

AN ANALYSIS OF SEFER TEUDAT SHLOMO

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I must confess that I consider myself a modern day Shlomo Lipschuetz. I, too, have been granted the privilege of being both a rabbi and a cantor. I have labored over traditional texts and have spent years of my life immersed in Jewish and secular music. If this paper helps uplift the minds and hearts of even a few rabbis and a few cantors to the truths Shlomo has made evident, then his life, his struggles, and his insights will not have fallen on deaf ears. May his text serve to remind us of the truth that "as long as the voice of Jacob is still heard, the hand of Esau can never harm us."

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER:

I.	Introduction - The World of Shlomo Lipschuetz . . . . .	1
II.	The <u>Haskamot</u> to <u>Teudat Shlomo</u> . . .	8
III.	The Life of Shlomo Lipschuetz . . . 26 (Addendum: <u>Memoirs Of Gluckel</u> <u>of Hameln</u> -- excerpt) . . . 47	
IV.	Shlomo's Guide to the Cantor. . . .	51
V.	The "Wisdom" of Solomon . . . . .	86
CONCLUSION. . . . .		97
BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . .		99



## I. THE WORLD OF SHLOMO LIPSCHUETZ

Shlomo ben Moses Lipschuetz was born at Feurth, Germany (c. 1675) just twenty-seven years after the termination of the Thirty Year's War (1648), which devastated vast areas of Germany, impoverished many ancient cities and communities, and resulted in great suffering and hardship for the German Jews of the time. The Jews lived on a contractual basis with rulers of states, duchies, and principalities, and in some cases with the free cities, which characterized Germany at the time. In each community, they were dependent on the grace and good will of the local rulers. In the Hapsburg countries the Jews had to deal directly with the Emperor or his closest relatives, who were governors of the hereditary lands. While the Jewish position was aggravated by the fanaticism of the counter-reformation, which most princes of the House of Hapsburg heartily endorsed, the Jews generally escaped the threat of expulsion.

As the Thirty Year's War drew to its exhausted end, in 1648, a flood of Jewish refugees fled from Poland, escaping from the Cossacks who had risen under their lead-

er Bogdan Chmielnitzki, and seeking a haven among their brethren in Germany. "It was a world which knew the horrors and perils of warfare no less than our own. In addition, there was the perpetual menace of plague and pestilence, the danger of fire desolating the narrow streets of cities; the travel by wagon or on foot along bad roads, with footpads [bandits] lurking in wait for the solitary traveler. People tended to rise and go to bed with the sun even in the cities."<sup>1</sup>

All that, however, was part of the external world, which was shared by Jew and Gentile alike. For the Jews as such there were certain other elements which made their life vastly different from that of their neighbors. To begin with, their religious faith taught them, and many must have believed, that they were in exile and must suffer that exile as their forbears had done. Their faith also taught them that the Lord had chosen them from among mankind for His own mysterious reasons, and that as a result certain responsibilities and definite duties were imposed upon them.

The following account further describes the situation: "The sufferings of the Thirty Year's War produced a state of pious devotion and engendered a sort of messianic pining, as such hopes constitute the comfort and blessings of the wretched ones....What could be more natural than such a mood in the turmoils of the time...and that it caused many to think of that point, where all

messianic hopes were stored and surrounded by a splendid sacred halo---Biblical Judaism."<sup>2</sup>

It was a world that still felt the sensational effect of Shabbatai Zevi, the false Messiah, whose renown and claims swept like wildfire in 1665 from Asia Minor and the Holy Land to the Jewish communities of Europe. The fervent belief in, and conviction of the messianic redemption of Israel, had indeed been strengthened by the sufferings of Polish Jewry in 1648 and the subsequent years, which were regarded by mystics, kabbalists, and everyday folk as the long-foretold "birthpangs of the Messiah." Jewry was filled with the hope of an imminent return and restoration to the Holy Land. According to Werner, this heightened concern for mysticism and the intrusion of kabbalistic prayers ruined the traditional unity of the synagogue and alienated many worshippers.<sup>3</sup>

Another danger was the growth of missionary centers which arose to proselytize the Jews. Normally these efforts did not achieve much success. However, when the missions began to include the services of learned Hebraists, a degree of friendliness developed between them and some Jews. The syndrome of anti-papism, Puritanism, and pietism seemed not wholly unacceptable. Men like Wagenseil and Osiander (father and son), thoroughly familiar with the Hebrew language and the customs of the Jews, devoted their lives to securing a mass conversion of European Jewry.<sup>4</sup>

Unquestionably, one of the worst results of the Thirty Year's War was the setback German culture suffered for at least a century. In neighboring France, literature and philosophy flourished; in Germany, there was little evidence of such cultural activity until the second half of the eighteenth century. The like was true of Jewish culture. "The days when the German rabbinate stood at the forefront of Jewish intellectual life was over. The ghetto imprisonment, the impoverishment, the terrors of war had not only destroyed schools, but also crushed the independence of spirit necessary for cultural progress."<sup>5</sup> In Poland of that day, there were at least large communities of Jews, and the very numbers stimulated intellectual activity. In Germany, the Jews were so small a minority as to have neither incentive nor opportunity for cultural development.

Most of the rabbis of the German-Jewish communities were men who had gained knowledge and reputation in Polish academies. The situation was partly due to the large number of Jews who had fled from Poland as a result of the Chmielnitzki uprising and the other Polish wars. Indirectly, these wars thus helped spread the intense Talmudic study which had become characteristic of Polish Jewry. This does not mean that there were no native scholars in Germany. One such scholar was David Oppenheim (1664-1736),

nephew of the Viennese Court Jew, Samuel Oppenheim. David Oppenheim was the Chief Rabbi of Prague, a man of considerable wealth, and a collector of rare Jewish books and manuscripts. Later on we shall see a few examples of his Talmudic skill. Oppenheim evidently was a great and renowned teacher, as his pupil, Shlomo Lipschuetz, attests. Lipschuetz, too, in addition to being a cantor and shochet, had considerable skill as a Talmudist.

This, in brief, was the world in which Shlomo lived. Threatened externally and internally the central and eastern European Jews deemed any kind of escape desirable, whether physical or spiritual. The central European Jews, especially in small Duchies, were immobile. Werner emphasizes that "oddly enough, it was the footloose cantors, driven by hunger and insecurity, who found ways of wandering from place to place. Originally undertaken in flight from the murderous Cossack hordes, the cantors' migrations became adventures, after 1670, somewhat similar to those of wandering apprentices."<sup>6</sup> Later, we will find the famous cantor, Jokele of Rzeszow of Poland, who caused a furor through his tremendous voice and wonderful singing. He served in Prague as cantor and later (1715) in Metz, where "while he was officiating on the feast of Shavuot, a terrible calamity occurred at the synagogue, fatal to many worshippers."<sup>7</sup>

Rabbi Solomon Lipschuetz in his Teudat Shlomo (Offen-

bach, 1718), gives us insight into the life of the traveling hazzanim of the first half of the eighteenth century. Lipschuetz's life was embroiled in the antagonism between the rabbi and the appointed cantor, the controversy over the introduction of art-music in the synagogue, and the discordant life in the German synagogue prior to the Emancipation. Teudat Shlomo is one of the most illustrative documents of this period.

## Notes to Chapter One

1. Beth Zion Abrahams, ed. The Life of Gluckel of Hameln-1646-1724, vii.
2. Eric Werner, A Voice Still Heard, p. 111.
3. Ibid., p. 111.
4. Ibid., p. 111.
5. Solomon Grayzel, A History of the Jews, p. 213.
6. Werner, p. 112.
7. Abraham Idelsohn, Jewish Music in its Historical Development, p. 213.



## II. THE HASKAMOT

With the spread of the haskamah, a new literary genre came into being. These haskamot serve as historical and literary sources. Jacob Landau's Agur, published by Azriel Guzenhauser in Naples, in approximately 1490, was the first book to contain haskamot.<sup>1</sup> This has been explained by the intense condition that existed between print shops, namely those of Guzenhauser and Soncino at that time. These short essays, dealing with the invention of printing, which accompanied texts, later came to be called haskamot.

The haskamah to Eliyahu Levita's Bachur, published in 1517, raised the issue of what the role of the haskamah actually was. On the one hand, the haskamah was considered a permit to publish a work and/or an approval of a work already printed; on the other hand, it was considered a statement of the copyright limitations on other printers. The haskamah for Elijah Levita's Sefer Habachur (Rome, 1518), signed by the rabbi of Rome, threatens excommunication for republication within ten years.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the haskamah fulfilled the function of copyright, the period of protection extending from five to twenty-five years.



On June 21, 1554, a statement by congregational representatives gathered at Ferrara, Italy, established for the first time the requirement that books contain haskamot. This statement instructed publishers of all succeeding Hebrew books to include the consent of three ordained rabbis living in the place of publication.<sup>4</sup>

Hurvitz notes that the standard haskamah, as it appears in so many Hebrew texts throughout the centuries, generally includes seven elements: Most of them appear in the haskamot of Lipschuetz's Teudat Shlomo. The essay must (1) be written by a maskim who is a recognized rabbbinic authority. His comments are (2) commissioned and (3) he expresses pleasure at being associated with the book. The haskamah is generally (4) addressed to the book's author. In Teudat Shlomo they are addressed to the general public, seemingly a later development. The books' contents are (5) analysed by the maskim, who, in doing so, vouches for the propriety of the work's halachic stance and, along the way, corrects any errors that may have crept into the printed edition. The maskim (6) urges the purchase of the book, and, finally, if the book is a publication of one of the classical Hebrew texts, or if the author is dead, he (7) places a copyright restriction on further publication. The fact that copyright restrictions appear in the haskamot to Teudat Shlomo, forty years before Shlomo's death, may attest to the importance and sanctity of his text or,

perhaps, may just reflect a later development in the history of haskamot.

The Frankfort bookseller Seligmann Reiss and his son Herz set up a Hebrew press in the city of Offenbach in Hesse, West Germany, and issued a variety of Hebrew and Judeo-German books between 1714 and 1721,<sup>6</sup> among them Teudat Shlomo (1718). The haskamot which follow are written in the characteristic combination of Hebrew and Aramaic, frequently employing the florid style of rabbinic writings. Undoubtedly, the haskamot will lose a certain flavor in my English translations, as there is no easy way to capture the pun-value and play-on-words which characterize the originals. Still, the data which they contain provide an important source of information about the man, Shlomo Lipschuetz, and his text, Teudat Shlomo.

#### Haskamah I

The haskamah of the great and famous rabbi, our master and teacher, Yaakov Reischer, may God bless and keep him, av bet din of the court of justice, and head of the yeshiva in the holy community of Metz, may Zion and Jerusalem be rebuilt, the author of Sefer Minhat Yaakov, Sefer Hok L'Yaakov, and Sefer Sh'vut Yaakov.

After the examination of this beautiful text, I decided in my heart to give it my permission and approbation. It is a joy to speak of a mitzvah which makes the rabbis glad. He

[Shlomo Lipschuetz] is a master of Torah and the author of a document! This scholarly author has been involved in this mitzvah at its proper time. I will pray in the form of prayer and song---and listen to his voice, his voice of song. "Asher Lish'lomo"---the text is weaved with wisdom, for first he beautifies himself and then others. And since he is now hazzan of the place, here in the holy community of Metz, he is the great singer, our master and teacher, Shlomo, may God bless and keep him. And for paths of righteousness he has taken, this path is the most beautiful of the beautiful. Besides this, he is a conscientious student. He is special, the best of this holy flock. From the choicest of the yeshiva this one [Shlomo] listens, follows rules and disciplines. For this reason I am giving my approval. I thought it over and it has made an impression on me. I said to myself, "Ordinarily, I do not give approval on any of these new texts, even though these books may have important elements and would be worthwhile for generations." One should not talk too much without guidance from the urim and tumim.

Just as someone does not disturb a seudah [festive meal], so should one not disturb this teudah [document], nor make waste. And what is more, someone might come along and, in his [Shlomo's] shadow and structure, take advantage of his labor. "For what has man of all his labors" (Eccles. 2:22). I have decreed that no one devious should come along and infringe upon this book for ten years without the knowledge and permission of the author. No one should "raise his hand" [play on Gen. 41:44] to permit the work [an infringement upon Teudat Shlomo] from going to press. This threat carries with it excommunication. But for he who listens to me [my warnings], blessings will come upon him and they will say that he is "like a soaring bird" [play on Is. 31:5]. The Lord of Hosts will protect us, and He is a protecting shield for all those who are sensitive and pure. This was written and sealed on the twenty-fourth day of Nisan א'ט"ד (1717) on Tuesday and Wednesday by the "junior" Jacob, the son of my distinguished father and teacher, Joseph Reischer of Prague, who has held important

sessions in the holy community of Metz.

May God watch over it.

The author of the first haskamah is Jacob ben Joseph Reischer, also known as Jacob Backofen. Kupfer identifies him as a rabbi, halachic authority, and author. Born in Prague (c. 1670), Reischer studied under Aaron Simeon Spira, rabbi of Prague, and was known as a prodigy in his early youth.<sup>7</sup> Some time after, he studied under Spira's son, Benjamin Wolf Spira, av bet din of the Prague community and rabbi of Bohemia, whose son-in-law he subsequently became. We shall see later that Benjamin Wolf, too, wrote a haskamah to Teudat Shlomo. His brothers-in-law were Elijah Spira and David Oppenheim, Shlomo's revered teacher in Nikolsburg. Reischer was dayan at Prague, where he was called to the rabbinate of Rzeszow in Galicia, deriving his name Reischer from that city which was known by the Jews as Reische. He was subsequently called to the rabbinate of Anspach, and then occupied a similar position at Worms, from 1713-1718. About 1718, he was appointed av bet din and head of the yeshiva of the important community of Metz. Evidently Reischer was "accepted by contemporary rabbis as a final authority, and problems were addressed to him from the whole Diaspora, and from Eretz Yisrael."<sup>8</sup> He officiated in Metz until his death in 1733.

Reischer praises Teudat Shlomo extravagantly. His haskamah accomplishes three basic tasks: (1) Praising the book, Reischer lists its (2) unique qualities and (3) implies that it should be published. The competition is never specified by name, but he mentions that he "ordinarily does not give approval on new books." He lauds Shlomo for being not just a great singer but a scholar of Torah as well. Here Reischer plays on the words תוצנה and תורה. Seemingly, the words are close enough in sound to merit a clever comparison. Phrases such as אשר שלמה abound, immediately suggesting Song of Songs. In fact, all of the maskimim, and even Shlomo himself, continually use words and phrases from Song of Songs. In addition, both the haskamot, and the text itself, are replete with an inordinate number of quotes from Ecclesiastes and Proverbs, both "traditionally" attributed to King Solomon. Shlomo is far from modest. Indeed, as we shall see, he views himself as a source of wisdom in much the same way that tradition views King Solomon.

