

KLEZMER MUSIC

Early Yiddish Instrumental Music: 1908-1927



1. **DOINA AND HORA** (*Hebrew dance*)
Jacob Hoffman - xylophone; with Kandel's Orchestra
(Vi 77163A; New York 1/25/1923)
2. **SIRBA** - Orchestra Orfeon (recorded by Blumenthal Co.,
Istanbul, Turkey 1912)
3. **MECHUTONIM TANTZ** - Jewish Orchestra
(Abe Schwartz' Orchestra) (84012, CoE4137; New York 2/1918)
4. **KALLARASH** - Naftule Brandwine - clarinet solo; &
his Orchestra (88764; CoE7780; New York 9/1922)
5. **YIDDISH CHUSEDEL** - Max Leibowitz - violin solo;
Philip Friedman - piano (44136, CoE2953; New York ca. 7/1916)
6. **KLEFTICO VLACHIKO** - Orchestra Goldberg
(w.cornet solo) (Odeon 5470, XC. 2051 Istanbul 1908)
7. **FIHREN DIE MECHUTONIM AHEIM** (*tanz*)
N. Brandwine (Naftule Brandwine & Abe Schwartz's
Orchestra) (89008, CoE9012; New York 2/1923)
8. **KOILEN** (*dance*) - Mishka Ziganoff (accordion solo)
(85579, Co E 4636; New York 10/1919)
9. **CH'SIDISHE NIGUNIM** (*H. Gross & B.Katz*) (Part I)
Boibriker Kapelle (H. Gross - leader; Dave Tarras - clarinet;
Beresh Katz & Abe Schwartz - violins, etc. - trombone or
tuba)(W 108029 - Co 8221-F, New York 6/1927)
10. **HANEROS HALULI**
H. Steiner - violin with unknown cymbalom
(5698r;Vi 63842-A; recorded in Lemberg, Poland - 1909)
11. **SADIGURER-CHUSID** (Moskowitz)
Joseph Moskowitz - cymbalom; Max Yussim-piano
(B 17390-1, Vi 67827-B; New York 3/27/1916)
12. **DOINA** (Pt. 1) S. Kosch - flute solo w/ cymbalom
acc.(1-24163,4944-1, CoE6020; Lemberg, Poland ca. 1911)
13. **DOINA** (Pt. 2) S. Kosch - flute solo w/ cymbalom
acc.(1-24164,4945-1, CoE6020; Lemberg, Poland ca. 1911)
14. **TURKISCHE YALLE VEY UVE** (*tanz*) (N. Brandwein)
Naftule Brandwein's Orchestra (Vi 73895-A; New York 5/10/1923)
15. **SADEGURER CHUSED'L**
Abe Schwartz' Orchestra(58782, Co E3671; N.Y. Nov. 1917)
16. **BIEM REBEN'S SIDEN**
Yiddisher Orkester (Abe Schwartz' Orchestra)
(58785-CoE3671; New York 11/1917)
17. **OI TATE, S'IS GUT** - Naftule Brandwein's Orchestra
(105612, Co8076-F; New York 4/1925)
18. **SCHWEIR UND SCHWIGER TANZ**
Abe Schwartz' Orchestra (86191, Co E 4746; New York 4/1920)
19. **RUMÄNISCHE FANTASIEN** (Pt. 1)
Joseph Solinski - violin solo, with cymbalom acc.
(1-24159, 4920-1, CoE6018; Warsaw, Poland ca. 1911)
20. **KHOSIDL** - Belf's Rumanian Orchestra
(Sirena Grand 12419; OK 14009; probably Russia ca. 1912)
21. **DER SHTILLER BULGAR**
Jewish Orchestra (Abe Schwartz Orchestra)
(84671, CoE4122; New York 9/1918)
22. **A MITZVE TENZEL** (*Tabak*)
Hochman's Orchestra (6116, Br.40,001-A; New York 8/1921)
23. **NATIONAL HORA** (Part II)
Abe Schwartz - violin; with Sylvia Schwartz - piano
(86284, CoE4745; New York 5/1920)
24. **SHER** (*Morris Fried*) (Part II)
Abe Schwartz' Orchestra (Abe Schwartz - violin)
(86692-1, CoE4905; New York 10/1920)

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Early Yiddish Instrumental Music
The First Recordings: 1908-1927

FROM THE COLLECTION OF DR. MARTIN SCHWARTZ



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Early Yiddish Instrumental Music: The First Recordings: 1908-1927

by Dr. Martin Schwartz

This disc presents 24 fine and early examples of commercially recorded klezmer music. The Yiddish term *klezmer* (plural *klezmórim*), with the *z* pronounced like the *zz* of jazz and not like the *tz* of *klotz*, means musician in general, but is especially used for instrumentalists of folk music. The term derives from a Hebrew phrase meaning 'musical instruments' and in the Yiddish once spoken in much of what is now Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, Hungary and Slovakia, klezmer referred to those musicians who professionally performed the Jewish vernacular ("folk") instrumental repertory of these regions. These musicians also frequently performed the local instrumental music of and for gentiles, as well as ballroom music, and even some classical pieces. In addition to their employment at weddings and

other ritual festivities, klezmerim performed, depending on their skill and reputation, for Hasidic rebes and for noblemen, at spas, in taverns, and as street musicians.

