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The Impact of Nineteenth-Century Romanticism on Eastern and Western European Synagogue Composers:

> Salomon Sulzer Louis Lewandowski David Nowakowsky Eliezer Gerowitsch

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Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for Master of Sacred Music Degree

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Introduction

This project developed from an interest in the changes in synagogue music which occurred in Europe during the Nineteenth - Century. Through my years of religious and cantorial education I became fond of the music of this period and in particular four of its composers. I chose Salomon Sulzer and Louis Lewandowski to represent Western Europe and David Nowakowsky and Eliezer Gerowitsch to represent Eastern Europe. My goal was to analyze their music and show through the technique of comparison and contrast what makes these individuals great composers but more specifically, what are the differences and similarities in their music and what forces may have influenced those composers to write their music in such a manner.

The following is a list of the compositions which I have chosen to analyze and their respective composers:

V'Teerav	SalomonSulzer
Enosch	LouisLewandowski
Atah Noten Jod	David Nowakowsky
Un'tane Tokef	Eliezer Gerowitsch

The first step in the research process was to learn more about the lives of these four composers. Where they came from, their upbringing, their education and professional development including their contributions to the world of synagogue music.

Second, I researched the development of the Enlightenment and the birth of the *Haskalah* movement in the end of the Eighteenth and beginning of the Nineteenth - Century. I continued by asking the question, what effect did these socio - political enterprises have on Europe as a whole, and on the Jewish communities and Jewish music.

Third, I analyzed the music itself. My goal in this section of the project was to illustrate how certain elements of Romanticism were injected and fused with tradition Jewish musical elements. In addition, recognizing the presence of literary and programmatic devices in Romantic music, I set out to demonstrate how these devices were worked into the new synagogue music.

In identifying the different composers' techniques and styles of composition I wanted to show if one composer had influenced others or had one region of Europe dictated what kind of characteristics the music might possess in another region. In summary, I wanted to show what aspects of Romanticism were included in these compositions and how the composers applied them.

Chapter 1

Haskalah and Reform

This section deals with the *Haskalah*, or enlightenment, movement in Western and Eastern Europe in the 19th Century and how this phenomenon effected the lives of the Jewish people. My focus is the effect of the *Haskalah* on synagogues and their music and ideologies.

The Haskalah movement began in the 1770's with a philosophy about education and religious reform laid down by Moses Mendelssohn one of the great Jewish philosophers of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Education in the wider sense of the word and religious reform of a diffuse and unclarified nature were two instruments with which the enlightened, maskilim, hoped to remodel Jewish life. The "new education" aimed to give the Jews a more realistic view of the world and a better understanding of their non-Jewish environment that would help to reconcile them with it.

It would also lead Jews to develop a taste conforming to the aesthetic standard of the European world. $^{\rm 1}$

One way to carry out this idea was to have Jews study religion side-by-side with the sciences and arts and any other general subjects that their Christian neighbors had been studying. For Jewish society in Central Europe, and even more so in Eastern Europe, this demand conflicted with the deeply ingrained ideal of *Torah* study that left no place for other subjects. ² In a later analysis of the effects of the *Haskalah* movement it was decided that the movement itself was partially responsible for assimilation by fostering loyalty toward the modern civilized state. This assimilation became more widespread in Central Europe than in Eastern Europe. ³

Haskalah operated as an active trend within German Jewry in one generation. In 1778 in Berlin, the first "Free School" opened to children of poor Jews. Jews were studying a curriculum which, for the first time in history, had its focus on general subjects and not on Jewish ones. Throughout the first half of the 19th Century schools of this sort opened up all across Central Europe and some in Eastern Europe as well. The German government supported the educational philosophies behind these institutions because they agreed with the

¹Katz, Jacob <u>Out of the Ghetto, The Social Background Of Jewish Emancipation, 1770-1870</u>, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard Univ. Press; 1973, pp. 124.

²Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 12, s.v. "Haskalah," by Yehuda Slutsky.

³Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 12, s.v. "Haskalah," by Yehuda Slutsky.

"improvement of the Jews and their education" policy which was laid out in Germany by its absolutist rulers. 4

In Austria, however, the liberal trend became clearer at the beginning of the 1860's. Several restrictions were lifted from the Jews and when the new Constitution was complete in 1867 equality was attained. ⁵

Haskalah was introduced into Russia from Western Europe, particularly Germany. It was brought there at the close of the 18th Century. The early Russian maskilim were in constant contact with their counterparts in Berlin.⁶ During the 1820's the Haskalah movement was revived in Lithuania and Southern Russia. During this time the maskilim gained a hold in Vilna one of the centers of commerce with Western Europe. One of their tasks was to establish modern schools similar to German free schools. In fact, even though these schools would be in Russia, courses would be taught in German because most of the teachers were maskilim from Germany. In 1822, Hirsch Hurwitz founded a school in Uman based on the "Mendelssohnian system" of dual secular and sacred educations. Similar schools were subsequently founded in Riga, Kishinev and Vilna. ⁷ In the 1840's and 1850's many schools were begun in the Pale of Settlement, and were run, at the request of the Russian

⁴Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 12, s.v. "Haskalah," by Yehuda Slutsky.

⁵Ben-Sasson, H.H. <u>A History of the Jewish People</u>, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard Univ. Press; 1976, pp. 811.

⁶Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 12, s.v. "Haskalah," by Yehuda Slutsky.

⁷Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 12, s.v. "Haskalah," by Yehuda Slutsky.

government, by Max Lilienthal, who was then the principle of the Jewish school in Riga. In these schools, which were supported by special taxes put upon the masses, a new group of maskilim was educated, however, due to the philosophies of haskalah, their ties with the Hebrew language and Jewish tradition were weak. 8

Certain basic ideologies made themselves apparent as the haskalah moved forward. The push toward emancipation and assimilation put more of an emphasis on the states recognition and help of the Jews rather than the hope for the Messiah. The general anti-messianic position taken by maskilim was aided by the failure of the Shabbatai Zevi movement which claimed to possess the next Messiah. Another ideological particularity was that maskilim were now identifying themselves as "we Germans" or Russians first, as opposed to Jews. The identification with their nation in equal proportion to their faith agreed with the assimilatory nature of haskalah. Thirdly, a linguistic assimilation slowly became a hallmark of haskalah. Wealthy German Jews adopted German as their spoken language and at the same time lost interest in Yiddish. Yiddish was removed from the Cheder, or traditional Jewish classroom, because maskilim labeled it as being "responsible for unethical conduct and the corruption of religion".9

Haskalah's ideologies laid the groundwork for reforms to take place concerning Judaism. Maskilim noted that whenever a conflict arose between the state and Jewish law, the state argument would

9Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Haskalah," by Yehuda Slutsky.

⁸Encyclopedia <u>Iudaica</u>, Vol. 12, s.v. "Haskalah," by Yehuda Slutsky.

prevail. This was the *maskilims* way of reforming Jewish tradition without directly attacking the need for religious reform for its own sake. ¹⁰

Israel Jacobson, court factor of Jerôme Bonaparte and fervent champion of synagogue reform in Westphalia, wanted religious rituals to resemble Protestant ceremonies as closely as possible in outward appearance. To that end, in Berlin, German was to replace the "dead language" of Hebrew for all prayers. In addition, to support the *maskilims* new nationalism, any references to Zion or Jerusalem were also deleted from prayer texts. ¹¹ Secondly, the aesthetics of Jewish worship were found wanting when compared to that of the non-Jewish world. The Jews first opportunity for improved aesthetics occurred in the Kingdom of Westphalia in 1809 when Jacobson introduced a number of musical innovations. ¹²

In Westphalia, the congregations had changed into an audience which expected the liturgical music to evoke feelings they could not find within themselves. Since they were no longer singing the focus needed to change. Jacobson responded with the idea of a choir which of course came from the Protestant church. To form the first Jewish choir, in 1804 he began to musically educate pupils of the Jewish mechanics school in Seesen. They formed a choir and sang with the

¹⁰Ben-Sasson, H.H. <u>A History of the Jewish People</u>, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard Univ. Press; 1976, pp. 788.