Reischer, the other maskimim, and Shlomo never mention a teacher nor a European city without an accolade. When a teacher or scholar is mentioned, he is invariably followed by the initials אורנו ורגנו פנה רה' - אפר"ק, "our great and esteemed teacher and master." Also, the initials אשריך רחמנא וברכיך - א"ק, "may God bless and keep him," appear often. The communities of Metz, Prague, Frankfurt, Feurth, and Nikolsburg are always designated as ק"ק -



קדש, "holy community." Following the name of a city the initials **ל'צ' - וירושלים**, "may Zion and Jerusalem be rebuilt," will invariably appear, a constant reminder that although they live in galut, they are linked to the Holy Land both physically and spiritually.

A phrase such as **אחריו מפרקים**, the "choicest of the choice" might indicate a reference to Shlomo's profession as a shochet, since the above phrase often refers to animals. An interesting play-on-words occurs with the phrase **אין אדם אורח גתעזב**, "no one should tamper with his document." Here Reischer may be alluding to a Talmudic phrase **אין אדם אורח גתעזב ואפס'נה** (Yebamot 107a), "no man would take the trouble to prepare a meal and then spoil it." The similarity between **תעזב** and **סעוד** would have been especially evident to the ear of Ashkenazic authorities who knew of the tav ( **ט** ) without a dagesh ( **ס** ) being pronounced as an s. The initials **ל'ח' - אמתא**, a "decree of excommunication," also spell the Hebrew word for snake. To Reischer, one who transgresses the ten-year copyright restriction is subject to the "snakebite" of the rabbis! The phrase **אין אדם אורח גתעזב**, "no man should raise his hand" [to permit infringement upon the copyright] is a quote from Gen. 41:44 where Pharaoh entrusts Joseph with power. At the end of his haskamah, Reischer mentions with praise his father, Joseph Reischer, who also was a distinguished rabbi and scholar.

Haskamah II

The haskamah of the great and venerable rabbi, our great and esteemed master and teacher, Aaron Worms, may God bless and keep him, a leader and spokesman of this generation in the holy community of Metz, may Zion and Jerusalem be rebuilt.

I have seen it. This is new....to do such holy service, this document of Shlomo's. I will make my voice heard to all who can read Scripture and understand. I have read and reviewed what this wonderful author has written, this great singer and revered teacher and master. Shlomo, the cantor of our beautiful community of Metz, 1'3'.

"And he offered peace offerings and he made a feast" (I Kings 3:15). This document of Shlomo's has found its "proper time" (Eccles. 3:1). It is small in quantity but great in quality to teach God's people, and especially hazzanim, who are the messengers, in whose hands are the path in which to walk. And this action [writing this book] which he has done with joy, gladness, and song in a joyous place---there will his prayer stand as a service of wonder. Without doubt his wisdom will spread, for its



meanings are good and precious. Both in the beginning and end of this forementioned book I have said that all of these words [Shlomo's] are of value and they deserve to be law. For these words [Shlomo] will have peace. No one should trespass his border [domain] under penalty of excommunication (ע"נ), for the next ten years, from the date of publication mentioned above. For he who heeds my warning, a good blessing will befall him. It was on the fourth day that God created the luminaries. Today is the fourth day. It is in God's holy care. Each thing at its proper time. How good are these words here in the holy community of Metz. Thus has spoken the busy "old one," Lekach Yitschak Aharon [his text for which he is also called], son of my father, the master, the righteous rabbi and revered teacher, Joseph Israel Worms, of blessed memory.

Aaron Worms is mentioned briefly in the Memoirs of Gluckel of Hameln (1646-1724), who travelled widely throughout Germany and provided a marvelous glimpse of German history. She mentions Aaron Worms in relation to Rabbi Gabriel ben Judah Low Eskeles, who was head

of the yeshiva of Metz between 1695 and 1709.<sup>9</sup> According to Gluckel, it happened that "Rabbi Gabriel had received permission to be away a year, though no one believed he would be absent for as long. But the one year grew to nearly three....The community was like sheep without a shepherd. They could not be without their rabbi, although there were among them highly respected and wise men well-versed in the Torah, especially the old gaon, Rabbi Aaron Worms, a very great scholar, who had been many years a rabbi in Mannheim and surrounding parts, and also in Alsace."<sup>10</sup> In 1709 Eskeles left the post in Metz and became Landesrabbiner (Chief Rabbi) of Moravia and head of the yeshiva of Nikolsburg, sharing his office with David Oppenheim.<sup>11</sup> Worms, who is closely aligned with Eskeles, according to Gluckel, was also well acquainted with David Oppenheim and, according to Flesch, ordained him along with Oppenheim's teachers from Metz and Landsberg.<sup>12</sup> This, then, is the probable link with Shlomo Lipschuetz, one of David Oppenheim's most outstanding students at the yeshiva in Nikolsburg, and for many years one of the great hazzanim of Metz.

Like the previous maskim, Aaron is effusive in his praise for Shlomo. Utilizing references to the Biblical King Solomon, he likens Teudat Shlomo to the "whole offerings and libations" of King Solomon, *כָּל הַזֶּבַח וְכָל הַשֵּׁלֶמֶן* (I Kings 3:15). Shlomo's words are so highly

valued they "deserve to be engraved as law" ( **כאוי' פ'ק** ) ( **לפיות חקורים** ). Aaron reiterates the warning not to infringe upon Lipschuetz's copyright for the next ten years. He "modestly" compares the writing of his haskamah on the fourth day of the week to God's creating the luminaries on the fourth day.

### Haskamah III

The haskamah of the great and venerable rabbi, our great and esteemed master and teacher, Benjamin Wolf, may God bless and keep him, the author of Sefer Ir Benyamin.

Behold, already Rabbis, Saboraim and Gaonim have preceded me, the master of this place, the head of our yeshiva, of our holy community, and second to him in holiness, the venerable master, Aaron Worms, sustainer and leader of our community, **ל'ז'.** "They both shall be good alike" (Eccles. 11:6). Those authors hold with praise horns of splendor and magnificence. To Solomon of Song of Songs I respond after them to say, "You [too] Shlomo are a prince!" Among rabbis you are "heroic" ( **גאזק זין אהר** ). As Solomon the King established "limits" ( **צ'רוגין** ), "sweet" ( **צ'רגין** ) are the words of this book and they are precious.

One should wash hands before "pulling" this holy book, this scroll. It is a pleasure for me to hearken to its voice, for it has in it inspiration, and I have gleaned joy from its holiness, like Moses who answered the call of God. "The tongue of the righteous is as choice silver" (Proverbs 10:20). [His words are like] "slices of cheese and butter" (I Sam. 17:18), and "honey is under his tongue" (Song of Songs 4:11). Until here the feeling of my heart has been like a good word. I say that I have taken a good action [his approval of this text], and may his [Shlomo's] strength continue in a straight path toward Torah. Behold, I am just a branch of the great and praiseworthy trees, the masters mentioned above who speak with laudatory praise upon the great and wonderful scholar, our exalted rabbi, Shlomo, a messenger of prayer, a loyal envoy. His "mouth drips with oriental spice" [close in language to Song of Songs 5:5], the wonderful "mouth" of our community, /'3', the son of the exalted "old-timer," our wonderful rabbi, the exalted scholar, Moshe. He follows in the footsteps

of his father. I can say he holds on to the deeds of his forefathers with his just hands. His good conversation deserves reward and his pleasant verses, inscribed with an "iron pen" (Jer. 17:1), are fixed in print, for his effort is the effort of the heart. His words will burst forth like a spring, his "wisdom of Solomon." It is inscribed and written and will go forth on the path. There is a preventive law on this text. For ten years from this day of printing no one shall trespass its borders, for this was the intention of the publisher. The "snake of the rabbis" [excommunication] shall bite him and there is no remedy for it. But for he who hearkens to these words, a blessing will come upon him. Such are the words of the "small" rabbi of the land. "I am but dust and ashes" (Gen. 18:17), the one who offers praises this day. The first day after Pesach---a word at its time. How good is this "little verse."

From the previous haskamah we know that Benjamin Wolf was the teacher of Yaakov Reischer. According to Deutsch, Benjamin (b. 1640, Prague) was the son of Aaron Simeon Spira and died in Prague in 1721. For twenty years

he was the Chief Rabbi of Bohemia. Like his father, Benjamin was a regular provider of haskamot, a notable one being to the first edition of Samuel ben Meir's commentary on the Pentateuch (1705). The manuscript was in the possession of David Oppenheim, to whom he was related in marriage. We have seen that there was a very close relationship between all the maskimim and Shlomo Lipschuetz and his teacher, David Oppenheim.

Benjamin Wolf has high praise for the other two maskimim, Yaakov Reischer and Aaron Worms, who have preceded him, and links them to the chain of "Rabbanim, Saboraim, and Gaonim." Like the other two, he also has great praise for Shlomo and his Teudah, and purposely utilizes phrases from Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Proverbs, and Kings to link Shlomo to the historical King Solomon. He, too, plays with words: As King Solomon established "limits" ( צ'רוג'ין ), so are the words of Shlomo the hazzan "sweet" ( צ'ר'ג'ין ). The praise continues effusively with phrases such as "the tongue of the righteous is as choice silver" (Proverbs 10:20), "honey is under his tongue" (Song of Songs 4:11), and "his mouth drips with Oriental spice" (Song of Songs 5:5).

For the first time in the text there is mention of Shlomo's father, Moshe, who also was a "wonderful rabbi and exalted scholar." Like the previous maskimim, Benjamin reminds his readers of the ten-year prohibition



on the copyright, and reminds them of the threat of excommunication. In characteristic "modesty" Benjamin notes that "he is just a branch of the great and praiseworthy tree," and that he is but "dust and ashes" (Gen. 18:17).

Each of the haskamot presented here exhibit some of the standard characteristics mentioned earlier. They were all written by recognized authorities so as to add lustre to the book. Asked to write their opinions of the book these authors display appropriate happiness at the privilege of doing so. The haskamot are addressed to the general reading public rather than just to the author, Shlomo Lipschuetz. In their presentations, the maskimim tell little about what the book is about, but vouch for its halachic trustworthiness, and praise Lipschuetz for his able scholarship. Finally, though not always directly, each of the haskamot urges the purchase of the book. Very significant is the copyright restriction which appears in each of the haskamot. Each of the rabbis threaten excommunication for infringing upon the restriction. In the insulated ghetto life of the early eighteenth century, the rule and the word of the rabbis is still powerful; or, at least, is formally presented as such.

That Shlomo could command the support of three such illustrious colleagues indicates his significance. It is that significance which suggests a further study of the book he authored.



## Notes to Chapter Two

1. Mark Hurvitz, The Rabbinic Perception of Printing as Depicted in Haskamot and Responsa (Rabbinic Thesis - Cincinnati, 1978), p. 17-18.
2. David Kaufmann, "The First Approbation of Hebrew Books," Jewish Quarterly Review, 10 (1898), p. 175.
3. Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, "Haskamah," Encyclopedia Judaica, 7 (1973), 1452.
4. Hurvitz, The Rabbinic Perception of Printing, p. 17-18.
5. Ibid., p. 18.
6. Zvi Avneri, "Offenbach," Encyclopedia Judaica, 7 (1973), p. 1335.
7. Ephraim Kupfer, "Reischer, Jacob ben Joseph," Encyclopedia Judaica, 14 (1973), p. 61.
8. Ibid., p. 61.
9. Meir Lamed, "Eskeles," Encyclopedia Judaica 6 (1973), p. 893.
10. Beth-Zion Abrahams, ed., The Life of Gluckel of Hameln 1646-1724, p. 176-177.
11. Lamed, "Eskeles," p. 894.
12. Heinrich Flesch, "Oppenheim, David ben Abraham," Encyclopedia Judaica, 12 (1973), p. 1419.
13. Gotthard Deutsch, "Aaron ben Benjamin Wolf," Jewish Encyclopedia, 16 (1904), p. 521.

### III. THE LIFE OF SHLOMO LIPSCHUETZ

"It was a period in which there was enacted the determined struggle of the synagogal singers, hazzanim, to introduce European means of musical expression into the ancient traditional Jewish-Oriental modes and songs. It was a hard and long fight between the cantors, intoxicated with their newly acquired introduction to the art of music, and the conservative minded rabbis of that time."<sup>1</sup>

In this brief statement of Idelsohn's, we have a glimpse of the baroque synagogal world into which Shlomo Lipschuetz emerged. Lipschuetz was one of many singers and cantors who, despite great difficulties, tried to acquire some musical knowledge; and, in the face of still greater obstacles from the oppressive world in which they lived, struggled to utilize their achievements for the beautification of their service. No lengthy account of these pioneers has ever been written. The scraps of information concerning them that we find in print must be extracted from the responsa or ethical works of strong and not always high-minded rabbis, wherein singers were often excoriated as blasphemers and outcasts. With Shlomo Lipschuetz we at least have a hazzan's own document which gives us an invaluable self-portrait of the hazzan in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Although the manual is extremely descriptive concerning the role of the cantor, Shlomo gives us only bits and pieces of biographical material concerning his own life. From these bits and pieces I will attempt to reconstruct a brief biographical sketch.

Even the distinguished scholar and bibliographer, Bernard Friedberg (1876-1951), who wrote a brief article on Shlomo Lipschuetz for the Jewish Encyclopedia (1904), only speculates about the dates of Shlomo's birth and death. He gives the wrong date of publication for Teudat Shlomo (1708), and provides only a meagre sketch of Shlomo's life. Idelsohn, Werner, and Adler also deal with Shlomo Lipschuetz, but mostly in terms of his role in the liturgical history of the baroque synagogue. The few references in Teudat Shlomo provide the following information:

From the introductory page we know that Shlomo was serving the holy community of Metz at the time of the publication of Tuedat Shlomo (1718). He was the son of the "wonderful, famous, fruit of Israel Moshe Hazzan of the holy community of Feurth." The introduction goes on to say that he was the grandson of the "great and righteous singer, Zalman Hazzan, of the holy community of Frankfort-on-the Main." Shlomo was the son-in-law of Shmuel Feibush who wrote two texts, "Leket Shmuel and Drush Shmuel." Evidently Shmuel was buried in Jerusalem.

The genealogy, "He died on the mountain upon which he had gone up to the Mount of Olives, and there he is buried"<sup>3</sup> concludes by noting that Shmuel Feibush was the grandson of the S'ma. We know that often a person is known for his text, and evidently this author was important enough to have been mentioned in the genealogy of Shlomo. However, I was unable to find any reference to this scholar in my research. He must have been an influential scholar though, for Shlomo notes that he was an "uprooter of mountains and a destroyer of stones."<sup>4</sup>

Characteristically, Shlomo has great reverence for his father, Moshe, who was his teacher as well. He notes that he has received his "great love" from his father and that he "wishes to be like his father."<sup>5</sup> He calls Moshe, av le-hazzanim, the "father of all cantors,"<sup>6</sup> and notes that he writes "words of truth."<sup>7</sup> He mentions that by the time he served the Prague community he already "yearned for his father and for the city of his birthplace, Feurth."<sup>8</sup> Shlomo was fortunate in having a father who was a hazzan with whom he could study, for usually the singers had to serve hazzanim from their childhood, travelling and suffering with them from place to place, without any possibility of having any general education.

