

## Hirshberg's *Ben-Haim*: Three Decades Later

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*Paul Ben-Haim: His Life and Works* by Jehoash Hirshberg. Tel Aviv: Israel Music Institute (IMI), 2010. 440 pp., including illustrations, 106 musical examples, extensive list of 259 compositions, and indexes of names and works. (First English edition, Jerusalem: Israeli Music Publications, 1990, edited by Bathja Bayer and translated by Nathan Friedgut from the original 1983 Hebrew edition, published by Am Oved. The 2010 edition was revised, updated, and edited by Paul Landau.)

Jehoash Hirshberg's *Paul Ben-Haim: His Life and Works* has been a groundbreaking work in all of its three editions: 1983, 1990, and 2010.\* Not only was it the first monograph on an Israeli composer—arguably the most performed among the founders of Israeli art music—it was also written by the first Israeli musicologist to daringly devote a monograph to an Israeli composer, a member of an emerging culture plagued by an inferiority complex: too young and never Western (or Eastern) “enough.” As a musicological work, especially in 1983 but also in 1990, *Ben-Haim* was unique at a time when practically all Israeli musicologists (unlike ethnomusicologists) focused their efforts on traditional topics related to European composers. Moreover, in his *Ben-Haim*, Hirshberg assumed the uneasy task of crafting a tribute to a conservative, audience-pleasing composer, whose reception among his colleagues at the time of the original, 1983 publication had been deteriorating for about two decades. At that time, toward the end of the (real or perceived) “tyranny of the avant-garde” in Israel, Hirshberg still had to justify the significance of Ben-Haim's elegant, tonal music throughout his book, and explicitly in the last chapter; today, there is much less of a need to advocate for Ben-Haim—and not just because of Hirshberg's written advocacy and concert planning in the past three decades. Many musicians and large audiences, in Israel and abroad, consider Ben-Haim to be the best composer among the founding generation: highly professional and creative, the best representative of local, exquisite, accessible music. Most importantly, through a study of Ben-Haim's biography as a German-refugee composer who created Israel's Mediterranean style, Hirshberg skillfully revealed a wealth of knowledge about processes, ideologies, and identity markers—ethnic, religious, and cultural, and especially nationalism in Israeli art music—at a time when some of these terms were not common in Israeli musicology. Finally, Hirshberg illuminated the professional relationship between Ben-Haim and singer Bracha Zephira, whose Mizrahi tunes Ben-Haim used for his Western compositions,

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\* I am deeply grateful to my friends and colleagues who enriched the final version of this review with their comments: Oded Assaf (Buchmann-Mehta School of Music at Tel Aviv University), composer and free-lance writer on contemporary—Israeli and non-Israeli—music; Yosef Goldenberg (Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance), a musicologist who focuses on tonal theory and Israeli music; Uri Golomb, musicologist, one of the guest editors of this *Min-Ad* issue and editor of the Israel Music Institute's journal *IMI News* and other IMI publications; Liran Gurkiewicz (doctoral candidate at Bar-Ilan University), who focuses on the music of Ben-Haim; and Michael Wolpe (Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance), a composer who edited some of Ben-Haim's compositions and who directed the Israeli Music Celebrations for the last six years. This review, however, does not represent their individual or collective views on Ben-Haim or Hirshberg's book.

revealing details that can be interpreted as supporting arguments about orientalism and arguably even about racism in Israeli music.

*Paul Ben-Haim* stands on a rather small shelf of books on Israeli art (serious) music and Israeli composers; each volume is a pioneering contribution to the field. Regardless of their perceived musicological quality, many of these books serve as efficient springboards for further research; without them, additional scholarship on these composers often does not happen. These books—whether basic and informative or more sophisticated—enable musicologists of various Jewish and Israeli cultures to commence their journeys into deeper meanings in Israeli compositions. Following Hirshberg's Hebrew version of his *Ben-Haim*, Avner Bahat, who edited a series of music books (of which *Ben-Haim* was the first), published his own book about Oedoen Partos in 1984 (Am Oved). These two books about two of the Israeli Five—Ben-Haim, Partos, Alexander Uriyah Boskovich, Mordecai Seter, and Josef Tal—opened the gates for more books about Israeli composers: first, about Boskovich and Tal from among the founders, and, later on, the life and works of André Hajdu, Mark Kopytman, Ben-Zion Orgad, Arie Shapira, Tzvi Avni, and others. These included a growing series of mini biographies published by the Israel Music Institute (IMI), notably on Mordecai Seter, Abel Ehrlich, and Tzvi Avni. Our modest shelf also includes general works on Israeli music, beginning with the books by Peter Gradenwitz, Max Brod, Zvi Keren, Philip Bohlman, Yehuda W. Cohen, Amnon Shiloah, Robert Fleisher, and continuing with a short book and a forthcoming one by the present author.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Israel Music Institute (IMI) published a series of mini-monographs on Israeli composers. The series includes booklets on Mordecai Seter (1995), with an essay by Paul Landau; Hanoch Jacoby (2003), Menachem Wiesenberg (2003), Menahem Avidom (2005), Yinam Leef (2005) and Ben-Zion Orgad (2007), with essays by Joseph Peles; Josef Bardanashvili (2005), with an essay by Uri Golomb; Tsippi Fleischer (2009), with an essay by Nathan Mishori and Uri Golomb; and Tzvi Avni (2007), with an essay by Michael Wolpe. The booklets also include additional information (e.g. complete lists of the composers' works, discographies of their music, short biographies, information on selected performances of their works, and short bibliographical lists). The most extensive in this series to date was the booklet on Abel Ehrlich (1997), edited by Yuval Shaked and Amnon Wolman, and containing several essays on Ehrlich's music by Ehrlich himself, Yuval Shaked, Ruben Seroussi, Joseph Peles, Oded Assaf and others.

Notable monographs about Israeli composers, in chronological order: Jehoash Hirshberg, *Paul Ben-Haim: hayyav vi-ytzirato* (*Paul Ben-Haim: His Life and Works*; Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1983); Avner Bahat, *Oedoen Partos: hayyav vi-ytzirato* (*Oedoen Partos: His Life and Works*; Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1984); Jehoash Hirshberg, *Paul Ben-Haim: His Life and Works* (translated from Hebrew by Nathan Friedgut, edited by Bathja Bayer [Jerusalem: Israeli Music Publications, 1990; 2nd edn., Tel Aviv: Israel Music Institute, 2010]); Jehoash Hirshberg and Herzl Shmueli, *Alexander Uriyah Boskovich: hayyav, yetzirato ve-haguto* (*Alexander Uriyah Boskovich: His Life, his Works and his Thought*; Jerusalem: Carmel, 1995); Josef Tal, *'Ad Yosef: zikhronot, hirhurim, sikumim* (*Josef Tal: Reminiscences, Reflections, Summaries*; Jerusalem: Carmel, 1997, retold in Hebrew by Ada Brodsky); Mira Zakai and André Hajdu, *Le'an sohim dgei ha-salmon* (English title: *Dialogue* [between Zakai and Hajdu]; Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1999); Yulia Kreinin (Ed.), *Mark Kopytman: Voices of Memories, Essays and Dialogues* (Tel Aviv: Israel Music Institute, 2004); Bat-Sheva Shapira (Ed.), *Ka-ho'ah ben shoshanim* (*Thorn Among Roses*; Haifa: Oryan, 2007); Yulia Kreinin, *The Music of Mark Kopytman: Echoes of Imaginary Lines* (Berlin: Verlag Ernst Kuhn, 2008); Bat-Sheva Shapira (Ed.), *Ben-Zion Orgad—Kol ha-mabat* (*Ben-Zion Orgad—The Voice of Vision*; Haifa: Oryan, 2008); and Tzvi Avni, *Be-mif'am ishi: pirkei haim be-musica* (*Personal Notes: A Life in Music*; in press (Tel Aviv: Maba, 2012).

