelem himself recounts how the emphasis on work on these settlements brought with it a spirituality of its own. "In the Diaspora, there was a clearly marked separation between the holy and the secular, between daily life and holiday observance. But in those early years of settlement, the whole year was like one holiday, to the extent that no other holidays were needed."[57]

Shelem's son Elisha summarizes the spiritual predicament of his father's generation. "This generation led a cultural revolution against religion. They were real atheists, socialists and Zionists. But they fast found themselves in a vacuum, especially in relation to holidays. From an ideological point of view, their relationship to religion was negative, but from a personal point of view, each had a strong background in Judaism."[58]

Lilker concurs with Elisha Shelem that a "cultural vacuum" resulted when the pioneers realized that it was no longer necessary to rebel against Orthodoxy and that the "religion of pioneering" no longer served as the main purpose for their life in Palestine.[59]

Once the work ethic and commitment to communalism

no longer provided adequate substitutes for spiritual outlets, the settlers began to search for other ritual forms to provide an emotionally-satisfying link to the Jewish people, if not necessarily to the Jewish tradition. They sought to develop ritual forms that would reflect the needs of the entire community, not of just those few spiritually- inclined individuals on each settlement.[60] Thus, the kibbutz movement, now firmly rooted in Palestinian life, awakened to the intellectual and organizational challenge and dedicated itself to the development of indigenous kibbutz holiday celebrations.

The process for creating these new holiday forms reflected the ideological commitment of these young pioneers to a new kind of Jewish drama being enacted on ancient soil. Elisha Shelem discusses the problems that Shelem's generation encountered in attempting to create holidays based on other than traditional religious festivals. Because of their negative feelings toward the Diaspora, Elisha believes Shelem and his contemporaries began to search the ancient Jewish sources as a basis for their holidays. "They did not want to totally wipe out Judaism and tradition. They searched for a custom born of Israel. They wanted to create holidays

which spoke to their lives and needs."[61] Elisha perceives this kind of holiday as unique to the Land of Israel, specifically designed for a new country and Land, with such themes as agriculture and shepherds.[62] According to Shelem's son, "There were people who believed that when a new holiday would be created, so would a new tradition."[63] Lilker, who agrees with Elisha, points out that unfortunately, many of the vatikim [old timers], who were founders of the kibbutz holidays, lived to see that this did not occur. In fact, Lilker believes only Passover is considered a tradition on kibbutz with established ritual forms.[64]

How then did the early pioneers, such as Shelem, decide what holidays to celebrate and which ancient forms to renew? Although Jews were farmers in other countries, only in Eretz Israel could they work the same land as their ancestors.[65] Working the land gave rise to the quest for holiday forms which would create, strengthen and deepen the settlers' tie to the ancient agricultural past.[66] Their "national-historic" attachment to the land[67] deemed it appropriate to revive ancient festivals with nature and/or agricultural motifs. In this way, the vatikim created "an intimate bond with the natural world that existed among Jews in antiquity."[68] Thus, Shelem concludes, "from this we

understand how the following became the first holidays to be given priority by the kibbutz; Omer at Passover, Bikurim at Shavuot, Assif at Succot, planting trees at Tu B'Shevat, and sheepshearing in the spring.[69]

The early pioneers' close connection to the land and the subsequent holidays which arose out of that connection also had its basis in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Jewish literature. For centuries Diaspora Jews had preserved a burning desire to return to the land of their biblical ancestors. The longing to attain this goal found its literary expression in the Zionist writings of the late 1800's, from the works of Yiddish poets Mordecai Zevi Manne (1859-1886)[70] and Shimon Frug (1860-1916)[71] up to and including the period of Hayyim Nahman Bialik (1873-1934).[72] Shelem believed that these and other authors, such as Wolf Jawitz (1847-1924) [or Ze ev Jawitz][73] and Elhanan Leib Lewinski (1857-1910),[74] used their writings to vent their longing and desire to not just return to the ancient homeland, but also for the renewal of nature holidays in the restored land of Israel.[75] For example, Shelem writes that, "Even Goldfaden excited crowds by staging plays, particularly 'Shlomit' which opens with the Bikurim ceremony and the pilgrimmage to Jerusalem."[76]

Whether they realized it or not, claimed Shelem, the works of these well-known literary figures significantly influenced the holiday-creators of the Third Aliyah.[77] Directly or indirectly, Shelem and his contemporaries became students of these writers, for oftimes it was their poems, stories and essays extolling the virtues of a return to Zion (e.g., Abraham Mapu's Ahavat Zion [1853],) which influenced many of the young pioneers to make aliyah. While the Jewish poets and writers sparked the intellectual impetus, the young pioneers were left to create the appropriate forms. According to Shelem, the pioneers took up where the poets' words left off.[78] But for guidance and inspiration they continued to look to poets like Berl Katznelson and Bialik, whose words became slogans for the pioneers.

Besides writing about a return to Eretz Israel, many of these authors, such as the poet Itzchak Katznelson (1886-1944)[79] and Abraham Goldfaden (1840-1908),[80] were already writing and producing plays featuring renewed holiday celebrations in Palestine. Although initially their works were intended for children in the nursery and primary schools, even before

World War I several secondary schools in Palestine (e.g., the Herzliah Gymnasia) included these holiday writings as part of their curriculum.[81]

During the 1930's and 1940's, the kibbutz movement experienced a "creative outburst of holiday song, dance and art."[82] As Shelem, Yehuda Sharett, Shlomo Postolsky and others began to work seriously on reviving ancient holiday celebrations, they did so with certain questions in mind. Are the ceremony and liturgical style (טבע) natural or artificial? Are the means of expression and costumes which they endeavored to adapt from ancient descriptions suited to contemporary times? Are the ancient symbols of farmers in biblical times used in our ceremonies applicable to modern society? And, even after much research and experimentation, will the renewed holiday forms find acceptance on kibbutz, especially among the second and third generations?[83] These questions reflect the uncertainty with which the pioneers approached this brand new field of creative ritual, for it was diametrically opposed to the traditional Judaism they had lived and studied in their youth.

Knowing that they were embarking upon an adventurous voyage into a world of untapped potential, the first settlers to become involved in renewed holiday

celebrations sought to begin their undertaking with ancient celebrations both familiar yet adaptable enough to withstand change. These initial experimental holiday forms had to incorporate an agricultural motif and portray the reclaimed tie to the land. They also had to embody a requisite amount of spirituality which would raise them to the level of ritual, without, however, their being authoritative and [certainly not] God-centered.

By virtue of their redemptive purpose and content, the renewed holiday forms had to represent the rebirth and regeneration of an ancient people restored to its historic homeland. What better season fulfills the hopes and aspirations of human beings than the period of spring, when nature itself abounds with signs of life renewed? Thus, it is not surprising that these talented young pioneers poured their creative energy and efforts into revitalizing holidays that celebrate the promise of the spring season.

As far as Shelem is concered, it was not coincidental that the "holiday awakening" began with the celebration of Passover. While this ancient holiday possessed a deep spiritual element in its relation to nature and the rites of spring, it also fulfilled the necessary

theme of redemption and freedom. No longer were these contemporary Jews slaves to an alien government (Poland). They rejected the rabbinic authority and the harsh conformist society of their parents in Eastern Europe. Free to live in their own land, they governed themselves and responded to the rules of nature and the commune. Of all the traditional Jewish holidays, Passover was most readily accepted by the kibbutzim for, according to Lilker, Passover represents "the essence of kibbutz communal Judaism."[84]

Even with all of its characteristics which complemented the early pioneer way of life, Passover itself was not new or different enough for someone as inquisitive and creative as Shelem. He sought to uncover the essence and formulate a holiday that truly arose out of the kibbutz way of life. Shelem did not have to search too far, because connected to the holiday of Passover is the ancient Omer festival. Omer, with its innate ties to the land, the symbolic reaping of the first spring harvest, and participation by the masses ignited the creative flame for which Shelem is now so well known.

Shelem believed it was important to establish the Omer ceremony as part of the overall Passover festival, "jointly as The Festival of Freedom and The Festival of Spring" (חג החרות וחג הגאולים כאחד).[85]

The agricultural aspect of Passover stems from the Omer ceremony in ancient times. Omer represents the beginning of the spring harvest in Israel, the season "when the sickle is first put to the standing grain," (_____ Deuteronomy 16:9). For Shelem, the moment of reaping the standing grain (_____), represents a poignant opportunty for communion with nature. Our ability to relate to nature refreshes the human spirit and inclines us toward celebrating the wondrous phenomenon of a new harvest. The custom of reaping the Omer and bringing it to the Temple signifies a prosperous Israel; a time when the Israelites were able to live on the land and make it prosper. For that reason, Avshalom Reich, author of a study on kibbutz haggadot, is not surprised to find several biblical references to it and to agriculture in general in early kibbutz haggadot. Concerning the renewal of the Omer festival, Reich writes, "Here is a real wish not to invent a new feast, but to try and renew an old custom as an accepted part of this ideological and historical selectivity, intending to imitate this ancient ceremony, both by its shape and by its text."[86]

Several attempts to renew the Omer festival took place before Shelem composed his Masechet for Hag Ha Omer in 1945. The actual beginning of the renewal of

the Omer festival commenced in the Jezreel Valley in the 1920's.[87] From the 1920's through the present, efforts to renew the Omer festival continue to be based upon the theme of a return to the land of our ancestors; an end to the exile and a "restoration of the life of a people."[88] In the following quote, Aharon Schurer captures the essence of the purpose of these early pioneers. "We tried to interweave the past tradition in its national aspects with the life of nature and of farming villages with the ancient principles which were remarkably suited to our renewing lives in the kibbutz family settlement. Apparently, we have found a blending of the values of nature and freedom from ancient days and the present."[89]

While there exists a great amount and variety of rich, folkloristic material on Omer ceremonies, there are three main versions of the renewed Omer festival on kibbutz: 1) Kibbutz Ein Harod, songs and compositions by Shlomo Postolsky; 2) Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan, program and compositions by Matitiyahu Shelem, dances by Lea Bergstein; and 3) Kibbutz Heftzi-Bah, composed by Anadad Eldan, music by Avraham Daus, dance by A. Aviel.[90] Each version shares the same basic structure of text (biblical and contemporary readings), songs, dances, and

reaping, waving and bringing the Omer back to a central place on the kibbutz. However, not each ceremony is celebrated at the same time on the three kibbutzim. Many other kibbutzim have adapted all or parts of these three ceremonies for their celebration of the Omer festival.

To this day, there is no fixed or permanent form for the many and diverse existing Omer ceremonies. They are held on different kibbutzim in their own, distinct manner. Some ceremonies are short; some long. On some kibbutzim the ceremony is celebrated on the eve of Passover before the seder. Others define it as an independent holiday, held the day or several days after the communal seder. What they share is the communal processional by all members before sunset to a designnated field. As the Bible commands, sickles are raised to the standing grain, and the first reaping is carried back to the kibbutz, accompanied by song and dance. Most kibbutzim have devised a program or pamphlet containing readings based on ancient and contemporary sources--songs, dances, the symbolic reaping, the token waving of the Omer offering, and other customs typical of the traditional Omer ceremony. (See Chapter Two, Omer in the Traditional Sources.)[91] In general the contents of the Omer program focus on the themes of spring, harvest, rejoicing and giving thanks.

In the several years since the first Omer celebrations, unlike Shavuot and Tu B'Shevat, which are accepted outside the kibbutzim (e.g., in educational institutions and youth movements in the cities and on moshavim), Omer remained a holiday unique to the kibbutz movement and kibbutz lifestyle. Shelem's desire to see Omer and Passover as both "The Festival of Freedom and the Festival of Spring" ("חג החרות וחג האביב") came to pass but not in the manner he had hoped. The fact that Omer occurs in such close proximity to the major kibbutz holiday, Passover, eventually led them both to be perceived as one general holiday rather than two independent ones, each with its own purpose and rite.

The Omer festival remained a significant holiday as long as the tie to the land comprised an intrinsic aspect of kibbutz life. However, similar to the fate of Shelem's Hag Ha Gez, as the kibbutzim modernized their equipment, lessened their economic dependence upon agriculture, and even eliminated their wheat and corn fields, fewer kibbutzim celebrated this fundamentally agricultural festival. Shelem was so concerned with the future of the Omer festival on kibbutz that in 1970 he prepared an abridged version of Ramat Yohanan's Omer

ceremony for kibbutzim which lack the resources or time necessary to prepare the longer version.[92] However, despite his efforts, by the 1970's several kibbutzim either omitted the Omer ceremony altogether or performed only a brief, token rite.[93]

Although the Omer ceremony has been in existence only two or three generations, it has succeeded in establishing Omer as a tradition on kibbutz.[94] A set liturgical rite is practiced faithfully on some kibbutzim year after year. In fact, the community has become accustomed to a particular form of celebration and has come to expect the same elements each year. A significant change in text, songs, dances, costumes, symbols and rites would produce a major disorienting effect.

Even those kibbutzim or city inhabitants who do not celebrate the Omer festival are aware of its substantial impact on the renewal of ancient agricultural holidays in Israel. Whether it is celebrated or not, renewal of the Omer festival has made undeniably significant contributions to Israeli culture in the form of songs, dances, poems and stories. For example, David Maletz's story, "Ha Sha'ar Na'ul" contains a section in which a father and son dispute the purpose of renewal of holidays on kibbutz, focusing on the Omer festival. In this case, the son wants to celebrate the Omer but the father

opposes him.[95] The poem, "The Ears of Corn Are Brought In," written by Levi Ben Amitai of Kibbutz Degania Bet, was used by Shlomo Postolsky in the 1930 Kibbutz Ein Harod Omer ceremony.[96] Another poet, Enda Amir, wrote a poem specifically describing the Omer celebration on Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan.[97]

Those Israelis who have not witnessed a kibbutz Omer ceremony first-hand have certainly had several opportunities to view this imposing sight on television, in the movie theatres, and on the stage throughout Israel. As part of the kibbutz movement exhibit at the Kiryat Eliezer amphitheatre in August 1950, the Omer ceremony of Ramat Yohanan was staged for the public and was reviewed in the September 1950 issue of "Hod Ha Hinuch."[98] In addition, an article in the newspaper Davar, written in 1958, reports that seven thousand spectators watched as members of Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan presented their Omer ceremony during a kibbutz festival in Haifa.[99]

Thanks to the creative ingenuity and dedication of pioneers such as Shelem and Shlomo Postolsky, the Omer festival has become a legacy in Israel. Indeed, more than any other renewed holiday form on kibbutz, the Omer represents the primary example of a kibbutz holiday which contains "deep and stable cultural values and a way of life based upon them."[100]

CHAPTER FOUR - THE OMER CELEBRATION ON KIBBUTZ RAMAT YOHANAN

In a 1960 interview, Shelem was asked why he chose to renew the ancient Omer celebration as an example of a contemporary kibbutz holiday. Shelem replied, "This ceremony has always found a deep response in my heart; this is the season most suited to a nature holiday . . . spring provided me with the impulse for encouragement and inspiration. What is more beautiful than a green field blossoming into grain?"[101] These sentiments are manifested not ony in Shelem's extensive research for the Omer ceremony but also in the manner in which Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan has celebrated this unusual kibbutz holiday since 1945.

The long and arduous hours that Shelem devoted to researching and writing his most famous and complex holiday celebration denotes that this was not a frivolous undertaking. Rather, Shelem hoped his Masechet for Hag Ha Omer, published by the Merkaz Ha Tarbut in 1947, would establish a general model for all agricultural settlements in Palestine at that time. By the time Shelem began to compose the Omer ceremony, he already had several years of experience in writing lyrics, music and other holiday celebrations.

The process Shelem adhered to for his Hag Ha Omer was similar to that employed in the creation of Hag Ha Gez[102] (see Chapter One, p. 16-17). While Shelem relied heavily upon the Bible as a basis for Hag Ha Gez, most of Hag Ha Omer derives from descriptions found in the traditional Jewish sources, particularly Mishnah Menahot 10.[103] Yet Shelem, who sought to create his own unique style, did not need to copy or imitate another person's work. Rather, he went out of his way to create a new culture, representing a young generation of Jews reclaiming their ancient homeland; he did so by combining Eastern European tradition with the music and dance of the Middle East.

The actual Masechet for Hag Ha Omer, divided into sections interspersed with songs, text and dances, reads like a sophisticated liturgical piece. Shelem composed the poetic lyrics and spirited music himself and, in a few cases, set appropriate biblical verses to music. Readings were adapted primarily from biblical, mishnaic or aggadic sources. However, as will be discussed in Chapter 6, "Liturgical Analysis of Shelem's Omer Ceremony," Shelem deliberately omitted sections from the traditional sources which did not suit the purpose of the message which his Omer ceremony sought to

convey. Finally, in what would become their most well-known collaboration, Shelem and Lea Bergstein worked closely on adapting dances and costumes to the songs and rites within the Omer ceremony.

Not only did Shelem seek "to create a special style; to create something complete and original[104] in composing his Omer ceremony. He also "wanted from the start to write something that they [i.e., the entire kibbutz community] would sing and perform.[105] For Shelem, then, this constituted the challenge: to create an indigenous holiday rite that arose out of the communal kibbutz life style; one which involved all members of this unique society in an equal manner. Shelem realized that while he remained drawn to the Jewish texts and rites, many of his fellow kibbutz members did not share his interest or enthusiasm. A major part of the process of creating a new and indigenous holiday form for kibbutz entailed his ability to persuade other kibbutz members of the worthiness of celebrating as a community these renewed holidays. Therefore, while composing his Masechet for Hag Ha Omer, Shelem assiduously included parts for every age group, from little children to the kibbutz elders. Apparently, Shelem's diligence prevailed, for today his Omer cere-

mony involves three generations of kibbutz members. Little girls and boys who began as dancers may now be part of the group of esteemed harvesters in the rite. As adult participants, they now watch their own children taking their former roles in another cycle in Shelem's timeless Omer ceremony.

Certainly, in the first Omer celebration, as well as in subsequent years, Shelem succeeded in gaining the active participation of all members of Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan. One can only speculate that this may have been due in part to the tremendous respect and admiration Shelem enjoyed on Ramat Yohanan. Participation for members in the Omer celebration means more than performing on the day of the celebration; it includes weeks of intense preparations and rehearsals prior to the evening of the celebration. As kibbutz member Moshe Harad confirms, "all of us will remember the preparations for the holiday for years when we gather to hold a rehearsal of the songs and dances for the Omer."[106]

Preparations for the Omer ceremony begin from six weeks to one month prior to the actual celebration. The choir rehearses the fifteen songs, the readers review their parts, the orchestra practices the music, and the dancers prepare the choreography. Each group in the

ceremony has a special costume, designed by Lea Bergstein,[107] which must be sewn. Kibbutz women embroider wide, colorful sashes from straw in designs of corn, wheat and flowers. Both the wagon and basket which carry the Omer offering must be decorated. The stage and wooden towers for the dancers and announcers also need to be built and decorated. Thus, one can see that much time and effort are expended by the members on a voluntary basis in order to enact Shelem's Omer ceremony each year.