Shlomo mentions his wife [although not by name] for the first time in reference to their yearning for Feurth. Much later in the text he presents a touching portrait of

her. Quoting from Proverbs 31:10, "A woman of valor who could find," Shlomo states, "I have found her. She is a blessing for me and for others. I have made a discovery! Knowledgeable and fearful of the Lord is she. Give her praise. She is a precious person. She is skillful, and her heart and mouth are equal in goodness. It is good that she can economize like the meal offering of the priest, for she is the daughter of a priest. The wisdom of women is in her open house, the space is filled with spirit, joy, and song. Prayer is in her heart. She speaks words of wisdom and righteousness, and expounds like the daughter of Zelophehad, the son of Hephher. She is like a well of running water and has the insight of Leket Shmuel and Drush Shmuel [the two texts written by her distinguished father, Shmuel Feibush]." <sup>9</sup>

Shlomo served both the Pinchas and Zigeuner synagogues of Prague between 1709 and 1711, then moving to Frankfort-on-the-Main, and eventually to Metz where he died. Prior to service in Prague, Shlomo mentions only briefly his early days in Wallerstein and Nikolsburg. These were years of study and training for Shlomo. It is not clear from the text to which city Shlomo first went after leaving his birthplace of Feurth. But what he says about those "yeshiva days" is most interesting. Seemingly, the days in Wallerstein were quite difficult. In Wallerstein, Shlomo was "tripped up by the words of

Torah" (Gittin 43a), for "he learned in the midst of anger and this led to error."<sup>10</sup> He cautions his reader to "remember that the impatient cannot teach" (Avot 2:5). The impatient teacher is an angry teacher, whose studies are full of error, as a result of the hostile environment in which they were forced to study. He further notes that he was "tested" there. Wallerstein was a "small city with small minded people." There he was "closed up" (פִּלְסוֹ), perhaps a play on the word (פִּלְסוֹ), referring to sefer Torah, tfillin, and mzuzot, three texts which require a sofer. Being a sofer was another profession, like shechitah, which Shlomo, and other cantors, were forced into in order to earn a living. "My beginning was bitter and my end was sweet. I waited patiently and the Lord heard my cry (Ps. 40:2). I was accepted to the holy community of Pfersee where they heard my voice. I 'cast off the yoke' (Gen. 27:40) of shechitah which was around my neck and I was no longer a teacher of children [still another profession of which Shlomo is not enamored]. Rather, I became a 'laborer,' the labor of serving the Lord. My voice became fluent and strong, which all would hear. All the people were amazed and would hear my pleasant song."<sup>11</sup> Shlomo makes no further mention of this city Pfersee (פֶּרְסֵי), which leads us to believe that it represented merely a "stopover" on his way toward Prague.

Shlomo was not exactly fond of his profession as a shochet,



the skills and training for which he learned either in Wallerstein or Nikolsburg. Being able to function as a cantor was an obvious exhilarating experience for him and he was none too modest about his skill and talent.

Shlomo strongly identifies with the plight of itinerant cantors, who, like him, are forced to be teachers of children and ritual slaughterers in order to make a living. "The cantors in the villages and towns read by day and do not have enough to eat at night. Their salary is very limited. Some of them are forced to knock on doors [beg], and others oversee the laws of shechitah. They even sleep in the fields and rest in the villages for their parnasa. They do not have enough time to prepare the sedra, because they simply do not have the time. Because their lives are so dispersed they must become scribes and teachers of children. The hazzan oversees how the children read, but he must struggle for a living."<sup>12</sup>

Nikolsburg was the location of David Oppenheim's yeshiva at which Shlomo studied. His great reverence for Oppenheim probably influenced his more positive feelings of this city. So great is his reverence for David Oppenheim that he even goes to some length to "prove" that the biblical King David did not really sin with Bat Sheva! His logic is as follows: "Since David is written in Chronicles 3'13 [instead of 313 ], it is apparent that the 'yod' ( ' ), which is one of the letters of God's name, means that he

[King David] did not sin with Bat Sheva! He merely erred."<sup>13</sup>

Shlomo has extraordinary love and awe for his teacher. He devotes an entire chapter (p. 25-29) to examples of Oppenheim's talmudic "wizardry." This section in the text, and the subsequent chapter which presents some of Shlomo's own talmudic skills, have nothing at all to do with the cantorate, but illustrate the kind of environment in which Shlomo, and other cantors of his period, were steeped.

David Oppenheim had been ordained by Rabbi Aaron of Worms, [one of the maskimim who wrote a haskama to Shlomo's text], and after twelve years of successful activity in Nikolsburg, became rabbi of Prague. Shlomo relates his experience with Oppenheim only regarding his early days at Nikolsburg, although they could have been in Prague at approximately the same time. Regarded as a man who was familiar with all branches of rabbinical and halachic literature, Oppenheim also had a reputation as a mathematician; this might explain his desire to play with numbers, as we shall soon see.

Shlomo makes a beautiful transition from his treatment of the cantor and liturgy to the chapter on David Oppenheim: "At the end of Masechet Brachot, Rabbi Levi said, 'Anyone who leaves a bet kneset and enters a bet midrash attains merit and receives the presence of the shechinah, for it



is said: They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appears before God' (Ps. 84:8). Therefore, I will go from matters in the bet kneset to matters in the bet midrash...and there is no bet midrash without 'discovery' (ע137)." <sup>14</sup> Here, Shlomo may be playing with the words ע137 and ע130.

He presents David Oppenheim with characteristic fanfare and praise: "I have heard these words of excellence and perfection from the mouth of my master, the great and famous gaon, the Head of the Exile, Fruit of the Generation, Victory of Israel, his name be honored, David Oppenheim. He is the 'strong man' (יָמִין יָמִין) of the old city, the holy city of Prague, [where he is the] av bet din, the head of the yeshiva, and Rabbi of the State - Landrabbiner, and a Prince of Israel [The community of Jerusalem honored Oppenheim with the title "Prince of Israel," when he became responsible for the collection and transference of sums collected throughout Europe for the benefit of Jews in Jerusalem]. May he be worthy to lead as a prince on high in the eyes of all Israel. I heard from his lips of holiness these things. In my youth, I learned at his 'yeshiva on high' in the holy community of Nikolsburg. These [his teachings] are the seal of my riches to this day." <sup>15</sup>

Evidently Oppenheim, and perhaps other rabbis of Bohemia, was fond of number games. Shlomo presents numerous examples of Oppenheim's skill, including the following:

"The gaon has found in Sefer Adam that for every mitzvah voided, or for every transgression that man does, he needs to suffer 1 1/2 hours in hell. Why would he say precisely 1 1/2 hours? The reason is as follows: Moses was on the mountain 40 days and 40 nights and learned 613 mitzvot and 27 letters of the alphabet. So, before him were 640 items. Evidently he learned for 40 days and 40 nights [these] 640 items.  $40 \times 24$  hours [per day] is indeed 960. He was on the mountain for 960 hours and learned 640 things. Evidently, he lingered [stayed] on each item 1 1/2 hours, because 1/2 of 640 is 320.  $640 + 320 = 960$ ! The person who nullifies, or transgresses even one thing [a mitzvah or even a single letter] needs to suffer 1 1/2 hours, as opposed to Moses who lingered [stayed] 1 1/2 hours on each item. Learn this well. The words of my mouth are wisdom." <sup>16</sup>

Oppenheim further clarifies an argument found in Masechet Brachot:

"Rabbi Yohanan said, 'What is the meaning of [the name] Ruth?' Ruth was privileged to be the ancestress of David who saturated the Holy One, blessed be He, with songs and hymns. How do we know that the name of a person has an effect upon his [her] life? The essence is this: It says in Shiftay Kohen on the Torah that Ruth was the reincarnation of Tamar, for Ruth ( ר ו ת ) has the same letters as Tamar, ( ת מ ר ). How is this so? The word ר"מ in gematria [2 x 40] is equivalent to ו [80]. And ו is like a ל in reverse gematria. [Both letters are six away from the extremes of the alphabet. ו is six away from א, and ל is six away from כ] This caused difficulty for our blessed sages. Why is her name called Ruth? If you say it is correct that Ruth is the reincarnation of Tamar [then] her name should be רמ. Rather,

because David issued forth from her and saturated (  $\text{שׁוֹבֵר}$  ) the Holy One, blessed be He, with songs and hymns, therefore her name is 'Ruth' (  $\text{רוּת}$  ), and it is easy to understand. The words in the mouths of the righteous are precious."<sup>17</sup>

Oppenheim's "equation" is as follows:

$N = \text{שׁ}$  , and  $\text{שׁ} = I$  . Therefore,  $I = N$  .  $N = \text{שׁ}$  .

After having studied with David Oppenheim at Nikolsburg, Shlomo travelled to Pfersee where he stayed only briefly on his way to Prague. While in Nikolsburg people suggested to Shlomo that he was "ready for the big time" (  $\text{עַל צִדְדֵי מַלְכוּת אֱלֹהִים}$  ). People would say to him, "What are you sleeping for? (Jonah 1:6), why are you sitting here?"<sup>18</sup>

Shlomo then went with his wife and retinue to the holy community of Prague. He "ran like a deer" and was "received with great honor at the Pinhas and Zigeuner synagogues."<sup>19</sup> There is evidence that he viewed his tenure at Prague as a period of great "redemption" from his previous pressures. Quoting Hagigah 5b, Shlomo rejoices that "from a desolate well, from a deep pit, he ascended to a high roof. My feet were on a pedestal and my lips gave a song of praise to our God, and many came to pray and put their trust in God. 'Happy is the man and happy is the God in whom he trusts' (Ps. 40:5)."<sup>20</sup> "In Prague are famous hazzanim. I found one among them who is a great artist and famous throughout Europe. His name is Yokele Hazzan. The hazzanim use singers and also flutes and organs and violins and cymbals and various

instruments of percussion every Friday to receive the Sabbath. With the help of those instruments, they sing not only Lecha Dodi but after they finish that poem, they continue to sing several sweet tunes for about an hour's time."<sup>21</sup> We will again encounter the famous Yokele when Shlomo later arrives in Metz.

Shlomo is appointed cantor in the afterglow of another cantor, Rabbi Yonah. Interestingly, Shlomo refers to a discussion in the Talmud, Yoma 38b. There the text interprets Eccles. 1:5: "The sun also rises and the sun goes down," to mean that as soon as the sun of righteous man descends, another sun of a righteous one begins its ascent. Shlomo views himself as that latter righteous inheritor.

Shlomo may have had a history of unpleasant associations with his previous congregations. He notes that "'many adventures have happened to me' (Kiddushin 33a) and I did not leave. In spite of my enemies and those who hate me the Lord has helped and comforted me." Unfortunately, these "adventures" are not spelled out for us. "How many times my congregations with the governing board quarreled with me.... over a matter I did not start!"<sup>22</sup> In spite of Shlomo's protestations, his seeming self-righteousness and inflated view of self may have had something to do with the difficulties he encountered with his "holy flocks which he shepherded."<sup>23</sup>

In addition to relating the difficulties with members of his synagogues, Shlomo laments the poor relations that

exist among cantors. It is here in Prague that Shlomo notes that the "'elders of the generations' (Sandhedrin 20a) would say, 'In previous generations all the cantors were together in 'love and brotherhood, peace and friendship' (Berachot 12), and the proof of this [that they used to live harmoniously], is that they would inquire of one another about the holidays a few days before the holidays...the laws of Pesach before Pesach, Shavuot before Shavuot, Succot before Succot, and especially the Days of Awe....all the customs, the tunes, the preparation. And there were among them cantors who were expert musicians who would produce new tunes for all the holidays. 'They are new each morning' (Lam. 3:23). [Shlomo here plays with the word for musical experts, ( *פ'לס'קא* ), and the word for mornings, ( *פ'קא* )]. Their colleagues would learn from each other with 'honor and without embarrassment' (Sotah 7a). Now, [regrettably], it is not so. When they have the opportunity to 'kill' their companion, they do so immediately. Everyone builds a stage ( *זנא* ) for himself and wraps himself in a tallit that is not his own. No one wants to learn from his colleague ...and they are ignorant of the rules of music."<sup>24</sup> Shlomo purposely uses the word *זנא* which denotes an idolatrous shrine to indicate strongly his disapproval and sadness that cantors do not have better relations among themselves and no longer learn from one another. To Shlomo, this is no less sin than idolatry. Moreover, as we shall see in the next chapter, Shlomo viewed the cantorate as sacerdotal in nature. His choice of words fits with his theology there.



A "false cantor" is a "false priest" offering at a "false shrine."

Shlomo is not very modest about his own ability; nor are other cantors any more reticent. He goes on to claim that "one colleague will say, 'Who is he and where is he?' (Esther 7:5) I should learn from him! I am the great singer. Better that he [the other hazzan] come and learn from me! Each one thinks of himself as Naboth and Hygras ben Levi."<sup>25</sup> [According to the Midrash, Peskita Rabbati 25: 127a, Naboth used to make regular pilgrimages to Jerusalem, since he was a great singer, many followed him. Hygras ben Levi is mentioned a number of times in the Talmud as the Levite who was in charge of singing (e.g., Shekalim 5:1)]. Although Shlomo really does consider himself a source of knowledge, he cannot accept the possibility that other cantors might see themselves the same way!

In Prague, Shlomo served both the Pinchas and Zigeuner synagogues. Although not quite as prestigious as the Altneuschul, these synagogues were surely large and famous. Idelsohn notes that another of Prague's synagogues, the Meisel synagogue built in 1592, had an organ and a special orchestra organized to play and to accompany different songs including Lecha Dodi on Friday evening. The Altneuschul also included a new organ, built by a Jewish organ builder, Rabbi Meir Mahler, and installed in 1716. There was considerable instrumental music in the synagogues around the

beginning of the eighteenth century, especially in the communities of Nikolsburg, Offenbach, and Feurth,<sup>26</sup> all cities in which shlomo touched ground.