A later usage of the term *klezmer*, which arose in the United States and has become widely used in the past twenty years or so, and canonized in English dictionaries, is in the phrase "klezmer music" or "klezmer" itself, to refer to the characteristically Jewish repertory and style of the klezmerim. This is a result of the recent "revival", or to use the more apt term preferred by Michael Alpert, "revitalization" of this musical genre. One even hears and sees "klezmer music" used to describe vocal music of the Yiddish American Theater, folk songs (traditionally transmitted chiefly by non-professional women), and anachronistically, any Israeli style music—in short, for all popular secular Jewish



Abe Schwartz violin, with his daughter Sylvia Schwartz at the piano ca. 1923.

music. The relatively exotic sound of the word *klezmer* has probably added to the modern mystique.

The multi-ethnic context of the European klezmerim also entailed the frequent participation of gentiles, especially gypsies, some of whom were klezmer bandleaders. Indeed, in recent years, long after the Nazi decimation of the Jewish communities of Ukraine, Romania, and Hungary, many Jewish tunes are preserved and played in gentile and Gypsy families of musicians. Under these circumstances, the repertory of the klezmerim absorbed melodic influences from the various neighboring gentile communities. This began with the music of the Slavic population among whom the Jews had settled after migrating from Germany. Gradually they came to be influenced by other musics of Eastern Europe as well. Furthermore, in the 17th and 18th centuries the klezmerim, already possessing certain easterly elements from their synagogal modes (*shteyger*, a term like Greek *dbrómos* and Turkish *makam*), also picked up Tatar musical influences. It is conceivable that they came into contact with Turkish, and more relevantly, Greek music

via Ottoman rule in eastern Romania (Moldavia) via Hasidic continuation of Oriental features. Governed by Greeks from Istanbul (Constantinople) in the 16th and 17th centuries it was a center of Greek commercial and cultural activity. Under czarist Russian rule, the city of Odessa became another urban site of Jewish and Greek contact. Toward the late 19th century, Moldavian/Romanian music itself became a dominant influence on the klezmerim, and continued to do so well into the present century, including in the United States.

The vast Jewish immigration to America, World War I, and the continued success of the American record companies during the first quarter of the 20th century, made the United States the center of klezmer recordings. By the 1930s, the commercial viability of authentic klezmer recordings had declined so that only a few ensembles were recorded. Furthermore, an attrition of klezmer music and recording was due to the fact that, as earlier in Europe, klezmerim were generally considered disreputable and their music was considered (except at weddings!) less a part of daily life, devotion, and emotion than folk

songs, Hasidic chants, and sentimental songs; less noble than cantorial and conservatory art music; and less chic and catchy than theater and vaudeville music. There was also a marked decline in the subtlety of the performances as they became increasingly influenced by American music which was also performed professionally by many klezmer musicians.

By the early 1970s, only a small part of the old repertory and style continued to be heard. Except among Hasidic groups, who developed further their own distinctive dance melodies in America, the majority of Jewish weddings by then featured American and Israeli dance music, with at most a handful of older melodies tossed in. Around the mid-70s, a wave of fresh interest in the old repertory and styles of the klezmerim on the part of youthful musicians, folkdancers, folklorists, ethnomusicologists, and record collectors/archivists on both the East and West Coasts, spearheaded a new interest in "klezmer music." A band of young musicians from Berkeley, California, calling themselves simply The Klezmerim, were probably the first to gain recognition, first via local per-

formances and their recordings on the Arhoolie label (CD/C 309) and later via coast to coast concert and club dates. Their ranks were soon to be swelled by musicians and researchers throughout the country, yielding experimental and hybrid effluences. In very recent years, the appearance of klezmer bands on radio and television and the participation of such personalities as Itzhak Perlman, has all the more broadened the popularity and prestige of "klezmer music" among Jews and non-Jews alike. As in the past some important klezmer virtuosi today are not Jewish.

The klezmer phenomenon has constituted not only a renewed resource of musical ideas, but also a new source of Jewish secular identity, and, accompanied by songs, has for some become a vehicle for liberal activism. In Israel, however, klezmer activity is closely linked to Jewish orthodoxy and has thereby given rise to a fusion of Ashkenazic and Sephardic musical styles applied to the old repertory. The recent addition of Yiddish songs to klezmer performance repertory has also contributed to maintaining Yiddish culture.

In the present collection, I have tried

to present what I regard as an aesthetically excellent and interesting diversity of mainly acoustic recordings (pre-1925) including rare European as well as American discs, representing solos on a variety of instruments, as well as ensembles of various combinations and styles, playing a range of tunes from the older repertory, i.e. the slow tunes like table-songs (the *nign*, plural *nigunim*,

also sometimes called *kbosidl* from association with hasidism) and the “lively” dance tunes called *freylekhs* and its choreographic variant, the *sher* (scissors), as well as the Moldavianized forms, i.e. the wistful improvisation called *doina* (doyne), the limping-rhythm *zbok* or *bora* (unconnected with the Israeli hora), and the upbeat *bulgar* (or *bulgarish*).