A complete rehearsal occurs one week before the actual ceremony. At the same time, the special committee for the Omer goes out to the fields to select a site for the ceremony. The committee must consider not only the annual cycle of produce, but other factors as well, such as, is it a pleasant site and is there an incline or slope for the spectators to view the ceremony? Once the site has been chosen, a stage is erected and an area surrounding the stage is mowed to make room for the dancers, reapers, choir, orchestra and other participants. A path must also be cut from the kibbutz to the designated spot so that the participants and the spectators do not trample the harvest as they proceed through the fields.

As with any major production, despite the lengthy hours of rehearsals and preparations, the actual ceremony lasts approximately two to three hours. Much has been written over the years about the Omer ceremony on Ramat Yohanan, either by Shelem, other kibbutz members, journalists,[108] television critics and poets.[109] Accounts of the first Omer ceremonies are found in the personal diary of kibbutz member Ya'akov Yaniv. He writes that the heavy rains just before the first celebration in 1945 threatened its performance. However, two days before the holiday, the skies cleared up, the land dried quickly, and Ramat Yohanan's first Omer ceremony was celebrated on Erev Passover. Yaniv deemed the celebration, which was prepared by the cultural committee, "very successful."[110]

Yaniv's entry concerning the 1946 ceremony provides a more complete insight into the Omer on Ramat Yohanan. Preparations began for the Omer holiday and Pesach seder immediately after Purim that year. The kibbutz learned that the Omer would be broadcast on radio and perhaps filmed by the Carmel Film Group. There were frequent choir rehearsals with significant preparation of the children. Work ceased on Erev Pesach around two o'clock in the afternoon. By four o'clock, the procession, con-

sisting of all participants, advanced to the site of the ceremony in one of the wheat fields. The procession was headed by three elders atop horses, followed by male harvesters carrying sickles, female harvesters, the choir, the orchestra, children, other members and guests. As the sun set, the celebration began. By eight o'clock that evening, with the ceremony completed, everyone reassembled at the communal dining hall to celebrate the Passover seder.[111]

Yaniv's diary provides a general and personal description of the early Omer ceremonies. The following constitutes a detailed account of the Omer ceremony of Matitiyahu Shelem as it is practiced generally each year on Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan. The information in the following sections is based upon a 1946 review of Shelem's Omer ceremony which appeared in the former kibbutz journal Hagalgal.[112]

DECLARATION OF THE HOLIDAY

On the day of the ceremony, which has since been changed from Erev Passover to the first day of Passover,[113] members work only half a day. (This change occurred because the number of guests exceeded the amount of room needed to hold them at the Passover seder. Once or twice the ceremony was held on the last

day of Passover, due to rain, but generally it occurs on the first day of Passover as an independent rite.) The festivities commence with the blast of a trumpet at precisely four o'clock in the afternoon. The participants and hundreds of guests, who come from all over Israel and from abroad, then assemble at their respective places at a designated spot on the kibbutz [e.g., the cultural center or dining hall] in order to begin the procession out to the field.

THE PROCESSION[114]

While the order and arrangement of the procession to the field has varied slightly over the years, it consists of the same groups who walk slowly to the accompaniment of music. Three elders and three younger men wearing white shirts and decorated sashes lead the procession atop six specially decorated horses, preferably white horses if possible. These are followed by the younger children dressed in blue pants or skirts and white shirts, with wreaths of flowers adorning their heads. Male harvesters wearing white shirts and blue pants, swinging sickles over their shoulders, walk in groups of threes. Immediately behind them are the female harvesters, also in groups of threes, dressed in traditional attire of white dresses and sashes, with their heads covered.[115]

Behind the twenty or so harvesters a flat, resplendently-decorated wagon harnessed to a pair of white horses, makes its way slowly out to the field. Upon it sits a large, wicker basked to carry the Omer offering back to the kibbutz. Alongside of the wagon march the orchestra, consisting of flutes and percussion instruments, the choir and dancers. The rest of the members and guests form the conclusion of the processional. On its way out to the field, the procession passes through three gates adorned with sayings written by Shelem. (Appendix 1, p. 4, last line and p.15 top paragraph, line of Karoz Bet) At each gate, the participants and guests stop and are greeted by a member, who wishes them well on their way to the field, with the following exchange:

Member: Welcome to those who enter these gates. Welcome to those who go forth to the field. Welcome to those who gather at the ends of field! Be strong.

Congregation: Welcome.

Member: Be strong, Be strong!

As the procession enters the designated site, each group arranges itself according to its role in the ceremony. The spectators move off to the side, usually on a sloping hill; the readers stand on top of the stage or special wooden towers erected for the occasion; and the participants form a semi-circle around the stage. Four horse riders stand in a square around the site to mark its borders. With all members in their proper places, the Omer ceremony proper is about to begin.

THE CEREMONY

This section of the rite, which consists of several readings, pronouncements, songs and dances opens with a second trumpet blast and one solitary sound of the flute. There then takes place a recitation in dialogue between an announcer and the assemblage of biblical quotations.

Group songs accompanied by a flute and small orchestra and dances by young women and children representing work in the field, the beginning of the Omer, and the welcoming of spring, follow. Two elders then engage in an antiphonal reading to which the assemblage responds.

By the end of this exchange, the tension rises as the gathering anticipates the appearance of the harvest-

ers to perform the rite of reaping. The female harvesters approach the stage in dance, signifying commencement of the harvest. To their right, hidden among the tall grain, a long line of male harvesters appears, moving in time to the festive rhythm of flute, drum and cymbals. With a burst of song, the choir beckons them to begin harvesting the grain. Thus, accompanied by song and sounds of the flute, the male harvesters rhythmically lift their sickles and harmoniously begin to reap the ripened grain. The female harvesters follow behind them, gracefully binding the cut grain into sheaves. This act of reaping constitutes the climax of the ceremony, as it occurs precisely at sunset "as the fields begin to glow lightly with the fading colors of the day."[116]

When the reaping is completed, one of the male harvesters announces "The section containing the commencement of the Omer harvest has come to an end." (_____ "חתם סדר ראשית קצירה בעומר") (Appendix 1, p.15) Four male harvesters lift the wicker basket while the women deposit within it a symbolic offering from the cut Omer. The remainder of the bound sheaves are placed on the women's heads. An announcer declares the official beginning of the harvest throughout Israel, as did the priest in ancient days. The participants and

spectators again arrange themselves for the return procession to the kibbutz and the conclusion of the Omer ceremony.

CONCLUSION OF THE CEREMONY

Since the sun has now set, two torches are lit at the head of the procession, as well as two more at the ends of the field to light the return. With a festive atmosphere and much singing, the procession slowly winds its way back to the kibbutz. Several elders stand atop a stage set up in a wide space adjacent to the main gate of the kibbutz to receive the procession upon its return. The men, carrying the wicker basket, ascend the stage, followed by the other male and female harvesters. At the concluding communal song, the male harvesters lift the basket up and down four times. One of the elders then receives the Omer and "redeems" it in the name of the kibbutz by dedicating it to the Jewish National Fund. As an announcer declares, "This concludes the Omer ceremony," (_____) the Omer ceremony comes to an official end but the festive atmosphere prevails, as members and guests dance and sing long into the night.

EVALUATION

Over the years, while there have been minor alterations in Shelem's Omer ceremony, basically the same for-

mat has been followed since 1945 (See Appendix II, Chart on Changes in Omer Ceremony from 1945-1983.) Shelem's Omer ceremony achieved such success and renown that it encouraged other kibbutzim to celebrate Hag Ha Omer and to use his ceremony or sections from it for their celebration. Many of the songs from his Masechet Hag Ha Omer have attained national folklore status [e.g., "Shibolet ba Sadeh"]. Each year, Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan is flooded with guests and tourists who come specifically to witness this colorful kibbutz ritual. Indeed, the Omer ceremony of Matitiyahu Shelem has become a "national byword."[117]

Despite the indisputable success that Shelem's Omer ceremony has attained on Ramat Yohanan, the question must be posed: what future does the Omer ceremony have on Ramat Yohanan? Lilker also questions whether the Omer ceremony still maintains its significance or whether it has become artificial, as Shelem feared it might.[118] Ramat Yohanan will celebrate its thirty seventh Omer in 1984. Yet, there is no guarantee that it will last forever, especially as fewer and fewer members actually work in the agricultural branches of the kibbutz, being replaced by machines or having the field crops subsumed by modern industries. In that case, the ceremony would no longer stem from the personal and

spiritual experiences of working and communing with the soil of our ancestors. Lilker fears that under those circumstances, members will have to fabricate feelings concerning ties to nature and the land. Although Lilker does not believe that the Omer ceremony really answers a deep religious call or need, he does assert that continuance of the Omer "can assure some kind of connection, however tenuous, between man and the natural environment in which he lives."[119]

Perhaps the answer lies with the attitude of the younger generation--those about to take their places in leadership positions on Ramat Yohanan. Dafna Shelem [Elisha Shelem's 21 year old daughter] reflects her grandfather's commitment to ritual forms specific to the kibbutz way of life. Like Lilker, Dafna acknowledges that most people probably do not pay attention to the words and meaning of the Omer ceremony because most of them lack a personal association with the land and agriculture. She does believe that the ceremony may have even greater meaning socially and culturally nowadays precisely because people have become removed from agriculture. Dafna believes the kibbutz will continue to celebrate Shelem's Omer ceremony because "it is very deeply rooted," (_____ "עמוק" _____). With the creation of his ceremony, Shelem began a process which,

according to Dafna, "is totally our own."[120] It is this indigenous aspect of the holiday that leads her and others to affirm the importance which the Omer still does play in their lives.

Even as far back as 1960, when asked about the future of his Omer ceremony on Ramat Yohanan, Shelem replied realistically, "It is my desire to become free of it . . . The time has come . . . I do not see that the Omer should continue to be my personal property. It is my hope that others will take the holiday upon themselves . . . that someone . . . will always be concerned with this holiday and care about it, that this holiday will exist with all its small details."[121]

Shelem certainly had sufficient reason to be optimistic back then and there is room for optimism today. The Omer ceremony on Ramat Yohanan has generated enough interest to be transmitted to the second and third generations. Even Elisha Shelem, who tends to be more skeptical about religion and rituals than his father and daughter, admits: "Enthusiasm for the Omer continues on several kibbutzim, but here it has become an established custom."[122] The fact is, Shelem succeeded unequivocally in what he set out to do: he renewed an ancient holiday form for a people regenerated from the experience of living and working on their ancestral homeland.

CHAPTER FIVE - METHODOLOGY OF ANALYSIS

Shelem's Omer ceremony represents a combination of his own perceptions of this ancient agricultural festival and descriptions of the Omer holiday in traditional Jewish sources. As a result of extensive research and original writing, Shelem composed and published an Omer ceremony in the form of what he terms a Masechet, but which in fact functions in the same manner as a prayer service. Because this Masechet is used each year on Ramat Yohanan as a fixed form of liturgy, it warrants examination as a liturgical text.

The methodology discussed in this chapter, which will be used to analyze this document, is based upon the work of a leading scholar in the field of liturgy, Dr. Lawrence Hoffman; on the work of cultural anthropologists, Peter Donovan and Margaret Mead; and on a book by Shalom Lilker, an expert on kibbutz Judaism. Each of these scholars discusses various aspects of liturgy or religious ritual which are relevant to an analysis of Shelem's Omer ceremony. In this chapter, I will endeavor to synthesize these elements in a manner which will produce a working methodology for an in-depth liturgical analysis of the Omer ceremony of Matitiyahu Shelem.

It is important to study the Masechet for Shelem's Omer ceremony as a liturgical document because it functions very much like a traditional prayerbook used during the worship experience. Like other Jewish prayerbook forms, Shelem's Masechet has a fixed order and arrangement of the material contained within it; readers who replace the rabbi or ancient priest; congregational responses; symbols; and religious ritual actions. The ceremony within the Masechet elevates the ordinary event of reaping grain and raises it to a higher, more spiritual, level. Shelem's Omer ceremony imbues a place which is otherwise secular and mundane [a small portion of a typical wheat field] with a sanctity that the entire community recognizes and accepts.

The use of this Masechet enabled Shelem to involve and affect a non-religious community in a spiritually moving and uplifting religious rite. Thus, through his Masechet and Omer ceremony, at least once a year Shelem was able to create a significant liturgical moment on Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan.

The creation of a liturgical moment is what interests Hoffman in his study of different prayerbook forms. To do so, he looks at what he terms the "liturgical message" implicit in the text and how this message

is transmitted to the worshippers. One way to accomplish this goal is to look beyond the written words to the various facets which comprise the Masechet. Shelem, a master at understanding the pedagogical significance of the Masechet, uses more than literary content to convey his views on the Omer holiday and religious rites in general. Songs, dance, visual symbols, musical instruments, costumes, agricultural tools and the actual produce are employed by Shelem to impart his liturgical message to his fellow kibbutz members. By examining the entire Masechet, including the art work and instructions, we will see how the Masechet has also become a main teaching device and means of transmitting certain religious statements to the worshippers.

In most cases, worshippers have the choice to accept or reject a particular prayerbook and the message contained within it. Hoffman believes that in accepting or rejecting the prayerbook, the worshippers make a significant statement about their Jewish identity. In this way, "the average Jew no less than the professional scholar confronts the existential task of living a Jewish life within a particular society."[123] Although the kibbutz society has undergone numerous changes, it is important to note that Shelem's Masechet has remained

basically unchanged for the past forty years. Thus, while the social context on Ramat Yohanan may have altered over the years, the original liturgical text and its message still seems to work for them.

Hoffman posits three basic elements to discern the liturgical message and the manner in which it is conveyed to worshippers; 1) prayer content; 2) prayerbook structure or design; and 3) service choreography.[124] Prayer content communicates the nature and manifest interpretation of the ceremony; what kind of event is being celebrated and what it means. Another way in which the liturgical message is expressed through prayer content is what Hoffman terms the "censoring in" and "censoring out" functions.[125] According to Hoffman, "censoring in" represents "the means by which a group uses its liturgy to define what it is."[126] Through the use of positive statements, the liturgical text reflects important beliefs and values which either teach or reinforce the author or group's world view. In the same manner, a group "censors out" those cultural characteristics which they have chosen not to accept.[127] Any views contrary to those of the author or group will be omitted from the liturgical text. Thus, Shelem's deliberate inclusion or exclusion of words or statements

denotes his conscious or unconscious intent to convey a particular factual or polemical message to the worshippers.

Inclusion of passages from traditional Jewish sources or use of contemporary verse representing different themes help to promulgate a specific point of view to which the author adheres and which he would like worshippers to accept. Sections from the traditional Jewish sources which the author includes or purposefully omits reveal some of the ideological beliefs she or he seeks to convey. Prayer content, then, which may be explicitly or tacitly expressed, is a fundamental way of determining what kind of hidden or overt agenda the liturgical message transmits to the worshippers during the worship experience.

The structure or design of the prayerbook portrays much about its message and the community it represents.[128] Analysis of this element consists of examining the arrangement and amount of readings, songs, dances and ritual acts called for in the liturgical script. More songs than readings could indicate a preference for music as a means of expressing the author's liturgical message. The type, number and placement of instructions depict the level of familiarity and know-

ledge the worshippers have with the ceremony; whether or not this document is geared towards elite or folk cultural tradition; and the extent to which high and low context can be assumed.[129] If much information needs to be explained, we have low context communication to a group that lacks familiarity with the ceremony. Relative lack of instruction signifies a high context tradition in which the author knows or presumes that the worshippers will understand its contents and that a lack of instructions will not disorient them nor detract from their worship experience.

In a society such as the kibbutz, which purports to be based upon the equality of all members, the role of titles and officiants holds special meaning. The liturgical document reflects this ideological concept through the use of titles conferred upon participants and officiants contained within it. Readings, songs, or instructions which appear in large or small print may indicate their importance in the ceremony, as well as the role of the person or persons responsible for that part. The author's intentions to convey a particular message may also affect the inclusion or omission of alternative readings. Finally, the type, amount and placement of art work subtly reinforces a certain

message or theme the author seeks to convey in a way that words cannot. Thus, the structure and design of the liturgical text provides a subtle but significant means of transmitting a message intended to influence worshipppers.

It is through the choreography, or physical enactment of the ceremony, that the true nature of the society, its values and priorities, are revealed. From this aspect we also learn much about the hierarchic structure of the community. Again, the kibbutz principle of equality will undoubtedly figure notably here. This is determined by analyzing who does what, where and when during the ceremony. The arrangement of people in a processional or recessional reflects their value within the ceremony and the value of the roles they play in society itself. Therefore, how, where and when people sit, stand, enter and leave the ceremony communicate a great deal about that society.

Where the action takes place [in a field, by a river, in a synagogue or cultural center] conveys the concept of sacred space of that community. A ceremony based upon an agricultural theme but held in a sports stadium will not have the same liturgical impact as if it were held in an open field. In some cases, sacred space is delineated by physical borders while, in other

cases, a dance or the placement of people can determine the sacred area.

Besides examining the space in which the ceremony takes place, it is important to study the mood which the ceremony endeavors to create. The site of the action can affect this ambiance; i.e., whether the worshippers are expected to be decorous or noisy; how the officiants read the service and the extent of congregation participation; whether worshippers speak and act only at prescribed times; or whether spontaneity is encouraged also help set the tone. The choice and use of music, musical instruments, dance, costumes and ritual objects further determine a simple or majestic character of the ceremony. Thus, when composing a liturgical text, the author will have borne in mind the type of liturgical mood that would best convey the desired liturgical message.

Finally, the aspect of time can have a substantial impact upon the liturgical message and the liturgical moment. The time of day in which the ceremony takes place and its length also reflect the nature and level of interaction between the worshippers and their culture.[130] A ceremony held during the day when most people work [assuming that work has not been cancelled] implies that their presence is not necessary to sustain

the ceremony. The sense of timing within the ceremony itself is also important. At what point does the climactic ritual moment occur: at the beginning, middle or end of the ceremony? Only an adept author who knows the values and needs of the worshippers will be able to compose a text with the correct sense of timing to create a moving liturgical moment.

It is also necessary to view time in terms of fixed seasons. Since the time for harvesting is tied to certain seasons, Shelem must plan his ceremony to occur at that particular time of his ceremony or its message will lose all import and validity. Some ceremonies are able to take their participants back in time to commune, as it were, with their ancestors. By celebrating the ceremony in virtually the same manner each year, the author is able to make time "stand still" for that moment year after year. In that way, the message that was meaningful many years before retains its purpose, even though the society itself may have undergone ideological as well as physical changes. Thus, the three basic elements of prayer content, structure or design, and choreography, along with the aspects of sacred space and time, provide a method for analyzing the liturgical message set forth in Shelem's Omer ceremony.

Another area to focus on is the type of religious language used by Shelem, since it is believed that word choice has a distinct ability to influence the worshipper and the worship experience. According to Donovan, religious language consists of the special vocabulary expressed during religious ceremonies for a religious goal or moment.[131] Donovan defines religious here as "a mode or manner in which language is made to work."[132] It is important to understand religious language and how it works because lack of familiarity with or inability to relate to this sort of language causes people to have difficulty with religious rituals and experiences.