Tragically, two centuries later, both the Pinchas and the neighboring Klaus Synagogue, would become part of the complex of buildings the Nazis intended to utilize for a "Central Museum of the Defunct Jewish Race." Today the Pinchas Synagogue bears inscriptions of the names of 77,297 Jewish victims of the Nazi extermination campaigns in Bohemia and Moravia.<sup>27</sup>

From Prague, Lipschuetz went to the community of Frankfort-on-the-Main. There is no mention of the synagogue which he served, nor any elucidation of the liturgical life there. We do know, however, that on January 14, 1711 [just about the time that Shlomo would have arrived there], fire destroyed the entire Jewish quarter. "The fire broke out in the house of Rabbi ben Isaac Katz and destroyed the synagogue [Neuschule], together with nearly the whole Judengasse. The rabbi was accused of having caused the fire by kabbalistic means, and was forced to leave the city."<sup>28</sup> One of the more detailed accounts of the fire occurs in a text by Rabbi David Philipson who visited this community in 1894:

"The Gasse (ghetto) is an example of the worst evils of the tenement system. On January 4, 1711 fire broke out in the house of the chief rabbi, which stood in the middle of the street. The cause of the fire was never discovered. It wiped out the Jewish quarter



completely, and was called the great Jewish conflagration, in contradistinction to the great Christian conflagration eight years earlier. The Christian population, as soon as the fact of the raging of the fire became known, hurried to the Gasse to give assistance. But the Jews, in an agony of terror, and remembering former days, had locked the gates for fear of plunder, and kept them closed for an hour. When, at last, they opened them the flames had gained great headway. The fire spread throughout the quarter, and with the exception of three houses standing at the extreme end of the street, everything was destroyed. The Jews, now homeless, had to look about for shelter. Some were harbored in Christian houses. After the "street" was rebuilt, they lingered in these houses with the hope that they might be permitted to remain outside the Gasse, and have freedom of residence but they were all ordered back in 1716. By the year 1717 all the houses were rebuilt."<sup>29</sup>

Communal life in Frankfort had long been dominated by a few ancient "patrician" families, like the Rothschilds, Schwartzschilds and Schiffs, who were often known by signs hanging outside their houses. The impoverished majority regularly challenged the traditional privileges of the wealthy oligarchy, and the city council repeatedly acted as arbitrator between the rival parties. Controversies on religious and personal matters, such as the Eybeshuetz-Emden dispute further weakened unity in the community.<sup>30</sup>

There may also have been problems with Shlomo's adjusting to the musical and liturgical minhagim of the Frankfort-on-the-Main community. The liturgical music and hazzanut of the Frankfort community represented the archetype of the Western Ashkenazic tradition. It can be traced to the

fifteenth century codifier Jacob Moellin (Maharil), and "is marked by an adherence to tradition which made any deviation from the customary melodies (some of which were credited with divine origin, mi Sinai) a religious offense."<sup>31</sup> Thus, the principal qualification of cantors was a precise acquaintance with the details of musical custom. Little scope was given the cantor's capacity for musical invention or improvization. As early as 1560, Rabbi Naphtali Herz Treves, in his commentary to the prayerbook, Mal'ah Ha'arets De'ah, bitterly complains against the "new movement [introducing gentile tunes for the synagogue and the introduction of art music which Shlomo happens to advocate] and the attitude that the hazzanim took toward their holy function: They have ceased to be writers of Torah, tefillin, megillahs; nor do they care for the correct grammatical reading for the meaning of the prayers...only for their songs, without regard for the real sense of the words. They neglect the traditional tunes of their ancestors!"<sup>32</sup>

We know that Shlomo felt burdened by his profession as a shochet, and found being a scribe and a teacher of children non-lucrative and unfulfilling. It is no wonder, then, that Shlomo may have been stifled in such a conservative and restrictive community as Frankfort. Whether it was the fire, the community squabbings, or the hostile liturgical atmosphere of Frankfort, we find that Shlomo left Frankfort after a few years and settled in the city of Metz by 1715.

The further east to west migration of Shlomo during his lifetime is significant. In addition to west European cantors moving further westward, there was, as we have seen, a continuous westerly influx of Polish and Ukranian cantors after the Chmielnitzki persecutions (1648-1660). In the course of a very short time, these Polish emigres altered the character of many a central European congregation; or, in some instances, separate Polish congregations were established in the west. "Toward the end of the seventeenth century, Rabbi Zelig Margolis of Kalisch complains bitterly against these rabbis, religious teachers, and hazzanim, who, for the sake of material returns, left their native places and migrated to the rich German communities."<sup>33</sup>

Thus, around the same time we find many rabbis and cantors of Polish origin in Germany, Holland, and even Italy. We have already had occasion to mention one such famous hazzan, Yokele of Rzeszow, Poland, who created a furor through his tremendous voice and wonderful singing. He had served in Prague and in Amsterdam. And in 1715 we find him in Metz where, while he was officiating on the feast of Shavuot, "a terrible calamity occurred at the synagogue, fatal to many worshippers."<sup>34</sup> His presence there linked him to Shlomo, whom catastrophic fires seem to follow! Shlomo either attended that service personally, or reported someone else's eye-witness vision of the terrible incident. At the end of this chapter I have reproduced, as an addendum, the account as recorded by Gluckel of Hameln in her

Memoirs. She was also at that fateful service in the year 5475 [1715].

As we would expect, Shlomo's recollection is laced with a number of biblical quotations. He begins with Esther 4:14, "'Relief and deliverance will be their hand in a short while.' Then, on the second day of Shavuot, a hazzan who possessed a great voice was praying, and about him it is said, 'he that increases knowledge increases sorrow' (Eccles. 1:18)...and with his great voice arrived at [the prayer] Yotser M'orot....and all around him there was the sound of something breaking. Out came this frightful shriek from the congregation. When he arrived at [the] Ahava Rabba [prayer] he changed [the word] 'ohev' [love] to 'oyev' [enemy]. [Yokele must have believed that a pogrom was taking place]...Out came a divine voice...a voice weeping...and the songs were songs of pain, like the pain of a divine judgment....and the women were crushed together, one from above and five from below [a reference to the number killed tallying perfectly with Gluckel's account....'For the stone shall cry out from the wall' (Hab. 2:11)....a voice of great bitterness...and a vision of flowing blood...the blood of pious women. 'And the beam out of the timber shall answer it' (Hab. 2:11)....Of the people who came six were killed. They were martyrs in a holy place...The second day of the giving of the Torah had sound and lightning. The families were weeping and several others were wailing about those

killed, those who were suffocated and crushed together.  
 'The Lord makes the earth empty and makes it waste' (Is. 24:1)....Pious, joyous, tender women...each following the other upon her crying daughter. The soul of all who saw this sight would pour out. It made a great impression not to be forgotten until would come that great and awesome day 'when the heart of the children will turn to their fathers' (Mal. 3:24). Therefore, my brother and my friend, do not regard this lightly in your eyes. Let these words enter [ring] your ears....And thus the teacher teaches his children. For this [remembering this incident] your days and years will be prolonged. Amen. Sela."<sup>35</sup>

This incident had a profound effect on Shlomo. His feelings must have paralleled Gluckel's when she wrote, "I would that everyone, man, woman, boy, and girl might take this to heart and pray to God that such a punishment should not again be visited upon any Jewish child. May He redeem us from the long exile. Amen! and Amen!"<sup>36</sup>

Shlomo loved the city of Metz. With a "loving tongue" he calls it a "thriving city." Not only was Metz to be his latest city in which to serve, it was to be his last. When Shlomo writes that he "has taken his tent and planted it outside the encampment"<sup>37</sup> [at Metz], it was indeed prophetic. Shlomo spent the rest of his life there until his death in 1758.



## Notes to Chapter Three

1. Abraham Zevi Idelsohn, "Songs and Singers in the Eighteenth Century, HUC Jubilee Volume 1875-1925 (1968), p. 397.
2. Shlomo Lipschuetz, Teudat Shlomo, title page. From here on the text will be noted by the initials T.S.
3. Ibid., 45a.
4. Ibid., 45a. Zinberg notes that like the Crusades in their age, so the persecutions of 1648 called forth an entire literature consisting chiefly of memoirs and elegies. The literary value of these sad memorials of the bloody year of terror is quite varied. Among the memoirs of that time are to be found, for example, such works as the Tit Ha-Yaven (Venice, 1655) of Samuel Feivish Feitel who lists in a dry, protocol-like tone two hundred and sixty-two communities which Chmielnitzki's henchmen destroyed and notes, in addition, the number of victims in each community.
5. Ibid., introduction, iii.
6. Ibid., introduction, iii.
7. Ibid., introduction, iii.
8. Ibid., 10a.
9. Ibid., 42a.
10. Ibid., 20a.
11. Ibid., 9b.
12. Ibid., 10a.
13. Ibid., 10b. Although there were many demands on David Oppenheim's haskamot, he did not furnish one for Shlomo's text, which just might indicate that the respect for each other's scholarship was not totally mutual.
14. Ibid., 25a.
15. Ibid., 25a.
16. Ibid., 25b.

17. Ibid., 31a.
18. Ibid., 10a.
19. Ibid., 10a.
20. Ibid., 10a.
21. Idelsohn, "Songs and Singers," p. 402.
22. T.S., 14a.
23. Ibid., 14a.
24. Ibid., 21b.
25. Ibid., 21b.
26. Idelsohn, "Songs and Singers," p. 402.
27. Erich Kulka, "Prague," Encyclopedia Judaica, 13 (1973), p. 977.
28. A. Friemann, "Frankfort-on-the-Main," Jewish Encyclopedia, 5 (1904), p. 484.
29. David Philipson, Old European Jewries, p. 69.
30. Mordecai Breuer, "Frankfort-on-the-Main - Music," Encyclopedia Judaica, 7 (1973), p. 484. Following the Shabbatai Zevi movement (1626-1676), wandering prophets and mystics continued to preach belief in their Messiah, even though Zevi had renounced Judaism. Many rabbis, even of the utmost erudition and piety, were suspected of cherishing a secret allegiance to him. Nearly a century later, learned circles were convulsed over a long period of years by a dispute between Rabbis Jacob Emden (d. 1776) and Jonathon Eybeschütz who was accused by Emden of having introduced allusions to Sabbatai Zevi in certain mystical amulets which he had written.
31. Ibid., p 484.
32. Idelsohn, "Songs and Singers," p. 401.
33. Ibid., p. 407.
34. D. Kaufmann, Memoirs of Gluckel of Hamelin, p. 325.
35. T.S., 15b.
36. D. Kaufmann, Memoirs, p. 182.
37. T.S., 8a.



Addendum: MEMOIRS OF GLUCKEL OF HAMELN (p. 326-327)

I cannot refrain from mentioning what happened on the Sabbath of the Feast of Weeks in the year 5475 (1715), when we were in synagogue. The reader and cantor, Rabbi Jokel of Rzeszow in Poland, had begun to intone the morning prayer 'O Lord, creator of lights,' in his sweet voice. Before he had reached the blessing, many people heard the sound as of something breaking. The women in the upper gallery thought the arch of the roof would fall in on them. The rumbling sound grew louder, just as though stones were falling. The alarm was very great; the women in the upper gallery rushed to get out, each wanting to be the first to save her life. One shouted this, another that. Some thought that the noise came from the men's part, and grew frightened, thinking that Gentiles were attacking the synagogue. Each rushed to save herself and her husband and with such force that the stairs were crammed with people who had fallen, and others, rushing down, began to stamp one another to death with the shoes they wore. Within half an hour six women were killed and thirty injured, some subsequently dying while others had to be attended by the barber-surgeons.

If each had gone down quietly, one by one, nothing would have happened. An old blind woman who was also up in the gallery had remained seated because she could not run. Nothing happened to her and she returned home safely.

The terror of what happened cannot be described. The women who were saved came out of the crush with heads uncovered, and clothes torn from their bodies. Many women who had remained seated told me that they, too, had wished to rush out but it was impossible to get out. So they returned to their seats saying, 'If we must die, we would sooner remain and die in the synagogue than be squeezed to death on the stairs.'

More than fifty women lay on the stairs, wedged together as though stuck with pitch; living and dead lying under one another.

The men came running up together, each to save his own; but only with great labour, and slowly, were the women taken off one another. The men rendered great help; there were many citizens, Gentiles came in to the Judengasse with ladders and hooks to bring the women down from the top gallery, for no one knew what was happening there. The men had heard the noise of the rumbling at the same time as the women and had also thought that the roof-arch was falling in on them; that was why they had called to the women to hasten down, and why they pushed so, falling on one another.

You can imagine the lament that went up when the six dead women were dragged out from under the living. An hour before they had been hale and well. May the Lord be merciful and turn His wrath from us and all Israel.

The women in the lower gallery lay also in the crush. I, Mother, sat in my seat in the lower gallery, praying when I heard the sound of running and asked what it meant. My neighbour thought that a woman near her time had been taken ill. I grew alarmed, for my daughter Esther, who sat eight seats from me, was near her time. I went to her in the rush, as she was trying to push her way out, and said to her, 'Where are you going?' She answered, 'The roof is falling in!' I held her before me and sought with my arms to push a way and get her out, but there were five or six steps to descend. When my daughter reached the bottom step I fell and knew nothing more. I could neither move nor call for help. The men who went to rescue the women of the top gallery had to pass the place where I lay. A second later, I would have been trampled to death, but the men saw me and lifted me up so that I was able to get out into the street. There I began to scream, demanding where was my daughter Esther? I was told that she was in her house. I sent someone to see if she was there, but the answer came that she was not. I rushed about like one who had taken leave of her senses. My daughter Miriam came running to me, relieved and happy to see me. I asked her, 'Where is my daughter Esther?' 'In the house of her brother-in-law Reuben,' she answered, 'not far from the synagogue.'

I ran quickly to the house of Reuben Krumbach and there found Esther sitting without frock or head-covering. Men and women stood about her, to revive her from her swoon. I thank God that He helped her and that no harm came to her child. May He turn His wrath from us and all Israel and protect us from such evil misfortune.

Later, people went up to the top gallery to see whether any part of the arch or the building had fallen in. Nothing was out of order and we do not know whence the evil fortune came. We can only put it down to our sins! Woe to us that such should have come to pass in our day, and that we should hear and be burdened with such heaviness of heart. The verse 'I will bring fear into your hearts' was confirmed. 'Therefore is our heart faint, for these things our eyes are dim,' because of this desecration of the Sabbath and holy-

days and the disturbance of prayer. As the Prophet says, 'Who hath required this at your hand, to trample My courts?' This holyday, when our Holy Law was given to us, and God chose us from among all peoples and tongues, if we had merited it, we would have rejoiced in the Giving of the Torah and the Holy Commandments. But now, 'we are a reproach to our neighbours, a mockery to those around us,' just as if the Temple was destroyed in our own days.

Most of the poor women killed were young and one was pregnant. They went to their everlasting rest leaving grief, heartache and sighing our portion. The day after the festival the members of the Chevra Kadisha went to the House of Life early in the morning. The six women were buried in a row, close to one another. Now it rests with each of us to examine his sins according to his deeds. God is righteous and will show mercy and forgive us sinners. He will not blot us out; He will not waken His wrath, but will say to the Angel of Destruction, 'Draw back your hand!' Grant our request, O owner of mercy. Guard our going out and our coming in now and evermore. Let there be no more breach or lamenting in our street or among our brethren in Israel. Amen.

Much has already been said about this misfortune, but who can write or believe everything? Yet I, Mother, will write what Esther, wife of Jacob our present teacher told me. This woman and her child, a boy of five, sat on the highest step of the women's gallery, when all this began. She saw six very tall women with short head-veils; they pushed her down the steps. She shouted, 'Do you want to kill me and my child?' They set the child in a corner and went on their way. It was at this very moment that the noise and confusion began and the women came rushing down from the top gallery. But she and her child were saved.

My son-in-law, the parnass, called to the women who remained and asked why they did not come down? The poor things shouted back that they were afraid that the stairs would break under them. The steps were quite sound; their fear made them imagine this. Esther and her child were rescued after much trouble. She was more dead than alive, and as a result miscarried and had so many injuries that she was attended by the barber-surgeon more than three months.