The Music

1. Doina and Hora - Jacob Hoffman (xylophone with Kandel's Orchestra, N.J., Jan. 25, 1923).

Jacob Hoffman (ca. 1899-1974). A native of Europe, Hoffman was (unlike the majority of musicians playing klezmer music in his day) a full-time musician in the United States performing on the xylophone. He made klezmer recordings with (Harry) Kandel's Orchestra played with the Philadelphia Orchestra, (as a long-time resident of

the Philadelphia area), and toured with the Boston Pops Orchestra and with the Ballet Russe of Monte Carlo. As a pianist he also accompanied silent films at local movie houses.

This selection consists of the common format *doina* plus part of a *bora* (*zbok*). The term *doina*, which comes from the word for “song” or “lament” in the ancient pre-Roman Dacian language of Romania, refers to a kind of slow, intense, non-metrical improvisation. Originally a rural genre associated with shep-

herds, the doina of Moldavia became popular with urban musicians (Gypsies, Greeks, and Jews). It was especially in vogue toward the end of the 19th century and the first quarter of the present century throughout the Yiddish speaking world. As is frequent with instrumental *doinas*, our example is followed by a danceable *bora* in the same mode or scale. The second and concluding part of the hora is a rhythm transposition of a tune in 4/4 time, found e.g. in the folk song “Vos hob ikh gedarft fun mayn heym avektsuforen” (“Why did I have to leave home?”), the first klezmer version of which was recorded as Bucharester Chusidel by Hochman's Orchestra in 1924.

The melody was also taken over for a Greek rebetic love song, “Mángiko” (also called “Skertsopetakhtó”), possibly performed in musical cafés of Smyrna before 1922, and heard on various recordings from Athens (and Cairo) from the period 1925-1935. A splendid version of *Mángiko*, sung by Dalgás and accompanied by the violinist Oghdhontákis (who had used the melody at the end of another tune) is reissued on *Greek-Oriental Rebetica, Songs and Dances in the Asia Mi-*

nor Style (Arhoolie/Folklyric CD 7005 cut 7) for which I provided text, translation, and further details of Greek, Jewish, Armenian, and Assyrian variants of the melody.

2. Sirba - Orchestra Orfeon (Istanbul, 1912).

This is an old Jewish *bulgarish* tune, probably known as *sirba* in Western Moldavia (including Iasi). It was still in the repertory of Avrom Bugich, the last major professional klezmer fiddler in Iasi.

The basic melody (i.e., minus the additional dance tune at the end) was well-known in the Western Ukraine as well, and was often played together with the famous dance-tune “Khosn-kale Mazltov.” The second part of the melody was also set to lyrics including the following: “Geloybt iz Got unzer boyre, Er hot unz gegeben unzer toyre,” (“Praised is God our Creator; he has given us our Torah”).

Probably the earliest European recording of the basic melody (however, in an undanceable brass-band novelty arrangement) was made by the Russisch-Jüdische Orchester (Columbia E6024 = Favorite 1-72083, mx. 2383) probably in Hanover in

January of 1911, and was curiously entitled "Konstan-tinopolisch." It seems unlikely that this title was merely an exoticizing caprice on the part of this band recording in Germany. However, in view of the Orfeon recording heard here, it is not wholly impossible that the melody, though of probably Moldavian provenience, became known among the Ashkenazim of Istanbul. A dance-tempo klezmer recording of the tune was made a little later in New York on April 4, 1913, by A. Elenkrig's Yidische Orchestra, with the title "Yiddelach Briderlach."

It appears that our anonymous Istanbul klezmer ensemble, for commercial viability, recorded Greek pieces (like the well-known *kalamatianó* on the reverse of the *sirba*) together with Jewish pieces which could be marketed, with Greek titles, as belonging to the Romano-Moldavian repertory with which Greeks were familiar. At this writing, I have just been informed of other recordings by this ensemble, listed under "Greek orchestras" in the Orfeon catalogue of 1912-1913. The present selection is, apart from its ethno-historical interest, notable for its early documentation of humorous effects in klezmer

performance style.

3. Mechutonim Tantz - Jewish Orchestra (Abe Schwartz Orchestra, N.Y.C. February, 1918).

Abe Schwartz, a native of Romania, was from the late teens well into the 1940s a highly successful bandleader both on record and at hotels in the Catskill Mountains of New York State, which were also a venue for Naftule Brandwein (#4, 7, 14, 17). He was also a composer, arranger, accompanist, and an excellent fiddler specializing in Romanian Jewish repertory. His orchestra produced more recordings than all other American klezmer ensembles of the acoustic period. In the 1940s he continued in the music business as an accompanist and arranger of comic songs for the Apollo label in New York.

This selection is an archetypal three-part Jewish dance-*nign* in *Abava Rabba* or three parts. The title means "dance of the parents of bride and groom" (*mekbutonim*). The second part (or a melodic variation thereof) figures in Prokofiev's Overture on Jewish Themes (Opus 34), and in a vocal *nign* associated with Nikolaev (southern Ukraine) by

Lubavich hasidim.

4. Kallarash - Naftule Brandwine (clarinet with orchestra, New York City, Sept. 1922).

Naftule Brandwein (Brandwine), 1889-1963, was an immigrant from Galicia, and a member of a musical family. Brandwein was famous both as a virtuoso clarinetist, brilliantly creative while clinging to an old-world style, and as a fun-loving eccentric. His career as the premiere klezmer clarinetist was diminished somewhat in the latter 1920s by the increasingly stellar Ukrainian-born Dave Tarras (1897-1989), who was far less of a traditionalist.

