

ORIENTAL AND JEWISH INFLUENCES IN TWO PIECES
FOR VIOLONCELLO AND PIANO BY ERNEST BLOCH

by

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A MASTER'S REPORT

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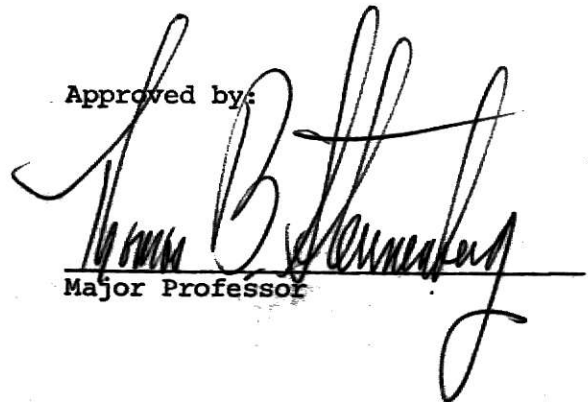
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INTRODUCTION

Ernest Bloch was the most outstanding Jewish composer of Western or Central Europe. He created Jewish musical motifs in his own imagination. He takes the tetrachordal characters from Hebraic melody and his melodies are modal. The Jew, being of Semitic stock, is a part of the Oriental world. Bloch's music retains its Semitic-Oriental characteristics.

Purpose of this Study

This study is to analyze Ernest Bloch's style of composition and the Oriental and Jewish influences on it. Prayer and Meditation Hebraique, written for cello and piano, are the two pieces used in the analysis.

The main sources of reference for this paper are Jewish Music by A. Z. Idelsohn and The Music of the Jews by Aron Rothmuller.

The method for analysis is to study some features of Bloch's style which were adapted from Oriental and Jewish music in the two cello pieces.

CHAPTER I

Ernest Bloch was born in Geneva, Switzerland on July 24, 1880. The violin was young Bloch's instrument. He composed a quartet and an Oriental Symphony before he was fifteen. In Geneva, his first teachers were Jaques-Dalcroze and L. Rey. In 1897, he went to the Brussels Conservatory where, until 1899, he was a pupil of Eugen Ysaye and F. Rasse. This was followed by a year at the Frankfort Conservatory under Iwan Knorr and one in Munich with Ludwig Thuille.

For a few years, Bloch made his headquarters in Paris. His opera, Macbeth, was produced at the Opera-Comique in Paris in 1910. In 1909-10, Bloch conducted orchestral concerts at Lausanne and Neuchatel. His Trois Poemes juifs were written at this time in Switzerland. Schelomo, a tone poem for cello and orchestra was written in 1915, as was his Israel Symphony. In 1915, Bloch became professor of composition and aesthetics at the Geneva Conservatory.¹

In 1916, he came to the United States as the conductor of the Maud Allen dance troupe then touring the country. After the troupe disbanded, he wrote String Quartet No. I. After this, all-Bloch concerts were given in Boston, Philadelphia and New York by such eminent conductors as Karl Muck, Leopold Stokowski and Arthur Bodanzky. Further attention was directed to Bloch when in 1919 he received the Elizabeth Sprague Collidge Prize of \$1,000 for his Suite for Viola and Piano.

¹International Cyclopedia, p. 234.

From 1920 through 1925 Bloch was the director of the Cleveland Institute of Music. Here he wrote the Baal Shem Suite for Violin and Piano. In 1923, he wrote the Concerto Grosso for students at Cleveland to show them the neo-classic form. He also wrote the First Piano Quintet in 1923.

In 1927, Bloch transferred his teaching and directorial activities to San Francisco. There he completed the America, a symphonic rhapsody. He wrote Helvetia, a symphonic fresco as homage to Switzerland before returning there in 1931. In 1933, the Sacred Service was written.

He returned to the United States and made his home in Agate Beach, Oregon and lived there the rest of his life. Voice in the Wilderness, a symphonic poem with cello obbligato, was written in 1936. String Quartet No. 2 was written in 1946 and two more in 1951 and 1954. In 1953, he wrote a second Concerto Grosso. Bloch died in Portland, Oregon on July 15, 1959.²

Bloch's creative career reveals four distinct periods. The first spans the years from 1901 to 1915.³ He instinctively expressed himself in a peculiarly Jewish idiom and his works, even in his early period, show hardly a trace of outside influence.⁴ His early music is filled with an enormous vitality and energy; the fully developed melodic lines and the free use of the rhythmic elements are already clearly apparent. The Hebraic qualities and the use of Oriental intervals are evident as is the use of vivid harmonic colors.

² Ewen, David Ewen Introduces Modern Music

³ Ewen, Book of Modern Composers, p. 254.

⁴ Groves Dictionary, p. 263.

About 1915, Bloch's style underwent a definite change. It was at this time that his ideal was to create a Hebrew music that would give expression to his race. He created music that is Semitic in personality, in melodic contour and in intervallic structure. It was during this period that he wrote Prayer and Meditation Hebraique.

His third period began about 1925. Bloch is less the Hebrew musician and more the composer for all races and creeds.⁵ He tended to become a rhapsodist, inclining toward spacious forms and passionate statements. During the last 15 years of his life, Bloch used more objectivity and classicism. He paid more attention to form, balance of parts and classic relations of tonality and movements. He uses polytonality and Oriental imagery, but the overall design is classic.⁶

Bloch's influence on American music is not confined to the works he wrote while living here, but is to be measured also by the many composers whose training he furthered and whose musical style he helped form. Roger Sessions was his pupil and associate at Cleveland; he taught Douglas Moore, Bernard Rogers, Randall Thompson, Frederick Jacobi, Quincy Porter, Ernst Bacon, Theodore Chanler, Herbert Elwell, Isadore Freed, Ethel Glenn Hier, Rosalie Housman, LeRoy J. Robertson, Ethel Leginska, Mark Brunswick, Ray Green, George Antheil and others.⁷

Bloch's music has a rugged and almost brutal directness and a passion at times, bitter, at times, idealistic. These and several other characteristics, can be distinctly traced to his intimate study of Beethoven,

⁵ Ewen, Book of Modern Composers, p. 256.