I, Mother, have just spoken with this woman. She swore to me that it happened just as she related. Her husband and parents confirmed all that she said. Many distinguished people and scholars called on her and she told them this on oath. She, her husband and parents are honest folk of whom no one has heard falsehood or any evil.

Further, one night shortly before all this happened, the wife of the rich Jacob Krumbach, whose house is close by the synagogue, heard a noise in the synagogue as though thieves had broken in, and were taking everything out, and the candelabra were falling down. She woke her husband and said, 'Don't you hear a noise in the synagogue? There must be thieves inside taking everything away!' They sent for the beadle, who unlocked the synagogue, but there was 'no voice and no answer.' Not a single object was moved from its place. No one knows whence this misfortune came.

The tumult was great. The women thought that the men's section was falling, while the men, in turn, thought that it was the women's gallery. That was why they shouted to them to get out. Most of them heard the noise as of a thunder-clap, as though a gun was fired. Others, on the other hand, amongst whom I was, heard nothing. The cantor, Reb Jokel, went home in the middle of the prayer, and another cantor took his place, but sang little or nothing at all.

A number of devout women together hired ten Talmud scholars to go to synagogue every morning at 9 to recite psalms and study Talmud for the sake of the orphans who had to say Kaddish. May the souls of those killed be received with grace and may their lives, so sadly lost, be an atonement for all their sins, and their souls be bound in life and the Garden of Eden. May they forgive those who, by trampling on them, were partly guilty of their deaths.

I would not have written of this in my book, only it was an occurrence that had never happened before, and, I hope, never will again. I would that everyone, man, woman, youth and girl, might take this to heart and pray to God that such a punishment should not again be visited on any Jewish child. May He redeem us from this long exile. Amen! and Amen!



#### IV. SHLOMO'S GUIDE TO THE CANTOR

From the very outset of Teudat Shlomo, Shlomo informs us of the sacred role and responsibility of the hazzan: "Because we no longer have the Temple and do not offer sacrifices, and have no High Priest, we [now] have the outpourings of our prayers in our 'small temple' [the synagogue], and prayer has taken the place of sacrifices. Behold, we are holy to the extent of the power of the High Priest, because we offer prayer in the synagogue, as the High Priest offered in the Temple."<sup>1</sup> Shlomo then likens the plight of the hazzan to the daughters of Zelophehad and asks plaintively, "Why are we diminished and may not offer the sacrifices?"<sup>2</sup> Just as the daughters of Zelophehad had to "fight" for what they believed to be their just inheritance, so too did the cantors in Shlomo's age have to fight for their right to offer prayers, often against truly vicious criticism of rabbis.

Werner notes that the antagonism between the rabbi and the appointed hazzan-not the lay precentor-went back to the time when the hazzan introduced and intoned the new piyyutim, which most rabbis considered at best superfluous and at worst abominable. This occurred through the centuries,

from the eighth to the twelfth. Yet it was only during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that rabbinic criticism became truly vicious.<sup>3</sup> One illustration provides a representative picture of just such criticism with which Lipschuetz and others had to contend: "Rabbi Jehuda Leib Zelichower (second half of the seventeenth century), in his Shire Yehuda (Amsterdam, 1697) spoke as laudator temporis peracti [spokesman of the place] and objected to the many 'foreign and strange songs' (שירים נכריים וזרים), which the old masters would not have tolerated, for most of them were borrowed from the theatres and dancing halls. They learn the melodies and ways of the vagabonds and take them to our synagogues. He then lists a great number of "offenses and sins" committed by the hazzanim of his time. 'They love long vocalises for Kedusha, Barechu, and Kaddish on Sabbath and holiday,' so that it became impossible to maintain true devotion; they also indulged in 'idle chatter' (שחירות) during the service. Finally Zelichower objected to the 'helpers' (פירייער) of the hazzan. Either they raced through the texts or they drew out single syllables. 'All this did not exist in the good old days.'<sup>4</sup> It was in response to this kind of opposition that Shlomo came to the defense of the hazzanim.

Shlomo was convinced that no hazzan could do justice to his office without knowledge of the "art of music" (פירייער פאוסיקל), a term used constantly throughout

the text. In addition, he stresses moral and spiritual qualifications, the knowledge of text, and the modes of behavior needed to be the "proper" cantor. It is these aspects which we will now examine.

Probably no single aspect of cantorial presentation is more crucial to Shlomo than kavana, "devotion, focus, and attention to text." His belief in the cantor as a "go-between," a shadchan between Israel and God, seems to be central to his thinking. Although Shlomo uses the more liturgical term sheliach tsibur (שליח ציבור), "a messenger of prayer for the congregation," his real metaphor of the cantor is less modest, approximating more a modern-day "High Priest."

Quoting the Book of Proverbs, he presents the "mashal of the shadchan who goes all day and every day arranging matches and writing marriage contracts from province to province, from city to city, and from family to family, and acting [in the sacred role] of an 'agent of negotiations' (מגיד שדכן 71070)." <sup>5</sup> Just as the sarsur is "blemished" (סרסור שרע - Pes. 31) for not being honest and reverent in his "negotiations," so is the hazzan "blemished" for not being reverent and honest in his prayers. "For the hazzan is the 'agent' (71070) between Israel and their heavenly Father. And if there is in him [the hazzan] one of the things that prevent prayer, and there is 'blemish of descent' (סרסור שרע - Kid. 71b) in his prayer, then his prayer is not heard [by God], and all of his words go out for naught." <sup>6</sup>



The hazzan needs to guard his prayer with 'extraordinary scrutiny' (אֵלֶּיךָ מִשְׁמֶרֶת מְאֹדָה), even more than the ordinary Jew, because he is the 'messenger' (רִשְׁיָה) and the 'advocate' (שֹׁדֵן) on behalf of Israel.<sup>7</sup> Shlomo also adds a pragmatic note which he takes seriously enough to repeat often: "Even more so, the community pays him wages that he perform his mission properly!"<sup>8</sup> If the hazzan does not perform properly, Shlomo likens him to a "thief (גַּנָּב), and 'one who eats forbidden foods,' and 'one who increases evil decrees.'"<sup>9</sup> Shlomo adds, though, that in "our places (בְּמָקוֹמֵינוּ), the cantors are 'worthy of distinction' and 'our months will be filled with laughter and our tongues with singing' (Ps. 126: 2)."<sup>10</sup>

A mystical strain runs through much of Shlomo's text. This is understandable in the light of the influx of eastern European cantors and rabbis, with a Lurianic orientation, into western Europe following the Chmielnitzki persecutions, and the afterglow of Shabbatai Zevi and his movement which created a tremendous stir throughout Europe. Thus: "As the 3<sup>rd</sup> who 'descends in front of the lectern' [leads prayer] and does not understand the essence of prayer and its 'secrets and mysteries' (סֵדֵר וּמִסְתֵּרֵי), and does not believe what comes out of his mouth -- woe to those who depend on him. We have learned that just as an anointed priest who has sinned casts shame upon the people, so does the 'priest from below' [the hazzan]. He 'ridicules those who send him' (מַבְדִּיל בְּשֵׁם הַשֵּׁם),

for he knows neither the essence of prayer, nor the 'high and hidden secrets' (גסויות נעלמות ונסתרים). Woe to those who appoint him to intercede in their behalf."<sup>11</sup> Shlomo here interpolates the word, **עושה**, which means both "to mock" and "to interpret." He continues, "that if man is 'hidden from secrets' (נסתר מנסתרים), how much the more so does he need to be very exact in his prayer, in order that it be accepted, and he fulfills his mission of interpreting with awe, reverence, and quaking. He should carefully examine and scrutinize that which emerges from his mouth in order that his words be sweet and aromatic in his place, because all of the words that leave his lips ascend upwards, and if he is righteous and 'mature' (ישר ונבון), and fearful of God, happy are those who sent him, and appointed him in their behalf."<sup>12</sup> This allusion to the "sweet and aromatic" nature of the prayers is again a tie to the sacrifices offered by the High Priest. The hazzan, living in the eighteenth century, is simply the "Low Priest" (כהן קטן) in Shlomo's estimation. Shlomo reinforces this image when he states that the hazzan "stands in the place of the High Priest when he cleansed the people from sin. And it is taught that at the time the Priest began to direct the words [to heaven] and offer the sacrifices, all of the people were happy and joyous, and the group on the right would become excited and those on the left would be included with those on the right and would bow down. But those on the right did not

dominate. Rather, they were joined each with the other and he [the High Priest] blessed them all as one. Therefore, you may conclude that the High Priest blessed those on high [the sacrifices] and those below [the people]."<sup>13</sup> Shlomo reiterates the two-fold responsibility that the "Low Priest" is responsible in his prayers, both to God and to the community whom he represents.

In addition to being the "Low Priest," the shadchan, and the messenger of prayer, Shlomo assigns still another role to the cantor, that of a spiritual guardian. The 3<sup>rd</sup> needs to protect the congregation with 'added care' (לְעוֹלָם לְעוֹלָם - Shabbat 51a), that is to say, to pray on their behalf with a full heart and desirous soul. And in Masechet Bava Metsia of our blessed Rabbis, page 92a, on the words 'cantors of the place' (לְעוֹלָם לְעוֹלָם), Rashi comments that they [the hazzanim] guarded the city at night, and all of the people of the city depended upon them to guard their person and their possessions. They [the people] certainly require 'added care.' All the more so, regarding the hazzan, on whom all the people of the city depend to guard their souls and to pray on their behalf with his prayers, it is obvious that 'added care' is needed, as with Jacob. 'As long as there is the voice of Jacob, no hands of Esau can harm Israel' (Bereshit Rabba 65:16)."<sup>13</sup>

Another role of the cantor, that Shlomo considers extremely important, is that of a baal k'riah, "he who reads

the Torah." He notes, "'How good and how pleasant' (Ps. 133) are the customs of Jews concerning the Torah in the holy community of Prague, and in some communities in Poland where they have a special reader who reads with great and superb precision...if only this custom would spread out to all of the communities. Even though I have been bestowed [with talents] by God, none of which I deserve, I have read [Torah] under scrutiny in all of the holy communities in which I have prayed...I will still be one of those who are offended by listening to the disgraces [of their careless reading]."<sup>14</sup>

Shlomo further quotes the Tur (O.H. 139:1), which states that "the reader of Torah needs to study the parasha two and even three times by himself. It is said about Rabbi Akiba that once he did not want to 'ascend' [to the Torah], for he had not practiced it [adequately]. It is further stated in the Bayt Yosef, that those who go down and come up [the aliyot] do not read out loud. Rather, the 3<sup>rd</sup> reads out loud and the aliyah reads quietly with the 3<sup>rd</sup> so, therefore, as it is stated in the Rosh, the 3<sup>rd</sup> needs to learn it [the sedra]. There are some cantors who swallow words and slur over letters. They put [improper] spaces in construct words and [they mispronounce] the shva na, and the shva nach, and do now know which words are accented and which are not. The reader is not exempt, [from proper reading], and even more so, the aliyah [with his mispronunciation], it [his reading of the blessings] is yereidah! [descent]"<sup>15</sup>.

Shlomo continues that cantors should tremble before the word of the Lord. "Who among us is as great as Rabbi Akiba who was able to expound on the crowns of the letters? Surely, the entire Torah was familiar to him yet he did not want to 'ascend' [read] for he had not prepared the portion adequately! How much more so, we 'young fledglings' ( *פ'חיל* ), who have not opened our eyes, who are ignorant of knowledge and bereft of insight, it is obvious that we need to prepare it [the sedra] two or three times, yea, even a hundred times! We shall not be sinners, nor shall we cause sin when called to the Torah."

In addition to reading Torah correctly, Shlomo also comments on the need to hold the Torah correctly. "The hazzan has to be careful to hold the Torah on the right side, for it is said, 'From his right hand went a fiery law for them' (Deut. 33:2). The Torah is called 'life' because it is 'the life and length of your days' (Deut. 30:30). And 'the length of your days' is 'on the right.' (Here Shlomo is playing on the text, *ואורק' איך תבונתך*, 'and in length of days there is understanding.' - Job 12:12). Do not be like those who use their left hands and hold the Sefer Torah on their left side, and their right hand on their cheek (a possible habit of some hazzanim to facilitate trilling or producing high notes - Reshit Bikurim, seventeenth century minhag text), and they stand there and 'scream' ( *גאלי* ) Gadlu or Hall'lu...rather, you should place it on your right side...and what would be



so terrible if you did not scream so! Therefore, place it on your right side, and you will be worthy of 'lengthened days' on your right, and 'honor and riches' on your left. The wise inherit goodness."<sup>17</sup> Again, Shlomo is playing with a biblical text, אֵלֶּיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, "the upright shall have good things in possession" (Prov. 28:10).

As we have seen, Shlomo is extremely concerned with proper detail. Throughout the text there are numerous directions for rendering specific prayers. Interspersed throughout these directions is an overriding concern with kavana. I will here present only a smattering of Shlomo's lengthy "stage directions" for specific prayers, and conclude with a touching personal prayer of his own that sums up his deep commitment and feeling.

