

Messianic ideas and Yiddish song:  
Anthems that sing of hope  
Vessels that sustain the chain of tradition

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To my grandmother, Dorothy Lefko

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## PREFACE

This topic is the culmination of an amazing academic journey. The discrepancy between “m’chayeh hameitim” of traditional Jewish belief and “m’chayeh hakol” in the Reform movement began my investigation into the role of conceptual-ideological response. I was astounded by the ability of the Jewish people to adjust to changing circumstances by filling old concepts with new meaning. This ability seemed to be one of their keys to survival. By examining Messianism within the context of my search, I could connect with the creativity that helped the Jewish people survive.

On the other side my connection to Yiddish music came through a sense of lost connection with the Jewish past. I mourn the fact that I know so little about my immediate and distant Jewish past. I wanted to bring some of this to life. Also I wanted to learn about it as if it were oral tradition. Yiddish, the language and the music, heightened my sense of reliving the experience of my ancestors. Yiddish is porous; infiltrated by the feelings of the Jewish people.

The connection between Messianism and Yiddish song became clear after intense examination. Yiddish song served as a vessel for conceptual-ideological responses, in other words, the changing feelings of the Jewish people. Movements of Messianism used devices such as Yiddish song to express their changing concepts, their very sources of creativity and adjustment. Thus, through my research I have gained a sense of connection to the Jewish past and a sense of pride in the great ability of my people to survive, thrive, and regenerate.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

For many reasons I have chosen to analyze the connection between Messianism and Yiddish song. The movement of Messianism expresses the Jewish people's desire for change, a desire motivated by the need for an improved life. Essential to the success of Messianism is a vocal response to its eliciting situation; I call this the conceptual-ideological response. The conceptual-ideological response serves as more than an advertising slogan, it is the concept on which people hang their hopes. The changing experience of the Jewish people endues these conceptual-ideological responses with meaning. The conceptual-ideological responses reflect the ability of the Jewish people to adjust to changing conditions of life, and thereby survive throughout history. The Messianic movements in Jewish history bear witness to the variety of such responses. The expression of such responses can be found in sources/devices beginning with Psalms and continuing through the literature of the Tannaim and Amoraim. Jewish intellectual leadership adjusted, created, and recreated the conceptual-ideological responses embodied in Messianism.

For many reasons, the world of Eastern European Jewry expanded the amount of devices available for expressing conceptual-ideological responses. Through the examination of conditions of the Eastern European world, we will see how Yiddish song ultimately flourished as a device for expressing conceptual-ideological response.

Upon examination of the conceptual-ideological responses especially thriving and adapting in the Talmudic period, we will see how Messianic ideas are used to validate the established authority over Jewish life. The established leadership of the Tannaitic and Amoraic period, through messianic concepts, created what is now known as “Shashelet hakabbalah.” By showing their connection not only to the present but to the past and to the future, in particular the redemptive future, the authority could effectively offer meaning and thus daily life structure in connection with the Jewish past, Jewish life, and the Jewish destiny.

Not without opposition, Yiddish song, belonging to the messianic movements of Hasidim, Early Maskilim, and later Zionists, also becomes a device for conceptual-ideological response. Yiddish song sustains tradition and proves to be a link in “Shashelet hakabbalah”. Analysis of texts and the music will illustrate how the creation and recreation of themes further the political purpose and overall goal of these Messianic groups. The very adjusting of the Messiah concept, as will be seen in both Yiddish song and Yiddish Messiah song, lent itself to the secularization for the maskilim, personalization for the Hasidim, and activism for the Zionists. These were all elements needed to make each movement in the Yiddish world successful for its followers.

## PART ONE

### CHAPTER TWO

#### DEVELOPMENT OF MESSIANISM AND THE MESSIANIC IDEAL

*Biblical Framework.* Throughout Jewish history the Bible served as the foundation for changing ideas and concepts within Messianic movements. Though leaders of Messianic movements could create, recreate, and reuse many themes to expedite their aims, they had to depend on one constant—the identification of Jews with the Torah. Acknowledgement of this principle meant accepting a shared history, even if their destiny would change. The historical nature of the Bible provided the sense of confirmed ideas. These ideas formed an integral part of the platform for Messianic movements.

The concept of God's ultimate rule permeates the Biblical world. This is particularly important in connection to the study of the political leaders of the Jewish people. Any change in leadership would have to retain this context in which God ultimately decided fate. The implementers of any movement within Judaism would be eternally bound to God's almighty power.

Political leaders in the Bible are referred to by the term "Mashiah" which means anointed. It derives from the Hebrew root "mem", "shin", "chet", which means to anoint. The process of anointment confers upon the leader the special status of chosenness by

God. Biblical and non-Biblical sources indicate that elections of the “mashiah” were either fortuitous or arbitrary, and based entirely upon God’s will. As servants of God, priests or kings, had the obligation of carrying out God’s will along with the specific commands of God in which the divine will was embodied. During the height of theocracy the constitutional embodiment for Jews was the Torah. God ultimately controlled the framework of society subsequently limiting the power of any anointed one to divert from that framework.

In the Bible, anointment was reserved primarily for its high priests and kings. The term “Mashiah” is found in connection with the anointment of kings and priests, especially the House of Aaron; and kings from Saul through David and the Davidic dynasty as well as other kings of Israel. In the Book of Leviticus the term “Mashiah” usually accompanies the term “cohen”, or priest who performed specific functions. “And the anointed priest shall take some of the bull’s blood and bring it into the Tent of meeting.”<sup>1</sup> At the time when Leviticus was in force, (the middle of the fifth century B.C.E. through the second century B.C.E.) the anointed priest was the chief political authority for the Jewish community.

Both King Saul and King David are specifically referred to as God’s anointed. “I will not raise a hand against my lord, since he is the Lord’s anointed.”<sup>2</sup> “Tower of victory to His king who deals graciously with His anointed, with David and his offspring evermore.”<sup>3</sup> Cyrus, the King of Persia, brought “redemption” to the Jewish people in exile and was also called God’s anointed.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lev. 4:5

<sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. 24:11

<sup>3</sup> 2 Sam. 22:51

<sup>4</sup> Is. 45:1

Other leaders in the community were regarded the agents of God in the process of anointing a king. Much like the position of an anointed leader, man's limitation as an agent of God reminds man of his limitations in forming destiny. Man's limitation can be illustrated in the story of the anointment of David. God told Samuel that He had rejected Saul as king over Israel, he instructed Samuel to "fill [his] horn with oil and set out" and told him to go look for David, son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, whom God had already chosen to be king. In the fulfillment of God's command, Samuel came to Bethlehem to organize a sacrifice to God. Jesse and his sons were to purify themselves and get ready for the sacrificial feast. Symbolically, Samuel could not identify the person whom God had chosen to be the "mashiah". At first Samuel thought it was Eliab because he said, "Surely the Lord's mashiah stands before Him."<sup>5</sup> But then God told Samuel, "Pay no attention to his appearance or his stature, for I have rejected him. For not as man sees [does the Lord see] a man sees only what is visible, but the Lord sees into the heart."<sup>6</sup> Then Samuel looked at Jesse's son Abinadab and realized that God had not chosen this one to be anointed. He proceeded with Shammah with the same result. Finally, Samuel realized that God had chosen none of the seven sons Jesse had presented to Samuel. Eventually Jesse brought David, and God says to Samuel "rise and anoint him for this is the one."<sup>7</sup>

Along with the limitations of the "mashiah" and the agents of God, the people are also limited. Their limitations are best illustrated in the story of King Saul, who though elected by the people, had his fate determined by God.<sup>8</sup> "The Lord had revealed the

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<sup>5</sup> 1 Sam. 16:6

<sup>6</sup> 1 Sam. 16:8

<sup>7</sup> 1 Sam. 16:12

<sup>8</sup> 1 Sam. 10:1ff.

following to Samuel: 'At this time tomorrow, I will send a man to you from the territory of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him ruler of My people Israel. He will deliver My people from the hands of the Philistines; for I have taken note of My people, their outcry has come to me.'"<sup>9</sup> Yet after God became displeased with King Saul, he effectively removed the effect of anointment from him.

*From Biblical History to Biblical Identification.* A strong connection exists between the belief in the almighty God and with the implementers of these ideas, in particular King David. Identification with King David consequently led to identification with the God of protection. As can be noted in the early Psalms 18, 20, and 28, God delivers the people for the sake of God's anointed; David "Now know that the Lord will give victory to His anointed, will answer him from His heavenly sanctuary with the mighty victories of his right arm".<sup>10</sup> "The Lord is their strength; He is a stronghold for the deliverance of his anointed".<sup>11</sup>

On a socio-political level, identification with King David meant you were on the winning team. At a basic level your life could be better through this identification. Since King David succeeded in his efforts, the people wanted to retain King David as an idea and as a concept to keep them united. This is clear when the Davidic dynasty is finally suspended during the Exile, the hope for a mashiah, an anointed, from the House of David continued. The Psalms reflect the fervor of David's supporters, and track the feeling of connection to the House of Judah even after its decline. Psalm 132 exemplifies the projected hope of the "return" of the Davidic dynasty. "There I will make a horn

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<sup>9</sup> 1 Sam. 9: 16

<sup>10</sup> Ps. 20:7

<sup>11</sup> Ps. 28:8

sprout for David; I have prepared a lamp for my anointed one.”<sup>12</sup> “For the sake of your servant David do not reject your anointed one.”<sup>13</sup> 2 Ch 6:42 echo this demand and foreshadow the desire for an anointed descendant for the House of David. “O Lord God, do not reject your anointed one, remember the loyalty of your servant David”.<sup>14</sup>

The gap between the Biblical present and identification with the Bible in times of great need was connected by hopes for the rise of another “anointed” from the House of David. More specifically, the people would respond to the situation of deep desire for change with conceptual-ideological responses that worked in the past, as in the case of further identification with King David.

*Conditions for the Development of Messianism.* Conceptual-ideological responses can be understood within the broad context of Messianism and within the smaller picture of Messianic movements. Messianism is a universal phenomenon. It is the direct outcry of a deep desire for the change of the status quo by individuals and by large groups of people. Anyone or any group, which finds itself in the throws of impossible distress, feels the need for a quick, immediate, and even miraculous change in the circumstances of life. In this sense, Messianism, the desire for a “quick fix”, is perennial and ubiquitous. The distress is sought in various coalescing directions, the psychological, the sociological, the economic, and the social-political. But above all, distress is derived from the challenge to one’s worldview or to a group’s worldview, which has sustained them up until that point. Therefore, when one’s view on life is greatly shaken by events that cause its dysfunction, then the messianic urge wells with increasing speed.

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<sup>12</sup> Ps. 132:17

<sup>13</sup> Ps. 132:10

<sup>14</sup> 2 Ch. 6:42

The amount of distress in a society has to be sufficient to bring about large movements capable of effecting change. For this change to succeed large enough numbers of individuals and large segments of a society must acknowledge a real threat to exist to the establishment of their societies. The Messianic movement responds to the desire for change with a platform containing the idea and the concept with which people can spiritually identify. The ideological-conceptual response is dependent upon many factors including how quickly the change needs to come about and through what devices the response could be expressed.

*Formulation and Response of a Messianic Movement: The Hasmonean Family.*

The conditions that ripened the atmosphere for imminent Messianism were the conquests of Alexander the Great. Alexander the Great, crossed the Hellespont in 334 B.C.E., and transformed Middle Eastern society.<sup>15</sup> "In Hellenism the Near East met the Western World and both were thereafter forever altered."<sup>16</sup> Alexander the Great converted older towns, villages and fortresses into the model Hellenistic city, and he created cities anew.<sup>17</sup> This phenomenon completely transformed the agricultural focused society into an urban stronghold.<sup>18</sup>

The advantages to becoming a Greek city or "polis" were that it advanced the transfer from the agricultural to the urban world. The established cities could achieve the title of a Greek city or polis. Thus its leading classes could be granted the privileges of Greek citizenship and institutions.<sup>19</sup> At the same time life for the farmers became quite

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<sup>15</sup> Dr. Martin A. Cohen, *Two Sister Faiths; Introduction to a Typological Approach to Early Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity* (Assumption College, 1985), 11.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 11.



difficult. "The city's growth was accompanied by a deflation in agricultural prices, and the deflation in turn generated migrations to the cities by farmers pushed off the soil."<sup>20</sup>

The cities, which had connections to the Greek polis throughout the Mediterranean world, were increasingly discontented with their inherited worldview as embodied in their constitution the Torat Moshe. For city dwellers, the Torat Moshe became increasingly dysfunctional. This occurred in the original laws, the purity laws, and places where taxes were paid in the form of agricultural items. This was the basis for the discontent for the urbanites and also the discontent for those farming classes who became increasingly marginalized in their status and potentially uncomfortable in their worldview.

Urban Jews wondered why God who was ever present in their worldview, would allow them to suffer under the Torat Moshe. They could not believe that God wanted this to happen. The second and third echelon leaders, who were looking for followers, concluded that God did not want to hurt them, rather, their suffering resulted from the misapplication or misinterpretation of God's word by the priests. Their response can be summarized in their motto: "Kannu la Torah" which meant "fight zealously for the Torah."<sup>21</sup> This provided the ideological-conceptual foundation for change on the part for those people affected and those who were dissatisfied with the Greek rule.

Ultimately this led to the Hasmonean revolution. The Hasmonean family was perhaps the best known for the non-establishment leadership in Judea at that time. They had solid roots in the history of the land and may even have been able to justify claims for descent from the Shilonite priesthood. While the Hasmonean revolution enjoyed the

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>21</sup> I Macc. 2:26-27.

short lived success under Judah the Maccabee in 165 B.C.E, success reigned when Judah's younger brother Jonathon allied with an anti-establishment Seleucid source and was able to become the primary authority in Judea.

The Hasmonean revolution had a connection to the blossoming of messianic ideology, which continued up until the Bar Kochba rebellion from 132-135 C.E. This was an era of constant warfare not only between Jews and outsiders but also among Jews themselves. The rift was a result of the Jewish policy dividing along two diametrically opposed ways of life. On one side the old farming way whose supporters constituted the majority were comfortable with the Torah constitution as it was literally applied. The other side consisted of the urban minority aided by disaffected and marginalized farmers wanted to understand the Torah in such a way as to alleviate their concerns. The rise of the Hasmonean family ultimately opened Jewish life to the value of an adjusting the Jewish framework. They offered to the people a messianic ideal.

## CHAPTER THREE

### ADJUSTMENT AND CHANNELING OF MESSIANIC IDEAS: ESTABLISHMENT OF CHAIN OF TRADITION

*Conditions for development of Rabbinic Judaism.* Out of the original Messianism of the Hasmonean revolution eventually emerged a group known as the Pharisees. The Pharisees appeared to be direct political heirs of the original Hasmoneans. When the Hasmonean leaders acquired authority and shifted their allegiance from the Pharisees to the Sadducees, the Pharisees disliked them intensely and fought against them. The Pharisees testified to the existence of a messianic thrust, which they inherited and indeed they in a sense gave stability and canonization to the messianic idea in Judaism. During the first century they gave voice to the increased messianic longings of large numbers of Jews who felt keenly the oppression of the Roman government. However, this ideal in Pharisaic Judaism is different in its thrust from the original or pure concept.

*Purposes of adjustment in Messianic concepts and ideas.* After the war against Rome when Masada fell in 73 C.E., it was clearly understood that this new centrist government of the Jews, working in allegiance with the Romans, would curb all forms of imminent Messianism as well as other dissonant movements. As a result, the leadership elements took the messianic fervor and gradually moved it from imminent, to expectant, and finally to channeled Messianism. This happened with the centrist leadership of the Jews who wanted channeled Messianism, especially on behalf of their supporters, the Romans, who saw any form of imminent Messianism as a threat to the establishment.

The success of a messianic movement and consequently its messianic ideal was not to be seen in the coming of the perfect age, but rather in the rise of institutions that embody the changed ideal. This is the phase which is reflected in rabbinic literature, a channeled Messianism in which the leadership of the society maintains the ideal of the Messiah, but is certainly opposed to any quick implementation of this ideal, for such an implementation would destroy the very institutions which they head.

Thus, the conceptual-ideological responses to the changing situation had to be turned into less time-bound and direct responses. Rather than depend directly upon the conceptual-ideological response as an answer to the changing situation of the Jews, Rabbinic Judaism masterfully and literally used the ideas and concepts in a way that proves its legitimacy and its authority. By depending upon familiar and successful concepts in the Jewish framework and the messianic ideas and ideals, which provided the foundation for their genesis, Rabbinic Judaism, through the device of the Talmud, formed "shashelet hakabbalah"-chain of tradition. While the Jewish authority of the Tannaitic and Amoraic periods proved that they were connected and adjusting to the present, they claimed a connection to the Biblical past and to the redemptive future.