^{1.1} Ben-Sasson, H.H. <u>A History of the Jewish People</u>, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard Univ. Press; 1976, pp. 788.

¹²Hoffman, Lawrence A. & Walton, Janet R. Ed., <u>Sacred Sound</u> and <u>Social Change</u>, "Jewish Liturgical Music in the wake of Nineteenth Century Reform,"

Notre Dame, Indiana; Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1992; pp. 59-60.

organ installed in the prayer hall of their institution (1807). Soon after, Jacobson opened another Reform synagogue with organ and part-singing in the Westphalian capital of Kassel. However, with the end of the kingdom (1814) both of Jacobson's synagogues were forced to close. Jacobson then went to Berlin where he opened a private synagogue with an organ and a boy's choir in the free school (1815).¹³ With the effort put forth for further reform in Berlin a number of forces fought against them. An unyielding rabbinate, a cantor barely possessing western musical skills, and a repressive government combined to prevent any more substantive musical reforms in Berlin until the 1840's.¹⁴ Meanwhile, elsewhere in Germany Reform was making different inroads.

Members of the New Hamburg Reform synagogue (1817) regarded the melodic recitation of the Bible and prayers as opposed to the spirit of the age and replaced them with plain declamation. They also created German-language hymnals containing some melodies composed by well-known musicians like A. G. Methfessel and the Jewish-born Ferdinand Hiller. However, most Reform congregations had real difficulty finding composers with any status or that were involved with the task of writing the new Jewish liturgical music. Most of the melodies which landed in the hymnals were rather weak and had no text bound inspiration. In addition,

¹³Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Music," by Hanoch Avenary.

¹⁴Hoffman, Lawrence A. & Walton, Janet R. Ed., <u>Sacred Sound</u> and <u>Social Change</u>, "Jewish Liturgical Music in the wake of Nineteenth Century Reform,"

Notre Dame, Indiana; Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1992; pp. 61.

¹⁵ Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Music," by Hanoch Avenary.

¹⁶Ibid.

the impulse existed to integrate prayers with the Christian environment by adopting tunes of well-known Protestant chorales, 17

Two major achievements of a general nature arose from the Reformers actions for change. First, was the education of the youth in part-singing with music written following rules of harmony. Second, the innovation of playing the organ in a worship service. The use of the organ in synagogues was made a cornerstone and symbol of later liberalism against strict observance in religious matters. 18

The tendency to replace unorganized congregation singing with a well trained part-singing choir and simplifying the ornate oriental melodies occurred during the period between the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815) and the revolutions of 1848 that lead to the admission of citizenship.¹⁹

For the first time in history what began to occur was the modern musical notation of all commonly accepted synagogue tunes. The tendency was then to improve and adjust these tunes, in essence to justify their usage. Actually, this process of personal liberty in regards to Jewish music had been happening for all time.²⁰

In Russia, as I mentioned earlier, the wave toward liberalism occurred much later. For instance, the first organ to be played in a Russian synagogue was in 1901 (Union Temple, Odessa). The reasons for the delay in change can be seen as both social and intellectual. Eastern European Jews were concentrated in the Pale of Settlement

¹⁷ Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Music," by Hanoch Avenary.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹ Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Music," by Hanoch Avenary.

²⁰Ibid.

and as result of the restrictions put upon them even the greatest musicians had to serve their community with their talents. Therefore, the people were very concerned with the high art music being heard in their synagogues. The people's knowledge and interest was focused solely on the *hazzan*—who was subjected to great criticism and unconditional adulation.²¹



²¹ Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. "Music," by Hanoch Avenary.

Chapter 2

Composers Biographical Information:

Salomon Sulzer

Salomon Sulzer was born on March 30, 1804 in Hohenems, a city in the province of Vorarlberg, Austria. He had all that he needed as a child both in terms of material things as well as a firm foundation in Judaism due to the fact that his family was very well off and were also devout Jews. Sulzer was tutored, as a child, in Synagogue music by Salomon Eichberg (1786-1880).²²

Early in Salomon Sulzer's life he had what could very well have been a fatal accident. Young Salomon fell into a raging river and was miraculously saved from drowning. From that day onward Salomon's mother dressed him in white as a sign that she had dedicated her son's life to serving God and the synagogue. Sulzer's general education began at the Yeshiva in Endingen, Switzerland where he studied composition extensively with Von Seyfried, a friend of Beethoven. His later music education continued in Karlesruhe,

²²Nulman, Macy <u>Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music</u>, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 240.

Germany.²³ It was after the completion of his education that he decided to become a cantor and served as itinerant cantor in Switzerland, Germany and France.²⁴ At the age of 14 (some say 16) he applied for and became the cantor of the synagogue in his home town. This position, however, would not hold his interest for long.

Sulzer seemed uneasy at the prospect of settling into the position at such an early age. Not long after he began the job he started taking advantage of opportunities to learn from and travel with a number of cantors who traveled from town to town singing in different synagogues. His extensive travels lasted for three years during which time he met and studied with two particularly influential cantors, Lippmann and Eichberg, who Sulzer would pay tribute to later in his life.

In 1826 Sulzer took a trip to Vienna. This trip turned out to be a permanent change of location for Sulzer because while in the great city of music he was offered the position of chief cantor. At 21 years old, the Vienna Jewish community opened its doors to him. He ended up staying at this position from 1826 to 1881, a span of 55 years. Eight years into his stay in Vienna Salomon Sulzer had a son. He named him Julius Salomon Sulzer which is curious because although Sephardic Jews often name their children after living relatives, Ashkenazic Jews do not. (Julius lived a full life and died on February 13, 1891.)

24Ibid., 240.

²³ Nulman, Macy <u>Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music</u>, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 240.

While he served as Obercantor in Vienna, Salomon Sulzer's talents would produce a reputation that carried across Europe to all cantors and musicians. He had a beautifully rich baritone voice, people came from miles away to hear him. Meyerbeer, Schubert, Schumann and Liszt were among the many great musicians who traveled to hear the great cantor. In addition to the musicians who heard Sulzer there were also dignitaries and members of the aristocracy. As a result of those very important visitors, Sulzer was given the title "Knight of the Order of Franz Joseph" who was the Empire of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the time. Sulzer was also sought after by many members of and patrons to the Vienna Opera.

Sulzer set out to "purify" the traditional melodies of the Jewish people. He began by removing what he called "arbitrary and tasteless adornments" and then proceeded to lay out the melody in it's most basic form. His next step was to set the liturgy to strict western harmonic formulas, in other words, in the form of Romantic Music. (The liturgy was that of the prayerbook written by Mannheimer.) Sulzer's first set of completed compositions written between 1838 and 1840 published as Schir Zion. The second volume of the same work would follow some 30 years later and included a much more complete liturgical list of musical settings. Schir Zion also contains 37 works by other composers such as Schubert, Von Seyfried, and Fischhof. He same work would follow.

²⁵Sulzer, Salomon Schir Zion, Forward Out of print classics Vol. 6, New York: Sacred Music Press, 1954.

²⁶Nulman, Macy <u>Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music</u>, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 240.

During the period of time between the publication of the two volumes of Schir Zion Vienna was in the throws of a revolution. In 1848 Sulzer was arrested and imprisoned. A short time later Sulzer was released due to the enormous popularity of his music in Austria and Germany. His final major work came in 1876 published as Denkschrift an die hochgeehrte Wiener Israelitische Cultus-Gemeinde zum fünfzigjährigen Jubiläum des alten Bethauses . (Dedication Address for the 50th Anniversary of the Old Synagogue of Viennese Jewish Community). This work was written to celebrate the synagogue's 50th anniversary. Sulzer's musical settings became the model for most liberal synagogues in Central Europe and quickly spread to the east as well.

In the process of composing, Sulzer was concerned with a number of important factors. First was diction, including the meter of the text of the liturgy, and second was the form and harmony of the day. Sulzer's philosophies about Jewish liturgy and traditional music were actualized through his compositional genius. The goals he wished to achieve were reached through a series of steps in his compositional style:

- Consider the traditional tunes passed down to him.
 Sulzer said that the tunes he used were mostly that of Nestor Maharil in addition to many Polish tunes as well.
- Remove what he felt to be tasteless embellishment, and at the same time put an end to cantorial improvisation.
- Reconstruct the pure traditional melodies and apply them to western musical meter as well as diction.