Donovan's study of religious language concentrates on how words are used in a religious context, rather than on the actual words. For Donovan, words represent just one aspect of the religious experience. For him, "words reflect content."[133] Therefore, one must look beyond the words to ascertain their real meaning in the liturgical context.[134]

In order to understand the role of religious language, one must examine the purpose of religious language. For Donovan, one of the goals of religious language is to move people to behave religiously; i.e.,

to act upon their beliefs.[135] Religious language accomplishes this goal through its ability to evoke positive associations and to communicate information effectively.[136] As a result, religious language affects the worshippers by raising them to a higher spiritual level. As Donovan contends: "Not every meaningful use of language has a basis in reality."[137] Because of their affective potential, Donovan argues that the selection of words must not be frivolous. Rather, words must be reliable in order to be effective and to not mislead the worshipper. Therefore, religious language has to be able to be "experientially confirmed or disconfirmed" or else "it makes no genuine truth claim."[138]

Donovan recognizes that some philosophers, such as R. M. Hare, posit that religious words need not convey information that must be confirmed or disconfirmed to be effective.[139] Rather, they believe religious words derive meaning from "some important role or function which they play in the lives of those who use them."[140] These words can give purpose, direction and reinforcement to a person's or society's way of life and world view. Thus, the words chosen by the author and the way in which they are used in the liturgical text express an intention about the author's and community's life style or belief system.[141]

In Donovan's system, religious language embodies other functions besides influencing people to behave in a religious manner. Religious language reminds us of our past and, in so doing, engenders close rather than alien ties to that past. The use of language from traditional Jewish sources also teaches about the Jewish past. Words taken from traditional Jewish sources and contemporary words serve to solemnize a situation.[142] Thus, religious language can elevate an ordinary event, such as shearing sheep or reaping grain, to a spiritually meaningful experience.

Donovan further posits that the use of religious language stimulates people to act in a worshipful manner.[143] This is particularly significant for kibbutz society, which has replaced God as the source of authority behind religious words with belief in the collective, in nature and in Jewish peoplehood.[144] Finally, Donovan asserts that religious language stimulates people to pray because the words inspire reverential feelings and actions which they might not otherwise display. Donovan's study of the ability of religious language to affect the worshipper and worship experience demonstrates the impact of word choice and usage in a liturgical context.

The work of Hoffman and Donovan would be incomplete without a discussion of the ultimate goal of the liturgical text and ceremony: to establish a ritual which is continuously reenacted by the community so that it becomes an accepted religious event in that community. According to Margaret Mead, ritual deals with relationships either between an individual and the supernatural or "among groups of individuals who share things together."[145] This does not imply that every member of the community holds the same view on the nature and purpose of the ritual and text. However, it does suggest that willingness to particpate in the ritual provides a common ground for the enactment of shared experiences. As a ritual is performed year after year, it becomes an established pattern of behaviour that is familiar and even expected. Thus, without being cognizant of its effectiveness, ritual evolves into a natural extension of the life style of that community.

As ritual becomes an intrinsic part of the community, it also serves to foster a sense of group identity. Since its inception, kibbutz society has been struggling with the question of group identity. Lilker believes that kibbutz, more than any other type of society in Israel, is involved in creating ritual because "the

ritual they generated reminded them that they were a special group who must struggle for their future."[146] Through the work of Shelem and others, kibbutz society continues to deal with the creation of new rituals because the nature of their society is constantly evolving.

Ritual also provides a means for kibbutz to express its values and beliefs rather than merely accept the prescribed halakhic mode of performing religious rites. This type of experimental or creative ritual allows for free expression by a group committed to the founding of a new society based upon the principles of equality and communalism. As Lilker writes: "Every enactment of ritual reinforces the group as to the reason for its existence, its distinctive character and its basic purpose."[147]

Shelem's Omer ceremony confirms the fact that it is possible to create new holiday forms and to have them become firmly implanted in the society as ritual. By taking into consideration the various factors outlined in this chapter, Shelem and other liturgists are able to produce liturgically meaningful texts which result in a spiritually stirring religious moment.

CHAPTER SIX - LITURGICAL ANALYSIS OF SHELEM'S OMER CEREMONY

A liturgical analysis of Shelem's original Masechet for Hag Ha Omer will demonstrate how, from a liturgical perspective, Shelem's Omer ceremony achieved wide-spread national prominence and acceptance. Rather than examine the Masechet page-by-page, I will analyze its contents thematically, according to the methodology set forth above in Chapter Five, "Methodology of Analysis." For the readers convenience, unless specified otherwise, the examples and page citations throughout this chapter refer to Appendix I, i.e., the original Masechet for Hag Ha Omer composed by Shelem in 1947.

Each year Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan prints and distributes pamphlets containing the readings and songs in Shelem's original Masechet. It is my contention that Shelem did not intend the original Masechet to be used by participants and guests during the celebration. Rather, based upon the inclusion of numerous detailed instructions and musical scores, I believe that Shelem perceived this Masechet as serving as a model for Omer celebrations on other kibbutzim (p. 5, last line of paragraph under section two, "Hatchalat Ha Tekes.")

While there is no conclusive evidence, photographs

of the Omer ceremony on Ramat Yohanan reveal that participants do not hold the pamphlet in their hand as a prayer book from which to read. Perhaps the need to hold the document is alleviated by the intense rehearsals which the participants undergo prior to the celebration. It appears, therefore, that the pamphlets are printed and distributed for the benefit of the hundreds of guests who observe the ceremony each year. This is especially important since the text contains congregational parts as well as the words to communal songs with which the guests might not be familiar.

LITURGICAL MESSAGE: "CENSORING IN AND CENSORING OUT" FUNCTIONS

Even outsiders unfamiliar with the text of the Masechet know that the ceremony celebrates the Omer festival, representing the commencement of the spring harvest in Israel. Besides the predominant spring theme, there are other important messages incorporated within the Masechet which Shelem sought to impart to the celebrants. By "censoring in" personal and nationalistic beliefs and values, Shelem is able to impart a message which may not be readily apparent to the celebrant.[148] (See Chapter Five above, p.76)

The spring motif, which constitutes the basis for the entire ceremony, occurs throughout the Masechet,

most notably in Section Three entitled "Aviv" (p. 7). Central to the Omer celebration is the ritual act of reaping the first grain of the spring season following the long, cold and wet winter. Shelem, who spent much of his early years in Palestine outdoors tending his flock of sheep, grew to understand and appreciate the distinct physical changes which overtook the land from one season to the next. Watching the frozen, hard soil thaw and be reborn deepened Shelem's belief in the redemptive power of spring on the human spirit.[149]

The first apparent example of spring occurs in the opening instructions when the reader is told that the children wear wreaths of spring flowers in their hair (p. 3, par. 3, line 3; see also photos Appendix IX, p. 93-95). Other references to various aspects of spring-time, [i.e., planting seeds and reaping the harvest, cessation of the winter rains, appearance of buds on trees, fields billowing with golden grain, and the song of birds] appear in the lyrics to the following songs: "B'Yuhuda U B'Galil," p. 43; song on top of p. 7, text from Song of Songs 2:11-13; "Shir He'Aviv," p. 9; "Shibolet Ba Sadeh," p. 14; "Ba Ha Shemesh," top of p. 15; and "Mi Be'er Sheva V'Ad Dan," p. 16.

Implicit in the overall homage attributed to spring

in the Masechet is a profound love and respect for land and nature. Shelem's deification of the land and the wondrous works of nature depict the central value they hold for his agriculturally based society. That modern people must be reconciled with land and nature and be responsive to the value of land is evident in the Hosea passage quoted on the bottom of p. 7. The verses chosen by Shelem (2:23-25) are taken from a passage in which God contracts a covenant for humans with animals and the land. According to the covenant, people will learn to live in harmony with living creatures and in peace on the land (2:10-22). In return, the land will respond by prospering and producing "new grain, new wine, and new oil."

Shelem extends the theme of a covenantal relationship with the land with the reading from Joel 2:23 which is set to music on the top of p. 8. As a result of their fasting and repenting, the Lord has compassion upon the people and in Joel 2:19, rewards them with an abundance of new grain, new wine and new oil as in Hosea 2:23. The children of Zion are told to rejoice (2:23) for the land has been replenished and abounds with grain (2:24) and the fruit of the vine (2:22)--a situation which aptly applies to the land reclamation of the early pioneers.

Although Shelem chose several biblical examples of the Israelites emulating land and nature, he also included original writings on this theme. The readings on the bottom of pages 8 and 9 are peitanistic odes praising the beauty of nature and the land; of golden fields pullulating with tall stalks of ripened grain. In the reading on the bottom of p. 8, Shelem personifies the land he loves by addressing the land itself (i.e., "S'ee B'racha, At Artzeinu.")

Not content merely to praise the land, Shelem offers a prayer of peace for the "fields and meadows, bushes on the mountainsides, and days of glorious sunshine" in the song "Kapeinu Nisah El Marom" (top p. 10). Another prayer for the land is presented on p. 17, line 2, with the phrase "A blessing upon labor and land." Shelem closes this prayer with the song "Mi Be'er Sheva V'Ad Dan" (middle p. 17). Based upon I Chronicles 21:2 and II Chronicles 30:5, the song lauds the festival of wheat and grain and the beginning of a new harvest. From one end of Israel to the other, Shelem's message resounds loud and clear: all of Israel shall know of the bounty of the land.

While the physical aspect of the land plays a dominant role in Shelem's Omer ceremony, the land as a

spiritual center and political entity also figures significantly. It is not coincidental that this ceremony contains political overtones. Shelem, a fervent Zionist, composed the Masechet in 1947, one year before Israel attained independent statehood. However, Shelem's underlying Zionist message is the least apparent theme to one unfamiliar with his lifelong commitment to the establishment of a Jewish state on his ancestral homeland.

Even as Shelem researched and wrote his Omer ceremony, Jewish refugees of the Holocaust remained detached in displaced persons camps on Cyprus and in Europe, unable to reach the Land "asher ani notein lachem" (Lev. 23:10, top p. 6). According to the Leviticus 23 passage, only when the Israelites reached the promised Land could they celebrate the Omer festival. The ancient meaning of this biblical quotation also contains a modern implication--that the opportunity for Jews to return to the promised Land still exists. So, Shelem's revival of the ancient Omer ceremony may also have been politically motivated. The passages he chose, either to "censor in" or write himself, reflect the need to express his sentiments concerning this most crucial matter for Jewish survival--the ingathering of displaced Jews.

Implicit in Section Four of the Masechet are the fundamental concepts of freedom and survival of the Jewish people in their traditional homeland. Entitled "Iddud" (encouragement), this section depicts Shelem's optimistic conviction that the Jews will return to Eretz Israel to reclaim and work the land as a free people.

Shelem begins Section Four with a dramatic responsive reading (page 11). In a tone of religious defiance Shelem declares that the Omer ritual and its like will never cease in Israel ("Lo yufar moed b'Israel," line 3). Furthermore, in what I interpret as a reference to the political situation in Palestine in 1947, Shelem vows that the legacy of the Jewish people will be revitalized in Israel by populating and foresting the land (lines 7 and 8). Shelem is resolute in his proclamation that no longer will Israel's enemies see Israel reduced to cowardice and fear (line 11). Rather, with unshakable conviction, Shelem declares that the spirit of Am Israel will never be destroyed nor exterminated, that "the glory of Israel will not fail" (last line, from I Samuel 15:29 and put to music on top of p. 12). While this sort of defiant message should be delivered to Israel's adversaries, its appearance in this Masechet indicates that Shelem wanted fellow Jews in Palestine to experience the impact of these words as well.

That Jews could publicly express such a defiant expectation in the immediate post-Holocaust years represents Shelem's belief in "geulah," the salvation of the Jews despite mass efforts to annihilate them. Shelem's faith in a strong, indestructible Israel, which also serves as a haven for refugees and Jews in the Galut, is reflected in the Isaiah passages (10:23, 35:10 and 51:11) on p. 12 (middle par., read by Karoz Gimmel). A contemporary interpretation of the Isaiah passages, as used by Shelem, reveals an explicit nationalistic message--the Jewish people will be strong and triumphant in the face of their enemies (see also p. 20, song "Oz Ve' Eyal" for an example of influx of Jews to a strong and secure Israel, and p. 19, song from Exodux 15:2 and Psalms 118-14 representing salvation, optimism and victory of the Jewish nation.)

The song "Pitchu sh'arim" from Isaiah 26:2 and 30:29 (also on p. 12) continues the theme set forth in Isaiah 10:23, 35:10 and 51:11. Verse One of Isaiah 26, not included in the Masechet, describes the song the Israelites will sing in Judah on the day of victory: "Ours is a mighty city; God makes victory our inner and outer wall." Then, they will open the gates and "a righteous nation shall enter, a nation that keeps

faith" (verse 2). For Shelem, who worked as a leader of young, orphaned victims of the Holocuast, the ingathering of this "righteous nation" could not occur soon enough. He is so confident of impending statehood that he completes the song with Isaiah 30:29 describing the rejoicing which will take place when independence is declared.

Although the land does not yet belong officially to the Jews, Shelem confidently refers to Israel as "our land" (p. 17, line 8, read by Karoz Alef). In the song "Shir Ha T'nufah" (top p. 18), Shelem praises what he calls "our land" on two levels--for its ability to produce a new Omer harvest and for its being the promised land to which all of Beit Israel will eventually return.

Unwilling to only dream about an independent Jewish state, Shelem seeks to hasten acquisition and settlement of the land by redeeming the Omer on behalf of the Jewish National Fund (bottom p. 18). The explicit political impact of this message resounds perhaps more clearly than any other statement in the Masechet. Redemption of the Omer to the Jewish National Fund represents a direct call for the return of the land to Am Israel under whose auspices it will never be destroyed ("V'lo taisham ha aretz litzmitut!", bottom p. 18).

In a less conspicuous but effective manner, Shelem uses the "censoring out" function to omit two important traditional Jewish concepts which were incompatible with the ideological purpose of his Omer ceremony. Shelem purposefully chose to delete references to God and sacrifices from any of the biblical passages quoted in the Masechet. In some cases, Shelem included biblical passages which refer to God but he does not interpret them from a theological perspective (e.g., song "Ozi V'Zimrat Yah" on p. 19 from Exodus 15:2 and Psalms 118:14). His consistent exclusion of these phrases and alteration of their biblical meaning substantiates the contention that Shelem masterfully arranged each line of the Masechet to convey a distinct liturgical message consistent with this beliefs.

The deliberate absence of God alongside the use of biblical passages does not contradict Shelem's religious beliefs. Like many of his generation, Shelem subscribed to what Ze'ev Gazit of Kibbutz Ein Dor terms "secular humanistic faith."[150] Their pioneer faith was grounded in the reality of their daily struggles to overcome the difficulties that arose in building a new society. A belief in the supernatural God of their parents' generation did not suit this rationalistic approach.

The first instance in which God is censored out occurs in the citation of the biblical passage on the top of p. 6. Shelem begins this section of Leviticus 23 not with verse 9, which states "The Lord spoke to Moses saying," but with verse 10, which enjoins the Israelites to reap the Omer in Canaan. Shelem conspicuously also leaves out verse 11, "The priest shall wave the sheaf before the Lord."

In quoting from Hosea 2:23-25 (bottom p. 7), Shelem omits words from the verses, rather than an entire verse. Specifically, in line 1, after the word "E'eneh," Shelem omits the words "'I will respond,' declares the Lord." Following the last word of the last line, Shelem deletes the words, "And he will respond, You are my God."

To further illustrate deliberate use of the "censoring out" function, Shelem omits several references to God in the song on the top of p. 8 taken from Joel 2:23. On line 1, following the word "V'simchu," should be the words "in the Lord, your God."

In the Isaiah passages on p. 12, phrases including God's name are excluded from Isaiah 10:20 (line 3). After the word "Makahu" should be the phrase, "But shall lean sincerely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel," and from Isaiah 51:11 and 35:10, before the word "Uva'u"

should be the words, "Let the ransomed of the Lord return." However, what does appear inconsistent is the inclusion of the words, "on the Mount of the Lord" from Isaiah 30:29 (line 4 of the song "Pitchu Sh'arim" on bottom p. 12).

Finally, in the Leviticus 23 reading on the top of p. 13, Shelem intentionally "censors out" references to both God and sacrifices. By citing only the parts of verses 14 and 16 which do not make God and sacrificial offerings to the Lord the ultimate purpose of reaping the Omer, Shelem alters the context of each verse. The concluding phrase of verse 14, "Until that very day, until you have brought the offering of your God," accords this sacrificial offering a theological purpose which Shelem chose to remove because it conflicts with his personal religious beliefs.

PASSAGES FROM TRADITIONAL JEWISH SOURCES

While Shelem may "censor out" concepts contrary to his views and those of the kibbutz, he does not reject Jewish tradition entirely. Rather, passages from traditional Jewish sources form a significant part of the prayer content of the Masechet. The biblical and mishnaic passages referring to the Omer festival provide the basic framework for the ceremony. Shelem's use of

passages from traditional Jewish sources legitimates the ceremony and gives the celebrants an authoritative raison d'être for enacting this ancient celebration.

At times Shelem cites biblical and mishnaic passages as a means of informing the celebrants why or how the Omer festival was celebrated in ancient times (top p. 6, Lev. 23:10; top p. 13, Lev. 23:10, 14-16; p. 17 middle two paragraphs, lines of Karoz Alef, Bet and Gimmel from M. Menahot 10:2 and 3; bottom p. 17 line of Karoz Bet from #85 p. 8). Parts of Shelem's instructions actually derive from or are based upon descriptions of the Omer in the Mishnah (top p. 16, line 1 and p. 18, first line after the song, act of raising basket four times from M. Menahot 10:4; bottom paragraph p. 16, redemption of Omer to JNF by elder similar to M. Menahot 10:4; top p. 17, section title "Hanafat Ha Omer" from M. Menahot 5:6; and p. 17, first paragraph of Karoz Alef, celebration of Omer on the 16th of Nisan from M. Menahot 10:3.)

Shelem uses traditional Jewish sources as a model or to set a particular tone. For example, we find women wearing traditional dress, and dialogues similar to mishnaic instances (bottom p. 4, reading of Karoz Alef based on Deut. 28:3 and 6; bottom p. 6, line 1; readings on bottom p. 13 are similar to dialogue between

priest and assembly in M. Menahot 10:3 as is the reading on the top of p. 15; bottom p. 15, line of Kotzair, "Chasal seder raishit k'tzar ha Omer" and p. 19, instruction after the dialogue, last line, the words "k'sidro v'k'hilchoto"--both are used in the Haggadah to close the Passover seder.)

Several biblical passages are incorporated into the ceremony and set to music because they apply to a particular theme or serve a descriptive purpose (top p. 7, phrases from Song of Songs 2:11-13 describe the beginning of spring; bottom p. 7, from Hosea 2:23-25 explain the importance of human appreciation of land and nature; top p. 8, parts of verse 23 from Joel 2 aptly describe rejoicing by the Israelites upon commencement of the spring rains; p. 11, last line from I Samuel 15:29 on theme of "encouragement"; p. 12 reading of Karoz Gimmel from Isaiah 10:27, 10:20, 51:11, and 35:10 continues the theme of salvation begun on p. 11; the song "Pitchu Sh'arim" bottom p. 12 from Isaiah 26:2 and 30:29 to let the refugees return to Israel; p. 16, line 1 of the song "Ni Be'er Sheva V'Ad Dan" from I Chron. 21:2 and II Chron. 30:5 in which King Hezekiah issues a decree for all Israelites to celebrate the Passover festival in Jerusalem; and p. 19, the song "Ozi V'Zimrat Yah" from Exodus 15:2 and Psalms 118:14 affirms Israel's strength and restoration.)