⁶ Ewen, World of Twentieth Century Music, p. 90.

⁷ International, p. 235.

for whose music he felt an especial understanding and affinity and whose tradition he in a sense carried on. As Beethoven's strong individuality and often harshly intense feeling repelled some of his listeners, so today does the challenging quality of Bloch's music have an alienating effect at first, on certain natures.⁸

John Hastings, again compared Bloch to Beethoven. He thinks that only in Beethoven does one find a spirit with which Bloch's in its sense of struggle and conflict and aspiration, may be compared and that the life work of each bears a striking spiritual resemblance to the other.⁹

Bloch studied Debussy's harmonic techniques. Strauss and Dukas also taught him how certain orchestral ensembles are obtainable.¹⁰

The cosmopolitan elements of Bloch's music are not so much successfully fused as they are opposed--Romantic influences alternate with neo-classic, German with French. The single personal strain in his work which unifies all other elements is the Jewish spirit along with the Jewish ritual which is found in his music.¹¹

Bloch's music has no merely superficial Jewish character, imparted to it by adoption of Hebrew songs and other ready-made material. He regards the authenticity of the greater part of traditional Hebrew music as doubtful and is aware that much of it was borrowed from other nations. His work is Jewish because his artistic nature happens to have fitted him

⁸ Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey, p. 129.

⁹ Music Review, Hastings Vol. 10, p. 115.

¹⁰ Pannain, Modern Composers, p. 38.

¹¹ Schwartz and Childs, Contemporary Composers, p. 40.

to give expression to the racial currents of his heritage.¹² His effects, though dramatic and full of originality, never give the impression of having been made for their own sake, but are always essential to the deeply-felt meaning of his ideas.¹³ He was acutely aware of his people's folk-tunes and synagogical motifs, but preferred not to use authentic themes, probably because alien cultural influences throughout the history of the wandering race have left too heavy a stamp on them. The three sketches FROM JEWISH LIFE (Prayer is the second one of these) and Meditation Hebraique are intentionally and obviously Jewish. Their only technical features are the frequent use of the interval of the augmented second as found in the near-Eastern scale, and the strained intensity of the high register in which the cello pieces are written.

As to form, Bloch is rhapsodic rather than symphonic; he inclined to let fully developed melodic formations, logically string together, take the place of gradual thematic evolution. He allowed himself considerable freedom with regard to the proportions and keys of the movements. Most of the smaller pieces are in simple ternary form with frequent thematic affinities within the groups.¹⁴

The repetition of the themes, developments, the returns, the breaking of the themes into "solo", which are developed again in antithesis to their former statements--all these form the very backbone of his style.¹⁵

Bloch attached much importance to his codas. This is especially so in last movements when the coda has the double function of summarizing

¹³ Groves, p. 765.

¹⁴ Music and Letters, Joan Chissell, p. 30.

¹⁵ Pannain, Modern Composers, p. 39.

not only the movement but also the whole work. It is frequently a period of recollection, in which old familiar ideas are reviewed with a "stream of consciousness" technique. Furthermore, no matter how gloomy, agitated or tense the atmosphere has been, with the coda comes a confident serenity frequently achieved by the simple means of the use of the major third.¹⁶


Bloch's harmony is subject to no restrictive system.¹⁷ Basically, he used bare fourths, fifths and octaves--and chords built of all three. There are numerous instances of false relations, all accented passing notes and of discords resulting from superimposed, unrelated triads. Occasionally his music is bi-tonal, and furthermore, he shows a strong leaning towards whole-tonalism. His keys are hard to define and comparatively unimportant when it is possible to do so. Their function seems to be the introduction of color and Bloch obtains the maximum of contrast and balance from the interplay of light and shade of the brighter sharp regions and the warmer, deeper flats. However, he never completely overthrows the underlying basis of tonality. Some of the most effective moments in his music are those when tension and strife are miraculously dissolved and resolved by simple diatonic chords.

Bloch takes the tetrachordal characteristics from Hebraic melody and his melodies tend to use these modes. The tetrachordal nature of harmonic texture helps free him from the unilateral major and minor modes. The whole suggestion of his harmony lies in the various functions of the semi-tone.¹⁸

¹⁶ Cobbett's, p. 132.

¹⁷ Groves, p. 764.

¹⁸ Music and Letters, Chissell, p. 33.

Bloch's rhythm is equally unfettered. He changes his time signatures very freely and is fond of cadenze-like passages which are devoid of metrical accents.¹⁹ He has been able to destroy, at will, all feeling of regularly recurring accent, the result being a melodic freedom akin to Oriental rather than European music. Very frequently he uses an unvaried, reiterated rhythm for his bass. One small idiosyncrasy is apparent throughout all his work--his fondness of the abrupt dotted figure . Similarly, his melody is often characterized by certain individual twists, turns and arabesques, such as a dotted note followed by rapid sixteenth notes.²⁰

BLOCH'S OWN THOUGHTS

"In my work termed 'Jewish'--my Schelomo, Psalms, Three Jewish Poems, The Voice in the Wilderness--I have not approached the problem from without--by employing melodies more or less authentic (frequently borrowed from or under the influence of other nations) or 'Oriental' formulae, rhythms or intervals, more or less sacred!"

"No! I have but listened to an inner voice, deep, secret, insistent, ardent, an instinct much more than cold and dry reason, a voice which seemed to come from far beyond myself, far beyond my parents . . . a voice which surged from the Old Testament"

"This entire Jewish heritage moved me deeply, it was reborn in my music. To what extent is it Jewish, to what extent is it just Ernest Bloch, of that I know nothing. The future alone will decide."²¹

¹⁹Groves, p. 766.

²⁰Music and Letters, Chissel, p. 34.

²¹International, p. 238.

