

Chapter 1

“Trifles of Jewish Music”

Is it not from “trifles” that emerge all the important collections of national objects? One must begin by first loving that which is small and modest . . . that which does not attract because of its majesty and colossal forms . . . but where are hidden the characteristic traits of that nation, hidden by the futile modes of despotism, ignorance and persecution.

VLADIMIR STASOV, “Art israélite à l’Exposition Universelle” (1878)

In a 1924 article Russian Soviet musicologist Leonid Sabaneyev (1881–1968) announced that through the work of a group of Jewish composers Jewish music was approaching the phase Sabaneyev called “its artistic expansion.”¹ Sabaneyev’s account of the birth of Jewish art music reflected art publicist Vladimir Stasov’s version of the development of Russian musical nationalism. Lest there be any doubt about this connection, the prophecy with which Sabaneyev closed his article demonstrated the strong effect of Russian national music on Jewish aspirations. Stasov shaped and propagated most effectively the Russian national ideals as the ideological basis for the *moguchaya kuchka* (frequently translated as “the Mighty Band”), a group of nationally committed Russian composers around Miliy Balakirev (1837–1910).² The Jewish group of composers, Sabaneyev claimed, has “many external features in common with the Russian national school” and “has many chances of becoming the ‘mighty band’ of Jewry.”

Heir to Herderian ideals of nationhood, Sabaneyev, like most of his contemporaries, saw no contradiction between a belief in the fundamentally diverse characteristics of nations, on the one hand, and the uniformity of their evolution toward the expression of their national genius, on the other. The genius of the Jewish race, like that of the Russian nation, was supposed to have been carried unconsciously for a long period by the “music associated with the life of the people,” in other words, by folk music. In Sabaneyev’s view the appearance of an intelligentsia with national allegiances signaled that this “unconscious, semi-psychological” phase of national music came to an end, for members of the new Jewish intelligentsia, after recognizing in their native music “*the style of the national soul*, the style of its sentiments, its emotions, its historical existence,” acquire “the irresistible conviction that the real creative power of music is always and in every case national.” Sa-

baneyev's is only one of many variations of the same basic tale of origin, newly applied to the birth of Jewish national music. It suggests a natural development in which a conscious expression of the national spirit replaces an unconscious one, and in which the sophisticated art music of the intelligentsia supersedes the folk music of the uneducated masses.

Sabaneyev, like other historians of Jewish music, identified the origin of Jewish art music with the foundation of the Society for Jewish Folk Music (*Obshchestvo Yevreyskoy Narodnoy Muziki*, henceforth OYNM) in St. Petersburg in 1908. The OYNM was an association of professional musicians and music lovers who sought to purvey Jewish music, both secular and sacred, to audiences both Jewish and non-Jewish. The organization was inspired in part by two of Russia's most influential musical figures, Vladimir Stasov (1824–1906), who encouraged Jewish artists to create Jewish art, and composer Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908), who prophesized to his Jewish students about the coming of a Jewish Glinka. Both were intimately associated with the Mighty Band. In most narratives of the OYNM's history these two men have been given so much credit that their contributions have been allowed to overshadow the cultural and political factors that paved the way for a Jewish musical renaissance in Russia. The overemphasis on Rimsky-Korsakov's and Stasov's roles has also served to shift attention from the collection and popularization of folk music, the focus of the OYNM at its inauguration, to the creation of Jewish art music. The Jewish political movements and the Russian model, however, played equally important parts in the development of the OYNM. As the history of the OYNM cannot be fully understood without the context of Jewish nationalism in Russia, so the music created by its composers cannot be accurately interpreted without comparison to Russian national music.

The political vagaries within the Jewish national movement strongly affected the emergence and development of Jewish cultural organizations. The desire to preserve and revive culture as a substitute for political activity and the bitter fights over the nature of the culture that would provide a common identity for all Jews left their mark also on the OYNM. Revisiting the political debates helps us understand how the fate of the OYNM was tied to that of the Jews in Russia, in other words, to a gruesome political situation, the memory of which should not be eradicated by nationalist nostalgia toward a pre-Holocaust, intact Jewish culture within Russia's Pale of Settlement. As the spiritual focus of some of the factions of Jewish nationalism in Russia contributed to the process of gradually losing touch with the political reality that gave impetus to the movement in the first place, so composers' preoccupation with the creation of Jewish art music obscured the original nationalist goals of the OYNM.

The Russian nationalist model was crucial in turning the OYNM from an organization for the preservation and popularization of Jewish musical cul-

ture into a funnel for the creation of a specifically Jewish art music. The progress from simple folk song arrangements through pieces of art music that exhibited their composers’ professional training and, finally, through modernist compositions with a neonationalist agenda mirrored the progress of Russian national music, evolving from *kuchkist* principles exemplified by the Mighty Band, through a modernist, neonationalist combination of stylistic elements, appropriated from folk music and modernist techniques, which reached its peak in the works of Igor Stravinsky. While the neonationalist phase of Jewish national music is the topic of chapter 2, this chapter focuses on the first, *kuchkist* phase. Ironically, the music written by composers whose ambition was to become the Mighty Band of Jewish music emulated their Russian models not only in technical details, but also in their willing embrace of stereotypes Russian composers exploited to depict the Oriental others, among them Jews. Instead of a Jewish Glinka, then, the OYNM produced several Jewish Borodins, who, using the Oriental style initiated by Glinka in his *Ruslan and Ludmilla*, cast themselves in the exotic garb of the Polovtsians of Borodin’s *Prince Igor*.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND:
THE EMERGENCE OF JEWISH NATIONALISM IN RUSSIA

Albert Weisser (1918–82), an insightful chronicler of the Russian Jewish national movement in music, points to two Jewish cultural-political factors that stimulated the new Russian Jewish intelligentsia to create Jewish art music around 1900: *haskalah* (the Jewish enlightenment) and Herzlian Zionism.³ What produced the intensity of the Jewish cultural renaissance was not the simple fact of the appearance of these movements but their transformation in Russia, where they had to adapt to the specific political situation of Russian Jewry. Precisely because of the oppressive policies of the tsars, culture came to serve as a surrogate for political activity among Jews in Russia even more than in Central Europe. This emphasis on culture, coupled with the belief in the existence of an intact, authentic Judaism in Russia, gave a special sense of mission to Russian Jewry.

Initiated by the German Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn (1729–86) in Berlin at the end of the eighteenth century, *haskalah* gained ground in nineteenth-century Russia against the opposition of the Orthodox Jewish establishment, which feared the movement’s secularizing effects. In Russia as in Western Europe, *haskalah* mediated between assimilation and Orthodoxy, advocating both the study of Western culture and internal Jewish reforms. The most important organization of the Russian *haskalah* was the Society for the Spread of Enlightenment among the Jews of Russia (Obshchestvo Rasprostraneniya Prosveshcheniya Sredi Yevreyev Rossii, henceforth ORP), founded in 1863 in St. Petersburg under the patronage of the

philanthropic Gintsburg family.⁴ Especially after a series of pogroms in 1881 that dashed the hopes of many assimilationists, organizations like the ORP began to attract members of the assimilated Jewish intelligentsia.⁵ This new group became the primary inculcator of secular nationalist ideals, which appeared in Russia even before Theodor Herzl's Zionist movement.

When it reached Russia, Herzl's brand of Zionism inspired Russian Jewish nationalists to define their national ideals in opposition to those propagated in the West. Resistance to Herzlian political Zionism in Russia displayed the familiar dichotomy between Jewish existence in the East and the West: a dichotomy between an almost intact community with living traditions and a Westernized, relatively emancipated Jewish culture that engaged in political action to substitute for its vanishing national identity. The Russian counterparts of Zionism were distinguished from the Herzlian movement by their focus on spiritual values instead of political programs and their awareness of an existing Jewish culture. The cultural organizations that sprang to life to preserve and develop these Jewish cultural traditions reflected the relationship of the competing factions of Jewish nationalists to the culture of the Diaspora.

The most influential of these Eastern Zionist movements was founded by Asher Gintsberg (1856–1927), more commonly known as Ahad Ha'am (Hebrew for "One of the People"). The Jewish secular nationalism advocated by Ahad Ha'am opposed Herzl's political program, accusing it of sacrificing a living Jewish tradition for a utopian political future. Ahad Ha'am did not dispute the legitimacy of Herzl's objective to create a Jewish state in Palestine, but he mistrusted the political methods advocated by Herzlian Zionists. The diplomatic solution for which they strove, he believed, was divorced from the political reality of the Russian Empire, home of 70 percent of Europe's Jewish population. The realization of Herzl's utopia, Ahad Ha'am feared, would break the continuity of Jewish tradition in the Pale of Settlement. He warned that spreading Herzlian Zionism was not only false but also dangerous for the Eastern European masses because, by exchanging material and political interest for spiritual, cultural integrity, it distracted the Jews from their "loyalty to spiritual greatness."⁶

Ahad Ha'am did not limit Judaism to religious practice. Instead of religious observance or potentially disruptive Herzlian politics, he offered culture as the means for preserving Judaism's spiritual continuity, which, he believed, was already threatened by the disintegration of isolated ghetto communities. What needed to be saved was not the Jews but Jewish ideals, the Jewish national spirit that Ahad Ha'am constructed from Jewish traditions. Ahad Ha'am envisioned a Jewish Palestine not as a politically independent state that would give home to Jewish refugees, but as a cultural center in which an intellectual elite would cultivate the true Jewish spirit and where an uncorrupted, genuine "Hebrew" character would be created.⁷ This cen-

ter was supposed to radiate the “right kind” of Judaism and thus help keep it alive in the Diaspora.