*Analysis of Talmudic and Midrashic texts.* First, Rabbinic Judaism maintained and strengthened a connection with the Biblical idea of God as the ultimate decision maker of destiny through the texts dealing with Messiah, in particular those texts dealing with calculations about the coming of the Messiah. Thus we find an aggadah in Talmud tractate Megillah that illustrates the unpredictable coming of the Messiah:

R. Jeremiah-or some say R. Hiyya b. Abba-also said: Onkelos the proselyte under the guidance of R. Eleazar and R. Joshua composed The Targum of the Pentateuch. The Targum of the Prophets was composed by Jonathan ben Uzziel under the guidance of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, and the land of Israel

right person?

Thereupon quaked over an area of four hundred parasangs by four hundred parasangs, and a Bath Kol came forth and exclaimed, Who is this that has revealed My secrets to mankind? Jonathan b. Uzziel thereupon arose and said, It is I who have revealed Thy secrets to mankind. It is fully known to Thee that I have not done this for my own honor or for the honor of my father's house, but for Thy honor I have done it, that dissension may not increase in Israel. He further sought to reveal by a targum [the inner meaning] of the Hagiographa, but a Bath Kol went forth and said, Enough! What was the reason? -Because the date of the Messiah is foretold in it.<sup>22</sup>

In the same vein we read a statement in Babli Sanhedrin which says that the time of the coming of the Messiah is a mystery but urges people to wait for it patiently "Though it tarry wait for it for it will surely come it will not delay".<sup>23</sup>

Not only does God know when the Messiah is coming, but God's all-knowing nature can be illustrated Genesis Rabbah where we read that the Messiah was in God's mind at the time of creation. While in Nedarim we read, "Seven things were created before the world, viz., The Torah, repentance, the Garden of Eden, Gehenna, the Throne of Glory, the Temple, and name of the Messiah".<sup>24</sup> In Genesis Rabbah we read that the name of the Messiah came up only in God's thought.<sup>25</sup> In Baba Bathra we read "Three were called by the name of the Holy One; blessed be He, and they are the following; the righteous, the Messiah and Jerusalem."<sup>26</sup> With regard to the Messiah the proof text of Baba Bathra, it comes from Jeremiah 23:6. Another example of this can be found in B.Pes. 5a.

The leadership groups used the concept of Messiah as a device to maintain faith in God's ultimate rule. To keep the Messiah from coming, consequentially leading to all

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<sup>22</sup> Megillah 3a.

<sup>23</sup> Sanh. 97b.

<sup>24</sup> Ned. 39b.

<sup>25</sup> Gen. Rab. 1:4.

<sup>26</sup> B.B. 75b.

these bad happenings, one must rely upon "our father in who is in Heaven." Mishnah

Sota 9:15 expresses this idea:

In the footsteps of the Messiah insolence will increase and hour dwindle; the vine will yield its fruit [abundantly] but wine will be dear; the government will turn to heresy and there will be none [to offer them] reproof; the meeting-place [of scholars] will be used for immorality; Galilee will be destroyed, Gablan desolated, and the dwellers on the frontier will go about [begging] from place to place without anyone to take pity on them; the wisdom of the learned will degenerate, fearers of sin will be despised, and the truth will be lacking; youths will put old men to shame, the old will stand up in the presence of the young, a son will revile his father, a daughter will rise against her mother a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's enemies will be the members of his household; the face of the generation will be like the face of a dog, a son will not feel ashamed before his father, so upon whom is it for us to rely? Upon our father who is in Heaven.

In general, if an implementer of a Messianic movement mixed and became the conceptual-ideological response of the movement, Jewish authority regarded this as a threat to its overall framework. Jewish authority considered the messianic figure of Bar Kochba, whose revolt 132-135 C.E., was crushed by the Romans, a threat to God as the ultimate ruler and to the present Jewish authority. The Talmud expresses this idea in Sanhedrin 93b, as it tells us about the fate of Bar Koziba (a Derogative euphemism for Bar Kochba):

Bar Koziba reigned two and a half years, and then said to the Rabbis, 'I am the Messiah.' They answered, "Of Messiah it is written that he smell and judges: let us see whether he [Bar Koziba] can do so.' When they saw that he was unable to judge by scent, they slew him.

In Talmudic literature ideological-conceptual responses include the terminology revolving around Messiah, but while these words served as a venue for hope, simultaneously they served the dialectic purpose of sustaining the institution of Rabbinic Judaism. These themes dealing with and around Messiah constantly adjusted to keep

Rabbinic Judaism competitive in the market of controlling Jewish life. Thus in the following examples, the adjustability of ideological-conceptual responses will prove the chain of tradition established by Rabbinic Judaism, and also show an amazing amount of creativity!

Rabbinic Judaism connected the Biblical past to the redemptive future in many examples including Bava Metzia 85b. where the story is told that the prophet Elijah, according to this story, used to spend a great deal of time in the Beit Hamidrash of Rabbi Judah the Prince. This story says:

One day-it was the new moon-Elijah was late. [When he did come] Rabbi asked him, "Why was the master delayed today?" Elijah replied, "[I had to wait] until I woke Abraham, washed his hands, let him say his prayers, and put him back to bed. And the same for Isaac and for Jacob." "But why did not the master wake the three of them at the same time?"<sup>27</sup>

The story concludes with: 'I feared the three, praying forcefully together, might bring the Messiah before his time.'<sup>28</sup> We see this thought also expressed in Genesis Raba 12:6 and the Tanchuma Bereshit where "R. Berekhiah said in the name of R. Samuel bar Nahman: Though all living things [such as white figs] came into being in the fullness of their growth, they shriveled up as soon as Adam sinned and will not return to their perfection until a scion of Perez [the Messiah] comes."<sup>29</sup>

Another combination of Biblical themes and redemptive themes appears in Genesis Rabbah where Rabbi Abbahu, commenting on the verse in Gen. 33:14, "Until I come unto my lord unto Seir", says "We went through all of Scripture to and fro, and did not find that Jacob ever went to the mountain of Seir to see Esau. Is it possible that

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<sup>27</sup> Bava Metzia 85b.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Gen. Rab. 12:6 and Tanchuma Bereshit

Jacob, the truthful one, would have deceived Esau?" <sup>30</sup> And then he raises the question, "So when is Jacob to come to Esau?" And he provides the following answer, "In the time-to-come, when 'liberators shall come up on Mount Zion to wreak judgment on Mount Esau'" (Obad. 1:21).<sup>31</sup>

Through the intertwining of the present and the redemptive future Rabbinic Judaism also proved its authority. For example, we read the story of Judah and Hezekiah where the twin sons of R. Hiyya were once sitting at a table with Rabbi Judah the Prince.<sup>32</sup> According to the story, Rabbi Judah told his servants to give the young men plenty of wine to get them to say something.<sup>33</sup> When wine had gotten to them they said: "[Messiah] the son of David will not appear before the two ruling houses in Israel-the exilarchate in Babylonia and the patriarchate in the Land of Israel-come to an end."<sup>34</sup> Either of these institutions did not expect to end very soon. Therefore they meant that they would come sometime in the very, very distant future.

Rabbinic Judaism adjusted their conceptual-ideological responses to support their control over the daily life of the Jew. In other words, redemption was framed into terms of understanding present activity, such as the reason for praying a certain prayer. This role of the Hallel psalms in the Haggadah is recognized in the Talmud in Pesachim 118a.:

Now since there is the great Hallel, why do we recite this one? Because it includes [a mention of] the following five things: The exodus from Egypt, the dividing of the Red Sea, the giving of the Torah [Revelation], the resurrection of the dead, and the pangs of Messiah. The exodus from Egypt, as it is written, When Israel came forth out of Egypt, the dividing of the Red Sea: The Sea saw it, and fled; the giving of the Torah; The mountains skipped like rams; resurrection of the dead: I shall walk before

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<sup>30</sup> Gen. Rab.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Sanh. 38a.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.



the Lord [in the land of the living]; the pangs of Messiah: Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us.

Rabbinic Judaism found it necessary to expand and add to the existing conceptual-ideological responses. It is during the Amoraic period when we see the great flowering of the messianic idea. Thus, in Talmud Babli Berachot we recognize in the discussion of the abbreviation of the blessing where David is mentioned that the word Mashiah that is used for David refers not merely to an anointed king but indeed to the Messiah. The passage reads:

R. Joshua says: an abbreviated eighteen. What is meant by 'an abbreviated eighteen'? Rab. Said: An abbreviated form of each blessing; Samuel said: Give us discernment, O Lord, to know Thy ways, and circumcise our heart to fear Thee, and forgive us so that we may be redeemed, and keep us far from our sufferings, and fatten us in the pastures of Thy land, and gather our dispersions from the four corners of the earth, and let them who err from Thy prescriptions be punished, and lift up Thy hand against the wicked, and let the righteous rejoice in the building of Thy city and the establishment of the temple and in the exalting of the horn of David Thy servant and the preparation of a light for the son of Jesse Thy Messiah; before we call mayest Thou answer; blessed art Thou, O Lord, who hearkenest to prayer.<sup>35</sup>

In Amoraic Haggadah, the concept of Messiah is universalized, making it more general, thus more applicable. While this added to the flexibility of the concept of Messiah the particularity of Messiah connected to an imminent Messianism was purged. Thus in Sifre Zutah we read:

Each of these I showed you has one disposition and one spirit. But as to what you asked for earlier, at the end of time there will be a person within whom, to be sure, there will be but one spirit, yet it will have the capacity to bear the weight of the spirits of all men-that person is the Messiah.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Ber. 29a.

<sup>36</sup> Sif Zuta, Pinhas, &16; Yelammedenu

The concepts of the resurrection of the dead, the ingathering of the exiles, the creation of the growth of abundant fruits, and indeed a time of peace and prosperity for all humanity blossomed as a result of the adjustability of the concept of Messiah.

Consistent with the idea of the ingathering of the exiles are the midrashim, which insist on the importance of being buried in the land of Israel, so as to ensure the resurrection when the Messiah comes. Thus in this connection the Talmudic Haggadah says in the name of Rabbi Eliezar,

The dead [buried] outside the Land of Israel will not come back to life, for it is said, "I will set glory in the Land of the living" (Ezek. 26:20); in the Land, where My glory is set, the dead will come back to life; but not so the dead in a land where My glory is not.<sup>37</sup>

On another level, the concept of Messiah expanded enough that rabbis could argue over it. In fact, they even could agree on various basics about the eternal destiny, but they would disagree on the details. This confidence reflects the authority of Rabbinic Judaism. Genesis Rabbah 96:5 involving Rabbi Eliezar exemplifies this idea:

Bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt" (Gen. 47:29). Why did all the patriarchs demand and yearn for burial in the Land of Israel? R. Eleazar said: There is a reason for it. R. Joshua ben Levi explained that in saying, "There is a reason for it," R. Eleazar alluded to the verse "O that I might walk before the Lord in the lands of the living" (Ps. 116:9), a verse our masters, in the name of R. Huldah, explained as follows: Why did the patriarchs yearn for burial in the Land of Israel? Because the dead buried in the Land of Israel will be the first to come to life in the days of the Messiah and will enjoy the age of the Messiah. But he who dies outside the Land and is buried there has, said R. Hananiah, two agonies to contend with [the agony of dying and the agony of burial outside the Land].<sup>38</sup>

Creativity in the rabbinic tradition, almost totally post-Tannaitic fills the concept of Messiah with imaginative speculation about his arrival. Rabbi Ishmael records his

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<sup>37</sup> B. Ket 111a.

<sup>38</sup> Gen. R. 96:5

introduction by the angelic prince Hardarmiel into God's "archives of deliverances and consolations".<sup>39</sup> There says Rabbi Ishmael:

I saw one crown different from all the other crowns-the sun, the moon, and the twelve constellations were set in it. I asked, "For whom is this exquisite crown intended?" He replied, "For David, king of Israel," I said, "Splendor of my radiance, show me the glory of David," He replied, "My beloved, wait three hours. David will come, and you will see him in his greatness."<sup>40</sup>

He further says:

David, king of Israel, coming out first, and all the kings of the house of David following him, each one with his crown on his head. But David's crown was brighter and more beautiful than all the others, so that the radiance reached to the end of the world. Then David went up to the heavenly Temple, where a fiery throne was prepared for him. He sat on it with all the kings of the house of David seated facing him and all the kings of Israel standing behind him. Then David rose up and uttered songs and praise no ear had ever heard. After David had begun with the songs and praises, Metatron and the entire heavenly household began to proclaim, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts" (Is. 6:3)... And all the kings of the house of David responded, "The Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall the Lord be One, and His Name One" (Zech. 14:9).<sup>41</sup>

In this last discussion, Rabbinic Judaism uses the concept of Messiah to explain the real focus in the daily life of a Jew. In other words, in that Rabbinic Judaism could achieve its messianic ideal, the concept of Messiah is channelized, put aside for the sake of a community working toward a common destiny. 'What must a man do to be spared the pangs of the Messiah'.<sup>42</sup> Rabbi Eleazar's answer is 'Let him engage in study and benevolence; and you Master do both'.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> BhM 5:167-68 (Page. 387, #1, Redemption and the Days of the Messiah)

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Sanh. 98 b.

<sup>43</sup> Sanh. 98 b.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONTINUED ADJUSTMENT AND MESSIANIC IMMINENCE: THE BRIDGE BETWEEN TALMUDIC JUDAISM AND HASIDISM

*Conditions for ripening of Mysticism and Shabbatai Zevi.* All succeeding

Messianic movements relied almost exclusively upon the Talmudic material dealing with the Messiah for their conceptual-ideological content. There was of course some degree of innovation, but it was relatively minor. It is not until we come to the Sixteenth century and the Ottoman Empire that a great effervescence of creativity developed in this area. The Messianic movement takes its natural course beginning with the external conditions which worsen. The sixteenth century was a time of great crisis and disorientation for the entire European world. In the Ottoman Empire large numbers of Sephardic Jews tried to cope with the disorientation that resulted either from their expulsion from Spain and Portugal when they left as Jews, or from their flight from Spain and Portugal after they or their ancestors had converted to Christianity. Their disorientation led to the profoundest questions about the meaning of life, and for those who were significantly disorientated, questions about the coming of the Messiah. The very time the whole Christian world was disorientated, largely because modern ideas were entering the world and challenging old ways of thinking and living. The rise of the Ottoman Turks, who eventually took over a good part of Southeastern Europe and even in the late 1520s knocked at the gates of Vienna, created consternation among Christians. No less consternation was caused by the rise of Protestantism, which ultimately resulted in splitting if not splintering a good

part of the Catholic world. All of these activities raised millennial expectations and messianic hopes throughout the European world. There were messianic circles throughout the Ottoman Empire in North Africa, Turkey, and especially in Palestine and within Palestine in the city of Safed.

*Analysis of Mysticism and Shabbatai Zevi.* In Safed significant group of Jewish philosopher/mystics gathered together to develop the Kabbalah, especially what was called the practical Kabbalah to bring forth the time of the redemption. Among these philosophers were Solomon Alkabetz, Moses Cordevero, Issac Luria, Chaim Vital, Joseph Saragosi, and Judah Hiyat, who were convinced that the Messiah would come before his generation would end. These Sephardic thinkers relied heavily on the messianic concepts of the Talmudic period, of which however they used only a small amount. A beautiful example from *The Wisdom of the Zohar* illustrates the linkage of mysticism to the Messiah concept. The Zohar, which helps explain the mystery of existence, tells a story about the entering of Rabbi Hiyya, a mortal being into the “celestial academy” to gain information about the end. Rabbi Hiyya would bring back information to strengthen his follower’s messianic beliefs in that revealing secrets hastens the coming of the Messiah.