Based on a Romanian song for the *zhok* dance, this piece became a standard tune among klezmorim. This version has one of the standard modulations within the so-called *mishebeyrakh sbteyger*. It is followed by a *nign* for dancing. The original is a *zmire* (song with Hebrew religious lyrics) for the Sabbath, *Lekhú neráneno*. The selection's title is the name of a town in Bessarabia. In the last section, the sound reminiscent of a "Roman candle" is a whirl produced by blowing on a disc.

5. Yiddisch Chusedel - Max Leibowitz (violin, Philip Friedman- pianist, New York City, July, 1916).

Max Leibowitz, probably a native of Romania, was an excellent traditional klezmer fiddler and bandleader, recording in both capacities between 1916 and 1920.

This is a dance *nign* in minor, played in old world fiddle style with American "straight ahead" rhythm on the piano accompaniment. This melody had been recorded earlier in Europe by Belf's ensemble as "Amerikanskaja" on Sirena 12421, July, 1912, and on the Kiev label Extraphon in July of 1914. Due to damage on the original disc, the conclusion of the piece was masterfully repaired by David J. Gray by "patching" from the corresponding earlier section.

6. Kleftico Vlachiko - Orchestra Goldberg (unknown cornet soloist, Istanbul, 1908).

Goldberg, of Orchestra Goldberg, is so far known to the world from only two discs which he made for Odeon in 1908, this *kleftico vlachiko* (and its reverse side, *sirto*) and a disc with two Turkish fanfares or concert-marches, one of which, "Midhat pacha

Kanto," was reissued by the ethnomusicologist-collector, Dr. Christian Poché, on *Turquie: Archives de la musique turque* (Ocora CD 560091, cut 3). Although Goldberg's orchestra is clearly a klezmer ensemble, it is uncertain whether they recorded any distinctly Jewish pieces, in addition to the known Greco-Moldavian, Greek and Turkish selections. Mr. Poché, who received me in Paris, denied knowing of any discs by Orchestre Goldberg other than these two (his and mine).

The first part is obviously a *doina*, but not in the same melodic pattern of other klezmer recordings. Possibly it represents a local (Moldavian?) type which is undocumented. For the 19th century it is known that several Moldavian klezmer troupes (especially from Iasi, but not from Bessarabia) traveled to Istanbul, where they played for Greeks, Ashkenazic Jews, and others (but not Sephardic Jews). The *doina* is followed by a well-known Bessarabian dance tune. The latter seems first to have been sung with Romanian lyrics, which began with words meaning 'Nearby in the garden', either as in *Colea in gradina* or *Colea in gradinita*. In the years

before the First World War, many Romanian, Greek, Jewish, Croatian, etc. songs and instrumentals using this tune appeared in Europe. In the United States, the melody became associated with a song "Nokh a bisl."

Although there is nothing intrinsically Jewish about the tune, and it had been performed among various gentile populations of Eastern Europe, it became identified with Jews in the United States and later on it seems, in Europe a recent Hungarian CD of instrumental performances of old tunes characterizes it as being of Jewish provenience, and the melody serves for the Russian underworld comic song "Khaim, lovachku zakroy" (Khayim, close up shop). In the United States, in 1920, the second part of the tune was adapted (along with fragments of the klezmer tunes "Ma-Yofes," "Kolomeyke," and "Khosn -Kale Mazltov" for the composition "Palesteena" by Con Conrad (Conrad Dober) and J. Russel Robinson and was recorded that year as a jazz instrumental by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band and as a vaudeville vocal by Eddie Cantor, in which our tune-segment is found in the title-refrain, "Lena was the queen of Palesteena,

just because she played her concertina."

The title of the present selection, "Kleftico Vlachiko," is made up of two Greek words, the adjective *vlábiko*, in this context amounting to "Romanian (Moldavo-Wallachian)," and the noun *kleftiko*, referring to a type of Greek regional non-rhythmic heroic ballad, named after *kléftes* or *brigands*, mountain warriors who took part in the Greek revolution against the Turks which ended in 1821.

The flip-side of this disc is a well-known Greek *sirto* played by the same group, clearly a klezmer ensemble, but was marketed for Greek audiences, as was the other Istanbul recording on this CD, the "Sirba" (#2) by another orchestra. Both records attest to the cosmopolitan nature of some klezmerim, and specifically document the klezmer performances of Greek music in Istanbul.

7. Führen Die Mechutonim Aheim - Naftule Brandwine (clarinet, with Abe Schwartz Orchestra. New York City, Dec. 7, 1923).

The title, "Firen Die Mekhutonim Aheim" ('Leading the bride's and groom's parent's home'), is an example of a *gas nign*

('street tune'), with which the in-laws were escorted to their home. In the recently seen video program *In the Fiddler's House*, Itzhak Perlman is shown escorting his daughter, at her wedding, to this tune. Recently Kurt Bjorling used the melody as basis for his composition "Calling The Children Home," a tribute to the early New Orleans horn man Charles "Buddy" Bolden (*Brave Old World, Beyond the Pale*, Rounder CD 3135, cut 12).