"Music consists, for the greatest part, of the incomparable legacy left to us by the great masters. When we study their lives and their works, people like Palestrina, Bach, Beethoven and Wagner appear to us not only as marvelous musicians, but also as tremendous human personalities. It is not because they were great masters of the notes only, but because they were great men first."²²

"Only that art can live which is an active manifestation of the life of the people. Art is the outlet of the musical, and emotional needs of the human spirit. It is free of all compromise and deaf to the law of supply and demand."²³

"It is not my purpose nor my desire to attempt a "reconstitution" of Jewish music, or to base my work on authentic melodies. I am not an archaeologist. I hold it of first importance to write good genuine music. It is the Jewish soul that interest me and I endeavour to hear in myself and to transcribe this in my music: the venerable emotion of the race that slumbers way down in our soul."²⁴

²²Ewen, Book of Modern Composers, p. 254.

²³Schwartz and Childs, Contemporary Composers--, p. 40.

²⁴Music and Letters, Chissel, p. 34.

CHAPTER II

The following are the basic elements of Semitic-Oriental music:

- a) Based on modes--A mode in Arabic and Persian music is composed of a number of motives (short musical figures or groups of tones) within a certain scale. The composer operates with the material of these traditional folk motives with a certain mode for his creations. Sixteen of these modes are most widely known throughout the near East.
- b) The next element is the emphasis upon ornament. Oriental music is unthinkable in long sustained tones. On the contrary, it is of a vivid tonal character. Either a note is short, or if long, it quavers in a tremolo and is adorned with ornaments.
- c) Oriental music is chiefly unrhythmical. It is mostly rendered by a solo voice with accompaniment of the Ud, a kind of lyre or mandolin, resembling a guitar. The rhythm is derived from the meter of the text.
- d) The tonality in the Oriental music is based on a quarter-tone system. Thus a scale of an octave has twenty-four steps. However, seldom does the melodic construction show the tendency of the octachordal line, for the folk-tunes are usually built on the tetrachordal or pentachordal range.
- e) Oriental musicians are fond of improvisation. Even set tunes are largely varied and modified. The improvisation

occurs in a certain mode and the improviser has to operate with the traditional motives therein.

- f) Oriental music is without any harmony. The only beauty the Oriental finds is in the melodic line and in the intricate ornamentation.
- g) Oriental music has retained the folk-character. Therefore, unlike the art music of Europe, which can be understood by the few only, the song of the Orient is understood by all.
- h) The folk-character is pronounced also in the form. Most of the set tunes consist of very short phrases. Only a few have two or three phrases. The most compound form seems to be the Bashraw, a rondo form in the scheme A-B-A-C-A.
- i) Oriental music is never written down, but transmitted orally. "Ear-marks" were developed by which music is recognized.

In the Orient, the Jews sing in scales, using the quarter-tone steps of their neighbors, while the Jews of the Occident employ the same scales with steps of the semi-tone system. Despite the resultant variance, Synagogue song remains identical the world over, because these differences in tonality are of sufficiently minor importance not to change the character of the music.

The music is primarily vocal. Instrumental music, never rising above accompaniment is an art in itself.

The minor scale is the basis upon which very joyous tunes are built, while the major scale serves for serious music. Moods are expressed by the rhythmical construction of the motives.

In Oriental music, provision was also made for the designation of tempo, as slow, vivacious, sad, moderato, etc.²⁵

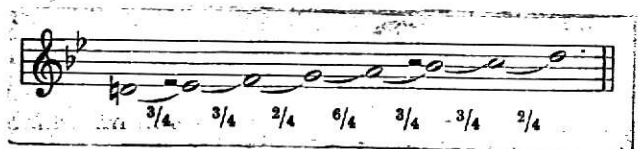
The tone degrees of the non-synagogal chant agree neither with those of European music nor with those of the tone systems of Oriental music. However, the scales are usually based on the Oriental scale or Magamat.²⁶

Examples 1 through 7 show the Oriental scales or Magamat:

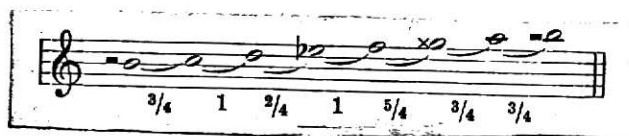
Ex. 1 Magama Nawa.



Ex. 2 Magma Sabba.



Ex. 3 Magama Og.



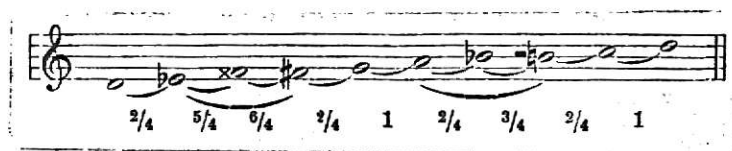
Ex. 4 Magama Siga: (End of Major 3rd).



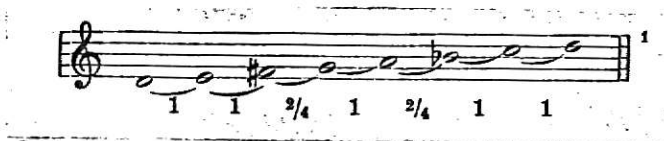
²⁵ Idelsohn, Jewish Music, p. 25.

²⁶ Idelsohn, Thesaurus of Oriental Hebrew Melodies, p. 43-45.

Ex. 5 Magama Higaz: (Major mode).



Ex. 6 Yemenite Arab Scale



The Arabs, as a Semitic-Oriental people developed secular rhythmical music for those of their poems which were accompanied by bodily motions. This poetry and this music made a great impression on the Jews. The influence was enhanced by the political freedom which the Jewish people received from the same source. Gradually the Arabic type of verse and music was introduced not only into Jewish secular life but also into the Synagogue, so that by the 10th Century we find poetry in Arabic meter together with Arabic melodies in the Synagogal service in Babylonia, Syria, Morocco, and Spain. Hence, rhythmical song among the Jews of the Orient became synonymous with Arabic music from that time on until the present day. An exception to this tendency to fall under the influence of rhythm, is the Yemenite Jew who accepted very few Arabic melodies even though living in Arabic environment.

