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Zvi Ben Yossef: Warrior and Musician  
(1914-1948)

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Zvi Ben Yossef (formerly Otto Dressler) was both a warrior and a musician. In many ways, Ben Yossef was similar to King David. Both men fought for their beliefs and expressed themselves through music. They also captured audiences with their poetry and musical composition.

King David was a fierce warrior and leader from 1010 to 970 B.C.E. Throughout King David's forty-year reign, he united the people of Judah, triumphed in battle and paved the way for his son Solomon to build and reign over the holy temple. Ben Yossef was not a king and he didn't build or fortify the holy temple. However, he did fight in the War of Independence, leading his troops to victory. Ben Yossef was noble and smart and like King David he was a leader in battle.

Both King David and Ben Yossef had the ability to express themselves through music and poetry. Rabbinic sages claim King David either wrote or edited The Book of Psalms, while Ben Yossef wrote poetry for his compositions. Prior to David becoming King, he gained the attention of King Saul with his lyre. Saul brought David to play music during the battle with Goliath. David volunteered himself for battle, which resulted in the realization of David's abilities as a warrior. Zvi Ben Yossef was a musician as

well; he composed and played music on the piano as well as the accordion. Upon entering military service, Ben Yossef did not abandon his music. Instead he carried his accordion into battle, writing music and entertaining the troops to boost moral.

Zvi Ben Yossef's life story is comprised of happiness and heartache, military battles and music. He tried to enjoy life, while struggling to suppress his personal pain and family problems. His story is unique and powerful because it brings strength to Israelis and Jews around the world fighting for the rights of freedom. Zvi Ben Yossef's music exemplifies European influence on the music of Israel prior to its national identity.

King David is a legend written into the most famous book of all time. Zvi Ben Yossef, however is a forgotten myth. Musicologists have overlooked his contributions to music and the state of Israel. Ben Yossef was an innovator, creating music that was complex in composition combined with folk melodies. His songs at one time were a staple in Israeli folk repertoire, but they have been replaced by more modern songs.

This study will explore the sources of Ben Yossef's cultural and musical development. It will attempt to focus on the music and poetry composed and

used by Ben Yossef. From his childhood in Austria, his parents instilled the importance of education and the Arts. When he moved to Palestine, Ben Yossef applied that education and knowledge to composing music, thus making him a prolific composer. However, despite Ben Yossef's contributions to Israel's short history of music, he never became a well-known name in Israel. Why didn't Zvi Ben Yossef become a prominent figure in Israel's history and where should Zvi Ben Yossef fit into Israeli music history?



## Chapter 2: Biography

Otto Dressler was born in the south of Poland on April 22, 1914. In the early 1900's many Jews in Europe were poor and lived very simple lives. The Dressler family, however, atypical from their neighbors, was different. Otto Dressler's father, Joseph, was in the oil business and was surprisingly wealthy. His mother, Sabina, was involved with art and music education. Dressler's parents were loving and supportive and wanted him to succeed in life. Because Dressler's parents valued education and it was financially feasible to do so, they sent him to private school and gave him the opportunities that most Jews in Eastern Europe were not afforded.

Between the late 1800's and the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Vienna became the third largest Jewish community in Europe, due to the emancipation of Jews in Austria. While other countries were prohibiting Jews from practicing their religious beliefs, Austria's government allowed them religious freedom. Prominent Jews such as Gustav Mahler (composer), Arnold Schoenberg (composer), Sigmund Freud (psychiatrist), Isaac Mannheimer (reform theologian), and Stefan Zweig (author) had moved to or lived in Austria at that time.

When Dressler was six, the family moved from the south of Poland to Vienna, Austria. By moving to Austria, Jews felt that they were moving to a place of hope and freedom. Ironically, because of the lack of Jewish assimilation into Austrian society by the 1920's, Jews were facing the beginnings of anti-Semitism. Those Jews who kept to themselves and created their own society felt the brunt of anti-Semitism. Unlike many others, the Dressler family assimilated into society. They had a keen sense for the socio-economic and political situations surrounding them.

In the 1920's, Austria went through a depression. There was an inflation of money, which resulted in a new form of currency in an attempt to halt the fall of monetary value in the country. By 1934, the Nazis took over the Austrian government. The Nazi take-over was alarming to many Jewish families who were already aware of the situation in Germany. In Germany, the concentration camp Dachau had been opened, Jewish shops had been boycotted, and books with "unGerman" ideas had been burned.<sup>1</sup>

The Dressler family felt confident about their economic situation and felt no reason to move at that moment. They assumed that the Nazi takeover in Vienna would not affect them. However, as time went on, it became

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<sup>1</sup> Available from  
<http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/timeline/ww2time.html>  
; internet; accessed 10/25/06

evident that every Jew in Vienna would be affected by the German uprising.

By 1932, Otto Dressler finished his degree with honors in diplomacy at the University of Vienna's Consular Academy. He studied several foreign languages including French, Italian, Spanish and English, as well as economics and geo-politics. Many of Otto Dressler's classmates at the Consular Academy were descendants of Viennese nobility. They loved to debate and write, thus challenging him and fostering his ability to succeed in his career of diplomacy. During his studies at The Consular Academy, Dressler wrote a book on the congress of Vienna. He inherited a love of business and politics from his father, who inspired him throughout his education.

Otto Dressler also gained a keen sense of music from his mother. He listened to Mahler with her and learned how to play piano at a young age. Over the next few years, he studied composition and piano with Ottorino Respighi in Italy. However, as he completed his studies in Italy, Dressler became torn between the situation in Europe and his ideals in supporting Zionism and a Jewish Homeland. It is fair to say that Dressler was influenced by the Zionist organizations in Vienna, but the exact reason remains unclear.

Otto Dresler had everything a young man could have ever wanted in life: a family that loved him, friends, a highly distinguished education, and the ability to use that education to further him in life. Ironically, at the time when Dressler was on the verge of making a name for himself in the world of politics and music he decided to leave Europe for Palestine. With the Nazi's taking over German and Europe's unstable situation, Otto Dressler was looking at ways to help his Jewish brothers in Europe and in the hopes of a Jewish homeland.

Leaving his family was a source of contention because they didn't want him to move to another country. The rest of the Dressler family would not follow him, and would remain in Vienna until the Nazi takeover. Abandoning his family must have been hard, but Otto Dressler was a young man with ideals and principles. The Zionist groups in Europe were very impressionable and influential and as a result, Dressler must have been impressed with their message. It is the opinion of this author that Zionism played a role, however Otto Dressler, alone, made the final decision in moving to Palestine. This difficult decision would be the first of many decisions that Dressler would face in his future.

In 1936, Otto Dressler moved from his home, which was now under Nazi regime, to Palestine, a land that was in the

midst of its own battles. Although the British controlled the land of Palestine, Jews and Arabs residing there were fighting over land, and Jewish immigration. These issues, as well as opposition to British rule produced incessant violence over a period of three years. "An Arab attack on a Jewish bus lead to a series of incidents that escalated into a major Palestinian Rebellion."<sup>2</sup> This incident happened in April of 1936 and over the next few months, the relationship between all sides deteriorated.

Upon moving to Palestine, Dressler made another major decision to change his name to Menachem Zvi Ben Yossef. As a young man moving to a different land with a new name, this moment in his life was dramatic and monumental. He was no longer an Austrian Jew, because Menachem Zvi Ben Yossef was now part of the Jewish cause yearning for a homeland. Soon after his arrival in Palestine, Ben Yossef met a woman by the name of Vera Zeltzberger in Jerusalem. Vera and her family welcomed Ben Yossef with open arms. Dr. Zeltzberger's family lived on *Rambam* street and rented a room to Ben Yossef, giving him shelter and a home-like atmosphere. Vera, Dr. Zeltzberger and their daughter Neomi loved him. Vera worried about Ben Yossef when he was out, just as if he was one of her own children.

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<sup>2</sup> available from  
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/riots36.html>; internet; accessed 10/13/06

Zvi Ben Yossef was an extraordinary young man. He came from a background of high social and economic class, rich in art, music and politics. "They were impressed with his education and nobility."<sup>3</sup> This was evident by his dress and the way he carried himself. Neomi Sarel formerly Zeltzberger recalls from her childhood, "He was very clean and nice. When Zvi was in the bathroom, he would teach me how to clean my nose and behind the ears." Cleaning your nose and ears was not a normal activity for people living in Palestine, yet for Ben Yossef, this was normal practice. Yosef Yadin, formerly a member of the Jewish Brigade with Ben Yossef, said,

He was always dressed like an Eastern European (in suits and ties) which was not very common (in Palestine). Everything (clothing) was always ironed and his hair was brushed in the back.<sup>4</sup>

As in his appearance, Zvi Ben Yossef was a perfectionist regarding music. While growing up in Vienna and studying in Italy with Ottorino Respighi, Zvi learned how to play several instruments, however his first instrument was piano. While living with the Zeltzberger family in Jerusalem, Ben Yossef taught Neomi piano giving romantic yet silly made-up names to the scales.

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<sup>3</sup> Nachumi Har-Tzion, "The Warrior and the Musician." the life of Zvi Ben Yossef. 1986

<sup>4</sup> Gadi Dantzig, The life of Zvi Ben Yossef, (Israel: Israeli Broadcasting Authority) Nov, 18<sup>th</sup> 1980

"With me, he had a different type of behavior. He used to give the melodies romantic names that I remembered for the scales. One of the melodies, he called the 'strawberry patch.' 'My Neomi, think that you are picking strawberries.'" <sup>5</sup>

Yosi Yadin recalls,

"One day I was in my room playing the accordion. I heard a knock on the door and Zvi Ben Yossef was standing there. He introduced himself and said, 'I heard you playing but you are off key! If you will allow me, I will show you your mistakes.' He used to come two or three times a week to give me lessons. He was very hard to work with. He wanted no mistakes!" <sup>6</sup>

Zvi Ben Yossef's love for music went beyond the realm of enjoyment; he wanted perfection. His perfection streamed across all types of music and styles from Russian cabaret to classical music. He studied music in a strict manor and he expected the people around him to do the same.

When Zvi Ben Yossef moved to the Promise Land, his parents sent him money from Vienna every month in order to live. "His budget was larger than any students. He didn't know what to do with his money. He rode horses and rented a piano."<sup>7</sup> Sometime before the war, Zvi Ben Yossef's parents came to visit him. Vera Zeltzberger recalls,

"His family came to visit him and asked for Otto Dressler. They didn't know he changed his name. They liked his room and they bought him a piano. They arranged the room before they left. They asked me to take care of him. Make sure that Zvi has a good time.