... And all the companions from each academy ascend from the academy here to the academy in the firmament, and the Messiah is coming to all these academies, to approve the teachings from the mouths of the sages. At that moment the Messiah came...He[The Messiah] said to him[Rabbi Simeon]: Blessed are you, Rabbi, because your teaching consists of three hundred and seventy lights, and each light has six hundred and thirteen explanations...I have not come to set a seal upon your academy, but the winged creature is here, and I know that he will enter no academy except yours. At that moment Rabbi Simeon told him of the oath that the winged creature had sworn. Immediately the Messiah began to tremble, and he raised his voice, and the firmaments trembled, and the great sea trembled, and leviathan trembled, and the world seemed about to overturn. In the meantime, he saw Rabbi Hiyya sitting at the feet of Rabbi Simeon. He said: Who

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brought a mortal here, clothed in the garb of that world? Rabbi Simeon said: This is Rabbi Hiyya, the light of the lamp of the Torah. He said: Let him be gathered with his sons, and let them be members of your academy. Rabbi Simeon said: Let him be given time. They gave him time, and he departed shaking, his eyes streaming with tears.<sup>44</sup>

As in the case of Bar Kochba, the rise in the late seventeenth century of the messianic pretender, Shabbatai Zevi, caused much threat to Rabbinic Judaism. Shabbatai Zevi represented many messianic groups who all believed that the coming of the Messiah was imminent. Shabbatai Zevi implemented a conceptual-ideological response to difficult times against all precepts of the Talmud. Yet, the adjustability of the concept of Messiah may have led so many followers to “fall” for his deception. In some sense his order to ensure the messianic fulfillment by engaging in such bizarre actions as being involved in all kinds of sinful activities in order to exhaust all of the sin in the world or to leave the Jewish faith to become Muslim in order thereby to convert the infidels made sense within the realm of the Talmudic conception of Messianism. The messianic repercussions around Shabbatai Zevi and his followers were reflected the general millenarian trend in the broader European world and in effect continued long after Shabbatai Zevi’s death. Ultimately many of the ideas of the Kabbalah filtered through Shabbatai Zevi’s successors. They became the foundational ideas for movements such as the Frankists and even the basis, with many modifications, for the Hasidic movement.

Within the spectrum of channeled Messianism the two major movements were Frankism and Hassidism. The leader of the Frankist movement, Jacob Frank (1726-1791) was born in Korolowka, a small town in Podolia, a region in Poland. He was a messianic figure. He attracted hundreds, perhaps thousands, of the Jews from among the disaffected people in Podolia and neighboring regions as well as a number of the anti-

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<sup>44</sup> Zohar I, 4a-4b.

establishment, intellectual leaders.<sup>45</sup> He called for a reemphasis of study and learning and looser fulfillment of halakha all which suited such those elements of village Jews and innkeepers who felt not merely oppressed by the demands of the halakha, but even more by the leadership of the Jewish community that made these demands.<sup>46</sup> His practices, certainly innovative, included:

"the Messiah image and his self-deification, and the official sanction or advocacy of licentiousness, the easy change from one religion to another—from Judaism to Islam and from that to Catholicism..."<sup>47</sup>

The Frankist movement sought alliances with the outside world, including elements of the Catholic church and the state apparatus, which were glad to join with them and support them in accordance with their own respective agendas. Frank, himself, eventually converted to Christianity in 1759 and was arrested on January 7, 1760.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Weinryb, 242.

<sup>46</sup> Weinryb, 242.

<sup>47</sup> Weinryb, 243.

<sup>48</sup> Weinryb, 255.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE EXPANSION OF MESSIANIC IDEALS THROUGH NEW PATHS: THE HASIDIC MOVEMENT

The first use of Yiddish song as a device for Messianic concepts can be attributed to the Hasidism. To understand how Yiddish song came to be a device of this platitude, Hasidism must be evaluated as a Messianic movement. The study will begin with the history of Hasidism; beginning with the external and internal circumstances which ripened the conditions for its formation. This study of the history will also provide the background information for Chapter 3; the Maskilim, the Zionists and Yiddish Song. The development of Hasidism and the consequential development of its conceptual-ideological response depended upon its implementers; leaders such as Israel Baal Shem Tov encapsulated the essence of Hasidism. The study will then continue with how the Hasidic movement came to use Yiddish and Yiddish song as devices for their conception-ideological response to these difficult conditions. The adjustment, creation, and recreation of Messianic concepts within Hasidism will be traced and evaluated in the texts as well as in the music of Yiddish songs mentioning the word "Messiah". Finally, this study will discuss how Yiddish songs are used to achieve the messianic ideal, the changed picture.

*The History of Poland and the conditions under which Hasidism arose.* Starting around the thirteenth century, Poland offered a refuge to Jews who lived in lands of



intolerance and turbulence. At a time when many lands to the west planned the expulsion of their Jews, Poland remained untouched and indifferent to these occurrences. Their political policies reflected tolerance and freedom. As early as 1264 intolerance was shown by such princes as Prince Boleslaw the Pious of Kalish, who granted the Jews of his principality (Great Poland) a privilege or charter of Western origin, patterned upon the privileges granted by Frederick of Austria (1244), Bela IV of Hungary (1251), and King Ottokar II of Bohemia (1254).<sup>49</sup> (This charter served as a model for privileges in other parts of Poland.<sup>50</sup> Casimir the Great (1333-1370) confirmed the privileges granted by the Prince Boleslaw.

The Jews learned of the opportunities awaiting them in Poland, and arrived in small groups mainly from the West of Poland from Bohemia and Germany-Austria.<sup>51</sup> Though some Jews may have arrived from the east, in Kievan Russia, most of our evidence in the early settlement of Poland came from Germanic lands. The theory purposed by Arthur Kessler that the Eastern European Jewish community derived from the remnants or successors of the Khazar Kingdom does not withstand strong scrutiny. He makes this claim in his book called *The Thirteenth Tribe*.<sup>52</sup> The reality is that the Khazar kingdom disappeared by the end of the tenth century, and the fate of its people is unknown to history. Furthermore, large segments, if not the majority, of the population were Jews only titularly because their leadership had adopted Judaism. The evidence seems to point to the fact that most of the subjects of the Jewish leadership of the Khazars

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<sup>49</sup> Bernard D. Weinryb, *The Jews of Poland; A Social and Economic History of the Jewish Community in Poland from 1100 to 1800* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973), 25.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>52</sup> Arthur Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe* (New York: Random House, 1976).

were non-descript in their religious devotion and all likelihood just dissolved into the general population at the time of the dissolution of the Khazar kingdom.

The charters of protection offered to Jews rights that perhaps were rarely given by other governments. The charters in 1264, 1334, and 1453 essentially granted Jews a quasi-autonomous status. Accordingly these charters granted Jews full rights to live according to their laws including such things as the right to have their own ritual slaughterer, the right to have their mikva, synagogues, and in addition, full protection against violence such that used to occur during Jewish funeral processions. The establishment elements, led by the kings of Poland, usually enforced the clauses in their charters, like the one in the Hungarian-Bohemian privileges, which prohibited the claims that Jews were using Christian blood for ritual purposes<sup>53</sup>, and in this case they called upon the papal bull of Innocent IV in 1247.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore following these charters and the desire of governments to keep Jewish communities comfortable and happy so that they could be maximally productive, Jews were not arbitrarily taxed, but, as a document of 1497 stated concerning the Lwow suburb, "Jews and non-Jews pay identical taxes".<sup>55</sup> The Polish polity wanted to create a symbiotic relationship between the establishment elements and the Jews as a result of the economic stability they provided.

Naturally such freedom and privileges given to the Jews led to considerable unrest in the general population. In these struggles the Catholic clergy, like the secular Polish leadership, was divided depending on where they stood on the spectrum of political leadership. Catholic clergy that served with the central leadership and local leadership

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<sup>53</sup> Weinryb, 34.

<sup>54</sup> Weinryb, 35.

<sup>55</sup> Weinryb, 53.

were de-facto protectors of the Jews even when they continued to mouth anti- Jewish statements in the New Testament or other places.

By contrast, the Catholic clergy that were connected to the anti-establishment elements did their utmost to highlight these texts and to disseminate anti-Jewish thought and literature. The Catholic Church or the Polish nobility cannot be considered at any time totally involved against the Jews. The attitude toward the Jews varied with the degree of protection that the leadership was prepared to give the Jews as well as with the degree of opposition which anti-establishment groups were able to mount.

At first the Jewish immigrants into the Polish regions from the West immigrated voluntarily, or at least not under the kind of duress that reflected the subsequent immigrations. Basically they were poor with little Jewish learning and less concerned with living in an established and Torah- centered Jewish community than were their co-religionists back home. If for no other reason because, initially, in Poland, there were no established Jewish communities, and Jews entering these communities would have to be content with a minimal or minimalist Jewish existence. Stability began to form as scholars began to arrive. One such example was that of Abraham of Bohemia, a prominent court Jew of the Bohemian Hungarian king and German emperor, who was eventually appointed elder over the Jews of Poland in 1514.

*growing* [ As Jewish communities, or Kehillot, were organized both by localities and by regions. Eventually as the Jewish population of Poland grew in numbers and economic and political esteem, their rabbis were regarded to be on a par with the great rabbis of the Sanhedrin at the time of Yavneh. Eventually also Jews had their regional organizations and eventually a Council of Three Lands and more classically the famous Council of

Four Lands, “the Va’ad Ar’ba Aratzot”, the highest institution of Jewish autonomy established in the middle of the sixteenth century.<sup>56</sup> In the kehillah, Jewish law was the official law and Jewish holidays were the official holidays and Jewish observance was the politically correct activity. In other words, the idea of choice was overruled by the fact that Jewish law was the official law of the Jewish polity, and could be enforced by Jewish leadership.

Nevertheless, the sense of security that Jews found within their kehillot was constantly challenged by turmoil and distress from the outside. As a result, Jews in all such situations were under the threat or the reality of destruction of life, property, and their relative freedom. Such situations occurred sporadically in the early centuries of Jewish life in Poland, but by the middle of the seventeenth century their occurrence was more frequent and more dramatic. At that time Poland, and therefore the Jewish community, stood at the zenith of their respective developments. Poland was a vast empire stretching from the Oder River in the West to the Dnieper River in the East with considerable wealth and with leadership that had considerable power and the Jewish community with great centers at Cracow and Lwow had become one the most creative and productive Jewish communities in history. The Jewish community and the population of the Jewish community had grown from 50,000 at the beginning of the sixteenth century to an unprecedented 500,000 by this time.

However, the seeds of disillusion were already planted. Poland was economically and militarily overextended, and was subject to a general decline economically and politically that affected all of Western Europe and the Mediterranean world. This decline

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<sup>56</sup> See article by H.H. Ben-Sasson, “Councils of the Lands” in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 5, cols. 995-1003.

was due to the advent of the modern world with its new techniques and opportunities and its relentless challenge to the foundations of the medieval world, on which the institutions of Poland, as well as the structures of other countries around it, continued to rest. The challenge of the modern world to the medieval structures brought considerable dislocation of large segments of the European communities in each polity, and gave anti-establishment forces an opportunity to seek advancement at the expense of their own ancient regimes. The struggles between Protestants and Catholics masked broader social problems with the religious dimensions. Thus the struggles in Poland where a pogrom against Protestants in a number of cities beginning at the end of the sixteenth century led to the expulsion of the Arians from Poland. Consequentially it was possible for anti-establishment leadership to organize the mostly Greek-Orthodox serfs against their Catholic masters amongst the Polish gentry leading to the furious Cossack rebellions led by Bogdan Chmielnicki in 1648.<sup>57</sup>

In all of these struggles the minority population of Jews, easily identifiable, and distinguishable and vulnerable by virtue of its small numbers and its traditional allegiance to the establishment, always found itself in the line of fire. It explains also why, in addition to being heard in many other but historically less dramatic situations, the Cossacks led by Bogdan Chmielnicki in 1648 decimated the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe. The brutality of the Chmielnicki Massacre was no where better depicted than in the great work, *Yeven M'tzulah, the Vale of Weeping*, by Nathan of Hanover who said:

Some were skinned alive and their flesh was thrown to the dogs; some had their hands and limbs chopped off and their bodies thrown on the highway

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<sup>57</sup> For a first hand account of the Chmielnicki Massacres, see Nathan of Hanover's *Yeven Metsulah*, ed. I Halpern (Tel Aviv, 1945) quoted below.

to be trampled by wagons and crushed by horses; some had wounds inflicted upon them and were then thrown on the street to die a slow death...others were buried alive. The enemy slaughtered infants in their mothers' laps. They were sliced into pieces like fish...The infants were hung on the breasts of their mothers. Some children were pierced with spears.<sup>58</sup>

An increasing majority of the Jewish community, terribly dislocated physically, economically, and emotionally by the massacres and their circumstances inevitably sought solace and hope in an immediate Messianic coming. The amount of dislocation and disorientation in the Jewish community was heightened, perhaps even more than in the other communities, because the Jewish community was so dependent. As has been seen throughout Jewish history, the Jewish community sought direct responses from the Jewish authority to these periods of unrest and persecution. As in other communities, Polish Jewry connected to the Messianic fervor that existed in the Ottoman empire under the leadership of Shabbatai Zevi. Therefore Poland developed its own kind of imminent Messianism, which had a great deal of Shabbatai Zevi in it, but was not limited to Shabbatai Zevi. As the nadir of the problems of Polish Jewry passed, and reconstruction of life in Poland and the Polish regions gradually increased stability came to the Jewish community in which as always happens, the forces of imminent Messianism began to decline and give way to forces of expectant Messianism and a spectrum of channeled Messianism. The greatest of these movements included Hasidism.

*Hasidic response: Its Implementers.* The putative founder of Hassidism, Israel Baal Shem Tov (1700-60) founded the concepts of Hasidism and his warm personality encapsulated the essence of Hasidism's conceptual-ideological response to a new dimension of meaning in the life of the Jewish people. He served as a symbol of the

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<sup>58</sup> Weinryb, 188.

bridge possible between God and the Jewish people. This bridge built through a personalization of the relationship between God and the Jewish people is the element added to the conceptual-ideological responses of the past. (.)

The highly romanticized but equally intriguing book by Jacob Minkin, entitled the *The Romance of Hassidism* describes Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov in words such as “the sublime suggestions of his teachings” came to him “as an illumination of his whole being, almost like a communion from on high” and “A sunny faith in God inspired all his words and teachings”.<sup>59</sup> His words touched the souls of the common folk, because of their new found relevance and application to life, and because of the medium through which they were spoken- Yiddish, the language of the common folk! The miracle tales are consistent with other stories found about other great leaders, who are portrayed as being “one of the people”. What is perhaps most important about the legends regarding the Besht is that they encapsulated the values, ideals, and the beauty of classical Hasidism.

*Hasidic response: Personalization.* According to Hassidic mythology, Israel Baal Shem Tov, known as the Besht, was born in the lower stratum of the Jewish society. The myth was conceived in order to make him “one of the people.” The “people” to whom he was ministering primarily were largely disadvantaged, unlearned, and even illiterate. In that Besht came from the very literate and literal Rabbinic establishment who oppressed the disadvantaged in many ways, he could not in any way emphasize his learning or his inevitable relationship to the Rabbinic establishment. Hasidism responded with the confirmation of the principle of physical joy being a precondition for spiritual joy, which appealed greatly to the lives of the common folk. Hasidism conferred “high

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<sup>59</sup> Jacob S. Minkin, *The Romance of Hassidism* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935), 85.

prestige upon the business of making a living and making money by the rationalization that the goal was to use one's earnings for good deeds: for charity, raising a family, marrying off the children, and so on. In some cases Hasidic leaders reasoned that affluence afforded peace of mind, which enables a man to serve God better."<sup>60</sup>

In accordance with the romanticized version of Hasidism and indeed the "classical theology" of Hasidism, Israel Baal Shem Tov spoke of the perceivable presence of God in all things created and certainly in all people in equal measure. God became democratic in early Hasidism; God was in the hearts of all human beings, learned or not. God was not punitive, but rather a loving God who desired humans to fulfill commandments in love and not in fear. God was near and embraceable and available to help all human beings no matter what their plight.

The Besht's worship reflected a joyous communion with God, he states, "No child is born except through pleasure and joy. By the same token, if one wishes his prayers to bear fruit, he must offer them with pleasure and joy."<sup>61</sup> By ridding fear and dread from the hearts of the common folk, Israel Baal Shem Tov implored his people to pray with joy. He states:

The first time a thing occurs in nature it is called a miracle; later it becomes natural, and no attention is paid to it. Let your worship and your service be a fresh miracle; later it becomes natural, and no attention is paid to it. Let your worship and your service be a fresh miracle every day to you. Only such worship performed from the heart, with enthusiasm, is acceptable.<sup>62</sup>

Worship included dancing, movement, and swaying. Lack of learning became secondary to a life lived with enthusiastic devotion to God and an endless faith in God's goodness.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 279.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 89.



Eventually splintered into dynasties with hereditary leaders called tsadikim and followers called the hasidim. Hasidism established the dynasties of the tzadik who ruled like princes and placed a sense of heavy religious responsibility upon their followers. Officially, the tzadik affirmed Hasidism by carrying out the teachings of his predecessor and ultimately all the way to the Besht. Conversely the tzadik was inevitably a model pastor who was available to his people, unlike the demonized picture of the Misnagidim, listening to all of their problems and offering solutions to every dimension of their lives from business to personal piety. The tzadik listened to women, to children, to everyone who had been disenfranchised from equality in the Jewish community. As a result, the common folk would make pilgrimages to see the tzadikim in their courts, and naturally to bestow gifts upon them.