Ahad Ha’am’s focus on abstract spiritual and cultural values and his contempt for political programs were not unique in Russia. Next to Ahad Ha’am the most influential advocate for the revival of Jewish culture was the historian Simon Dubnov (1860–1941). Initially Dubnov, like Ahad Ha’am, was an ardent opponent of political Zionism, which he thought would raise false hopes in a people who needed all their strength for survival.⁸ Dubnov believed that other means besides politics existed for helping the Jews. As Ahad Ha’am transformed political Zionism into spiritual Zionism, Dubnov promoted cultural nationalism in opposition to the political nationalism of the Zionists. As the founder of the autonomist movement, Dubnov fought for cultural as well as limited political autonomy in the Diaspora.

Dubnov formulated his theory of Jewish nationalism in a series of articles entitled “Letters on Old and New Judaism,” published between 1897 and 1906 in *Voskhod* (Sunrise), a St. Petersburg Russian Jewish periodical that served as the most important forum for the new Russian Jewish intelligentsia until 1906.⁹ Strongly influenced by French historian Ernest Renan’s definition of a nation as a “spiritual principle,”¹⁰ Dubnov distinguished three phases in the historical development of a people’s national existence: the tribal, the political-territorial, and the spiritual. Only in the second, territorial phase did nationalism appear as an aggressive and oppressive force, familiar to the Jews who suffered its consequences. Dubnov rejected this aggressive nationalism by calling it “national egotism” and advocated a spiritual, “national individualism” in its stead. National egotism, Dubnov stated, aimed to repress the culture of the minorities, while national individualism would give cultural and political autonomy to all peoples.¹¹

Both Dubnov’s spiritual nationalism and Ahad Ha’am’s cultural Zionism were attempts to give culture a role that would have been played under other circumstances (or in other countries) by politics. Dubnov and Ahad Ha’am’s major point of difference lay in their conceptions of the time and place of the Jewish spiritual rebirth. Ahad Ha’am placed his hopes in Palestine, whereas Dubnov insisted that the Diaspora could become an autonomous cultural entity without any particular spiritual lodestar. Dubnov, who held the existing culture of the Diaspora to be more eternal than Ahad Ha’am’s dreams about the future, rightly sensed disdain for the Diaspora in Ahad Ha’am’s utopian vision of a purified Jewish culture.

The debate between Dubnov and Ahad Ha’am about the Diaspora came to a head in 1909, at a time when controversies among Jewish nationalists about the kind of culture that should be fostered reached a new level of divisiveness.¹² By the 1910s Jewish secular national movements in Russia were divided according to their position regarding the interrelationship of politics and culture and their attitude toward the Diaspora. While the Herzlian

Zionists' political program ignored the existence of Diaspora culture and Ahad Ha'am's cultural Zionism dreamt of its purification in a Jewish Palestine, Dubnov's cultural nationalism saw the Diaspora as its basis.

Only the *Bund*,¹³ which represented the socialist faction in Russian Jewish politics, rejected the utopian tendencies of the nationalist movements. Jewish socialists focused on practical solutions to political and social problems and fought for freedom equally for Jews and non-Jews. Although in 1903 even the *Bund* adopted national-cultural autonomy in its program, Jewish socialists disapproved of the narrow outlook of political and cultural nationalists alike. Representing the interests of the masses instead of an intellectual elite, Ber Borochov (1881–1917), founder of the socialist Poale Zion (Workers of Zion) party, lashed out at utopian Zionism in the revolutionary year 1905:

I confess that my mind is not capable of grasping what benefit would redound to poor, hounded Yankel if a Spinoza were to write his works in Hebrew, a Meyerbeer compose his operas on strictly Jewish themes, and Ahad Ha'am create a wonderful museum of Jewish antiquities in Jerusalem. . . . Sometimes [I] . . . am seized by the urge to hate Palestine when [I] meet with those among its advocates who, whether fastidiously or ecstatically, push aside all thought for the people and its needs in order to devote themselves fully to some kind of national essence.¹⁴

Despite the opposition of Borochov and his faction, this national "essence" remained a central concern for Jewish nationalists in Russia. Most of the debates concerning Jewish culture revolved around this undefined essence, which was to be deciphered and reconstructed out of the cultural shards and artifacts that the members of the Jewish intelligentsia started to collect toward the end of the nineteenth century.

CULTURAL REVIVAL AT WORK

The rapid spread of Jewish cultural societies in Russia in the first decade of the twentieth century was not only a sign of an increasing national orientation among the Jewish intelligentsia but also one of political frustration. From the time of Alexander II (1855–81) until the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the history of Russian Jewry consisted of a sequence of hopeful signs indicating the government's willingness to improve the situation of the Jews. Such promises, however, went unfulfilled, leaving behind the sobering reality of a fundamentally anti-Jewish tsarist agenda. After the assassination of Alexander II in 1881 his reforms were abolished and new anti-Jewish legislation introduced.¹⁵ The attempted democratization of tsarist Russia following the 1905 Revolution had a similarly devastating effect on the Jewish population. The tsar's manifesto of 17 October 1905, which contained a declaration of

civic equality and thus implied the abolition of restrictive laws against the Jews, instigated a wave of pogroms throughout the Pale of Settlement. Costing numerous lives and much material damage, the pogroms also served as a pretext for the tsar not to apply the new law of equality to Jews.¹⁶ Partially out of political frustration Jews turned inward and started to mobilize their economic, educational, social and cultural resources toward the modernization of Jewish life.

In 1882 Dubnov and political activist Maksim Vinaver (1862–1926) founded the Historical-Ethnographic Commission (*Istoriko-etnograficheskaya komisiya*), which served as a framework for historical research. Since state archives were closed to Jews, Dubnov’s only means for conducting historical research was collecting Jewish source material. In 1891, while working on a monumental history of the Jews in Eastern Europe, Dubnov had circulated a pamphlet calling for the collection of Jewish historical documents. Dubnov and Vinaver’s findings appeared in a two-volume study and in supplements to *Yevreyskaya Starina* (Jewish antiquity).¹⁷ Several articles about folk songs were published in the early volumes of *Yevreyskaya Starina*.¹⁸ In 1898 historians Saul Ginzburg (1866–1940) and Pesach Marek (1862–1920) called for collecting Jewish folk songs. Their collection, *Yevreyskiye narodniye pesni v Rossii* (Jewish folk songs in Russia), appeared in 1901 as a supplement to *Voskhod*. As with other contemporaneous folk-song collections, it contained only the texts of the songs, grouped into eleven thematic categories.¹⁹

With Dubnov as its vice-chair, the Jewish Historical-Ethnographic Society (*Yevreyskoye Istoriko-Etnograficheskoye Obshchestvo*) achieved independence from the ORP in 1908.²⁰ Between 1912 and 1914, under the leadership of writer and folklorist Shlomo Zanvil Rappoport, better known by his penname Semyon An-sky (1863–1920), this society organized major ethnographic expeditions for the systematic collection of Jewish ethnographic material in the centers of Hasidism, in the Ukrainian districts of Volhynia and Podolia. An assimilated Jew who published in both Russian and Yiddish, An-sky was a socialist who turned to Jewish folk art only after returning to Russia to participate in the 1905 Revolution. Giving up political activity for a while, An-sky focused his energies on the “systematic and comprehensive collection of objects representing every aspect of folk art, treasures of Jewish heritage, descriptions of every facet of daily Jewish life,”²¹ which seemed to be perishing before his eyes. An-sky was determined to dedicate the rest of his life to this project. His mission was not without a political agenda. Demonstrating that Jews had an indigenous culture of their own, An-sky also wanted to justify their right to autonomy and to counter the common assumption that Jews simply borrowed the cultural artifacts of others. With the financial support of Vladimir Gintzburg, two expeditions took place, one in 1912, the other in 1913. The expedition lasted two years, during which An-sky and his team collected, among other documents of

Jewish culture, one thousand melodies.²² Members of An-sky's team included Moscow critic and composer Yoel (Yuliy) Engel (1868–1927) and ethnographer Zusman (Zinovy) Kiselgof (1878–1939),²³ both prominent figures in the OYNM. Many of the songs appeared in OYNM collections and in arrangements by OYNM composers.²⁴

After 1905 numerous Jewish societies were founded both in St. Petersburg, then the center of Jewish activities, and in the provinces.²⁵ The programs of these societies, many of which functioned as substitutes for the schools that were closing their doors to Jewish students, were very similar: they offered courses for adults, set up libraries, and organized popular lectures and professional discussions. On 16 November 1908 the founding meeting of the Jewish Historical-Ethnographic Society took place in St. Petersburg. Activities surrounding this society might have been a factor in the foundation of the OYNM, which also came into being in 1908, approximately at the same time as Betsalel, a society for Jewish art, was founded.²⁶

THE SOCIETY FOR JEWISH FOLK MUSIC

At its inception, the OYNM had aims very close to those of the Jewish Historical Ethnographic Society: the collection, preservation, and cultivation of Jewish cultural artifacts—in this case, primarily Jewish folk music. According to chroniclers of the OYNM the founding members had to accept the specification “folk music” in the OYNM’s name, since folk music was the only kind of music Russian authorities were willing to recognize as a basis for a Jewish musical society. The name “Society for Jewish Folk Music” was, however, not a complete misnomer. When in the 1940s one of the founding members, Solomon Rosovsky (1878–1962), recounted the foundation of the OYNM, he still described Jewish music as folk and synagogue music. As examples of Jewish art music Rosovsky referred to compositions by Glinka, Balakirev, and Musorgsky. Here is how Israel Rabinovitch retold Rosovsky’s account:

When we entered the bureaucrat’s sanctum, we saw before us twelve forbidding-looking officials who regarded us with considerable suspicion. Nisviszki explained our mission: we were interested in founding a society for Jewish music. “Jewish music?” The ejaculation came from Drachevski.²⁷ “What is *that*?” Tomars nudged Rosovsky to jump into the breach; as advocate, Rosovsky could now show his talents; the reception was going to be definitely unsympathetic. Rosovsky did not require to be coaxed; forthwith he launched into a lecture on the history and the nature of “Jewish music”; the purport of which was that Jewish music had always existed and that its development had never been interrupted. The impromptu lecture adduced the example of synagogal music and did not fail to mention songs vernacular and typical of the daily mode of Jewish life. He alluded to the music of Chassidim, he spoke of Jewish instru-

mental music. Finally, by way of peroration, and as clinching argument Rosovsky referred to the fact that the Russian composers Glinka, Balakirev, and Moussorgsky, had in their own music made use of Jewish melodies. Upon Moussorgsky’s tomb, Rosovsky added, joining pathos to reason, there was engraved an aria from his oratorio *Joshua-ben-Nun*, the melody for which had been borrowed from the synagogue.²⁸

Drachevski began to display some interest, he stroked his mustache, he reminisced. Yes, he had himself heard some Jewish music, at a Jewish wedding it was, but that was folk-music. Certainly not music as it was understood today. Not Jewish music as such. Folk-music, yes. He was of the opinion that the society should be called “The Society for Jewish Folk-Music.”²⁹

The participants of this interview, Solomon Rosovsky, the pianist Leo Nisvitzky (later Arie Abilea, 1887–1959), and the singer Joseph Tomars (professional name of Iosif Beer, 1864–1934), were all devoted Zionists. Six of the seven members of the first music committee of the OYNM—Efraim Shklyar (1871–1943[?]), Rosovsky, Mikhail Gnesin (1883–1957), Pesach Lvov (1881–1913), Alexander Zhitomirsky (1881–1937), and Lazar Saminsky (1882–1959)—were students of Rimsky-Korsakov. Later other musicians joined the OYNM, among them composers such as Lev Mordukhov Tseitlin (1884–1930),³⁰ Moses Milner (1886–1953), and Joseph Achron (1886–1943). In 1914 the board of directors included such prominent figures as An-sky and dilettante art critic Maximilian Sirkin (1858–?).³¹ In 1913 pianist David Schorr (1867–1942), Yoel Engel (1868–1927), Jacob Weinberg (1879–1956), and Alexander Krein (1883–1951) founded a separate Moscow branch. Other branches were soon founded in Kiev, Kharkov, Ekaterinoslav, Riga, Simferopol, Rostov-on-the-Don, Baku, and Odessa.³²

The OYNM’s activities included the organization of public lectures and concerts of Jewish music, the collection of folk music, and the publication of compositions by OYNM composers. The first concerts were modeled on Engel’s concert in Moscow in November 1900, which was regarded as the first concert of Jewish music. Engel, whom historian Pesach Marek asked to review the musical material of *Jewish Folk Songs in Russia*, organized the concert as part of the series of folk music of different ethnicities sponsored by Russia’s first ethnomusicological organization, the Musico-Ethnographic Commission of the Imperial Society of Friends of Natural History, Anthropology, and Ethnography (MEK for short).³³ Lectures by Marek about the texts and by Engel about the music of folk songs preceded the concert. Prayer songs, love songs, family songs, and comic songs appeared in Engel’s simple, strophic settings on the program. Yet despite Engel’s pride in keeping the tunes intact, he could not resist building drama when called for by the text. At the end of “Das Kind liegt” he thickened the piano texture, raised the dynamic level, and emphasized the rhythm suggestive of a funeral march to convey the tragic death of the child’s mother implied in the text (ex. 1)

[MUSIC]
[Example
1]

Example 1. Ending of Engel's "Das Kind liegt" (*Yidische folkslider*), mm. 25–33.
Lyrics originally in Yiddish, Russian, and German.

25

Chei - der fih - ren?! Ni - to, ni - to kein

Ma - me, ni - to kein Ncho - - - -

30

me!

p

([Who would] take you to school [my child]? There is no mother here, there is no consolation.)

A few months later Engel repeated the concert in St. Petersburg, where it drew a significant number of students from the Conservatory—at that time the only institution of higher education in Russia in which the number of Jewish students seems not to have been strictly regulated by quota.³⁴ The memory of this concert must have lingered on, for at the second meeting of the OYNM on 19 December 1908 the board invited Engel to organize a similar event.³⁵ The Conservatory hosted Engel’s concert on 12 April 1909. Another concert had taken place three months earlier in the concert hall of the Society of Civil Engineers. The program was similar to Engel’s, except that most arrangements were by Shklyar and that they also performed Jewish songs by two idols of Russian music, Rimsky-Korsakov and Musorgsky.³⁶

Following Engel’s model most concerts opened with preconcert lectures on topics related to Jewish music.³⁷ Beginning in 1913 Rosovsky also organized courses with the aim of making performers familiar with the style of Jewish music.³⁸ The Jewish music to be performed was provided by OYNM members, who, like Engel, arranged folk songs that they had either collected themselves or, in most cases, borrowed from the transcriptions of folklorist Zusman Kiselgof.

The OYNM published Jewish music in easily performable arrangements. The most user-friendly publication was Kiselgof’s 1912 anthology *Lieder-Zamelbuch far der yidische shul un familie* (Collection of songs for the Jewish school and family).³⁹ Pesach Lvov’s and Alexander Zhitomirsky’s simplified arrangements were wholly utilitarian. The volume contained twelve *skarbove* or sacred songs, forty-five secular folk songs, five *niggunim* or “songs without words,”⁴⁰ and seven unaccompanied cantillation melodies, called *trop* in Yiddish (see table 1). As in most of the OYNM’s early concerts, art music was represented in Kiselgof’s volume by twenty-three works by well-known Western or Russian composers, among them Orientalizing ones excerpted from Anton Rubinstein’s sacred operas, choruses by Musorgsky, and Glinka’s “Yevreyskaya pesnya” (Hebrew song) song, mixed with vocal pieces by Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Mozart, and Saint-Saëns, arranged for three- or four-part a cappella chorus, for duets with piano accompaniment or, in a few cases, for solo voice and piano.

[TABLE]

[Table 1]

The mixture of sacred and secular, folk and art music, Russian and non-Russian, Jewish and non-Jewish composers shows that Kiselgof adhered to no particular nationalist bias. He included favorite melodies most commonly used in Jewish households without forcing any specific ideological purpose on the users of his *Zamelbuch*. While ideologically neutral, his selection reflected the taste of Russian Jews, who eagerly embraced the stereotype of Jews as Orientals. Of the sixty-two folk melodies in the *Zamelbuch*, thirty are in minor and twenty-five in the exotic-sounding altered Phrygian, also called *frigish*, a mode distinguished by the half-step between its first and second and the augmented second between its second and third degrees.⁴¹ Be-

TABLE 1 Table of Contents of Kiselgof's *Lieder-Zamelbuch far der yidishe shul un familie* (Collection of Songs for the Jewish School and Family, 1913)

I. Skarbowe Volks-Nigunim^a

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- 1 Scholojm aleichem (Peace be with you)
 - 2 Adir bimlucho (Mighty is His kingdom)
 - 3 Zur mischeloy ochalnu (The Rock from which we have eaten)
 - 4 Jojm schabos kojdesch hu (The Sabbath day is holy)
 - 5 Mnucho w'simcho (Rest and happiness)
 - 6 Eli Zijojn w'oreho (God of Zion and its cities)^b
 - 7 Ejljohu hanowi (Elijah the prophet)
 - 8 Ism'chu w'malchuscho (The Heavens will rejoice)
 - 9 Ogil w'esmach b'simchas tojro (I will rejoice and be happy on Simkhat Torah)
 - 10 Sissu w'simchu (Rejoice on Simkhat Torah)
 - 11 Hamawdil bein kojdesch l'chojl (He who distinguished between the sacred and the weekday)
 - 12 Ejljohu hanowi, Ejljohu hatschbi (Elijah, the prophet, Elijah the Tishibite)
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II. Weltliche Volks-Lieder

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- 13 Der alef-beis (The alphabet)
 - 14 Oder Iden sajnen mir (But we are Jews)
 - 15 Helf uns Gottenju (Help us, our God)
 - 16 G'wald že Brider (Oy, brothers)
 - 17 Amol is gewen a majse (Once upon a time)
 - 18 Hot Haschem isborach arob geschickt (God, blessed be His name, sent down)
 - 19 Ale-lu-le, schlof majn gdule (Ayle-lyu-le, sleep, my glory)
 - 20 Schön bin ich, schön (I'm really pretty)
 - 21 Gej majn Kind in chejder (Go to school, my child)
 - 22 Schlof majn Tochter (Sleep, my daughter)
 - 23 Zehn Brider (Ten brothers)
 - 24 Oj, chanuke (Oh, Chanukah)
 - 25 Zint on lichtlech (Light candles)
 - 26 A Purim-lied (A Purim song)
 - 27 Hob ich a por Oksen (I have a pair of oxen)
 - 28 Hob ich a klejnem Michalku (I have a little Mikhalko)
 - 29 Bulbe (Potatoes)
 - 30 A gnejwe (A theft)
 - 31 A retenisch (A secret)^c
 - 32 Schlof, schlof, schlof (Sleep, sleep, sleep)
 - 33 Di gilderne Pawe (The golden peacock)^d
 - 34 Der Ejberster is der mchuten (God is the father-in-law)^e
 - 35 L'chaim, rebe
 - 36 As ich wolt getan (If I had)^f
 - 37 Die Mesinke ojsgegeben (Giving away the youngest daughter)^g
 - 38 Chazkele^h
 - 39 Schlof, majn Kind (Sleep, my child)ⁱ
 - 40 Ich bin mir a chossid'1 (I am a little khosid)