4. Apply the pure melodies to romantic form and harmony.

In doing so, he succeeded in bringing traditional Jewish nusach and it's melodies together with Western harmonies and models of composition.

It was of utmost importance to Sulzer that he strive in inject a new sense of dignity into the service. One way to control the atmosphere in the synagogue was to give the singing almost entirely to the cantor and the choir. Congregational singing was taken out of the equation which, to the average congregant, seemed like a reasonable sacrifice in light of the fact that the cantor was so incredible to hear.

Sulzer also wanted the office of the cantor to be looked at in a different light. He strived to elevate the position so that the cantor and rabbi would be on the same professional level both in terms of service to, and perception of, the community at large.

Late in his life Salomon Sulzer, was assisted by his son Joseph, devoted himself to reediting his works, regrettably he never lived to see finished second edition.²⁷

Sulzer's achievements proved to be so great that his music as well as his demeanor were standards for most 19th century cantors.

Sulzer died in Vienna on January 17, 1890.

²⁷ Nulman, Macy <u>Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music</u>, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 241.

Louis Lewandowski

Louis Lewandowski, originally Lazarus Lewandowski, was born on April 3, 1821 to a merchant family who lived in Wreschen, a city in the Prussian province of Poznan. At an early age Louis was drawn by his father into the musical service of their local synagogue where his father served as volunteer cantor on the High Holidays and was accompanied by the humming of his five sons, one of which was Louis.

Louis' mother died just after he turned twelve years old and soon thereafter, in 1834, due to her death and his families extreme poverty, he departed for Berlin to attend the Berlin Academy of Music. However, before entering the Academy Louis attended the local Gymnasium where he began his general studies as well as piano and violin lessons. Cantor Asher Lion, after hearing Louis sing in Berlin, took the boy who possessed a beautiful soprano voice into his synagogue choir and had Louis fulfill the Role of the "Singer". After the Gymnasium Louis attended the University and became the first Jew to be accepted into the Prussian Academy of the Arts. He achieved high acclaim while studying at the Academy and was awarded a prize for his cantata and symphony.

Suddenly the progress and the hope of success came to a halt when Louis was struck and rendered musically inactive by a serious nervous disorder for four years. While suffering from his disorder Louis had the opportunity to hear Cantor Hirsch Weintraub perform a series of concert services. Louis was very moved and inspired by

²⁸ Nulman, Macy <u>Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music</u>, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 132.

Weintraubs' "real" Jewish music which was written in classic harmonic form. This occurrence was pivotal for Louis' decision to focus on the music of his faith. Therefore, when he finally healed he realized that the synagogue was where he wanted to focus his talents.

After being nursed back to health Louis took his first synagogue appointment as conductor at the Heidereutergasse Synagogue. It was clear that he had to restructure the entire musical service because what existed was no longer in style and was keeping people away from their faith. The music which Louis was to do away with was similar to that which Sulzer had been dealing with. In other words, cantorial improvisation with many melismas which the congregation could not sing along with and had been slowly losing it's popularity. The demand for new music was growing, and after the populous heard what Weintraub had produced they wanted it as well.

Cantor Asher Lion then hired Louis as his choirmaster because the cantor himself had no ability to create new music or arrange preexisting music, and therefore was in fear of losing his position. Incidentally, Lewandowski was the first Jew to be called choirmaster because this job was held exclusively by the cantor.²⁹ Because Cantor Lion was limited in his talents Louis was not moved to create great music. But, after accepting the position, and upon the retirement of Cantor Lion, and the installment of Cantor Lichtenstein, Louis began the process of the metamorphosis of modern Jewish

²⁹Nulman, Macy <u>Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music</u>, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 132.

music. Louis came to life and his creative juices began to flow. Following in the rather large footsteps of Salomon Sulzer, Louis began to take traditional tunes and rewrite them in modern musical forms of his day.

His compositions were so well liked by cantors near and far that those cantors who traveled around singing in various synagogues sent music to Lewandowski for him to arrange at which point Louis would send the new compositions back to the cantors for them to sing "on the road". But Louis' greatest opportunity was yet to present itself.

In 1864 a new temple was being built in Berlin which was to house a fine organ. The name of that new house of prayer was the Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue. Louis took the position of cantor at the new synagogue and soon began to take his place as a leader in the creation of new synagogue song.

As a result of Louis' new found inspiration he published his first collection called Kol Rinnah U'T'fillah in 1870. This work was a complete service for the Sabbath and Festivals and included recitatives for all of the liturgy. They were made up of a cappella one and two-part chant arrangements. Much of this work does not include any complex passages. The new melodies are based upon the tradition and are to be sung clearly and seriously. The melodies he had written were of a more musical artistic style and were also easier to sing because he removed the rich embellishment of the older tunes and rewrote them in simple song meters. This in turn made the new music more palatable for the specific tastes of the new congregants.

Six years later in 1876 Louis Lewandowski wrote <u>Todah</u> <u>V'Zimrah</u>. In this volume he rewrote his earlier melodies into four part choruses, a cantor part and sections written intentionally for congregational singing. There was also an organ part which, for the most part doubled the choir parts and employed 19th century Romantic harmonies. In order to keep the service fresh he wrote a few arrangements of the same text, for example *L'cha Dodi*.

The interest in Sabbath liturgy was so great that in 1883 a second volume followed called <u>Festgesaenge</u>. It was these two volumes, <u>Todah V'Zimrah</u> and <u>Festgesaenge</u> which made up the core of synagogue music for the entire community. This great synagogue composer brought a semblance of organization in the music of the Jewish community of Berlin.³⁰

During his career he was also employed as music director of the Free School and the Jewish Teachers Seminary in Berlin and was responsible for founding the Institute for Aged and Indigent Musicians.³¹

Late in Louis' life he was given many honors by the Jewish community and the German government. He was made Honorary President of the Cantors' Assembly and was named director of all of Berlin's synagogues. He held that position until his death on February 3, 1894.

^{30&}lt;sub>Nulman</sub>, Macy <u>Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music</u>, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 132.

³¹Ibid., pp. 132.

David Nowakowsky

David Nowakowsky was born in Russia in the town of Malin, Province of Kiev, in 1849. He was orphaned at an early age and had to leave home at which time he traveled to Berdichev. After arriving at his destination in 1857 he joined the choir of the Chorale - Synagogue in Berdichev and stayed there for ten years. During this time he managed to study rules of harmony and counterpoint and composition.³² Later, at the age of 21, in 1870 he went to Odessa where he became Choirmaster, and Assistant Cantor of the Broder Shul, Odessa's liberal synagogue.³³ In addition to this position Nowakowsky was also a highly respected teacher of conducting, harmony and counterpoint as well as performing the responsibilities as musical director of the Orphan Asylum in Odessa.

When David Nowakowsky arrived at the Broder Shul Nissan Blumenthal was at the height of his career but Nowakowski did not agree with Blumenthal's philosophies of synagogue music. For instance, Blumenthal believed that musical reform could be achieved by setting prayers to oratorios and or operas while Nowakowsky saw no place for such music in the synagogue. Therefore, he started replacing these pieces which he called "intrusions" with his own compositions. Regardless of their differences, however, the reputation of Blumenthal's davening, chanting, and Nowakowsky's conducting spread throughout Russia.

³²Nulman, Macy Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 150.

³³ Nulman, Macy <u>Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music</u>, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 150.

In 1891, after 50 years of service, Blumenthal retired from the Broder Shul and was succeeded by Pinchas Minkowsky (1859-1924) who had already gained a reputation as a cantor. Minkowsky was very happy to work with such a conductor and composer as Nowakowsky. Minkowsky's voice and highly developed sense of style meant that Nowakowsky would have to lift his level of artistic composition which he did so happily and to rave reviews both from his cantor and from the community. It was not long after the team began their work together that the reputation of their Sabbath services spread throughout Europe. Almost anyone who visited Odessa stopped to hear Minkowsky's *chazzanut* and the choir and conducting of Nowakowsky.