External pressure and ultimately the exploitation of the system of the tzadikim led to the downfall of the Hasidic movement. The opponents of the Hasidim, named "Misnagidim" by the Hasidim sought to discredit the movement or any part whenever they could, though they had great difficulty as they did in the case of the Besht with his circle, whenever a tzadik was a learned man. As it developed, the movement of Hasidism represented a threat to Misnagid traditional Judaism.

*Hasidic response: Use of Yiddish as a sacred language.* To reach and to help the Jewish people, they would at any "cost", though Hasidism saw it as at any "gain", institute personalization. Thus the "radical" institution of Yiddish and of Yiddish song as devices for conceptual-ideological response seemed natural to Hasidism. In the eighteenth century movement of Hasidism sanctioned the use of Yiddish to express religious concepts, and greatly influenced the explosion and growth of the Yiddish

language for all mediums. After the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) and the Chmielnicki Massacres (1648-1656) in the Ukraine in the seventeenth century, Jewry was filled with ascetic ideals and mystical longings.<sup>63</sup> The mystics were mostly in favor of disseminating translations of the Zohar and other mystical works in Yiddish so that they could promulgate their Kabbalistic ideas.<sup>64</sup> Hasidism was built upon this ground. Hasidic teachers conferred the prestige of Yiddish and openly recommended its use for sincere prayer.<sup>65</sup> Rabbi Levi Yizhok of Berdichev (1740-1809) was the source of many original prayers, poems, and songs in Yiddish while Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav (1772-1811), whose stories have become popular, urged his followers to worship in Yiddish.<sup>66</sup> He says:

In the sacred tongue it will be difficult for him (the hasid) to say everything that he wishes and he will not be able to be as sincere since we do not speak the sacred tongue. But in Leshon Ashkenaz, which we always use, it will be easy for him to speak his heart. His heart is drawn to Leshon Ashkenaz to which he is accustomed.<sup>67</sup>

The recognition of Yiddish as a literary language denoted a loss of authority for the traditional Jewish authority. The use of Yiddish eliminated the hierarchical aspect in the participation of Jewish worship and in effect the participation in Jewish life. God could now be reached through simple measures, through the language of one's heart. This ideological response downplayed the authority upon which Rabbinic Judaism stood. Rabbis often opposed not only the secular Yiddish works patterned after European

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<sup>63</sup> Emanuel S. Goldsmith, *Modern Yiddish Culture; The Story of the Yiddish Language Movement*, (New York: Shapolsky Publishers and The Workmen's Circle Education Department, 1987), 34.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 36.

literature but even the Yiddish renderings of religious and ethical works.<sup>68</sup> A few rabbis supported the use of Yiddish as a study language such as Rabbi Yekhiel Mikhl Epstein, author of liturgical and moralistic words. Yet people such as this rabbi were interested in maintaining the traditional religious regimen through Yiddish. (Up until the fifteenth century Yiddish was not commonly used in the production of sacred or secular works. For the average Jew, whose Talmudic knowledge was limited; the women, who had little if any formal education; and the children in the schools, the vernaculars soon also became literary languages.<sup>69</sup> The earliest classics of Yiddish literature were products of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries and were predominately created by bards, jesters, and other Jewish counterparts of medieval troubadours and minstrels.<sup>70</sup> Their stories were based on biblical tales and on medieval stories. One such circulating tale was about King Arthur and his Round Table. One of the most popular knightly romances titled *Bovo-Bukh* was written by Elia Levita in 1507-1508 and printed for the first time in 1541.<sup>71</sup>)

While the Misnagdim tried to maintain a vernacular use of the Yiddish language, Hasidism negated their cause. For example, when tzadikim, the righteous ones, undertook to composing “holy tunes by heavenly inspiration”. They created “holy tunes” that could include both Hebrew and Yiddish.<sup>72</sup> This procedure induced the antagonism of the Misnagdim who favored traditional melodies, and certainly those not in Yiddish. Hasidism’s use of Yiddish as a religious language, and their official de-emphasize of

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>71</sup> Sol Liptzin, *A History of Yiddish Literature* (Middle Village, New York: Jonathan David Publishers, 1972), 5.

<sup>72</sup> Abraham Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music; Its Historical Development* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1992), 415.

study (though study was still a major vehicle for the upper crust of Hassidic society), and what the Misnagidim regarded as the abhorrent and “rapturous” worship practices all downplayed the authority of the Misnagidim. As a result, in 1772, the Vilna Gaon, the great leader of Misnagid Jewry banned Hassidism. Twenty five years later his son confirmed this ban after it was rumored that he might be relaxing his opposition. The tensions between the Misnagdim and Hasidim culminated with the denunciation by the Misnagdim of such leaders as Shneur Zalman to the government on the charge that they were instigators of a dangerous political movement against the interests of the state.

*Analysis of changing Messianic concepts.* The texts of the Hasidic movement from the *Hasidic Anthology* as well as those of Yiddish songs all illustrate the adjustability of conceptual-ideological response within the essence of Hasidism and of course illustrating its validity in the “Shashelet hakabbalah”. As most Messianic movements, Hasidism upheld the Biblical belief of God as an almighty and even capricious sovereign always ready to intervene in the affairs of his people Israel. Hasidism emphasized and expanded the concept of God’s omnipresence in life. *A Dudeleh* by Reb Levi Yitzok Berditchiver illustrated how God was not external to the world but rather the underlying principle of all the particular forms, containing them within Him :

Lord of the Universe, I will for you sing a You-eleh:  
 Where can one find you? Where cannot one find you? Because, where I  
 go-You. And where(ever) I stand-You. Continuously You, only You,  
 again You, but You...(If it) Is for someone good- You. God forbid bad-  
 ay You, oy You..East You, West You, North You, South You, Heaven  
 You, Earth You, Up you, don You. Where(ever) I turn, You, oy You.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Chaim Neslen, comp., Course Book for Yiddish Music and Folklore, (The Annual Yiddish Summer Course of The Oxford Institute for Yiddish Studies, Yiddish Music, and Folklore: 1999), 4.2.

The personalized relationship between God and the Jewish people is illustrated in this beautiful example of the acceptance of the yolk of commandments in joy which Rabbi Levi Yitzchak used to sing on the High Holidays, *Dorei Mailo Im Dorei Mato*:

The inhabitants of heaven and earth sing Your praises. I, Levi Yizchok of Berditchev am here to let my prayers fall before the throne of Your glory. At every turn You approach the children of Israel to advise them and to command them. This shows that they are Your beloved children. Therefore, let us proclaim the greatness and the holiness of the Lord.<sup>74</sup>

Hasidism offered a response that brought people closer to God, through all forms of communication. These songs do not fail to emphasize man's limitations in the face of God. From them we derive the statement, "a mentsh is nur a mentsh", "a man is only a man", that is he is a rational being complemented by emotion, but limited in almost every way can be derived. Even the pious Jews, the shayneh layt, could beseech God with tears, because in their world view, tears of this kind especially from pious people were always considered acceptable in God's sight.<sup>75</sup> Their petitions, in this and in other ways could function as a plea for God's mercy and a request therefore for God to change the situations of their lives. All forms of communication became devices for expression! As this song illustrated, even irrational argument, a device so attached to the common people, became an important mode of expression. Reb. Levi Yizchok of Berditchev illustrated this in *A Din Toire mit Got*:

Good morning to You, Lord of the Universe! I Levi Yizchok, the son of Sarah of Berditchev, have been sent by Your people of Israel to summon You to trial. What grudge do You bear against Your people of Israel. Why do you so persistently harass Your people of Israel? At every turn it is: Speak to the children of Israel? Tell the children of Israel! Dear Father in Heaven there are so many nations in this world. The Russian say: their Czar is the only ruler; the Germans say: their Kaiser is the only ruler, and

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<sup>74</sup> Velvel Pasternak, comp., *The Yiddish Anthology* (New York: Tara Publications, 1998), 149.

<sup>75</sup> Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog, *Life is With People; The Culture of the Shtetl* (New York: Schocken Books 1962), 415.

the English say: their King is the only King. But I, Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev say: The only king is He who sits on the throne in Heaven. I have something else to say, too. I will not budge from this spot until You stop the persecutions of your children Israel.<sup>76</sup>

Hasidism utilized only a small portion of the vast variety of Talmudic messianic ideas. The individual role, used in the context of Hasidic thought, has been activated through “whole-hearted” devotion. Whereas the arrival of the Messiah was once dependent upon study, now the new ideological-conceptual response changes the equation to “whole-hearted” devotion. Thus we read a statement attributed to Rabbi Schmelke who once asked:

Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to the meal, neither yesterday, nor today?” ”Why has not the Messiah, Son of Jesse, come yesterday or today, in former generations and in this generation? Because we petition the Lord merely for bread, for our material well-being. Had we whole heartedly implored Him to send the Redeemer, and forgotten or individual needs, the Lord would assuredly have sent us Messiah”.<sup>77</sup>

In a similar vein we read a question that was placed before the Berditschever Rebbe:

Does not the verse in Malachi 3:23, which states that Elijah will appear before the great day of the Redemption to prepare the hearts of the fathers and their children, contradict the statement in Sanhedrin (98) that the Messiah replied to a query concerning the time of his advent with the verse in Psalm 95:7; “Today, if you will obey His Voice?”<sup>78</sup>

The Rebbe responds:

The Messiah could come today without being preceded by Elijah, if we ourselves prepare our hearts without troubling the Prophet to do it for us. Let us make ourselves read, the, to receive the Messiah any day by obeying the Voice of the Lord.<sup>79</sup>

Similarly also we read the case of the Rabbi Eliezer Lippmann , the rabbi of Rozniatov,

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<sup>76</sup> Pasternak, comp., 103.

<sup>77</sup> *The Hasidic Anthology*, trans., comp., and arr. Louis I. Newman and Samuel Spitz (New Jersey: Jason Aronson, ) 248.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 246.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 246, 247.

Who persistently inquired of Rabbi Menel of Kossov why the Messiah has not come, and Why the Redemption promised by the Prophets and Sages has not been fulfilled. Rabbi Mendel answered: "It is written: Why has the son of Jesse not come, either today or yesterday?' The answer lies in the question itself: 'Why has he not come? Because we are today, just as we were yesterday.'"<sup>80</sup>

In Hasidism, the concept of Messiah becomes integrated with living a life of holiness. An example of this can be found in Israel Baal Shem Tov's parable:

It is the same with us. The moan of holiness depends upon the support of a lesser man, and the latter depends upon men of even lowlier quality in order to attain the summit of holiness and to bring down God's love. But when one person weakens, the whole structure totters and falls, and the tzadik must begin anew.<sup>81</sup>

*Analysis of Hasidic song: its role in bringing the messianic ideal.* Like the texts belonging to Hasidism, the music can be examined as a device for conceptual-ideological response. Thus the music itself adjusts to hold the essence of Hasidism. The music served a political as well as spiritual purpose. The music symbolized the very personalization and individualized worship, and as a practice, they are messianic in nature. If the conceptual-ideological response of Hasidism is to bring the Messiah through joy, the singing of Hasidic melodies, particularly niggunim helps to bring the messianic ideal! Music activated the soul, and functioned as a way to bring private or communal ecstasy. Niggunim were a way of experiencing the present through joy. In that the people could reach "d'veikut", the highest form of communication with God, the tzadikim would compose niggunim, which were melodies without words.

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 247

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 247.

Thus, unfortunately for the study of Yiddish Messiah songs, the use of Yiddish in conjunction with the mentioning of the concept of “Messiah” only served to limit the connection between God and his people. Concepts, such as Messiah and language, such as Yiddish were too time-bound to be used in connection with music the experience of the present, which alludes time. The music of the Hasidism best illustrates what Gershon Sholem expresses as the “neutralization” of the concept of Messiah within Hasidism.<sup>82</sup> While Hasidic text points to the superiority of human feeling and experience over literal ideas, the music of the Hasidim actually encapsulates it.

When there was a rare mentioning of the Messiah in Yiddish song it was done in a liturgical form.<sup>83</sup> Ninety percent of all Hasidic Yiddish songs are liturgical were performed as part of the liturgical calendar! The neutralization of the Messiah concept can be beautifully illustrated in the Hasidic Yiddish Messiah song *Adir Eloheinu* that was usually sung by the Chassidim on the holiday of Shavuot:

Mighty is our God, mighty are the people of Israel, who received the Torah from the mouth of the Almighty on the day of Pentecost. Rise up brethren! Let us rejoice with the joy of the Torah. We hope and wait and look forward. When will that day be? Very soon-in the days of our life. Who will it be? Messiah the righteous. What will our life be then? Days of joy, days of song, days of overwhelming rejoicing!<sup>84</sup>

The Hasidim channeled the joy of the coming of the Messiah into an ever present joy, a more tangible joy, such as that of celebrating Shavuot.<sup>85</sup> Hasidism, very purposefully, focused messianic anticipation into celebration of the present. In analyzing a Yiddish Messiah song such as *Adir Eloheinu* (ex.#1), a piece attributed to Rabbi Levi Yizchok of

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<sup>82</sup> See the chapter entitled “Neutralization of the Messianic Element in Early Hasidism” in The Messianic Idea in Judaism.

<sup>83</sup> Velvel Pasternak confirmed this idea.

<sup>84</sup> Pasternak, comp., 69.

<sup>85</sup> Pasternak, comp., 69.



Berdichev (though most likely written by a tzadik), we find elements closely related to other Hasidic music. It has characteristics of a pilgrimage song. The rhythm is like a march and in the ahava raba mode. Though the height of the song is reached in the rallentando with the phrase “Moshiakh tsidkeinu”, “Messiah our righteous one”, the allegretto section coupled with the niggun of this piece reached after that point could be considered more of the spiritual ecstasy. The song seems to be saying that the Messiah will only come with our singing and with our elation. “When will that day be?” the song asks, and the answer is not when, but that it will be a joyous day. Perhaps it will be a joyous day much like the spirit of the song.

Even when the Messiah is mentioned, the music clearly tells us the focus of Hasidism is not on the Messiah as a concept. While, Hasidism naturally devotes a great deal of time to the question of the Messiah, to such a degree that it has a messianic tinge to it, the concept of Messiah is neutralized. The neutralization of the concept allowed room for a present experience, namely that of experiencing joy! The continuing difficulties and troubles of the Jews who lived in that world made such stories and prayers meaningful to them and made life, which was difficult, much more tolerable. It is interesting in this regard to note that at no time during Hasidic history was there any major widespread disorientation such as would lead to a recrudescence that would lead to imminent Messianism.

## CHAPTER SIX

### OPPOSITION AND ASSIMILATION: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW MESSIANIC IDEAL

While the Hasidic movement did the breakthrough work with the use of Yiddish song, the proponents of the Jewish Enlightenment, the Maskilim expanded and developed the Yiddish language as a vehicle of expression; especially the expression of their ideological-conceptual responses. This study will examine the conditions for the growth of Jewish secularism and briefly the conditions for Zionism. The Maskilim, through satire, approach “shashelet hakabbalah” in a completely new way. They combine secular aspects with sacred aspects of Judaism to, in effect, they liberated Jews from the “chain of tradition”. Through this freedom the overall goal, assimilation, could be achieved. This chapter will focus on how the Maskilim developed this new tool in the formation and adjustment of ideological-conceptual responses to the changing circumstances, and how this new tool within the text of Yiddish song and within the music of Yiddish Messiah song adjusted the concept of Messiah to promulgate its overall goal

*Background of the Haskalah.* The desire for education, civilization, and assimilation, which reached its zenith in Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth century, produced another movement more vehemently opposed to Hasidism than the Misnagidim. The maskilim, the Eastern European followers of the German Enlightenment, whose putative father was Moses Mendelssohn, were the proponents of the Haskalah, or Jewish Enlightenment. They were the stark enemies of Hasidism. Participation in the enlightenment became a reality for the small, but increasing number

of cultured Jews. Jews took advantage of opportunities that had rarely been offered to their parallels in the social structure during the course of Jewish history. Most important to the proponents of the Haskalah was their freedom to become part of the intellectual stratum of secular society by attending secular schools and universities. Furthermore as society became increasingly open these Jews no longer were fully compelled to follow Jewish law and increasingly could make compromise that they felt would lead to their acceptance in the general society.