This recording, the seventh disc on which Brandwein is featured, seems to have made him especially popular. That perhaps he had not yet, at the time of this recording, established himself as a commercially safe bet for Columbia records, appears to be the case, since the reverse side of this record consists of imitations of farmyard animals by a comedian named "Noé" (French for Noah). This selection is a *gas nign* in the *shteyger Abava Rabba*, or in the 3/8 rhythm of the Moldavian *zbok*. This pattern had evidently been adapted by Jews no earlier than the 19th century, and was employed for several functions: (1) the *gas nign* for wedding processions; (2) tunes used for ritual moments in the wed-

which he studied with his father in his native Romania. Moskowitz toured Europe and came to the United States in 1908 for further tours, often with the Matus Gypsy Ensemble. From 1913, he operated and performed at the Moskowitz wine cellar on Rivington St. on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. He thereafter performed in other restaurants in New York and Washington D.C., to which he moved in 1943 and where he died. His repertory included not only Jewish material, but also Romanian, Hungarian, Russian, Ukrainian, Greek, Turkish and ragtime tunes. (This diversity is addressed in the reissue *The Art of the Cymbalom, The Music of Joseph Moskowitz, 1916-1953*, annotated by Dick Spottswood and Nicholas Blanton, Rounder CD 1126.)

Moskowitz's performance in his restaurant is vividly recalled for several pages in Michael Gold's *Jews Without Money* (as Lev Liberman first pointed out to me):

"Moscowitz runs a famous restaurant now on Second Avenue. In those days he kept a wine cellar on Rivington Street. It was popular among Romanian immigrants. . . I remember his place; it was a long narrow basement

lit by gas-lamps hanging like white balloons. Between the lamps grew clusters of artificial grapes and autumn leaves. There were many mirrors, and on them a forgotten artist had painted scenes from Romanian life—shepherds and sheep. . . a horse fair, peasants shucking wheat, a wedding. At one end of the room, under a big American flag, hung a chromo showing Roosevelt charging up San Juan Hill. At the other end hung a Jewish Zionist flag. . . It draped a portrait of Dr. Theodore Herzl. . . To one side was an open charcoal fire, where lamb, scallops and steaks grilled in a pit. Near this, on a small platform, Moscowitz sat with his cymbalom. Strings of red peppers on festoons dried behind him. A jug of wine stood at his elbow and after every song he poured himself a drink. . . As Moscowitz played, his head moved lower and lower over the cymbalom. At the crescendo one could not see his face, only his bald head gleaming like a hand mirror. Then, with a sudden upward flourish of his arms, the music ended. One saw his shy, lean face again, with its gray moustache. Everyone cheered, applauded and whistled. Moscowitz drank off his wine, and played an

encore. . .

"A hundred Jews in a basement blue as sea-fog with tobacco smoke. The men wore their derby hats. Some were bearded, some loud, sporty and young, some brown as nuts. The women were fat and seated happily, and smacked their children. . . The waiters buzzed like crazy bees. . . Mrs. Moscowitz was making change. Moscowitz played a sad and beautiful peasant ballad. A little blubber-faced man with a red beard beat his glass on the table, wept, then talk, talk, talk again. Jewish talk. Hot, sweaty, winey talk. A sweatshop holiday. Egypt's slaves around the campfire in the shadow of the pyramids. . . And Moscowitz played the Babylonian harp."

This is a three part instrumental dance in *Abava Rabba* followed by a second modulating three-part tune, and was also recorded by the Abe Schwartz Orchestra as Tate Siser, in 1917 and by Max Leibowitz as "Die Silberne Hochzeit," the same year. Moskowitz' version has a rather simplified first part and is played at a faster tempo than the later ones.

12. Doina (Part I) - S. Kosch (flute, and unknown *tsimbl*, probably recorded in

Lemberg [Lvov] ca. 1911).

S. Kosch is quite likely to be Shloymke Kosch, a flautist member of a musical family of Lemberg (Lvov) which flourished around the time of our recording, as Z. Feldman has observed from information in J. Stuchevsky's book, *Ha-Klezmorim*. The recording is a rare illustration of Jewish playing of flute and *tsimbl*.

The selection is a Jewish *doina* followed by a *zboik* in minor and a *sirba*, both probably of non-Jewish Bessarabian origin. Similarly, the *tsimbl* accompaniment is unlike that of known Romanian recordings of the period.

13. Doina (Part II) - S. Kosch.

Opshpil using the syncopated rhythm originating ultimately in the Greek *sirtó* dance, the tune is probably of Bessarabian provenience. The *doina* itself seems to be of the *de jale* variety, a particularly sad type of *doina*, always played instrumentally. It is followed by a tune for the Bessarabian *bonga* dance, also known among the Crimean Tatars as the *kalabalik*.

14. Turkische Yalle Vey Uve (tanz) - Naftule Brandwein's Orchestra (including

Brandwein, clarinet; Sam Spielman, trombone etc. N.Y.C. ca. April, 1923).

A Greek *sirtó* with an additional section in *Abava Rabba* by Brandwein, but I have not heard an exactly comparable *sirtó* among the great many early Greek recordings to which I have access. However, Dr. Zev Feldman assures me that Brandwein's tune corresponds to a specific *sirtó* which he has heard since Brandwein had a Greek musician friend, possibly named Tsopanidhis or Nikos Tsopanakis.