Nowakowsky's skills blossomed due to Minkowsky's knowledge of science and math. The cross - pollination of their two minds allowed Nowakowsky to branch out into new musical forms such as fugues, choral writing for 5,6,7 and 8 parts as well as theme and variations.³⁴ He also began to write art songs, double choruses and his largest work, an oratorio based on the farewell song of Moses *Ha'azinu*. Because of the general size of Nowakowsky's works, which is a characteristic of the Eastern style of synagogual composition, they are better suited for the concert stage rather than the average service in synagogue.³⁵ Ironically, Nowakowsky became the most Europeanized (meaning his use of Western harmonies and forms) synagogue composer in Eastern Europe.³⁶

³⁴Idelsohn, A. Z. <u>Jewish Music in it's HistoricalDevelopment</u>, New York: Schocken Books, 1956, pp. 308.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 308.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 308.

The organ was introduced to the Broder Synagogue in 1901 with Isador Geller serving as the organist and assistant choir director under Nowakowsky.

The Broder Synagogue celebrated Nowakowsky's 40th anniversary of service to it on November 20, 1910, and ten years later on his 50th anniversary. He died on July 25, 1921.

Eliezer Gerovitsch

Eliezer Mordechai ben Yitschak Gerovitsch was born in Kitaigorod, Russia in 1844 and remained there while he studied Scripture, Talmud and other general subjects with his father and the local rabbi.³⁷ Early on Eliezer showed musical talent but his family could not afford a musical education as well. Against his fathers wishes, at the age of 18, Eliezer left home for Berdichev to study music, specifically harmony and voice. He studied voice with cantor Moses Spitzberg, who was chief cantor at the Berdichev Chor-Shul.³⁸ Eliezer would later be promoted to assistant cantor of the Chor-Shul. After the Chor-Shul he took a position as chief cantor in Nicolaiev where he developed more fully as a cantor and composer. There he became familiar with the great synagogue compositions of the day and their composers such as Sulzer, Lewandowski, Naumbourg and Weintraub.³⁹

³⁷ Nulman, Macy Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 86.

³⁸Gerovitsch, L. <u>Schirej Simrah</u> Rostow am Don, Preface, New York: Sacred Music Press, 1954.

³⁹Ibid.

Eliezer soon became hungry for more advanced music and so he left his position in Nicolaiev and went to St. Petersburg Conservatory to receive a more thorough musical education studying voice, counterpoint and the "church-style" of composition. Eliezer Gerowitsch was one of the first cantors in Russia to attend that institution. At the conservatory Gerowitsch began what was to become a long standing relationship with the great Russian composer Rimsky-Korsakov. Together they discussed synagogue music and it's relationship to the Greek Catholic Church. 40

While in St. Petersburg Eliezer was offered a position as cantor in that city's Chor Shul. However, the damp climate did not agree with him. Later, in 1877, he accepted an offer from the Chor Shul in Rostow am Don because it was farther south where the climate was more suitable and in fact he stayed there for 25 years.⁴¹

Rostow am Don saw the full flowering of the compositional talent of Gerowitsch come into being. He wrote six volumes under two names. Three volumes were named Shirei T'fillah and were published in 1890, and three named Shirei Zimrah which were published in 1904.⁴²

Gerowitsch became a master of counterpoint and applied the method of the classic (romantic to be exact) composers to the application of traditional tunes around which he creates new artistic

⁴⁰Gerovitsch, L. <u>Schirej Simrah</u> Rostow am Don, Preface, New York: Sacred Music Press, 1954.

⁴¹ Nulman, Macy Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 86.

⁴² Nulman, Macy Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1975, pp. 86.

forms.⁴³ He also became well versed in the traditional modes of the synagogue, even the neglected <u>Adonai Malach</u> mode (in his works Nos. 2-3).⁴⁴

Gerowitsch would give the chant not only to the cantor but also to the choir frequently in unison which may have created a sound which one may have heard in the synagogues of old. At the same time his works were all written in fine taste. At this point in time this was new and met with some opposition because there were those people who wanted to hear the sound of Handel and Verdi.⁴⁵

By the end of his career Gerowitsch had won the respect of Jews and gentiles alike. He died in October, 1914 in Rostow, admired by the entire community for his character and accomplishments.

⁴³ Idelsohn, A. Z. <u>Jewish Music in it's Historical Development</u>. New York: Schocken Books, 1956, pp. 310.

⁴⁴lbid., pp. 310.

⁴⁵Binder, A. W. Schirei Simrah, Preface, New York: Sacred Music Press, 1954.

Chapter 3

Comparison and Contrast / Musical Analysis

During the Romantic period in music history, nationalism was in vogue. Nations strove to find their own identity, that which made them different from other nations. As a result of music's emotional impact, people began to be drawn to their own musical heritage. They felt that music was an ideal tool through which they could define themselves as Germans, or Austrians etc. In a composers search for his peoples' identity he tried to find melodies or folk tunes which he felt were true expressions of his peoples' experience and history. Jewish European synagogue composers found their traditional Jewish melodies to be precisely the kind of folk expression from which nationalism would benefit. The melodies they chose obviously served a dual purpose. First, they were melodies for the synagogue, and second, German Jews, for example, felt that these tunes made them feel both German and Jewish, thus fulfilling both the religious and nationalistic roles.

⁴⁶Binder, A. W. <u>Schirei Simrah</u>, Preface, New York: Sacred Music Press, 1954, pp. 24.

By studying the particular characteristics of the choral/solo liturgical music of Salomon Sulzer and Louis Lewandowski from Western Europe and Eliezer Gerowitsch and David Nowakowsky from Eastern Europe we can gain a better understanding of what these individuals were trying to accomplish for themselves and their communities.

There are clear differences between the Western European and Eastern European liturgical compositions which I haven chosen to analyze. First, is the organ as accompaniment. Both Sulzer and Lewandowski wrote most of their music with the organ to accompany the chorus and cantor. In Sulzer's V'Teerav (S1) the organ part does not double the voice parts but rather is a skeleton, or a loose frame of the harmonic structure of the voice parts. In measures 17-18 the organ simply tracks the tonality, and where the voice parts continue in rhythm and do not change tonality, the organ part is left to a single half-note in the bass clef. This is what I mean by a tonal "skeleton". However, in Lewandowski's "Enosch" (L2) the organ part begins with a seamless introduction and then for the remainder of the piece, with few exceptions, doubles the voice parts. After the vocal parts begin in measure 26 the doubling continues until measure 36. The function here is to aid in the shift of tonality. In L2 measures 57 until the end of the piece he wrote about one chord per measure while the vocal parts were singing the text rhythmically but not changing notes. In measure 60 the altos, tenors and basses sing homophonically while the organ holds one chord.

The organ in Eastern Europe is for all practical purposes nonexistent. As I stated in the previous chapter there were only a handful of organs in synagogues in Eastern Europe during the Nineteenth - Century, therefore, Gerowitsch and Nowakowsky had no reason to compose an organ accompaniment. In Nowakowsky's *Atoh Nosen Jod* (N3) and Gerowitsch's *Unsane Tokef* (G4) there is no organ part at all, only SATB and the cantor part.

In all four of these compositions the vocal parts are SATB. At the beginning of the Nineteenth-Century the sopranos and altos were probably boys and men, but as the Enlightenment settled further into numerous aspects of synagogue life, congregations began to see women in the choir loft beginning in the middle of the century. This occurred first in the West and later in the East as was the case with most social and musical developments.

The Romantic style of composition has many characteristic elements. One of these is melody. Most Romantic melodies are constructed by phrases, motifs or an unending continuous almost through-composed nature.⁴⁷ Melodies often had large intervals woven into them to offer more emotional intensity. These intervals range from sixths, sevenths, octaves as well as augmented and diminished intervals.⁴⁸ In S1 the cantors melody line has an octave as it's largest skip which occurs in measures 24-25 and Sulzer repeats the octave in the very next measure. The rest of the melody is a mixture of skips of thirds and fourths together with stepwise motion. While looking at a melody composed by Salomon Sulzer the next logical step to focus on is his "purification" of traditional oriental

⁴⁷Longyear, Rey M. Nineteenth-Century Romanticism in Music; 2nd ed., New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1973; pp. 20.