PRAYERBOOK STRUCTURE

The contents of Shelem's Masechet consist of twenty-one readings (fourteen original and seven from traditional Jewish sources); twenty-one sets of instructions; thirteen songs; six dances; fifteen musical arrangements; and nine ritual acts. Shelem astutely interspersed readings with songs, dances and ritual acts so as not to bore the participants and guests with excessive oration. While he includes several congregational parts, there are no alternative readings and no part of the Masechet may be omitted. Shelem uses music to create a festive atmosphere. The dances provide a visual portrayal of the dramatic moments of the act of reaping and redeeming the Omer.

The numerous and detailed instructions set the tone for every aspect of the Omer ritual. While they always appear in plain Hebrew script, the directions are sometimes encased in parenthesis, sometimes not. Shelem goes so far as to direct participants how to read or sing a part (song "Shir T'fillah" on p. 10 should be sung "Chagigi," [joyously] and on top of p. 7, the part of "Yahid" should be read "B'n'imah," [pleasantly]).

Based upon the nature of the instructions, one concludes that they are directed at the person reading the

Masechet, rather than the one observing the ceremony. Shelem provides a detailed visual account of the entire procedure, to the extent that a person not present at the actual ceremony can visualize the production fairly accurately. In fact, the instructions function more as a running commentary on the ceremony or as stage directions for a theatrical production (all of p. 3; p. 4, line 6; and bottom paragraph p. 4).

The inclusion of Shelem's intricate instructions in the original Masechet indicates it was intended for a folk culture tradition, i.e., toward a society in which many but not all members work the land (see middle paragraph p. 5). Since agriculture does feature as a fundamental part of their culture, many terms do not require explanation (e.g., "kamah," "shibolet," or "t'nah"). Yet, because of the number and type of instructions, the original Masechet is considered to exemplify low context communication (see bottom p. 6 and top p. 10 which typify a low context instruction of the high context nature of the song which follows).

Since the pamphlet distributed to guests at the ceremony does not contain instructions, it represents high context communication. This document assumes that most people know what is transpiring during the ceremony

and will not become confused, frustrated or disoriented by the contents of readings or performance of ritual acts (e.g., bottom p. 18, male harvesters carrying basket of Omer sheaves to be redeemed by elder; see also photo in Appendix VIII, p. 10). Furthermore, since much of the ceremony stems from descriptions in traditional Jewish sources, one cannot assume that everyone present at the ceremony is familiar with those sources. However, despite the lack of instructions, the participants and observers derive meaning from this modern interpretation of an ancient Jewish ritual.

The overall Zionist message also illustrates high context communication. Those who are aware of or share Shelem's Zionist leanings and know about political events in pre-independence Palestine can immediately detect his implicit call for an independent homeland.

Shelem's use of titles and roles for participants denotes a hierarchal structure within the Omer ceremony. Kibbutz elders, who receive great respect in the kibbutz, are at the top of the hierarchy since they lead the procession, read the major parts, and act as the priests by redeeming the Omer (p. 3, paragraph 3, line 2 and p. 18, bottom paragraph). They are followed by the male and female harvesters who perform the

primary ritual act of reaping the Omer (p. 13, particularly the middle paragraph of instructions; top and bottom p. 14; and bottom p. 15, paragraph of instructions). Although the female harvesters are cast in a traditional role by following behind the male harvesters to collect and bind the sheaves, Shelem at least sought to include women who are left out of the biblical and mishnaic descriptions of the Omer festival (p. 15, paragraph after song, line 3). The dancers, other readers, choir, orchestra, children and guests complete the heirarchical order in the ceremony.

One way to ascertain how Shelem indicates status within the text is to examine what appears in large or small print. Only the seven section titles and titles of songs are written in large, bold and ornate print. All instructions are in plain, small script, sometimes enclosed in parentheses. Readings and the words to songs are in small, fancy print. However, the lyrics written under the musical notes appear in small plain print. Some biblical passages are printed in fance Toraitic calligraphy.

It is surprising that Shelem, who arranged the Masechet with such precision and concern for detail, would leave out any art work. While the original

Masechet lacks art work on its pages, pamphlets distributed in subsequent years and the ceremony itself contain examples of symbolic overlay through the use of art work.

Drawings of stalks of ripe grain are a common artistic motif in printed pamphlets of the Omer ceremony. [Appendix VI has a drawing of an ancient jug with a stalk of ripe grain around it (p. 30) and two stalks of ripe grain on p. 34]. (Appendix III, last page, has a reproduction of an ancient relief with a pitcher on either side of a bound sheaf of grain; Appendix VII, printed in green ink to symbolize spring, the cover and pages 78, 86-90 contain drawings of stalks and bound sheaves of grain; and Appendix VIII has a drawing of a sickle about to cut ripe stalks of grain (p. 3) and flowers decorating the song title (p. 7). Thus, even if one could not read or did not know Hebrew or the nature of the ceremony, one would discern from the type of art work that the ceremony deals with wheat and agriculture.

Photographs demonstrate the extent of art work which constitute important parts of the actual Omer ceremony. Towers built especially for the ceremony,

possibly replacing the altars used for sacrifices in the ancient Omer ceremony, are decorated with pictures of vines and ripe fruit (see Appendix IX, p. 91 and 93; and Appendix VIII, p. 10). The wagon used to carry the wicker basket which contains the Omer offering is adorned with a blanket with designs of wheat (see Appendix IX, p. 94 and 95). Shelem even uses costumes to convey an aesthetic message exemplified by the handmade sashes decorated with scenes of wheat and flowers (Appendix IX, p. 97 and 102) and the colorful headresses worn by the women harvesters (see Appendix IX, p 101).

SERVICE CHOREOGRAPHY

Who does what, where, and when in the ceremony also portrays the hierarchical structure of the kibbutz. This is best illustrated by the arrangement of participants in the processional out to the site for the ceremony. Led by elders and youth atop horses, the procession continues with the young children, parents of members (i.e., more elders), male and then female harvesters, the decorated wagon carrying the wicker basket led by a pair of white horses, the orchestra and choir, and finally the remaining members and guests (p. 3). The order of the procession denotes the emphasis on

children and the elderly on the kibbutz. It also divides people according to task and sex. Since the kibbutz is based upon the work ethic, a person is defined by his or her job as exemplified by the ritual of reaping. It would be interesting to know whether or not women labored in the fields as they did among the sheep. If so, Shelem did not include women as equal partners in the act of reaping or redeeming the Omer. (However, in this Omer ceremony, those who work the land take precedence over any other function).

In addition to the procession, Shelem's ceremony is replete with movement. Every move, from the beginning to the end, is choreographed to precision, leaving no opportunity for spontaneity. Songs and readings are used to link one piece of choreography to the next. The action begins when a lone trumpet blast summons the people to assemble at the main gate to the kibbutz (p. 3, second paragraph, lines 1 and 2). There, they arrange themselves for the procession and parade out to the field, stopping at two gates along the way (p. 4, bottom par., last line; p. 5, first par., lines 3 and 4; and Appendix IX, p. 93-95). At the designated site, the participants form a semi-circle and the readers move to their appointed places on the stage (p. 5, second paragraph, lines 3-5). In what appears to be an act

similar to the traditional ritual of women lighting the Sabbath candles, the women, dressed in white, dramatize a song in which they lift their hands to heaven in a prayer of peace for the land (top p. 10).

Several times during the ceremony men and women perform dances representing the act of reaping (p. 6, bottom and p. 9, dance with song; Appendix IX, p. 102; Appendix VIII, top p. 14). The most important movement occurs when the male harvesters rhythmically reap the ripened grain (p. 13, bottom paragraph in parentheses; p. 15, following the song; Appendix IX, p. 100-101; and Appendix VIII, p. 14) and raise and lower the basket containing the Omer offering (p. 16, top paragraph and paragraph after the song, line 2). When the central ritual of reaping the Omer is complete, the participants rearrange themselves and proceed back to the kibbutz, (p. 16, second to last paragraph).

It is not known whether the participants stand throughout the entire ceremony. This seems unlikely, particularly for the elders and children. Photographs show young children sitting on the wagon during the procession to the field (Appendix IX, p. 94-95) and musicians seated during the ceremony (Appendix IX, p. 96 and 98). The performance-oriented nature of the ceremony would dictate that participants stand during their

part. From photographs, we observe that the choir stands when it performs (Appendix IX, p. 97-99) and the elders and harvesters stand on the stage when the Omer is redeemed (Appendix VIII, p. 16).

SACRED SPACE

The concept of space features prominently in kibbutz society. Private space exists only in the individual member's own living quarters. The rest of the kibbutz becomes communal space, shared equally by each member. Even the fields comprise an extension of the members' home. Unlike a synagogue-oriented community, there is no sacred space already available. Only the common space used neutrally by any communal action is available. Thus, the conversion of a specific area, temporarily, as sacred space where the ritual is enacted, is of special importance to the Omer ceremony.

In renewing this ancient ceremony to fit to the modern context of kibbutz life and values, Shelem would need to incorporate this new and different concept of space. Although agricultural in nature, the Omer ceremony begins and ends inside the kibbutz gates. However, the main body of the ritual takes place in the fields, just as it did in Mishnaic times (Mishnah Menahot 10:3).

Order is so important to Shelem that people do

not wander independently through the fields to the designated site of the ceremony. Rather, the entire assemblage proceeds on a path prepared specifically for this purpose. They stop along the way at two gates erected solely for this ceremony, according those spots a religious quality they otherwise do not possess. The prcession's slow, deliberate march to the field elevates the sacredness of the chosen site.

Participants mark the sacred area by forming a semi-circle where the main action will occur. The borders are marked by a rider sitting atop a horse in all four corners of the site[151] (see Chapter Four above, p. 8). Since guests sit away from the participants, usually on a slope of a nearby hill, they are outside the area of sacred space. A stage is erected in the middle of the field. As a substitute for the traditional pulpit, it becomes the space upon which most of the readings and dances take place, as well as the "Hanafat Ha Omer" (top p. 17) and redemption of the Omer (bottom p. 18).

The symbolic reaping of the Omer is performed on the land itself. By centering the ceremony outdoors and in the field, Shelem highlights the sanctity of land and nature in the kibbutz. In fact, one could assert that

for Shelem, a secular Jew, land and nature replace the temple and are worshipped as traditional Jews worship God.

AMBIANCE

Every detail of Shelem's Omer ceremony was purposefully included by him to convey a particular liturgical message and just as importantly, to set a certain mood. That the ceremony takes place in the open air and in the actual wheat field promotes an atmosphere of openness, non-confinement, and being at one with nature. Yet, although the ceremony is peformed in an unrestricted space, the participants are expected to be decorous, solemn and orderly. At times the mood is tense, as when they await the presence of the harvesters (p. 13, middle paragraph of instructions, line 1) and at other times, festive, as when they begin the procession to the field (p. 4, paragraph after song, line 1). Most readings are presented in a dramatic dialogue and Shelem even instructs participants how to read (top p. 6, line of the "Chaver"). Everyone has a specific part at a prescribed point in the ceremony, which enables them to let it proceed efficiently and smoothly.

Because of his exceptional talent for music, the role and type of music comprise a major part in creating

a certain mood for the ceremony. Influenced by his early years in Palestine spent among the Arabs and Bedouin, combined with his desire to create an indigenous holiday form, Shelem introduced eastern melody into his Omer ceremony. Music is used continuously throughout the Masechet to create a holiday atmosphere (p. 3) and to increase congregational involvement. The procession commences with the blast of a trumpet (p. 3) and the tune of a flute signals the beginning of the ceremony (p. 5). A second trumpet blast sets the tone for the climactic moment, i.e., the ritual of reaping the Omer (p. 15, line 1 after song). In addition to the flute and trumpet, Shelem uses an accordian and cymbals to highlight important ritual moments and to create a festive ambiance (Appendix IX, p. 94-96, 98).

Shelem and Lea Bergstein apply the eastern influence to dance. Men dance in a long, straight line (p. 13, second paragraph of instructions, line 1) and stamp their feet as the Bedouin do when performing their native debka dance (p. 17, paragraph of instructions, lines 1 and 2). Dance is also used to introduce or enact different parts of the ceremony. With their colorful costumes and flowing, rhythmic movements, the

dancers create an aesthetically pleasing sight for the participants and guests (Appendix IX, p. 92, 93, 97, 98, 100-102 and Appendix VIII, p. 14).

As in any worship experience, ritual objects (or "props") help foster a certain ambiance. Part of Shelem's genius was his ability to take ordinary objects and events and transform them into religious symbols. The trumpet, which calls people to gather for the procession, and begins the symbolic reaping, replaces the traditional shofar used in ancient times to announce events, warn or inform the community. Horses, indicative of a simple life before the encroachment of modern technology, lead the procession, transport the wagon, and mark the borders for the ceremony (Appendix IX, p. 94 and 95; [note: in later years, tractors were used when the kibbutz no longer kept horses] Appendix IX, p. 93).

The gates and towers appear to resemble the traditional Aron Ha Kodesh. During the procession, the assemblage stands and speaks before them as in the "Barechu" prayer which begins a typical prayer service (Appendix IV, p. 91 and 93). The stages represent the altar whereupon much of the ceremony is read and the Omer offering is brought, just as the ancient sacrifices were placed upon the altar (Appendix VIII, p. 14 and 16; M. Menahot 10:4).

In keeping with his desire to create a natural atmosphere unhampered by the complexities of modern technology, Shelem relies upon the sun to provide the light for the enactment of the Omer ritual. Yet, he times the ceremony so that the sun will set and paint the sky with brilliant colors just as the symbolic reaping begins. When the sun has set, Shelem uses bonfires and torches, which create an aura of primitivism, to light the return to the kibbutz (p. 16, last paragraph, lines 1 and 2). Thus, Shelem applies the traditional symbols of light and fire (i.e., the eternal light and the sacrificial fire) in a more contemporary and non-religious context.

The wicker basket and sickles become "kley kodesh" [holy objects used for a sacred purpose] to harvest and hold the Omer offering. The raising and lowering of the basket, and the respect it receives, likens it to the Torah. Many Jewish services are based upon the reading of the Torah and as such, it is accorded tremendous respect. We decorate the Torah with ornate coverings, hold it high for all to see, parade around with it, and rise when it is lifted. The Torah scroll contains the watchword of our faith. In the Omer ceremony, the basket is adorned with decorations, raised and lowered, held high for all to see, paraded to the stage to be

received by the elder cum priest, and within it is placed the Omer - the most important symbol of the ceremony (Appendix IX, p. 94 and Appendix VIII, p. 16).

TIME

On the day of the ceremony, work ceases on the kibbutz at approximately two o'clock in the afternoon. By early dusk, usually around four o'clock, the members and guests assemble and proceed to the field. Like traditional Jewish holidays, the Omer ceremony adheres to Jewish liturgical time by commencing at sunset. The ceremony lasts around two to three hours. Unlike Yom Kippur, it does not require an entire day to convey the message of this festival. However, the nature and purpose of the Omer ceremony necessitates that it be celebrated at a fixed time, i.e., during the spring season and on the evening or first day of Pesach.

Timing within the ceremony affects the impact the worship experience can have on the community. The placement of readings, songs, and dance help create a certain atmosphere and either gain or lose the worshipper's attention. Shelem knew how to build up to important ritual moments and to time it so that the climactic ritual moment occurs in the middle of the ceremony, precisely as the sun sets.

By reenacting an ancient ceremony, Shelem enables the participants to go back in time and to develop real and close ties with our Jewish past. In the process, the participants are transported in time. For many of them, especially the harvesters who reap with sickles which date back to the bible, time appears to stand still. Through his understanding of Jewish liturgical time, Shelem succeeds in bridging the gap between ancient and modern times. His contemporary interpretation of this ancient ceremony makes our ancestors and their customs come alive.

RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

Thus far, we have seen how Shelem was a master in the art of creating a meaningful and effective liturgical moment. Shelem had an innate ability to fashion a ceremony of high literary standards with an eye for the appropriate artistic touch. As a poet and composer, Shelem appreciated and understood the importance of language, particularly how to choose and utilize words to effectively convey his liturgical message.

Moreover, in the original Masechet, Shelem uses words to communicate information. The numerous instructions are perhaps the most instrumental means of

imparting information about the Omer ceremony (p. 15, paragraph of instructions after song, line 3) Shelem informs the reader that the sheaves "bow down before the harvester" and in line 4, we learn that the sun is setting). Through some of the readings, Shelem publicly announces information about which the celebrants may already be aware, e.g., that winter has ended (top p. 7, line 1) and that this is the fixed season and time for assembling (p. 11, first line after song). Some lines are included to introduce action, e.g., what the harvesters will do following the reaping of the Omer (p. 15, bottom paragraph, lines 3 and 4); inviting the community to join in a song (top p. 14, line 3 of Karoz Gimmel); and announcing the commencement of a dance by the women (middle p. 13, line of Ma'aremet).

Primarily, Shelem uses the religious language in his Masechet to motivate people spiritually and emotionally. In order to do so, his words must be able to create a particular ambiance and to recreate a sense of what the ancient Omer festivals resembled. The type of words and readings chosen by Shelem reflect the themes contained within the Masechet. The "Aviv" section, which visually depicts the land reawakening to the signs of spring, stimulates people to rejoice (top p. 7, lines

3 and 5) while the section on "Iddud" in which Shelem declares, "the spirit of Israel will not be defeated nor abolished" (bottom p. 11, second to last line), causes people to take a firm political stance.

Religious language teaches and reminds us of our Jewish past. Shelem accomplishes this by using biblical "paitanistic" and liturgical terms (p. 4, line 1, "atzeret," the traditional term for the portion of produce left by harvesters for the poor in Leviticus 19:9; and frequent use of the root (ע-ר-ב), p. 4, line 3, p. 8, line 1 after song, and p. 14, top line).

RITUAL

Whether or not Shelem consciously selected each word and phrase with the above goals in mind, the fact remains that his ceremony had a major impact on the members of Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan. Shelem's Masechet for Hag Ha Omer moved people to want to participate year after year, despite the arduous preparations which the celebration requires. The Masechet is effective, because it reinforces a way of life and world view of a people committed to developing a new society, reclaiming the ancient land, and establishing an independent Jewish state. Their world was secular but not totally removed from traditional Judaism, as Shelem demonstrated

through his revitalization of a biblical and mishnaic custom.

Because Shelm was successful in representing his society's beliefs and values in an aesthetically pleasing and meaningful manner, his ceremony for Hag Ha Omer has become an established ritual on Ramat Yohanan. More than any other holiday form which has come out of the kibbutz movement, Shelem's Masechet for Hag Ha Omer continues to be celebrated year after year, generation after generation. With the Omer ceremony, Shelem has proven that it is possible to adapt ancient rituals to a contemporary Jewish community.