"In the prayer, Eloheinu Vaylohei Avoteinu, the 3<sup>rd</sup> faces the congregation with awe...All eyes of the people are upon him in order to urge him to request mercy upon them."<sup>18</sup>

"Although the majority of the cantors that I have heard say veyazor, veyagon, etc., they are stumbling. Yagon (יגון) is the language of sorrow and distress. The cantor needs to say veyagayn with a tsayre (צ) underneath the gimel (ג), and the explanation of this is that veyagayn is the language of protection such as magen Avraham, or 'I protect you.' Your reward will be very great if you are careful with this matter."<sup>19</sup>

"The cantor must be very careful to pray word by word and to enunciate ( *יננו* ) clearly with his lips, and with compression ( *ג'נד* ), and without swallowing [the words and letters]. All the more so, with the reading of the Torah, he should be careful with the signs of cantillation, ( *פ'נ'ס'ג'ג' נ'י'ל'ג'* ), and with the vowels, and all of the grammar."<sup>20</sup>

Like Zelichower, Shlomo laments the practice of those cantors who elongate their tunes to the point that all meaning of the text is lost. "It is written in the Sh'ne Luchot Habrit [Isaiah ben Abraham Halevy Horowitz's (1565-1630) text which combines halacha, homily, and kaballah for the purpose of giving directions as to how to live an ethical life] that 'you should reprimand those who greatly elongate their tunes on the word amen, and in the Kedusha, Kaddish, and Barechu.' They elongate the sabbaths and the festivals with their songs...The songs are too long and they stretch out the words and letters so, until the letters are so far apart from each other that the word has lost all meaning. What they do is not proper."<sup>21</sup> "They pause too long between Kaddish and the answering of amen. It is an 'orphaned amen' [response to an unheard benediction]...and we learn from our blessed rabbis, that rather than say an 'orphaned amen' [where you are not even sure what you are confirming], you should answer amen immediately after the worshipper completes the prayer."<sup>22</sup>

The concern with a proper amen permeates much of Shlomo's advice. "On erev shabbat the hazzan must say



vayechulu with great kavana and a willing heart. It says in the Sefer Chasidim (a source of major ethical teachings of the Hasidei Ashkenazi in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries) that once 'a hasid was about to die and another hasid saw that his face was green. He said to him, "Why is your face green?" He said to him, 'I was saying vayechulu and magen avot at the time that the 3"e was saying it.' And, thus, all the more so, the hazzan needs to utter with very great kavana. This prayer is more important to God than the prayers of the 3"e during the week, and it has already been said how important it is to 'direct' during the week. In the shemone esrei he [the hazzan] prays word by word, because if he prays too quickly they will offer an 'orphaned amen' ( אנין' מלכ ), or a 'snatched amen' ( אנין מלכ ) without even knowing to what they are answering. God forbid that the hazzan should cause such damage! Therefore, he should be very careful to insure that those who answer know to what they are answering. Thus will their prayers be heard."<sup>23</sup>

Concerning the rendering of the birkat kohanim, Shlomo provides particularly explicit "choreographical" directions. "If he does not do it this way, God forbid, he will incur very great punishment. Therefore each 3"e should be careful to conduct himself like this: On the words yevarech'cha adonai, he [the hazzan] turns his face toward the wall where the Torah is. Veyishmerecha, he turns toward the right.



permeates Teudat Shlomo. He quotes from a large number of traditional sources, of which I will note only a few. "If one makes a mistake in his tefilla, it is a bad sign for him, and if he is a 3<sup>rd</sup> of the congregation, it is a bad sign for those who have commissioned him (Berachot 34b.)"<sup>29</sup> He continues, "I have found in the Sefer Matte Moshe this teaching: 'The person who prays needs to direct his heart.' As scripture states, 'Thou wilt direct their heart. Thou wilt cause Thy ear to attend' (Ps. 10:17). The explanation is that he [the hazzan] should direct the words that come out from his mouth...and remove all disturbing thoughts, until his thoughts and action attain merit in his prayer, and his kavana becomes the foundation of faith."<sup>30</sup>

Quoting the Tur (O.H. # 106), Shlomo notes that "he who enters the house of study prays that 'no offense will happen to me' (Berachot 4:2), and says, 'May it be Thy will O Lord and God of our fathers that I do not fail.' And thus, it is fitting and proper that when the cantor prays he should not stumble in his prayer." It is here that Shlomo inserts this touching prayer of his own creation: "May it be Your will our God and God of our fathers, that I do not falter in my prayer and that I do not go astray, and that my prayer 'stimulates me' ( 'סורגני ), lest the words of my lips not be according to Your will. God forbid my thought should be extraneous. Accept with mercy and desire my prayer, that I may pray on my behalf, and on behalf of my congregation, and

on behalf of all Israel, because You O Lord hear the prayer of all mouths."<sup>31</sup>

In addition to Shlomo's concern for correctness of text and kavana, he also recognizes the need for joy in rendering prayer, and has much to say about cantors who know only how to "weep and wail." "The 3"e should pray with joy and do his worship with a joyous heart. It is good for a servant to serve his master with love because 'the shehinah dwells only in the midst of joy' (Shabbat 30a)....and happy is the community which gives the 3"e considerable wages, in order that his heart will always be happy and free from worry, for it is said, 'Serve the Lord with gladness, come before Him with singing' (Ps. 100:2). But everything is to fear the Lord, and when he [the hazzan] is happy, the shehinah dwells with him."<sup>32</sup>

Connected to joy, in Shlomo's thinking, is study. So, in the text, Shlomo moves directly to the need for cantors to study. "The 3"e needs a fixed time for study because the Lord has bestowed [talent] upon him. 'The one who sacrifices much and the one who sacrifices little have the same merit, provided that the 'heart is directed to heaven' (Berachot 5b)....And all who increase 'sefer' [study] indeed are to be praised...and it is praise for the community....The 3"e should study every day 'musar' [ethical literature] or סידור סידור [proper behavior]. If he cannot [study on his own] he should go out and seek a scholar, or go to the house

of study and listen to the words of Torah, for if he does not do so, his prayer is not heard by God!"<sup>34</sup>

Having given a brief picture of Shlomo's professional advice to the cantor, I will here present some of Shlomo's remarks regarding personal habits and traits for the cantor. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Shlomo notes that the elders of Prague remembered the "good old days" when cantors would learn from each other and there was great friendliness and comradeship among them. Now, regrettably, there is "backbiting" and conceit among them. Perhaps because of this situation, Shlomo is prompted to write of the need for the  $\text{צ"ע}$  to possess some degree of humility and modesty. "The  $\text{צ"ע}$  needs to be humble. It states in Megillat Amukot (p. 175), 'Behold the Lord is standing upon (  $\text{ל'ד}$  ) him.' This suggests that he [Moses] revealed his humility, for Moses was very humble. Also, in gematria the letters in the word,  $\text{ל'ד}$ , are the same numerical value as the word,  $\text{לדיו}$  [both equal 136], for Moses had climbed a ladder [toward heaven]....In Yalkut Reubeni it says that the voice of the righteous in prayer is like a ladder to angels. Thus  $\text{לדיו}$  [136] is equal to  $\text{לד}$  [136], and equal to  $\text{ל'ד}$  [136]."<sup>35</sup> Shlomo, then, has found an ingenious, albeit somewhat mystical and roundabout way, to equate the voice with humility. Having equated 'humility' (  $\text{ל'ד}$  ) and 'voice' (  $\text{לד}$  ), he now equates them with the 'ladder'



(*psio*) on which Moses climbed to heaven. Thus the cantor who has a voice and is humble is associated with Moses who was humble; his voice carries him heavenward as on the angelic ladder. "The community that has commissioned a hazzan is [so to speak] causing him to stand in the shadow of the tabernacle. God forbid should the hazzan be anything but pure, honest, humble, and of full voice. The word *psio* suggests a ladder of praise and a ladder of ascent. The ladder stands 'rooted on earth with its head [top] reaching toward heaven' (Gen. 28:12). So, too, the *3"ע* stands below [on earth] and he prays, and his prayer is heard in heaven. 'And the angels of the Lord ascend and descend' (Gen. 28:12). The explanation is that the ladder was made from the prayer enabling them to ascend, and they would 'weave crowns' [a metaphor to describe the combination of praises put together by the angels to "coronate" God], and bring them to the Holy One, Blessed be He. Happy is the *3"ע* and the congregation that has sent him."<sup>36</sup>

But cantors should be more than humble; they must be generous as well. "The *3"ע* needs to be a 'charitable person' ( *דקבב דאא* )....Do not say, 'What do I have to give to the poor?' If a poor person comes to the door of your house, say to him, 'All that I have is yours.'.... Surely the prayer [of him who closes his door to the poor] is not heard. About him it is said, 'Whoever closes his ears to the cry of the poor, he himself shall cry, but



shall not be answered' (Proverbs 21:13)."<sup>37</sup>

Tied to his message of modesty, humility, and charitableness, is Shlomo's admonition to cantors who get drunk and speak obscenely. "A drunkard does not pray! And if he does offer his prayer, his prayer is an abomination for it is written in the Sefer Tolaat Yaakov, 'the reason that prayer ascends to God is that there [in heaven] is no food or drink,' as our blessed Rabbis have said, 'In the next world there is no food or drink' (Berachot 17b). This thought makes good sense. For when one comes in the presence of a king of flesh and blood and enters 'intoxicated with wine' ( וְיָשֵׁן ), and the king sees that he is a drunkard, immediately the king commands that he be sent away, for the drunkard is only an 'ignoramous' ( גִּילְגִּיל ). He [the hazzan] does not hold water [play on the word גִּילְגִּיל which means both 'ignoramous' and 'cistern'], but he holds wine! How much more so, the cantor who goes all the way before the King of the King of Kings, God, the Holy One, blessed be He, and prays on behalf of the entire community of Israel, and enters the 'small temple,' the synagogue, he must [offer his] worship with a heart of prayer. If he is drunk, his prayer is 'despied' ( נִסְתָּוֶה ), and his offering is an abomination. And according to the wisdom of the Midrash, 'Why did Nadav and Abihu die? Because they were intoxicated with wine when they entered the tabernacle.'"<sup>38</sup>

In the following selection, Shlomo is almost humorous.

He does seem to possess an effective sense of sarcasm and understatement. If there is any humor in Teudat Shlomo, it is probably in this following quotation: "Also the drunken hazzan is liable to die. Therefore he should be very careful that he not enter the synagogue when he is intoxicated with wine, and not only wine they say, but anything that can make one drunk, such as wine, 'juice of resin' ( *שֵׁר* ), honey syrup [fermented presumably], for they 'confuse the mind' ( *לִשְׁכָּתוֹ יְהַכְּכֵהוּ* ), and drinking includes eating. He should not eat gluttonously, so as not to burp in his prayers, for he might 'sneeze from below' ( *יִסְתַּחֲסֵם מֵעַלְיוֹ* ), and that is a bad sign for him. Therefore, he should strive not to act badly, but to do the right thing."<sup>39</sup>

Evidently, the cantors of Shlomo's age were known not only as occasional drunkards, but also for obscene talk. "It says in K'tuvot, 'Everyone knows why a bride is entering the huppah [bridal chamber], one need not talk obscenely, or else he incurs a judgment against him for ten years.' Also, our blessed Rabbis have said, "A man should not let an indecent word pass his lips, for indeed it is repugnant and is not pure, etc.' (Pesachim 3a). All the more so, the

<sup>39</sup> should not let obscenities pass his lips. He should speak properly. Moses, our teacher, did not want to drink from impure cream, because it was [with] his mouth [that] in the future [he] would speak to the Holy One, blessed be He. The hazzan, who each day speaks with his prayer to

the Holy One, blessed be He, how can he, God forbid, allow obscenities to pass through his lips! Therefore, let those who are enlightened take heed."<sup>40</sup>

Having mentioned the importance of proper speech Shlomo then speaks in a "stream of consciousness," of speech problems and abuses. "And, thus, the stammerer who reads for an 'alef' ( א ) an 'ayin' ( ע ), or vice versa, and cannot utter the letters properly, should not be appointed as a 3"e, and the laws stated here also [apply] to the reader who says 'shibolet' ( שבוילע ) instead of 'sibolet' ( סיבילע )....Therefore, a community should commission a 3"e who can utter the letters properly. Shlomo then quotes a baraita from Megilla 24b, 'We do not allow to pass before the ark [officiate] either men from Bet Shean or from Haifa, or from Tibonim because they pronounce the 'alef' ( א ) as 'ayin' ( ע ), and 'ayin' ( ע ) as 'alef' ( א ).'"<sup>41</sup> The issue also may have involved more than regional differences in pronunciation. Shlomo may have resented the fusion of Sephardic and Ashkenazic ritual occurring in the Bohemian synagogues in which he served. Unfortunately, there is no elucidation of this issue in his text.

Shlomo also chastises those cantors who are lazy, or who do not step into a synagogue except to sing. "Those cantors who have a pleasant voice and who are received in great communities are called 'Head Cantors' ( ראשי חזנים ), and they have second and even third cantors

under them who lead prayer on week days, while they [the Head Cantors] do so only on the sabbaths, festivals, and Rosh Hashana. During the week out come their 'evil urge' (אָרױף דאָס), and they say, 'Why go to the bet k'neset today? It is not rosh chodesh [the new month], nor is it the sabbath today' (Kings II 4:23). God forbid you should want to listen to such a one, or to seek his advice. He will lead you to the grave."<sup>42</sup>

In addition to the internal traits of cantors, Shlomo discusses briefly their external traits as well. "It is proper and fitting for the hazzan to be dressed pleasantly and cleanly for his prayer, in order to prepare himself to meet God. Especially those cantors who are in the villages and small towns, since the majority of them are shochtim and bodkim [examiners of animals for slaughter], they have to be especially careful to dress properly for prayer, and not to pray in the same clothes that are always full of blood [from their work]. About them [those who are not clean] it is said: 'They who destroy prayer are not heard, for their hands are full of blood.' Also, one can infer that reason dictates this. If a person in authority (דער קעניג פאר אים) is dressed uncleanly, surely you would say, 'Get out bloody man!' All the more so, before the King [God], you should be dressed properly."<sup>43</sup>

From proper appearance, Shlomo continues that the cantor who is mature in age is the most desirable. He quotes Maimonides' Mishne Torah (Hilchot Tefilla chapter 11):

"You do not appoint as <sup>3"e</sup>one who is [not] known in the community for his wisdom and his deeds. If he is older, indeed this is more praiseworthy. You should strive to appoint as <sup>3"e</sup>a man who has a rich voice and is accustomed to reading [prayer]. One who is not 'full bearded' (לכחנני

לך, נש ) [mature in age], although he may be a very wise man, should not be appointed <sup>3"e</sup>out of 'respect for the community' (נאצא צאצא)."44

In the above passages, Shlomo mentions the need for a cantor to possess a pleasant voice and, even more important, to pray with kavana and precision. He has provided additional advice and admonition to cantors to be upright, pious, generous, scholarly, humble, and dignified both in heart and action.

In addition to his advice and guide to cantors, he presents in Teudat Shlomo a significant argument and justification for art music and artistry in the baroque synagogue of his day. Apropos of the need for artistry, and a heightened involvement with music, Shlomo also provides us with a great amount of material on choirs and choir singers. I will here provide only the barest summary of this information.

Hazzanut in central Europe seems to have gone through the same development in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as did the synagogue song in the Orient in the eleventh and twelfth centuries---in the period, that is, when the piyyut was at its height. Here, as well as there, the



the inclination of the hazzanim to neglect traditional folk song and to elevate the synagogue music to the realm of art resulted in either reaction or failure. First, the artistic flavor caused the people to cease to understand the song, although they favored it as a novelty and as art; and secondly, inasmuch as the art demanded the direction of professional singers, it excluded the laity entirely. Thus, the traditional occupancy of the position of precentor by rabbis and 'men of leisure' ( ר' יוסף ) was, by reason of the new art, impossible. Art music required vocal ability and musical knowledge necessarily excluding the layman.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the rabbinic opposition and criticism of cantors often reached vicious proportions. In addition to Zelichower's scathing criticism, perhaps this excerpt from the seventeenth-century Reshit Bikkurim, [freely translated by Werner], sums up the complaints against cantors, complaints with which Shlomo had to contend and against which to defend.