The five Arabic meters chiefly adopted and used in Hebrew poetry are shown in Example 7. These were frequently altered to facilitate their application to Hebrew.

Ex. 7

Arabic Meters

Hazağ 0 - - 1, 0 - - 1

1. 
me - fa - 'i - lun, me - fa - 'i - lun.

Rağaz 0 - 0 1, 0 - 0 1, 0 - 0 1.

2. 
mus - taf - 'i - lun, mus - taf - 'i - lun, mus - taf - 'i - lun.

Mutákarib 0 - - 1, 0 1 1, 0 - - 1, 0 - - 1.

3. 
fa - 'u - lun, fa - 'u - lun, fa - 'u - lüh, fa - 'u - lun.

Ramal 1 0 - - , 1 0 - - , 1 0 1.

4. 
fa - 'i - la - tun, fa - 'i - la - tun, fa - 'i - lan.

Tawil - - - 1, - - - , - - - , - - - .

5. 
fa - u - lun, mu - fa - i - lun, fa - u - lun, mu - fa - i - lun.

Rhythmical music, once established in the Synagogue, gained more and more ground and also rooted itself in Jewish song.²⁷

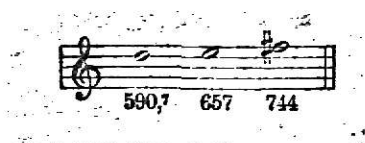
The chanting of the Bible, believed to have been established in the 5th Century B.C. survived in the various synagogues, and to the present day, represents the oldest extant type of Jewish music. Idelsohn examined the musical tradition of Jewish tribes in Yemen, Babylonia, Persia, Syria, etc. in the late Pre-Christian era. A comparison revealed a startling similarity among the chants sung by these tribes which, living in strict isolation, could hardly have had any contacts with each other after their separation from their common home.²⁸

²⁷Idelsohn, p. 115.

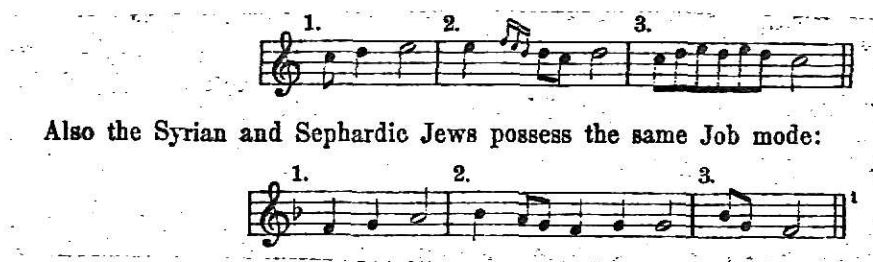
²⁸Apel, Harvard Dictionary of Music, p. 380.

The synagogal chant involves not fixed melodies, but fixed modes, i.e., groups of motives which move within a definite scale and are constantly repeated with small variations.²⁹

Ex. 8 Tone Degrees in Job Mode.



Ex. 9 Motives in Job Mode.



Also the Syrian and Sephardic Jews possess the same Job mode:



²⁹ Idelson, Thesaurus, p. 22.

Ex. 10 Motives in Pentateuch Mode (Yemenite).

TABLE I.

1. MOTIVES ADVANCING TO THE FOURTH:

Yemenite 

Sephardic-Oriental 

Ashkenazic 

2. MOTIVES ADVANCING TO THE THIRD:

Yemenite 

Sephardic-Oriental 

Ashkenazic 

3. MOTIVES ADVANCING TO THE LOWER SECOND:

Yemenite 

Sephardic-Oriental 

Ashkenazic 

Next in antiquity to the chants of the Bible is that of the prayers. For each service there exist certain traditional themes or motives but the actual singing is a free vocal fantasia, frequently of a highly virtuoso character which retains only the barest outline of the prayer-motive (mainly in the closing formula). These more or less freely created melodies are known as hazzanut, a word derived from chazzan, the name of the professional precentor to whom the singing of prayers is entrusted.³⁰

Ex. 11 Hazan

50. *hazan*

Wāj - ja'a bōr ă - dō - noj ăl po - now wāj-jig-ro

qahal

ă - dō - noj êl ră-hum wă-hăn-nun ă - răh ăp-pă - jim wă-răb

hă - sād wă-ă-măt nô-sēr hă - sād lo - ă - lo - fim nô-sê 'o-wôn

wo - fă - ăa wă - hă - to - oh wă-năg-gê.

51. *hazan* *qahal*

Ă - nê - nu ă - lô-hêj ăb-ro - hom ă - nê -

etc.

nu tô - di - 'ê - nu ô - rah hăj-jim sô - bă sê-mo -

hôt ăt po-nă - ho nê-i - môt bi-mi-nê-ho nă - sâh.

³⁰Apel, Harvard Dictionary, p. 381.

The forms in which the prayers were rendered were explained by sages who lived in the first century. One was the responsive form (Bloch used this form for Prayer). Unison and solo forms were also used.

The prayers among the Yemenites are chanted partly by the precentor in solo, partly by the congregation as choir unison and partly by the precentor and congregation alternately.

Ex. 12 Forms

Psalms

a) Ps. 81. 1-2 (Sephardic-Oriental)

Solo 1 Yo-sheb be-se - ter el-yon, *Congregation* be-selshad-day yith-lo-nan.
Solo o-mar la-do-naymah-si um-su-da-thi *Cong.* e-lo-hay ev-tah bo.

2 Ps. 72 1-2 (Sephardic-Oriental)

Lish-lo-mo, e-lo-him mish-pa-te-cha le-me-lech ten,
 we - sid - ka - the - cha le - ven me - lech.

3 (Ashkenazic)

Solo Ash - re semi-me do-rech, ha-hol-chim be-so-ras a-do - nay.
Cong. ash-re notz-re e-do-sov, be-chol lev yid-re-shu - hu.

b) Ps. 92. 2-3 (Sephardic-Oriental)

Unison 4 Tob le-ho-doth la-do-nay, ul-zammer-le-shim-cha el-yon.
 le-haggid bab-bo-ker has de-cha, we-e-mu-na-the-cha bal-le-loth.