⁴⁸lbid., pp. 22.

florid melodies. In measure 14 on the text *l'tzion* he wrote an 8 note melisma on one syllable. To contrast Sulzer, the cantorial lines in G4 are the most florid of the four composers' melodies. Beginning in measure 111 the cantor has some 64th note melismas to maneuver. This is a clear illustration of a difference between compositional techniques of Eastern and Western Europe. While Sulzer in the West was against this type of cantorial embellishment, Gerowitsch saw this type of highly developed cantorial writing as an asset of his musical heritage with which he was not willing to part. In N3, however, the melodic structure is much more like that of Sulzer, very seldom including melismatic passages. Therefore, melodically speaking, I think Sulzer had an effect on the East, however, Gerowitsch must have felt that Sulzer had gone too far in his effort to purify the traditional tunes.

Freedom and flexibility are elements which separate Romantic music from more Classical treatments of rhythm.⁴⁹ Together with the heightened importance of the text in the Romantic period, rhythm and text began to be married together more closely. In S1 the figure of the dotted - sixteenth tied to an eighth-note seems to be Sulzer's primary motif and chief tool for text placement. This occurs throughout S1. Also in the same piece is the clear use of other motifs in addition to the aforementioned figure. The first figure appears as I said in the first cantorial phrase on the text V'teerav. Then immediately Sulzer takes this motive as alters it in the second cantorial phrase alecha in measure 4-5 using a triplet instead of the

⁴⁹Longyear, Rey M. <u>Nineteenth-Century Romanticism in Music</u>;
2nd ed., New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1973; pp. 25.

dotted - eighth and sixteenth. These two related figures are then used in almost every measure of S1 illustrating Sulzer's ability to create a motif and then build a composition around that motif. Rhythm in L2 has another purpose altogether. The text of this composition mentions the death of man and the Almighty's presence. Lewandowski uses the latter text, Gods presence, from which to draw his rhythmical inspiration. The organ introduction creates a feeling of pure unending sound. Combined with the homophonic choral style, this suggests the Oneness of God, while at the same time the tension of the forward motion and its relentlessness suggests the Eternal presence of God. Whether these thoughts were those of the composer or not, the effect of this piece is universally recognized. Rhythm in N3 comes in two forms. First, there is the conversation between the cantor and the choir and second, is the fugue section beginning in measure 11. The conversation is a statement and response format typical of traditional Jewish cantor/choir music. Measures 1-10 are a good example of the m'shor'rim, or back-up group, repeating the text of the cantor. To illustrate this point we can look back at the beginning of S1. An interesting similarity between these two sections of music is that both composers wrote the same type of cantor/choir structure with the cantor making a statement and the choir repeating the text. The freedom of tempo is also an element of these two sections. While Sulzer marks his phrases with firmatas in measures 10-12, Nowakowsky, who doesn't include such markings, does however write the music in a statement response texture. Following these sections in both pieces the choir continues with the next portion of the text. The similarity between

Sulzer's composition of Western Europe and Nowakowsky's of Eastern Europe demonstrates that while Sulzer wanted to stray from certain aspects of his musical tradition such as the florid melodies mentioned earlier, he felt the need to hold on to the traditional cantor/choir structure. Another similarity between these two compositions comes in N3 measures 38-63 where, beginning in the treble clef, the children's voices, Knaben, sing what sounds like a modal line which resembles that of a solo cantorial line. This technique is used by Sulzer in the opening of S1 where the bass section performs a similar function. The goal in writing this type of choral unison melody may have been to have the choir and congregation sing the traditional melody together as one voice. To balance this, Nowakowsky wrote sections which were clearly not meant for the congregation to sing such as the fugue section in N3. Sulzer and Nowakowsky inserted only the proper portion of text, rhythm and harmonics to create the right amount of aural interest while at the same time always keeping the music in the reach of the average congregant, whether he or she was singing or listening.

Another difference between East and West is how these 4 composers utilized expressive markings to dictate how the music should be sung. In the Romantic period tempo and other expressive markings increased in complexity and verbosity.⁵⁰ At first glance at the compositions of Sulzer and Lewandowski we can see that the West was very much in tune with the current Romantic tendencies toward a greater number of written expressive markings. In the

⁵⁰Longyear, Rey M. <u>Nineteenth-Century Romanticism in Music</u>;2nd ed., New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1973; pp. 27.

first 4 measures of S1 there are dynamics, accents, phrase markings, tempo markings etc. This continues throughout S1 and L2. Sulzer and Lewandowski knew exactly what they wanted and they knew exactly how to notate it so that even today we can see how to sing their music. However, in the beginning measures of N3 and G4 there is one tempo mark, and only a few dynamic markings. The note for note instructive markings are not a characteristic of Eastern European synagogue compositions of the Nineteenth-Century therefore showing another difference between the East and the West.

Harmony is the next lens for comparison and contrast. These four compositions are very chromatic which is a characteristic of Romanticism. However, only S1 is written in a Jewish mode throughout the composition. This mode may be labeled the S'licha mode which is used for penitential prayers which plead for God to act on our behalf. The scale of the mode in this piece is G harmonic minor with a C sharp inserted. With regard to text and harmony working together, in S1 measure 8 there is a diminished secondarydominant chord used under the phrase k'olah which means "as an offering". Sulzer wanted his music to be an offering to God so he combined this chord and text together. Sulzer then uses a similar diminished secondary-dominant in the next measure on the word u'chkorban meaning "sacrifice" but this time it occurs one half- step lower which is meaningful because it implies that God comes closer to us and our "sacrifice" closer to God. L2 is not written in a mode at all but rather in C minor with an assortment of typical Romantic chromaticisms. For example in measure 62 the first chord in the

measure is a V7/V chord with a flat nine to emphasize the phrase "God's place (or dwelling)". N3 is not written in one particular mode either, but in an assortment of minor tonalities with augmented seconds to give the piece an oriental traditional Jewish sound leaning toward that of the Ahavah Rabah mode. In measures 18-20 the C sharp combined with the B flat give the phrase a modal sound. What is lacking is the presence of motifs and a consistent scale throughout the composition which is characteristic of most Jewish modes. What is present is a rich Romantic chromatic flavor which is also the case in G4, chromaticism with oriental sounding phrases. Measures 46-49 are an example of this sort of oriental sounding melody. The choral parts continue in this manner but again the typical modal motifs and scale are missing. In the middle section of G4 the melody is at its most florid. This section of the text describes how man has a variety of fates in the coming year. The tone painting is wonderful because in measure 130 the text says who will live and even though the melody descends it then jumps upward to God as if to say that God gives us life. In measures 131-132 the text says who will die and here the melody begins with a skip upward of a fourth but then descends to the bottom of the line as if to conjure up man's eventual journey back to the dust from which he came.

With regard to harmonic rhythm, all four compositions change chords about twice in each measure. The chords themselves used by all four composers are that of standard Western Romantic harmony. In G4 there are modulations separating different sections of the Un'tane Tokef. Almost every firmata, or end of a section, is followed by a different tonal center. For instance at measures 13-14 we move

away from G minor and go into C minor. At measure 27 the piece returns to G minor but only for 6 measures when it changes key to D minor. At measure 69 the tonality begins to shift again, this time landing in G minor in measure 78. The chordal structure of this piece is standard as well. Gerowitsch felt the need to change sonorities so that each section of the text would stand in a different light.

These compositions seen through the lens of Romanticism in music show how Eastern and Western Europe were not so different in how their composers wrote synagogue music. To look at one composition alone, it is not perfectly clear where that piece may have been written or by which of these four great composers.