"They are often ignorant of rabbinic literature, and are unfamiliar with the prayer book. They often rest their elbows on the pulpit by putting their hands, which ought to be folded and at rest, on their jaws, temples, or throats. They introduce into the most holy passages some gibberish or incomprehensible words or syllables, such as da da, la la, or they tear words apart. On the New Year or Day of Atonement, they ruin many prayers, especially avot or alenu or ohila la'el. The cantors tarry with their sing-song, while on the other hand they rush through the piyyut that is part of these permanent prayers (tefillot keva) in such haste that no galloping rider could catch them. Moreover, they use quite an assortment



of non-Jewish tunes, and make potpourris of many melodies at the memorial service at its kaddish for the deceased, in order to entertain the listeners; in this way and by such behavior devotion becomes a mockery and subject to ridicule."<sup>46</sup>

Shlomo may have been one of the very first cantors who championed the introduction of art music in the face of a bitterly antagonistic rabbinate. In presenting his justification for art music in the synagogue, Shlomo cites an elaborate maze of textual material from numerous sources, including the Talmud, Mishne Torah, the Tur, and the writings of Leone de Modena (1571-1648). In this complex section, Shlomo makes two arguments: (1) Jewish law is less strict concerning vocal music than it is with instrumental music, since it is the latter alone which was connected to the great national tragedy of the destruction of the Temple; (2) Vocal music for prayer is to be regarded differently than secular song.

"Maimonides realized that music exercised an ennobling influence upon certain individuals, but since the law was intended for the benefit of the many, music, except in connection with prayer, was banned because it was wanton and voluptuous, and carried with it a sensuous thrill, and had the power of manipulating the mental atmosphere of most people for evil, especially when the songs were recited by women at a regale [sumptuous feast] of wine. Consequently, Maimonides would prohibit not only Arabic but also Hebrew songs, if their contents were such as to lead to excitement and debauchery."<sup>47</sup>

Having presented this and other statements on song, Shlomo concludes: "In the bet k'neset where there is no

food or drink, just singing and prayer and gratitude to God, how much more [sacred than in the taverns] should it be permitted to sing songs of gratitude to God, who is blessed. The Lord will answer anyone who increases song with sweet voice and kavana. Indeed, it is exemplary, a mitzva, for a man to learn this with certainty: to serve God with strength and glory is a mitzva. 'In the multitude of people is the King's honor' (Proverbs 14:28)."<sup>48</sup>

Transmitting the importance of knowledge of music and the introduction of art music in the synagogue, seems to be Shlomo's chief goal as a cantor. He writes that the cantors of his day are at a "'crossroad' ( פ'צוץ סערום דא ), and often do not know what is good and what is bad. Song without knowledge of music is like prayer without kavana."<sup>49</sup> And we have seen how essential kavana is to Shlomo. Shlomo's thinking can almost be charted as an equation:  $\frac{\text{song}}{\text{music}} = \frac{\text{prayer}}{\text{kavana}}$ .

Shlomo then quotes from an interesting source, Sefer Nefutsot: "Especially is music [so important], for it is one of the seven 'arts and sciences' ( מין סו ) that we find in the text Sefer Nefutsot of Judah, who speaks with very great discernment about this wisdom....Open your eyes and you will see in Sefer Nefutsot of Judah's that there are many pages of far reaching things [from which] you will find pleasure. 'Whoever is for God be with me' (Ex. 32:26). Gather all the sons of Levi, the singers, and I will tell you, your songs reach up to God."<sup>50</sup>

Judah ben Joseph Moscato was one of the most important rabbis, authors, and preachers of the Italian Renaissance. As a leader of the Mantua community (1587-1594) he preached a long sermon titled Higayon be-Khinor ("Meditation on the Lyre") which was published in his Nefutsot Yehuda (Venice, 1589). Here he examined the subject "man and music" under the aspects of Jewish tradition from the Talmud and Midrash down to his contemporary kabbalists, including also reference to the Greek and Arabic philosophers. "The rabbi stressed the interrelation of the harmony found in music and the harmony imagined in the soul and character of man, striving to show the legitimacy of the musical art in Judaism."<sup>51</sup>

From the eloquent recommendation of Judah Moscato, and the delight in art music fostered in wide circles of Renaissance Judaism, it was not a far cry to welcome art music in the synagogue as well. The power of conservatism and exile, however, proved hard to overcome. But the power behind progressive tendencies was Leone de Modena who, although ordained a rabbi, was really a "jack of all trades." Idelsohn notes that "according to his own statement he had a good voice, was a trained musician, and even taught music."<sup>52</sup> Modena, along with Moscato, exerted great influence upon Shlomo.

As a rabbi in his native Ferrara, about 1605, Modena saw to the installation of a synagogue choir and to the systematical instruction of its six to eight singers in music. "They performed hymns such as adon olam, yigdal,

en kelohenu, and alenu on the occasion of feasts and special Sabbaths, in honor of God according to the order and right proportion of the voices in the art of music."<sup>53</sup> This innovation met with the stiff resistance of a local rabbi who held that music was prohibited in exile; but Modena secured a decision of four other rabbis in favor of polyphonic [many voiced] synagogue singing. This document was to become the main weapon for many later attempts in this direction."<sup>54</sup>

Shlomo regards Modena highly and praises him effusively. "As our eyes have been on the rivers [he was previously speaking about the rivers of Babylon], now they are on 'rivers of honey' ( עֲדָי יְדֵן - Job 20:17).... 'A roaring lion, and it is good to roam' [Here Shlomo slightly distorts Prov. 28:15, changing 'dov' [bear] to 'tov' [good], changing it to introduce] the young Yehuda Arye [lion] from Modena."<sup>55</sup> He selects a passage of Modena's in praise of vocal music. "It is good to praise the Lord with strength and to sing his name....Therefore, sing the holy song to the Lord, for with the coming of our exile comes the redemption of our souls. Then will be our joy and happiness in our salvation forever."<sup>56</sup>

Shlomo then provides us with a succinct summary of musical advice to cantors. "The singer who knows music and stretches the music over the word as it is intended, his voice is lovely and 'charming' ( נְחִימָה ). [Here Shlomo

plays on 'a charming bride' - *אֵלֶּיךָ יְהוָה* - Song of Songs]. But he who sings without musical knowledge and does not stretch the music over the word, sometimes speaks words and languages with his lips and tongue that do not exist in all the world! Therefore, 'turn yourself away from perverse talk, and perverse lips put far from thee' (Proverbs 4:24)....Be not ashamed in the face of scoffers who say, 'First they are singers, second they are musicians.' They may have a strong voice, but it is a 'loud and bitter cry' (Gen. 27:24)."<sup>57</sup>

Shlomo sees himself as a veritable source of knowledge and adds, "'Why should you stay outdoors when I have made ready the house, as well as a place for good?' (Gen. 24:31). [Here Shlomo cleverly plays on a 'good deed' (*דנע*) and a 'camel' (*דנע*)]. I will learn with you, for God has granted me a little wisdom, and I do have 'some fame' (*דנע* 3' - Is. 56:5). What I know is just a little of what you see, for 'you shall see just the utmost part of them' (Nu. 23:13). It is impossible to learn [the knowledge of music] to the very foundation."<sup>58</sup>

In addition to the introduction of art music, Shlomo also seems to champion the introduction of secular melodies into the synagogue. He does not make sweeping generalizations, though, without standing on some halachic precedent. "Rabbi Joel Sirkes (1561-1640) of Cracow gave a formal responsum (1596-1597) to the question of whether it is



permitted in the synagogues to sing melodies which are sung also in the Christian Churches. Sirkes argued that some of these melodies were originally Jewish, and proceeded to the heart of the question, the prohibition against 'imitating the customs of the Gentiles.' ( *פ'י אדמו"ר* ).<sup>59</sup>

Thus, Sirkes permitted the use of Gentile melodies for synagogal purposes, as long as they were not chanted in churches. Shlomo further testifies that hazzanim used to take tunes from the theatre or the dance hall and use them for the service. "There are those who say, what are these new tunes that come from the taverns? They are the prayer of the poor. When the hazzanim, like the poor people, sit on the crossroads, their songs are heartrending. Alas, there are those who call bad good and good bad. What is bitter they make sweet, and what is sweet they make bitter."<sup>60</sup>

On this issue of secular tunes introduced in the service, there also was great rabbinic opposition in Shlomo's age, "notably by Rabbi Yehuda Hechasid and Joseph Hahn."<sup>61</sup>

We have seen antagonism toward the cantor, both externally and from Shlomo, and opposition to art music and secular song; there was also opposition to the choirs being created in almost every congregation or community, as a result of the ars nova introduced by the hazzanim of the period.

"At the beginning of the eighteenth century, we find from Prague to Amsterdam community of kahal singers consisting



of a bass and a discant or singer, that is a soprano or falsetto. These men were sustained by the congregations, and together with the hazzanim, received the nickname, 'סמ"ח' (שמחה) (7713, 7710). In Amsterdam, choir singing was introduced in 1700, and at the same time, also in Hamburg. In Frankfurt about 1714, the institution of a choir was considered a long established one. In Prague, every synagogue had its choral society of volunteers, aside from the employed singers."<sup>62</sup>

Shlomo has much to say about choirs and choir singers. He quotes traditional texts concerning the Levites during Temple times, mainly from the masechtot of Rosh Hashana and Arechin. He quotes Rabbi Bertinoro on the institution of the major and minor Levites. "They [the minor Levites], the 'tormentors of the Levites' (7713, 7710), were so called by the [adult] Levites who could not sweeten and make pleasant their voices as they [the 'tormentors'] could. Therefore, we learn that there were choir singers in the Temple. Further, do not mock choir singers."<sup>63</sup>

But mock is exactly what Shlomo proceeds to do in his discussion which seems to evolve from "degradation to praise" (7713, 7710). First he chastises, then he praises. "Just as it is impossible to have a world without wind, so it is that, it is impossible to have a cantor without choir singers. But sometimes they are 'rowdy and wild' [Here Shlomo plays with 7713 (singers), 7713 and 7710], spending the time from early morning to late at night in the taverns and at rowdy parties. They

'gluttonize' and drink to excess. They eat as friends and end up drinking as 'buddies' ( *פ'3/3* ). They do all the things they are reputed to be derided for....And what to do with these 'rebellious sons' (Deut. 21:18) so they will not sin? All week they do not go to the synagogue and they say to each other, 'Why are you going to the synagogue? It is not a rosh hodesh today and it is not the sabbath.' The cantor these days does not pray, and even when he is praying he is not singing anything! On the sabbaths and festivals they [the choir singers] come and stand near the hazzan, as if they have come to be 'released from vows' [apparently a reference to the way a *פ'3 ת'3* might stand in such a ceremony]. They 'cough and howl in their vibratos' ( *אנוני אנה ויפול כסדרים* ), and they stand like 'Aaron and Hur' [who held up Moses' arms while fighting the Amelekites]. They are 'irresponsible and unstable' ( *פ'3, 31 פ'3* ), and as empty as a cistern or a well....Sometimes just to socialize the hazzan converses with them. 'Dare man treat prayer as he would a talk with a friend!' (Berachot 34a)....But in the midst of this degredation will come praise. As Jews they are sacred, but they are empty unless they are filled with mitzvot like a pomegranate. I have seen wonderful achievements in several communities. I have had choir singers with me who have honored God and who pray with great intensity and who do go every day of the week to synagogue and have a fixed time

for the study of Torah. Each one succeeded in his ability and the 'rebellious son' 'preached' ( ע713 ) each day to God and prayed with total kavana....The cantor should be concerned about their dignity and not embarrass them. Even more so, he should not, God forbid, hit them. There shall not be any beatings for them. Nor should he [the cantor] kick them on their legs as some cantors do....The cantors must be careful not to do anything that will disgrace them. ... Furthermore, the choir singers must be very careful to honor the cantor. They should prevail with faith, and with all their strength, to honor God, and to honor humanity, and pray with total kavana."<sup>64</sup>

Obviously, Shlomo was deeply concerned with all aspects of the cantor. He fervently pleads that the cantor offer his prayers with kavana and precision. Further, he urges that the cantor improve his image by looking, acting, and speaking properly. Finally, the cantor must be knowledgeable about music. It is this final aspect that is so significant and yet the least spelled out for us. There is not one mention of any of the tools or vocabulary of music---no mention of words such as theory, harmony, polyphony, or even such words as tone or rhythm. It is just possible that Shlomo himself may not have been a very proficient musician. This in no way detracts from his commitment to the cantorate and the art song in the synagogue, but it may indicate that what Shlomo envisions is still vague in his own mind, not

to be manifest until the middle of the eighteenth century,  
when cantors began to use musical notation and, thus,  
began the "literary period" of Ashkenazi hazzanut.

## Notes to Chapter Four

1. T.S., hakdama, i.
2. Ibid., i.
3. Eric Werner, A Voice Still Heard, p. 112-113.
4. Ibid., 113.
5. T.S., 7a.
6. Ibid., 7a.
7. Ibid., 6b.
8. Ibid., 6b.
9. Ibid., 7a.
10. Ibid., 7a.
11. Ibid., 9a.
12. Ibid., 9a.
13. Ibid., 8b.
14. Ibid., 7a.
15. Ibid., 20a.
16. Ibid., 9a.
17. Ibid., 9a.
18. Ibid., 9b.
19. Ibid., 23a.
20. Ibid., 3a.
21. Ibid., 4b.
22. Ibid., 4b.
23. Ibid., 13a-b.
24. Ibid., 13b.

25. Ibid., 12a.
26. Ibid., 13a.
27. Ibid., 11a.
28. Ibid., 12b. Although Hygras is mentioned a number of times in the Talmud, as a great singer, he is mentioned for derision in Yoma 38a for not wanting to teach and share his knowledge.
29. Ibid., 3b.
30. Ibid., 4a.
31. Ibid., 3b-4a.
32. Ibid., 6a.
33. Ibid., 2a.
34. Ibid., 6a.
35. Ibid., 5a.
36. Ibid., 5b.
37. Ibid., 6a.
38. Ibid., 23b
39. Ibid., 24a.
40. Ibid., 23a.
41. Ibid., 12b.
42. Ibid., 11b.
43. Ibid., 12a.
44. Ibid., 12b.
45. Abraham Idelsohn, Jewish Music, p. 212.
46. Werner, A Voice Still Heard, p. 115.
47. Dr. Boaz Cohen, "The Responsum of Maimonides Concerning Music." Jewish Music Journal, 2 (1935), p. 5.
48. T.S., 19a.



49. Ibid., 21a.
50. Ibid., 21b-22a.
51. Hanoch Avenary, "Music," Encyclopedia Judaica, 12 (1973), p. 616. For further information and analysis of Moscato's sermons, see Israel Bettan, HUCA, 6 (1929), p. 297-326.
52. Idelsohn, Jewish Music, p. 198.
53. T.S., 19a.
54. "Music," Encyclopedia Judaica, p. 620.
55. T.S., 19a.
56. Ibid., 19a.
57. Ibid., 19a.
58. Ibid., 22a.
59. Werner, A Voice Still Heard., p. 113.
60. T.S., 22a.
61. Abraham Idelsohn, "Songs and Singers of Israel," HUCA Jubilee Volume (1925), p. 405.
62. Ibid., p. 405. The term, 'וְכֵלִים לְעִוְוָה' also translates rather negatively to "vessels of lawlessness."
63. T.S., 15b.
64. Ibid., 16a-17b. In the Midrash, Pesikta Rabbati, the choir singers ( פִּזְמוֹנִים ) are likened to Aaron and Hur who held up Moses' arms when the Israelities fought the Amalekites.