The melody is certainly in the style of Greek *sirtó* tunes from Constantinople and the towns of Asia Minor. This would explain the designation "terkish." For the ethnological imprecision, cf. Brandwein's "Araber Tantz," Victor 78658 (N.Y.C., Feb., 1926), which is not an "Arab dance" but an old *kalamatianó* from Greece, first recorded by Yangos Psamatialis as "I Plighés" in Istanbul in 1906. A genuinely Turkish tune, the well-known *Katip* or *Katibim* (popularized by Eartha Kitt as "Üskudar"), which is also in *sirtó* rhythm, and was recorded by Brandwein as "Der Terk in America," (Victor 77599 N.Y.C., March, 1924). As in the case

of Turkisher "Yalle Vey Uve" and "Araber Tanz," in the latter composition Brandwein added a section of his own.

The title represents *yale veyuve*, the southern Yiddish pronunciation of a Hebrew phrase meaning "May it ascend and come," which, in the High Holy Day liturgy, refers to the arrival of the prayer before God. Since there can hardly be a real connection of the dance tune with the liturgy, I suspect that the phrase was adopted in klezmer jargon to express the rhythm or movement of the *sirtó*, which figured as an exotic element in the European klezmer repertoire, as evidenced, for example, in a Jewish composition in *sirtó* rhythm recorded in the 1970s by the Moldavian klezmer Avrom Bugich.

Finally, it should be observed that the term *terkish* was also used by klezmerim for pieces resembling the Aegean (sea of Marmara) and Constantinopolitan *ballos/sousta* which was itself rhythmically similar to the *sirtó*.

15. Sadegurer Chused'l - Abe Schwartz Orchestra (New York City, Nov., 1917).

A modulating three-part *nign*-like tune, this selection is unconnected with the simi-

larly entitled piece played by Moskowitz, and the implied link to the Sadeger (Hasidim named after a town in western Ukraine) is in this instance dubious; often the names of well-known Hasidic groups were arbitrarily used on recordings as title of klezmer pieces.

16. Biem Reben's Sideh - Yiddisher Orkester (Abe Schwartz Orchestra, New York City, Nov., 1917).

The title, *Baym rebns sude* (side) means 'At the *rebe*'s sacral meal' (*rebe* here is a charismatic leader of a Hasidic sect), derives from the fact that this three-part melody is in the style of an old Hasidic dance *nign*. Other American recordings of the tune, with the same title variously spelled, are by Leibowitz' Yiddish Orchestra (Pathé (0)3526, N.Y.C. ca. 1917); I.J. Hochman's Yiddisher Orchestra (Edison 59501, New York City, Dec. 1918); and the Abe Schwartz Orchestra (Columbia 13055, New York City, ca. March 1920). Belf's ensemble had recorded it twice in Europe under the Russian title "Na Razsvete," ("At dawn") (Sirena 11090, April 1911, also on Extraphon 22.626). The latter record is subtitled in Russian "After the wedding."

The melody was used in Joseph

Cherniavsky's incidental music to Ansky's "Dibbuk," and recorded as part of the "Mechatunim Tantz" by Cherniavsky's Yiddish-American Jazz Band (Pathé 03685, N.Y.C. ca. May 1924), and again as "Jewish March" (Victor 78422, New York City, Nov. 1925).

17. Oi Tate, S'is Gut - Naftule Brandwein (clarinet solo with the Naftule Brandwein Orchestra, N.Y.C., April, 1925).

A three-part tune (1. *Abava Rabba*; 2. major; 3. *Abava Rabba*), apparently a *freylakhs* rephrased in New York as a bulgarish. The last part of the tune occurs as part of "Berdichever Chusidel," recorded by the Abe Schwartz Orchestra (Co E4069, New York City, ca. May, 1918, but not listed in R. Spottswood's *Ethnic Music on Records*). The title, *Oy, Tate, s'iz gut* means 'Oh, (heavenly) Father, it's good!'

18. Schweir and Schwiger Tanz - Abe Schwartz Orchestra (N.Y.C., April, 1920).

Entitled "Father-in-law and mother-in-law dance" ("*shver un shviger tants*"), this piece closely belongs with the other in-laws' dance reissued here ("Mechutonim Tantz" #3) from the same very old repertory of ritual dances. It is also known as a *shabes* (Sab-

bath) *nign* among the Bratslav hasidim.

19. Rumänische Fantasiën (Part 1) - Joseph Solinski (violin solo, with unknown cembalo. Warsaw, 1911).

A klezmer tune inspired by Romanian *lautar* tunes, this is the first part of a suite of melodies, recorded on two discs (Pts. I, II, III & IV). The fourth part is reissued on "Yikhes," cut 4, for which Joel Rubin provides a detailed musical analysis.

20. Khosidl - Rumynskij Orkestra Bel'fa (Belf's Romanian Orchestra, Russia, July, 1912).

V. Belf was a clarinetist who started as a pauper but was able, as leader of "Belf's Romanian Orchestra," to buy a house during his short but prolific recording career (1912-1913): first, with the Warsaw-based Sirena firm, and then with the Kiev-based company, Stella. The group was probably called "Romanian" only for promotional reasons.