Ps. 29. 1-3 (Sephardic-Oriental)

Unison 5 Miz-mor le-da-wid. ha-bu la-do-nay be-ne e - lim,
 ha-bu la-do-nay ka-bod wa - oz. kol a-do-nay
 alham-mayim, elhak-ka - bod hir - im, a-do-nay al ma-yim rab-bim.

Ps. 81, 1.
Unison (Yemenite)



La-me-nas-se-ah al haggit-tit, mi-ze-mor le-o-sof.

There are four main Jewish Biblical Modes:

- I. Pentateuch Mode--e--f--g--a plus b--c--d--e. It has a tetrachordal basis which means between the tetrachords there is an interval of a whole step (a-b).

The "bars" in the examples do not mark rhythm, but indicate the motives of the modes.

Ex. 13

1. Way-yik-ra mo-she. le-chol-zik-ne yis-ra-el wa-yo-mer a-le-hem.
mi-she-chu uk-hu la-chem son lemish-pe-ho-the-chem,
we-sha-ha-tu hap-pa-sah. ul-ka-tem a guddat-he-
zob ut-bal-tem baddam-a-she-r bassaf, we-hig-ga-tem
el ham-mash-kof we-el she-te ha-me-zu-zoth min haddam-a-she-r bassaf.
we-at-tem lo the-se-u ish mi-pesah be-thoad bo-ker.

Genesis 48, 15-18 (Portuguese-Amsterdam)

2. Way-ba-rech eth yo-sef way-yo-mar. ha-e-lo-him a-she-r
hith-ha-le-chu a-bo-thay le-fo-naw ab-ra-ham we-yishak. ha-e-lo-him
ha-ro-e o-thi, me-o-di ad hay-yom haz-ze. ham-mal-ach

- a. The mode of RUTH is built on the same scale as that of the Pentateuch, but its motives are of a different nature.
- b. ECCLESIASTES Is chanted in the mode of Ruth in most communities.

II. MODE OF THE PROPHETS is based upon a tetrachordal system on a scale of d--e--f--g-- plus a--b--c--d. In some instances it is changed to the scale: d--e--f--g-- plus g--a--b^b--c, (Hypodorian). This is the standard scale in Jewish music, not only in the Synagogue song but also in folk-song. Nearly eighty percent of all Jewish folk-song is based upon it. The mode has the character of minor, but is not melancholy because it has a note of hope--of promise. This mode is also built of motives.

Ex. 14

Prophets

Exod. 12. 21 Yemenite-Pentateuch

1 Way-yik-ro mo-she le-chol-zik-ne yis-ro-el way-yo-mer
 a-le-hem. mi-she-chu uk-chu lo-chem son
 le-mish-pe-ho-the-chem, we-sha-ha-tu hap-po-sah.

Song of Songs 1. 1-2 Persian-Song of Songs

2 Shir hash-shi-rim a-sher lish-lo-mo. yish-shoke-ni min
 shi-koth pi-hu, ki to-bim do-de - cho miy-yo - yin.

Joshua 1. 14 Yemenite-Prophets

3 Ne-she-chem ta-pe-chem u-mik-ne-chem
 ye-she-bur bo-o-res a-sher go-thar
 lo-chem mo-she be-e-ber hay-yar-den.
 Kol gib-bo-re hah-ha-yil, wa-a-zar-fem o-them.


- a. In the Prophetic mode, there is also the mode of LAMENTATIONS which has the same tetrachordal character.

III. The MODE OF JOB is based on the scale f--g--a--b^b, identical with the Ionian or modified Lydian scale which is a tetrachord.

Ex. 15

Job

Job 3. 3-4 Sephardio-Oriental

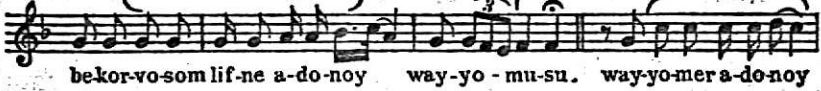
1 
Yo-badyom iw-wa-led bo, we-ha-lay-la a-mar hora ga-ber-.


hay-yom ha-hu ye-hi ho-shech, alyid-re-she-hu e lo-ha


mim-ma-al, we-al to-fa a-law ne-ha-ra.

Leviticus 16. 1-2 Ashkenazic - Pentateuch for the High Holidays

2 
Vay-dabbera-do-nay el-mo-she, a-chare mos she-ne bene a-ha-ron,


bekor-vo-som lif-ne a-do-noy way-yo-mu-su. way-yo-mer a-do-noy


el-mo-she, dab-ber el a-ha-ron o-hi-cho, ve-alyo-vo


becholes el-hak-kodesh, mibes lap-po-ro-ches, el-phe-hak-kapo-res a-she


al-ho-o-ron ve-lo yo-mus, ki be-o-non e-ro-e al-hak-kap-po-res

Lam. 1 Gregorian

3 
In-ci-pit la-menta-ti-o Je-re-mi-a pro-phe-tae. A-leph.

Lam. 5. 1. Gregorian

4 
Re-cor-da-re Do-mi-ne, quid ac-ci-de-rit no-bis, in-tu-e-re,


et res-pi-ce op-pro-bri-um no-strum. (Frequently recurring motive)

IV. MODES OF THE PSALMS are based on the Dorian, Hypophrygian and on the Lydian scale.

The MODES OF THE PRAYERS were taken over from the Biblical modes, together with the texts. The Tefilla mode came from the Pentateuch mode.

Ex. 16

Tefilla Mode (Yemenite)

1. **Priests** **Precentor**

Ye - bo-re-che-cho e - do - noy *Priests repeat*

Precentor **Congregation**

we-yish-me-re-cho. o - men.

(Syriac - Oriental)

2. **Precentor** **Congregation**

A - do-nay se-fa-thay tif-tah u - fi yag-gid te-hil-la-the-cha.