## V. THE "WISDOM" OF SOLOMON

In his History of Jewish Literature, Israel Zinberg describes the era following the Chmielnitzki pogroms as "The Period of Intellectual Decline."<sup>1</sup> The foundations of the Jewish self-government had been shattered, and it had lost its former glory. "Gradually, as the decay of the state-organism progressed, the governing council of the Jewish community was transformed into a true oligarchy, which brutally employed its power to oppress and exploit the masses of the people in shameless fashion."<sup>2</sup> It would not infrequently happen that a struggle broke out between both privileged groups---between the intellectual aristocracy, the rabbis, on the one hand; and the communal leaders and financial aristocrats, on the other. Each group wished to have complete authority in communal matters.

All this brought it about that to a large extent the rabbinate and the rabbis lost their former glory and respect in the eyes of the people. The loss of power may have accounted for some of the vitriolic attacks on hazzanim such as those by Rabbi Zelichower and Hanokh Henich [1667 author of Reshit Bikkurim excerpted in the last chapter]. It is just possible that as the authority of the rabbis waned, their frustration

was vented mainly toward hazzanim.

It was also during this period that special handbooks for preachers, with ready-made pilpulistic subtleties and indications of how they are to be utilized, were produced.

"Characteristic in this respect is the handbook of Joseph ben Mordecai Ginzburg of Brest-Litovsk, Leket Yosef, which appeared in Prague in 1689. Its topics are organized alphabetically, mainly according to the names of important Biblical personalities. On every theme the author has ready-made a whole collection of overly subtle, absurd questions; and along with these, no less "brilliant" answers are provided. All this is so barbarically strange and totally inconsistent not only with the scientific method of thinking, but with plain common sense, that the reader begins to think he has before him a kind of Purim parody or satirical caricature. Unfortunately, this is not a parody but a handbook and guide for preachers. To the second edition of Leket Yosef (published in Offenbach, 1716 [two years before Teudat Shlomo]) was added at the end a special section Sugyot Hatalmud, with principles and indications of how one must split hairs in the subtle analyses of the rabbis."<sup>3</sup>

Shlomo Lipschuetz's work is a marvelous guide for the seventeenth century cantor, and a text which has provided us with a picture of an obscure, but seeming giant of his age. However, it falls short of being great literature compared to such contemporary works as Shabbetai ben Joseph Bass' Siftei Yeshenim or Koidonover's Kav Ha-Yashar [According to Israel Zinberg, these two texts are representative of the more outstanding halachic and ethical literature of the period]. Shlomo is unquestionably guilty of excessive

cleverness, hair-splitting analyses, especially in the section on David Oppenheim's teachings and, in general, formlessness in the organization of his text. He, like Ginsburg, produced a typical literary product of his age.

We have seen examples of Shlomo's penchant for play on words, some of which are extremely clever, while others are quite transparent. We have seen his constant allusions to Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs, all of which "tradition" ascribes to the Biblical King Solomon. But probably his most obvious attempt at cleverness is his use of acrostics which permeate much of the text and illustrate this chapter's heading, the "Wisdom" of Solomon.

Interspersed throughout his text are his "one-liners" of wise sayings. We saw in Chapter Four, that indeed, Shlomo considered himself an authority and source of wisdom, fancying himself a sort of modern day King Solomon. His use of acrostics as the vehicle for transmitting his pithy words of advice is interesting. For one thing, according to the Midrash Song of Songs Rabbah 1:7 King Solomon composed an alphabetic acrostic. In addition, there are numerous acrostic prayers such as Ashrei and Lecha Dodi, with which, of course, Shlomo would have been totally familiar. Acrostics simplified learning by heart and prevented mistakes, deletions, and additions. Furthermore, it preserved the name of the author, which often appeared as an acrostic, such as Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz in Lecha Dodi. That purpose would not be beyond

Shlomo Lipschuetz. Finally, Shlomo was well aware that kaballistic literature considered acrostics, like all combinations of letter and syllables, to be important.

Shlomo utilizes a number of acrostic combinations, but mainly the akrostikhon, where the letters or words that are to be joined are consistently found at the beginning of each verse or sentence. However, in one place (p. 43a) he utilizes the alphabet in reverse, the so called tashrak (תש"ק) form. He also produces a number of variations, where all of the last words of each verse will end with the same letters, as in the haskamot (iiii), hakdama vi., (9a, and 24b).

Since so much of this material is repetitious, and not very profound, I will here present just a few examples of Shlomo's "wisdom."

### תעודת שלמה ח

שיר חדש נפי אתן ואלך מחיל אל  
 ל'ה אשר נתן לי ע'ם מיץ כח לעשות  
 חיל — ב'נן הוא ל'כל החוסים בו לישראל עושה —  
 ר'וא יעזרנו ויבוס צרינו ובו נעשה  
 ח'ון מפעילות ה' אשר שם מופ  
 תיו — מ'רו לו שירו לו שיחו בכ'ל נפלאו  
 נ'מליכו ונ'חר שמו הודיעו בע'מם ע'ליו

"A new song ( )'ע) in my lips I will render, and I will go from strength to strength.

The Lord ( 'ד' ) who gave me the thriving city of Metz [gives me] strength to do valor.

He is a shield ( /ד' ) for all those who act mercifully, for Israel He acts valiantly.

See ( **לכ** ) the works of the Lord, whereupon He has put all his glorious works.

We will cause Him to reign ( **למלכו** ), and we will unify His name. Praise His acts to the nations."<sup>4</sup>

שְׁלֹמֹה בְּנִי רַע אֱלֹהִים  
בֶּן חָכֵם חָהִיד וְשֹׁשֶׁן  
מִהָרָר וְרֵץ כְּצִי לַעֲשׂוֹת רָצוֹן  
מִשִּׁשָּׁה אִמָּה וְחֹרֶת אִמָּה שֵׁם לִבְכֹּךְ  
הֶזֶק וְאִמְצָנָה בִּיקְרוֹנָה וְהִיא בְּלִבְכֹּךְ

"Shlomo, ( **למלך** ), my son, know the God of your father.

A wise and happy son ( **לך** ) you will be.

Quickly, ( **לך** ) run like a deer to your desire.

Moses ( **לך** ) is truth and his Torah is truth. Put your heart and your lips to it.

Be strong ( **לך** ) and courageous in it, for it is near to your heart and your lips."<sup>5</sup>

#### Alphabetical Acrostic:

#### תעודת שלמה

אֵל חָדָא קִשָּׁה כְּאַרְזֵי אֵילָא רֵךְ כְּקִנָּה  
בְּכָל קִנְיָן קִנָּה חֲכָמָה וְכִינָה  
גִּילְיָה אֵל חֲבִקֵּשׁ לַעֲצֹמֵךְ כָּל יְמֶיךָ  
דְּבִי מְגֻנָּה אֵל תְּחִיָּה מִפִּיד  
הוּא שְׁקוֹד לְלִמּוֹד הַדְרָתְךָ

"Do ( **לך** ) not be rigid like a cedar, but soft as a reed.

Of all ( **לך** ) of your possessions, acquire knowledge and wisdom.

Do not ask for greatness ( **לך** ) for yourself all of your days.

Do not let a disgraceful word ( **לך** ) leave your lips.

Be ( **לך** ) hasty to learn Torah."<sup>6</sup>



Reverse Acrostic:

## תעודת שלמה

תחזרי כארי לעבודת בוראך ואל תשמע לרע יצרך.  
 שחזרה אתה מעורר השחר ולא יהא הוא מעוררך:  
 ראש לשועלים אל תהיה אלא זנב לאריות  
 קול תורה וחפלה יצילך מכל גזירות אבדניות.  
 צדיקה הציל אותך ממוח ומבאר שחת.  
 באת וקנך לא תשחית במעלות:  
 ושהקבע תורחך ותחנוניים חפלהך:

"Be strong (תחזרי) like a lion in the service of your Creator, and do not succumb to your evil urge.

When (שחזרה) you awake in the morning, do not be the one who wakes you [Get married!].

Do not be the head (ראש) of a fox, rather be the tail of a lion.

The voice (קול) of Torah and prayer you should guard from all ugly decrees.

Tsedaka (צדקה) will save you from death and from the grave.

The corner (פאת) of your beard you shall not cut off when you shave.

Make (עשה) your study of Torah a fixed thing, and second [only] to your prayer."<sup>7</sup>

Shlomo concludes his text with two sh'elot and teshuvot. This literary form flourished in the days of the geonim and continued through Shlomo's age and, indeed, to the present time. During the Gaonic period these thousands of letters were characterized by terseness of expression. Such was not the case with Shlomo, however, who often tells his readers

more than the questions asked. But the questions and answers found in Teudat Shlomo are interesting and revealing, and merit reproduction here:

QUESTION: "Which is preferred, a 3"ע who receives wages or one who is a volunteer?

RESPONSE: It is more proper to engage a cantor with a salary, because in a place where he is receiving a salary, it is more harmonious for the community. 'Everything is in order, no breach and no outcry' (Psalm 144:14). No one else is empowered to get up there and pray, and if one is a volunteer, then permission [can be] given to anyone and discord will break out. Someone who is unworthy [might be called]. To [prevent] this, we need to be diligent on holy days such as the ashmurot [one of the periods into which the night was divided], Rosh Hashana, and Yom Kippur. One should not be granted permission to pray [officiate] unless that permission has been granted by the community. And also in [the matter of] blowing the shofar we also have seen dissension in the city. They have fought over this issue until we decreed and guarded against it. And, furthermore, these words of dissension are a burden for all of the communities. Every place that the 3"ע is salaried, and where the 3"ע is careful in his prayers, and his religious conduct [is proper], the community is content.

QUESTION: If the  $\text{ז"ע}$  has a sweet and pleasant voice to his listeners, and if he extends his worship in order that the people hear his sweet voice, and they [the community] can boast and rejoice [in] his voice, and his opinion [of himself] is that he prays, and [he] says that he is worthy for he has 'joy in his heart,' is it not proper to reprimand him? For how can he perform his prayer and petitions, and ask for supplication, in the midst of joy?

RESPONSE: These things are a matter of 'sense' ( $\text{אדם נאמן}$ ). There are those who say that if the  $\text{ז"ע}$  has joy in his heart, for he has given praise and gratitude to God with a pleasant, sweet, and joyful voice, in the midst of awe, then a blessing will come upon him. The other opinion concerns the  $\text{ז"ע}$  who 'descends in front of the lectern' [officiates], and who has a pleasant voice. It is taught in Masechet Tannit (chap. 2), 'When they stand up to pray they place [as reader] before the ark an old man conversant [with the prayers] who has children and whose house is empty [of food], so that his heart is concentrated on his prayer'....He needs to pray with seriousness because one does not pray except with- in the midst of gravity and he should stand in awe as one who stands before the Shechinah. In another text, Rabbenu Tam said in the name of Rav Hama, son of Bizna, who said in the name of Shimon the Hasid, 'he who prays needs to be pious as if he were soaked with the Shechinah, for it is said, 'I have

set the Lord always before me' (Psalm 16:8). Further it is taught, one does not pray in the midst of conversation, nor in the midst of frivolity, mirth, and idle chatter. Therefore, if the 3<sup>rd</sup> is joyous and stands with awe, as it is written, 'Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling' (Psalm 2:11), indeed this is praiseworthy. But if he is concerned only with having his beautiful voice heard, and the joy in his voice is only so the people will hear him and praise him, indeed this is disgraceful, and upon him, and that which comes out of his [his mouth], it is said, 'It cries out against me, therefore, have I hated it' (Jer. 12:8).

RESPONSE TO SECOND PART OF QUESTION: Every place that he [3<sup>rd</sup>] extends his prayer service [unduly], it is not good that he does this. In many places [Talmud, Commentaries, etc.,] they say to shorten the service because of [not wanting to] burden the congregation. And, thus, says Rabbi [Rabbi Judah the Prince who compiled the Mishna], 'Such was the practice of Rabbi Akiba who would pray with his congregation. He would shorten it [the worship service] when he ascended the pulpit. When he would pray he would often end up in a separate corner because of his bowings and genuflections.' And I bow and praise and bless the Lord in the eyes of the entire community that has enabled me to conclude this book.

This has been for me as sustance, this teudah [document]. I request [you] to help me bring to light [to publish] the text Kol Rina, for I have it 'in the bag' ( *סוֹסֵנִיָּה* ). I hope to be a fountain to those who read. For all of the mistakes, those who understand will understand....It is good to give thanks, to praise the Lord, and to sing, 15 Sivan 1717."<sup>8</sup>

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## Notes to Chapter Five

1. Israel Zinberg, A History of Jewish Literature  
p. 135.
2. Ibid., p. 136.
3. Ibid., p. 138.
4. T.S., 8a.
5. Ibid., 42b.
6. Ibid., 43a.
7. Ibid., 43a.
8. Ibid., 46a-b.



### CONCLUSION

As we have seen, Shlomo Lipschuetz lived during difficult times. The aftermath of the Chmielnitzki pogroms and the Sabbatean movement brought with it disorientation, intellectual decline, a loss of the power of the rabbis, and a general moral malaise within the population.

Many of the rabbis were incapable of distinguishing between frivolous pastimes and truly artistic endeavors such as music. To them, music was either a merry-making noise at weddings, and the like, or a science of the Gentiles, to be avoided by Jews. The concept of art in the modern sense was foreign to them. They understood music as a set of more or less trivial skills, practiced by klezmerim, the folk musicians, or by badhanim, the jesters and entertainers. For these rabbis, such skills were a world apart from the sphere of ritual and text study.

The span of Shlomo's life, 1685-1758, paralleled the very time when Western art music was reaching its greatest splendor. Only miles away from Shlomo's world were Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frederic Handel, and the beginning careers of Mozart and Haydn. And, yet, the synagogue, isolated by ghetto walls, remained almost untouched by its greatness. Whatever chamber or operatic music permeated the baroque synagogue usually emerged as crude or silly parodies. How the rabbis and cantors viewed baroque music, both secular

and religious, merits further study.

Cantors, like Shlomo Lipschuetz, were caught between "a rock and a hard place." Faced with rabbis, whose judicial power and prestige were slowly being abrogated in the course of the Emancipation, and whose perception of art music was that it represented a step in that direction, Shlomo Lipschuetz emerged a kind of cantorial crusader preaching piety, precision, and commitment to tradition, with an eye over the ghetto walls to the outside world.

His text rings as loudly today as it must have two hundred and sixty-three years ago. Many of the problems Shlomo faced linger with us even now. There is still jealousy, distrust, and often vitriolic criticism levelled by rabbis against cantors. There is still a reluctance on the part of many rabbis to allow cantors to flourish and to uplift our synagogues and congregants with art. And there is still a need to upgrade the cantor by providing better musicianship and deeper knowledge of text and tradition.

Teudat Shlomo remains for us a testament to the dedication and ideals of one past master. As we, too, are subject to powerful cultural forces that encroach on our mores, thoughts, and songs, let us always be reminded of the fundamental lessons of Shlomo's text and his life: There never was, is, or will be any substitute in Judaism for serious study, sincere worship, and deeds of lovingkindness.

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