Disillusionment with Emancipation among the Maskilim began after the assassination of Alexander II in March of 1881.<sup>86</sup> His death served as a sign for all the Russian anti-Semites to begin a series of terrible pogroms against the Russian Jews. Only four weeks after the death of Alexander the Second, the first pogrom in Elizabethgrad occurred. On May 15 this was repeated in Kiev and immediately afterwards riots broke out in many other cities.<sup>87</sup> Unlike the past, the government did not serve to protect the Jews. In fact the very anti-establishment elements generally against the Jews were the government. The pogroms eventually spread throughout the Jewish Pale, and protests against Russian brutality were raised all over Europe. Emigration from the Pale of Settlement became the most realistic option for the Jews. The question of emigration revolved around two countries, one in a sense practical-America, and one a sense idealistic-old Zion, Eretz Yisrael.<sup>88</sup>

*Maskilic response: Literary Tactics-Satire.* Their conceptual ideological responses to the changing situation generally reflected the desire to be disconnected with

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<sup>86</sup> Eliakum Zunser, *A Jewish Bard; Being the Biography of Eliakum Zunser*, ed. A. H. Fromenson, trans. Simon Hirsandsky (New York: The Zunser Jubilee Committee, 1905), 34.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

the stifling aspects of Judaism and consequently the desire to be connected to secular world. Education was regarded as a means of proving to the nations that the Jews were also a people of learning and culture and that not all Jews were to be identified with the fanatical, ignorant, and superstitious Hasidim.<sup>89</sup> The motto of the Maskilim was "Education for the Jews".<sup>90</sup> The aim of the Enlightenment was to redirect the particularistic outlook of Jews into a more universal one. The educational goal of the maskilim was to bring knowledge and intellectual focus to large numbers of Jews to open to them opportunities for learning indeed outside the confines of their cheder education. Of course even the maskilim realized that the implementation of this ideal would be difficult and many of them were probably satisfied personally with a slight degree of success. They knew some of the difficult political realities in the implementation of their position.

For that reason that Yiddish represented the culture of the Hassidim the early maskilim tried to distance themselves from it. They felt the disappearance of Yiddish to be a special sign of enlightenment and as a prerequisite for emancipation.<sup>91</sup> In their eyes Yiddish was associated with all that was "uncultured", "unlearned", and "not enlightened". Yet the maskilim realized in order to reach just that crowd their literature must be written in Yiddish. Maskilim such as Mendl Lefin and Joseph Perl (1773-1839) began publishing Yiddish tracts. Their Russian and Polish counterparts, many of whom published anti-Hassidic pamphlets anonymously, followed them.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Raphael Mahler, *Hasidism and the Jewish Enlightenment; Their Confrontation in Galicia and Poland in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Eugen Orenstein, Aaron Klein, and Jenny Machlowitz Klein (New York: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1985), 37.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>91</sup> Goldsmith, 36.

<sup>92</sup> Goldsmith, 39.

Although the Maskilim detested the language and saw it solely as a temporary means to enlighten the masses, many of the propagandistic and didactic works of the Russian maskilim possessed literary merit and became foundations for modern Yiddish literature and drama.<sup>93</sup> During the time of political reaction, persecution, and pogroms in the early 1880s, the shattering of assimilationist ideology led to a heightened esteem of Yiddish. A sense of Jewish national sentiment rose the prestige of Yiddish.<sup>94</sup> The flowering of Yiddish literature culminated with great writers such as the Sholom Aleichem and I.L. Peretz.

The intellectualism among the Maskilim produced a thriving literary movement. Their writings, often utilizing the literary device of satire, strongly defended their positions and became a reflection of the conflict within the Jewish world. While most of the maskilim favored composition in Hebrew, they quickly learned that the most effective way to reach the unenlightened Jews was through Yiddish. Among the earliest Hebrew rationalists to realize the educational potentials of Yiddish were Moshe Marcuse, a physician of Königsberg, who practiced in Poland throughout the second half of the eighteenth century, and Mendel Lefin (1749-1826), a philosopher of Satavov in Podolia, who had become influenced with enlightenment during his trips to Berlin within the circle of Moses Mendelssohn and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing.<sup>95</sup> In 1789, Marcuse published a popular handbook of medicine for Jewish men and women who dwelt in small, remote communities where doctors were unavailable.<sup>96</sup> He attempted to reach "his potential readers [who] carried on their daily activities in Yiddish and that, if he wanted

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<sup>93</sup> Goldsmith, 40.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>95</sup> Liptzin, 25.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

to save them from charlatans who posed as healers and from mumbling old women who prescribed nostrums against the Evil Eye”, he could only do so in a language understandable to them.<sup>97</sup> With extreme sarcasm he ridiculed the “swindlers who impressed with their superficial piety in order to inspire confidence and whose knowledge of Latin was restricted to words such as hocus, pocus, triocus”.<sup>98</sup> He even went as far to say that studying long hours in cheder, children could become “anemic and stunted in their physical growth” and in effect, it was better for children to develop into strong bodied laborers than to be pale “sickly scholars”.<sup>99</sup>

Such writers as Joseph Perl (1773<sup>2</sup>) who was drawn to the mystical doctrines of the Hassidic movement but strongly influenced by rationalist thought responded within the literary tool of satire.<sup>100</sup> Hassidism vocally opposed any efforts of Perl, who at this time was a avid proponent of the Haskalah. The literary tools of satire and ridicule enabled the enlightened Jews to exert their freedom from Jewish authority while proving their dedication to the Russification of Jews. Some of the anti-Hassidic satirical works include Perl’s *Revealer of Secrets*, Israel Aksenfeld’s *The Fooled World*, and *The Kerchief*.<sup>101</sup>

Satirical and polemical works in Yiddish lent themselves to the greater literary works of such writers as Mendele Mokher Seforim, Y.Y. Linetzky and Abraham Goldfaden.<sup>102</sup> The devastating effect of the pogroms led to the reconciliation between tradition and reason, and to these writers depicting more of the fullness of Jewish life.

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 38.

Mendele served to raise the Jewish vernacular to a refined literary language through his artistic works of Eastern European Jewish life of the nineteenth century in all its darkness and light, its messianic longings and its deep despair, sorrow and joy. The well-known badchonim and composers Velter Zbarzher (1826-1883) and Eliakum Zunser (1863-1913) fell into this categories. Their lyrics sought to bring “cheer and merriment to his audiences without undermining the basic principles of their traditional faith”.<sup>103</sup>

The symbols of Hasidism that were often satirized included: the energetic worship, the warm Rebbe, and the tzadik. Eventually the corruption of the tzadikim only added to the fuel of their opponents, and the symbols and icons of Hasidism lent themselves very easily to abuse by various strata of corrupt leadership. The tzadikim first established as a voice of the rebbe and a comfort for the people turned into a greedy business. While Hasidism introduced the figure of the tzadik, to whom the followers responded with a respect and veneration seldom equaled in Jewish history, as happens in all cases when people cling to a person instead of an idea, it opened the way to “demagoguery” and “charlatanry”.<sup>104</sup>

*Maskilic response: Use of Yiddish song to satire.* While the Maskilim expressed opposition to Hasidism, to its blind faith in tzadikim and to the superstitions that were rampant among the people<sup>105</sup> the majority of the Maskilim did not tamper with the holiness of the Talmud and sanctified the very essence of the rabbinic tradition.<sup>106</sup> This fact remains consistent in the discussion of Yiddish song of the Maskilim. Songs dance around the “old” and “particularistic” view of the Jews before Enlightenment while

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<sup>103</sup> Liptzin, 48.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 336.

<sup>105</sup> Mahler, 41.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

downplaying their opponents, who needed the most amount of “enlightenment”. The Maskilim compiled humorous and satiric songs on Hasidism and Hasidic rebbes. These songs attempt to preserve the sanctity of the concept of Messiah while downplaying the roles of the Hasidic rebbe, the tzadikim, and of course their followers. The Maskilim loaded these songs with both Talmudic and Biblical imagery and complete satire. These songs depicted the Rebbe who, in a way, dared to take the voice of God, perhaps underlying all of these Yiddish songs, is the suspicion that the Rebbe wished to take the role of the redeemer, the Messiah. This sort of song resembled a family feud in that it acknowledged Hassidism as valid enough to poke fun at, yet a great love or the traditional values remained.

*Vos Vet Zayn Vun Dem Rebbe?* said to have been written by Wolf Zbarsher-Ehrenkrantz (1826-1883), born in East Galicia was one of the first Yiddish Bohemians of his day, who not only wrote the texts to his songs, but also set tunes to them, performing them also, for a time, professionally.<sup>107</sup> His topics dealt with his struggle against general ignorance and superstition, although he tempered his expression with a good deal of humor and compassion.<sup>108</sup> His songs illustrate his position against Hasidic Rebbes, their false sense of piety, their belief in miracles and their blind superstition<sup>109</sup>:

What will happen to the religious rabbi when the anointed king (Messiah) will come? The rebbe will be like a boy (bachur), and will go around like a nazirite with the long hair. And all tree will grow challahs and rolls, and the branches will grow cigarettes and pipes. We, the little Chassidim will smoke it. Who will live to see the little synagogue that will stand by the Rebbe's house (brothel) The little synagogue will not be made alone of bricks but of lochshen kugel. There will be a well (fountain) a whisky and

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<sup>107</sup> Ruth Rubin, collector and ed., *Jewish Life “The Old Country”* (New York: Folkways Records and Service Corp., 1958), 2.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.



vodka in the middle of the hall and Nebuchadnezzar will come from Bavel to Jerusalem and will drink L'chayim with them.<sup>110</sup>

Another similar, and beautiful example which utilizes common themes mixed with an enormous amount of satire is another rendition of *Vos vet zayn mit dem Rebn dem*

*Frumen*:

What will happen to the pious Rebbe quickly in our days when Messiah will come? It will rain with wine and brandy, and this will be for the Hasidim's "vegn", quickly in our days how does one live to experience this? It will be a bright light world and everyone will drink brandy without end.

We will take a cow ("bheme"), a kosher one, a pious one, it will be a grandchild of the red heifer ("para adumah"). They will harness it in the carriage of the pious Rebbe. Quickly in our days when Messiah will come.

The carriage will be made of parchment, not paper, from wood ("atzey shitim") will be made the wheels, the axels will be made of wood ("atzey goyfer"), and the whip, a tzitzit tied to a shofar. Who can live to experience this?

On the trees will grow Challahs mit bulkes, the branches will be made of pipes and smoke, The leaves will be like Turkish tobacco, and we the Hasidim will smoke it. It will be a lit up world, one will drink spirits without being disturbed.<sup>111</sup>

Another version of the same song, a Bessarabian variant, *Az Moshiakh Vet Kumen*

reiterated the same ideas with additional stanzas:

The wicked ones may talk until they burst, but we will tell about it in joy, and when we do: the sinners will be struck dumb-when the Messiah will come. Woe unto the sinners, when the Rabbi shouts at them they will tremble with fear! Oh sweet father, the rainfall will be of wine and brandy, and it will all be for us Hasidim!

Chorus: Oh, we Hasidim, we are exalted, and we shall always praise the Lord, and when the sinners will witness this, they will quake with anger! Oh, may we live to see it all, Trhadiraydiraydiray, diraydirardirom, when the Messiah will come.

No king will ever possess, the beautiful, precious coach, which the Rabbi will receive, when the Messiah will come. The chassis will be covered with prayer-shawls instead of leather, the wheel will be made of acacia wood, the axels and posts of resinous lumber, and the whip shall be made of holy fringes tied on to a ram's horn. A kosher, pure beast will be chosen to pull it, not a horse, but a young heifer. Oh Lordy, the coachman

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<sup>110</sup> Mascha Benya, trans.

<sup>111</sup> Mascha Benya, trans.

will be a scribe or a reader (of the holy writ), and the Rabbi will preach the Torah!

Wait until you see the lovely and precious prayer-house, which will be built near the Rabbi's house, which the Rabbi will get, when the Messiah will come. Not of stone and brick will it be built, but of sweet meat, dainty stews and puddings, the eternal light will be fed by brandies, and the rostrum will be made of egg-cakes. The ground will be tiled with salted fish, and the walls will be smeared with fish-sauce, Oh Lordy, wine and brandy will be pouring from all sides, and we Chassidim will be licking the fish sauce off the walls!<sup>112</sup>

Another very popular Yiddish song was *Vos Vet Zayn az Mashiach Vet Kumen*.

The rebbe assures his followers that when the Messiah comes a colossal feast will be held for them. They will be served the Leviathan and the Messianic Bull and the wine reserved for them from the days of creation. Moses will expound the Law at that feast. David will play, Solomon will entertain them with wit and wisdom, and Miriam will dance for them.<sup>113</sup>

Two anti-Hasidic songs approach their satire from another angle. *Oif der Inzl Do* satirizes the life of the poor merchant. In this song the merchant bemoans his bad fortune, and he can only comfort himself by saying "when the Messiah comes he will be one of the first to have brandy ready [for the celebration]".<sup>114</sup> While Chemjo Vivaner writes that the mentality of this piece most likely derived from a Jew lonely and living in a village removed from the town where he had previously lived, another perspective is possible. The Maskilim generally liked to be characterized as the worldly merchant from the big city, whereas the social character of the Hasidim is generally that of the poor, often unemployed merchant from the lonely town.<sup>115</sup> Another situation, possibly satirized by the Maskilim, concerned how Hasidim avoided military service. To avoid military service, which, under the circumstances, was considered "tantamount to forced

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<sup>112</sup> Ruth Rubin, trans., 2.

<sup>113</sup> Velvel Pasternak, comp., 131.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Mahler, 8.

conversion”, the Jews either simply neglected to register their sons or they furnished incorrect birth dates.<sup>116</sup> The piece *Az Moshiakh Vet Kumen* dates from the reign of Czar Alexander I of Gatchina, whom the Jews hated bitterly because of his persecutions. They nicknamed him “Sender der Hatshner”:

When Messiah comes we will all be happier and wine and brandy will we drink straight out of the barrel. Who will be a witness to it all? The Holy people of Israel. I, too, Getzel Michal will shout with my people “Creator of the Universe! Hurrah?” And when the Messiah comes we will all return to our land and will be the envy of our foes. When Messiah comes we will not need to go into the army. And “Sender der Hatshner” will be more like his father.<sup>117</sup>

*Analysis of Yiddish Messiah songs.* The political debate that often tosses around the concept of Messiah extends into the musical component of Yiddish Messiah songs. While the exact nature in which these songs were performed may be inaccessible, their structure, melody, and text- melodic relationship uncover and enlighten the political battles between the Maskilim and the Hasidim. As we have seen, the Maskilim often used the tool of satire in Yiddish literature and in particular Yiddish Messiah texts. Yet Yiddish Messiah songs bring satire to a completely other realm.<sup>118</sup> The Maskilim add a layer to their satire by setting their texts to Hasidic melodies and melodies of a Hasidic nature. In effect, the Maskilim attempted to paralyze the Hasidic movement by satirizing it from all directions. To heighten their parody of the mannerisms and backwardness of the Hasidism, they use music so typical of Hasidic character. The chosen melodies are those that seem to embody the ideologies of the Hasidic movement themselves. The maskilim, by setting new words to a popular Hasidic melody, downplayed and even

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<sup>116</sup> Mahler, 22.

<sup>117</sup> Velvel Pasternak, comp., 42.

<sup>118</sup> <sup>118</sup> David Roskies, *The Jewish Search for a Usable Past* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), 95.

degraded the authority of the Hasidic movement. Once these melodies were heard, it was near to impossible for anyone to return the original song with a sense of purity. We are uncertain as to the extent of the exposure of these melodies directly and immediately to the Hasidim, though I am quite sure that in places where a small number of Maskilim lived among Hasidism the interchange happened. How else could the maskilim have obtained these melodies unless they lived among the Hasidim in the first place?

One of the best illustrations of this type of parodying is the song *Vos vet zayn mit dem Rebn dem frumen* (see ex. #2). The ethnomusicologist Abraham Idelsohn describes this melody as “unrhythmical dveikut melody in the Ahava Raba mode.”<sup>119</sup> It is possible to gather from the free rhythm structure how this piece may have been performed. The free rhythm nature and recitative style of this piece tends to make it a song intended for solo singing.<sup>120</sup> Between the amount of words and solo aspects of the song, one would speculate that this song would not be intended to help group unity, but rather, this is one Maskil’s attempt and “one shot deal” to downplay the Hasidic movement.

The Maskilim clever use of “dveikut melody”, or in other words a melody that results in an individual “communion with God,” served many purposes beyond poking fun at Hasidic character. By entering the realm of using this melody, they downplayed the stepwise elevation of spirit that characterizes the Hasidic music, and more particularly the step toward “d’veikut”. The maskilim believed that the most despicable aspect of the Hasidim was not necessarily their communion to God, but their communion to the Rebbe. Therefore, by showing their ability to use this melody and in fact ridicule the Hasidic Rebbe within it, they attempted to destroy the perceived communion between the Rebbe

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<sup>119</sup> Idelsohn, 432.