Precentor

ba-ruch at-ta a-do-noy e-lo-he-nu we-lo-he a-bo-the-nu.

me-lech o-zer u-mo-shi-a u-ma-gen. ba-ruch at-ta

a - do - nay ma-gen ab-ra-ham.

(Sephardic - European)

3. **Precentor**

Ba - ruch at-ta a-do-nay e - lo-he-nu we-lo-he a-bo-the-nu,

e-lo-he ab-ra-ham, e-lo-he yits-hak ve-lo-he ya-a-kob, ha-el hag-ga-dol

hag-gib-bor ve-han-no-ra el el-yon go-mel ha-sa-dim to-bim, ko-ne hak-

Cong.

kol ve-zo-cher has-de a-both u-me-bi... she-mo be-a-ha-ba.

Selicha and Mogen-Ovos came from the modes of the Prophets, Lamentations and Psalms. Viddui mode is taken from the Job and group C of the Psalms modes.

Both the Biblical and prayer modes constitute the oldest, the most genuine and the most Oriental-Semitic part of Jewish music, upon which the later creations were based.³¹

While the synagogal chant deals only with modes, recitatives without any fixed melody or form, the non-synagogal chant evinces a higher musical development, for the songs of this species mostly have rhythm and form.

These songs are accompanied by dance and kettledrum and are drawn nearer to the secular song of the Arabs. The Jews in the villages find their non-synagogal chant strongly influenced by Arabic song.

Non-synagogal chant of the Yemenites is antiphonal throughout. The first strophe of each song is sung by the solo singer to remind the singers of the melody. Dancing takes place during the singing and the dance is executed only by men and has the well-known Oriental character.³²

In the folk-songs current among the Jewish people there are included tunes for Bible texts or tunes based upon Biblical themes, for prayers, for religious poetry, melodies for meditation, for the elevation of the soul, for rousing the spirit to ecstasy and melodies which express the innumerable struggles and pains the Jew has suffered. The Jewish folk-song, like Jewish life in the last 2,000 years nestles in the shadow of religion and ethics.

³¹Idelsohn, Jewish Music, p. 72-89.

³²Idelsohn, Thesaurus, p. 43.

Elements of the Eastern Folk-songs:

- A) Biblical and Prayer modes are employed either in their original unrhythmical form or are shaped in rhythmical melodies.
- B) The bulk of the folk-songs, is in the Minor Scale. The Jewish folk-song in Eastern Europe is based primarily upon these two types. It developed a style of its own, influenced by that in Slavic song which is Oriental.

The two large Jewish cultural centers possessing characteristic Jewish folk-song today are Eastern Europe and Palestine.

The religious and mystical songs, of the folk-songs, which also form a bridge between religious and secular song, deal with various religious problems outside and apart from the synagogue service. These often take the form of duologue with God. Sometimes the tune, or part of it is taken directly from the synagogue service. Part of the tune may therefore be in recitative or cantillated, and, in conformity with the style of the East European religious service, there is frequent resort to coloratura. (Prayer is an example).

A very distinctive and highly tense and expressive kind of folk-song was sung by the Chasidim. This means "devout" and they are a Jewish sect which came into existence in Eastern Europe, in the middle of the 18th Century. They give free rein to the expression of their religious feelings and singing plays an important part in that expression. The Chasidim resort to singing to exalt their mood to the state of ecstasy. Many of their songs are without words. (Meditation Hebraique is an example of this type).

Sussman Kisselhoff, an expert on Jewish folk-song said of the Chasidic songs:

"They are the most original in form and character of all the Jewish folk-songs and the riches in regard to form and variety of the musical coloration. They are entirely without words and the people usually regard them as the 'highest' of all songs. They are usually expressive of a prayerful mood, or of religious exaltation and they are generally mystical in character."³³

(quoted from Megubbolim, "Das Judische Volkslied", Judischer Verlag, Berlin, 1913, p. 9, from Rothmuller book.)

Ex. 17 Chassidic Song with Rhythmic and Style Changes

1 Moderato
23 *mf*

2 con moto
D.C.

3 *with increasing emotion*

4 Allegro
mf Repeat part 3

5 Andante

6 Allegro
Repeat part 3

7 Allegro vivace
f Repeat parts 3 & 4

³³ Rothmuller, The Music of the Jews, p. 135.

Ex. 18 Chassidic Song. Triplet Figure--Compound Lied-Form



There is a strict form in the rhythmical chassidic tune. The tunes have symmetrical structure of one to three periods. Some of them use the compound Lied-form A.B.C.A., and the Rondo-form. We also notice that the principle of modulating to the subdominant is observed.

The chassidic song, though religious in intent, is not used for the worship proper, but for inspiration and preparation for worship. It is done exclusively by men and is a masculine song.³⁴

The Palestinian folk-songs of one classification are Religious songs, with religious texts but non-religious in mood and often used as marching and dance songs. The Israeli folk-tunes tend toward a gay and optimistic expression which is mostly achieved by vivid rhythmic patterns.

During the pioneer period in Palestine, under the Mandate, new Palestinian folk-songs were created. These were songs taken over from Palestinian Bedouins, or Arabs. All this has resulted in the creation of a Bedouin-Arab-Palestinian (Israeli) modern Jewish color to which many composers are specially partial.

³⁴Idelsohn, Jewish Music, p. 412.

The following is an example of the shepherd's song in Israel that reveals distinctive features in the latest era of Jewish music. Notice the similarity of the rhythmic pattern in the bass with melody line above is the same as in Meditation.