EPILOGUE: IMPLICATIONS OF SHELEM'S WORK FOR REFORM COMMUNITIES TODAY

Abraham Joshua Heschel taught, "Jews live in time, not space"[152] and that "Judaism is a religion of time, aiming at the sanctification of time."[153] For centuries, Jews have lived in a world of liturgical time in which the days of the calendar flow from one holiday to the next. Yet, for how many contemporary Jews does this statement apply? We are living in an age when assimilation is at its highest. In a recent article discussing the decrease in the observance of holiday celebrations by the Jewish community, Rabbi Harvey Fields notes that because Judaism in general and the synagogue in particular fail to respond to the spiritual needs of its members, nowadays "only five to ten percent of the Jewish community regularly attends Shabbat or festival services in our synagogues."[154] While perhaps the remaining ninety to ninety-five percent of the Jewish community practices Judaism in other ways, there exists an increasing disintegration of the formal celebration of Jewish rituals and holidays by contemporary Jews.

The reasons for the breakdown in Jewish ritual life today are not unlike those found on the first agricul-

tural settlements during the early years of the establishment of the Jewish state. At that time, conquering the land and organizing communal villages took precedence over the observance of seemingly obsolete and purposeless Jewish traditions. Working hard to develop the land which they believed would ensure the future of the Jewish people required forms of worship that better represented this new society. Shelem and his contemporaries aspired to create rituals and holidays that arose out of their pioneering way of life.

Recognizing that times and peoples' needs had changed, Shelem sought to create ritual forms that were both compatible with his agricultural existence and Jewish in content. Through the celebration of his original holiday compositions, Shelem revitalized ancient Jewish rituals and ceremoneis which spoke directly to the needs and values of the community in which he lived. Because of the work and creativity of Shelem, an entirely new mode of Judaism evolved--one which I believe has important consequences for Reform Jewish communities today.

Shelem's renewal of ancient holiday forms and his reasons for doing so are akin to the purpose and goals of the Reform Movement. Lilker perceives a similarity

between Reform Judaism and Judaism on kibbutz in their "departure" from halachah.[155] Both Shelem and Reform Judaism advocate freedom of choice, in which responsibility lies with the individual to decide which laws and traditions to observe or discard. Although much of traditional Judaism does not appeal to the broad-minded and rational adherents of Reform and kibbutz Judaism, many Reform and secular Jews are unwilling to reject Judaism in its entirety. Rather, these Jews struggle with the challenge of adapting the wealth that our tradition offers to our modern customs and beliefs.

Shelem concurs with Reform that change is intrinsic to Jewish life. Therefore, it is necessary to adapt or create meaningful rituals that enable Jewish tradition to interact with modern culture. As a means of adapting Judaism to contemporary society, Shelem, like Reform, believes in adding music, poetry, art and dance to his ceremonies for aesthetic enhancement.

One of the main similarities between Shelem and Reform Judaism is their concern for Jewish survival and recognition of the "specialness" of the Jewish people. The efficacy of the worship experience is viewed by both as an important means of strengthening Jewish identity and relationship with the Jewish community. Yet both allow for diversity, enabling people to maintain

different beliefs and practices without being dogmatic about theological tenets. As with Reform Judaism, equality between men and women constitutes an important principle in Shelem's society. Finally, Shelem and Reform Judaism accept the Torah as an historical document which provides guidelines for an ethical monotheistic lifestyle.

While Reform Judaism shares many beliefs with kibbutz Judaism, some distinct differences do exist between them. Reform Judaism, which presents a universal message, has implications for Jewish communities throughout the world. However, kibbutz Judaism is particularistic, affecting only a small and unique group of Jews, some of whom even reject Jewish existence in the Diaspora. Furthermore, while Reform Judaism is grounded in a belief in the reality of God, kibbutz Judaism is based upon a belief in peoplehood and the power of nature, rather than in God. Therefore, kibbutz Judaism does not accept the tenet put forth by Reform that ethical obligations extend from God. Rather, they contend that ethical obligations are the responsibility of each individual, particularly towards his or her fellow kibbutz member.

The Reform Movement maintains a full-time profess-

ional staff of clergy and lay people, while the kibbutz relies solely upon its members to volunteer their services for the preparation and celebration of holidays. According to Lilker, "whatever arises out of holiday practice in the kibbutz is therefore a layman's culture, evolved naturally and organically."[156] For that reason, unlike Reform Judaism, kibbutz Judaism does not yet perceive the synagogue as the center of Jewish communal life. However, like Shelem, many Reform communities today are discovering that the solution lies within the community itself. It is precisely this aspect of Shelem's work with religion on kibbutz that I believe has far-reaching implications for Reform Jewish communities today.

Shelem has successfully demonstrated that the community and the professional staff must together work to create indigenous rituals and celebrations. Working together, as the kibbutz system of equality advocates, lay people and professionals can strengthen their ties to a viable and living Judaism. The role of lay people in the process of renewing Jewish celebrations should not be underestimated. When Shelem involved all members [in his Omer ceremony] from children to elders, he provided an unusual opportunity for people of different ages and talents to interact. Shelem's system also

enabled each participant to feel important and useful, regardless of age. Involving people of all ages and backgrounds fosters greater interest and participation in the renewal and celebration of Jewish rituals and holidays.

The Joint Worship Commission of the Reform Movement [Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Central Conference of American Rabbis, and American Association of Cantors] has already proposed the establishment of festival celebration committees in each Reform congregation.[157] Each committee would consist of "congregants of all ages, interests, views, and sensibilities, mandated to renew holiday celebrations within the synagogue and home."[158] These congregants and the clergy would be responsible for researching, creating, preparing and participating in the actual celebration. In order to prepare a new ritual and worship forms, the committee members would have to engage in communal study. Hence, these committees provide a unique opportunity for increasing one's knowledge of Judaism in a non-threatening stimulating setting.

While this method does not ensure complete success, it possesses several advantages for community involvement. The more that people participate in the decision-making process and understand the background and purpose

of the celebration, the more willing they are to participate. The Reform Movement, which prides itself upon community-building, can derive enormous benefits from this aspect of Shelem's approach to the renewal of Jewish celebrations.

Besides the important lesson of including as many lay and professional people as possible in the renewal of Jewish holiday celebrations, there are other specific lessons Reform Jewish communities can derive from Shelem's liturgical text itself, the Masechet for Hag Ha Omer. It is interesting to note that Ramat Yohanan has used the same text, with minor alterations, for the Omer ceremony since 1947. Repeated use of the same text appears to be desired. It fosters a sense of tradition from one generation to the next and ease with the ceremony. Perhaps Reform should heed Shelem's example that liturgical familiarity and limited choices are not contrary to the overall Reform principle of free choice.

Another fundamental lesson the Masechet teaches is the importance of the liturgical message and the function of transmitting it. Since the main theme of Shelem's Omer ceremony is absolutely clear, the participants and guests do not have to spend time in which they should be "praying" or endeavoring to discern the

intent of the liturgical message. While Shelem does "censor in" and "censor out" additional motifs, these messages do not detract from or confuse the main purpose of the ceremony; i.e., to celebrate the beginning of the spring harvest in Israel.

What strikes the reader of Shelem's Masechet is how this overtly secular Jew did not deter from interweaving his many songs, dances and original readings with passages from traditional Jewish sources. This serves an important educational purpose, particularly since many Reform Jews do not have sufficient opportunity to study the classical Jewish texts. Use of traditional Jewish quotations as well as traditional costumes enables contemporaries to feel a part of a specific people and an ancient tradition.

From the prayerbook structure, we learn how to combine the different mediums of art, song, dance and poetry in an aesthetically moving and meaningful manner. With the assistance of his colleague, Lea Bergstein, Shelem made music and particularly dance a legitimate form of prayer which became, for his and successive generations, a new means of spiritual expression. As Shelem's ceremony demonstrates, the proper placement of these various aspects helped set a tone and enabled the ceremony to flow naturally.

Shelem's success is enhanced by his willingness to experiment. His decision to alter the traditional concept of sacred space by placing the Omer ceremony in the wheat field itself added important and relevant aspects to a holiday which has its basis in agriculture. While location and weather may not always permit, Reform Judaism should further examine the possibility of extending our concept of sacred space beyond the perimeters of the synagogue.

All of the above suggestions together create a certain ambiance for the holiday celebration. Using Shelem as a model, perhaps Reform Judaism will take advantage of the numerous opportunities to enhance our worship experience by investing more effort into the type of atmosphere we hope to achieve for various liturgical experiences. To accomplish this goal spiritually, it will sometimes be necessary to alter the physical setting of the ceremony. Thus, a synagogue wishing to celebrate the Omer ceremony and without access to a wheat field, can certainly transform its sanctuary to create the atmosphere of an agricultural site.

In order to achieve the success that Shelem's Omer ceremony has enjoyed, a combination of factors is re-

quired. However, it is important to remember that the primary purpose of renewing Jewish celebrations is to create rituals and holiday forms to which each community can personally relate. Adapting aspects of our tradition to conform to the needs and beliefs of our individual communities encourages creativity, and adds a wealth of new ideas and customs to Jewish liturgy and celebrations. As rituals become more contempory, they inevitably become more meaningful to the worshippers. This, along with greater community involvement in the creative process, should lead to increased participation in Jewish rituals and ceremonies in the home and synagogue.

Many Reform congregations today who have never heard of Matitiyahu Shelem already are engaged in numerous and diverse projects to enhance the worship experience and to increase community participation. This original liturgical material is kept under the auspices of the chairperson of the Joint Worship Commission. Technically, there is no specific clearing house with a full-time staff comparable to Shelem's Institute for Holidays and Culture on Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan. However, the abundance of new and creative material emanating from Reform congregations, and the need to disseminate this material, warrants the est-

ablishment of a permanent resource center with a full-time staff to administer it.

In addition to the Reform Movement's Joint Worship Commission, which deals primarily with the ambiance and aesthetics of the worship experience, the CCAR maintains a Committee on Liturgy. Composed of rabbis and a cantorial representative from the American Conference of Cantors, this committee concentrates on periodically revising outdated prayerbooks and publishing worship services for use during life cycle events and recognized holidays.

The Reform Movement, which is beginning to gain recognition in Israel, is experiencing significant acceptance from the non-religious kibbutz movements, Kibbutz Ha Artzi and Ichud Ha Meuchad. Reform communities in the Diaspora and kibbutzim in Israel have much to offer each other in the realm of renewing Jewish ceremonies. Because the Reform Movement and many kibbutzim share similar goals and tenets concerning strengthening Jewish identity through participation in rituals and ceremonies, it would be mutually beneficial to provide formal opportunities to exchange materials. An official organizational framework for a mutual ex-

change program does not yet exist. The establishment of a permanent commission within the Reform Movement or the World Union for Progressive Jewry to work directly with the kibbutz Movement's Committees on Holidays and Culture and with Shelem's Institute for Holidays and Customs would provide a central means for obtaining access to new holiday materials. Working together with the kibbutz Movements, who have been involved in the field of creative liturgy since the 1930's, furnishes the Reform Movement with an excellent opportunity to further its cause in Israel.

In conclusion, the creative and diverse liturgical work undertaken by Shelem has significant implications for Reform communities today. The message to strengthen Jewish identity and Jewish survival [implicit in his celebrations] greatly concerns Reform leadership as well. Shelem's insistence upon involving as many members as possible, regardless of age or background, encourages individuals to take responsibility for being Jewish. Use of music and dance as a form of worship enhances the aesthetic and spiritual experience for the worshippers. His work in adapting ancient ceremonies to contemporary society enables otherwise secular Jews to

live in the realm of liturgical time, moving from one meaningful Jewish ceremony to the next.

A community that feels involved in its celebrations will want to repeat them year after year. The continuous celebration of renewed holidays leads to the establishment of fixed rituals which the community eagerly anticipates. Through the appointment of committees to prepare and organize new and indigenous rituals and celebrations, the synagogue would become a more vibrant and genuine spiritual center. Participants would meet to study and work in the synagogue, transforming it into a veritable Beit Knesset. Increase in the number of creative materials would lead to a real need for a full-time resource center, based upon the Institute that Shelem founded over thirty years ago on Ramat Yohanan.

The work begun by Shelem in the 1930's and by the Reform Movement in recent years reflects the prodigious need for indigenous Jewish rituals and ceremonies. Despite the difficulties inherent in this type of creative process, kibbutz member Asher Maniv summarizes the need for developing a folk tradition when he states, "None of us know in advance what part of our cultural creativity will 'take'; what will become, in the course

of time, the property of the people or what will pass and be forgotten. But this does not release us from the proper expression for our life experience which conforms to our basic outlook, our way of life and feelings."[159] As Maniv posits, the creative process cannot and should not stand alone. What began on the rocky soil of our ancestors can also take root in the fertile ground of America.

APPENDIX I

למשפחת צבי וע. מורי ומדריכי שלום וייגר

מתתיהו וייגר

הבאת העומר

מסכת-חג ושירה

המרכז לתרבות

ספריה מוסיקלית מס' 16

הוצאת המרכז לתרבות

תל-אביב תש"ז

מאחל לתרבות

החגים והאושרים בכל ההתיישבות העובדת.

הנכסף — קבוצת נוסח אחיה קבוע בשבת הוי החגים ניגוי לאטרקציו במאגר וחיזוק הנסיון בשטח הוי החגים ניגוי לאטרקציו ואמנים נתחרו על יחיו. הבה נקוה, ש"י ריכוז ראש־יוחנן, בעריכתו של אתיהו וינר. תאסכת האוסיקה

בזה אנו מפרסמים את טקס־מבחר המאמר של

(נתפרסם בספר פסח, תש. אוצרות).

טקס מראשון בסיפורו של ז. פוסטולסקי הוגש בין־חגי. בהתיישבות ציונית שונית על מאגדת בחקלאי האחוסן הזה. נתיישבה בורה אחיהם על טקס בשבת המאמר. קייאים בסיבה ובאמרם את מאמר בשיתם. מוקף זה היה טרם שקיעת השמש על שפתי, אניפים את סמרטוט בקצה האמיתי מפוצצת. בכל אקום ובאוים בני מאקום מרה הבית לפני לפיך מאמים ובך בשפט נתקבץ כאצע בכל בהתיישבות בך בשבת מסוגר, כשהיתה רוות בשראש תגיגית

סקס קציר העומר

מאסכת זכן בשירים ומאיונות נערכו וחוברו ע"י אחיהם
יגיר, ופוצו בראת־יוחנן.

התכונה לחג.

ערב חג חרותנו. שעת בין ערביים. שעתם המלאכה בשדה ובבן בחפר ובאשק. אולם בבוקר החלה התכונה. בכל פינות הכפר אורגשת יד אטפלת ואטפחת, באים לקשוט, לנקיון ולשפור האקום לקבלת החג. בשטאים הגרחבים אוריקים בדרגותם תוק שלל בפנים על ערב השקיעה.

חפוקרה אצל האצפ קוראות:

אכל הצברים גוראים חברי הקבוצה על יציאם ואורחיהם על שער החצר, האקום האיוצם ליציאה לשדה. כלם לבושים בצבי חג. החברים בחולצות לבנות, החברות בשמלות עם לבן, חגורות אפנטים אליונים על אתניהם. ע"י השער האקושן אסתדרות התהלוכה, איש איש באקומו ולפי הספר שנקבע לו.

חברת רוכבים אבני הנזר ראשונים לתהלוכה. סוסיהם אפוחמים ואקושטים ברחש אותיקי הקבוצה. אחריהם ילדי בית הספר וכנים לבושים כחול לבן ועדי פרחים לראשיהם. לאחר צועדים הורי החברים, על יד חברת הקצרים והאצלות. חראשים אמריקים על הכתפיים. האצלות בלבוש אסרתי, והקצרים באכנסים כחולים וחולצות לבנות. בצלה שטוחה ואקושטת יפה רחואה לעוך סוסים לבנים אתנבלת לאחה ואצליה אורם טוב ישוע להבאת הצמר אן השדה. לפניה תצאורת חגיגים וכלי־הקשה, וקהל אצרים ואחריהם קהל אורחים וצופים אחרי הסביבה שבאו לחגוג בתקם הצמר.

א. הכרזת החג.

הכרוז מברך לפותח את החג.

כְּבוֹד הַבָּחָל, כְּבוֹד כָּל הַמִּתְכַּנְּסִים בָּעֲצֶרֶת,
שְׁעַת הַיְצִיאָה הִגִּיעָה, יְבוֹרַךְ חֶבֶל־הַחוֹגְגִים!

הקהל: בָּרוּךְ יְבוֹרָךְ! בָּרוּךְ יְבוֹרָךְ!

(התהלוכה נעה אטיטה בשירה).

בִּיהוּדָה וּבַגְּלִיל (שיר התהלוכה)

בִּיהוּדָה וּבַגְּלִיל — יִשְׂרָאֵל הַזּוֹרְעִים! — וְשִׁיר עַל כָּל שְׂפָתַיִם.
כְּרָמִים מְשַׂגְשְׂגִים, יִשְׂרָאֵל הַקּוֹצְרִים! — זוֹ שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה,
וּבְרָחֲבֵי יִזְרְעֶאל — זוֹרְעִים הֵם, — זוֹ שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה לָךְ
שָׂרוֹת מְסָתָרִים. — קוֹצְרִים הֵם, — יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, יְרוּשָׁלַיִם!

תהלוכת החג.

התהלוכה מתנהלת בחגיגיות רבה ושירה בפי כל
המשתתפים. (שירי תהלוכה "עוד יארית יד", "על ואוי", בסוף החוברת).
לאורך הדרך מאוכלסת על שבי המאזר, לקבל הצאר אותנים
שנרים. התהלוכה מתנהלת לאט בשדר הראשון.

כרוז א': שָׁלוֹם לַבָּאִים בְּשָׁלוֹם! שָׁלוֹם עִמָּכֶם לַשָּׁדֶה!

(לו אחר התהלוכה על שבי השדר הראשון).

פתיחה. (נגינת תלמידות)

(את הפרק בזה יש להתאים כאופן לכל ישוב וישוב)
התחלת הטקס.
האולם מואפל בהברת חג. באמת ברב. הכל מרוכז לקראת
בחצי צלע סביב הבמה האולם הראשית הקדיר. הכרוזים באולמות
האחרים, האנפים והאחוזות. כל הקהל בתוך הקהל אלא אולם לאשכים הפעולים —
בקצה החלקה האולם הקדיר אלא אולם לאשכים הפעולים.
הקהל נכנס לתוך השבר הנשוי שמוכן לפני תנוך התבואה.

ב. התחלת הטקס.

הקהל: אֶחָזְקָנָה, אֶחָזְקָנָה!

(הכתובת על שבי שער ב')

כרוז: שָׁלוֹם וּבְרָכָה לְפָנֶיכֶם! אֶחָזְקָנָה יְדֵיכֶם!

בפעמי השבר האולם לראשית הקדיר. הנשא נוטה לצדדים.
פרשת לכון אמוים. התהלוכה כולה פונה אל שבר השער אשר
רחב-ידים, לא מחוק אנקלאות הישוב. עזלת הטנא בלות הקלעים
התהלוכה אשכים ארכבה. נראים כבר פני השבר, שבה שנוים

הקהל: שָׁלוֹם, שָׁלוֹם!

(תנאורת שירה: "ביאתם ובצילו").