General books, selection: Max Brod and Yehuda W. Cohen, *Die Musik Israels* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1976; 2nd edn. of the 1951 book); Zvi Keren, *Contemporary Israeli Music: Its Sources and Stylistic Development* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1980); Philip V. Bohlman, "The Land Where Two Streams Flow:" *Music in the German-Jewish Community of Israel* (Urbana and Chicago:

On this shelf, the place of three books by Jehoash Hirshberg is secured. His *Ben-Haim* launched a career of devoted service to Israeli music. Twelve years later, Hirshberg published both his Oxford University Press tome, *Music in the Jewish Community of Palestine 1880-1948: A Social History* (1995) and his monograph on Alexander Boskovich, co-written with Herzl Shmueli, *Alexander Uriyah Boskovich: hayyav, yetzirato ve-haguto (Alexander Uriyah Boskovich: His Life, his Works and his Thought)*, (1995). These three works sealed Hirshberg's status as an authority in the field, which led to his *Grove* entries on Israeli composers in the 2001 edition, and consequently in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*.<sup>2</sup> Hirshberg's *Ben-Haim*, *Palestine*, and *Boskovich*, plus his *Grove* and *MGG* entries, capture the peak of his work on Israeli music (in addition to his articles and books in the realms of early music on Machaut, ethnomusicology on the Karaites, the origins of the Italian solo concerto beyond Vivaldi, Albinoni, and Marcello, and Italian opera, 1860-70). The path to this peak was paved by Hirshberg's first notable contribution to the field, his 1978 "The 'Israeli' in Israeli Music: The Audience Responds."<sup>3</sup> Three decades later, he summarized his thoughts on nationalism and ideology in Israeli music in his 2005 and 2008-09 *Min-Ad* articles, both on the vision of the East and the heritage of the West in Israeli art music (for a selective list of Hirshberg's writings on Israeli music, see Appendix).<sup>4</sup> Outside academia, Hirshberg has served as an avid promoter of

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University of Illinois Press, 1989); Yehuda W. Cohen, *Ne'imei zmirot Israel: musica u-musica'im be-Israel* (English title: *The Heirs of The Psalmist: Israel's New Music*, Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1990; consists of approximately one hundred biographies of Israeli composers); Jehoash Hirshberg, *Music in the Jewish Community of Palestine 1880-1948: A Social History* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995); Peter Gradenwitz, *The Music of Israel: From the Biblical Era to Modern Times* (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1996); Robert Fleisher, *Twenty Israeli Composers: Voices of a Culture* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997); Ronit Seter, *Yuvalim be-Israel: Meheva la-musica ha-omanutit be-Israel 1948-1998 (Homage to Israeli Art Music, 1948-1998)*; Jerusalem: The National Council for Art and Culture, 1998; a short book consisting of essays about Israel Prize winners: Oedoen Partos, Paul Ben-Haim, Menahem Avidom, Mordecai Seter, Josef Tal, Arie Shapira, Ben-Zion Orgad, Abel Ehrlich, and André Hajdu); and Ronit Seter, *Israeli Composers: Between Jewishness and the World* (in progress, under contract with Oxford University Press).

ספרים נבחרים בעברית על מלחינים ישראליים, בסדר כרונולוגי: יהואש הירשברג, *פאול בן-חיים: חייו ויצירתו*, תל-אביב: עם עובד, 1984; יהודה כהן, *נעימי זמירות ישראל: מוסיקה ומוסיקאים בישראל*, תל-אביב: עם-עובד, 1990 (ביוגרפיות קצרות של כמאה מלחינים ישראליים); יהואש הירשברג והרצל שמואלי, *אלכסנדר אוריה בוסקוביץ': חייו, יצירתו והגותו*, ירושלים: כרמל, ספרי מוסיקה, 1995; יוסף טל, *עד יוסף: זכרונות, ההרורים, סיכומים* (רשמה מפי המלחין וסיפורה בעברית: עדה ברודסקי), ירושלים: כרמל, המועצה הציבורית לתרבות ואמנות, ספרי מוסיקה, 1997; רונית סתר, *יובלים בישראל: מחווה למוסיקה האמנותית בישראל, 1948-1998*, ירושלים: המועצה הציבורית לתרבות ולאמנות, מרכז ההדרכה לספריות בישראל, 1998 (מאמרים על חתני פרס ישראל עד 1998: עדן פרטוש, פאול בן-חיים, מנחם אבידום, מרדכי סתר, יוסף טל, אריה שפירא, בן-ציון אורגד, אבל ארליך, ואנדרה היידו); מירה זכאי ואנדרה היידו, *לאן שוחים דגי הסלמון*, תל אביב: הקיבוץ המאוחד, 1999; בת-שבע שפירא, *עורכת, כחות בין שושנים: אריק שפירא – מלחין ישראלי*, חיפה: אורין, 2007; בת-שבע שפירא, *עורכת, בן-ציון אורגד – קול המבט*, חיפה: אורין, 2008; *צבי אבני, במפעם אישי: פרקי חיים במוסיקה*, [תל אביב]: מבע, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Hirshberg wrote the entries in the 2001 *Grove* on composers Haim Alexander, Paul Ben-Haim, Alexander Uriyah Boskovich, Avraham Daus, Tsippi Fleischer, Theodore Holdheim, Mark Kopytman, Haim Permont, Menashe Ravina (music critic), Erich Walter Sternberg, Joachim Stutschewsky, Josef Tal, Jehuda Wohl, and Michael Wolpe; most of them appeared also in the *MGG* (1999 and into the first years after 2000), including an entry on "Israel." See also Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Jehoash Hirshberg & David Sagiv, "The 'Israeli' in Israeli Music: The Audience Responds," *Israel Studies in Musicology* 1 (1978): 159-73.

<sup>4</sup> Jehoash Hirshberg, "The Vision of the East and the Heritage of the West: Ideological Pressures in the Yishuv Period and their Offshoots in Israeli Art Music during the Recent Two Decades," *Min-Ad: Israel Studies in Musicology Online* 4 (2005): <http://www.biu.ac.il/hu/mu/min-ad05/en/JehoashH.pdf>; Jehoash Hirshberg, "The Vision of the East and the Heritage of the West: A Comprehensive Model of Ideology and Practice in Israeli Art Music," *Min-Ad: Israel Studies in Musicology Online* 7/II (2008-09):

Israeli art music, most significantly as a senior steering committee member of the annual multi-concert festival, the Israeli Music Celebration. His recent initiative within this committee, to dedicate 2011-12 to Ben-Haim as “Composer of the Year” for Israeli orchestras and ensembles, culminated in the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra production of Ben-Haim’s 1933 oratorio *Joram*, in April 2012.<sup>5</sup>

While the 1990 edition of Hirshberg’s *Ben-Haim* was thoroughly revised and expanded, and not merely translated from the 1983 Hebrew edition, the 2010 edition is almost identical in its prose to that of 1990 (with minor exceptions and updates, like the description of the complete premiere of *Joram* in 2008 on p. 96). It is indeed significant that the book is available again—especially given that its original publisher, Peter Gradenwitz’s Israeli Music Publications, closed down a few years after the book was published. More importantly, the 2010 edition contains a comprehensive list of Ben-Haim’s works, which (as emphasized on the inside cover of the book) was revised, updated, and edited by Paul Landau, the Chair (since 1989) of the Israel Music Institute, which is the current publisher of Ben-Haim’s compositions. Landau’s work on this list of more than 259 compositions (some of them unnumbered) is of the utmost significance for both performers and musicologists, especially as the *Grove* “Ben-Haim” entry, also written by Hirshberg, contains only a short, selective list of works.