Table 1 (*continued*)

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- 41 Sitzen, sitzen sieben Kinder (Seven children are sitting)
 42 Schlof, majn Kind, majn Krejn (Sleep my child, my crown)^j
 43 Kinder, kumt, der Friling ruft (Children, come, the spring calls)
 44 Unter dem Kinds Wiegele (Beneath the child's cradle)
 45 Ich bin a bal-agole (I am a teamster)
 46 Saj že mir gesund (Fare thee well)
 47 Sejt gesunter-hejt (Bless you)
 48 Omar Adojnon l'jakoju (God said to Jacob)
 49 Schir eres (Lullaby)
 50 Alte Kasche (The eternal question)^k
 51 Unser Rebeniu (Our rabbi)
 52 Mejerke, majn sun (Little Mejer, my son)^l
 53 Wos wet sajn, as Moschiach wet kumen (The Messiah will come)
 54 Zindt on di hawdole (Light the habdalah candle)^m
 55 Welcher jojm-tojw is der bester (Which holiday is the best)
 56 O, Bruder, sog (Ah, brother, tell me)
 57 A gute Woch (A good week)
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III. Lieder ohne Werter

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- 58 A redl, wie men sing si: Stiller—wejnt sich, gicher—wilt sich tanzen—(A little round, how people sing it: Quietly, it weeps, faster, so you want to dance)
 59 A Nigun on a sof (A niggun without end)
 60 A Nigun
 61 A redel fun Lubawizer rebe (Round of the Lubavitcher Rebe)
 62 A Ljadier chabadnize (A “chabad” song from Ladi)
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IV. Kinstlerische Lieder [translated into Yiddish by M. Riwesman, into Hebrew by S. Tchernikovsky]

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- 63 Alz git a schewach dem bojre (Everything praises the creator) (Betchowen)
 64 Di Frejd (The joy) (Betchowen)ⁿ
 65 Du, finstere nechtele (You, dark little night) (Rubinstejn)
 66 Zu dem silber-kloren tajchel (To the silver-clear little stream) (Rubinstejn)
 67 Der Chor fun bnej-Schejm (The chorus of the sons of Shem) (Rubinstejn)
 68 Der Chor fun bnej Chom (The chorus of the sons of Ham) (Rubinstejn)
 69 Die Frejd fun jagd (The joy of the hunt) (Rubinstejn)
 70 Jhojschua-bin-Nun (Joshua the son of the Nun) (Musorgski)
 71 Der Persische Chor (The Persian chorus) (Glinka)
 72 Herbstlied (Autumn song) (Mendelsohn)
 73 Der Wald (The forest) (Mendelsohn)
 74 A Gruss (The greeting) (Mendelsohn)
 75 A Winterlied (A winter song) (Mendelsohn)
 76 Ot is der jojm tow gekumen (Holiday has just arrived) (Mendelsohn)
 77 Es falt a thoj (Dew is falling) (Mendelsohn)
 78 Schejn Fejgele, du sing (Song, beautiful bird) (Mendelsohn)
 79 Das gesegenen sich fun a jeger (The goodbye of a hunter) (Mendelsohn)
 80 Die Feldblumen (The wildflowers) (Mendelsohn)

Table 1 *continued*

| | |
|----|--|
| 81 | Der Chor fun di Plischtim (The chorus of the Philistines) (Sen Sans) |
| 82 | A Owendlied (An evening song) (Mozart) |
| 83 | Lejas Gesang (Lea's song) (Rubinstejn) |
| 84 | Der hejliger Schabbes (The sacred Shabbat) (Rubinstejn) |
| 85 | A Jüdisch-Lied (A Jewish song) (Glinka) |

V. Trop (Tajmej honginejs)

| | |
|----|---|
| 86 | Batojro (The Torah) |
| 87 | B'haftejro (The Haftarah) |
| 88 | B'jomim nojroim (The High Holidays) |
| 89 | Mgilas Estejr (Esther) |
| 89 | Mgilas Ejcho (Lamentations) |
| 91 | Schir haschirim, Rus, Kejheles (Song of Songs, Ruth, Ecclesiastes) |
| 92 | Akdomojs (Hymn recited by Ashkenazik Jews on the first day of Shavuous) |

^a Transliteration follows Kiselgof's original.

^b Arranged by Tseitlin (1914, OYNM, number 45).

^c A different version is arranged by Pesach Lvov (1912, number 26).

^d Arranged also by Efraim Shklyar (1909, OYNM, number 1).

^e Arranged also by Zhitomirsky (1911, OYNM, number 21).

^f Arranged also by Zhitomirsky (1910, OYNM, number 10).

^g Song by Varshavsky, arranged also by H. Kopit (1912, OYNM, number 29).

^h Arranged also by Shklyar (1909, OYNM, number 4).

ⁱ Arranged also by Zhitomirsky (1912, OYNM, number 24).

^j Arranged also by I. Schumann (1912, OYNM, number 33).

^k Arranged also by Shklyar (1909, OYNM, number 2). The same song was set also by Maurice Ravel, as one of his *Deux mélodies hébraïques* (1914).

^l Set also by Maurice Ravel as "Chanson hébraïque" (1910).

^m Habdalah is the ceremony performed at the close of the Sabbath.

ⁿ Yiddish translation of the *Ode to Joy* of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

cause of the Orientalizing effect of the augmented second, the scale came to be considered the "most Jewish" in the public mind. It appears in the *Zamelbuch* not only in Jewish folk tunes but also in the excerpts from Anton Rubinstein's *The Demon*, *The Tower of Babel*, and *The Maccabees*, in which augmented seconds represent Georgians, Philistines, and Syrians, respectively. In some of these examples the augmented second occurs also in the upper register of the scale, producing an even more exotic scale, the so-called "Gypsy" scale (ex. 2).

FROM JEWISH FOLK MUSIC TO RUSSIAN ART SONG

In addition to Kiselgof's *Zamelbuch*, the OYNM published a series of sheet music. The cover page for the third series captured perfectly what the OYNM stood for: based on Jewish folk art that mixed Jewish symbols with elements borrowed

[MUSIC]
[Example
2]

Example 2. Excerpt from Anton Rubinstein’s *The Tower of Babel* in Kiselgof’s *Lieder Zamelbuch*, no. 67, mm. 21–26 (piano part only).



from other folk traditions, the cover design was the work of an assimilated Jewish artist, Moisei Lvovich Maimon (1860–1924), whose 1893 painting *The Marranos and the Inquisition in Spain* earned him a membership in the Russian Academy of the Arts (fig. 1).⁴² The figures on the cover were typical images of Jewish folk art, familiar from An-sky’s collection. The columns as a frame represented the columns of the Temple in Jerusalem, while the harp of King David was a clear reference to the musical content of the publication. Because of the appellation of Judah in Genesis 49:9 as “a lion’s whelp,” images of lion abound in Jewish folk art. In Maimon’s illustration, however, the lion has wings, which relates Maimon’s lion to that of the Divine Chariot in Ezekiel’s vision (Ezekiel 1:10). The wings might also have musical significance, referring to the seraphim, the winged creatures with undefined shape that sing the praise of God. More unusual, though, is the pairing of the lion with a winged stag.⁴³ Stags or deer are not uncommon in Jewish folk art, although they are more typically Ukrainian. Here on the cover of a musical publication it is tempting to associate the stag with Jacob’s blessing of Naphtali as a “hind let loose” (Gen. 49). The antlers allude to the name Naphtali, which means wrestled or twisted.⁴⁴ Naphtali has a specific musical association: Deborah, known from the “Song of Deborah,” supposedly came from Naphtali’s tribe. “Awake, awake, Deborah,” says the Bible in Judges 5:12, “awake, awake, utter a song.”

While Kiselgof’s *Zamelbuch* was intended for use at home and in schools, the series of sheet music the OYNM published was designed for more trained musicians. Most compositions were arranged for voice and piano, but musicians could find any variety of ensembles (see table 2): voice and string quartet; voice and string quintet; vocal duet and piano; voice, violin, and piano; solo and chorus; four-part chorus and piano; piano; English horn; violin and

[Figure 1]

[Table 2]



Figure 1. Moisei Maimon's cover page for the 1913 OYNM sheet music series (Saminsky, "Ani hadal"). Wallersteiner Sheet Music Cover, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University.