Ex. 19

Moderato $\text{♩} = 124$

Ga-mal ga-ma - li ga-mal ga-ma - li che-ver a-la li ta-

Ex. 20 Meditation Hebraique

pp *p* *pp*

Example 21 shows the consecutive fifths being used:

Ex. 21

*From 'Morning Song,' from 'Voices of Jerusalem,' by
Shula Doniach.*

(simile)

(simile)

etc

etc

Attention can be drawn to the following points in the preceeding examples:

- a) Melodic. A minor mode corresponding to the Dorian or Hypodorian, and also the Myxolydian, is predominant, but various intervals are diminished or augmented by way of successive exchange. The result is an interchange of Dorian and Myxolydian modes. We note also the characteristic modal cadence, with a whole tone, instead of the semitone. There is often playing around the tonic with whole tone intervals.
- b) Rhythmic. There is much syncopation.
- c) Harmonic. It is striking that the harmonies are usually restricted to the bare essentials; there is a striving for simplicity in this respect, for a kind of primitiveness, in which

much use is made of ostinato figures.

The following three examples illustrate various instances of the minor in melody, from simple to more complicated forms. There are two augmented seconds in the scale (marked) in Example 22 and 23. Example 24 is neither a pure B flat minor nor E flat minor. There are no special rhythmic features, except in Example 22, where the syncopation at the beginning of the second bar, and in the voice part beginning of the fourth bar, is not the result of the rhythm of the words but simply a feature of Jewish tunes.

Ex. 22

From 'Romance,' by Jacob Weinberg.

Violino

Piano.

Andante (non tardare)

p recit., rubato

m.g. p espress. m.d.

Ex. 23

From 'Hakotel,' by Joel Engel.

Sostenuto e mesto.

p

E. reia tawi bru.cha

jesch be.ew. re jam scham al har ka.dosch ko.tri je.è.wal ram

Ex. 24

From 'Beker Teireni Dimati,' by Alexander Krein.

Andante.

Piano. *p* *espr.* *mf*

Canto. *mf*

Bo - qer te - i - re - ni dim - a - ti. e. li.

In the next two examples there is influence of Jewish secular and the religious folk-song. The motives are used here for the entire suite in the second example.

Ex. 25

From 'The Vision of Ariel,' Op. 16, by Lazare Saminsky.

24 *Sognando* (ARIEL) *p*

Va - hi bi-mei A-cha-shve
Those were the days of A-ha -

rosh hu A-cha-shve-rosh
su - e - ruz great A - As - su - s - ruz

Ex. 26

From 'Children's Suite,' No. 18, by Joseph Achron (The Caravan).



This example represents another type of Israeli folk or popular song. Syncopation and strong metrical rhythms are apparent.

Ex. 27

'Shir ha-Emek,' by Daniel Sambursky (words by N. Altermann).

Andante pastorale

1. Ba-a mna-kha la - ya - go - a u - mar - go - a le - a - mei. Lay-la chi-ver mis - ta -
 2. Vam ha - da-gan mit - no - e - a shir ha - e - der ma-tial-tzeil. Zo-ni or-tzi u - sda -

- re - a el adot e-mek yis-re - el. Tal mif - ma - ta ul - va - na me - el
 - te - ha ze - hu e-mek yis-re - el. Te - vo - rakh ar - tzi ve-tit - ha - lai

2 mi - bet al - ta ad Na - ha - lai. Ma, ma lay-la mi - leyi? Dme - mo

be-yis - re - el. Nu-ma e-mek e-retz tif - e - ret' a - bu le-kha mish - me - ret.

The latest distinctive features of Israeli music are more frequent use of Oriental Jewish songs. Examples 28 and 29 are instances of this:

Ex. 28 This is a use of musical motifs of Yemenite songs

From 'Israelian Suite,' by Joachim Stutschewsky.

Molto tranquillo
Violoncello

Piano

Ex. 29

'Yerushalayim,' Op. 24/3, by Paul Ben-Haim.

Andante solenne
Voice

Piano

molto rubato (acc. - - - - - ff. - - - - -)

Ped. - - - - - *

espr. *dolente* *ff* *(rubato)* *cresc.*

Ye - te nat me - sos te - - - - - vel liv - rah le -

- me - - lach rav - - - - - lach alih - se - fah nat - shi

shp - ps - - - - - shi - - - - - a - rav.

etc. *espressivo* *etc.*

Certain deductions and conclusions as to the specific features of Jewish music can be made.

- a) The minor mode predominates. There are various complicated modes with or without augmented seconds, and often with two augmented seconds.
- b) Syncopation is the most striking feature of the rhythm. It takes different forms, which in general correspond to the structural peculiarities of the Hebrew language.
- c) There are no specific features worth mention in respect of harmony. In general the harmonies derive from the minor and the ecclesiastical modes.³⁵

In the Catholic Church an effort was made, beginning with Gregory I and continuing to the present time, to preserve the traditional song of the Church and to keep away secular tunes. In the Synagogue no laws or orders were issued to that end, the Jew being guided merely by his instinct. As long as his Jewish consciousness was strong, wherever he developed his spiritual culture and lived accordingly, his religious song was Jewish.³⁶

³⁵ Rothmuller, The Music of the Jews, p. 218-237.

³⁶ Idelsohn, Jewish Music, p. 177.

CHAPTER III - CONCLUSIONS

Prayer

The form of this piece is A B C A plus Coda. Responsive form is used for the entire piece.

Ex. 30

The musical score for 'Prayer' (Ex. 30) is written for three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line in a key with three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and common time. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by a mezzo-forte (*mf*) section. The melody is characterized by eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplets indicated by a '3' over the notes. The middle and bottom staves are a two-part setting. The middle staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a series of sustained notes, some with slurs. The bottom staff also starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and has sustained notes. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings. Handwritten numbers '1', '2', '3', '12', and '13' are present, likely indicating measures or sections. The piece concludes with a 'poco dim' (poco diminution) marking.

The tonality is of modal character. The minor mode is predominate. The scale is f--g--a^b--b^b--c--d^b--e^b--f. This also closely resembles the Mode of the Prophets.

Ex. 31

Tempo

f *dim.* *p*

Bloch uses augmented seconds which are characteristic of Jewish music.

Ex. 32

dolente
mp espress.

f

On measure 38, the cadence is on the IV; this is also a characteristic of Jewish music.