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<sup>5</sup> Gadi Dantzig, The life of Zvi Ben Yossef, (Israel: Israeli Broadcasting Authority) Nov, 18<sup>th</sup> 1980

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

They were very rich people from Vienna and they had lots of nice things." <sup>8</sup>

Zvi's transition to Jerusalem wasn't easy, although his economic status and the home of the Zeltzberger's made life easier. Learning Hebrew, communicating with people and the conflict between Jews, Palestinians and the British added to the pressures of life in Palestine. When the Nazis took over Vienna, Ben Yossef's money source was cut short. His parents fled Vienna for France looking to find safety, unaware that France would soon be Nazi territory.

The lack of money forced him to find a job. Ben Yossef used his musical ability to support himself. He got a job playing music in a bar called *Hezti* in Jerusalem. On his accordion, he played jazz, swing, and light music.<sup>9</sup> "Ben Yossef could play any type of music; with his talent he was able to adapt to any style." <sup>10</sup>

Zvi Ben Yossef's parents were resentful of his move to Jerusalem.

"They were not happy that he left Vienna and also that he became a musician. He was very talented, but the family didn't see a future in Jerusalem."<sup>11</sup>

Although they were unhappy with his move to Jerusalem,

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<sup>8</sup> Gadi Dantzig, *The life of Zvi Ben Yossef*, (Israel: Israeli Broadcasting Authority) Nov, 18<sup>th</sup> 1980.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Nachumi Har Tzion, *the life of Zvi Ben Yossef "The Warrior and the Musician,"* Words of Moshe Hillman; 1986

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



they loved him very much and wanted Ben Yossef to make a name for himself in whatever he did. Ben Yossef hated his job playing music in the bars of Jerusalem however he needed to support himself. He therefore moved to *Ma'aleh Chamisha*, a *kibbutz* on the western side of the Jerusalem hills, where he worked with his hands earning enough money to live. "There he had a better job, building roads and doing every job they asked him. Zvi worked as a laborer."<sup>12</sup> Even though Ben Yossef financially needed to become a laborer, he never lost his love and passion for music.

As World War II broke out, Zvi Ben Yossef along with the other Jewish youth in Palestine, volunteered to fight against the Nazi army. He joined the Second Division of the British Brigade army in 1941. His main roles included guarding military installations, bases, ports and airports.<sup>13</sup> Shlomo Drori (formerly Shlomo Doucher) spent time with Ben Yossef in the Jewish Brigade and recalls singing, playing and dancing with Ben Yossef while he played the accordion, which he brought with him always.<sup>14</sup> Drori says,

"I didn't pay attention to him, because he wasn't so impressive, but when he played it was an attraction. During the week he wasn't allowed to play, except for

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<sup>12</sup> Gadi Dantzig, *The life of Zvi Ben Yossef*, (Israel: Israeli Broadcasting Authority) Nov, 18<sup>th</sup> 1980

<sup>13</sup> Nachumi Har Tzion, *the life of Zvi Ben Yossef "The Warrior and the Musician."*

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

the moments of Shabbat. We lived from Friday night to Friday night because he played so well."<sup>15</sup>

Together, Shlomo Drori and Zvi Ben Yossef moved around from place to place guarding installations. One of their stops along the way was a kibbutz called *Nahalal*. At *Nahalal*, Ben Yossef played his accordion at an all girls' school. One of the members of the *kibbutz* asked him to write a song for *Nahalal* in honor of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *kibbutz*. Zvi Ben Yossef took this seriously and asked about *Nahalal's* history and members. He stayed up all night and with the help of Shlomo Drori, they performed the new song for the *kibbutz* in the morning. This song became a hit and they were invited to perform the piece on *Kol Yerushalyim* (The Voice of Jerusalem), the radio station in Jerusalem.<sup>16</sup>

Zvi Ben Yosef was never considered a major composer in the history of Israeli music, but around his friends and army division, he was the life of the party. Ben Yossef played famous folk dances for everyone to dance and sing. He loved the attention and it fueled his love for writing music. Because the accordion was so easy to transport, Ben Yossef was able to bring it with him wherever he was asked to go.

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<sup>15</sup> Gadi Dantzig, *The life of Zvi Ben Yossef*, (Israel: Israeli Broadcasting Authority) Nov, 18<sup>th</sup> 1980

<sup>16</sup> Nachumi Har Tzion, *the life of Zvi Ben Yossef "The Warrior and the Musician."* 1986

In 1943, Jewish military groups were formed in order to help the Jews of Europe and to fight for the rights of Jews in Palestine. The second division, which included Zvi Ben Yosef, went to Ben Ghazi, Libya, to help the British fight against Germany and Italy.<sup>17</sup> However, the Jewish Division was not welcomed, and was sent to the Libyan desert sixty kilometers from Ben Ghazi. It was here in the Libyan Desert that Zvi Ben Yosef assembled a thirty-member orchestra comprised of soldiers who had never played an instrument. The British army supplied the instruments and Ben Yossef worked diligently, making this "start up" orchestra a musical entity of the army. Because of Ben Yossef's persistence and work ethic the army promoted him to sergeant.<sup>18</sup>

After the start of this group, the most accomplished musicians were gathered together and sent to perform in Europe for British troops. The official name of the British umbrella group was called the Entertainment National Service Association (ENSA). The Jewish group that eventually traveled to Europe was called "*Meh'Ein Zeh*," (From Where is that) named by one of the founding members Yitzchak Chak. The band included Zvi Ben Yossef, Shlomo

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<sup>17</sup> Available from:  
<http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-C-Egypt/index.html>; internet; accessed 10/22/06

<sup>18</sup> Nachumi Har Tzion, the life of Zvi Ben Yossef "The Warrior and the Musician." 1986

Drori, Mordechai Zeira, Chana Maron and Yosef Yadin. Zvi Ben Yossef played accordion and wrote music, along with Mordechai Zeira. Together they visited and played for British soldiers in North Africa and Europe.

While touring in Europe, the group saw first-hand what Hitler and the Nazis had done to the Jews. The group including Ben Yossef, took this monumental and historically important opportunity to entertain and improve morale for everyone. As they attempted to improve the spirit of the troops, the music for the troops and eventually the Jewish refugees, would be more than just a moral booster.

"We traveled a lot to Italy, Austria and Poland. We went to Tarvizio where the refugees came from Auschwitz and Dachau to the meeting place where the brigade camped. They would take the people to the camps in the night. One night with the troops we were singing *Hava Nagila*. Suddenly it was quiet, and the children refugees started to sing because it was the only one they knew. And suddenly everyone sang. We started to cry together.<sup>19</sup>"

Zvi Ben Yosef and the group *Meh'Ei Zeh* then knew what kind of impact they could make with their music. The emotional impact would be indelibly etched in their memory.

While serving in Italy, Ben Yossef was informed that his father was in southern France after fleeing the Nazis in Vienna. He went to Nice to find his father and upon meeting him, Ben Yossef learned that his mother had been

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<sup>19</sup> Gadi Dantzig, *The life of Zvi Ben Yossef*, (Israel: Israeli Broadcasting Authority) Nov, 18<sup>th</sup> 1980

taken by the Nazis and killed in a concentration camp. His brother Robert, immigrated to Venezuela and married a Catholic woman; Ben Yossef never forgave him. He also learned that his father, who had just been released from jail for trying to commit suicide, was unstable and unhappy with life. This deeply troubled Ben Yossef, which led to many struggles in his life.

Ben Yossef was troubled by the news about his family, but he stayed in the band until it was disbanded in May of 1946. He went back to Jerusalem and got a job at *Kol Yerushalayim* where he worked in the library and the music department. At first, Ben Yossef worked in the library filing music and books but as soon as his talents were discovered, he was moved to the music department. The people he worked with said he played so many different instruments and possessed a mastery of music.<sup>20</sup>

While working at *Kol Yerushalayim*, Ben Yossef composed and recorded the majority of his music. With the help of Shimshon Bar Noy's (a prominent singer in Israeli history) singing, "*Rosh Pina*" and "*Yesh Li Kinneret*" were recorded. Bar Noy enjoyed working with Ben Yossef and wanted to continue the relationship, however he was overly focused on composition and the situation over land in Palestine. It

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<sup>20</sup> Nachumi Har Tzion, the life of Zvi Ben Yossef "The Warrior and the Musician." 1986.

is possible that the duo worked together, but it is unclear if anything was recorded after "Yesh Li Kinneret."

During an interview with Neomi Zeltzberger (the daughter of Vera Zeltzberger), she mentioned the letters and correspondence with Ben Yossef. They connected in Jerusalem after his return from Europe. Ben Yossef and Neomi Zeltzberger talked about marrying in the coming years, while he was away serving in the army. Ben Yossef would tell his friends in the army of their love affair and the future that they hoped to share. However, there was a small problem, Neomi was fourteen years of age which troubled his friends and fellow soldiers.

In December of 1947, Zvi Ben Yossef decided to join the army as a commander. This was a way to support the ongoing cause for a Jewish homeland. Ben Yossef didn't have to serve and the people working at *Kol Yerushalayim* asked him to stay and play music for the troops. But Ben Yossef wanted to do more for his people by protecting them in the army. This was a tough decision for Ben Yossef. Choosing between a career in music and fighting for his homeland, only complicated his life. However, protecting the Jewish people never stopped Ben Yossef from writing music. With the accordion, he would play and write music while defending the Jewish people.

During his army service in February of 1948, Zvi Ben Yossef wrote his last song "*Chayav Elmavet*" (The Immortal Army). These were some of the last words composed by Ben Yossef. In March of that year, his unit went to *Gush Etzion* to help defend the Russian Monastery. Inside the monastery, Ben Yossef played his accordion, wrote music (including his last piece, Song on the Monastery) and entertained the people. On May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1948, the Jordanians converged on the monastery.