TABLE 2 List of Publications of the OYNM in St. Petersburg

| | <i>Composer</i> | <i>Title</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Notes</i> |
|----|-----------------|--|-------------------|--------------------|--|
| 1 | Shklyar | Di gilderne pave (The golden peacock) | 1910 | S, A, T, B (pf) | “Volkslied” [arrangement] |
| 2 | Shklyar | Alte kashe (Eternal question) | 1910 | S, A, T, B (pf) | “Volkslied” [arrangement] |
| 3 | Shklyar | Faryomert, farklogt (Depressed, dejected) | 1910 | S, A, T, B (pf) | [arrangement] |
| 4 | Shklyar | Khatskele | 1910 | S, A, T, B (pf) | [arrangement] |
| 5 | Shklyar | Hatikvah (The hope) | 1910 | S, A, T, B (pf) | [arrangement] Text and music by Imber |
| 6 | Shklyar | Shtey oyf mayn folk (Arise, my people) | 1910 | S, A, T, B (pf) | [arrangement] |
| 7 | Zhitomirsky | Dem rebns nign (The rebbe’s niggun), op. 3 | 1910 | 2 vl, vla, vc, cb | [arrangement] |
| 8 | Saminsky | Unter soreles vigele (‘Neath little Sarah’s cradle) | 1910 ^a | 1 v, 2 vl, vla, vc | [arrangement] |
| 9 | Saminsky | Khsidish (Hasidic dance) | 1910 ^b | vl, pf | “Volksmelodie” [arrangement] |
| 10 | Zhitomirsky | Az ick volt gehat (If only I had), op. 4, no. 2 | 1910 | 1 v, vl, pf | “Volkslied” [arrangement] |
| 11 | Zhitomirsky | Du meydele, du sheyns (You pretty girl), op. 4, no. 1 | 1910 ^a | 1 v, pf | [arrangement] |
| 12 | Lvov | Zog mir du sheyn meydele (Tell me, pretty maid) | 1910 ^a | 1 v, pf | [arrangement] |
| 13 | Shalit | Eli, Eli (My God, my God) | 1910 ^a | 1 v, pf | [arrangement] |
| 14 | Shklyar | Der parom (The ferry) | 1910 | 1 v, pf | “Volkslied” [arrangement] |
| 15 | Shklyar | Yerusholayim, Yerusholayim (Heb. Jerusalem, Jerusalem) | 1910 | 1 v, pf | Text by Halevi, music by Shklyar [arrangement] |
| 16 | Kopit | Freylekhs | 1912 | pf | [arrangement] |
| 17 | Kaplan | Yidishe melodye (Yiddish melody) | 1912 | harp ^c | [arrangement] |

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

| | <i>Composer</i> | <i>Title</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Notes</i> |
|----|---------------------|--|-------------------|----------------------|---|
| 18 | Zeitlin | Reb Nachmons nign (Nachmons's niggun) | 1912 | 2 vl, 2 vla, vc | "arrangiert" |
| 19 | Zhitomirsky | Dem rebns nign (The rebbe's niggun), op. 3 | 1912 ^a | vl, pf | Transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 20 | Lvov | Volokhl | 1912 | vl, pf | [arrangement] |
| 21 | Zhitomirsky | Der eybershter iz der mekhutn (God is the father-in-law), op. 5, no. 1 | 1912 | Solo, S, A, T, B, pf | Transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 22 | Gurovitch | Riboyne oylem (Lord of the world) ^d | 1912 | Solo, S, A, T, B, pf | "arrangiert" |
| 23 | Potoker/ Zeitlin | Zogzhe rebenyu (Tell me, oh rebe) | 1912 | Bar, T, pf | Transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 24 | Zhitomirsky | Shlof, mayn kind (Sleep, my child), op. 5, no. 2 | 1912 | 1 v, vl/vla, pf | Transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 25 | Lvov | Vos vet zayn mikoyack burikes (What will be about the beets) | 1912 | 1 v, pf | Transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 26 | Lvov | A retenish (A riddle) | 1912 | S, Bar, pf | Transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 27 | Kaplan | N'umo ferack (Heb. Sleep, flower) | 1912 | 1 v, pf | "Volkslied," transcr. by Kiselgof, text by A. D. Lifshits |
| 28 | Kopit | Der filozof (The philosopher) | 1912 | 1 v, pf | "Volkslied," transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 29 | Kopit | Di mezinke oysgegebn (The youngest betrothed) | 1912 | 1 v, pf | Text and music by Varshavsky |
| 30 | Shalit | A lid fun a feygele (Bird's song) | 1912 | 1 v, pf | [arrangement] |
| 31 | Shalit | Melave malke (The close of Sabbath) | 1912 | 1 v, pf | [arrangement] tune from "Ost & West" |
| 32 | Schumann | Bayse-Malke, efn mir (Bayse-Malke, open up) | 1912 | 1 v, pf | [arrangement] |
| 33 | Schumann | Schlof, mayn kind, | 1912 | 1 v, pf | [arrangement] |

Table 2 (continued)

| | <i>Composer</i> | <i>Title</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Notes</i> |
|----|--------------------|---|-------------|--------------------|---|
| | | mayn kroyn (Sleep, my child, my crown) | | | |
| 34 | Rosovsky | A viglid (A lullaby) | 1912 | 1 v, pf | |
| 35 | Achron | Hebreyish melodye (Hebrew melody) | 1914 | vl, pf | |
| 36 | Achron | Hebreyish Tants (Hebrew dance) | 1914 | vl, pf | |
| 37 | Achron | Hebreyish viglid (Hebrew lullaby) | 1914 | vl, pf | Hebraische Volksmelodie, transcr. by Kiselgof (see no. 45) |
| 38 | Zeitlin/ Achron | Eli Tsion (Wail, o Zion) | 1914 | vl, pf | |
| 39 | Saminsky | Kleyne rapsodye (Little rhapsody) | 1914 | vl, pf | |
| 40 | Saminsky | Lid fun Esterke (Song of little Esther) | 1914 | 1 v, pf | “Im Volkston,” text by Imber |
| 41 | Saminsky | Lid fun a yeseyme (Song of an orphan) | 1914 | 1 v, pf | “Volksmelodie,” transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 42 | Saminsky | Unter soreles vigele (‘Neath little Sarah’s cradle) | 1914 | 1 v, pf | “Volkslied” |
| 43 | Saminsky | El yivne hagalil (Heb. God will rebuild Galil) | 1913 | S, A, T, B, pf | [arrangement] |
| 44 | Saminsky | Ani hadal (Heb. Poor as I am) | 1913 | S, A, T, B | “Melodie der Jemeniten” (orig. Ben Jehuda “Luach erez Izrael) |
| 45 | Zeitlin | Eli Tsion (Wail, oh Zion) | 1914 | vc, pf | “Fantasie über eine Volksmelodie und Trop” |
| 46 | Gnessin | A nign fun Shyke Fayfer (Shyke Fyfer’s tune) | 1914 | vl, pf | |
| 47 | Rosovsky | Fantastisher Tants (Fantastic dance) | 1914 | vl, vc, pf | |
| 48 | Rosovsky | Lomir zick iberbetn (Let’s cease our quarreling) | 1914 | 1 v, pf | [arrangement] |

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

| | <i>Composer</i> | <i>Title</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Notes</i> |
|----|-----------------|--|-------------|--------------------|--|
| 49 | Rosovsky | Ick bin a balegole (I am a coachman) | 1914 | Bar, pf | |
| 50 | Kopit | Vos vet zayn mit reb Yisroel dem frumen (What will become of pious reb Israel) | 1914 | 1 v, vl, pf | “Volksmelodie,” text by Rivesmann |
| 51 | Kopit | Oy efen mir (Oh, please open to me) | 1914 | Bar, T, pf | “Volkslied” |
| 52 | Milner | Baym rebn tsu melave malke (With the rabbi at the close of the Sabbath) | 1914 | pf | Folk tune recorded by N. Jasnogrodsky |
| 53 | Milner | In kheyder (At school) | 1914 | 1 v, pf | “Worte und Musik von Milner” |
| 54 | Milner | Unsane Toykef, op. 2, no. 5 (Traditional Yom Kippur prayer) | 1913 | Solo, S, A, T, B | |
| 55 | Milner | Iber di heyen (Over the countryside) | 1914 | Bar, T, pf | Folk tune “Idel mit’n fiedel” |
| 56 | Milner | Unter di grininke beymelack (Under the green trees) | 1914 | 1 v, pf | |
| 57 | Shklyar | Farn opshid (Before parting) | 1914 | 1 v, pf | Text by L. Jaffe, transcr. by Rivesman |
| 58 | Streicher | Fun Shir Hashirim (From the Song of Songs) | 1914 | 1 v, pf | |
| 59 | Achron | Tants improvizatsyon (Dance improvisation) | 1914 | vl, pf | |
| 60 | Kaplan | Danse hebraique | 1917 | 2 vl | Transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 61 | Aisberg | A khasene lid (A Hasidic song) | 1917 | pf | on two folk tunes, transcr. by Engel |
| 62 | Aisberg | Reb Shmul’s nign (Samuel rebbe’s niggun) | 1917 | pf | Transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 63 | Kopit | Freylekhs No. 2 | 1917 | pf | |
| 64 | Levinson | Umetum finster, shtum (All dark and silent) | 1917 | 1 v, pf | Text by Rivesman |

Table 2 (continued)

| | <i>Composer</i> | <i>Title</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Notes</i> |
|----|-----------------|---|-------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| 65 | Zeitlin | Shabes lid (Song of Sabbath) | 1918 | T, T, B, B | |
| 66 | Saminsky | Shlof, mayn zun (Sleep, my son), op. 11, no. 2 | 1917 | 1 v, 2 vl, vla, vc | |
| 67 | Saminsky | Gebeyt fun reb Levi Yitskhok, op. 12, no. 3 (“Di dudkele”) (Levi Yitskhok’s prayer) | 1917 | 1 v, pf | Transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 68 | Saminsky | Un reb Elyezer hot gezogt (“Omar fun Elosor”) (And Eliezar told us), op. 12, no. 4 | 1917 | 1 v, pf | |
| 69 | Saminsky | Patsh, patsh kikhelakh (Patty cake, patty cake) | 1918 | 1 v, pf | “Kinderlied,” transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 70 | Saminsky | Di nakht (The night), op. 12, no. 2 | 1917 | 1 v, pf | Text by Ansky |
| 71 | Achron | Variations sur le theme Hebraique, “Eil ivne hagailil,” op. 34 | 1917 | pf | |
| 72 | Shalit | Shoy nito der nekhtn (Yesterday is no more) | 1917 | 1 v, pf | [arrangement] |
| 73 | Shalit | Klesmorimlech majne libinke (My dear little klezmer players) | 1917 | 1 v, pf | [arrangement] |
| 74 | Levinson | Yidishe viglid, op. 28, no. 1 (Jewish cradle song) | 1917 | vc, pf | |
| 75 | Levinson | Opshids lid, op. 28, no. 2 (Farewell song) | 1917 | vc, pf | |
| 76 | Levinson | Freyecker tants, op. 28, no. 3 (A merry dance) | 1917 | vc, pf | |
| 77 | Rosovsky | Der shuster Moyshe (Moyshe the cobbler) | 1917 | woodwind quintet | |
| 78 | Rosovsky | Nign on a sof (Song without end) | 1917 | woodwind quintet | |

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

| | <i>Composer</i> | <i>Title</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Notes</i> |
|----|-----------------|--|-------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 79 | Rosovsky | Chassidic nign (Hasidic niggun), op. 8, no. 1 | 1917 | English horn | |
| 80 | Saminsky | Shchav, bni (Sleep, my child) Viglied fun dem Apten Row, op. 11, no. 2 | 1917 | 1 v, pf | Transcr. by Kiselgof |
| 81 | Rosovsky | Chassidic nign (Hasidic niggun) | 1917 | vc, pf | |

^a Reprinted in 1917.