The book portrays the life and works of Paul Ben-Haim (1897-1984) in twenty-four chapters. It is a traditional biography, based on Hirshberg’s interviews with the composer during the last few years of his life, and on a close study of manuscripts and letters that Hirshberg himself brought from the composer’s home to the National Library of Israel, where they are archived.<sup>6</sup> The first five chapters portray the early years of the composer, born as Paul Frankenburger, as a young man in Munich. Hirshberg describes his work as a *Korrepitor*, or deputy director of the chorus and coach at the Munich Opera under Bruno Walter. He then devotes a chapter to Frankenburger’s subsequent post as a *Kapellmeister* and choir conductor of the Augsburger Stadttheater, where he conducted about forty operas. In chapter five, the author portrays the climax of these early years in Germany as Ben-Haim’s 1933 oratorio *Joram*, “which throughout his entire life he would regard as his *opus magnum*” (p. 82).

One can find the seeds of a sad irony right there, in chapter five: “*Joram*: The Book and the Oratorio.” In a book that, as a whole, establishes Ben-Haim as the father of Israeli music, Hirshberg surprisingly agrees with Ben-Haim, supporting an argument that his best composition was neither Jewish nor Israeli, but rather a traditional (well, Christian) German oratorio.<sup>7</sup> (Isn’t the fate of German Jews—think

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[http://www.biu.ac.il/hu/mu/min-ad/8-9-II/06-Hirshberg\\_The%20Vision.pdf](http://www.biu.ac.il/hu/mu/min-ad/8-9-II/06-Hirshberg_The%20Vision.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> See Noam Ben Zeev, “Ha-yetzirah ha-gdola shel ha-malhin Paul Ben-Haim zokhah li-g’ulah” (“Composer Ben-Haim’s Magnum Opus Attains Redemption) in *Haaretz* (1 April 2012, preview of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra performance on 3 April of Ben-Haim’s 1933 *Joram*): <http://www.haaretz.co.il/gallery/classicalmusic/1.1676451>. English version: Noam Ben Zeev, “Lost in 1933 Germany, Jewish Composer’s Grand Opus Finally Reaches Israeli Stage” in *Haaretz* (2 April 2012, preview of Ben-Haim’s 1933 *Joram*): <http://www.haaretz.com/culture/arts-leisure/lost-in-1933-germany-jewish-composer-s-grand-opus-finally-reaches-israeli-stage-1.422050>

<sup>6</sup> Jehoash Hirshberg, “Archives Have a Life of Their Own—New Discoveries in Ben-Haim’s Legacy,” *Min-Ad: Israel Studies in Musicology Online* 6 (2007-08): [http://www.biu.ac.il/hu/mu/min-ad/07-08/Hirshberg-Ben\\_Haim.pdf](http://www.biu.ac.il/hu/mu/min-ad/07-08/Hirshberg-Ben_Haim.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> In a short response to Liran Gurkiewicz’s paper on Jewish melodic elements in *Joram* (at the Israel Musicological Society annual meeting, July 2011), Hirshberg argued that *Joram* is essentially a traditional (Christian) German oratorio, structurally modeled after Bach’s Passions and practically

of Einstein, Freud, Schoenberg and thousands of other German-Jewish intellectuals, in the context of Amos Elon's 2002 *The Pity of It All*—reminiscent of the trite cliché about the definition of a Jew as someone who disseminates German culture globally?) Looking at Ben-Haim's oeuvre as “essentially Israeli,” as the composer himself proclaimed and as Hirshberg further promoted, or rather as “fundamentally German,” as his ideological adversaries Alexander Boskovich and others strongly implied—are, in retrospect, two interpretations of the same story. Indeed, these two narratives can be viewed as complementary as well as conflicting. In the 1990 book (and, hence, in the 2010 edition as well), Hirshberg uncompromisingly endorses the former perspective; but his current views, some of which are absent in the book, seem to capture a more complex image of Ben-Haim and his oeuvre. The first part of the book is thus of special importance. For both ideological and emotional reasons, Ben-Haim practically banned his early pieces, composed in Germany, for nearly three decades. Hirshberg's research, in writings and through concert planning, unearthed these works and secured performances for many of them—beginning with a private performance of several of Ben-Haim's early Lieder at Ben-Haim's home, a short time before the composer passed away,<sup>8</sup> and continuing in the last few years in a fruitful cooperation with Michael Wolpe, artistic director of the annual Israeli Music Celebration.

The theme of identity conflict reemerges throughout the book, but is most evident beginning in chapter six, “From Munich to Tel Aviv,” where Hirshberg unfolds the story of Ben-Haim's emigration in an upbeat tone, based on his letters and other writings. The name-changing anecdote tells a lively side of the story. In his first visit to Palestine, on a tourist's visa, Frankenburger had been forbidden to undertake employment of any kind, yet he was offered the opportunity to perform, which he did not wish to refuse. His producer, Moshe Hopenko, found a way around it: “‘Very simple,’ he said. ‘Change your name!’ ‘But how?’ I asked. ‘What is your father's name?’ he queried. ‘Heinrich,’ I replied, ‘Haim in Hebrew.’ ‘Well then,’ said Hopenko, ‘you'll be called Ben-Haim’” (p.108).<sup>9</sup>

Triumphant, or at the very least optimistic undertones accompany this and the subsequent chapters on the leading figure among the founders of Israeli style in music. The tragedy of a dislocated but proud German composer is somewhat soft-pedaled; yet it can be reconstructed between the lines—or more pronouncedly, in Ben-Haim's two short biographies found in the archives of the National Library of Israel (formerly the Jewish National and University Library). Ben-Haim proudly dwelled on his achievements in Germany prior to 1933 in a short biography from 1941 (Example 1).

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devoid of Jewish signifiers—which Ben-Haim ascribed to *Joram* only as an afterthought, four years later, in response to the historical events and ideological pressures of the time. This response was emailed to me in absentia, and I delivered it as the Chair of that session. This observation is not entirely correct, however: while Ben-Haim was evidently inspired by Bach's musical style, the structure of his oratorio bears little resemblance to Bach's Passions, but rather to oratorios by Handel and Mendelssohn (among others).

<sup>8</sup> Hirshberg, “Archives Have a Life of Their Own,” *Min-Ad* 2007-08.

<sup>9</sup> Hirshberg, *Ben-Haim* (2010), 108, originally cited in Paul Ben-Haim, “Aliyati le-eretz Israel,” *Tatzlil* 5, 11 (1971): 187.

פאול בן-חיים, “עלייתי לארץ-ישראל, פרק מאוטוביוגרפיה: זכרונות משנת 1933,” *תצליל*, קובץ 11, כרך 5, עמ' 187.

Example 1: Paul Ben-Haim, short biography, 1941

פ. בן חיים נולד ב-5 ליולי, 1897 במינכן והיה הילד הרביעי.  
לעורך דין ד"ר הינריך (חיים) פרנקנבורגר ולאשתו חנה למספחת  
שולמן. בן חיים קבל את חנוכו הכללי והמוסיקלי בעיר מולדתו  
איפה שבמר בטנסיה, אוברסיסה ואקדמיה המלכותית בהצטינות.  
מ-1920 עד 1922 היה האסיסטנט של המנצח ברופו ולטר והופיע  
אחרי כן בתור מנצח, מסנתרן וקומפוזיטור לפני הקהל בערים  
שונות בגרמניה. בין יצירותיו שזכו אז להצלחה מיוחדת יש  
למנות את: קונצרטו גרוסו, אופ' 15 (חובר ב1931) שבוצע לא רק  
בגרמניה אלא גם בצ'כוסלובקיה, אטליה, ורוסיה הסובייטית, ושרק  
ההיליים 'קכו' שקבל פרס בחגיגה מוסיקלית גדולה בנורנברג ובס  
יצירות אחרות לתזמורת, מוסיקה קמרית ושירה.  
בן חיים עלה ארצה ב-1933 והתישב בתל-אביב ועוד נמצא בה בתור  
מורה, קומפוזיטור, מסנתרן ומנצח-אורח של התזמורת הארצי ישראלית  
והתזמורת שרות השידור. הוא מורה בקונסרבטוריון, שולמית'  
בתל אביב, מפקח ובוהן בקונסרבטוריון האיני בירושלים, ויושב  
ראש של אגודת האמנים והמורים למוסיקה בתל אביב.  
בין היצירות הגדולות שהוא יצר בהיותו בארץ יש לציין את הסימפוניה  
הראשונה שלו שחבר בין 1939 ל-1940. הוא הקדיש אותה לזכרונו של  
אביו ז"ל אשר מת בשנת 1938 בגיל של 82 עזוב ושבור לב בכיה  
החולים היהודי במינכן. על הסימפוניה הזאת ובצועה הראשון  
בנצחונו של הממבר עצמו בחדש ינואר, 1941 כתב:

There, eight years after his forced emigration, he described his life as a successful young conductor, pianist, and composer, including his role as assistant to Bruno Walter and the performances of his 1931 Concerto Grosso in Germany, Czechoslovakia, Italy, and Russia.<sup>10</sup> Four crucial years later, in 1945, his second short biography was transformed in tone:

<sup>10</sup> Ben-Haim short biography, 1941, Ben-Haim archive at the National Library of Israel, Mus. 55, F 9 (Example 1), my translation from the Hebrew:

P. Ben-Haim was born 5 July 1897 in Munich and was the fourth child to the lawyer Dr. Heinrich (Chaim) Frankenburger and his wife Chana née Schulmann. Ben-Haim received his general and musical education in his hometown, where he graduated from the gymnasium, university, and the Royal Academy with distinction. From 1920 to 1922 he was assistant conductor to Bruno Walter, and later appeared as conductor, pianist, and composer in various cities in Germany. Among his then successful works were Concerto Grosso op. 15 (composed in 1931), which was performed not only in Germany but also in Czechoslovakia, Italy, and Soviet Russia; Psalm CXXVI, which won an award in a large musical celebration in Nuremberg; and other orchestral works, chamber music and songs.

Ben-Haim immigrated [to Palestine, 'ala artza] in 1933, settled in Tel Aviv, and still lives there as a teacher, composer, pianist, and guest-conductor of the Eretz-Israel Orchestra [Palestine Orchestra], and [the Palestine] Broadcasting Service. He teaches at the Shulamit Conservatory, [serves as a] superintendent at the Eretz-Israel Conservatory in Jerusalem, and chairs the Association of Artists and Music Teachers in Tel Aviv. [The next paragraphs focus on his first symphony.]

### P. Ben-Haim

The composer P. Ben-Haim[,] a native of Munich and graduate of the [missing word] Academy there[,] became known and famous as a young composer and conductor in Germany. His meeting with Heinrich Shalit [sic,] a brother of Isidor Shalit—Herzl's secretary[,] gave him the incentive to study Jewish music and its problems. A. C. Idelson's [sic] Books introduced him into a new world of music.

In 1933 Ben-Haim emigrated to Palestine. After 3 years of tranquility—years of acclimatisation and adaptation to the surroundings of the country and regeneration of the soul after a crisis, he composed a quartet which was played in the framework of concerts of Jewish music initiated by Joachim Stutchewski [sic]. This was the great turning point to a new original Palestinian creation. Gradually he absorbs the sounds of the orient, those of nature and those tunes of oriental communities. In working on the latter Ben-Chaim [sic] is looking for new ways of expression and new forms of harmony. He succeeds in finding a pleasant mixture of Eastern melody with Western technique of composition. Ben-Haim worked on tens of Oriental folklore [tunes], vocal with piano and also with small orchestras. Apart from this he composed art songs to the verses of Yehuda Halevy, Chaim Nachman Bialik, Anda Pinkerfeld, Leah Goldberg and others. After the quartet Ben-Haim composed a Trio (variations on a Palestinian song) and a quintet for clarinet and strings. In the sphere of chamber music Ben-Haim is no doubt the leading creator and artist in the country.

In his career Ben-Haim reached a new climax—the creation of his first symphony which was executed by the Palestine Orchestra under his conductorship. This symphony has in it the essence of the tribulation of a man from the people of Israel in the stormy and horrible period of the second world war. In the symphony oriental tunes are adapted and also in the rythms [sic] vital Hora steps come to expression. A splendid of deep feeling and delicate expression. Thus Ben-Haim became Palestine's first symphonist. For this creation he was awarded the Engel Prize 1945. His creations have become richer since and he composed a poem for violin and orchestra “Yiskor” and a “Pastorale” for clarinet and orchestra (they were played in the Palestine Orchestra) and a second symphony.

[under the typed text, handwritten: “(written in 1945...)”]<sup>11</sup>

The embittered composer, who had lost not only his career but also his parents and siblings by the end of World War II,<sup>12</sup> chose (or possibly allowed his publisher) to

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<sup>11</sup> Ben-Haim short biography, 1945, Ben-Haim archive at the National Library of Israel, Mus. 55, F 10. This is an almost exact copy of the English original, including punctuation and spelling typos. There are two spellings of the composer's name in the document: Ben-Haim, as in the title and in the text; and, three times in the text, Ben-Chaim, of which two were crossed out and corrected in handwriting to Ben-Haim. It seems that he used the first spelling, Ben-Chaim, when he first came to Palestine, following the German spelling, and perhaps only later, when corrected by Hebrew speakers (since “ch” and “h” represent two different Hebrew letters), did he change the spelling.

rewrite, i.e. suppress and condense, his German past into the first sentence only: “The composer P. Ben-Haim[,] a native of Munich and graduate of the [missing word] Academy there, became known and famous as a young composer and conductor in Germany.” His work with Bruno Walter and the early works, which had been sources of pride, were not mentioned in 1945. Instead, the text emphasized his commitment to Jewish identity in his music even before emigration—absent in the 1941 biography, and for a good, ideological reason—by mentioning both his contacts with a well-known advocate of Jewish music, composer Heinrich Schalit, and his familiarity with Idelsohn's *Thesaurus*, which most local composers discovered only on emigration. The 1945 biography continues with a predictable list of identity signifiers, which highlight the strength of his new local ties: from the collaboration with Joachim Stutschewsky, a faithful supporter of Jewish music, and the work with “Oriental folklore” (NB: Bracha Zephira's name is not mentioned), to a list of famous local poets whose Hebrew poems he set to music, to his first great success, the performance of his first symphony by the Palestine Orchestra (since 1948, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra).<sup>13</sup>

But this additional facet of Ben-Haim's identity, as a Jewish and Israeli composer, has often been challenged. The loudest to confront his claim of identity as an authentic Eretz-Israeli voice and not merely an exiled European composer, was Boskovich, who saw Ben-Haim's arrangements of Bracha Zephira's songs as *shaatnez* or, in his words, a “loveless match or even inappropriate relationship”—an unseemly combination of Mizrahi tunes with Western harmonies.<sup>14</sup> In his widely cited 1953 *Orlogin* article, Boskovich does not mention Ben-Haim by name, but his references to Ben-Haim's music are evident:

Quick and thoughtless synthesis [of different styles, Western and Eastern], on the basis of immediate, superficial impression, may be made at the expense of one of the styles, and in fact, of both. This phenomenon is revealed especially in arrangements of simple tunes (Yemenite, Sephardic, or Persian, for instance) for [voice and] piano by the European professional composer. In most cases, the result is bi-stylistic: the folk tune, innately non-harmonic, is accompanied by conventional European chords, originating in the Russian romantic [music] or the early [twentieth-] century German “modernism.” At best, this combination will echo the Mediterranean harmony of Debussy, Ravel, De Falla. It is clear, then, that we cannot talk about an organic synthesis. The Mizrahi tune and the European accompaniment march as a couple in a loveless match or even inappropriate relationship.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> In 1938, Ben-Haim lost his father (who felt that he could not relocate to Palestine after the age of 80), his sister in Haifa that same year, and his second sister in 1940; she disappeared in Terezin and then Auschwitz. Paul Ben-Haim, “Aliyati le-eretz Israel,” *Tatzlil* 7, 13 (1973): 173.