At 2:00am the division was awakened to take their positions and at 3:00 am the attack began. Mosh Zilberschmit was the commander, instructed all soldiers to retreat towards the Russian hill but the Jordanians were at the gate to the monastery. At that time, Zvi was standing on the roof shooting with his gun in his hand. He was shot and his friend Yitzhak Weiss ran back to get him. While he was lying there, he muttered the (poetic) words from his song:

*"If I fall in the battle. Friend, my weapon, to my revenge you should take it."*<sup>21</sup>

These were his last words. Zvi Ben Yossef died as a fighter and pursuer of peace. He lived a life of dedication to the Jewish people while in Palestine. Although Ben Yossef struggled with the pressures of life, he was able to relieve some of the pressures through his music. Early in his life, Ben Yossef wrote music in happiness and fortune. In his travels, he expressed his passion for life through

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<sup>21</sup> Nachumi Har Tzion, the life of Zvi Ben Yossef "The Warrior and the Musician." 1986.

his music. Upon moving to Palestine, Ben Yossef obtained a newfound love for the land of the Jewish people. These compositions continued to express happiness, as well as devotion for a land and people yearning for a homeland. The homeland that Zvi Ben Yossef lived for was also the land that he died for. In that moment on top of the Russian Monastery, Zvi Ben Yossef died with his music on his lips.



### Chapter 3: The Musical Life of Zvi Ben Yossef

Zvi Ben Yossef's musical education was rooted in the study of formal European classical and romantic music. Although some would argue that Ben Yossef's music is written in the folk idiom of Israel, his thorough training in piano, composition and conducting gave him the tools to create a sophisticated musical language. The romantic composers (Gustav Mahler, Robert Schumann and Felix Mendelssohn) of lieder and song cycles had the most influence on Ben Yossef, though classical music and the composers Mozart, Beethoven, and Joseph Haydn also influenced him.

Amazingly enough, the composers of Israel's nationalist style, a blend of Eastern and Western European styles and Eastern Mediterranean music (Paul Ben-Haim, Tzvi Avni, and Modechai Seter) didn't influence Zvi Ben Yossef to a great degree. However, after serving time in the British Brigade and creating music with other musicians from Palestine, the Israeli folk style, influenced Zvi Ben Yossef.

The story of Zvi Ben Yossef's life is easily portrayed through his music. There are rich colors of happiness, playfulness, and love in his melodies juxtaposed with the pain and struggle in his lyrics. His lyrics and settings

of poems by Chaim Nachman Bialik and Shaul Tchernichovsky also show the despair as well as the hope of the Jewish people.

Zvi Ben Yossef's compositions were compiled by Moshe(Maurice) Hillman, a pedagogue, amateur musician and dear friend. Hillman, the Director of high schools in Jerusalem (1960's) founded and directed the Rubin Academy of Music (Jerusalem). Eliyahu Schleifer adds, (Hillman) "played the piano well and had a deep knowledge of classical music. He was a very close friend of Zvi Ben Yossef and managed his musical heritage after the composers death," which are currently housed at the Hebrew University Givat Ram Campus in Jerusalem. Zvi's vocal compositions are primarily written for baritone and piano or accordion. He wrote a few marches (with accordion) and popular songs for the Israeli Defense Forces entertainment troops. Other compositions include pieces for dueling pianos and songs for soprano and alto with piano. The entirety of his compositional output was written between 1943 and 1948, even though the actual dates of each work are not for certain.<sup>22</sup>

Zvi Ben Yossef's life can be categorized into two distinct parts. His life before Palestine, full of wealth

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<sup>22</sup> Alice Tischler, A Descriptive Bibliography of Art Music by Israeli composers. Harmonic Park Press. Michigan, 1988.

and promise and his life in Palestine, which were at times very happy, yet accompanied with struggle and pain. Those struggles hindered Zvi's ability to become one of the prolific composers in Israeli history. Although there were other factors (army service and necessity to work during and after World War II) that interfered with Zvi Ben Yossef's desire to compose,<sup>23</sup> it was his early death that ultimately ended his chance at becoming a well-known pioneer of Israeli music. Hypothetically, if Zvi Ben Yossef had lived past the inception of the state of Israel and into the 1950's, he could have made a more prominent name for himself. Ben Yossef's genre of composition became more popular after the War of Independence as a celebratory response.

*Shirei B'tzibur*, communal public singing, was a way for the Israeli people to collectively express their feelings of hope through music. More than merely a song session, public singing provided a sense of community and prayer. This allowed people to express their collective feelings of mourning the losses in the War of Independence and the monumental task of creating a homeland. The song "*Hen Efshar*," sung by Yaffa Yarkoni (known as the singer of three wars in Israel) and written by the *Chizbatron* in 1948 (the entertainment group for the Israel Defense Forces)

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<sup>23</sup> As mentioned on page 7 and 8 of Chapter 2.

speaks of the possibility of peace, after the intense feelings of war.

Thru the falling leaves, autumn already blows  
The dust on the roads slowly falls still  
And the day burns only towards you  
And dreams of a distant meeting

Yes, it's possible another evening will come  
And the gate will creak quietly  
And your eyes will be so good  
As if there were no war in the world

Chorus:

Yes, it's possible, yes, it's possible  
That this will simply happen tomorrow  
Yes, it's possible, on the jeep that passed by -  
Young men roared, that it's over  
Yes, it's possible, yes, it's possible  
That this will simply happen tomorrow

Yes, it's possible that your sad room  
Waits in the paleness of its walls  
And calls the two of us to return  
From battles, from roads and from autumn

Yes, it's possible that suddenly we will meet  
At a vantage point, or dirt road  
Yes, it's possible even between smoke and fire -  
To dream that everything is already over<sup>24</sup>

The *Chizbatron*,<sup>25</sup> performed for Jewish soldiers at army bases and military installations throughout the country. They would sing songs of remembrance and sacrifice as well as inspirational songs to help boost moral for the soldiers. Most armies have military bands and drum lines, however in Palestine during World War II (the entertainment group was called *Mi Ein Zeh*, From Where is That) and during

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<sup>24</sup> Available from <http://www.hebrewsongs.com/song-henefshar.html>; internet; accessed on 11/18/06

<sup>25</sup> Available from [http://www.jewishagency.org/JewishAgency/English/Jewish+Education/Eye+on+Israel/Gallery+of+People+\(Biographies\)/Hefert+Chaim](http://www.jewishagency.org/JewishAgency/English/Jewish+Education/Eye+on+Israel/Gallery+of+People+(Biographies)/Hefert+Chaim); internet; accessed on 11/18/06

the War of Independence, the *Chizbatron* the entertainment group of the *Palmach* entertained the soldiers. Although not directly memorialized in any song, Zvi Ben Yossef's own death in the War of Independence portrays the sacrifices that are referred to in so many of these songs.

Another song that became popular after the War of Independence was "*Bab El Wad*". It tells the story of the road from Tel Aviv leading into Jerusalem. This area was impassable for convoys and any other traffic for two years, preventing food and medicine from entering into the Jerusalem area.

Bab-el-wad,  
Do remember our names forever,  
Convoys broke through, on the way to the City.  
Our deeds lay on the road edges.  
The iron skeleton is silent like my comrade.<sup>26</sup>

"*Bab El Wad*," memorialized the many soldiers that fell at *Bab El Wad*. "*Hen Efshar*" and "*Bab El Wad*" are examples of some of the songs that were sung at *Shirei B'tzibur*.

Within the same genre as these popular folk tunes, Ben Yossef loved to write music about his own everyday experiences, and his love for the land of Israel. Zvi Ben Yossef had a passion for pleasing people with his music. Despite the pain and struggle in his personal life, Ben Yossef lived for infusing music into other peoples lives.

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<sup>26</sup> Available from <http://www.hebrewsongs.com/song-babelwad.html>; internet; accessed on 11/18/06

Whether through his founding direction of an orchestra in the Libyan desert or the composition of a *horah* for a *kibbutz* commemoration, Ben Yossef influenced others with his musical abilities. He also enjoyed collaborating and using poetry of others to enhance his music. Also a poet, Ben Yossef wrote the lyrics to a few of his melodies. Although Hebrew was his sixth language, his skill in using the Hebrew language was remarkable.

When Zvi Ben Yossef wrote "*Horah Nahalal*," for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Kibbutz Nahalal*, he collaborated with Shlomo Drori.<sup>27</sup> This passion for enriching the lives of others allowed Zvi to push aside his struggles with life and enjoy the wonders of his musical gifts.

Zvi Ben Yossef was cultured, well dressed, and a noble man. He had a strong face with a mustache and a goatee. Shlomo Drori said "he looked like a prince in the world of adventure and idealism."<sup>28</sup> Zvi was innovative, always thinking a step beyond the average individual. Although uncommon at that time to residents of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, Zvi owned a piano, which aided him in writing music. With ease, Zvi was able to compose, teach piano, and perfect his craft.

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<sup>27</sup> Chapter 2 page 11

<sup>28</sup> Gadi Dantzig, *The life of Zvi Ben Yossef*, (Israel: Israeli Broadcasting Authority) Nov, 18<sup>th</sup> 1980

Zvi Ben Yossef could play any instrument naturally but he mastered the piano and accordion. Because the accordion was similar to the piano, yet mobile, Zvi was able to transport and play the accordion allowing him to play his music in any setting. Although the accordion is not indigenous to the Middle East, Jews from Europe brought it to Palestine keeping their musical roots alive. The accordion was a symbol of music during this time period.

It is without question that Zvi Ben Yossef's music is deeply rooted in Eastern Europe. Those roots were acquired from his mother in Vienna and his studies in Italy. He studied the music of Richard Wagner, Gustav Mahler, and Russian composer Pyotr (Peter) Tchaikovsky. After carefully studying these composers and their compositions, Ben Yossef formulated his own style. Ben Yossef's European style is characterized by romantic, legato melodies accompanied by complementary harmonies in the piano. However, within those complex romantic harmonies, even Israelis without an acute ear for music were able to appreciate Zvi Ben Yossef's tunes with ease. This is why musicologists have identified Zvi Ben Yossef as a composer of folk music. Although most of his songs are strophic and easy to the listener, it is the sophisticated accompaniment that places Zvi Ben Yossef in a category separate from any other composer of folk music.

A folk song can be categorized in a fairly simple way, yet a precise definition of folk music has been unclear in the last 50 years.

Folk Music, the music with which the people of a nation or an ethnic group most specifically identify themselves. It consists of songs or pieces taught through performance rather than notation (written musical notes), and learned by hearing...<sup>29</sup>

A folk song does not have a standardized form. Instead, its words as well as its music exist in more than one and sometimes a great many variants, or in slightly different versions. Although many folk musicians are accomplished artists who have fine technique and mastery of many pieces, folk music is generally simpler and more compact in style than classical, or art, music.<sup>30</sup>

Israeli folk songs generally are written in a strophic style, a refrain, verses and occasionally a bridge. The melody for the verse is usually repeated after each chorus with different words, some songs feature five or six verses. Occasionally, a third section, diverse from the others is added to break up the continuous repeating of verse and chorus. The third section or bridge, whether through music or lyrics, is varied from the verse and chorus. Although the bridge contains different material there is always a connection between it (the bridge) and either the chorus or verse.