^b Reprinted in 1918.

^c r violin, piano, and harmonium.

^d The melody is the same as in "Eli, Eli."

piano; violin duets; cello and piano; violin, cello, and piano; piano trio; harp, flute, and harmonium; string quartet; string quintet; and woodwind quintet. Some pieces appeared in different arrangements in different editions. The first thirty-three compositions were all arrangements of *frigish* and minor folk tunes or popular Jewish songs. The two categories were not sharply divided. I. Kaplan's "N'umo ferack" (OYNM no. 27) appeared as "folk song, transcribed by Kiselgof," but the publication also named the author of the text (A. D. Lifshits). Songs by Abraham Goldfaden ("Faryomert, farklogt," no. 3 and "Shtey oyf mayn folk," no. 6) or Mark Varshavsky⁴⁵ ("Di mezinke oysgegebn," no. 29) passed easily as "folk songs." Instrumental pieces, such as H. Kopit's "Freylekhs No. 2" (no. 16), even if they do not specify the original melody, were usually free arrangements of instrumental folk tunes. Sometimes even pieces that are not labeled "arrangement" and thus suggest original compositions, still name Kiselgof as the transcriber of the original melody.⁴⁶

The arrangements, though most kept the original melody unchanged, were more ambitious than those in the *Zamelbuch*. The effort to elevate the arrangements into the sphere of art music occasionally resulted in pieces that were more artificial than artful, such as Zhitomorsky's 1911 folk-song setting "Der eybershter iz der mekhutn" (God is the father-in-law),⁴⁷ which he also arranged for Kiselgof's *Zamelbuch*. In the OYNM publication Zhitomorsky set three strophes, instead of just one, harmonizing each differently and providing the last with a running bass line in double octaves. He set the third refrain in imitative texture, adding a realistic touch at the end by depicting the guests shouting, "Mazel tov" (ex. 3).

Signs, or one might even say posters, of academic training abound in the OYNM arrangements: elaborate instrumental introductions and postludes,

[MUSIC]
[Example
3]

Example 3. Zhitomirsky, “Der eybershter iz der mekhtutn.”

a. Arrangement in Kiselgof’s *Zamelbuch*, no. 34, mm. 1–8.

Moderato, M.M. 69 = ♩
Mittel-messig

Soprani
Der Ej-ber-ster in der in chu - ten, di toj-re is di

Alti I.
Alti II.

Piano

Sop.
4
ka - le Mej-sche ra - bej - ne is der schad - chen ge - wen

Alti I.
Alti II.

Pno.

(God is the groom, the Torah is the bride, Moses our teacher is the matchmaker.)

b. Arrangement of the third strophe in the OYNM series (no. 21), mm. 51–58.
Lyrics originally also in Hebrew characters.

A Ka - le a rej - ne si is rajch un schejn

(continued)

Example 3 (continued)

55

o - rent-lich un fajn — si is be - sser wi alz

(A bride, a pure one, she is rich and beautiful, honest and refined, she is better than . . .)

c. Imitative ending, mm. 67–75 (text missing from some parts in the OYMN publication).

Sop. *mf*
Es fli - en i - de-lech sin - gen lid - lech

Alto *mf*
Es fli - en i - de-lech

Ten.
Es fli - en i - de-lech sin - gen

Bass
Es fli - en

Example 3 (continued)

70 *p*
 je - de - rer schrajt be - sun - der chos - sons zad
p
p
 chos - sons zad
p

Allegro
 75 *f*
 Ka - les zad Ma - sel - tow Ma - sel - tow.
f
 Ka - les zad Ma - sel - tow Ma - sel - tow.
f
 Ma - sel - tow.
ritenuto **Allegro**
f
p

(Twirling Jews are singing songs, each shouts, the groom's side and the bride's side: good luck.)

Example 4. Piano introduction to P. Lvov's "A retenish" (OYNM no. 26), mm. 1–4.



some featuring chromatic voice leading (ex. 4); sections of contrapuntal texture in choral music or string ensembles (ex. 5) as well as in songs, such as Kaplan's "N'umo ferack" (no. 27), in which the composer layered different lines of the melody above each other (ex. 6). To lend the arrangements the appearance of lied, OYNM composers, like Engel before them, often dramatized folk songs by the use of extreme dynamics (see the *ff* outburst in Shklyar's "Der parom," no. 14, in ex. 7). It was also common to highlight specific words with unusual harmonic juxtapositions, as in Saminsky's choral "Ani hadal" (no. 44), in which the word "Adonay" (Lord) starts on a minor dominant (ex. 8). But Conservatory training manifested itself most obviously in the harmonization of songs: augmented sixth chords, chromatic harmonic sequences, and modulation to distant keys (e.g., from F# minor to the Neapolitan G minor in Kopit's "Vos vet zayn mit reb Yisroel dem frumen" [no. 50] [ex. 9]), also occur.

OYNM arrangements overflow with descending chromatic scale segments à la Borodin, sometimes stretching, like in Shklyar's "Der parom," to almost two octaves (ex. 10). Descending chromatic bass lines occasionally result in strange harmonic sequences, such as the one in a piano interlude of Shklyar's "Yerusholayim, Yerusholayim" (no. 15), in which the harmonic progression can be best explained as the consequence of chromatic voice leading (ex. 11). The sequence of mainly half-diminished chords in P. Lvov's "Vos vet zayn mikoyack burikes" (no. 25) is also built on a chromatically descending bass line, accompanying, in this case, a same-note recitation in the vocal part (ex. 12).

Descending chromaticism, though, was not only a sign of composerly artifice. Chromaticism was also one of the infallible marks of Orientalism in Russian music, characterizing Jews, Georgians, Arabs, or Polovtsians, in other words any people living—geographically or imaginatively—east of Russia. One of the musical signs by which these "others" were distinguished has been associated by Richard Taruskin with the strongly erotic "sweet bliss," or *nega* in Russian.⁴⁸ The musical characteristics of *nega* include syncopated undulation, a drone, and, most important, a chromatic accompanying line, the most characteristic turn of which is the sixth degree descending via flat sixth to the dominant, or ascending from the dominant via the same chromatic route (ex. 13).

[MUSIC]
[Example
4]
[Example
5]
[Example
6]
[Example
7]
[Example
8]
[Example
9]

[MUSIC]
[Example
10]
[Example
11]
[Example
12]

[MUSIC]
[Example
13]
[Example
14]

Example 5. Contrapuntal texture in Tseitlin’s string quintet arrangement of “Reb Nachmons nign” (OYNM no. 18), mm. 10–13.

The musical score for Example 5 consists of two systems of five staves each, representing the string quintet. The first system starts at measure 10, marked with a circled '5' above the first measure. The staves are labeled Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla. I, Vla. II, and Vc. (Violoncello). The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a 3/4 time signature. The first system shows the beginning of the texture, with Vln. I and Vln. II playing eighth-note patterns, Vla. I and Vla. II playing quarter-note patterns, and Vc. playing a sustained bass line. The second system continues the texture, featuring prominent triplet markings in the upper staves.

Example 6. Contrapuntal combination of different thematic lines in J. Kaplan’s “N’umo ferack” (OYNM no. 27), mm. 10–12. Lyrics originally in Yiddish.

The musical score for Example 6 consists of two systems. The first system starts at measure 10, marked with a circled '10' above the first measure. The staves are labeled Voice and piano accompaniment. The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked "a tempo". The voice line is marked "mp" (mezzo-piano) and features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns. The piano accompaniment features a complex contrapuntal texture with multiple rhythmic patterns in both hands, including eighth-note and quarter-note figures. The second system continues the texture, with the piano accompaniment marked "m.g." (mezzo-giochiato).

Example 7. *Fortissimo* outburst in E. Shklyar’s “Der parom,” mm. 19–23.
Lyrics originally also in Hebrew characters.

p 20 *con espressione*
 fli - hen. Di a - le Ment-schen win-schen sich un ben - tschen, sei so-len
p *f*
ff *mp*
 glik - lich a - ri - ber di Taich. Un - ser

(. . . racing they are escaping. All the people pray and wish a happy crossing of the river.)

Example 8. E_b-minor dominant chord at the word “Adonay” in Saminsky’s
“Ani hadal” (OYNM no. 44), mm. 15–16 (piano part only).

(schem A - do - naj____)
 15 *poco f*

(the name of the Lord)

Example 10. Descending chromatic bass line in Shklyar’s “Der parom” (OYNM no. 14), mm. 13–18. Lyrics originally also in Hebrew characters.

15 *cresc.*

sai - ten fun bei - de Bre - gen. Men - tschen, Ferd un

p *cresc.*

dim. *p* *f*

We - gen ——— haj - len - dig a - hin fli - hen. Di

dim. *p*

Detailed description: This musical score consists of two systems. The first system shows a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The vocal line has lyrics in Yiddish. The piano part features a descending chromatic bass line. The second system continues the vocal and piano parts with further lyrics. Dynamics include piano (*p*), crescendo (*cresc.*), decrescendo (*dim.*), and fortissimo (*f*).