(תנאורת)

בנות הקבוצה בתפקיד מאסורתית אקבלות פני הבא בתלבושת אחלן. אלא מאד חביבה בקהל אתנהלן האחלן בחיבוקים ובנשיקות נלהבים.

הקבץ:
וּקְצַרְתֶּם אֶת קְצִירָהּ
וַהֲבֵאתֶם רֵאשִׁית קְצִירְכֶם
עֹמֶר, עֹמֶר, עֹמֶר, עֹמֶר
רֵאשִׁית קְצִירְכֶם.

חברה: (בנאומה) וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹאוּ אֶל הָאָרֶץ
הקבץ: (שוב בשירה) וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹאוּ אֶל הָאָרֶץ
חברה: (בנאומה) וְהָיָה כִּי תָבוֹאוּ...
אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נוֹתֵן לָכֶם.

ג. אב"ב.

כרוז א': (קריאה) הֵנָּה הַסְּתָו עָבַר. הַגֶּשֶׁם חָלַף. הָלַךְ לוֹ...

יחיד: (בעיאה) הֵנָּה הַסְּתָו עָבַר. הַגֶּשֶׁם חָלַף. הָלַךְ לוֹ.
הַנְּצָנִים נִרְאוּ בָּאָרֶץ. הַזְּמָנִים. הַזְּמָנִים.

קהל: (בשירה) הַתְּאֵנָה חָנְטָה פַּגֶּיהָ וְהַגְּפָנִים סְמָדַר נָתְנוּ רֵיחַ...
עֵת הַזָּמִיר הִגִּיעַ וְקוֹל הַתּוֹר נִשְׁמַע ...

כרוז ב': (קריאה) וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶעֱנֶה אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהֵם יַעֲנוּ אֶת
הָאָרֶץ, וְהָאָרֶץ תַּעֲנֶה אֶת הַדָּגָן וְאֶת הַתִּירוֹשׁ וְאֶת
הַיִּצְהָר וְהֵם יַעֲנוּ אֶת יִזְרְעֶאל:

כרוז ג': וּזְרַעְתִּיהָ לִּי בָאָרֶץ וְרִחַמְתִּי אֶת לֹא רוּחָמָה
וְאָמַרְתִּי לְלֹא עַמִּי עַמִּי אַתָּה:

לִקְרַאת יוֹם הַיְצִיאָה, שְׁנַת תְּבוּאָה חֲדָשִׁים.
כְּלֵךְ תִּפְאֶרֶת־חֵג שְׁקוּיַת חֲדָוָה –
בְּרָאשֵׁי פְּסָגוֹת וְשִׂיאִים נַעֲבֹתְךָ לְרַאֲוָה
צְיוּרֵךְ נְוֹנִים בְּדִמְעַת אַהֲבָה.
לַתַּן זֵךְ חֲרִישִׁי יְדוֹבְבוּ אוֹהֲבַיִךְ.

כורס על: שִׂישִׂי בְרָכָה, אֵת אַרְצֵנוּ, בַּת שָׂרוֹת וְהָרִים חֻשְׁבִי בְּמַבּוֹאֵךְ.

* תפסו ג'-ד' בקהל ו-ד קולות.

(שירה) וּבְנֵי צִיּוֹן גִּילוּ וְשִׂמְחוּ...
כִּי נָתַן לָכֶם הַיּוֹרֶה
גֶּשֶׁם יוֹרֶה וּמַלְקוֹשׁ. (יואל ב')

שִׁיר הָאָבִיב. (ארם ואתן)

עֲנָה הַנֶּשֶׁם, מֶרִיק הַנַּחַל
הַלָּה־הָלַךְ לוֹ. גַּלִּים בּוֹעֲטִים.
עֲנָן־רָקִיעַ הוֹמָה הַחוֹרֶשׁ
חָלַף־הָלַךְ לוֹ. חֲדָוָה שׁוֹבַבַת.
עֲנִי אֻרְמָה מוֹרִיק הַשׂוֹחַ
בָּאוֹר חַמָּה. שָׂדוֹת לָרוֹב.
שְׁבָלִים זָקְפוּ צִכְעוֹנִים עָלוּ
נָאשֵׁי־הֶן בָּאָמָה. גְּאֻלֵּי־חֵן בְּזִקִּים.
עֲנִי הָרִים זֶה אֶל זֶה כֻּתֻּמִּים כְּרֻחֵי־נוֹי
בְּרָמָה יְשׁוֹרֵרוּ: זֶה אֶל זֶה יְשׁוֹרֵרוּ:
שָׁלוֹם, שָׁלוֹם. שָׁלוֹם, שָׁלוֹם.
הֵידָד! הֵידָד! הֵאָח! הֵאָח!
אָבִיב הַיּוֹם. אָבִיב הַיּוֹם.

כוֹל ב: שְׁמִיחַ שָׂמְחִי מָמָד וַעֲרִיצַיִךְ נַחֲלִי מַיִם,
הָרֵיחַ יִתְעַטָּפוּ מִרְעֶה וְשָׂדוֹת בָּכָּה יַזְהִיבוּ.
נִקְוֵי חַן אָרֹם וּמְכֻלֶּת מַמָּטָה נוֹי מַעֲשֵׂה מְחֻשֶּׁבֶת
זְרֻשׁוּ פְּרָחִים וְשִׁמְרִי בָּר לְכָאֲרָה בָּהֲדֵי.
מַקְהֲלוֹת כָּנָף חוֹרְשׁוֹת יַצְהִילוּ,
נְחָלִים יְשִׂיקוּ וְיָרִנּוּן כָּל חַי —
כִּי יָצָאָה הָאָרֶץ בְּמַצְהָלוֹת וּבְנִיהָ לְעִמָּתָהּ יְרִיעוּ.
שְׂאִי בְרָכָה אֵם כָּל חַי, שְׂאִי בְרָכָה!

כַּפֵּינוּ נִשָּׂא אֶל מָרוֹם...(שיר תפלה)

כַּפֵּינוּ נִשָּׂא אֶל מָרוֹם, שְׂאֵת תְּפִלָּה תְּדוֹבֵב.
בְּפִינוּ תְּפִלַּת הַשָּׁלוֹם. תּוֹחֶלֶת עֻטָּפַת בַּלַּב.
עַל שְׂרֵמָה נָכָר אֵי זִיוֹן עַל תְּלָהּ
עַל שִׂיחַ בָּחָר, תְּמָנָה לְתוֹהֲלָה.
עַל שָׂעָה שֶׁהִזְהִיב וּמִכָּל קְצוֹת עוֹלָם
יְנַהֲרוּ בְנֵי הָעָם.
שְׂאִי בְרָכָה, שְׂאִי בְרָכָה! זוֹ הַבְּרָכָה, זוֹ הַבְּרָכָה!

תפילה

ד. עידוד.

כולם ג׳ : עֵת חֵג, עֵת מוֹעֵד וַעֲצֶרֶת,
רֹאשִׁית קְצִיר הַשָּׁבוּעִים הַגִּיעַ.
לֹא יִפֶּן מוֹעֵד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל!

קצץ: לֹא יִפֶּן מוֹעֵד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל!

כולם א׳ : עַל קִינָה, עַל גְּזֵרוֹת בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל!
עוֹד יְרוֹנֵן וְיָרוֹעַ וְיָעוֹר,
עוֹד תִּגְאֶה, תִּצְהֶלֶה וְתִצְרוֹחַ
נְחֻלַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל אַדְמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל!

קצץ: נְחֻלַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל אַדְמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל!

כולם ב׳ : עוֹד תָּרוּם קֶרֶן יִשְׂרָאֵל!
לֹא יִרְאוּנוּ כְּשָׁאֲנוּ כָּמֹעַ.
שָׂבַע נָדַךְ בַּאֲחוּזַת יִשְׂרָאֵל!

קצץ: שָׂבַע נָדַךְ בַּאֲחוּזַת יִשְׂרָאֵל!

כולם ג׳ : רוּחַ יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא תִּשְׁבֹּר, לֹא תֵעָקֵר
נֵצַח יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יְשַׁקֵּר.

מִי כָמֹכָה

מִי כָמֹכָה בָּאֵלִם יְיָ... מִי כָּמֹכָה נֶאְדָּר בַּקֹּדֶשׁ

נוֹרָא תְהִלֹּת עֹשֵׂה פֶלֶא:

שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה שִׁבְּחוּ גְאוּלִים

לְשִׁמְךָ עַל שְׂפַת הַיָּם יַחְדָּו כֻּלָּם הוֹדוּ וְהִמְלִיכוּ וְאָמְרוּ:

יְיָ יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל קוּמָה בְּעֶזְרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל וּפְדֵה כִנְאֻמֶךָ יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל גְּאוֹלֵנוּ יְיָ צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ גָּאַל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

הַשְׁכִּיבֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְשָׁלוֹם וְהַעֲמִידֵנוּ מַלְכֵּנוּ לְחַיִּים וּפְרוֹס עָלֵינוּ סֻכַּת שְׁלוֹמֶךָ וְתַקְּנֵנוּ בְּעֵצָה טוֹבָה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ וְהָגֵן בַּעֲדֵנוּ וְהָסֵר מֵעָלֵינוּ אוֹיֵב דֶּבֶר וְחֶרֶב וְרָעָב וְיָגוֹן וְהָסֵר שָׂטָן מִלְּפָנֵינוּ וְאַחֲרֵינוּ וּבְצֵל כְּנָפֶיךָ תַּסְתִּירֵנוּ כִּי אֵל שׁוֹמְרֵנוּ וּמַצִּילֵנוּ אָתָּה כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם אָתָּה וּשְׁמוֹר צֵאתֵנוּ וּבוֹאֵנוּ לְחַיִּים וּלְשָׁלוֹם מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ שׁוֹמֵר עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל לָעַד.

ה. לְקְרַאת הַקוֹצְרִים

כרוז א׳: דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כִּי־תָבֹאוּ אֶל הָאָרֶץ
אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם וּקְצַרְתֶּם אֶת־קְצִירָהּ וַהֲבֵאתֶם אֶת־עֹמֶר
רֵאשִׁית קְצִירְכֶם אֶל הַכֹּהֵן... וְלֶחֶם וְקָלִי וְכַרְמֶל לֹא
תֹאכְלוּ עַד עֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה... וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם מִמָּחֳרַת
הַשַּׁבָּת מִיּוֹם הֲבִיאֲכֶם אֶת־עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה שֶׁבַע שַׁבָּתוֹת
תְּמִימֹת תִּהְיֶינָה: עַד מִמָּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִת תִּסְפְּרוּ
חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם...

כרוז ב׳: שְׁעַת הַהַכְרָזָה הִגִּיעָה וְהַקּוֹצְרִים עוֹד שָׁרִים יָרֵאוּ.

אזהרה: הָבָה בָּנוֹת נַצָּה לְהַכְבִּיל פָּנֵיהֶם בְּמָחוֹל וְזִמְרָה.

התראות – שמלת משפחה. (בצאו 44)

(בבית. כל הקפל מוכן לקראת בוא הקוצרים ואם לא טרם
מגיעו. האלמנות יצאו לקראת האוכל. הלוקח ומטלטל תלכנה בשמלי הקמה.
נגלות מאחר משפחה.)

כרוז ב׳: הַנִּרְאִים דְּבָר פְּנֵי הַקּוֹצְרִים?

כרוז ג׳: הֲבָאִים דְּבָר נוֹשְׂאֵי הַחֲרְמָשִׁים?

כרוז א׳: הִנֵּה הֵם בָּאִים, בָּאִים וּקְרֵבִים.

(אחוק אחר משפחה נגלית שורה אחורה של הקוצרים ואחריהם,
ונגלת מטען לפניהם וזוגות האלומות. חלקי מחרשות ניטלות מראש
אריזות למשפחה אחרי.)

האלמנות: בּוֹאִי בּוֹאִי כָּלָה קוֹצֵר!
הַן רַד הַיּוֹם, נָשׂוּ גְּלָלִים,
שָׁהֲעֵת הַחֲשֻׁשׁ בָּהָרִים, שִׁמְשׁ בָּהָרִים. (3 פעמים)
(חזרת בצאו 45)

הקהל: אֲחֻזָּתֵנוּ יָדֵיכֶם!

כולם ב': בְּרוּכִים תִּהְיוּ וַחֲזָקָה יְדֵיכֶם!

קובץ א': הִנֵּה בָּאנוּ אַחִים לְהַכְלוֹת הַחֶרְמֵשׁ בַּשָּׁמָה.
רֵאשִׁית הְבִיר הָעוֹמֶר לְעֵת הָאָבִיב.

כולם ב': בְּרוּכִים תִּהְיוּ וַחֲזָקָה יְדֵיכֶם!

הקהל: אֲחֻזָּתֵנוּ יָדֵיכֶם!

שִׁבּוֹלֶת בַּשָּׂדֶה (שיר הקהל)

שִׁבּוֹלֶת בַּשָּׂדֶה — שָׁדָה אֲרוּרִים תָּפָה.
כּוֹרְעָה בָּרוּחַ, — זֵר חַג עוֹשֶׂרֶת,
סַמְּקִים גַּדְּלִינִים כִּי רָב. — שֶׁצֶת יְבוּל וּבְרָכָה.
וּבְסָרְחַב הָרִים — לְקַרַאת בֹּא הַקּוֹצְרִים
יוֹם דָּבָר יָרוּחַ, — קְוֹהַ מְזֻהֶרֶת
קָשְׁקֵשׁ דָּתֹם וְזָהָב. — חֶרֶשׁ לָעוֹמֶר מְחַכָּה.
עִירִי, הוֹי עִירִי! — הָבִי הָגִיפִי,
שׁוּרִי בְּנֵי כְּפָרִים! — נִירִי לָכֶם נִיר.
כָּפָה זֹן פְּשָׁלָה דָּבָר — חֵג לַנְּפָשָׁה,
עַל פְּנֵי הַכָּרִים. — עֵת רֵאשִׁית הַבָּצִיר.
רַבְּרִי, שְׁלְחִי מַגָּל — רַבְּרִי, שְׁלְחִי מַגָּל —
עֵת רֵאשִׁית הַבָּצִיר. — עֵת רֵאשִׁית הַבָּצִיר.

כולם ג': אֲחֵי הַחוֹגְגִים, לְכָבוֹד הַקּוֹצְרִים הָבוּ שִׁיר!

כולם ב': עֲלֵה בְרוּכִים וּבְשׂוֹרָה הַלּוֹם, נוֹשְׂאֵי הַחֲרְמֵשִׁים.

הקהל: בְּרוּכִים וְבוּרָכָה הָעֲדָה וְיִבוֹרַךְ עַם בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל

בָּא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ

מארגנת: צוּא צוּא נָא קוֹצֵר, – הֵן רַד הַיּוֹם נָסוּ צְלָלִים,
שְׁקָעָה דְּבַר שָׁמֶשׁ אֲחָרִים, שֶׁמֶשׁ אֲחָרִים.

כולם: בָּא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ, בָּא, בָּא, אֵת לְקָצוֹר,
בָּא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ, בָּא, בָּא, אֵת לְקָצוֹר.
מָה זֶּה ? – זוֹ . זוֹ . מַעַל זֶה ?
זֶה, זֶה . – הֲאֲקָצוֹר ?
קְצוֹר, קְצוֹר! הֲאֲקָצוֹר ? – קְצוֹר, קְצוֹר!

הקלדים אינם את התראות. (תקנות 1973, נגינת קין)
הם ראוי קיר מצוי. הקלדים את־עצמו מקצב ואחיפה
ציווי הקאה. פעמים פירות יפין פקין ואחרות אחרות אלגות ו־
אלגות. ראוי, וכן יוּצַע התראות תְּצָאָה, הצלע שאת פעמיה. הקלד
את־לפי פעור.

קהל: (בשירה) וּקְצַרְתֶּם אֶת הַקָּצִירָה... (האיש התוכן בצוות 9).

קופי: חֲסַל סִדּוּר לֶאֱשׁוֹת וְקָצִיר הֶעֱרִימוּ !

כולם: וְעַתָּה יַעֲבִרוּ נָא הַקּוֹצְרִים לִפְנֵי הָעָם. יִדְבָּא נָא הַשָּׁנָא
לָעֵינִי כֹּל, – הַשָּׁנָא לַאֲלוּמוֹת הָעוֹמֵר.

ו. הַבָּאַת הָעוֹמֶר.

מיד מנא מצוה ונשא ע"י שליח קודם. מאלמות ואלמות על
ראשיהן, ואחריהן כל מקבלי התקריבות על פסח מחבות בארבע.
כרוז ב': תְּבוֹרַךְ שְׁנַת תְּבוּאָה חֲדָשָׁה!

מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע וְעַד דָּן...

מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע וְעַד דָּן
חַג חַמָּה, חַג דָּגָן –
שְׁנַת תְּבוּאָה חֲדָשָׁה.
שְׁנַת תְּבוּאָה חֲדָשָׁה.

* אפשר גם לבצע בקנון ל-2 קולות.

הקהלה קרבה והולכת אל הבמה.
מקובים. אחדה נאית אחרת אותיקי מכבי, אחים לחוקת ולקבלת הצואר.
כרחבה אשר יפין בשיר הרגל על הקלשב, אחרה אחרה אחד אחר
מקובים עלקים נגד אחוד אלוה שירה ואחרה.
תהלוכת מחנקים נגד לפי הסדר בשיר הסמך. רב הכנסת. לאור
הלבנה הקרבה והולכת אל הבמה.

ז. הַנָּפַת הָעוֹמֶר.

גִּלּוּ הַשְּׁאֵרִית: בְּרוּכִים תִּהְיוּ מְבִיאֵי הָעוֹמֶר, רֵאשִׁית תְּבוּאָה חָרָשָׁה!

(עמדו תוך ההתחיל הקהל והשלוחות ביכרים ועומר בין שניהם.)

קוֹרִים: עוֹמֶר רֵאשִׁית אֲנוּבַת הַשָּׂדֶה, בְּרָכַת עָמָל וַאֲדָמָה.

קהל: (בשירה) מִגָּאר שֶׁבַע וְעַד דָּן...

(השלוח והתווך בצאתו הקודם)

כרוז א': וְהֵנִיפוּ. וְהֵנִיפוּ. עוֹמֶר. עוֹמֶר זֶה הֵנִיפוּ.

כרוז ב': יוֹם תְּנוּפַת הָעוֹמֶר הָיָה כְּמוֹ בְּנִיָּן מְחֻדָּשׁ שֶׁל כֻּלָּנוּ.

כרוז ג': מִצְוַת הָעוֹמֶר לָבוֹא מִן הַקָּרוֹב. לֹא בִּיכּוּר הַקָּרוֹב לִירוּשָׁלַיִם, מְבִיאִים אוֹתוֹ מִכָּל מָקוֹם.

כרוז א': מִצְוַת הָעוֹמֶר לָבוֹא מִן הַקָּמָה. לֹא מִצָּא, יָבִיא מִן הַגָּמָּרִים. מִצְוָתוֹ לָבוֹא מִן הַלַּח, לֹא מִצָּא יָבִיא מִן הַיָּבֵשׁ. מִצְוָתוֹ לִקְצֹר בַּלַּיְלָה, וְקָצַר בַּיּוֹם כָּשֵׁר וְדוֹחֶה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת.