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<sup>29</sup> Bruno Nettl, M.A., Ph.D.; Available from [http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia\\_761554209\\_2/Folk\\_Music.html#s12](http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761554209_2/Folk_Music.html#s12); internet; accessed on 12/2/06

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*



Ben Yossef was an accomplished composer, whose style should not be characterized as simple and compact. He used a strophic European/Israeli style that was reminiscent of Russian and German lieder as well as an Israeli folk song style in its early stages. Many composers in Israel were working to create a nationalist style. Although in the 1940's (composition period of Zvi Ben Yossef), the nationalistic style was new and unfamiliar, causing some composers like Zvi Ben Yossef to draw more heavily from their musical roots.

Abraham Idelsohn says in his book entitled Jewish Music, Its Historical Development,

"It is generally known that a composer creates his music on the establishment premises of the music prevalent in his immediate environment. His tonal element he instinctively chooses from the folk and art music with which he is filled from his childhood."<sup>31</sup>

Even though these composers of European decent tried to create a relationship with their new environments, "the classic music created by Germans has the imprint of German folksongs and character; while the Russian music unmistakably bears the marks of Russian folksongs and character."<sup>32</sup> Similarly, Zvi Ben Yossef wrote mostly in a style that was embedded in his past. His music looked and

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<sup>31</sup> Abraham Idelsohn; Jewish Music, Its historical Development. Dover Publications Inc.; New York; 1929; pg 471

<sup>32</sup> ibid.

sounded similar to the songs of Russian cabaret clubs in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the influence of his new surroundings in Palestine, opened Ben Yossef to a new style of music, the "Israeli folk style." As we look deeper into his music, the complexity and texture will prove Zvi Ben Yossef was an accomplished composer and talented folk musician.

## Chapter 4: The Music

The most famous and widely known song written by Zvi Ben Yossef is entitled "*Yesh Li Kinneret*." There exists an instantaneous connection between Israelis and the well known song, "*Yesh Li Kinneret*". It is important to note, that the words and music were written by Zvi Ben Yossef even though Israelis in their collective memory, have no connection to the composer and the poet.

"*Yesh Li Kinneret*" uses a romantic melody evoking emotion through word-painting of hope, sadness, and joy. The piece is strophic in ABA form (A, B, B2, A, B1, A2, B, Codetta). The piano introduction (A section) in F major, evokes the feeling of the waves of the Kinneret with broken chords.<sup>33</sup> This creates a rhythmic drive in the piano. In the accompaniment, the constant 8<sup>th</sup> note chords in the left hand of the piano imitates a heart beating. The codetta is short, doubling the piano and voice. Parentheses are adding in the accompaniment giving the option to sing the codetta A cappella.<sup>34</sup> In the first verse (B section), the voice through a sequential descending cadence (Bb to A, A to G, and G to F,) and use of appoggiaturas (non-harmonic

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<sup>33</sup> Appendix A

<sup>34</sup> Appendix A

tone on an emphasized beat, providing tension), Zvi achieves a sense of longing and yearning.

Starting in measure 13, Ben Yossef adds tension to the piece with a set of richly colored augmented 6<sup>th</sup> chords. He uses a French 6<sup>th</sup> chord in measure 13, a German 6<sup>th</sup> chord in measure 14, and in measure 15 a series of chords including a half diminished, German 6<sup>th</sup>, C major seven chord (V7), a Bb major chord (IV7), and an A7 chord resolving to D minor (relative minor). In classical music, augmented 6<sup>th</sup> chords generally serve as leading tone chords to another key, however Ben Yossef uses these chords as a way to color the vocal line, characteristic of the Romantic style. Ben Yossef uses this complex harmonic palette, in order to support the melody and give meaning to the text.

Ben Yossef's harmonic language is reminiscent of a composer from the late romantic period. Gustav Mahler, a composer of opera, lieder, symphonies in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century used sequences, flowing melodies, chromaticism and expansive harmonies to evoke emotion from the listener.<sup>35</sup> Although Mahler's compositions of lieder (songs for piano and voice) occasionally included the melody in the piano, Ben Yossef most always used this style of doubling when writing piano compositions.

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<sup>35</sup> The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians edited by Stanley Sadie, Macmillan Publishing 2001, pg 602, Gustav Mahler.

The Israeli folk style is most evident in a piece called "*Horah Nahalal*" written by Zvi Ben Yossef. Written for *Kibbutz Nahalal's* 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the story portrays a shy girl who lived at the *kibbutz* and a boy in the army. He attempts to dance with her because he knows this is the only way he can hold her hand.

She said-  
Only in the course of dancing-  
Does she give her hand to the guys of the brigade exclusively.  
She said-  
For her the ideal is  
A guy of the male gender and dangerous, namely: a  
Soldier.<sup>36</sup>

In the end of the story they dance together in the celebration of *Kibbutz Nahalal*.

And behold-  
We danced all around,  
We sashayed seven times from Munk to Bentovich.  
And see-  
In the lucky circle dance  
My eyes were opened to see what the *Hora Nahalal* is!<sup>37</sup>

The music helps to show this relationship between the soldier and the girl.

The tune was written for dancing the *horah*. The most defining characteristic of the *horah* is the syncopated beats on "one" and the "and of two." Zionists coming from Europe brought this dance to Palestine in order to celebrate life and the hope for a peaceful homeland. The *horah* was danced in Palestine prior to the state of Israel,

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<sup>36</sup> Appendix A, Translation by Dr. Stanley Nash

<sup>37</sup> Appendix A, Translation by Dr. Stanley Nash

but is associated with the Independence of Israel. Now, this is the dance of the Jewish people.

Danced slowly and solemnly or fast and furiously, the *horah* is the national dance of Israel and has been so since that nation's founding in 1948. But it was not invented there. It came from Romania, where it is also the national dance and has been so at least since Romania was the Roman province of Dacia nearly two thousand years ago. When Romanians want to celebrate a historical moment, they dance and sing the "Union Hora," written in 1855 by poet Vasile Alecsandri<sup>38</sup>.

"*Horah Nahalal*" is of the "fast and furious" style mixed with the march like sound of an European army.

This *Horah* features two different types of rhythmic contours within the form of ABA. The A section of this piece, also the piano introduction, depicts the soldier marching. It is comprised of two measures of B minor with emphasis on the rhythm and 2 measures of melody with vertical chords. The 4/4 time signature and straight forward rhythm give the feeling of the march. The left hand of the piano doubles the dotted rhythm (common to the march) of the right hand extending down to the octave below. In measure two (A2) we see an arpeggiated triplet finishing with the octave, again sustaining the march like beat. The section ends in Mahlerian fashion with chords in

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<sup>38</sup> Available from <http://www.answers.com/topic/hora>; accessed on 11/19/06

contrary motion and parallel first inversion chords, cleverly alleviating parallel 5ths.

The B section was written to be light and soft, creating the imagery of a girl who is youthful and fragile. The piano arpeggio each chord while the melody is doubled in the right hand. The melody, in B minor, leaps up a 7<sup>th</sup> to an unresolved tone on the 3<sup>rd</sup> beat resolving on the 4<sup>th</sup> beat. Zvi Ben Yossef uses this technique of going from the "non-harmonic" tone to the harmonic tone or resolution in many of his songs. The resolution releases the tension from the non-harmonic tone in the previous beat. The release of tension gives the sense of coming home.

The last four measures of this section use a progression of descending chords, giving emphasis to the sequence. As the sequence ends, the melody ascends once again and the piano syncopates the melody, sustaining the dance through the end of the section. At the end of the piece, the chromaticism is brought back in contrary motion.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Appendix B

## Chapter 5: The Significance of Poetry

Music is the lens through which poetry is viewed by the composer. The use of poetry in music can be powerful. Setting poetry to music is a way to make a statement or simply a way to describe feelings. Whether the music portrays the poem abstractly or makes its point directly, words bring a separate and meaningful dimension to musical language.

Chaim Nachman Bialik, Moshe Tabenkin, and Shaul Tchernichovsky all connect Ben Yossef to the rich Hebraist-Zionist heritage of Eastern European Jewry. Similarly to Ben Yossef, these poets spent the early years in Central or Eastern Europe and shared the same ideals with regards to Socialist Zionism. Ben Yossef set music to their poetry as a way to symbolize and personalize his own ideology of Zionism. It is also important to note that Ben Yossef used these poets as a way to connect back to his heritage and his roots in Central Europe.

Zvi Ben Yossef wanted to make a clear statement with his music and choices of poetry. Zionist poets were at the core of Zvi Ben Yossef's values. They were influential for secular Zionism, excluding religion from its core. The enlightenment or *Haskalah* was the movement of European Jews, starting in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which pushed for the



integration of the Jews into European society through education in secular studies and through the study of Bible, Hebrew and Jewish History. The main focus of the *Maskilim* was on rejuvenating the Jewish people and their values in an effort to bring the Jews into the mainstream of European culture. By the late nineteenth century the *Haskalah's* efforts shifted in many cases from achieving political emancipation towards definition of the Jews as a national entity. Metaphorically, the writers who were Ben Yossef's inspiration wanted to create a cultural revolution, transferring the dark times of the Jewish people into a light of hope. These ideals of the *Haskalah* and of the modern Jewish Renaissance period, The *Tehiyyah* (1880-1920), in particular, became most poignant during the Second Aliyah (1904-1914) and the Third Aliyah (1919-1923). From Ben Yossef's biography we can tell that he found these ideals embodied most fully in the kibbutz movement in Israel.

The rise of capitalism, the influx of Jews into Russia proper, the radical ideas of the *Haskalah* and the national Zionist movements all prompted hatred towards Jews. The Pogrom of 1903 in Kishinev was just one of the most atrocious acts towards Jews. The poet Chaim Bialik was sent to Kishinev as part of the Historical Counsel in Odessa. This group was put together by Shimon Dubnov and

Ahad Ha'am in order to investigate the pogrom in Kishinev. The report of Bialik was never published but he wrote two famous poems entitled "On the Slaughter" (a short poem written after hearing of the pogrom) and "In the City of Slaughter," a longer, vivid description after talking with the people of Kishinev.