(... on both banks people, horses, and wagons are racing as they flee.)

Example 11. Harmonic sequence in Shklyar’s “Yerusholayim, Yerusholayim” (OYNM no. 15), mm. 68–73.

70

p

Detailed description: This musical score shows a piano accompaniment in bass clef. It features a harmonic sequence with changing chords and a rhythmic pattern. The score is marked with piano (*p*) and includes a measure number of 70.

Example 12. Sequence of inversion of half-diminished chords in P. Lvov’s “Vos vet zayn mikoyack burikes” (OYNM no. 25), mm. 8–9. Lyrics originally also in Hebrew characters.

her majn wajb bis Pej-ssach is noch draj wo - chen

bu - ri - kes we - len mir laj - en bajn sso - chen

(... till Passover there are still three weeks. We will borrow beets from the neighbor)

In Balakirev’s “Yevreyskaya melodiya” (1859), a setting of one of Byron’s “Hebrew Melodies” in M. Lermotov’s translation, the occasional flat sixths in D^b major and flat seconds in B^b minor lend a hint of sensuality to Balakirev’s otherwise stark representation of Byron’s romanticized Hebrews (ex. 14).

But Jews were characterized as Oriental “others” not only by Russians. Yoel Engel’s setting of the Yiddish folk song “Di sheyne Rochele” (The beautiful Rachel), the fifth song in Engel’s *Yidische folkslider*, displays the same Orientalizing characteristics as its Russian counterparts. There is nothing in the simple four-line song in G natural minor, printed separately after the setting in the score, that would call for a harmonically adventurous accompaniment. The extreme chromaticism with which Engel surrounded the melody is a badge of the East. With the sinuously chromatic lines and sensuously arpeggiated harmonies Engel turned the song’s Jewish heroine into an exotically desirable woman (ex. 15).

An explicit sixth–flat sixth–fifth descent in a major key rarely appears in

[MUSIC]
[Example
15]

Example 13. *Nega* in Borodin's *Prince Igor*; no. 7, mm. 33–37 (from Taruskin's *Defining Russia Musically*, p. 69) (piano part only).

Musical score for Example 13, measures 33–37. The score is for the piano part only, in 2/4 time. The key signature has one flat (B-flat major). The melody in the right hand consists of a series of eighth notes, with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 35. The bass line consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment. A measure rest is present in measure 35. The marking "N.B." is written above the staff in measure 35.

Musical score for Example 13, measures 33–37, showing the English horn part. The score is for the piano part only, in 2/4 time. The key signature has one flat (B-flat major). The melody in the right hand is marked *dolce* and consists of a series of eighth notes, with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 35. The bass line consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment. A measure rest is present in measure 35. The marking "Eng. horn" is written below the staff in measure 35.

Example 14. Flat sixths in D \flat major and flat seconds in B \flat minor in Balakirev's "Yevreyskaya melodiya" (1859).

a. Mm. 1–4.

Musical score for Example 14, measures 1–4. The score is for the piano part only, in 2/4 time. The key signature has three flats (D-flat major). The tempo is marked *Largo* and the dynamics are *p*. The melody in the right hand consists of a series of eighth notes. The bass line consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The marking "Allegro passionato" and *f* are written above the staff in measure 3. The marking "*f* quasi Corni³" is written below the staff in measure 3.

b. Mm. 70-75.

70 *poco a poco ritard.*
mf *pp* *m.d.*

75
pp *m.s.*

Example 15. *Nega* in Engel's "Di sheyne Rochele," mm. 1-8. Lyrics originally in Yiddish, Russian, and German.

Adagio, molto espressivo

1. Sie sitzt sich in Fen-ster un

Adagio, molto espressivo

kammt sich die Hör-lach; var we-men sie is zu-lo-sen, var

5 3

(continued)

Example 15 (continued)

mir is sie ehr-lach. Oi - weih; a Jom-mer, oi Weih, a Klog! Ni-

(She combs her hair by the window, her fine hair; for everyone she is a loose woman, for me she is honest. Oh, misery, what a shame, oy wey, what agony.)

songs by the composers of the OYNM, which, like Engel's original, are mainly in minor. More fittingly for the minor, the chromatic descent became a sharp sixth–natural sixth–fifth sequence, as in Zhitomirsky's setting of "Az ick volt gehat" (no. 10) (ex. 16).

[MUSIC]
[Example
16]

There are only a few genuine art songs among the OYNM's publications. The most famous among them is Moses Milner's "In kheyder" (1914, no. 53), the title page of which proudly states: "words and music by Milner." Moses Milner (originally Mikhail Melnikov) was widely regarded as one of the most significant composers of Jewish art music. Yoel Engel held him in such high regard that he applied an old Jewish figure of speech ("one page of the Talmud is worth all your Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky") to Milner's song by claiming that even one page of Milner's "In kheyder" proved the existence of Jewish art music. Ironically, what made Milner's song a beacon of Jewish art music was his painstaking imitation of Musorgsky's technique of realistically reproducing the rhythm and inflection of the text. The imitation garnered for Milner the nickname the "Jewish Musorgsky" (ex. 17).⁴⁹

[MUSIC]
[Example
17]

Another genuine art song among OYNM publications is Shklyar's "Farn opshid" (Before parting, no. 57), which further illustrates the adherence of OYNM composers to their Russian idols. Shklyar's song is an example of the Orientalizing exotic song that was Rimsky-Korsakov's specialty. "Farn opshid" seems to be inspired specifically by Rimsky's "Yevreyskaya pesnya" (Op. 7, no. 2), a 1867 setting of words from the Song of Songs in Lev Alexandrovich Mey's translation. Rimsky's song is dedicated to Musorgsky, who also set a section from Mey's translation in the same year. A typical example of dreamy musical Orientalism, Rimsky's "Yevreyskaya pesnya" starts with long, sustained half-diminished harmonies built over a C# that accompanies the entire song as a pedal. The vocal line enters in the middle register with a long solo, replete

Example 16. VI#–vi–V progression in minor in Zhitomirsky’s “Ak ick volt gehat” (OYNM no. 10), mm. 66–68.

Example 17. Beginning of M. Milner’s “In kheyder” (OYNM no. 53), mm. 1–12. Lyrics originally also in Hebrew characters.

Andante cantabile

Kum a-her, in-ge-le ne-hen-ter zu mir un thu a-kuk in di klej-ne ei-ssi-lach

taj - e-re ej - sse-lach gil - der-ne ej - sse - lach

(continued)

Example 17 (continued)

(Come here, little one, come nearer to me and look at the scroll letters, dear letters, golden letters. Quick, come here.)

with augmented seconds and graceful embellishments. Although the melody ends on $c\sharp^1$, the song is in altered $F\sharp$ Phrygian. Only three harmonies alternate in the accompaniment of the sensuously meandering vocal line. There is no modulation, and although the $C\sharp$ dominant pedal finally resolves to $F\sharp$, for most of its duration the song feels suspended rather than driven toward its final cadence. Rimsky complements the text with music in which life stands still and gives way to a world of dreams (ex. 18).

[MUSIC]
[Example
18]

Shklyar used the same altered $F\sharp$ Phrygian scale in “Farn opshid,” a setting of Zionist poet Leib Jaffe’s poem. Like Rimsky, Shklyar ends the song on an $F\sharp$ -major chord, but, unlike his teacher, he reaches $F\sharp$ via G , thus emphasizing the Phrygian character of the tonality. Besides their common tonality and abundant use of augmented seconds, Shklyar’s and Rimsky’s songs also have melodic affinities (ex. 19). But while the text of Rimsky-Korsakov’s “Yevreyskaya pesnya” justifies his choice of Oriental musical idiom, the heroic tone and the topic of longed-for freedom and rebirth of Jaffe’s Zionist poem do not obviously call for sensuous grace notes and augmented seconds.

[MUSIC]
[Example
19]

Shklyar’s song is more dramatic than Rimsky’s. It modulates to D major for its middle section and, unlike Rimsky’s setting that fluctuates between *piano* and *pianissimo* to enhance the sensuous effect, uses the whole range of dynamics between *piano* and *fortissimo*. Rimsky-Korsakov’s song ends in a low register, which is a common mark of sensuous Oriental women. Shklyar’s singer finishes an octave higher, which, especially after the heroic, *fortissimo* a^2 that preceded it, projects more energy as a final note. Shklyar’s piano postlude, however, brings back the embellished, augmented-second-ridden, soft Oriental tone, a gesture that ultimately undermines the poem’s heroic subject matter. The traditional characterization of Jews as dreamy Orientals was a stronger impulse for Shklyar than the optimistic Zionist message of the text (ex. 20).

[MUSIC]
[Example
20]

Example 18. Rimsky-Korsakov's "Yevreyskaya pesnya," op. 7, no. 2.

a. Beginning, mm. 1-12.

Adagio ♩ = 60

The score for the beginning of the piece is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of three staves: a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in both hands. The vocal line begins with a whole rest for five measures, then enters with a melodic phrase starting on a half note. The lyrics are: "Splyu, no serd - tse mo - ye chut - ko - ye ne spit." The piano accompaniment continues with a consistent rhythmic pattern throughout the section.

p

p a piacere

10

Splyu, no serd - tse mo - ye chut - ko - ye ne spit.

(I sleep, but my sensitive heart is not sleeping.)

b. Ending, mm. 45-50.