Conclusion

Having completed the musical analysis of these four Nineteenth-Century European synagogue compositions certain conclusions can be noted. With the dawn of the Enlightenment and it's Jewish element, the *Haskalah*, Jewish music began to change as a reaction to the people's desire to enter, and participate in, society as a whole. They decided that their religious music was an element of their culture which was limiting them so they elected to sound more like their non-Jewish neighbors. This combined with Romanticism made for some wide ranging changes.

First was the addition of the organ in most Western European synagogues. With the organ came a new crop of organists and cantors who were familiar with and had studied modern Western rules of harmony and began to inject these new elements into their liturgical music.

After investigating what makes these compositions the same or different from one another I began to see that the dividing line between the East and the West in terms of each regions musical characteristics became blurred. Cross-relationships were found between the West and the East.

Even though Sulzer succeeded in his purification of the traditional tunes, his melodies look and sound like that of Eastern Europe. Sulzer's influence was felt far and wide by a large portion of sacred and secular composers. It is no surprise that some of the characteristics of Sulzer's style rubbed off on Eastern composers and possibly visa versa as well.

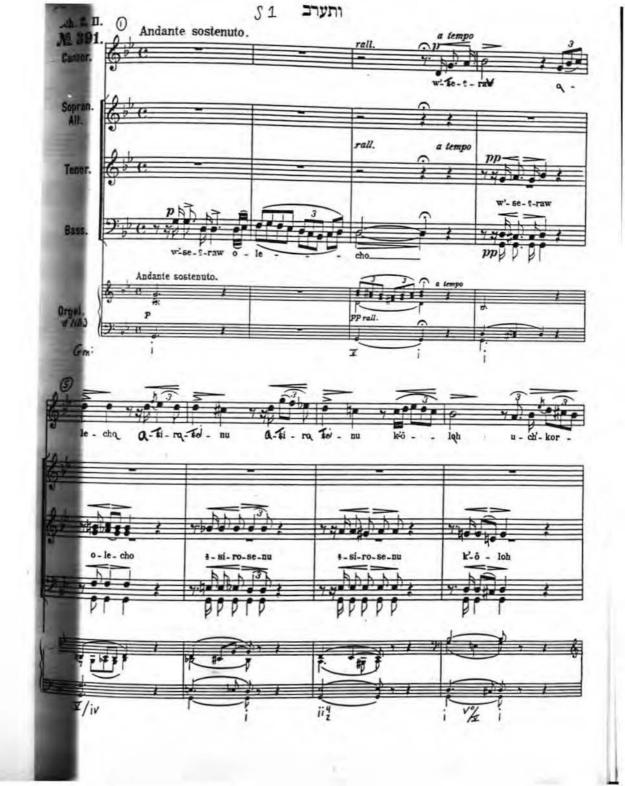
The chordal selections of all four composers clearly show their having been influenced by Romanticism. These four composers used standard progressions of Nineteenth-Century Western rules of harmony.

The literary and programmatic elements of this period in history are revealed in these pieces as well. All four composers used special harmonic means to highlight certain texts. Richer, more chromatic moments were created to add a deeper meaning to a given text which the composer felt was a focal point of the liturgy.

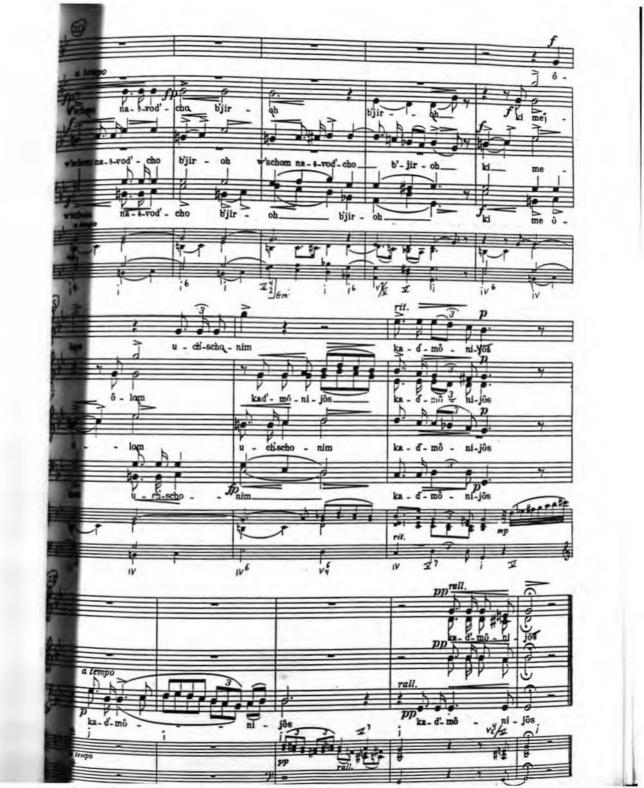
Some differences were also distinct, for instance, the use of organ. In Western Europe, as I mentioned above, the organ became a symbol of the new reforms, while in the East the organ lagged behind in number and popularity. Musical forms were also a source of differentiation. Nowakowsky's fugue in *Atah Noten Jod* is a form not found in the other 3 compositions. Melodic portions of Gerowitsch's *Un'tane Tokef* were very florid, while the other composers wrote simpler step-wise melodic lines.

Most importantly, what makes these four composers stand out is that their music remains as vibrant and relevant today as it did when it was first premiered over a century ago. The reason is the balance in their music. All of these individuals, while bound together by Romanticism, found a different technique to achieve the same balance. Traditionally speaking, the congregant has just as much to sing as he or she has to hear. The equal measures of music meant to stir forth the voice of one's spirit and the music meant simply to be heard and allowed to take a spirit higher is, in my opinion, the most crucial characteristic which these compositions share. These four composers understood very well the liturgical, musical and ultimately the spiritual needs of their congregants.