One of the poem's more memorable lines is:

For God called up the slaughter  
and the spring together  
The slayer slew, the blossom burst,  
and it was sunny weather<sup>40</sup>

One would think, Bialik suggested, that on a day when people were slaughtered, the weather should be dark and dreary, however it was sunny. The harsh irony of rebirth (spring) and renewal makes this grim description of death hard for the poet to endure. It was an insult to the suffering humanity that the sun should go on shining as if nothing had happened. Bialik felt the pain of Kishinev and knew that something needed to change for the Jewish people.

As a result of Bialik's harsh description of how "the sons of the Maccabees fled like mice," Jewish self-defense groups sprang up throughout Russia. And Bialik anger at God also led him to be angry at those Jews who passively accepted and blamed themselves for their suffering.

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<sup>40</sup> translated by Abraham Klein

While in Kishinev, Bialik wrote another poem, "*Im Shemesh*" which was not related to the pogrom. "*Im Shemesh*" used the metaphor of the sunlight differently, in much the same way as this metaphor had been developed during the *Haskalah* period. For the *Haskalah*, the metaphor of light, spring, and rebirth described the new intellectual movement, as well as the awakening national hopes of the return to Zion. Zvi Ben Yossef uses the words of this poem to compose his music. This poem, does not use the vivid description of the pogrom, however it focuses on "the light" of the sun as a metaphor for wisdom and self knowledge. "And your brother of the dark night will rise and bestir himself and search for the sun, the sun."<sup>41</sup>

Bialik says that religion and God are what cause Jews to be passive. If we stand by and watch our brethren die accepting the cruel fate which God has given us, then we have become passive. Bialik rails against this spiritual passivity or quietism. The metaphors used by Bialik of death and darkness versus hope and light tell the reader of Bialik's religious past and his newly found ideals of Zionism. Zionism had marginalized prayer and God. Bialik a *Maskil* and Zionist says, "pray for the sun, the sun. (Im

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<sup>41</sup> Appendix B "*Im Shemesh*"

Shemesh)" In the poem "Im Shemesh," Bialik mimics the idea of prayer to make his point stronger for enlightenment.

Ben Yossef utilized the poetry of the Zionist poet and teacher Moshe Tabenkin (1917-1979). Tabenkin, from Kibbutz Ein Herod in the north of Israel, was a strong supporter of the youth movements and military activities in Israel. Ben Yossef composes music for Tabenkin's poem, "Al Ha-Yaldah be'chaluk ha'kachol" to show his fondness for Neomi Zeltzberger, daughter of Vera Zeltzberger. During Ben Yossef's stay with the Zeltzberger's in Jerusalem, Neomi would walk around the house in a blue bathrobe. Aware of the poem by Tabenkin, Ben Yossef playfully wrote a tune to go with the poem for Neomi Zeltzberger. Through the theme of blue, perhaps alluding to Zionism, perhaps not, Tabenkin conveys an atmosphere of playfulness, as the young girl plays in the sand with her grandfather.<sup>42</sup> The lightheartedness of this ditty tells us something about Ben Yossef's boisterous spirit.

In the tune, *Horah Nahalal* composed for dancing the horah, Ben Yossef poetically "plays" with the idea of romantic involvement. As the song articulates playfully, the girl, a *kibbutz*nik is forbidden to touch another man although she is allowed to dance the *horah*, enabling them to hold hands while dancing. She admits that her ideal man

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<sup>42</sup> Appendix B *Al Ha-Yeldah Beh'chaluk ha'kachol*

is a dangerous soldier as they stroll into the darkened fields.

She said many more things  
And caused me pangs of conscience;  
But with the descent of night  
We went out to stroll  
The two of us together to the fields

Ben Yossef, a gentleman, always dealt with love from a distance. This playful nature of his and his musical talent always attracted women toward him, but somehow real love always alluded Ben Yossef. The Bialik poem, "Ayyech" asks the question of that special love, "where are you?" "Reveal yourself to me," as if to say that love is so distant, I feel incomplete. Bialik, wrote this poem "Ayyech" as well as "*Im Dimldumei ha-Hammah*" ("At Twilight," in 1908). There is speculation that Bialik had an affair with, or at least a crush on, Ira Yan, one of the first Hebrew artists and photographers, and a sometime Hebrew writer, and that this connection sparked the ideas for these poems. The element of distance in Bialik's poems embodies his desire to seek what is not achievable for the repressed Jewish intellectual. The allusion to remote, hidden islands in "At Twilight" is used as a metaphor for that desired, unreachable goal of romantic love, but the island is also used to show feelings of abandonment and aloneness.

They are the islands of gold for which we thirsted  
As for a homeland

About which all the night-stars hinted  
With the light of the quivering ray

On them (the islands) we remained  
(were left) without friendship or companion  
Like two flowers in a desert  
Like two lost ones in a foreign land  
Forever seeking something lost<sup>43</sup>

"Ayyech," too, represents this struggle and pain of feeling abandoned, but Bialik, although disillusioned with love, poetically gives the feeling of hope ironically through prayer.

In the most perfect of my prayers  
And the purest of my thoughts  
In the most pleasant of my musings  
And in the greatest of my torments  
My soul sought for nothing  
but for you to reveal yourself,  
Only you, you, you<sup>44</sup>

Zvi Ben Yossef also used poetry by Shaul Tchernichovsky (1875-1943). Tchernichovsky, generally regarded with Bialik as the most important poets of the modern Hebrew Renaissance grew up near Siberia in rural Russia. Somehow he learned Hebrew magnificently, although he was far removed from the yeshivah-dominated society in which Bialik and virtually all of the great Hebrew authors of the period grew up. Tchernichovsky, in addition to his enduring poetry, translated books such as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* into Hebrew, and Tchernichovsky also helped to

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<sup>43</sup> Appendix B "At Twilight" Chaim Nachman Bialik

<sup>44</sup> Appendix B "Ayyech" Translated by Dr. Stanley Nash

broaden the scope of the Hebrew language.<sup>45</sup> Shalom Spiegel wrote in his book, Hebrew Reborn that Tchernichovsky was the "bard of Hebrew paganism" but his ideas were not as radical as it might sound. In the later part of the book, Spiegel points out how Tchernichovsky was attempting to awaken the Jewish psyche, that had been dormant for so long. Tchernichovsky believed Jews needed to become more free spirited having natural instincts and less bookish. Although these ideas seem simple, Jews marginalized Tchernichovsky. Dr Stanley Nash says, "this caused Tchernichovsky to feel as if he was speaking to deaf ears, and that he was born before his time." In his later years, Tchernichovsky lived and worked as a doctor in Palestine. Researcher Robert Alter says, some of his best serious poetry was written during his later years. He wrote about the physical presence of the land of Israel and to the human efforts of its re-builders.<sup>46</sup>

Ben Yossef composed music for the poem "*V'et Shemeich Ani Esah*," (I shall carry your name) written by Shaul Tchernichovsky.<sup>47</sup> The poem describes a passionate love for a girl, however the love for this girl is in a future generation; a generation that will truly love this woman.

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<sup>45</sup> Spicehandler, Ezra; *The Modern Hebrew Poet Itself*; Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan, 2003

<sup>46</sup> Spicehandler, Ezra; *The Modern Hebrew Poet Itself*; Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan, 2003

<sup>47</sup> See Appendix B "*V'et Shemeich Ani Esah*"

Tchernichovsky suggests that he must carry the name of his beloved "on the wings of poetry" to a better time and place. Only the future generation will be able to find her rightful place.

And like the preciousness of pearls  
Amidst the recesses of the great deep  
Like a trembling kiss given to a bride  
I will make it into an eternal keepsake  
For a better time and a much elevated generation

In a conversation with Dr. Stanley Nash, he says:

"With this poem, Tchernichovsky describes a potential new Jewish way of life, however no one in this generation will be able to appreciate it. Only after they are gone, in a another time and another place, his girlfriends name will resonate in the time to come."

Tchernichovsky's poem makes this point to his contemporaries; you are not in a position to love a woman, correctly. Dr. Stanley Nash continues, "Tchernichovsky wanted to express, that a woman should be loved freely without guilt, in happiness." Nash also adds,

"most people in the Jewish world were simply not ready to embrace this theory. There was the idea that when you return to the land, that maybe there will be a generation that will be capable of living more spontaneously."

Enhancing this argument, Tchernichovsky, in his poem "Ani Ma'amim," ({I Believe} or better known as 'Sachki, Sachki,' {Laugh oh Laugh}) which has been used in Reform liturgy, directly mentions his dreams of this future generation in an utopian time.



Laugh, O Laugh at all my visions,  
I the dreamer, tell you true;  
Laugh, for I believe in man still,  
For I still believe in you

For my soul still yearns for freedom,  
Unbartered to the calf of gold  
for I still believe in mankind,  
in his spirit, strong and bold

Man shall rise to the heights of glory.  
Vanity's fetters from him shed;  
The worker then will starve no longer  
Spirit-freed, and hunger-fed

Laugh, in friendship too my faith is,  
Somewhere yet I'll find a heart.  
One to share my every hope with  
Feeling fortune, knowing smart

I believe, too, in the future,  
Though the day's not close at hand.  
It will come-then peace and blessing  
Will be borne from land to land

My people, too, again will flower  
On the land a breed will rise  
That will cast their chains from off them  
See the light before their eyes

Living, Loving, working, doing,  
On the earth alive indeed  
Not hereafter-hope of heaven  
Not content with empty creed.<sup>48</sup>

The themes of the poem *Ani Ma'amim* show the idealism of a man focused on the visions of universalism (equality, liberty and fraternity). The poem *Ve'et Shemech Ani Esah* demonstrates that love was part of the equation as well. Tchernichovsky's ideas of the future and universalism, and his vision of love, resonated in Ben Yossef's own worldview.