כרוז ב': כֵּיצַד הָיוּ עוֹשִׂים? שְׁלוּחֵי בֵית דִּין יוֹצְאִין מֵעֶרֶב יוֹם טוֹב וְעוֹשִׂים אוֹתוֹ כְּרִיכוֹת בְּמֻחְבָּר לַקָּרְתָּם, כְּדֵי שֶׁיִּהְיֶה נוֹחַ לְקָצְרוֹ. וְכָל הָעֲיָרוֹת הַסְּמוּכוֹת מִתְכַּנְּסוֹת לְשָׁם, כְּדֵי שֶׁיִּהְיֶה נִקְצָר בְּעֶסֶק גָּדוֹל.

(הקוצרים פורשים מאחוז גלהם. ריקוד קצרים שלושה-ארבעה. הקהל מרעיפים בחמה אלומות קטנות ואחיזות מקהל.)

(תפארת)

כרוז ב': הַאֲנוּבָה הָיְתָה בְּאֵזוֹרָהּ. מוֹלִיךְ וּמֵבִיא, מַעֲלֶה וּמוֹרִיד. וְכֵיצַד הָיוּ מְנִיפִים... רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אוֹמְרִים: מוֹלִיךְ וּמֵבִיא לְבַטֵּל טַלְלֵי רְבִיעוֹת רָעוֹת (קָשׁוֹת) מַעֲלֶה וּמוֹרִיד כְּדֵי לְבַטֵּל טַלְלֵי דְּגִים (קָשִׁים) וְכָל הַיּוֹם הָיָה פָּשֵׁר לְתְנוּפָה. וּנְקִרָא יוֹם הַתְּנוּפָה.

(ה·יב) :קהלת

שִׁיר הַתְּנוּפָה.

וְהָנִיפוּ, וְהָנִיפוּ. בְּרָכַת אַרְצֵנוּ, בְּרָכַת אַרְגֵּנוּ -
עוֹמֶר, עוֹמֶר זֶה הָנִיפוּ. אֶרֶץ - יִשְׂרָאֵל.
עוֹמֶר תְּבוּאָה חֲדָשָׁה. בְּרוּכָה הָאָרֶץ, בְּרוּכָה הָאָרֶץ
בָּרוּךְ. בָּרוּךְ כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל

אנו פותחים את הטנא ארבע פעמים, ארבע ואומרים. לקן האשארת
פוסה את הצואר בשם כל הקהל.

לקן האשארת: הִנְנִי מוּדֶה עוֹמֶר זֶה בְּשֵׁם כָּל הַכְּפָר לְקֶרֶן הַקַּיֶּמֶת
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לִגְאוּלַת קַרְקַע וְהִתְאַחְזוּת. וְלֹא תֵּשֵׁם הָאָרֶץ
לְצָמִיתוּת!

כורע ג׳: חֲסַל סְדַר קְצִיר הָעוֹמֶר, אָמֵן וְנִשְׁלַם!

קהל: חֲזַק, חֲזַק וְנִתְחַזֵּק!

כורע ב׳: חֲסַל סְדַר הַבָּאַת הָעוֹמֶר, אָמֵן וְנִשְׁלַם!

קהל: חֲזַק, חֲזַק וְנִתְחַזֵּק!

תזמורת: [פְּנִיָּה, והנשיא ... (התזמורת מנגנת מקטע)

קהל המשתתפים יוצאו מאולם התנופה, רוקדים בשורות ושרים בקצב ובשמחות. הקצב אינו שווה. רם הלילה. חפר באוכף על הקפוצה אוחז ברוך חגיגית. החברים מתכוננים לעריכת מסדר כפרו והמלכתו.

שירים לתהלוכה.

עָזִּי וְזִמְרַת יָהּ
וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה.

עוֹד וָאֵיל.

עוֹד, עוֹד, עוֹד וָאֵיל,
נַבְקִיעַ הֵרָה לִכְנַעַן.
קֵץ לַמַּרְבֶּה,
תִּקְעוּ שׁוֹפָר!
נִפְרָץ חוֹמָה נָשָׁעָר,
לָאָרֶץ הַמּוּבְטַחַת.

עוֹד, עוֹד, עוֹד וָאֵיל,
נַבְקִיעַ הֵרָה לִכְנַעַן.
עָלָה הָאוֹר,
קְרָאוּ לַדְּרוֹר,
נִפְרַץ כָּל שְׁבִיל וָדֶרֶךְ,
לָאָרֶץ הַמּוּבְטַחַת.

APPENDIX II

CHANGES IN OMER CEREMONY 1945-1983

	1945	1946	1950	1957
IME OF CEREMONY	Erev Passover	Erev Passover 4 p.m.		
OSTUMES		1) Everyone-Woven & embbroidered sashes. 2) Men-white shirts & blue pants. 3) Women-white dresses. 4) Children-blue and white-and wreaths in hair.	Same as 1946	Men-khaki pants instead of blue.
ROCESSION		1) Elders atop horses. 2) Male harvesters with sickles. 3) Female harvesters. 4) Choir 5) Orchestra 6) Children 7) Members & Guests	1) Elders atop horses. 2) School & little children. 3) Decorated wagon with basket, led by horses. 4) Choir and members.	
DDITIONS AND HANGES		Added hora		Added accordion & special readings for Israel's 10th anniversary

APPENDIX II

CHANGES IN OMER CEREMONY 1945-83

	1958	1959	1960	1961	1965
TIME OF CEREMONY				First day Passover	
COSTUMES	Same as 1957			All white	White shirts & dresses; each group has spec-costume
PROCESSION		transpor-tation to field be-cause too far to walk.		1)6 horse riders-3 elders & 3 young men 2)Dancers 3)Wagon with band 4)Wagon with basket 5)20 male & female harvesters 6)Choir 7)Alternate row of children & adults 8)Guests	
ADDITIONS AND CHANGES			Extra read-ing section		

APPENDIX II

CHANGES IN OMER CEREMONY 1945-83

	1967	1971	1980
TIME OF CEREMONY			
COSTUMES		Men-blue shirts & black pants	
PROCESSION		Decorated tractor pulling decorated wagon leads procession	
ADDITIONS AND CHANGES	No presentation of riders on horses with flags at end	No horseback riders & torch procession at end	Lea Bergstein included girls from 11-12 years in dances. End with Hatikvah

APPENDIX III

ועדת החגים הבין-קיבוצית - תשמ"ב

טקס קציר העומר (פסח תש"מ - 1980)

א. הכרזת החג

- - - שם היציאה מחצר הקיבוץ

1. חצוצרה: יבורך . . .
2. הרינן: "כבוד הקהל, כבוד כל המתכנסים לעצרת - שעת היציאה הגיעה - יבורך קהל החוגגים!"
3. מקהלה: עונה: "ברך יבורך! ברך יבורך!".

- - - ת ז ו ז ה - - -

ב. בדרך לשדה

1) סדר התהלוכה בתנועה לשדה: רוכבים, מחוללות, בנות הפרחים, קבוצת "הן ירונן", עגלה ריקה, קבוצת "שבולת בשדה", עגלת התזמורת, המקהלה, הקהל.

2) זמרה: מהלך - הקל: "בירושלים ובגלגל", "עזי וזמרת יה", "שבחה בשדה", "פני הגשם", "נצח ישראל", "הן ירונן מבאר-שבע ועד דן", "והניפו", וכד'.

- - - התהלוכה מגיעה אל פאת השדה - - -

התהלוכה נחלקת: הפעילים אל הבמה ואל ראשי השבילים, הקהל צופים אל מרומות הישיבה.

ג. התחלת הטקס

1) חצוצרה: יבורך ...
2) הקהל: נעימת הפתיחה.
3) הרינן: "עומר הקיבוץ המאוחדן שנת תש"מ - יבורך קהל החוגגים".
4) הרינן: "טקס קציר העומר - ראשית תבואה חדשה - אשר אנו נוהגים - הבלה היא מאוחינו טרם גלו מאדמתם".
5) זמרה: שירת יחיד: "יבורך ..."
6) הרינן: "והיה כי תבואו אל הארץ אשר אני נותן לכם, וקצרתם את קצירה והבאתם את עומר ראשית קצירכם אל הכהן" (ויקרא כ"ג).
7) זמרה: יחיד ומקהלה: "והיה. . .". התהלוכה מתכוננת לעלות לבמה.

8) <u>מחול</u>: תזמורת, מקהלת, מחוללות: "והניפו. . ."

והניפו והניפו
עוטר עומר זה תניפו,
שוֹעֵר תבואה חדשה. (ב.פ.)
ברכת ארצנו - ברכת ארצנו -
ארץ ישראל.
בָּרוּכה הארץ, ברוכה, ברוכה.
ברוך ברוך כל בית ישראל. (ב.פ.)

7) <u>הרוכבים</u> - דוהרים ברקע הרחוק ומדליקים <u>כתובת האש</u>.

8) <u>סיום התלווה</u>.

שירים ומסכת: מתתיהו שלם ז"ל.
מחולות ותלבושות: לאה ברנשטיין.

רמת יוחנן, פסח תשמ"ב, אפריל 1982.

האביב

מלים ולחן: מתתיהו שלם

פָּנָה הַגֶּשֶׁם,
הָלַךְ – הָלַךְ לוֹ.
עֲנַן־רָקִיעַ
חָלַף – הָלַךְ לוֹ.
פְּנֵי אֲדָמָה
בְּאוֹר חַמָּה.
שִׁבֳּלִים זָקְפוּ
רָאשֵׁיהֶן בְּקָמָה.
בְּנֵי הָרִים זֶה אֶל זֶה
בְּרָמָה יְשׁוֹרְרוּ:
שָׁלוֹם, שָׁלוֹם,
הֵידָד! הֵידָד!
אָבִיב הַיּוֹם.

עָרוּץ הַנַּחַל
גַּלִּים בּוֹקֵעַ.
הוֹמֶה הַחוֹרֶשׁ,
חֶדְוָה שׁוֹפֵעַ.
מוֹרִיק הַנּוֹף:
שָׂדוֹת לָרֹב.
צִבְעוֹנִים עָלוּ
בְּאֹדֶם־חֵן בַּנְּקִיקִים.
בָּעֲמָקִים פִּרְחֵי־נוֹי
זֶה אֶל זֶה יְשׁוֹרְרוּ:
שָׁלוֹם, שָׁלוֹם,
הָאָח! הָאָח!
אָבִיב הַיּוֹם.

אין תמיסות :
פונה עומד זה בשם כל מי שיש
לבשולת קרקע והתאחזות ורוויחה
לנו ולאחרים
לעמיתינו!
כיוון :
מקום קציר זה עמוד
ונעלם!
תם

תְּבוּרָךְ
שֵׁנַת
תְּבוּאָה חֲדָשָׁה!

חמזמרים: (בקנון)

מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע וְעַד דָּן
חַג חַטָּה, חַג דָּגָן,
שְׁנַת תְּבוּאָה חֲדָשָׁה,
שְׁנַת תְּבוּאָה חֲדָשָׁה.

כרוז:

הַנָּפַת הָעֹמֶר

כרוז:

וְעַתָּה תּוּבָא רֵאשִׁית תְּבוּאָתֵנוּ
לְפִי מִשְׁפֶּטֶת הַכֹּהֵן.
לְתִדְּיוֹן וְלִתְנוּפָה.
עַל גַּרְגְּרִים וּבוּאוּ לְפִי מִשְׁפֶּטֶת
הַכֹּהֲנִים.

(הקוצרים נושאים את טנא העמר לעבר בימת הפא
זקן המשמרת
תְּבוּאָה חֲדָשָׁה!
גַּרְגְּרִים תְּהִי מְבִיאֵי הָעֹמֶר, רֵאשִׁית
נושא הטנא:
עֹמֶר רֵאשִׁית תְּנוּפַת
הַנִּפָּה, בְּרָכוֹת עַל עָמָּה וְאַדְמָתָהּ.

זקן המשמרת:

הִנְנִי

פּוֹדֶה עוֹמֵר זֶה בְּשֵׁם כָּל הַמָּקוֹם
לִגְאוּלַת קֶרְקַע וְהִתְאַחֲזוּת וְחַיָּה
לָנוּ הָאָרֶץ לְצִפְיוֹת!

כרוז:

חַסַל

טֶכֶס הַגָּפַת הָעֹמֶר
בָּא וְנִשְׁלַם!

קהל:

חזק
חזק
ונתחזק!

ח

סיום החגיגה

א. חלוקת משואות
ב. שירת ההמנון
ג. תקיעת חצוצרות...

באופק מופיעים שלושה רוכבים דוהרים.
הראשון עם דגל והשנים עם אבוקות.
הם מדליקים בתובת אש:
עמר עמר זה הניף.
הרוכבים באים בדהרה אל המרכז ומתייצבים כשהדגל
חול מקהל. שירת ההמנון ע"י כל המצבור. נדלקות
משואות בכל הסביבה: (אחר השקיעה). תהלוכת
החוגגים נעה לפי סדר לעבר הכפר לאחר הכיבואות
נישא העמר בלוית שירה וזמרה.

חזק חזק
ונתחזק!

פורה עומר זה בשם כל הפרי
למשלחת קרבת התאחדות הדיינים
לכל הארץ

טרם הגיעו הדעות
הם ונשלם!

סִיּוּם הַהַגָּדָה

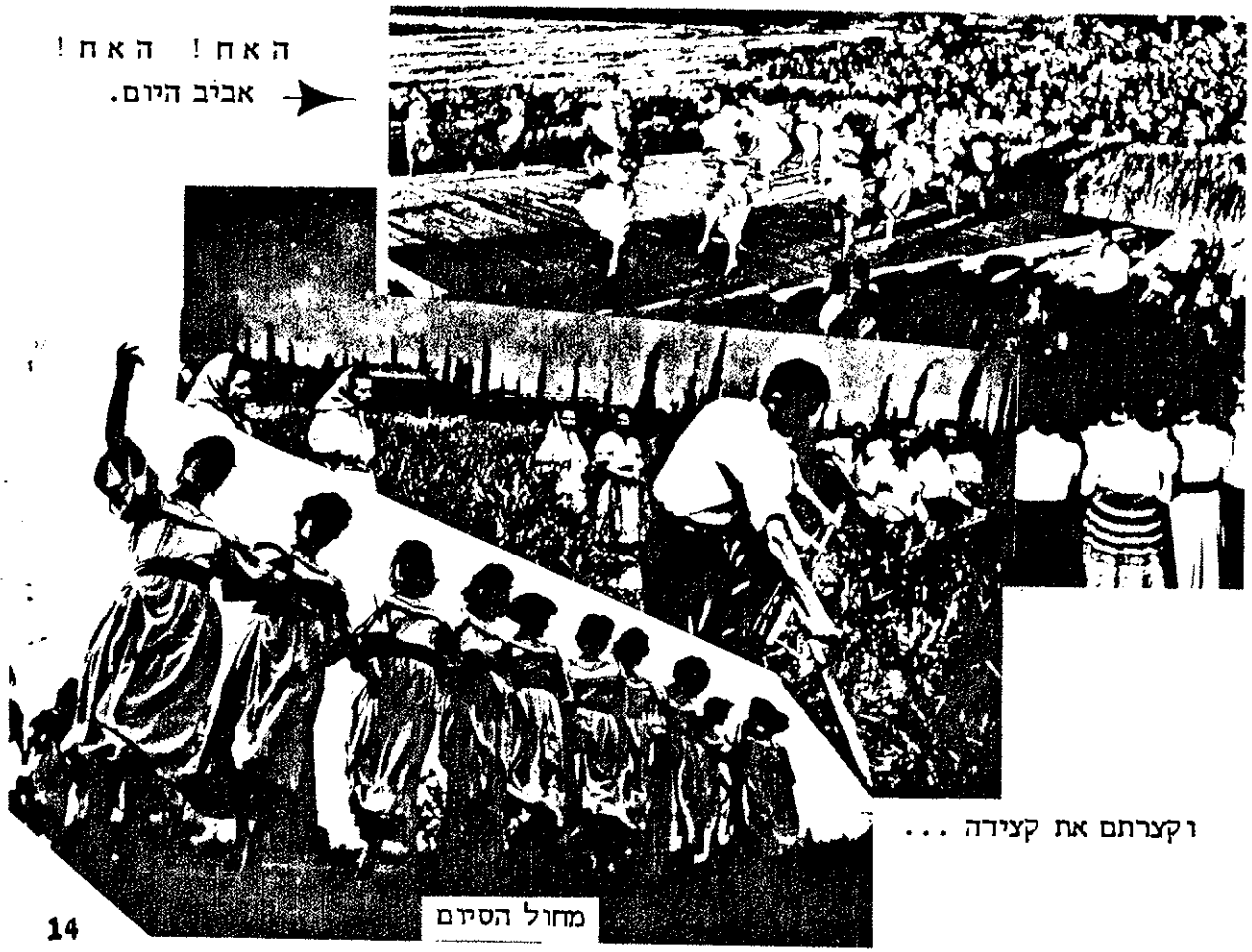
א. הַדְלָקַת מְשׁוֹאוֹת
ב. שִׁירַת הַהֵימְנוֹן
ג. כְּרוּז:

וְעַתָּה תּוֹבָא רִאשִׁית תְּבוּאָתֵנוּ אֶל הַכֹּהֵן. אִישׁ אִישׁ לְפִי מְקוֹמוֹ יֵלֵךְ, רִאשׁוֹן רִאשׁוֹן וְאַחֲרוֹן אַחֲרוֹן וְשִׁירָה בְּפִיכֶם. פַּע דֶּרֶךְ לַקּוֹצְרִים, לַמְאַסְּפוֹת, לַטּוֹשְׁאֵי הַטָּעַן, לַטִּפְשֵׁי וְחֹשֶׁךְ לַיְל וְהַתּוֹף. עָלוּ תְּרוּכִים וּבוֹאוּ בְּשַׁעֲרֵי כְּפָרְכֶם.

(אחר השקיעה. תהלוכת החוגגים וזה לפי הסדר לעבר הכפר. לאור המשואות נישא המשתה סלווה שירה ושירה).