<sup>120</sup> Idelsohn, 432.

and his Hasidim. In *Vos vet zayn mit dem Rebn dem frumen* the embellished words, “frumen” and “kumen”, which would be characterized as an outpouring of emotion for the Hasidim, are merely used as rhyming sequential phrases. The high notes, which again could be considered deep expression on the part of the Hasidim, are marked by such words as “bronfn” and “trinken shpirites”. Thus, the Maskilim interpret that the real ecstasy of being a Hasid comes from drinking and not a communion with God, and the Rebbe plays the major role in bringing this false ecstasy.

*Az Moshiakh Vet Kumen* as sung on Ruth Rubin’s recording has a similar purpose as the *Vos Vet Zayn mit dem Rebbe dem frumen*. The text and music is attributed to the Maskil and bard, Wolf Zbarsher-Ehrenkrants (1826-1883).<sup>121</sup> “If the Hasidim brought mystical longing into popular song, and the [Maskilim] brought topical morality, then Velvl Zbarsher can be credited as both ‘the father of Yiddish bohemian poets in Eastern Europe,’ and the one who made parody into a national Jewish sport.”<sup>122</sup> As the Maskilim of his time, he used Yiddish Messiah song to “beat the Hasidim at their own game”.<sup>123</sup> Like *Vos Vet Zayn* this piece is written in a recitative and free rhythm style, characteristic of a d’veikut melody. This song adapts what we may call “Weekday ahava raba mode nusach”. He uses weekday prayer cadences as concluding phrases, and ends in a way similar to what one may expect in a weekday service according to Cantor Spiro of the Eastern European tradition. The phrase beginning with “Di r’sho-im vet es avade farshtime” and ending with “Az moshiach vet kumen” illustrates this concluding phrase and cadence. At some level Zbarsher-Ehrenkrants infiltrates prayer as we saw

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<sup>121</sup> Ruth Rubin, trans., 2.

<sup>122</sup> David Roskies, *The Jewish Search for a Usable Past* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), 95.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

previously. By filling Hasidic prayer modes with so many words, especially destructive words towards the Hasidic movement, this Maskil plays on the danger of getting caught up in the Hasidic movement. Just as one would be overcome by a joyous melody and “communion with God”, simultaneously the more steeped one is, the more fooled he may be.

In the 1890's, the bourgeoisie, in essence, attempted to distract the working masses from participating in the revolutionary struggle against capitalism.<sup>124</sup> As a result of the problem of national regeneration in the face of the social struggle of the proletariat, which had already taken on an organized form in Russia, ideologues turned from the internal struggles of the Jewish community and formulated a Jewish nationalistic program of their own.<sup>125</sup> The search for authentic Jewish folk music led to many debates over what truly was “authentic” Jewish folk music, and what would really work in this situation.<sup>126</sup> Messiah songs parodying the Hasidic movement were scrutinized for their authenticity. “It bothered [S. An-ski] (one of the folklorists) that along with the old, authentic Hasidic songs (i.e. the ‘true, folk creation’), vulgar ‘anti-Hasidic’ songs were sung (An-ski 1909:56).”<sup>127</sup> However, during this time many Yiddish folk songs, including these parodies, were revived. Despite the opinion of An-ski, the folklorists changed familiar pieces of Jewish folk music, including the parodies, to fit their aims so that a new expressive means of a familiar theme could be created.<sup>128</sup> The Jews were most likely to identify with songs so deeply ingrained and already familiar,

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<sup>124</sup> Slobin, Mark, ed. *Old Jewish Folk Music: The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 19.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, 21.

and certainly by this time, parody songs were a part of Jewish culture. *Wos wet sajn mit reb Isroel dem frumen* (see ex. #3) proves to be a good illustration of this phenomenon. This song was rewritten by M. Riwesmann and published in 1913. This is a revision of *Vos vet zayn mit dem Rebn dem frumen*. First, the words are revised casting a new light upon the meaning of this song:

What will happen with the pious rebbe quickly in our days when Messiah  
Will come? There will again be the old prophets in the Beis Hamikdash.  
The Leviim with the Kohanim singing. Ti, ri, biri, bim, bam, bam....  
We will have ...laws and statues, we will again be the 12 tribes, and each  
Tribe will have its own flag and 3 times in the year one will make  
Pilgrimages, Ti, ri, biri, bim, bim, bam, bam...  
The city Jerusalem will be alive again on the bell will ring Zion's songs.  
God with his "chesed" will give us each our own ...to sit silently. Ti, ri,  
biri, bim, bam, bam.<sup>129</sup>

The words paint over the satire, leaving the melody to be filled with this nationalistic spirit. The melody has been smoothed over from the original to give the song a cleaner message. The high notes that once sung of the ridiculous nature of Hasidism are now entertained by such words that "ring" nationalism : "degel", "n'vi'im", "zingen", and "vein schtok". The additions of "ti, ri, biri, bim, bam, bam", done in such a graceful manner greatly contradicts the parody of these very grotesque elements of Hasidism, the elements the Maskilim despised. The entire arrangement of this piece with the additions of the violin and clavier begs for this piece to be considered as a serious piece of Jewish folklore and folksong!

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<sup>129</sup> Auth., trans.

## CHAPTER 7

### FROM SECULARISM TO ZIONISM: THE FREEING OF THE MESSIANIC CONCEPTS

*Freedom from Jewish authority, values, and messianic ideas.* The influence of secularism and extension of so many Jews into the secular sphere led to the expansion and adjustment of Jewish ideas, particularly those in connection with Messianic movements. The Emancipation opened many intellectual options for Jews. This inevitably led to a clash between the ideas of the world outside and the traditional ideas which had been inherited for generations and which had formed up until that point the basis for the world view of the Jew. For example these new ideas challenged Jewish concepts of the afterlife, including resurrection as well as the concepts of their chosenness and the divinity of the Torah. All of this created tensions within the Jewish community, not only between religious and less religious leaders, but also among people whose ideas created new subgroups of great diversity and disorientation.

*Secular response: Uses of Yiddish song.* Yiddish song had the power to express and promulgate the political views of whichever group from which it originated. Ideas that symbolized Eastern European life at the time were reiterated and encapsulated in Yiddish song. The struggle for assimilation, the fight against assimilation, the desire for worker's rights, the everyday asperity of poverty and the uncertainty of the political situation were just a few among those scenes encapsulated and expressed so fervently in Yiddish song in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The views that Jews could at one time



not only imagine expressing were carried and energized by Yiddish song. These songs were fueled by the fact that ideas and practices reserved for the sacred realm found themselves criticized and abhorred in the Jewish secular world. The meaning of sanctity became the object of scrutiny. Yiddish song only served to embody the conflict and the crossover between two worlds of Jewry so severely separated.

Avraham Reisen (1876-1953), a proponent of the Haskalah, in his song Maykomashmalon expressed the deep sense of loss of a common world view and a common purpose. While not intentionally against the Haskalah, it resulted from the loosened experienced in the Jewish community. Said Reisen:

What is the meaning of –this rain? What can be heard in it? It drops against the window-glass roll themselves like melancholy tears, and my boots are torn, and it is becoming, in the streets, a mud. Soon will also the winter come- I have no warm coat. What is the meaning of –the candle? What does it tell me? It drips and melts its tallow and it will soon become of her nothing. Before my eyes so flickering is it in this chapel like a candle, weak and gloomy, until I, too, will snuff out in the silence, in this eastern corner. What is the meaning of- this clock? What does he let me hear in it? With its bland, calm number-face, with its ringing, with its truth. It is a man-made creation-it has no life, no feelings, comes the hour, then must it ring without desire, without a will...What is the meaning of- my Life? What does it tell me? Wasting, withering in my youth before my time to become faded: eat days and swallow tears; sleeping on my hard fist killing here the consciousness of my people, only to wait for the soul's resting place (olam haba.).<sup>130</sup>

While the common direction of most Jews may have shifted during the enlightenment the desire for working towards a common goal did not change. These new goals led to the formation of such groups as the Bundists, the Jewish Socialist group. Songs such as Un Mir Zaynen Aleh Briyder expressed the unity formed through these “common goal groups”:

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<sup>130</sup> Chaim Neslen, comp., 3.6.

And we are all brothers-oh all brothers and we sing happy songs-oy, oy, oy and we hold ourselves as One...such cannot be found among others and we all are all united....whether we are many or few-oy, oy, oy. And we all love one another...like a groom and a bride-oy, oy, oy...<sup>131</sup>

The empowerment of the Jewish people with choices led to the contradiction of traditional belief that God chose the circumstances of one's life. Jews acted as the creator, the almighty. This was carried out by making decisions that included fighting for the Jewish homeland to fighting for labor rights. Many songs expressed this new active voice, songs such as *In Kamf*<sup>132</sup> by David Edelstadt (1866-1892), a proponent of the Haskalah. He also proclaimed this belief in his song *Vakht Oyft*:

How long, oh how long will you remain slaves and carry the disgraceful chains? How long will you create sparkling riches for that which robs you of your bread?...Open your eyes! Recognize your strength! Verbalize your Freedom on battle barricades. Declare War on the tyrants!...Gather together the suffering slaves, and fight zealously, fight fearlessly for your holy Right!<sup>133</sup>

*Secular Response: Move toward emotional identification and adjustment.* The embodiment of these concepts can so beautifully be seen in Yiddish songs mentioning Messiah. The age-old concept of Messiah was a meeting ground for all of the severed groups of Jews. The Messiah acted as the cynosure for the Jewish people. Thus, even the concept of Messiah saw itself in a role of accessibility more than before in Jewish history. The shoemaker, the workingman, became the man most in need of representation in the world of emancipated Jewry. Since religion could not change the worker's situation, either physically or spiritually, the workers ended up with deep

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<sup>131</sup> Chaim Neslen, comp., 9.6.

<sup>132</sup> Chaim Neslen, comp., 10.11.

<sup>133</sup> Chaim Neslen, comp., 10.4.

feelings of frustrations with no place to “hang them”. The concept of the Messiah served as the literal scapegoat for frustration in this equal society.

Avraham Reisen (1876-1953) composed this poem entitled “Moshiakh” used in a Yiddish song by I. Kornblit and H. Anik, which encapsulated these ideas stemming from emancipati

Oh, hurry Messiah, Oh come quickly, come, it already circles the whole world around like a poisonous snake, the hunger, and need, and chaos, and fear, and anxiety, and death, it can not nourish the earth, oh come Messiah on a white horse. Oh come Messiah, the oppression is everywhere, the chains from slavery are around, and there is already no space, the innocent blood drips and pours itself from under the rod, it is rusty from human blood already hard, oh come Messiah on a white horse.<sup>134</sup>

*Analysis of a Secular Yiddish Messiah Song.* The accessibility of the concept of the Messiah, the activation in a sense, played out in Yiddish song. Yiddish song melded the new role of the Messiah to the harmonic interplay. This can be illustrated in the song *Moshiakh* (see ex. #4). This song written by Avraham Reisin, has music by Ida Kornblit.<sup>135</sup> Kornblit appropriately sets this piece as if Yiddish song and the topic of Messiah are literally places to identify lost political hope. In the beginning of the song, almost as a skeleton, she adheres descriptive and emotive words on chords as they are bones. The songs use such words as “quickly” [come quickly, Messiah], “poisonous snake”, “hunger”, “lawlessness”, “fear”, “anxiety”, and “death”. [The world is filling like a poisonous snake with hunger and hardship/need/distress]. The accompaniment becomes more anxious with arpeggios supporting the melody line and creating the sense of urgency. The anxiety culminates on the climax of the piece on the word “place/room”.

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<sup>134</sup> Auth., trans.

<sup>135</sup> Mascha Benya told me that Ida Kornblit and Avraham Reisin were in connection with each other and he was quite pleased with the result of this setting.

“There is no place/room for the shedding of innocent blood.” The composer uses recitative style throughout the piece as if there is no time to sing about the hardships of the workers. At the end, a final plea for the Messiah on the phrase, “O come already, Messiah” shows the disparity of the situation. The urgency of the piece is coupled with the dream of the Messiah arriving on the white horse.

*Zionist response: Expansion and growth of emotional identification with concepts and ideas of Messiah.* The Emancipation and Enlightenment eventually induced the idea in increasing numbers of Jews that the Messiah, in some way, could be “unleashed” with a certain degree of human effort. The coming of the Messiah was regarded as dependent at least in part on the activists those who pursued, the protested, and fought. This idea was not new in Jewish life. It had history going back to the Second Commonwealth where fighters frequently on the right of the Jewish spectrum took matters into their own hands and used physical force to try to bring out the imminent coming of the Messiah through the work of their own hands..

The possibility of bringing the Messiah through humanitarian values and concerted action excited many of the Maskilim. Yet, they did not agree on exactly what the work of their hands would bring. Each group<sup>7</sup> the Nationalists, the Zionists, the Emigrationists, and the Bundists stood for redemptive ideals along with salvific action. Many of the great literary men became enthusiasts of the Zionist movement. The ancient dream of returning to Zion became vivid again in the works of the Labor Zionists. The Enlightenment, particularly when enabled through emancipation, began the worldview of the Eastern European Jews along the lines, with some changes and

modifications to be sure, that had been tried with great success in Western Europe in the previous two centuries.

Zionism depends upon the fact that the concept of Messiah has completely evolved. Secularism led to the ability to reevaluate and isolate the notion of Messiah. In the past, Jewish leadership groups used the term Messiah according to the needs within the Jewish community. Secularism releases the term Messiah from the purpose of attaining the messianic ideal. The term Messiah serves as an emotive identification with the overall circumstance, but no longer serves as a viable ground for answer. Zionism utilizes the concept of Messiah for this goal alone, and the Yiddish songs reflecting a Zionist spirit demonstrates this idea.

*Zionist response: Use of Yiddish Song.* The most prominent Maskilic redemptive theme expressing itself as Messiah in Yiddish song belonged to the Zionists. The father of the Yiddish theatre, Abraham Goldfaden (1840-1908), used the theater as a medium for education and for waking Jewish national patriotism. Of course his songs, full of Zionist themes, were for entertainment as well.<sup>136</sup> He was a proponent of the Haskalah and continued in its style mixed with influence of the Badchonim, Jewish performers especially at weddings, who truly sparked his dramatic fruition.<sup>137</sup> His song *Di Yiddishe Hofnung* illustrates his ability to capture his audience with illustrative Jewish themes:

Not far to go...under a rock in the cave lies our crown-the years have been so long. King David Yisrael, oy, David, David wake up from your sleep, devoted shepherd, what is one to do? How we have been slaughtered, your poor sheep, no one sticks up for them, and will David hear the Shofar of Messiah. Will he hurry himself and he will mount himself on his voice and give his fiddle a play. And that moment his hand

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<sup>136</sup> Liptzin, 78.

<sup>137</sup> Liptzin, 78.

will fly from his musicianship and every Jew will sing a song from the famous psalms. Israel is not forgotten and will be reborn, sing with me this song to the beloved God.<sup>138</sup>

Another maskilic writer who expressed his views about Messiah in a similar way was Simon Frug (1860-1916). He believed in the returning to Zion's soil, and was not a Russian nationalist in any way.<sup>139</sup> "Frug's songs combined honey and gall, sentimentalism and satire...and visions of Messianic redemption."<sup>140</sup> His lyrics to *Tsi Kenstu Dos Land?* and *Der Becher* expressed both the deep longing for to Zion resulting from the many years of pain in "goless".

*Der Becher:*

Son: Tell me Mommy, I beg you, is this true what I was told by grandpa, that there in heaven God has a cup, when we feel things are so difficult, the mighty God has mercy and he cries a tear?

Mom: True, my child

Son: Ah, Mame is it also true, is it also sure, that Messiah will come when the cup is full?

Mom: True.

The child tries to understand, waits a while, quietly sad, he asks again..

Son: But Mame, shouldn't the cup already be full?

He raises his sad blue eyes to his Mother...

Son: Is the cup without a bottom? Are we doomed? How long have we stayed here in Goless and he has not filled the cup? Maybe the tears are drying up before the cup gets full.

The mother remains upset. The pious child is looking up at his mom. The mother's eyebrows are trembling above her damp eyes. Tears are falling from the mother onto the child's innocent forehead.

Mom: G-d in heaven, have mercy, fill the cup with tears, have mercy!<sup>141</sup>

*Tsi Kenstu Dos Land?*

Do you know the land where citrons bloom, where goats eat carob instead of grass? Roast geese, ducks are flying raisin wine flows endlessly. They hatch the roofs with palm trees, and almonds grow on

<sup>138</sup> Auth., trans. Irene Heskes, comp. and ed. *The Music of Abraham Goldfaden* (New York: Tara Publications, 1990),

<sup>139</sup> Liptzin, 51.

<sup>140</sup> Liptzin, 52.