Appendix



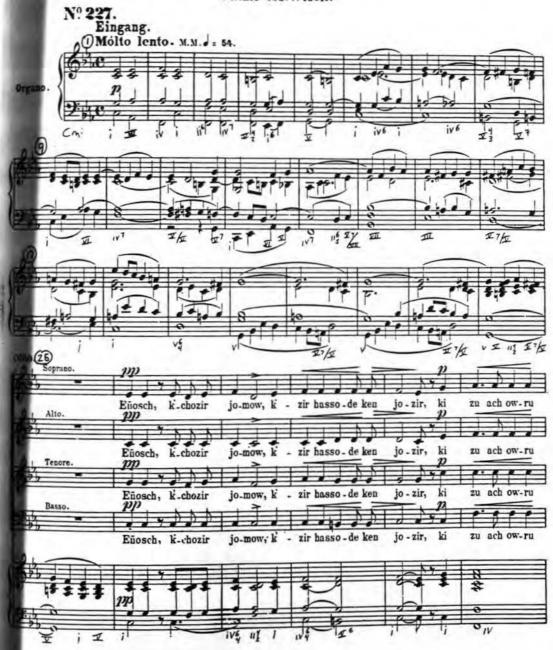


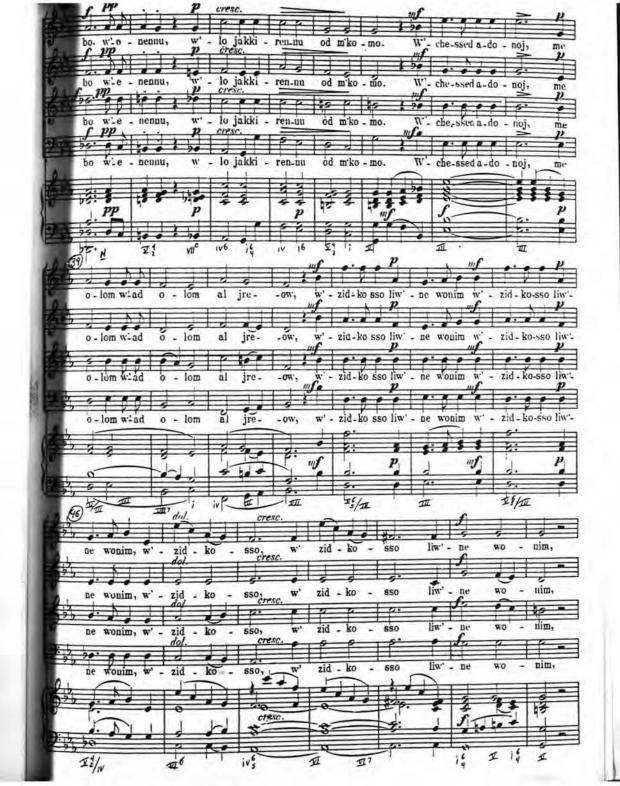


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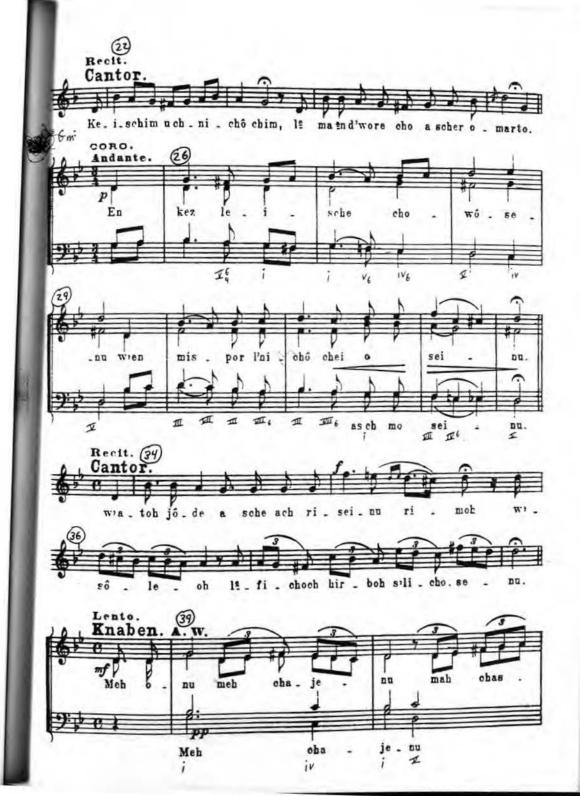