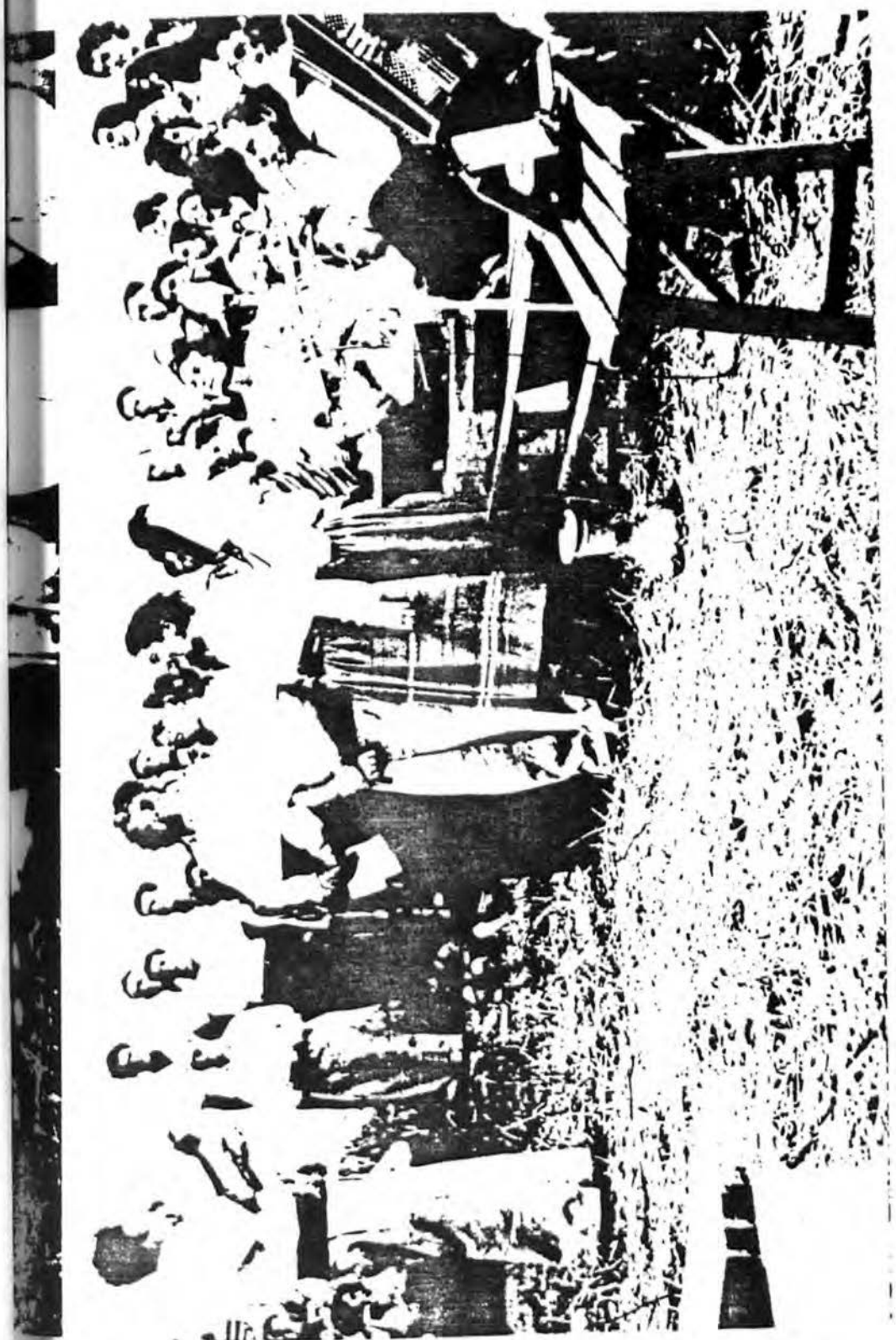
10

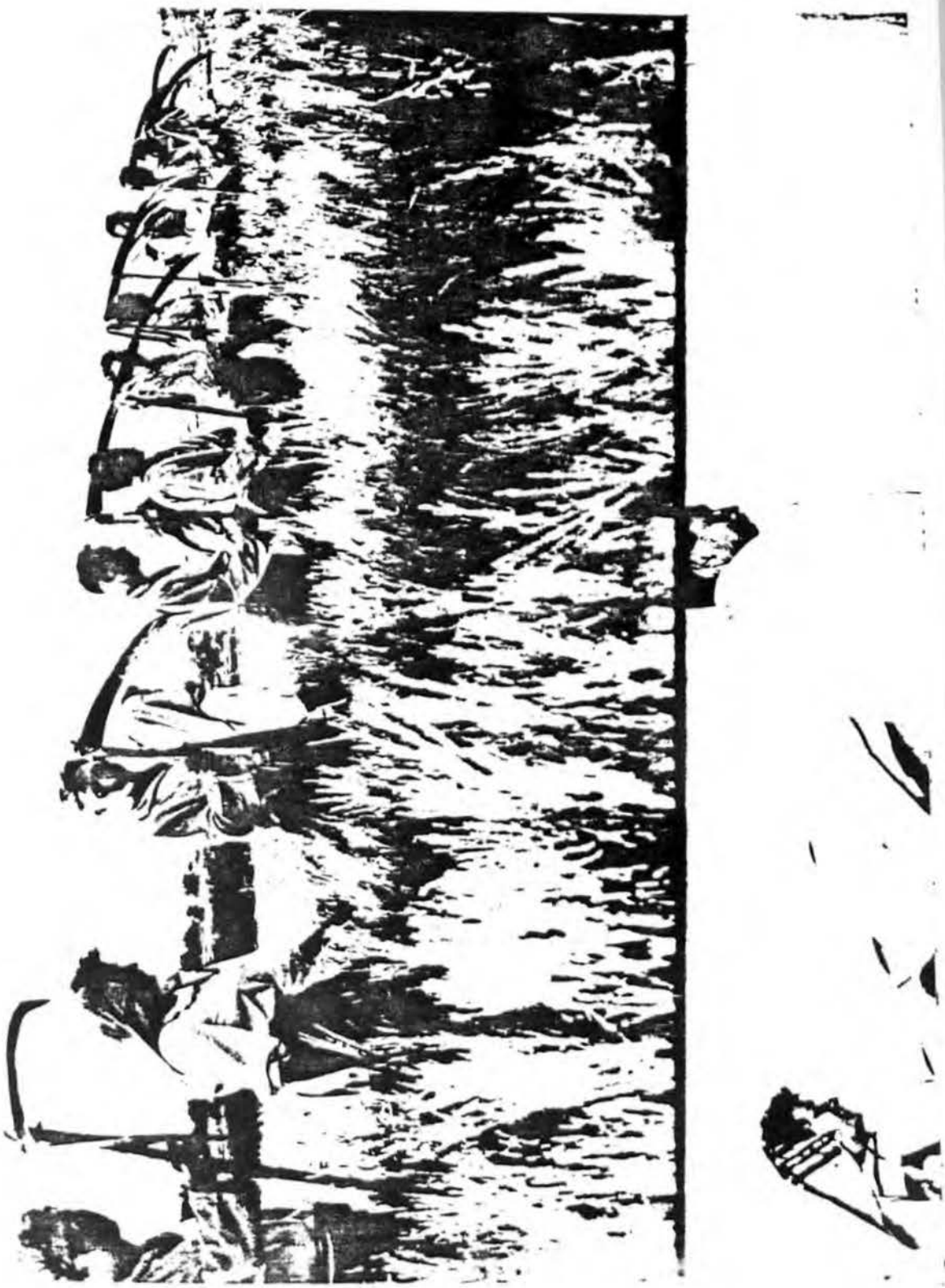
הטא לחבאת העומד



וקצרתם את קצירה ...

הנני פרדה עומר זה . . .





FOOTNOTES

1 זמנות שלו, 55, אדם-נ-ם, 1972.

2 מתיתיהו שלם, "ספורים וזיכרים לילדים", עמוד 6.

3 "שיח לוחמים: פרקי הקשבה והתבוננות", (עם אדיר: המנוסה הקיבוצית, אוקטובר 1967), עמוד 171.

4 Elliott Cohen, "Lea and Matitiyahu of Ramat Yohanan," Viltis, Vol. 41, Number 2, June-August 1982, p. 10.

5 מתיתיהו שלם, "ספורים וזיכרים לילדים", עמוד 6.

6 שם, עמוד 6.

7 שם, עמוד 7.

8 The Third Aliyah took place between 1919-1923 and consisted of young pioneers from the He Halutz and Ha Shomer Ha Za'ir Movements. The approximately 35,000 pioneers who arrived then established the Histadrut and Gedud Ha Avodah parties, worked on road building, and set up kibbutzim and moshavim. Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 1 (Jerusalem:Keter Pub. House, 1972), p. 633-634.

9 אלכס דגן, "שאול שלום מי תיקרץ...", מורשת, יהדות לארגוז ולאמנות, מספר 9, נובמבר 1975, עמוד 15 ועל שמחת בר-מיצוה: (עם אדיר: בדיר, 1962), עמוד 308.

10 "שיח לוחמים: פרקי הקשבה והתבוננות", עמוד 171.

11 אלכס דגן, "תל קדיר", אלדמה, כ"ד דצמבר תשל"ו, עמוד 7.

12 שם, עמוד 7.

13 Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 9, p. 520.

14 Interview with Dafna Shelem, Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan, June 27, 1983.

15 מתיתיהו שלם, "ספורים וזיכרים לילדים", עמוד 7.

16 אלכס דגן, "תל קדיר", עמוד 8.

17 כתריך (מסירת שירה מוקדשת לשירתו של מתיתיהו שלם ב"ל), ראה יוחנן, שורה 11.

18 אורנן, "על קצוי", שורה 8.

19 מתיתיהו שלם, "ספורים ושירים לילדים", שורה 10.

20 שם, שורה 10.

21 שם, שורה 10.

22 אורנן, "על קצוי", שורה 7.

23 "מתיתיהו שלם: שירי ניצב הראשונים" (בדרך מעין אוטוביוגרפיה), תגלית - מחקר המוסיקה לשיר-לשורש, חיפה, 1967, שורה 179.

24 מתיתיהו שלם, "ספורים ושירים לילדים", שורה 21.

25 חנן שטינלף, שרק, אנציקלופדיה למוסיקה (על אדיר: הוצאת עדון - בע"מ), שורה 424.

26 מתיתיהו שלם, "ספורים ושירים לילדים", שורה 21.

27 "מתיתיהו שלם: שירי ניצב הראשונים", תגלית, שורה 180.

28 מתיתיהו שלם, ברוסה וחזו (על אדיר: בניו פלורנטין, שלום 1979), שורה 5.

29 Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism: A New Tradition in the Making (New York: Herzl Press Pub., 1982), p. 198.

30 Ibid., p. 198-199.

Interview with Elisha Shelem, Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan, June 26, 1983.

Interview with Lea Bergstein, Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan, June 26, 1983.

Interview with Elisha Shelem.

The Sadduccees, who adhered to the literal meaning, define "מחרת השבת" as the day after the first Sabbath during the holiday of Passover. Under the Sadduccean system, Omer and Shavuot, which is tied to the counting of the Omer, would occur each year at a different time.

45 א. שפה, ערך, הנוי ומוסך - חוברת ג'- הסומר, עמוד 8.
הכללנו גם הסוגיות הסדרים דאלך ישראל מתפ
קרבות ולמיטלן, עמוד 8.

46 מציינים שלף, "לחידוש חג הסומר", עמוד ב.

47 א. שפה, ערך, הנוי ומוסך - חוברת ג'- הסומר, עמוד 8.

48 שם, עמוד 8.

49 מציינים שלף, "לחידוש חג הסומר", עמוד ב.

50 א. שפה, ערך, הנוי ומוסך - חוברת ג'- הסומר, עמוד 8.

51 מציינים שלף, "לחידוש חג הסומר", עמוד ב.

52 שם, עמוד ב.

53 שם, עמוד ב.

54 Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 9, p. 516.

55 אברון שובב, "בדיון בחג זקיקות - לא סוף-סוף", על המשמר, 3/29/72.

56 Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism: A New Tradition in the Making, p. 41.

57 Ibid., p. 59.

58 Interview with Elisha Shelem.

59 Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 123.

60 Ibid., p. 122.

61 Interview with Elisha Shelem.

Interview with Elisha Shelem. 62

Ibid. 63

Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 140. 64

Ibid., p. 133. 65

יוסיבה ניר, "המשמרת לחיילים שקם מחדש רוסין", (5/15/82), 66
עמוד 1.

Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 135. 67

Ibid., p. 135. 68

מרגיבו שלף, "חזינו בתחומים", ניר הקיבוצ (3-2) כרך 19, 69
ילף, 1970, עמוד 295.

Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 8, p. 294. 70

Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 208. 71

Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 795. 72

Ibid., Vol. 9, p. 1303. 73

Ibid., Vol. 11, p. 173. 74

מרגיבו שלף, "חזינו בתחומים", עמוד 296. 75

שם, עמוד 296. 76

שם, עמוד 296. 77

שם, עמוד 297. 78

Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 10, p. 830. 79

Ibid., Vol. 7, p. 715. 80

מרגיבו שלף, "חזינו בתחומים", עמוד 296. 81

82 Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 141.

83 אברון שורר, "דיון בתר דקידוש - לא טוף-כסוקי".

84 Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 179.

85 מאירוביץ שלף, "לחידוש טקס בליל הסדר", יבדות 7, כיתן י"א, תשל"ו 1976, עמוד 9.

86 Avshalom Reich, Changes and Developments in the Passover Haggadot of the Kibbutz Movement: 1935-1971, Ph.D Dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 1972, p. 104.

87 מאירוביץ שלף, "לחידוש בתר הסדר", עמוד 1.

88 שם, עמוד 1.

89 אברון שורר, "דיון בתר דקידוש - לא טוף-כסוקי".

90 מאירוביץ שלף, "לחידוש בתר הסדר", עמוד 3.

91 See Chapter Two above, Omer Festival in the Traditional Jewish Sources for an in-depth discussion of customs typical of the traditional Omer ceremony.

92 מאירוביץ שלף, "טקס הסדר הקיבוצי", הסדר (לחוג הקיבוצי והקיבוץ, המחלקה לגדנות וספורט, הסתדרות העובדים הלאומית, רעת יהנן), ניסן תשל"ו, עמוד 3.

93 Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 180.

94 דיוויד הייטלר, "סדר-עמוד בתפוצות", יבדות 7, תל-אביב 1965, עמוד 9.

95 מאירוביץ שלף, "סבורים וסודים לילדים", עמוד 20.

96 Avshalom Reich, Changes and Developments in the Passover Haggadot of the Kibbutz Movement: 1935-1971, p. 98.

97 מ. גיניהו שלף, "לחידוש חג העומר", שם, ג.

98 א.ב., "חג העומר על במת הקיבוץ", הד החנוך, גשרי תשי"ח.

99 "הצגת העומר וחג הדיכורין הועלו על במת הקיבוץ", דבר 58/31/8.

100 Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 124.

101 ג. ק., "ל שנה לעקס העומר: שיחה עם מ. גיניהו", שם, ג.

102 In his preparation for Hag Ha Omer, Shelem relies upon the Bible as the primary source for the celebration of this holiday, as he did with Hag Ha Gez.

103 In Chapter Two, Shelem's use of the traditional sources is explained in detail, particularly how they pertain to his Omer ceremony.

104 ג. ק., "ל שנה לעקס העומר: שיחה עם מ. גיניהו", שם, ג.

105 שם, שם, ג.

106 שם, שם, ד.

107 Interview with Lea Bergstein.

108 "קבוץ העומר יזרעאל-יונתן", דבלט 46/10/5 "קבוץ העומר יזרעאל-יונתן", דבר 47/25/4.

109 יעקב שדה, "בדרון החג קיבוץ-לבן סוף-סוף", Personal diary of Ya'akov Yaniv, p. 173.

110 Ibid., p. 185-186.

111

112 "קדוד בסומר קרמת יוחנן" בשלבים.

113 גוש איכי, מגיעים שם, ארכיון, רמת יוחנן.

114 ד"ר יוף טוב לוינסקי, ספר מועדים, חלק II: פסח (תל אביב: דביר, 1961), עמוד 217.

115 Interview with Lea Bergstein.

116 Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 181.

117 "Who Is Who in Ramat Yohanan," in Ramah in English #3, 11/15/73, p. 4.

118 Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 181.

119 Ibid., p. 181.

120 Interview with Dafna Shelem.

121 ג.ק., "15 שנה לעקם בסומר: שיחה עם מגיעים", עמוד 3.

122 Interview with Elisha Shelem.

123 Lawrence Hoffman, editor, Gates Of Understanding (New York: UAHC, 1977), p. 133.

124 Ibid., p. 135.

125 Lawrence Hoffman, "Censoring In and Censoring Out: A Function of Liturgical Language," in Joseph Guttman, editor, Ancient Synagogues (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981), p. 22.

126 Ibid., p. 22.

127 Ibid., p. 22.

128 Lawrence Hoffman, editor, Gates of Understanding, p. 143.

129 Charles Liebman, "The Religion of American Jews," in Marshall Sklare, editor, The Jew in American Society (New York: Behrman House, 1974), p. 227.

130 Edward Twitchell Hall, The Silent Language (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1973), p. 2.

131 Peter Donovan, Religious Language (NY: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1976), p. 1.

[132]Ibid., p. 1.

[133]Ibid., p. 2.

[134]Ibid., p. 7.

[135]Ibid., p. 78.

[136]Ibid., p. 11.

[137]Ibid., p. 11.

[138]Ibid., p. 17.

[139]Ibid., p. 25.

[140]Ibid., p. 25.

[141]Ibid., p. 26.

[142]Ibid., p. 84.

[143]Ibid., p. 85.

[144]Ibid., p. 63.

[145]Margaret Mead, "Ritual and Social Crisis," in James D. Shaughnessy, editor, The Roots of Ritual (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1973), p. 89.

[146]Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 123.

[147]Ibid., p. 123.

[148]"Censoring In" is defined by Hoffman on p. 76 as "the means by which a group uses its liturgy to define what it is.

[149]

[150]Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 46.

[151]See Chapter Four above, p. 8.

[152]Abraham Joshua Heschel, The Earth Is the Lord's and The Sabbath(NY: Harper and Row Pub., 1966), p. 15.

[153]Ibid., p. 8.

[154]Rabbi Harvey Fields, "Renewing Jewish Celebrations," in Reform Judaism, Vol. 12, Number 1, Fall 1983, p. 12.

[155]Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 102.

[156]Ibid., p. 102-103.

[157]Rabbi Harvey Fields, "Renewing Jewish Celebrations," p. 12.

[158]Ibid., p. 12.

[159]Shalom Lilker, Kibbutz Judaism, p. 101-102.

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ראו: 181, 185, 186.

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א. 9

"קול קורא לאומה: מסכת חג ושיחה", דבר, 2 באפריל 1961,
מאת רמת יוחנן

<u>על המשמר</u> 4/30/70 תיק 2, הקואליציה לאומה, מכון הולי
"קול הקואליציה לאומה ברמת-יוחנן" הוא סדרי הקואליציה בנושא
פלג ג'לן) רמת יוחנן

<u>נמרים</u> (מסיבת שיחה מוקדשת לסיבתו של מתניהו
ג'ינג'ר, מ. "קריאה לאומה ברמת יוחנן" <u>דבר</u> 4/25/47

ארכיון, רמת יוחנן
ה כאוזן, מאיר. "שקלטת בשבה." תיק אש. 4/13, מ מגד

"מכון להולי ומזרח" תיק, ארכיון, רמת יוחנן, א 181

<u>דבר</u> 8/31/58
"הקואליציה לאומה מכה הכיכובים הושלו על רמת פטיגן היקפי"

מכון הולי ומזרח, רמת יוחנן
" הקואליציה לאומה ברמת יוחנן." תיק ב', הקואליציה לאומה,

מכון הוד ומוסד, רמת יתנן

הכנה לתינוק, תשרי תשי"ת תיק 3 הדואר העולמי
א.ב. "תג' הלקח של רמת פוליקון".

כרך ו', בסוף תש"א
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28/5/5 א"מ 6

לנקסיס יצחק בימינו. שם המוסד: מבצעי רובין
שולפן תחום הנושאים השווים בין שקסי, צומר כי המקורות
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