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<sup>48</sup> Silberschlag, Eisig; Shaul Tchernichovsky, Poet of the Revolt; Cornell University Press, Ithica New York; 1968 Hebrew Translation in Appendix B

In accordance with our hypothesis that the kibbutz epitomized and was a culmination of the ideals of the Modern Hebrew Renaissance and the Second and Third Aliyot, we can point to Ben Yossef's own composition of "Yesh Li Kinneret,"<sup>49</sup> as a wonderful composite of the many influences we have already cited and also of the influence of A.D. Gordon's "Religion of Labor." "Yesh Li Kinneret" is written in an extremely ornate Hebrew style. The poem is based on a Hebrew pun. Dr. Stanley Nash explains the word *Kinneret*, obviously referring to the Lake Kinneret or the Sea of Galilee, as also a variant on the word *kinnor*, a stringed instrument. The Lake Kinneret gained its fame in the poetry of Rachel Bluvstein (known to the Hebrew literary world simply by the affectionate name "Rachel"). Songs referring to the Kinneret such as "Ve'Ulai" (*lo hayu devarim me'olam...*) are etched into the Israeli consciousness by the pioneering cause identified with the Second Aliyah (1904-1914). Equally, to illustrate the point from a well-known modern example, Naomi Shemer's "Yerushalayim shel Zahav" uses the word "kinnor," as in the refrain "halo le-chol shirayich ani chinor" ("Behold I am a violin for all your songs") suggests a kind of poetic ecstasy. In all, they go back to the metaphor originally drawn by Yehudah Halevi in the eleventh century A.C.E.

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<sup>49</sup> Appendix B "Yesh Li Kinneret"

Ben Yossef's "*Yesh Li Kinneret*" encompasses these imageries mixing the metaphors of musical sound and of sunrays reflecting through water and creating a rainbow in the water-drenched mist. Each sound of the "two thousand strings" brings together colors of the rainbow, metaphorically mixing the senses of sight and sound. Ben Yossef's usage of the word "*niglosha*" we will stream or flow or slide down to the Jordan evokes a clear linguistic association with Rachel's poem entitled "*Kinneret*." Rachel had longed for the kind of mystical-religious transformation of Jewish body and soul through physical labor and return to the soil that Aaron David Gordon had preached and exemplified in his own life. Ben Yossef's fluid transitions from joy to sorrow and back again also resonate with the poet Rachel's melancholy in her poems lamenting her illness and her inability to continue her agricultural "mission" along the shores of Lake Kinneret in her kibbutz Degania.

The poetry of these well known and famous poets inform the ideals of Zvi Ben Yossef. Ben Yossef, an educated and idealistic man, used these poet's writings to embellish his compositions, portray his message and also to illustrate the important figures and events that permeate his mental and artistic life. The music of Ben Yossef is a reflection of his mind and a lens that gives us the ability to peer

time when Jews living in Palestine were close to acquiring a Jewish state, Ben Yossef's opportunity to shine as a composer of serious music was cut short. However, his legacy as a fallen warrior will be remembered.

# Appendix A

"... 123 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

**A**

1 2 3

4 5 6 7

**B**

8 9 appoggiatura

Deceptive cadence

decending cadence

10 appoggiatura

11 12

vii<sup>o</sup>

Handwritten musical score, measures 13-18. The score is written for voice and piano. The piano part includes a "Frvi chromatic bass line" in measures 13-14 and "Grvi" in measure 15. The vocal line includes lyrics in Hebrew. The piano part includes a "Frvi chromatic bass line" in measures 13-14 and "Grvi" in measure 15. The piano part includes a "Frvi chromatic bass line" in measures 13-14 and "Grvi" in measure 15.

Measures 13-18. The score is written for voice and piano. The piano part includes a "Frvi chromatic bass line" in measures 13-14 and "Grvi" in measure 15. The vocal line includes lyrics in Hebrew. The piano part includes a "Frvi chromatic bass line" in measures 13-14 and "Grvi" in measure 15.

Handwritten musical score, measures 19-21. The score is written for voice and piano. The piano part includes a "Frvi chromatic bass line" in measures 19-20 and "Grvi" in measure 21. The vocal line includes lyrics in Hebrew. The piano part includes a "Frvi chromatic bass line" in measures 19-20 and "Grvi" in measure 21.

Measures 19-21. The score is written for voice and piano. The piano part includes a "Frvi chromatic bass line" in measures 19-20 and "Grvi" in measure 21. The vocal line includes lyrics in Hebrew. The piano part includes a "Frvi chromatic bass line" in measures 19-20 and "Grvi" in measure 21.

Handwritten musical score for measures 22 through 30. The score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line, a piano accompaniment, and a section labeled "inner pulse".

**Measures 22-24:** The vocal line begins with a melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support. The "inner pulse" section is marked with a double bar line and a pulse line.

**Measures 25-27:** The vocal line continues with a new phrase. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern. The "inner pulse" section is marked with a double bar line and a pulse line.

**Measures 28-30:** The vocal line concludes with a final phrase. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern. The "inner pulse" section is marked with a double bar line and a pulse line.

**Handwritten notes and markings:**

- Measure 22:  $\kappa \eta$   $\iota \alpha - \lambda \epsilon$   $2 - \eta \eta \theta$   $\theta$   $\iota$   $\kappa \beta$   $\iota - \rho \beta$   $\theta$   $\iota$   $\iota - \rho \beta$   $\eta - \gamma \lambda$   $\eta \theta$
- Measure 23:  $\eta \eta$   $\iota - \kappa \beta$   $3/8$   $\eta - \alpha \beta$   $\iota \alpha \theta$   $\iota - \alpha \beta \theta$   $\theta$   $\iota$   $\theta$   $\iota - \eta$   $\rho \beta$   $\iota$
- Measure 24:  $\iota \alpha \theta$   $\iota - \alpha \beta \theta$   $\theta$   $\iota$   $\theta$   $\iota - \eta$   $\rho \beta$   $\iota$
- Measure 25:  $\eta \theta$   $\eta \theta$   $2 - \theta$   $\iota \eta$   $\iota - \eta$   $\theta$   $\iota$   $\alpha \theta$   $\eta - \lambda$   $\rho \beta$   $\iota \kappa$   $\theta$   $\rho$   $\iota \theta$   $\eta \rho$   $\iota$
- Measure 26:  $\iota$   $\alpha \theta$   $\eta - \lambda$   $\rho \beta$   $\iota \kappa$   $\theta$   $\rho$   $\iota \theta$   $\eta \rho$   $\iota$
- Measure 27:  $\iota$   $\alpha \theta$   $\eta - \lambda$   $\rho \beta$   $\iota \kappa$   $\theta$   $\rho$   $\iota \theta$   $\eta \rho$   $\iota$
- Measure 28:  $\theta$   $\theta \eta$   $\kappa - \alpha \theta$   $\iota - \theta$   $\eta$   $\eta$   $\rho$   $\iota$   $\iota \kappa - \alpha \theta$   $\theta$   $\iota$   $\alpha \theta$   $\alpha \theta - \lambda$   $\rho$   $\iota$
- Measure 29:  $\eta$   $\eta$   $\rho$   $\iota$   $\iota \kappa - \alpha \theta$   $\theta$   $\iota$   $\alpha \theta$   $\alpha \theta - \lambda$   $\rho$   $\iota$
- Measure 30:  $\iota$   $\alpha \theta$   $\alpha \theta - \lambda$   $\rho$   $\iota$

Handwritten musical score for three staves, measures 31-33.

**Staff 1 (Melody):** Treble clef, key signature of one flat (B-flat). Measure 31: quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Measure 32: quarter note B4, quarter note A4, quarter note G4, quarter note F4. Measure 33: quarter note E4, quarter note D4, quarter note C4. The staff ends with a double bar line.

**Staff 2 (Lyrics):** Hebrew text written below the melody. Measure 31: *אֶל-כֹּחַ הַיָּד נִשְׁמָר*. Measure 32: *הַיָּד הַזֹּאת הַזֹּאת הַזֹּאת*. Measure 33: *הַזֹּאת הַזֹּאת הַזֹּאת*.

**Staff 3 (Piano Accompaniment):** Treble and Bass clefs, key signature of one flat. Measure 31: Treble clef has a whole note chord (F4, A4, C5). Bass clef has a whole note chord (B3, D4, F4). Measure 32: Treble clef has a whole note chord (F4, A4, C5). Bass clef has a whole note chord (B3, D4, F4). Measure 33: Treble clef has a whole note chord (F4, A4, C5). Bass clef has a whole note chord (B3, D4, F4). The staff ends with a double bar line.

**Handwritten Annotations:**

- Measure 31: *Fr II* written below the bass staff.
- Measure 32: *vi<sup>6</sup><sub>4</sub>* written below the bass staff.
- Measure 33: *Fr II* and *vi* written below the bass staff.



**כל הזכאות שמורות**

Handwritten musical score for "The Rose Tree" in G major. The score is written on ten staves, with the first five staves for the vocal line and the last five staves for the piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written in English and Vietnamese. The score includes various musical markings such as "chromatics", "staccato", and "piano". The lyrics are as follows:

1. The Rose Tree  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng

2. The Rose Tree  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng

3. The Rose Tree  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng

4. The Rose Tree  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng

5. The Rose Tree  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng

6. The Rose Tree  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng

7. The Rose Tree  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng

8. The Rose Tree  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng

9. The Rose Tree  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng

10. The Rose Tree  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng  
 Cây Hoa Hồng

[illegible]

Musical score for "The Rose Tree" (The Rose Tree). The score is written for voice and piano. The vocal melody is in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The piano accompaniment is in the same key and time. The lyrics are in Hebrew and English.

**Vocal Melody:**
  
 Hebrew: אֶחָד הָיָה אֶמְלָא שֶׁהָיָה לוֹ שָׁרָה
   
 English: ACH HI AM-LEA SHE-LEA - SAR
   
 Hebrew: וְהָיָה עִתָּהּ עַל הָרֶשֶׁת
   
 English: ET HA-GITHA EL RASHT

**Piano Accompaniment:**
  
 The piano part features a treble and bass staff. The right hand plays chords and arpeggios, while the left hand plays a simple bass line. The tempo is marked "Allegretto".

Musical score for "The Mass" (Messe) by J. S. Bach. The score is written for a vocal soloist (Soprano) and a string ensemble (Violins I, Violins II, Violas, Cellos, and Double Basses). The key signature is D major (two sharps: F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are in French, and the music is in a Baroque style.

The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows the vocal part and the string parts. The vocal part has the lyrics: "ET VO-DA TH-FAS-TI AGH NI AN-RA GUS-SE A-SUR". The string parts provide harmonic support. The second system continues the vocal part and the string parts.

The score is written for a vocal soloist (Soprano) and a string ensemble (Violins I, Violins II, Violas, Cellos, and Double Basses). The key signature is D major (two sharps: F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are in French, and the music is in a Baroque style.

The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows the vocal part and the string parts. The vocal part has the lyrics: "ET VO-DA TH-FAS-TI AGH NI AN-RA GUS-SE A-SUR". The string parts provide harmonic support. The second system continues the vocal part and the string parts.