45 *riten.* *pp*

The ending section is marked "riten." and "pp". It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The vocal line enters with a melodic phrase starting on a half note. The lyrics are: "O - tvo - ri mne, ne - na - glyad - na - ya!" The piano accompaniment continues with a consistent rhythmic pattern throughout the section.

p *pp*

3

O - tvo - ri mne, ne - na -

3

glyad - na - ya!"

50 *ppp*

(Open to me, you beautiful girl.)

Example 19. Melodic similarities between Shklyar's "Farn opshid" (OYNM no. 57) (mm. 13–16) and Rimsky-Korsakov's "Yevreyskaya pesna" (mm. 16–18).

13 Shklyar



16 Rimsky-Korsakov



Example 20. Ending of Shklyar's "Farn opshid," mm. 37–47. Original lyrics in Russian and Yiddish in Hebrew characters.

Musical notation for the ending of Shklyar's "Farn opshid" (mm. 37–47), first system. The score is in G major and 2/4 time. It includes a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "za - li nas chud - ni - ya zve - n'ya, O -". The piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment with a triplet in the final measure. Dynamics include *f* and *p*.

Musical notation for the ending of Shklyar's "Farn opshid" (mm. 37–47), second system. The score is in G major and 2/4 time. It includes a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "din nas vle - chet i - de - al. I". The piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment with a triplet in the final measure. Dynamics include *f* and *ff*.

Musical notation for the ending of Shklyar's "Farn opshid" (mm. 37–47), third system. The score is in G major and 2/4 time. It includes a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "ot - blesk za - ri voz - ro - zhde - ni - ya O -". The piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment with a triplet in the final measure. Dynamics include *ff* and *dim.*

Example 20 (continued)

più rit. *a tempo*
 bo - im nam v du - shu za - pal.

45

recitando
p

(Wonderful links connected us, our ideal brings us together. And the reflection of the dawn of rebirth set fire in both of our souls.)

It is not only the musical idiom that brings this song into contact with Rimsky-Korsakov. In later accounts “Farn opshid” was regarded as a breakthrough in the history of Jewish music. As the proponents of Jewish music recounted, when Shklyar brought it to a composition class, Rimsky-Korsakov, like Sabaneyev twenty or so years later, had prophesied the coming of a Jewish Glinka: “Well, write another thirty such things and you will found a new school . . . “Then turning to his Jewish students he said, “Why do you imitate European and Russian composers? The Jews possess tremendous folk treasures. I myself have heard your religious songs, and they have made a deep impression upon me. Think about it. Yes, Jewish music awaits her Jewish Glinka.”⁵⁰

However flattering for Jewish composers, Rimsky’s comment was self-contradictory. While rebuking his Jewish students for imitating Russian composers, he encouraged them to follow the Russian *kuchka* model for creating national music. It is doubly ironic, of course, that the piece that supposedly elicited Rimsky’s enthusiasm was indebted to his own Orientalizing musical idiom.

A NEW AGENDA

It may be that Rimsky's comment was not inspired by "Farn obsheid" but by another piece by Shklyar. Saminsky and Rosovsky, whose accounts seem to be the main source of the story, had their own agendas. They made sure that Rimsky's remark, which would have more easily fit a folk-song arrangement, became associated with an original composition. There are several divergences between the various versions of the story. Rosovsky described Shklyar's piece as "a Yiddish song" (despite the fact that the song's original language was most likely Russian);⁵¹ Lazare Saminsky remembered it as "a firm song built on an old Hebraic chant,"⁵² while Mikhail Gnesin, in all probability the most reliable source, recalled the title of Shklyar's legendary piece as "Eastern Melodies." Although Yiddish folk songs, Hebrew liturgical music, and Eastern melodies (a designation that usually referred to Hasidic tunes) were not as generically distinct in practice as was often claimed, their use as designations seems to indicate the storytellers' own preferences in Jewish music. Moreover, in Gnesin's story there is no mention of the future Jewish Glinka; Rimsky-Korsakov's comment, in Gnesin's telling, was confined to surprise at Shklyar's calling what Rimsky-Korsakov regarded as a typically Jewish melody "Eastern" (*vostochnaya*) instead of "Jewish."⁵³ The part about Glinka seems to have originated with Lazare Saminsky, who attended the St. Petersburg Conservatory with Rosovsky years after Shklyar's studies with Rimsky-Korsakov ended.⁵⁴ It is unlikely, then, that Saminsky or Rosovsky were present when Shklyar presented his "Eastern" piece.

Lazare Saminsky played a crucial role in shaping the image of the OYNM. A founding member and the group's first secretary, Saminsky, at least in his later account, became a major force in the OYNM between 1909 and 1916 while chairing its Art and Publication Committee.⁵⁵ In his autobiographical notes Saminsky recalled recruiting twenty-five composers to serve on the Music Committee.⁵⁶ Despite Saminsky's emphasis on the creation of art music, as late as 1914 an OYNM pamphlet still identified Jewish music mainly with secular and religious folk music:

*From the Protocols of the Society for Jewish Folk Music*⁵⁷

I. The Goal and the Rights of the Society

1. The Society for Folk Music has as its goal to cooperate in the learning and development of Jewish folk music (synagogal and secular) through collecting examples of folk creations, reworking them artistically and disseminating them among the Society, also to support Jewish composers and other musicians.
2. In order to achieve the stated goals, the Society has the right:
 - a) To publish and help publish music and theoretical works on Jewish musical topics;

- b) To organize musical gatherings, concerts, operatic performances, lectures, etc.;
 - c) To have its own chorus and orchestra;
 - d) To have a library of sheet music and books about the question of musical art;
 - e) To publish a journal dedicated to Jewish music; and
 - f) To hold competitions for better musical works by Jewish composers.
3. In addition, the Society has the right to open branches in various cities of the country, in accordance with local laws.
 4. The activities of the Society will be spread over all of Russia.

For Saminsky, as for the historiographers of Jewish music, point 2f was the most important goal of the OYNM. In the English translation of this text both Weisser and Rosovsky replaced the phrase “musical works by Jewish composers” with “musical compositions of a Jewish character.”⁵⁸ The change in meaning is significant. While the original text refers to any compositions by Jewish composers, the translation suggests the prior notion of specifically Jewish art music.

Art music indeed became central after the 1917 Revolution when, instead of the St. Petersburg OYNM, the reorganized Moscow branch (founded on 8 October 1923) became the main institution of Jewish music in Russia.⁵⁹ The omission of “folk” from the name of the Moscow Society (Obshchestvo Yevreyskoy Muziki, henceforth OYM) not only marked the difference from the St. Petersburg branch, but now represented a new attitude toward the society’s function. In a revolutionary spirit the brochure of the OYM announced that it was “no longer sufficient to restrict [the society] to the Jewish music of the past—the task of the hour is to create actively new musical treasures reflecting the contemporary life of the Jewish people.”⁶⁰ Unlike the OYNM, the OYM planned “to create a fund . . . to award prizes for the best works of Jewish music in an effort to stimulate creative work.” By 1926 the brochure could proudly assume that the “young school of Jewish music” was on its way to joining “the mainstream of European music.”

The list of compositions the OYM advertised shows the efforts to be part of the “mainstream.”⁶¹ Thus while at the first concerts of the OYNM most works performed were arrangements of folk tunes, the OYM concerts presented mainly original compositions that fit the expectations of a general audience of classical music. In Joachim Braun’s comparison of the OYNM’s first concert and the OYM’s fourth concert the change is clear. While in 1909 there were five folk-song arrangements on the program, in 1926 there were none. As genuine “art music” in 1909 three pieces on Jewish subjects by non-Jewish composers were played. On the 1926 concert all four composers presented (Achron, Bloch, Gnessin, and Milner) were Jewish. Even more significant is that most compositions on the 1926 concert used synagogue

music instead of folk music as their basis—a sure sign, in Saminsky’s opinion, of composerly sophistication.⁶²

As Sabaneyev’s article demonstrates, in the historiography of Jewish music the story of the OYNM and OYM merged into a heroic narrative of the development of Jewish art music. The more recent the accounts of the societies’ developments, the more they have tended to reflect views first introduced by Saminsky. Joseph Yasser (1893–1981), who as a student of Moscow composer Jacob Weinberg started to popularize the ideas of the OYNM in the United States after his 1923 emigration, went so far as to describe unconscious ideologies underlying the aims of the OYNM. These ideologies, even he had to admit, were “rather vague at the outstart and have been brought to a fuller understanding at a much later date.” The key concept in Yasser’s presentation of the OYNM’s latent ideology was the combination of modern achievements with ancient glory, the task “to lift the present status of Jewish music to a degree that may render it just as eminent, relatively speaking, as it used to be in the biblical times.”⁶³ Only folk music—the original *raison d’être* of the OYNM—failed to find a place in Yasser’s elaborate ideology. The same assumption, originating from Saminsky, about the priority of an ancient tradition over the folklore of the present and the focus on modern art music set the tone for the infighting that plagued the OYNM during its short existence.

Saminsky’s emphasis on ancient music and his selective amnesia concerning the musical culture of the Jews in the Diaspora reflected the ongoing political debate represented by Ahad Ha’am’s purist and Dubnov’s Diaspora-oriented vision of Jewish culture. Like Ahad Ha’am’s spiritual nationalism, the Jewish art music Saminsky envisioned severed its ties with its cultural environment. This loss of ties, however, was not an automatic process. It needed to be orchestrated, both through institutions and through the aggressive rhetoric that characterized Saminsky’s polemical writings on the subject. Like Ahad Ha’am, Saminsky and his followers advocated a process of purification that would detach Jewish art from its Diaspora associations and, as Saminsky hoped, would elevate it to the concert podium as part of the “classical” mainstream. Detachment, however, came at a heavy price, for “purification” of Jewish music resulted in its almost complete assimilation to its Russian models.