פאול בן-חיים, “עלייתי לארץ-ישראל, פרק שני מתוך אוטוביוגרפיה,” *תצליל*, קובץ 13, כרך 7, עמ' 173.

<sup>13</sup> In the 1945 short biography, Paul Ben-Haim mentioned that he had set to music poems by “Yehuda Halevy, Chaim Nachman Bialik, Anda Pinkerfeld, Leah Goldberg and others.” For recent short biographies of Ben-Haim, see Hirshberg's *Grove* and *MGG* entries, and also Ronit Seter, “Paul Ben-Haim” (2006), a short biography that is available on the website of the Jewish Music Research Centre:

<http://www.jewish-music.huji.ac.il/thesaurusee23.html?cat=9&in=9&id=1022&act=view>

(as the website is under construction in 2012, search under biographies).

<sup>14</sup> *Shaatznez* (שעטנז), meaning the combination of unlikely items; it is originally a Jewish halakhic term relating to the ban against wearing a fabric woven from the forbidden combination of wool and linen.

<sup>15</sup> Alexander Uriyah Boskovich, “Ba'ayot ha-musica ha-mekorit be-Israel” (“The Problems of Original Music in Israel”), *Orlogin* 9 (Nov. 1953): 280-94. My free translation. The original Hebrew:

Boskovich's reference to the professional European musician—and especially to the “Mediterranean harmony” of French composers (i.e. the harmonies of their “Spanish” compositions)—clearly alludes to typical features of Ben-Haim's music. These reservations toward Ben-Haim were echoed locally, among some of the founding generation and especially second-generation composers, and also abroad, decades after Boskovich passed away in 1964. In his 2009 *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections*, Ralph Locke discussed Ben-Haim's *magnum opus* for orchestra and soloists, the 1953 *The Sweet Psalmist of Israel*, and especially its last movement, a tuneful, memorable—indeed, exotic—set of variations:

Its style associates the young king [David, whose biblical epithet is the Sweet Psalmist of Israel] with the festive rejoicing of Arabs or of “Oriental” Jews. East and West then merge musically when, in mm. 202–5, Ben-Haim adds Western triadic harmonies to the quick-twisting theme, turning David—though, again, the published program gives no hint of this—into a hora-dancing kibbutznik.<sup>16</sup>

It is not hard to imagine Boskovich mocking a musical portrayal of King David as a hora-dancing kibbutznik. His criticism of Ben-Haim's approach was published about six decades ago, but his peers and students knew about it earlier and its roots were even older. A Bartók-Kodály disciple, Boskovich's respect for the Mizrahi material dictated the use of the extended-modal (or quasi-maqqamat) pitch material of Mizrahi melodies throughout the accompaniment, and he did not believe that any “artificial glue” could help authenticate the reunion between Mizrahi tunes and Western (or even simple modal) harmonies. Boskovich's criticism, which Oedoen Partos and Mordecai Seter also shared,<sup>17</sup> was so powerful and influential that Hirshberg, who was fully aware of their ideas (and not only through his studies at the Tel Aviv Academy of Music where they all taught<sup>18</sup>), took pains throughout the whole book to protect Ben-Haim's name as an authentic Israeli voice.

The last chapter, where Hirshberg defends Ben-Haim from the two most notable arguments against him—that his style was not Mizrahi (and consequently, Israeli) “enough,” and not “modern” enough—is a chapter that clearly would have been written differently in 2010, especially the last, apologetic sentences of the book: “Ben-Haim did not compose in an artificial style, planned in advance and enclosed in

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זיווג נמהר [של סגנונות שונים, מזרחי ומערבי], על בסיס התרשמות-לאחר שהיא שטחית, עלול להיעשות על חשבון אחד הסגנונות, ולמעשה – על חשבון שניהם. תופעה זו באה לידי גילוי ביחוד באותם המקרים, שנעימה פשוטה (תימנית, ספרדית או פרסית, למשל) מקבלת “ליווי” של פסנתר בידי המוזיקאי האירופי המקצועי. ברוב המקרים מתקבלת כפילות סגנונית בולטת: הנעימה העממית, הלא-הארמונית מלידה מלווה אז אקורדים בצירופים אירופיים קונוונציונאליים, שמקורם במבנה ההארמוני המוסכם שברומאנטיקה הרוסית, או ב”מודרניזם” הגרמני של ראשית המאה. במקרה הטוב ביותר תהדהד בו, בצירוף זה, ההארמוניה הימתית-כוננית של דאבובסי, ראוול, דאָ-פּאַללאַ. ברור, איפוא, כי אין לדבר כאן על זיווג היסודות בסיבתיות מוזיקאלית אורגאנית. הנעימה המזרחית והליווי האירופי הולכים כאן כזוג בשידוך שאין בו אהבה ואף ב”שידוך שאינו הגון”.

אלכסנדר אוריה בוסקוביץ', “בעיות המוסיקה המקורית בישראל”, *אורלוגין* ט': 280–294 (נובמבר), 1953.

<sup>16</sup> Ralph Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 284.

<sup>17</sup> Oedoen Partos, “Darki ba-musica” (“My Way in Music”), *Bat-Kol* 3 (April 1956): 6–8 (English synopsis appended); Mordecai Seter, “Mizrah u-ma'arav ba-musica—keitzad?” (“How [to integrate] East and West in Music?”) *Bat-Kol* 1 (of the second series; [Sept., *Tishrei* 1960]: 7–8; English abridged issue of *Bat-Kol* was published in January 1961).

<sup>18</sup> The Tel Aviv music academy is now officially called the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music at Tel Aviv University.

any dogmatic-ideological framework. Instead, he exposed himself to the effervescent culture surrounding him, and expressed it with love, commitment and understanding” (p. 381). Three decades later, a vast literature on the return of tonality and postmodernism in music is at the disposal of a scholar supporting conservative styles, and not only Meyer's 1967 *Music, the Arts, and Ideas*, which Hirshberg cites in the last chapter. At a time when many composers use hybrid, multi-stylistic, or “postmodern” techniques, there is no need to defend twentieth-century compositions inspired by neo-romantic music. Moreover, in retrospect, one can find similarities between pieces such as Ben-Haim's *Five Pieces* (1943) and Boskovich's *Semitic Suite* (1945) that were not noticed, and often were even unthinkable, until the 1980s.<sup>19</sup>

While we can argue for similarities in certain stylistic elements between Ben-Haim and his adversaries in the 1950s, the so-called Troika of Partos, Boskovich, and Seter (and Tal, too, for different reasons), there is one significant difference, and it is a difference in attitude. Ben-Haim's style can be characterized as synthesizing influences from “German expressionism, French impressionism, and traces of Hindemith on the one hand, and modality and German Jewish folk *melos* on the other,” to quote Michael Wolpe.<sup>20</sup> The Troika's approach was fundamentally different; it was based, primarily, on ideas derived from the Russian and especially the Hungarian national schools in music, which vehemently opposed the German influence (which still informed their works). The reason for stylistic similarities between composers who held different perspectives on composition, such as Ben-Haim and Boskovich, lay in a common source of influence—French impressionism, which served as a model for both Ben-Haim and the Troika. But one difference remains crucial. The main national identity signifier in Ben-Haim's style was derived from the Spanish-inspired works of French impressionists, which he reconstructed as (invented) “Israeliness” in his music. The simplified tunes of Bracha Zephira—Ben-Haim preferred the Sephardi to the Mizrahi ones—were arranged and composed in (arguably, superimposed on) that Spanish-French impressionist style.<sup>21</sup>