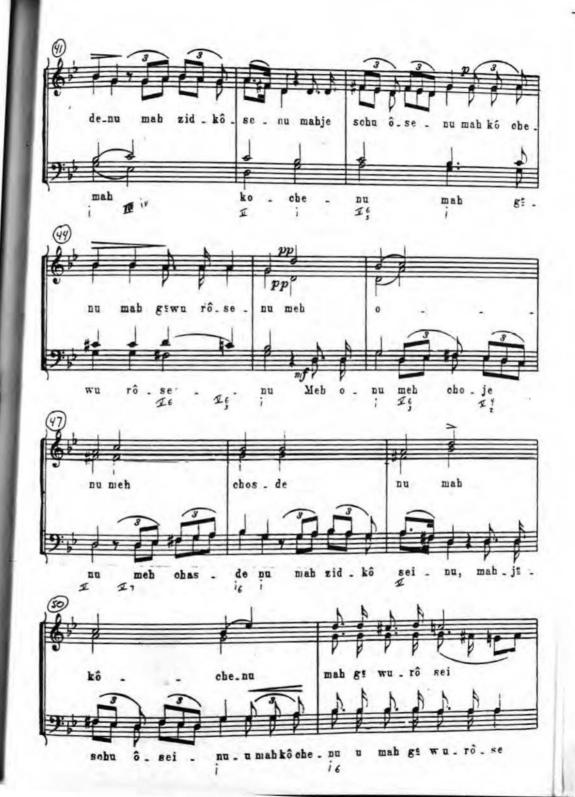


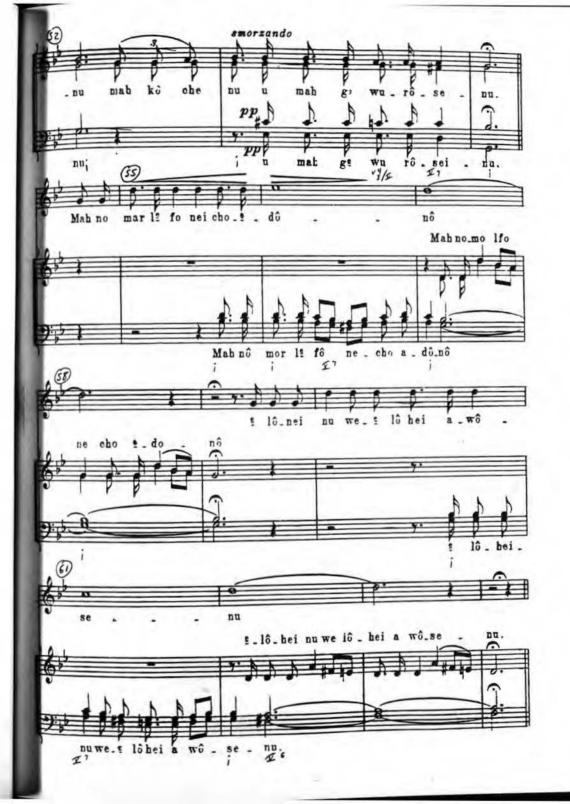


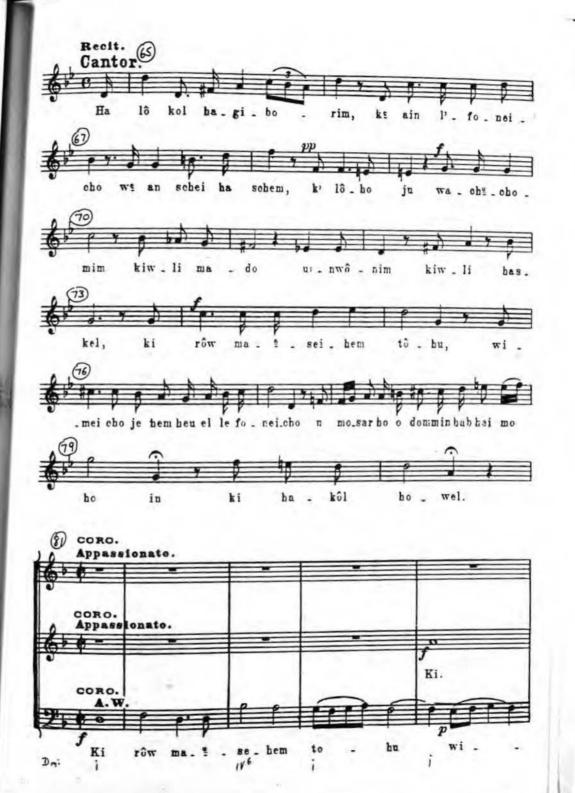




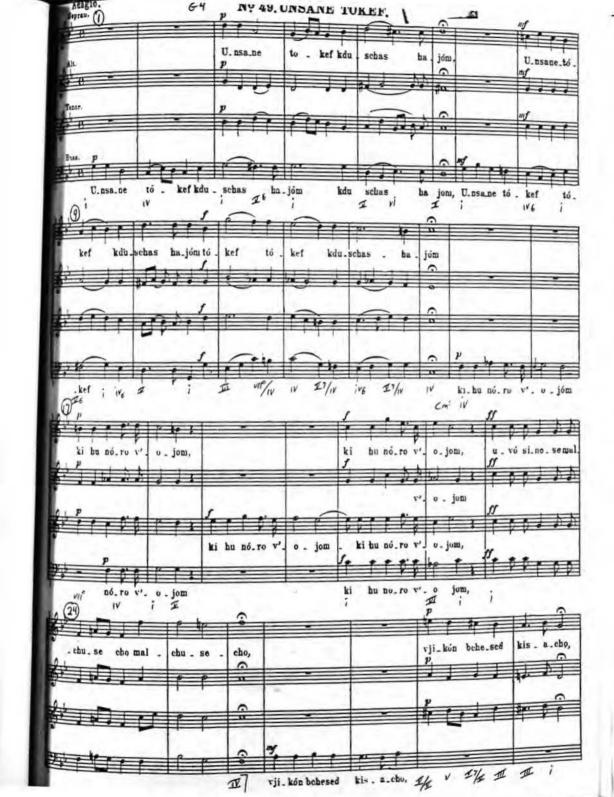


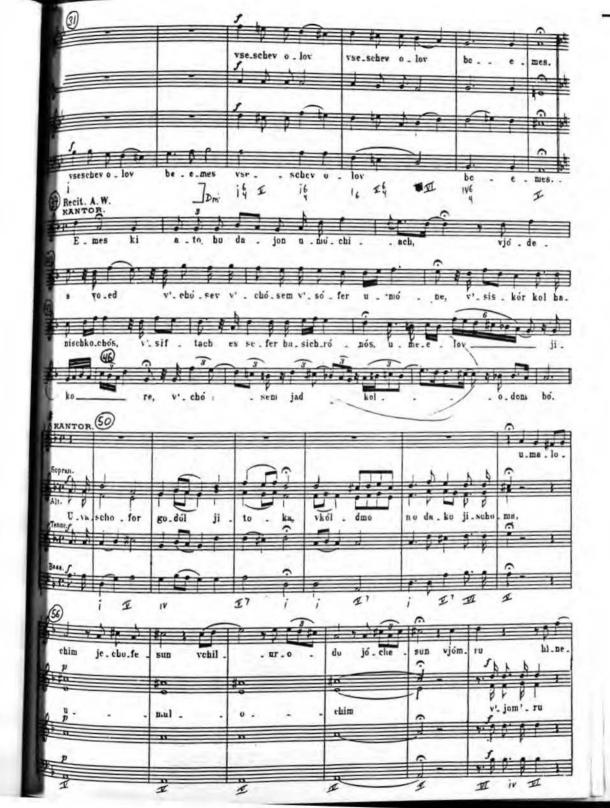


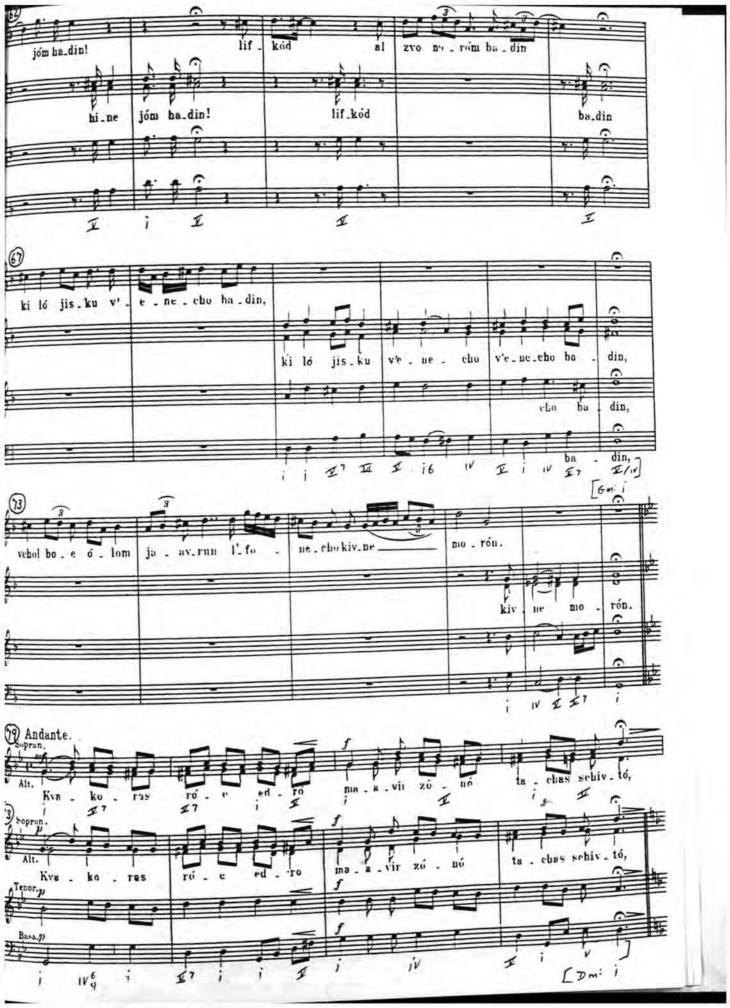


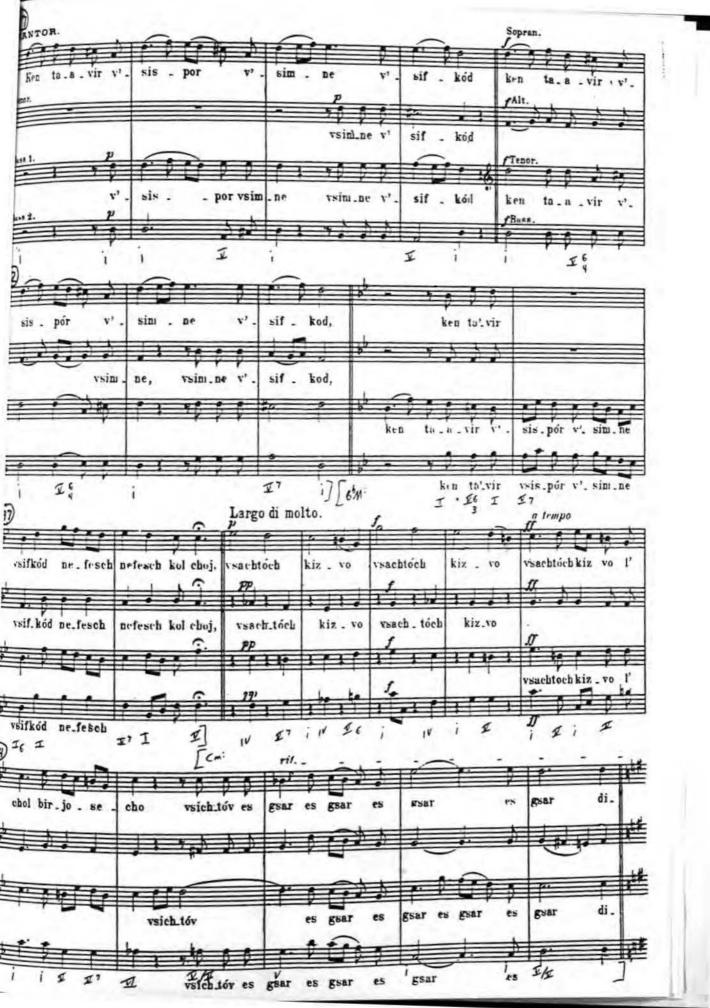




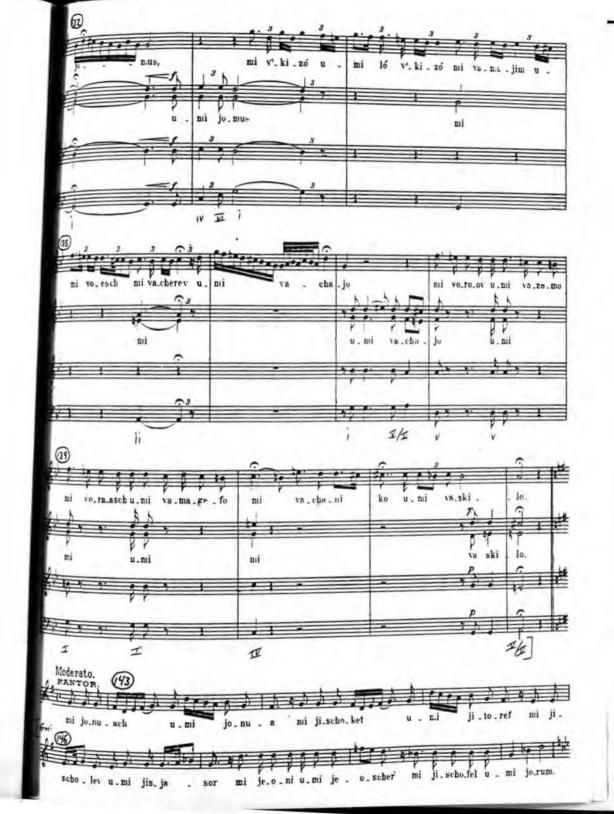














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