<sup>141</sup> Auth., trans.

every stick. Oh-to go there? Oh rabbi dear, help! I would love to go-and right now! Do you know the land where the Messiah, our righteous one, will come riding on a white horse? And blow a great resurrecting breath to wake the dead from out of the earth. And will lead, will lead our people, Israel, to our land, to our uncle Ishmael.<sup>142</sup>

The Yiddish song *Vos vet zayn* expressed another view of Messiah.:

Oh how wonderful will it be when Moshiakh will come along. Oh how sweet. Oh how beautiful when Moshiakh will come along. We shall sing. We shall dance. Oh tell me father sweet, how do we live so long? T'will be truly, truly very beautiful when every Jew will be his own boss. We shall thank, and praise our God when we will be worthy to see the big joy, how fathers-mothers, how sisters-brothers will themselves turn to Yisroel back. Of paper shall we build a bridge, and nag, and roll in our own land again. Oh, tis Truth. Truth. Oh, Truth what I say, oh, father, sweet (One) When will we live to see that day? Oh how wonderful...<sup>143</sup>

The expansion of the concept of Messiah into an emotional identification channeled hopes and frustrations of many of the common folk. In the face of calamity, the Yiddish Messiah song would serve to reconcile the absurdity of so many innocent deaths. The question as to why God would not send the Messiah at this time was asked often during calamities. This was especially evident in the time of the Holocaust. The Yiddish Messiah songs of the Ghetto eschewed satire and depended upon emotional identification with traditional Messiah themes already expressed in the past. Mordechai Gebirtig (1877-1942) was one of the song writer/composers of this time, and his work voiced despair while somehow maintaining a spirit of hope.<sup>144</sup> Gebirtig hoped that peace would spread over the entire world, that children and graybeards would dancing on all roads, foes would become friends again, and Jews would experience a Messianic era of kindness toward them on the part of their oppressors. Unfortunately, Gebirtig lived the

<sup>142</sup> Eleanor Gordon Mlotek and Joseph Mlotek, comps., *Songs of Generations: New Pearls of Yiddish Song* (New York: Workmen's Circle), 187.

<sup>143</sup> Chaim Neslen, comp., 4.6.

<sup>144</sup> Lipzin, 427.

last part of his life in the Cracow ghetto where he was murdered in May, of 1941. Oh Mamenyu Mayn is one of Gerburtig's many songs. By setting this song as a monologue of a young girl, he emphasized the human element, which made the political situation so absurd.

Oh, mummy mine, mummy, my dearest! Is it true, mummy, that the dear Lord, (from) me, my dear daddy taken away, has? Why particularly my daddy? I resent it so much. I shall, says zaydeh (grandfather) him never see ever again. Mummy mine, I want to be with daddy.

Oh, mummy mine, mummy, my dearest! Is it true, mummy, what zaydeh says that the dead suffer when, after them, we grieve? And that when we, here, cry have they no rest- I won't cry any more. Don't cry mummy. Mummy mine, I beg you, don't cry.

Oh, mummy mine, mummy, my dearest! Is it true, mummy what I have heard? When Moshiakh will come on his white horse, will all the corpses rise anew and my dear daddy will be among them? Mummy mine, oh mummy mine when will that be?

While the Yiddish poet, H. Leivick (1888-1962) was not a victim of Holocaust, his family did perish.<sup>145</sup> He could never forgive himself for living his life in America.<sup>146</sup> How could a poem even reproduce the agony of the men, women and children killed in gas chambers? His poetry captured the accountability he held God for not acting on the Jews behalf, and the underlying theme—Why did God not bring the Messiah? When the war ended, Leivick was chosen to visit the surviving Jews in Displaced Persons' Camps in the American Zone of Germany.<sup>147</sup> His poem *Yidn Zingen: Ani Maamim*, which resulted from his visit, combined the age-old hope of Messiah's arrival with the pending death of those in the death camps.

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<sup>145</sup> Liptzin, 306.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 307.



Jews are singing in the bunkers: "I believe, I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah" He will come, from somewhere, from here. Jews are singing in the bunkers: I believe, I believe that.."az afile az er zamt zich" I believe, I believe like a believer a D.P. (displaced person). Let's sing together: I believe...if we sing it doesn't sing the Messiah to us (? "oyb mir zingen es nit zingt zich es say-vi") Anyhow in evening, anyhow at dawn, I believe with perfect faith, he will come, he must come, I believe. Don't ask anymore, don't ask when it will be. I believe, I believe, he is coming, he is already here.<sup>148</sup>

Another composer was Schmerke Kacerginski (1908-1954), who wrote one of the best known Yiddish Messiah songs *Zol Shoy'n Kumen Di Geula*. Kacerginski wrote of his experiences in the Vilna Ghetto. Interestingly, we see an active appeal to God to bring the Messiah, but the individual ability to bring the Messiah has diminished:

When a weight rests on your heart, take a drink. If the sadness allows no rest-we sing a song. If there's no tot of brandy, we must drink water. Water of Life is yet Life. What more does a Jew need? Let the Messiah come! Soon he will be here! T'is a generation of Guilt, don't be fools and after sinning-the Messiah will come sooner. Oh, you Father in Heaven, we plead for mercy see that Messiah doesn't come a little too late! Trees're dancing in the forest, stars in the sky, Reb Israel, their in-law, turns at their center. He will awaken, the Messiah, from his deep sleep when he will hear our song of prayer.<sup>149</sup>

*Analysis of Zionist Yiddish Messiah Songs.* Composers, such as Goldfaden used his messianic musical themes in his Yiddish song to wrench the hearts of the theatregoers and to further his political goals. The use of the concept of Messiah for emotional identification with Zionism blooms with the music of Yiddish theatre. Abraham Goldfaden used the theatre, and the particularly the music of the theatre to express his political inclination toward Zionism. The audience is in some way overtaken by these songs at a gut level. They find them emotionally appealing. To compound the emotional bliss, Goldfaden would use themes so poignant to the present time. The theatregoers did not have the opportunity to "act- out" their political longings or political identification.

<sup>148</sup> Auth., trans.

<sup>149</sup> Chaim Neslen, comp., 15.10.

The theatre served as that medium. By using text painting and familiar musical themes in several examples, Goldfaden's song *Shofar Shel Moshiakh* (see ex. #5) illustrates how a Zionist one could feel by the end of his song. Goldfaden uses cantorial recitative to begin his piece, which in the Jewish mind sets up a climax to be reached later in the "prayer". He uses cantorial kvetching/crying on such words as "melech yisroel". The return to Zion is closely identified with the restoration of the Davidic kingdom. Thus Goldfaden marks King David's reappearance with musical motifs connected to his awakening. Every action that King David will do is acted out in this song. He "awakes from his sleep" in a trill on the word "shluf." The first climax we reach on the word "mashiach", where shortly after follows the sound of the shofar (t'kiah) in the bass. The shofar sends this sense of urgency to the listener. Shortly after the shofar sounds, David appears playing his instrument, the "fiedele". Here the audience almost lives the messianic moment when the song continues to play in the melody line the strokes of David on his "fiedele". Goldfaden moves the audience with his last words "Israel is not lost, it is not yet born", these are the words which people are led to desire by the time the piece is finished.

Much like Goldfaden, Solomon Golub in Simon Frug's *Der Becher* (see ex. #6) wrenches the hearts of his listeners while appealing to the idea of Zionism. Unlike Goldfaden, Golub depends upon classical harmony to involve the audience to the concept of Messiah. He utilizes chord progression to tell this story between a child and a mother in a way that expresses a heightened sense of the absurdity that the Messiah has not come sooner when the Jews have suffered so long. The response of the mother, which repeats each time on the words "emes, kind meins", illustrates the definitude

concerning the absurdity of the Messiah not coming. The boy pleads to his mother in a melodic line climaxing with the words “oich zicher”...”is it *also true* that Messiah will come when God’s cup is full of his tears?” His questions continue mainly ending with half cadences, almost in disbelief over the absurdity of this idea. The piece leaves us with an a capella line: “God, in heaven, have mercy, fill the cup with tears.” Singing this last line a capella has a stark effect upon the listener. The listener cannot help but feel empathetic on behalf of the mother who asks for God to have mercy.

The development of emotional identification with a theme is best illustrated in *Tsi Kenstu dos land* (ex. #7), another poem of Simon Frug. He published this with the music in A. Bulkin and L. Efron in 1917.<sup>150</sup> This Yiddish Messiah song does not hide its Zionist message. The words, which echo the opening lines of the famous poem *Mignon* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe “Kennst du das Land, wo die Zitronen bluhn?”, are clearly Zionist.

Do you know the land where citrons bloom, where goats eat carob instead of grass? Roast geese, ducks and flying, raisin wine flows endlessly. The hatch the roofs with palm trees, and almonds grow on every stick. Oh-to go there! Oh rabbi dear, help! I would love to go- and right now! Do you know the land where the Messiah, our righteous one, will come riding on a white horse? And blow a great resurrecting breath to wake the dead from out of the earth. And will lead, will lead our people, Israel, to our land to our uncle Ishmael.<sup>151</sup>

Not only are the words Zionist, but this song rings of Hatikvah motifs. On the words, “tsi kenstu dos land...” (“do you know the land”), he utilizes the opening phrase of Hatikvah. By recognizing the melody, we identify with the land of Israel.

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<sup>150</sup> Eleanor and Joseph Mlotek, comps., 187.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 188.

In time of deep suffering the concept of Messiah retained its emotional identification, and also returned to a more basic level, within that of imminence. S. Katcherginsky, the writer of *Zol Shoyrn Kumen di Geula* (see ex. #8), was a member of Young Vilna. They were a group of writers who served to raise morale in the time of the Vilna Ghetto.<sup>152</sup> They organized dramatic performances and composed poems such as *Zol Shoyrn Kumen di Geula*, which depicted their pain, longing and defiance.<sup>153</sup> In a manuscript sent to the compiler of *Mir Trogn a Gezang*, Kaczerginski attributed the music of the song to Rabbi Kook.<sup>154</sup> A recitative style singing supports the words, and the chorus is marked by a Hasidic melody. While this certainly is not a Hasidic piece, the Hasidic style works to carry the message of this piece. In a sense, the more one “hoped” for the coming of the Messiah the closer he would come. This hope is expressed by the Hasidic melody set to the words “Zol shoyrn kumen di geula”.

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<sup>152</sup> Liptzin, 432.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Eleanor Gordon Mlotek, comp., *Mir Trogn a Gezang!*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Workmen’s Circle Education Department, 1987), 172.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONCLUSIONS

Through the examination of the basis of Messianic movements to their development and adjustments in Jewish life, it becomes apparent how the Jewish people coped with situations of great difficulty. Ultimately sparked by their connection to the Torah and their shared past, the Jewish people sought ways to build life in relationship to a Jewish framework but under changing conditions. The adjustment of the concepts and ideas revolving around Messiah reflects the great will of the Jewish people to survive. The rise of Messianic movements such as the Hasmoneans ultimately opened Jewish life to the value of adjusting the Jewish framework. When the Hasmoneans used their motto “Fight for the Torah”, they were unaware of its potential implications. The implications resonate in Jewish life at any point... the Torah is in our own hands, and to fight for it, you must interpret it, respond to it, and live accordingly. Those Messianic movements who did interpret and respond offered the Jewish people a way to make meaning of their lives within a Jewish framework.

Rabbinic Judaism developed out of the preceding Messianic movements who offered ideological-conceptual responses to difficult times, such as the Hasmoneans. Jewish authority built upon the Messiah concepts and ideas to maintain and prove their ability to offer a messianic ideal to the Jewish people. In effect, they literally expanded, recreated, and adjusted the concepts and ideas around Messiah, to reflect how the

messianic ideal became one built upon channeled Messianism. The improved time would be achieved through acts of the present, and the overall achievement of the messianic ideal would happen some time in the distant future. They used these concepts to prove and expand their integral part in interpreting Jewish life of the present and ideas about Jewish destiny. Consequently they formed the “Shashelet hakabbalah”, a “chain of tradition”, of which they were a link.

Messianic concepts and ideas served more of an active purpose in times of great distress, such as the time of Shabbatai Zevi. The idea of Messiah became linked to the present, a concept achievable within a matter of a short time. The messianic movement of Hasidism is built upon this present need for an improved life, but the concept of Messiah greatly differed. In fact, the focus on the present becomes so great that the time bound concept of the Messiah is neutralized. Music begins to play an integral role in achieving the messianic ideal.

The experience of the present, especially that of joy, could be achieved most elatedly through singing. Hasidism implements its messianic ideal directly into the practice of singing. Only through niggunim, melodies without words, could the messianic ideal be fully achieved. Thus, any Yiddish songs of the Hasidim, though liturgical in nature, would not bring the highest achievement, a communion with God.

The influence of both Secularism and Hasidism on Judaism led to further to the changing role of Messiah. Yiddish song and musical devices filled with concepts surrounding the Messiah served as a reflection of the divided Jewish world (particularly between the Hasidim and the Maskilim) and the internal pressures to assimilate. The

Maskilim developed the tool of satire within Yiddish song to further its aims in achieving its messianic ideal.

The unleashing of the Messiah into the secular sphere led to its reapplication in a new way. The concepts of Messiah served as an emotional identification with the Jewish people and with the messianic ideal needed to be achieved. In the case of Zionism, this is best played out in the music of Abraham Goldfaden who uses Messianic musical motifs.

The concept and idea of Messiah serves as a vessel filled by experience of the Jewish people; likewise Yiddish song serves as an anthem voicing the experience of the Jewish people. As devices they reflect the adaptability of the Jewish people. Through creativity and will to survive, the Jewish people reformulated and reinterpreted their framework to work toward their messianic ideals. Not only did Messiah and Yiddish song serve as vessels, as entities they brought hope to the Jewish people.

## APPENDIX



# EXAMPLE #1

## ADIR ELOHENU

Moderato

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev

The first system of musical notation for 'Adir Elohenu'. It consists of a treble and bass staff in G major (one sharp) and common time. The treble staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. The melody is characterized by eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures containing beamed sixteenth notes. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

The vocal melody for the first system, written on a single treble staff. It follows the same key and time signature as the instrumental accompaniment. The melody is composed of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures containing beamed sixteenth notes.

1. A-dir e-loi-hei-nu — a-di-rim yis-ro-eil a-di-rim yis-ro-eil — She-  
 2. Bo-ruch e-loi-hei-nu — b' ru-chim yis-ro-eil b' ru-chim yis-ro-eil — She-

The second system of musical notation. It continues the instrumental accompaniment from the first system. The treble staff begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic marking. The melody continues with eighth and sixteenth notes, and the bass staff provides harmonic support.

The vocal melody for the second system, continuing the vocal line from the first system. It features a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure of the system.

kib-lu ha-toi-ro she-kib-lu ha-toi-ro — mi-pi ha-gvu-ro.

The third system of musical notation. It continues the instrumental accompaniment. The treble staff features a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure. The bass staff provides harmonic support.

The vocal melody for the third system, continuing the vocal line. It features a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure of the system.

Mi-pi ha-gvu-ro b'-sim-chas toi-ro ha-bo-ho — mi-pi ha-gvu-ro b'-

The fourth system of musical notation. It continues the instrumental accompaniment. The treble staff begins with a *piu mosso* (faster) dynamic marking. The melody continues with eighth and sixteenth notes, and the bass staff provides harmonic support.

The vocal melody for the fourth system, continuing the vocal line. It features a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure of the system.

*piu mosso*

sim - chas toi - ro ha - bo. U - ru no u - ru no a - chei - nu b' -

sim' - chas toi - ro sam - chei - nu u - ru no u - ru no a - chei - nu b' -

sim - chas toi - ro sam - chei - nu. Al zois o - nu m' - tza - pim vei - al zois o - nu m' - cha - kim

*rit.* *piu mosso*

al zois o - nu m' - ka - vim. Ven zhe vet dos zain? — Bim - hei - ro v' - yo - mei - nu

*rit.* *piu mosso*

*rall.*

ver zhe vet dos zain? Mo - shi - ach tzid - kei - nu

*rall.*

Moderato

vos zhe vet de - molt zain? vos zhe vet de - molt zain?

Allegretto

yoim gi - lo yoim ri - no yoim di - tzo ve - ched - vo

yoim gi - lo yoim ri - no yoim di - tzo ve - ched - vo.

Da-di-dam da-di-dam, dai-dai-dam dai-dai-dai-dam dai-dai-dam

da-di-dam, da-di-dam dai-dai-dai dai-dai-dai-dam dai-dam.