Ex. 33

Ex. 33 is a musical score in B-flat major, 3/4 time. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a 'breve' note and a '(8va ad li)' instruction. The middle and bottom staves are piano accompaniment. The music is in 3/4 time and includes dynamic markings like 'f' and 'breve'.

The rhythm follows no strong beats and there are no metrical accents. Rather the motives follow the Hebrew language.

Ex. 34

Ex. 34 is a musical score in B-flat major, 3/4 time. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a 'p' marking and a 'mf' marking. The middle and bottom staves are piano accompaniment. The music is in 3/4 time and includes dynamic markings like 'p' and 'mf'.

Prayer is written in primarily a vocal style. It resembles improvisation with a melody line over simple harmony.

Ex. 35

*Più vivo
a piacere* *accel.*

The melodic line is highly ornamented.

Ex. 36

Bloch uses quarter-tones in scale-line passages.

Ex. 37

a tempo rall. *ten.* *dim.*

Meditation Hebraique

The form is in two sections, A, B, plus coda developed on the first part. Part A is built on motives and he strings figures of motives together.

The tonality is a minor scale, with modal characteristics, built on $c--d^b--e--f--g--a^b--b--c$. He uses augmented seconds.

Section A begins with thirty measures of ostinato bass on C. Over this he uses hard-to-define keys and dischords of unrelated, superimposed triads. He uses linear counterpoint.

In section A, he uses very strong syncopation in his rhythm in the ostinato bass. However, there is no metrical feeling in the upper line of motives.

Ex. 38

Violoncello

Piano

pp *p* *p* *pp* *p*

poco *dim.*

1 2 3 4 5 6

Bloch uses the Oriental quarter-tones in scale-line passages.

Ex. 39 *meno mosso* quarter-tone *a tempo*

The score for Example 39 consists of a piano melody on a single staff and a tenor line below it. The piano melody starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a *meno mosso* tempo. It features a scale-like passage with quarter-tones, which are circled and labeled "quarter-tone". The tempo changes to *a tempo* later in the piece. The tenor line is marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and includes a "ten." (tenor) marking. The piano melody ends with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The score is divided into measures 68 and 69.

There are few regular phrases and no full cadences.

Ex. 40

The score for Example 40 is a multi-staff piece. It features a piano melody on a single staff, a tenor line below it, and a bass line at the bottom. The piano melody starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *breve* tempo. It includes a scale-like passage with quarter-tones, which are circled. The tempo changes to *a tempo* later in the piece. The tenor line is marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and includes a "ten." (tenor) marking. The bass line is marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and includes a "cresc." (crescendo) marking. The score is divided into measures 8, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14.

Bloch uses the vocal, improvisory style with many ornaments.

Ex. 41

Ex. 41 is a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features several ornaments, including triplets and slurs, and is marked with *tempo 1*, *dim.*, *espr.*, *mezza voce*, *accel.*, and *rall.*. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one flat. It includes dynamic markings such as *ff*, *mp*, and *pp*, and tempo markings like *88*, *89*, *90*, *93*, *94*, *95*, and *96*. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple notes and ornaments. The overall style is vocal and improvisatory, with many ornaments and tempo changes.

He uses many tempo changes.

Ex. 42 is a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features several tempo changes, including *allarg.*, *a tempo*, and *animando*. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one flat. It includes dynamic markings such as *ff* and *f*, and tempo markings like *largamente*. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple notes and ornaments. The overall style is vocal and improvisatory, with many tempo changes and dynamic markings.

In section B, the style completely changes. This section resembles the Chassidic Song. It is very rhythmical. The phrases are more defined and it modulates to the subdominant. It is a highly intense style. He uses bare fifths, fourths and octaves.

Ex. 42

The musical score for Ex. 42 consists of two systems. The first system is a single staff with a treble clef, marked *ff*. It contains various musical notations including triplets, accents, and dynamic markings. The second system is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with the instruction *pesante molto e marcato*. It contains complex musical notations including chords, triplets, and dynamic markings.

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ORIENTAL AND JEWISH INFLUENCES IN TWO PIECES
FOR VIOLONCELLO AND PIANO BY ERNEST BLOCH

by

SANDRA SMERCHEK HAINES

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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Ernest Bloch is Western and Central Europe's most outstanding Jewish composer. He was born in Switzerland, but lived one-half of his life in the United States. Although Bloch created works out of his Jewish perceptions, his musical motifs correspond to the peculiarities of the Hebrew language. This is shown in his tonal intervals and rhythms. He uses the motifs of the synagogue service as well as East-European melodic folk-song elements.

His work spanned three distinct periods. First, his early effort was in the Jewish idiom with Hebraic qualities and he used Oriental intervals as well as vivid harmonic colors. His second period was devoted to creating Hebrew music that would give expression to his race. During this period he wrote Schelomo, for cello and orchestra; Prayer and Meditation Hebraique, the works discussed in this study. In his third period, he was less concerned with Jewish music. He became a rhapsodist, inclining toward spacious forms and passionate statements. During the last fifteen years of his life, he used more objectivity and classicism in his style of composition.

Oriental features in Bloch's works include: music based on modes; ornamentation; music that is often unrhythmical; music of a vocal style; improvisation with traditional motives; and simple harmony.

Bloch also has used the modes of the synagogal chant. Groups of motives move in the fixed modes and are constantly repeated with small variations. The Biblical and prayer modes constitute the oldest, most genuine and most Oriental-Semitic part of Jewish music, upon which the later creations were based.

Bloch's music also reflects the Jewish folk-song. In the Eastern folk-song, Biblical and prayer modes are used either in their original

unrhythmical form or they are shaped in rhythmical melodies. The Meditation Hebraique, has characteristics of the Chasidic folk-song of Eastern Europe and also reflects the Palestinian folk-songs of Israel.

The major conclusions of Jewish music are these: the minor mode predominates with or without augmented seconds, and often, with two augmented seconds; syncopation is the most striking feature of the rhythm; and harmony derives from the minor and the Biblical modes. The latest distinctive features of Israeli music are more frequent use of Oriental Jewish songs.