The Troika's music was—or at the very least, was both intended and perceived to be—more Oriental or Mizrahi (i.e. Arabic-inspired), “harsher” to the Ashkenazi audience in an attempt to create a more authentic national style. Ben-Haim's music, in comparison, was perceived as gentler, easier to grasp, and far closer to Western music as understood at the time. Their approach to Zephira and the music she revealed to them was also diametrically opposed to that of Ben-Haim. Ben-Haim (and Marc Lavry, too) used her tunes as a source of melodic content in certain pieces (e.g. some of the movements in his symphonies). As a German-born composer and conductor, whose experience in Munich prior to emigration had nothing to do with Arab or Mizrahi music, he probably saw Zephira's Mizrahi tunes not merely as “low-art,” but foreign as well. In a 1953 interview with Amnon Shiloah (in *Massa*), he compared the

<sup>19</sup> Composer Ben-Zion Orgad was one of the first to notice similarities among the founders. Ben-Zion Orgad, “Bustan tzlilim” (“Garden of Sounds”), in *Madrikh le-vitzu'a yetzirot Israeliot li-fsanter* (*Performance Guide for Israeli Piano Pieces*), ed. Miriam Boskovich & Yona Rosental-Bogorow (Tel Aviv: Ha-merkaz ha-metodi le-musica, 1987), 267-71.

<sup>20</sup> Michael Wolpe, in an email to this author, 30 January 2012.

<sup>21</sup> “She herself [Bracha Zephira] mentioned, for instance, that while Paul Ben-Haim preferred the songs of Sephardi Jews, Oedoen Partos expressed a special interest in Yemenite songs. Lavry favored light and dance-like songs, and Partos preferred recitative-like, intricate tunes.” Jehoash Hirshberg, “Bracha Zephira ve-tahalikh ha-shinui ba-musica be-yisrael,” *Peamim* 19 (1984): 37.

“היא עצמה [ברכה צפירה] ציינה, למשל, כי בעוד שפאול בן-חיים העדיף את שירי יהודי ספרד, גילה עדן פרטוש עניין מיוחד דווקא בשירים תימניים. לברי נטה לשירים בעלי אופי ריקודי וקל, בעוד שפרטוש העדיף שירים מורכבים ורציטיביים.”

הואש הירשברג, “ברכה צפירה ותהליך השינוי במוסיקה בישראל,” *פעמים* 19 (מכון יד בן-צבי, 1984): 37.

situation of Israeli composers (i.e. his own) to that of “a number of composers of Western descent who turned to the folklore of *foreign* lands” (cited in Hirshberg's *Ben-Haim*, p. 303, emphasis added). Just as the Russian Rimsky-Korsakov and the French Ravel and Bizet could write masterworks in a foreign, Spanish folkloristic style—one can read into Ben-Haim's answers—he, too, could compose successfully in the foreign, exotic Mizrahi style. And so he did. Several of these Mizrahi-inspired, Spanish-impressionistic works entered the Israeli canon.

Partos, Boskovich and other composers who worked with Zephira (Avidom among them, but not Seter), however, utilized Zephira's materials in a Bartókian way—as a source not only for the melodic and rhythmic contents, but also for the harmonic, polyphonic, and formal underpinnings of their compositions. In other words, if a core condition for orientalism is the clear demarcation of the self and the orientalized other, the Troika—indeed, Ashkenazi composers who were educated in Europe and worked hard to emulate and internalize Mizrahi music, with great difficulties—took pains to integrate the borrowed Mizrahi elements into their works as a whole, not merely certain elements or parts of it. Several of Ben-Haim best known works incorporate Zephira's tunes in certain aspects or sections only; it is thus easier to analyze them as orientalist works. Obviously, this discussion is highly dependent on definitions of the old-new term orientalism, which went through a paradigmatic shift in 1978. Jonathan Bellman's 2011 “Musical Voyages and Their Baggage: Orientalism in Music and Critical Musicology” (*Musical Quarterly*) provides a thought-provoking explanation:

It is in this [1978 Said's] and related senses that “orientalism” is now most often used, and critical perspectives that occupy themselves with orientalism and its consequences have for some time been called postcolonial. Postcolonial criticism, generally speaking, seeks to identify and resistantly read artworks and documents in which an “oriental” flavor or undercurrent is present and thereby working in a subliminal, nonneutral way. Given the relationship of postcolonial music criticism to the broader area of cultural criticism, such “oriental” spice is rarely considered to be benign or beneficial, and this has resulted in a gradual reduction of the complexities and layers of meaning into a single, damning idea. Said's postcolonial sensibility is reflected in the third definition offered by Webster's Dictionary (2009): “a viewpoint, as held by someone in the West, in which Asia or specifically the Arabic Middle East is seen variously as exotic, mysterious, irrational, etc.: [a] term used to impute a patronizing attitude.”

... What is more, works that use musical gestures to suggest specific people, places, or cultures are often put in a separate, problematic critical category: separate because of the unstated, unproven, yet (seemingly) widely held assumption that there exists some kind of standard, definable, more normative style that does not evoke identity or place so specifically, and problematic because of the longstanding tradition... that local color automatically implies cheapness, ephemerality, and compositional weakness. A more recent term is transcultural music, which preserves the culture- or ethnicity-bridging aspects of a mixed musical style while deemphasizing the power-relation aspects (that it is necessarily A who appropriates—“colonizes”—and exoticizes B). For all the heat generated, though, the vexed question of terminology is probably insoluble. Each term overlaps somewhat with the others, and each carries a certain amount

of baggage, and is therefore susceptible to certain predictable patterns of criticism.<sup>22</sup>

While Ben-Haim's orientalist and exoticist attitudes have been noticed in his music, his attitude to Zephira herself escaped scrutiny: she was too polite to mention it publically, perhaps because it was an undercurrent, "working in a subliminal, nonneutral way." Several details about the collaboration between the singer and the composer color Ben-Haim as a patronizing orientalist, who sometimes exoticized her tunes. Ben-Haim worked with singer Bracha Zephira from 1939, and he used her tunes until 1957. She approached him for arrangements and to accompany her performances, which led to at least six years (possibly eight) of close collaboration. Thirty-three of his compositions written between 1939 and 1957, more than a third of his output at the time he established his Israeli style, incorporated (or were based on) tunes he learned from her (pp. 400-16), among them some of his major works: *Hitragut* (in five arrangements, vocal and instrumental, 1939), Symphony No. 1 (1940), Quintet (1941), and Symphony No. 2 (1945). Nonetheless, Bracha Zephira was not mentioned in his 1945 short biography (above).<sup>23</sup> Two years later, when Ben-Haim celebrated his fiftieth birthday in a concert of his works, other performers were invited to perform his art works but not Zephira. In retrospect, Ben-Haim wrote in his 1975 autobiographical essay (*Tatzlil*) that, in 1949, he gave up his public performances, "first and foremost with singer Bracha Zephira"—once the financial need, it seems, was no longer pressing and more commissions filled his time.<sup>24</sup> In retrospective interviews, however, he did mention her contribution with respect, possibly for ideological reasons: discussing the use of her tunes functioned as his guarantee against current, repeated claims (echoed in the last sentences of *Ben-Haim*) that his style was "artificial," not authentic or local "enough." At a time when the Yemenite accent of Hebrew and Yemenite songs was considered to be the most authentic among Mizrahi 'edot (communities) to be used as a base for the *altneukultur*, the closest probable connection to the lost tradition of the Temple—"...eastern equals ancient equals Jewish equals Yemenite"—Ben-Haim's work with Zephira established his own authenticity as a representative of Israeli music.<sup>25</sup>

Hirshberg revealed his independence from the composer's own thinking when he dedicated an entire chapter to their collaboration, entitled "The Encounter with Bracha Zephira" (encounter, not collaboration), detailing Zephira's impact on several of Ben-Haim's most celebrated works. Still, for Ben-Haim, the separation between "low" and "high" art is clear: the chapter on Zephira is followed by "The Art Song in Hebrew"; the arrangements of Zephira's songs are not included in the latter. Ben-Haim's art songs—or the ones he composed as such—are not based on her tunes (that said, some of the arrangements of her songs are highly artistic, and their level of intricacy and sheer beauty is similar to that of his art songs; indeed, some of them are more elegant than the art songs and performed more often). Hirshberg's explanation is sympathetic to the composer: "His joint work with Bracha Zephira opened to him a new direction

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<sup>22</sup> Jonathan Bellman, "Musical Voyages and Their Baggage: Orientalism in Music and Critical Musicology," *Musical Quarterly* (2011):1, 4.