In this dance-*nign* in a minor key the performance-style, while comparable in its humorous mannerisms to other recordings by Belf's ensemble, may in this instance be intentionally parodic; M. Beregovskii's account of a *kbosidl* (*kbusidl*) as a "grotesque solo

dance, imitating a dancing Hasid," attested from a description in 1848 of a wedding in the (predominantly non-Hasidic or anti-Hasidic) Jewish community of Brest-Litovsk (*Old-Jewish Folk Music*, p.503, fn.95). It should be observed, however, that many of the tunes called *kbosidl* or *kbusidl* ("Hasid"), including the present one, are, in rhythm, melody and tempo, of a type once actually sung and/or danced (with devotional fervor, rather than grotesquery) by hasidim, including the tune from Vinnitsa (where hasidism flourished), published by Beregovski, *Old Jewish Folk Music* (p. 446), which motivated his comment.

21. Der Shtiller Bulgar - Abe Schwartz Orchestra (New York City, Sept., 1918).

This well-known, originally non-Jewish Bessarabian dance tune here is designated as: "quiet (*shtiler*) bulgar," and was also recorded as: "Der Stiller Bulgarish" by Kandel's Orchestra (Victor 72054, N.Y.C., Dec. 5, 1907). The present recording was also released under the Romanian title "Hora Boulevardului." The tune appears also as a concluding motif after a *doina* by Max Leibowitz, "Orientalische Melodien"

(Emerson 1343, New York City, 1919) and there are several other instrumental versions. My mother sang a Yiddish version with lyrics *Oy, a nakht (velt?) a sheyne*... "Oh, a lovely night (world)..."

The melody was the basis of an American pop song hit "And The Angels Sing," recorded in 1939 by Benny Goodman's Orchestra with vocalist Martha Tilton. Goodman has related the history of the song as follows: "It was Ziggy Elman who brought that to us. He had recorded it as an instrumental with his own little group on the Bluebird label, and when it started to become a hit, I asked Johnny Mercer to write some lyrics for it. It was originally a Hebrew folk-tune, you know, and Ziggy had done it as a *freylekh*—in fact part of his solo on our record is in *freylekh* tempo..." (edited from the quotation in G.T. Simon, *The Big Bands Songbook*, 1973, p.6). In 1943 Elman recorded the song with Tommy Dorsey's band. It has been reported that this song was the subject of an unsuccessful plagiarism lawsuit by Abe Schwartz.

22. A Mitzve Tenzel - Hochman's Orchestra (New York City, Aug. 1921).

This three part *nign* in minor was also

recorded as a *kbosidl*. The *mitsve-tants* or *mitsve-tentsl* ("commandment" or "good deed" dance) was one of the ritual wedding dance-occasions.

23. National Hora (Part II) - Abe Schwartz (violin, accompanied by his daughter, Sylvia Schwartz on piano. New York City, May, 1920).

The first part is a famous tune for *Opfiren di mekbatonim* (leading away the in-laws). The characterization of the rhythm as *bora* is due to Schwartz' origin in western Moldavia; in Bessarabia the term would be *zbok*. This is followed by a *freylakb*, in the *Abava Rabba* mode, consisting of three tunes. The sequence of these three tunes was later recorded by Kandel's Orchestra as "Simkhas Toyre in der alter haim" ("The holiday celebration of the Torah in the old country"), (Victor 77163, N.J. Feb. 22, 1923).

The dialogue which opens our recording goes "Schwartz brother, you've pleased me so much with the first piece, I'd like you to play me another piece!" Schwartz: "Why not? With the greatest pleasure! Here, I'm playing already!" (The "first piece," i.e. Part I, is reissued on *Yikbes* (cut 14) and is no-

table for its Turkish-style bowing on two-strings, and its imitation of bagpipes).

24. Sher (Part II) - Abe Schwartz Orchestra (New York City, October 1920).

The *sher* ("scissors"), an old distinctly Jewish kind of group couples-dance was popular throughout the Yiddish-speaking world, and even spread in some areas of Eastern Europe among gentile populations. The dance apparently has no East European prototype. M. Beregovskii noted rhythmic and structural parallels in German *Scherer* dances of the 16th century; conceivably, then, a Jewish version of the dance came from Germany with the Ashkenazic immigration into the Polish Kingdom.

(Prof. Martin Schwartz - 1996 with contributions by Dr. Walter Zev Feldman, and editing & summarizing by Chris Strachwitz & Leticia Del Toro)

DISCOGRAPHY AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following reissues provide both excellent examples of early *klezmer* recordings, and contain informative liner notes. By studying all of these fine productions one can gain a well-rounded basic background on what may be called klezmerology.

1) Our original reissue, **Klezmer Music-**

The label gives composer's credit to one M. Fried of Philadelphia, the localization of which in Philadelphia is significant, since that region has had a tradition of *sher* compositions different from those played in New York. Morris Fried was a well-known member of a musical family in Philadelphia which included his son, the liturgical composer Isadore Fried. On both sides of the present recording M. Fried has put together a series of parts from traditional tunes into a compositional whole in *sher* rhythm. Prominent in Part II are phrases from the Yiddish song "Az moshiakh vet kumen" ("When the Messiah comes"), which also provides a synthetic closure.

The First Recordings: 1910-1927 (Folklyric LP/Cassette 9034), is (apart from three eliminated selections) superceded by this present production, which is much expanded and improved as to selections, annotations, and re-recording technology.