[illegible]

## Appendix B

### ואת שמך אני אשא

Poem By Shaul Tchernichovsky

Music By Zvi Ben Yossef

I shall carry your name upon the wings of song  
I shall plant it beyond the borders of eternities  
And to the distance of the future replete with mysteries  
I shall bring it so full of pleasantness and radiance

ואת שמך אני אשא על כנפי השירה.

מעבר גבול-יובלים אטענו

ולמרחק העתיד המלא תעלמות

מלא נעים וזיו אביאנו

וביקורת הפנינים תוך נבכי תהום רבה,

כנשיקה חרדה לפלה, And like the preciousness of pearls amidst the recesses of the great deep,

Like a trembling kiss given to a bride

משמרת עולמים אנכי אתנו

I will make it into an eternal keepsake

For a better time and for a much elevated generation

לעת יותר טובה ולדור מאד נעלה.

ויחי שמך ויפרח, ואביבו--עולמים,

Then will your name live and flourish, and its springtime-forever,

בנגהות עטרתו לו נאווה,

Through the radiance of its crown so beauteous,

Every heart will supplicate it and every knee will bend to it

לו יפלל כל לב ותכרע כל פרך

In the kingdom of beauty and love

בממלכת היפי והאהבה.

Im Shemesh

## עם שמש

Awake at Sunrise to the mountains.  
And find the good and fine gold.

And you will be the first  
to see the sun's light,  
And each man will draw his fill of it  
for his soul and heart.

And a precious God's morning,  
still fresh and moist  
Will pass over you,  
flooding over you again and again.

And all that is old and withered  
in your heart—will be made new  
And all things foul  
and defective will be made holy.

And you shall store away and guard this,  
your treasure of gold,  
And it will be a repository  
to nourish your heart  
And if you started out heavily  
in debt and impoverished,

You shall return rich and unencumbered,

Oh, you decayed and rotted  
ones of the night.  
Pray for the sun, for the sun!

And moistened by the radiant  
dew return to your brethren  
And they will be moistened  
by you and bear fruit;

And bear, each man of you,  
the good tidings of this expansiveness  
To the house of his fathers and brothers.

And go forth and sow  
your light all about  
And it will shine upon all the members  
of your of generation;

And it will descend to find  
in the dark cellar  
Your downtrodden and miserably  
benighted brother.

And the light will quiver  
on his heart and cling to it  
And silently it will come  
tapping at his heart..

עם-שמש השכימו להרים ומצאתם

הזהב הטוב והכתם.

והייתם ראשונים לאור שמש, ושאו

איש איש מלא נשמתו ולבבו.

ויקר בקר-אל, בעודו חדש ורטב,

יעברכם-נא עבר ושטף,

וכל-נושן ובלה בלבבכם יתחדש!

וכל-פגול ופסול בו יתקדש!

וצפנתם ושמרתם זה אוצר זהבכם,

והיה לכלכל בו לבבכם.

ואם כבדים בחובות יצאתם, ועניים

ושבתם עשירים ונקיים.

הו, נמקי החשך ורקבי האמש,

התפללו לשמש, לשמש!

ורטבי טל-אורות, לאחיכם תשובו,

ורטבו מכם ויגו;

ואיש אל-בית אביו ואיש אל-בית אחיו

Poem By Chaim Nachman Bialik

Music By Zvi Ben Yossef

תביאו נא בשורת המרחב.

ויצאתם וזרעתם מסביב את-אורכם

ונגה על-ראש כל-בני דורכם;

וירד ומצא במרתף האפל

אחיכם הדך והשפל,

ורעד על-לבו האור והתרפק,

ותרש על-לבו יתדפק:

"קום, אחי, התפלל יש מקום לתפלה,

Wake up my brother and pray,  
there is room for prayer  
There is room for hope - so do hope!

יש מקום לתקווה הוחילה!"

And your brother of the dark night  
will rise and bestir himself  
And thirst for the sun, for the sun!

וקם והתנער אחיכם בן-אמש

And if fruitlessly you have sought  
the sun's light for your eye-  
Go out and create it for yourself  
out of nothingness!

וצמא לשמש, לשמש!

ואם-תהו בקשתם אור-שמש לעין

Carve it, excavate it  
from huge rocks and boulders,  
Draw it forth  
from the recesses of your heart.

צאו ובראוהו מאין!

חצבוהו מסלע, מצורים נקרוהו,

The God of light,  
once have been disclosed  
So will He spread forth  
and never be diminished!

מפנות לבבכם משכוהו!

וחי אל האור, כי-כאשר יחשף

Your exiled ones, too,  
will rise up and come  
Raising up and reaching out  
with their souls to you.

כן יפרץ ולעד לא-יאסף;

וגם-גדחיקם יקומו ובאו

And in your bosom will they lay  
all of their holy longings  
And they will pass them on  
to their children

ואליכם את-נפשם ישאו,

And generations upon generations  
will pass on this legacy:  
Live! Work hard! And Hope!

ובחיקכם יניחו את כל-געגועיהם

Oh! People weaned from the darkness,  
released from the night--  
Let the sun be a beacon over your heads,  
let your beacon be the sun!

הַקְדוּשִׁים וּמִסְרוֹם לְבָנֵיהֶם,  
וְדוֹרוֹת לְדוֹרוֹת יִנְחִילוּ וַיֵּצְאוּ:  
חַיּוֹ, עֲבָדוֹ הַרְבֵּה וְקוֹו!  
הוּא, גְּמוּלֵי מַחֲשָׁךְ, עֲתִיקֵי מֵאֲמָשׁ  
תָּלוּ שָׁמֶשׁ עַל-רֹאשְׁכֶם, תָּלוּ שָׁמֶשׁ!  
קִישִׁינוֹב, כ"ד סיון, תרס"ג.

Yesh Li Kineret

I have the Lake Kineret  
Two thousand strings  
Of the sun's rays  
Flowing heavens

I have the Lake Kineret  
Seven fold sound  
On every string  
Of sadness and their happiness

I also have a bow  
In which there is firmaments rainbow  
And burnished in it with every radiance  
Of color and hue

I have a bow  
Seven times the sound  
From the beginning of the dawn  
Until the completion of the blue sky

When the Spring comes  
I will play the music of Hope  
And the youthfulness will pour forth into the Jordan  
When the fall comes, the sadness of silence  
My song will be silent  
My string will doze from frost

Then surely spring will come and we will play music  
Young people we will indeed flow forth into the Jordan  
And no (longer) silence  
And no longer sadness of Autumn  
My song, Our song, will shine together

But on every string, there is delicate pleasure  
Joy, Singing, Happiness.

Music By Zvi Ben Yossef

יש לי כִּנֶּרֶת,  
מִיתָרִים אֲלָפִים,  
שֶׁל קֶרְנֵי שֶׁמֶשׁ,  
אֲשֶׁד וְשָׁמַיִם.

יש לי כִּנֶּרֶת,  
שִׁבְעָתִים צֶלֶל,  
עַל כָּל מִיתָר,  
שֶׁל עֶצֶב הֵן וְגִיל.

אֵף יֵשׁ לִי קֶשֶׁת,  
בָּהּ רִקִּיעַ קֶשֶׁת בָּעֶנָן  
וּמִתְלַטֶּשֶׁת הִיא כָּל זֵיו  
שֶׁל צָבֵעַ וְגוֹן.

יש לי קֶשֶׁת,  
שִׁבְעָתִים קוֹל  
מִרְשִׁית שָׁחַר  
וְעַד תֵּם הַכַּחוּל.

אֲזִי יָבוֹא אָבִיב וַיִּנְגְּנָה,  
בְּנֵי עֲלוּמִים נִגְלָשָׁה הִירְדָּנָה,  
וְלֹא דִמָּמָה וְלֹא עוֹד עֶצֶב סִתּוֹ,  
יִזְרַח שִׁירֵי שִׁירֵנוּ גַם יַחְדָּיו.

אָבִיב כִּי בָא,  
תִּקְוָה לִי אֲנִיגְנָה,  
וְעֲלוּמִים יִגְלֹשׁוּ הִירְדָּנָה,  
אֲדָּ סִתּוֹ כִּי בָא,  
תִּוּגַת הַדָּמִי יִשְׁוֹר  
יָדָם שִׁירֵי



יָנוּם מִיִּתְּרֵי מִכְּפֹר.

coda

לֵךְ הַכְּנֶרֶת,  
מִיִּתְּרֵי אֲלָפִים,  
שֶׁל קֶרְנֵי שֶׁמֶשׁ,  
אֶשֶׁד וְשָׁמַיִם.

אוֹתָהּ כְּנֶרֶת  
שִׁבְעָתַיִם צָלִיל,  
אוֹלָם עַל כָּל מִיִּתְּרֵי  
עֲדָנָה, חֲדָוָה, רִנָּה וְגִיל.

## אֵיךְ

Ayyech

From the place where you were hiding,      מִמְּקוֹם שְׁאַתְּ נִסְתַּתְּרַת שָׁם, יַחֲדוֹת חַיִּי  
oh my life's chosen one      וְשִׁכִּינַת מֵאוֹיֵי --  
And the sanctuary of my longings  
Reveal yourself, please,      הִגְלִי-נָא וּמִהָרִי בְּאֵי, בְּאֵי  
and come hurriedly, come      אֵלַי מִחֻבּוֹאִי;  
To my hiding place;  
And while these is yet salvation      וּבְעוֹד יֵשׁ גְּאֻלָּה לִּי צֵאִי וּגְאֻלִּי  
for me go forth and redeem      וּמַלְכִי עַל-גּוֹרְלִי;  
And reign over my fate      וַיּוֹם אֶחָד גְּזֻלַת נְעוּרַי לִי הִשִּׁיבִי  
And one day restore to me my stolen youth      וְהַמִּיתֵנִי עִם-אַבִּיבִי.  
And bring my demise  
at the moment of my springtime      וְתַחַת שִׁפְתוֹתֶיךָ יִכְבֶּה-נָא נִיצוּצִי  
And beneath your lips may the spark  
of my life be extinguished      וַיִּבֶן שָׂדֶיךָ יוֹמִי אוֹצִיא,  
And between your breast  
let me my day expire      כָּגֹעַ בְּעֶרֶב הַיּוֹם בֵּין פְּרָחֵי בְּשָׁמִים  
As a butterfly perishes      צִפְרֶת כְּרָמִים.  
among fragrant flowers  
With the fall of evening

Where are you?