<sup>23</sup> See contextual exegesis in Ronit Seter, "Israelism," *The Musical Quarterly*, forthcoming.

<sup>24</sup> Paul Ben-Haim, "Pathways to the Wide World," *Tatzlil* (1975): 144.

פאול בן-חיים, נתיבות לעולם הגדול, תצליל תשל"ה (1975), 144.

<sup>25</sup> Amnon Shiloah, "Eastern Sources in Israeli Music," *IMI News* 93/2-3 (Israel Music Institute, 1993): 2.

of artistic arrangements of folk-traditional melodies, and allowed him to relieve the art song from any deliberate reliance on the folk-oriental style” (p. 185).

Zephira, an exceptional singer and musician—possibly the best singer (art or folk) in the *Yishuv* in the 1930s and 1940s—was not an easy personality to collaborate with (to put it mildly, hence “encounter” and not “collaboration”), and she arguably sensed the orientalist, possibly racist attitude she experienced with Ben-Haim and his peers, and recorded it in her 1978 book *Kolot Rabim (Many Voices)*.<sup>26</sup> Her introduction, including a six-page, double column description of her work with art music composers, “Collaboration with Composers,” is an unparalleled source of severe criticism against the establishment’s attitude to Mizrahi music at that time, and a collective condemnation of Ben-Haim’s, Lavry’s, Partos’s, and many of the founders’ approaches to the synthesis of their Western techniques with her melodies and other Mizrahi tunes. Zephira argued that they produced

Mizrahi songs in clumsy Western clothes, Western music that adopted something from the Mizrahi exotic. ...Moreover, the composers held jealously onto the materials which I brought for them, but did not see the need to establish a direct contact with the community which sang [the original] songs. ...the composers were satisfied with my interpretation only. Even if I was faithful to the original [melody], I could not replace the various communities, not even one community’s complete [musical heritage].<sup>27</sup>

Fifteen years later, Amnon Shiloah, a world-renowned Israeli scholar of Arabic music and its ancient theory, could not agree more with Zephira. In his “Eastern Sources in Israeli Music” (1993), he did not hesitate to tag the music of the first generation, Ben-Haim included, as Musical Orientalism:

Most of those who became the pillars of Israeli music arrived in Eretz Israel in the years preceding World War Two: Menahem Avidom, Ben-Zion Orgad, Haim Alexander, Alexander Urijah Boskovich, Paul Ben-Haim, Karl Solomon, Mordecai Seter, Oedoen Partos, Erich Walter Sternberg, and Josef Tal. During those years there was a marked tendency on the part of the *yishuv* as a whole to enhance the impression of belonging by developing a national style which expressed an identity at once Hebrew, Jewish and Israeli, and which of course included a turning towards the east for inspiration. Since no composer, even among the avowed disciples of eastern music [Shiloah hints at Boskovich, Partos, and Seter], ever dreamed of “crossing the line” and adopting a revolutionary change of style, the result was musical works whose general orientation, if not their flavor, was western, and which eventually became the cornerstones of the splendid edifice of western music erected in this country. In any event, it may be said that most works which in some way integrated elements of eastern folk music or art music did not err in their approach. They

<sup>26</sup> Bracha Zephira, *Kolot rabim (Many Voices)*; Ramat Gan: Massada, 1978). This roughly 250-page volume contains 31 pages of introduction and over a hundred transcriptions of Yemenite, Sephardi, other Mizrahi, Arab and Israeli tunes, in addition to Zephira’s own tunes.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 21-22.

צפירה, קולות רבים, עמ' 21: "אולם המלחינים היו בראשית צעדיהם, ועל אף מאמציהם נתפסו לנקודות הפחות אפייניות והפחות אותנטיות של השירים. אף על פי שניגשו לשירים מתוך עניין שבהערכה ואהבה, יצאו מתחת ידם שירים מזרחיים בלבד מערבי מסורבל, מוסיקה מערבית שאימצה לה משהו מן האקזוטיקה המזרחית." עמ' 22: "זאת ועוד: המלחינים נתפסו בקנאות לכל אותו חומר שהייתי מביאה לפנייהם. אבל לא ראו הכרח לבוא במגע ישיר עם העם שבפיו מושרים השירים. ...המלחינים הסתפקו באינטרפרטציה שלי בלבד. אף כי הייתי נאמנה למקור, לא יכולתי לבוא במקום כל העדות, אפילו לא במקום עדה אחת בשלמות." "

did seek musical solutions which in Europe went by the name of “Musical Orientalism”—essentially a pejorative term.”<sup>28</sup>

Shiloah's analysis, which brings to the fore known and lesser-known paradoxes, can be both supported and contested at length. But Zephira's bottom line for the section about the composers is a simple, direct, and painful realization for a Zionist artist who aspired to be considered, rightfully, an equal collaborator in the enterprise of creating Hebrew music that would represent the melting pot: “here we are, despite our artistic collaboration, we did not succeed in creating a true synthesis [between Mizrahi and Western musics]—not in [our] art and not in [our] society.”<sup>29</sup> After many years of collaboration with ten or more of the leading local composers, she mentioned not even one exception. Not even Ben-Haim, whose professional ability she deeply respected.

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Hirshberg's *Ben-Haim* is a solid, traditional biography. The writing style is fluent and engaging, and the writer uncovers detailed biographical events, illustrated with many photos of Ben-Haim, his family and his colleagues. He also includes meticulous descriptions of many works and over a hundred musical examples from practically all of Ben-Haim's major works, with an emphasis on his most performed pieces. The chapters cover orchestral and choral works, several of the Lieder, chamber music and piano works, sections devoted to ideological themes, and numerous citations of primary materials. Whole chapters or large sections of them are devoted to Ben-Haim's signature works: the oratorio *Joram* (1933), its thematic structures, poetic interpretation, its belated and incomplete premiere in 1979, in Israel, and the complete premiere in 2008, in Germany; Symphony No. 1 (1940), the first symphony by a local composer to be performed by the Palestine Orchestra in 1941, under the baton of the composer (its second movement, *Psalms*, was performed thirty-two times by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra under Koussevitzky and Bernstein during their American tour of 1951, p. 272); the Clarinet Quintet (1941), one of the favorites in Israeli chamber music, and Symphony No. 2 (1945), a cyclical Romantic symphony dedicated to Max Brod and based on tunes that Ben-Haim learned from Bracha Zephira.

Separate chapters cover the *Liturgical Cantata* (1950), which did not receive many performances, and *Fanfare for Israel* (1950), a short work that has become a favorite of orchestras wishing to provide a (invented) taste of Israeli music, which has been performed hundreds of times and was described warmly by Hirshberg. One of the most captivating chapters is devoted to the *Sweet Psalmist of Israel* (1953), Ben-Haim's most prestigious commission (or any other local composer's at that time) from the Koussevitzky Foundation and Leonard Bernstein, which was meant to be his *magnum opus*. It is not inconceivable, however, that despite Ben-Haim's best intentions to represent a national ideology for the newly-forged Israeli state, or perhaps just because of the pressure of these intentions to truly integrate Mizrahi elements, this piece (or at least the first movement) might not represent the best of his writing—simply because this ideology, ultimately, did not fit his traditional musical taste (and, indeed, the last movement is a powerful homage to Ravel's *Bolero*).