2) **Klezmer muzik: Klezmer Music 1910-1942. Recordings from the YIVO Ar-**

chives 1910-1942. Compiled and Annotated by Henry Sapoznick. Folkways LP FSS 34021, 1980. The liner notes contain still valuable musicological and historical annotations by Walter Zev Feldman and Andy Statman. (CD reissue, but without liner notes, now as *Klezmer Music 1910-1942*, Global Village CD 104)

3) **Klezmer Pioneers: European and American Recordings 1905-1952.** Produced and annotated by Henry Sapoznick and Dick Spottswood. Rounder CD 1089, 1993. A broad spectrum of selections, with annotations particularly interesting for the history of klezmer music in the United States.

4) **Yikhes: Frühe Klezmer-Aufnahmen von 1907-1939 aus der Sammlung von Prof. Martin Schwartz.** (Trikont CD 26, soon to be available in an English version). A showcase of aesthetically excellent older European and American recordings, chiefly of solos and small ensembles, mostly featured also on the present Arhoolie/Folklyric reissue. Magisterially produced and annotated (in German), with all sorts of interesting information, in what amounts to an exhaustively researched monograph, by Joel Rubin (himself one of

the very best clarinetists of the klezmer revitalization), with the collaboration of Rita Ottens.

5) I also recommend **Like in a Different World: Leon Schwartz, a Traditional Jewish Klezmer Violinist from Ukraine**, produced by Michael Alpert and Michael Schlesinger, Global Village Music CD/Cassette 109. A well-edited documentary of the playing (and comments) of Leon Schwartz (1901-1990), notable for his repertory (secular and spiritual), skill, and human presence. The notes, which show Alpert's usual quality of incisive illumination (he also is a fine accompanist on several cuts), bring out the interethnic and intergeneric nature of the traditional klezmer world.

Important publications from which I've drawn are "Bulgareasca/Bulgarish/Bulgar, The Transformation of a Klezmer Dance Genre" by Walter Z. Feldman (*Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 38, No. 1, Winter 1994), and **Old Jewish Folkmusic: The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski**, edited and translated by Mark Slobin (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982).

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*Dedicated to the memory of my mother,
Anna (Enyele) Schwartz (1906-1996).
She was blessed with song and with song
she blessed us.
She was Jewish music.*

Edited by Dr. Martin Schwartz.
Produced by Chris Strachwitz.
Cover art by Beth Weil.

Notes by Dr. Martin Schwartz with editing and summarizing by Chris Strachwitz and Leticia Del Toro.

Sound restoration of the 78 rpm discs by David Julian Gray using the NoNoise system.

THE KLEZMORIM

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KLEZMER MUSIC

Early Yiddish Instrumental Music: 1908-1927



1. **DOINA AND HORA** (*Hebrew dance*)
Jacob Hoffman - xylophone; with Kandel's Orchestra
2. **SIRBA** – Orchestra Orfeon
3. **MECHUTONIM TANTZ** – Jewish Orchestra
(Abe Schwartz' Orchestra)
4. **KALLARASH** – Naftule Brandwine - clarinet solo; & his Orchestra
5. **YIDDISH CHUSEDEL** – Max Leibowitz – violin solo;
Philip Friedman – piano
6. **KLEFTICO VLACHIKO** – Orchestra Goldberg
7. **FIHREN DIE MECHUTONIM AHEIM** (*tanz*)N. Brandwine
(Naftule Brandwine & Abe Schwartz' Orchestra)
8. **KOILEN** (*dance*) – Mishka Ziganoff (accordion solo)
9. **CH'SIDISHE NIGUNIM** (*H. Gross & B.Katz*) (Part I) Boibriker
Kapelle (H. Gross - leader; Dave Tarras - clarinet; Beresh Katz &
Abe Schwartz - violins, etc. - trombone or tuba)
10. **HANEROS HALULI**
H. Steiner - violin with unknown cymbalom
11. **SADIGURER-CHUSID** (Moskowitz)
Joseph Moskowitz - cymbalom; Max Yussim-piano
12. **DOINA** (Pt. 1) S. Kosch - flute solo w/ cymbalom acc.
13. **DOINA** (Pt. 2) S. Kosch - flute solo w/ cymbalom acc.
14. **TURKISCHE YALLE VEY UVE** (*tanz*) (N. Brandwein)
Naftule Brandwein's Orchestra
15. **SADEGURER CHUSED'L** – Abe Schwartz' Orchestra
16. **BIEM REBEN'S SIDEH**
Yiddisher Orkester (Abe Schwartz' Orchestra)
17. **OI TATE, S'IS GUT** – Naftule Brandwein's Orchestra
18. **SCHWEIR UND SCHWIGER TANZ**
Abe Schwartz' Orchestra
19. **RUMÄNISCH FANTASIEN** (Pt. 1)
Joseph Solinski – violin solo, with cymbalom acc.
20. **KHOSIDL** – Belf's Rumanian Orchestra
21. **DER SHTILLER BULGAR**
Jewish Orchestra (Abe Schwartz Orchestra)
22. **A MITZVE TENZEL** (*Tabak*) – Hochman's Orchestra
23. **NATIONAL HORA** (Part II)
Abe Schwartz - violin; with Sylvia Schwartz - piano
24. **SHER** (*Morris Fried*) (Part II)
Abe Schwartz' Orchestra (Abe Schwartz - violin)

Edited by Dr. Martin Schwartz from his collection of 78s.

Produced by Chris Strachwitz

Cover art by Beth Weil

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