When I did not know who you are

or what you are

Your name trembled upon my lips

And like a burning ember

at night upon my bed

You glowed in my heart;

And I cried in sleepless tossing at night,

and gnawed at my pillow

While my flesh longed at the thought of you;

And all the day among the letters of the gemara

In a ray of sunlight,

in the pure figure of a cloud,

In the most perfect of my prayers

and the purest of my thoughts,

In the most pleasant of my musings

and in the greatest of my torments

My soul sought for nothing

but for you to reveal yourself,

Only you, you, you...

איך?

ואני עוד לא ידעתי מי ומה את

ושמך על-שפתי רעד,

וכרצפת אש בלילות על-משכבי

בערת בלבבי;

ואבך בנדודי ליל, ואשך פרי

וילוכך כלח בשרי;

וכל-היום בין אותיות הגמרא,

בקרו אור, בדמות עב פרה,

בזכה מתפללתי ובטהר-הרהורי,

בנעים הגיוני ובגדל-יסורי

לא-בקשה נפשי כי אם-הגלותך,

רק-אותך, אותך, אותך...

מרוי, סיון, תרס"ד.

## The Horah of Nahalal

By Zvi Ben Yossef

I was one who was a shirker  
And I wasn't at all ashamed:  
Until I seized some daring  
And acquired some verve  
In the dance of Nahalal.

I was a "bimkom," a replacement; here's how:  
The farmer's son was in the army for quite a while;  
But the work was abundant to overflowing,  
The young lady was getting exhausted  
So I came to her assistance.

She was  
A beauty of a girl:  
Her hair a storm in an ocean of flowing grain.  
She was legendary:  
A thousand and one nights from the book of stories.

After all I am a guy  
And I became ignited like a kettle from a match.  
I chewed the fat,  
I grabbed her hand  
But she said it was not allowed!

She said—  
Only in the course of dancing—  
Does she give her hand to the guys of the brigade exclusively.  
She said—  
For her the ideal is  
A guy of the male gender and dangerous, namely: a soldier.

She said many other things  
And cause me pangs of conscience;  
But with the descent of night  
We went out for a stroll  
In the fields, just the two of us.

And behold—  
We danced around and around,  
Seven times sashaying from Munk to Bentovich.

## הורח נהלל

ביצוע: אריק לביא  
מילים ולחן: צבי בן יוסף

משתמט אני הייתי  
ואני לא התבישתי כלל  
עד כי עז תפסתי  
ועזוד רכשתי  
ברקוד בנהלל.

הייתי "במקום", זאת אומרת:  
בן האפר מזמן הוא בצבא  
אך העבודה שופעת,  
הבת היא מתנגעת  
ואנוכי בא לעזרתה.

היא הייתה  
לפי של ילדה  
שערותיה סערה בים דגן נוהר  
היא הייתה אנדה  
אלף לילה ועוד לילה מתוך ספר מספר.

נו, סוף סוף אני בחור  
והתלשחתי בפרימוס מגפרור  
את החיטה גרסת  
אך היא אמרה שזה אסור!

היא אמרה -  
רק אגב רקוד -  
היא נותנת יד בלבד לבחורי הגדוד

היא אמרה -  
בשבילה אינדיאל  
זה בחור ממין זכר ומסכן כלומר: חיל.

היא אִמְרָה הַרְבֵּה דְּבָרִים עוֹד  
וְגִרְמָה לִי לְמוֹסֵר כְּלִיּוֹת;  
אֵךְ עִם פֹּל הַלֵּיל  
נִצָּאנוּ לְטִיִּיל  
שְׁנִינוּ יַחַד לְשָׁדוֹת.

וְהִנֵּה -  
תָּרַנוּ טוֹב-סָבִיב  
תָּרַנוּ שְׁבַע פְּעָמִים בֵּין מוֹקֵק וּבִנְטוּבִיץ  
וְרָאָה -  
בְּמַעְגַּל מִזֵּל  
נִפְקָחוּ עֵינַי לִרְאוֹת מָה זֹאת הוֹרָה נִהְלָל!

And lo and behold—  
In the circle dance of chance  
My eyes were opened to see what the *Hora* of *Nahalal* can do!

A swing entered my feet,  
A pinch of excitement finally entering my blood:  
Finally, I was signing up for the cause,  
Finally, I was turning into a hardy human being.

Yes, I was one who had been a shirker  
But I took up the hint of fate:  
And in my heart of hearts—  
Already there was my beloved  
Already the *Hora* of *Nahalal*.

וְהִסּוּיֵנִי נִכְנָס לְרִגְלִי,  
וְהַקְנִיִּיץ לְבִסּוֹף נִכְנָס לְדָם:  
מִתְנַסֵּס אֲנִי לְדָגֵל  
נִהְפֵּךְ לְבֶן אָדָם.

כֵּן, מִשְׁתַּמֵּט אֲנִי הֵייתִי  
אֵךְ הִבְנֵיתִי אֶת כְּמוֹת הַגּוֹרָל:  
וּבִלְבָב לִבִּי --  
כְּבָר אֶהוּבָתִי  
וְגַם הוֹרָה נִהְלָל

I Believe (Laugh O' Laugh)

By: Shaul Tchernichovsky

Laugh, O Laugh at all my visions,  
I the dreamer, tell you true;  
Laugh, for I believe in man still,  
For I still believe in you

For my soul still yearns for freedom,  
Unbartered to the calf of gold  
for I still believe in mankind,  
in his spirit, strong and bold

Man shall rise to the heights of glory.  
Vanity's fetters from him shed;  
The worker then will starve no longer  
Spirit-freed, and hunger-fed

Laugh, in friendship too my faith is,  
Somewhere yet I'll find a heart.  
One to share my every hope with  
Feeling fortune, knowing smart

I believe, too, in the future,  
Though the day's not close at hand.  
It will come-then peace and blessing  
Will be borne from land to land

My people, too, again will flower  
On the land a breed will rise  
That will cast their chains from off them  
See the light before their eyes

שחקי, שחקי על החלומות,  
זו אני החולם שח.  
שחקי כי באדם אֲמִין,  
כי עודני מאֲמִין בך.

כי עוד נִפְשִׁי דָרוֹר שׁוֹאֶפֶת,  
לא מִכֶּרְתִּיךָ לַעֲגֹל-פֶּזֶז,  
כי עוד אֲמִין גַּם בָּאָדָם,  
גַּם בְּרוּחוֹ, רוּחַ עֶז.

רוחו יִשְׁלַח כְּבִלִי-הַבֵּל,  
יְרוֹמְמֵנוּ בְּמִתִּי-עַל;  
לא בְּרָעַב יָמוֹת עוֹבֵד,  
דָרוֹר לִנְפֶשׁ, פֶּת לְדָל.

שחקי כי גם בְּרֵעוֹת אֲמִין,  
אֲמִין כי עוד אֶמְצֵא לֵב,  
לֵב תִּקְוֹתַי גַּם תִּקְוֹתָיו,  
יְחוּשׁ אֲשֶׁר, יָבִין כְּאֵב.

אֲמִינָה גַם בְּעֵתִיד,  
אֲף אִם יִרְחַק זֶה הַיּוֹם,  
אֲךְ בּוֹא יְבוֹא יִשְׁאוּ שְׁלוֹם

אֲזִי וּבִרְכָה לְאִם מְלֵאָם.

יָשׁוּב יִפְרַח אֲזִי גַם עִמִּי,  
וּבְאַרְץ יְקוֹם דּוֹר,  
בְּרָזֶל-כְּבִלְיוֹ יוֹסֵר מֶנּוּ,  
עֵין-בְּעֵין יִרְאֶה אוֹר.

Living, Loving, working, doing,  
On the earth alive indeed  
Not hereafter-hope of heaven  
Not content with empty creed.

Then a new song will one poet sing,  
To the beautiful and sublime  
his heart sensitive;  
For him, for that young poet,  
from upon my grave  
They will gather flowers  
for his laurel wreath.

יחיה, יאהב, יפעל, יעש,  
דור בארץ אמן חי,  
לא בעתיד, בשמים

חי-רוח לו אין די.

אז שיר חדש ישיר משורר,  
ליפי ונשגב לבו ער;  
לו, לצעיר, מעל קברי

פרחים ילקטו לזר.

Al Yeldah Bechaluk Hakachol

By: Moshe Tabenkin

About a young girl there is a tale, a tale,

About a young girl in a blue smock

In her blue smock,

she loved more than anything

the great ocean (shore)

to play, oh to play in the sand

In her one hand she had a star-covered pail

In her other a little blue spoon

The sea would be struck

by her boisterous la-la-laugh

And strollers (be struck by the blue of her smock)

Gold is the sand

The smock is (so) blue

And her eyes (ever) darkening brown

Without any respite

She is baking (some) cookies

And digging tunnels upon tunnels

And an old man

who was there alone and bereft

Sat across facing her upon the sand

Silently gazing jealous and sad

At the girl all in blue

And then the girl lifted

her eyes at him

And called out help me,

oh help me granddad!!

על ילדה אגדה אגדה

על ילדה בחלוק הפחל,

בחלוק הפחל אהבה היא מפל

עם הים הגדול

לשחק לשחק לה בחול

בגדה האחת דלי מכבב

בשניה פן קטנה ירקה

הים? שתאה לצחוקה ה-ה-השובב

טילים אלי פחל חלוקה

זהב הוא החול

החלוק הוא פחל

ועיניה חומות שחרחרות.

בלי הפוגות

אופה היא עוגות

וחופרה מערות מערות.

וזקן שם היה בודד ועזוב

ישב על החול ממוקה

דומם התבונן מקנא ועצוב

בילדה הפחלה

ותרם הילדה את עיניה אליו

ותקרא הו עזרני עזרני הסב!!



Playing until the time to depart  
For the night had cast darkness on all  
Then did the old man bless her  
(Saying) It should (only) grow with you  
The smock oh so blue, oh so blue.

הָזָקֵן אֵז קָרַב וְהָאוֹר בְּעֵינָיו  
בְּעוֹגוֹת יַעֲמִלוּ יַחְדָּיו  
שֶׁחָקוּ עַד הַגִּיעָה לָּעֵת הַפָּרֹד  
כִּי הָעָרֶב הָעֵטָה אֶת הַכֹּל  
אֵז בִּרְכָה הָזָקֵן  
עֶמֶד הוּא יִצְמַח  
הַחֲלוּק הַכָּחַל הַכָּחַל.

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