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<sup>28</sup> Amnon Shiloah, “Eastern Sources in Israeli Music,” *IMI News* 93/2-3 (Israel Music Institute, 1993): 4.

<sup>29</sup> Zephira, *Kolot Rabim*, 26.

”אחרית דבר : הנה כי כן, אף על פי ששיתפנו פעולה במישור האמנותי, לא הצלחנו ליצור שילוב של אמת לא באמנות ולא בחברה.”

Naturally, anyone looking for the circumstances of piano favorites, now staples of Israeli music, like his *Five Pieces* (1943), *Sonatina* (1946), *Chamsin* (1950) and *Sonata* (1954, dedicated to Menachem Pressler), will find the necessary details in Hirshberg's work.

The chapters and sections on ideology—especially “Mediterraneanism, Folklorism and Modality”—pose a challenge; they can be read as exegesis of identity themes, but they also provide a wealth of primary materials collected by an insider, thus open to new interpretations, including by Hirshberg himself. As noted above, these chapters, like the book as a whole, are almost identical to those drafted twenty years earlier in the 1990 edition. Had they been written anew, the author likely would have changed some of his views, as is evident in his recent writings: these chapters, thus, should be read along with the more recent *Min-Ad* articles (2005, 2007-08, 2008-09). Yet the sections on ideology and nationalism in Hirshberg's *Ben-Haim*, three decades later, are still thought provoking; they are likely to become bases for further hermeneutics, which could well result in diametrically opposed ideas to those he presented in 1983.

Still, without the extravagance of new musicological narratives, Hirshberg's reserved, proudly positivistic, informational and illuminating prose carved new paths in good old Israeli musicology. And for that, we—many of us working on Israeli musics—will always owe him our deep respect.

## **Appendix: Selected Writings on Israeli Music by Jehoash Hirshberg**

Hirshberg, Jehoash. “Ha-opera Dan ha-shomer le-Marc Lavry, mekoroteha ve-hivatrzuta” (“Mark Lavry's Opera *Dan The Guard*, Its Sources and Creation”), *Tatzlil* 9, 17 (1977): 123-34.

———. “The Emergence of Israeli Art Music.” In *Aspects of Music in Israel*, ed. Benjamin Bar-Am. Tel Aviv: Israel Composer's League, 1980, 3-15.

———. “Heinrich Schalit and Paul Ben-Haim in Munich.” *Yuval* 4 (1982): 131-49.

———. *Paul Ben-Haim: hayyav vi-ytzirato (Paul Ben-Haim: His Life and Works)*. Tel-Aviv: Am-Oved, 1983. The most extensive biography of an Israeli composer, comparable only to that of Boskovich, written by Hirshberg and Shmueli (below).

———. “Bracha Zephira ve-tahalikh ha-shinui ba-musica be-yisrael” (“Bracha Zephira and the Process of Change in Music in Israel”). *Peamim* 19 (1984): 29-46.

———. “The Process of Formation of Music Institutions and Audience in the Yishuv in the 1920s and 1930s: Ideology, Economic Conditions, and Transfer of Models.” In *Perspectives on Culture and Society*, ed. Nurith Gertz. Tel Aviv, 1988, 195-203 (in Hebrew).

———. *Paul Ben-Haim: His Life and Works*. Translated from Hebrew by Nathan Friedgut, edited by Bathja Bayer. Jerusalem: Israeli Music

- Publications, 1990. Second edition, Tel Aviv: Israel Music Institute, 2010 (revised, updated, edited by Paul Landau).
- . “Alexander U. Boskovitch and the Quest for an Israeli National Musical Style.” *Modern Jews and Their Musical Agendas*, in *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 9 (annual, Oxford University Press, 1993): 92-109.
  - . *Music in the Jewish Community of Palestine 1880-1948: A Social History*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1995. The only extensive study of the general history of Israeli music.
  - . “Jewish Music in Europe,” “Setting the Framework of Musical Life,” “The Development of Music Performing Groups,” and “Concert Societies, Professional Union and the Struggle for Survival” (in Hebrew). In *The Construction of Hebrew Culture in Eretz-Israel*, part one of *The History of the Jewish Community in Eretz-Israel Since 1882*, ed. Zohar Shavit, pages 69-70, 99-104, 263-341, and 411-414 respectively. Jerusalem: The Israel Academy for Sciences and Humanities, 1998. See under Shavit.
  - . “Israel.” Part I: Art Music. In *The New Grove, Second Edition* (2001).
  - . “Alexander, Haim,” “Ben-Haim, Paul,” “Boskovitch, Alexander,” “Daus, Avraham,” “Fleischer, Tsippi,” “Holdheim, Theodore,” “Kopytman, Mark,” “Permont, Haim,” “Ravina, Menashe,” “Sternberg, Erich Walter,” “Stutschewsky, Joachim,” “Tal, Josef,” “Wohl, Jehuda,” and “Wolpe, Michael.” In *The New Grove, Second Edition* (2001).
  - . “Ben-Haim, Paul,” “Boskovitch, Alexander,” “Israel” (and most of the *Grove* entries on Israeli composers, above, and additional ones). In *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik begründet von Friedrich Blume*. Kassel, Basel, London, New York, Prag: Bärenreiter. See “Ben-Haim,” in Vol. 2 (1999): 1108-11; Boskovitch, in Vol. 3 (2000): 469-70; other entries published in the early 2000s.
  - . “A Modernist Composer in an Immigrant Community: The Quest for Status and National Ideology.” In *On the Music of Stefan Wolpe, Essays and Recollections*, ed. Austin Clarkson. New York: Pendragon Press, 2003, 75-94.
  - . “Visionen von Osten und westliches Erbe: Ideologische Faktoren bei der Herausbildung einer israelischen Musik.” In *Jüdische Musik?* ed. Ekhard John & Heidi Zimmermann. Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2004, 173-94.
  - . “Kopytman’s Heterophonic Trail: From *Memory* to *Beyond all This*.” In *Mark Kopytman, Voices of Memories*, ed. Yulia Kreinin (Tel Aviv: Israel Music Institute, 2004): 67-80.

- . “The Vision of the East and the Heritage of the West: Ideological Pressures in the *Yishuv* Period and their Offshoots in Israeli Art Music during the Recent Two Decades.” *Min-Ad: Israel Studies in Musicology Online* 4 (2005).
- . “The Vision of the East and the Heritage of the West: A Comprehensive Model of Ideology and Practice in Israeli Art Music.” *Min-Ad: Israel Studies in Musicology Online* 7/II (2008-09).
- Hirshberg, Jehoash & Sagiv, David. “The ‘Israeli’ in Israeli Music: The Audience Responds.” *Israel Studies in Musicology* 1 (1978): 159-73. The only scholarly research of local reception.
- Hirshberg, Jehoash & Shmueli, Herzl. *Alexander Uriyah Boskovich: hayyav, yetzirato ve-haguto (Alexander Uriyah Boskovich: His Life, his Works and his Thought)*. Jerusalem: Carmel, 1995. Major contribution to the study of the formation of Israeli identity in music.
- Hirshberg, Jehoash & Adler, Ayelet (Eds.) *Ideologia ve-lehatzim ideologiyim be-hayyei ha-musica ba-yishuv bi-tkufat ha-mandat (Ideology and Ideological Pressures in the Music Life of the Yishuv in the [British] Mandate Period)*. Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1987. A collection of thirty-nine facsimile source readings, concert reviews and newspaper essays, by critics and composers, from the 1920s to the 1940s.