1. אדיר אלוהינו (מעכטיק איז אונזער גאט), אדירים ישראל (מעכטיק איז דאס פאלק ישראל) אדירים ישראל שקבלו התורה (וועלכע האבן מקבל געווען די תורה) שקבלו התורה מפי הנביאה [מפי הנביאה בשמחת תורה תפאח (אין דעם טאג פון דעם יום טוב שבועות)] [עורה נא, עורה נא, אחינא, בשמחת תורה שמחננו (וואכט אויף, ברוי דער, און פרייט זיך מיט דער פרייד פון דער תורה)] על זאת אנו מצפים (אויף דעם האפן מיר) [על זאת אנו מחכים (און אויף דעם ווארטן מיר)] על זאת אנו מקווים (אויף דעם ווארטן מיר) ווען-זשע וועט דאס זיין? — בסקרה בנפנו (שנעל, אין אונזערע טעג) ווער-זשע וועט דאס זיין? — משיח צדקנו (משיח דער גערעכטער) [וואס-זשע וועט דעמאלט זיין?] [יום נילה, יום רינה, יום דיצה וחדוה (א טאג פון פרייד און פון געזאנג)] [דאי-די-דאם, דאי-די-דאם, דיי-די-דאם, דיי-די-די-דאם]
2. ברוך אלוהינו, ברוכים ישראל (געבענשט איז אונזער גאט, געבענשט איז אונזער פאלק ישראל) א.א.וו.
3. גדול אלוהינו, גדולים ישראל (גרויס איז אונזער גאט, גרויס איז דאס פאלק ישראל) א.א.וו.

{ This song was usually sung by Chassidim on the holiday of Shavuot (Pentecost) which was also known as Simchas Torah Habo'o. }

Mighty is our God, mighty are the people of Israel, who received the Torah from the mouth of the Almighty on the day of Pentecost. Rise up brethren! Let us rejoice with the joy of the Torah. We hope and wait and look forward. When will that day be? Very soon—in the days of our life. Who will it be? Messiah the righteous. What will our life be then? Days of joy, days of song, days of overwhelming rejoicing!

# EXAMPLE #2

430

JEWISH MUSIC

*Recitando*  
*Andante*

29 *mf*

Vos vet zein mit dem reb-ben dem fru - men, bim - he-roh ve - yo -

me - nu, az mo-shi-ach vet ku - men, fon vein un fon bron-fen

vet gehn a re-gen, un dos vet zein far die chssi - dim ve-gen,

bim-he-roh ve-yo-me-nu vie der - lebt men dos shoin.

*Allegretto*

30 *mf*

Ef-fent reb-bi-tzin, chssi-dim ge - hen, chssi-dim ge - hen,

vil-lensich fre-hen, chssi-dim ge-hen zei vil-lendocht zuga-ve-nen die  
in pantof-fel

zil-ber-ne lef - fel! chssi dim ge-hen zei vil-lendocht zuga-ve-nen die  
in pan-tof-fel

zil-ber-ne lef - fel reb-be-tzin, reb-be-tzin, hot kein moi - roh,

chssi-dim ge - hen ler-nen toi - roh. ler-nen toi - roh.

# EXAMPLE #3

-28-

Разрешено къ публичному исполнению Главнымъ Управлениемъ по дѣламъ печати въ С-Петербургѣ 10го апрѣля 1913 г. за № 5344.

50.

## Wos wet sajn mit reb Isroel dem frumen

Volksmelodie  
bearbeitet für Stimme, Violine und Klavier  
von H. Kopit.

Worte von M. Riwesmann.

## וואס וועט זיין מיט ר' ישראל דעם פרוימען

פאלקס-מעלאדיע  
בעארבעיט פאר שטימע, פיעדעל און פיאנע  
פון ה. קאפוט.

ווערבער פון ס. ריוועסמאן.

מיר וועלען האבען אייגענע חקים ומשפטים  
ס'וועלען ווידער זיין די צוועלף שבטים  
און יעדער שבט וועט האבען זיין דגל  
אין דריי טאל אין יאהר וועט מען זיין עולה ורגל.

וואס וועט זיין מיט ר' ישראל דעם פרוימען  
במחנה ביטונו או כשיח וועט קומען?  
ס'וועלען ווידער זיין די אלסע נביאים  
אין בית המקדש וועלען זינגען כהנים אין לויים  
טורי כורי בים באם בים באם.

די שבאב יהושלים וועט אפגעבען ווידער  
אויף די פעלדער וועלען קלינגען ציון'ס ליעדער  
נאם וועט מיט זיין הסדר אויפן בעשיצען  
און יעדער וועט איבער זיין ווייניגשאק לוחיג זיצען.

### Adagio religioso.

Canto.

Violino.

Piano.

### recitando ad libit.

Vos vet sajn mit reb is - ro - el dem fru - - men,  
מען פרו דעם אל - ר' יש' מיט זיין וועט וואס

bim -  
==

hej-ro be-jo-mei-nu a-mo-schi-ach vet ku - men s'veln  
הי-רו בע-י-י-נו א-מ-ו-ש-י-א-ח ו-ע-ת קו-מ-נו ש-ו-ע-ל-נו

mf

Red. Red. Red. Red.

vi-der zayn di al-te n'-wi im in bejs ha - mik-dosch veln zin - gen kei-  
ו-י-ד-ע-ר ז-י-י-ן ד-י א-ל-ת-י-ם ב-י-ת א-י-ן מ-י-כ-ד-ו-ש ו-ע-ל-נו ז-י-נ-ג-ו-ן ק-י-י-ם

f

Red. Red.

ha-mim mit l' - vi -yim ti-ri-bi-ri bim, bam, bam, bim, bam! Mir veln  
ה-מ-י-ם מ-י-ת ל' ו-י-י-ם ת-י-ר-י-ב-י-ר-י ב-י-ם, ב-א-ם, ב-א-ם, ב-י-ם, ב-א-ם מ-י-ר ו-ע-ל-נו

pizz. arco

mf

Red. Red. Red. \*

ho-bon ei-ge-ne chu-kim u-misch-po - tim, s'tein  
 הא-בון עי-גה-נח כח-קים ו-מיש-פא-טימ, שטיין

*mp*

*Red* *Red*

Vider gajndi zvelf schvo-tim un je-derschejvet vet hobn gajnde gel un  
 מוים - שבע צוועלף די זיין דער-ווי אין גל - ד זיין האבען וועט כח - ש דער-יט

*mf*

*Red* *Red* *Red* *Red* *Red*

draj mol in Jahr vet men gajndi oj-le regl tiribiri bim,bam,bam,bam, bam, - bam!  
 דראג מאל אין יאהר וועט מען גאנגען אויף-לע רעגל טיריבירי בים,באם,באם,באם, באם, - באם

*pizz.* *arco*

*Red* *Red* *Red* *Red* *Red*



*cantabile*

First system of musical notation. It includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features complex fingerings and slurs. Performance markings include *Red.*, *\* Red.*, *m.d.*, *m.d.*, *pp*, and *m.g.*. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5.

Second system of musical notation. It continues the vocal and piano parts. Performance markings include *Red.*, *Red.*, *m.g.*, *m.g.*, *m.g.*, *Red.*, *Red.*, *Red.*, and *Red.*. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5.

Third system of musical notation. It includes a vocal line with the lyrics "Die" and a piano accompaniment. Performance markings include *mf*, *rit.*, *Red.*, *\* Red.*, *Red.*, *Red.*, and *Red.*. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5.

schtot Je - ru - scho - la - im vet oif - le - ben vi - der oif - di  
 שחטת ירושלהאם וועט אים לעבן ווי דער איד

*mp*

Red.

felder veln klingen i - o - jns li - der Got vet mit zayn chessed uns be -  
 דער ליע יונגס פערלעך וועלען דער - פערלעך זיין מיט זיין חסד אונז

Red. Red. Red. Red.

schi - tzn un je - der vet un - ter zayn Vein - schtok ru - hig si - tzn ti - ri - bi - ri  
 און ציען יעדער וועט אונטער זיין בערע שחטן ווייניג ציען ירושלהאם

Red. Red. Red. Red.



LYRICS by AVROM REISIN  
MUSIC: Ida Kornblit Arr. Harry Anik  
MODERATO

# EXAMPLE #4 מִשְׁחָה MOSHIAKH

מִשְׁחָה כְּדָרְבָּר  
וְהַיְיָ יִשְׁמַח  
בְּכָל עַמּוּת  
וְכָל לֵב

Handwritten musical score for "Moshia Kh" in G major, 4/4 time. The score includes a piano introduction, a vocal melody with Hebrew lyrics, and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are:

gi-kher moshia kh, gi-kher shoin kum, es ringelt di gantsene velt shayn a-rem vi  
gi-ti-ke shlangen der hunger un noyt, un breyker un parhad un angstn un toyt es  
ken shayn nit a-leimen shpaten di erd. oy kum shoyne mo-si-a-akh

wait a ein Vaisin-kn ford! Con moto

4 T. m. 25  
hum shoy noshakh es drukt umetum di keytn fun krechtsheft amun un a rum, es

hot shoyn keyn ort dos umschuldike blut Vos trifft uns es geyt zid fun unter der ruit, es

rosteret fun minkliche blut shoyt di shved o, kum shoyn mosh i - akh.

*Allegretto*

Wäit *tenderly* a-fu vuy-sin-kn ferd 8-va --- 0 Kumshoy'n, moshia'kh, me shiach

a-fu vuy-sin-kn ferd!

# EXAMPLE #5 43 Shofar Shel Moshiah

Music: Abraham Goldfaden

Words: Abraham Goldfaden & Yossele Rosenblatt

Arr: Joseph Rumshinsky

Allegro Moderato

**Voice**

**ff**

Nisht

weit zu gehn ken a je - de-rerschu Wie un-ter a stein in ein

tie - fer heil liegt in serkroin lang yoh renshon

in ser Do-vid me-lech jis roel Oi Do-vid Do-vid Steh

auf fin dein shlof get-rei er Pastuch sugwus is zi thin

seh - wiemanshlach tet aus dei-ne shuf in keiner nehmt zich far sei nicht

on o ber as er wet he-ren sho fer shel mo-shi-ach Tkioh

wet er auf stein fon sein kei wer gich Tkioh in wet sich setz e auf sein stuhl in

Allegretto assai

wet sich ge - ben auf - sein fie - de - le a spiel

Auf der mi-nit wet sich ge-ben a shit fie - le - mu - si - kan - ten

ye - der yud wet - sin - gen dus lied fon Thi - lim - dem be - kan - ten

in auch der yam wetsich einhalten kam zu shok len mit die - bet - lach



inder gri-ner wald wet ki - men bald in ples-ken mit die blet - lach

in Do - wid me - lech mit sein fie - de - le wet - sich spie - len a frei - lich lie - de - le

Do - wid me lech mit sein fie - de - le wet - sich spie - len a frei - lich lie - de - le

yis - ro - lik is noch nit fer - lo - ren yis - ro - lik wird noch nei ge - bo - ren

Singt mit mir - ot - den shir - zu dem le - be - di - gen gott yo

singt mit mir ot dem shir - zi dem le - be - di - gen gott yo

# EXAMPLE #6 DER BECHER (THE CUP)

Edited by H. Pospishil  
SIMON FRUG

SOLOMON GOLUB

*Cm:* Andantissimo



*un poco raffrett.*



*Cm:*



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*F#-A-C-Eb*

kwehlen zich do schwer, Hot der groisser Gott Rach-mo - ness ——— Losst in  
 KVEYN SAYER

Koss a-rain a Trer? ——— "E - mess, Kind mains."  
 A- RAYN MAYNE

*Lento pp*

Ach, Mam-me, Mam-me is oich E - mess, is oich Zich - er, Az Mo-  
 Tempo Imo cresc. CH: poco a poco

schi - aeh der wet kum-men, koim wet ve - ren full der Becher?  
 ER ant

*G-B-F dim. B-D-F*

"E - mess!" Un dos Kind far-klert zich, Vart a Wajl, troi - rig  
 (purity)  
 VAYL  
*Lento pp* *Tempo Imo*

still, fregder-noch "Ober Mame... Vet der Bech-er zain schoin full?"  
 p ff  
*Andantino* a little faster

Un er hejbt die blate Oi - gen trof-e-rig Tzu der Mut-ter of Tzu.  
 rane BLOGE  
*p con tenerezza* b-d-x  
*Andantino* a little faster

on a deck der Bech-er Vos mir lei - den on a  
 bottem LAY-DN  
*Andantino* a little faster

*u. more*  
*p* *anxious* *cresc.* *poco a poco* *He does*  
Ssof? *LAU-DN* *GOLESS* *VOCH*  
Wie lang mir lau - d'n schoin in Go - less Un er Vill schoin full nit

*pp* *cresc.* *poco a poco*

*dim.* *the tears are drying up before the cup gets full*  
Ver - ren Ef - sher trick - nen durch die Yoh - ren in dem Bech - er oys die

*dim.*  
trick throughout the years

Thre - ren? *half cadence*

*cres -* *cen -* *do* *di -*

*p* *with a little agitation*

Un Tze - ru - dert  
upset  
*min - u - en - do* *ff* *ff*



bläbt die Mut - ter i - bern frum - men Kind ge - boy - gen Un es.

*blaybt* *pious* *gent*

*p* *ant* D-F-C *d-f#ab C ant.* *G-B-D-F*

Tzit - te - ren die Bre - men Fun die Mut - ters feich - te Oi - gen

*Tremblung* *eyebrow* *DER* *clump most* *gr.*

*FAYKH-TE*

**Andantino**

Fal - len Thre - ren, Zwei Brillan - ten oif dem Kinds ver - kler - ten Ster - n.

*ar.* *cm.* *RN*

*BRILLYAN - TN* *AF* *FAR - KLER - TN SHTERN*

**Andante religioso**

*marcato* *espress.*

*p* *f* *p* *pp* *dolce*

*iv64* *i* *iv64* *iv* *iv64* *i* *iv64* *iv* *iv64*

*ad libitum*

"Gott in Him - mel, hob Rachmo - ness, Nem in Koss a - rein die  
*With inner glow, compassion.* A - RAYN

*cresc.*

*appassionato*

Thre - ren, hob Rach - mo - ness, Hob Rach - mo - ness Nem in Koss a -

*mf*

*PT*  
rein die Thre  
*RAYN*

*ant. V*  
*RAYN*

*f*

*p*

*p*

*pp*

*p*

*pp*

*dolciss. molto rallent.*

# EXAMPLE # 7

Andante

Dm Gm Dm

Tsi ken - stu dos land vu es - roy - gim - lekh bli - en, Vu

F Bb A7 Dm

tsi - gn e - sn bok - ser an - shtot groz — an - shtot groz, Ge -

Gm Dm

bro - te - ne gen - dze - lekh, katsh - ke - lekh fli - en, Tse -

Am E7 A F

mu - kim vayn tut fli - sn on a mos, on a mos. Mit lu - lo - vim, mit

Am Dm F

lu - lo - vim tut men de - kher de - kn, Un — mand - len, un — mand - len

Am Dm Gm Dm

vak - sn oyf ye - der shte - kn. Oy — a - hin, a - hin, a - hin, Oy,

Gm A7 Dm Gm

re - ben - yu, ge - vald — ge - vald. Volt ikh mir a - vek, a - vek, a -

Dm 1. Am E7 A 2. Am A7 Dm

vek. Oy, ta - ke — bald. — Oy ta - ke — bald. —



## EXAMPLE #8

find the Chassidic version

## ZOL SHOYN KUMEN DI GEULE

Words by  
S. KATCHERGINSKYMusic by  
SIDOR BELARSKY

Allegro.

Piano



% Voice



check out words  
(not soon) (Kum shoin bald)

(4)

Zol shoin ku-men di ge - u - le Mo - shi - ach kumt shoin bald

Fine

Soor

Andante

heavy hearts (written in the ghetto)

1. On - ge - zo - liet of - 'n hart - z'n, macht men a l' - cha - yim Un az der  
2. Tan - tz'n bej - mer in di vel - der shte - r'n of f'n hi - m'l reb ls -  
3. S'iz a dor fun ku - lo cha - yev zait nit kein na - ro - nim Un fun dem

Sam

Surfer

um - et lozt nit ruk - en zin - gen mir a lied az siz nish - to kain bron - f'n whiskey  
ro - lik der me - chu - t'n dreiz zich in der mit s'vet zich olf cha - p'n Mo - shi - ach  
zin di k'n Moshiaach ku men vet oy ta - te nu in hi - m'l

ouf! rain ->

awaken

freshwater ven er vet der - kor n

D.S. al Fine

muz mentrinken ma - yim ma - yim cha - yim iz doch cha - yim Vos darf noch der Yid?  
fun zein ti - f'n dri - m'l un der he - r'n un - zer t'fil - e - di - ke Hd.  
s'bet - 'n b'nai - rach - mo - nim ze az Mo - shi - ach zol nit ku - men a bi - se - le tzu shpet.

Jewish people

rit.

f a tempo

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