

# *The Field of Yiddish*

STUDIES IN LANGUAGE, FOLKLORE,  
AND LITERATURE

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THE USES OF PRINTED VERSIONS IN  
STUDYING THE SONG REPERTOIRE OF  
EAST EUROPEAN JEWS: FIRST FINDINGS

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The importance of the interplay between oral and literary sources in studying the European Jewish religious tradition is well understood. As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1972:62) has noted, "...oral tradition is an institution in Jewish religious learning as sacred as the written word. Literacy and the writing down of folk tradition did not inhibit oral circulation." On the other hand, Patai (1960:21) has stated that "no Jewish custom, or belief, or piece of unwritten literature can be fully understood and adequately studied without a thorough search of that vast accumulation of written literature in which so much of the Jewish tradition of past centuries has received a fixed form." Nevertheless, in an important area of Eastern European Jewish folklore, the field of Yiddish song (both folk and popular), there has been only sporadic interest in the interrelationship of oral and printed sources. Such studies as we do have (Mlotek and Mlotek 1974, Rubin 1973) focus on only one parameter of song, the text, tending to overlook three other important considerations: melody, context, and performance practice.

The general purpose of the present paper is to initiate a broadly-based discussion of ways in which printed songs and piano arrangements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries might be viewed in relation to folksong data gathered from oral tradition to shed light on the evolution of the Yiddish song, with special attention to the potential utility of commercial sheet music. The evidence for the value of such studies does not always lie in simultaneous

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treatment of all four parameters of song cited above. For one song, insights gained from two or three parameters may reinforce each other to produce a fuller interpretation of the data, whereas for other examples these parameters may not provide a common base for deducing general principles. Yet another factor, the relationship of commercial recordings to both printed and oral versions of songs, will be touched upon briefly. This aspect of the question has been extensively discussed in connection with mainstream and black American song (Green 1972, Oliver 1968), but is just beginning to emerge as a serious consideration in the study of American immigrant musics, as witnessed by the recent (January, 1977) groundbreaking conference held by the American Folklife Center, aptly titled "Ethnic Recordings in America: A Neglected Heritage".

The Yiddish song tradition has several unique aspects. Firstly, American Jews carried on what may be the most extensive intragroup music printing industry in American immigrant history. Secondly, the first publication of "authentic" folksongs coincides with the earliest commercial printings of both folksong arrangements and popular songs in the period under discussion. For these reasons, our analysis is closer in spirit to Green's (1972) study of early twentieth century miners' songs, which compares the recent intricate interrelationship of folk, printed, and recorded versions of song, than to historically oriented studies such as that of Richmond (1961), who can reach back to seventeenth-century documentation to illustrate the effects of literacy-induced change in the English ballad. In the case of Yiddish, the history of such change has been telescoped to a period almost within the reach of living memory, roughly the same time-span covered in Green's work. The Eastern European Jews' habit of almost immediately assimilating literary productions into the mainstream of folklore has been well documented, even in terms of the output of famous writers--Sholom Aleichem (Mlotek 1954), Mikhl Gordon (Mlotek 1951), Abraham Ber Gotlober (Skuditski 1931), Dovid Edelshtat (Pipe 1971) and others. The practice extends to commercial music as well. Joseph Rumshinsky, a major figure in the evo-

lution of the Yiddish operetta, complains that theatergoers do not even credit a composer with the creation of songs heard on stage:

אבער דאס פאלק אינטערעסירט זיך זייער ווייניק ווער ס'איז דער קאמפאָזיטאָר זיטאָר פֿון אזעלכע לידער, און צי ס'איז איבער הויפט דאָ אזאָ זאָך, ווי אַ מוזיק־קאָמפּאָזיטאָר. מיר איז אַ מאָל אויסגעקומען צו הערן (ווען אַן אַקטיאָר האָט געזונגען אַ שיינעם ניגון, וואָס קריכט אַרעפֿן אין די ביינער), ווי אַ צוהערער האָט זיך אויסגעדריקט: „געוואָלד! פֿון וואָנען נעמט זיך צו אים (מיינענדיק דעם אַקטיאָר) אזאָ קלוגער קאָפּ אויסצוקלערן אזאָ האַרציקן ניגון?" אָו ס'איז דאָ אזאָ זאָך, ווי אַ קאָמפּאָזיטאָר, אַ מוזיקער, וועלכער האָט דעם ניגון פֿאַרפֿאַסט דורך שלאָפֿלאָזע נעכט, דאָס פֿאַלט אים גאַרניט אַפֿן.

But the folk interest themselves very little in who the composer of such songs is, or whether there is actually such a thing as a composer of music. I once happened to hear (when an actor had sung a beautiful tune that stole right into your heart) a spectator express himself this way: "My God, where does he (meaning the actor) get the brains to think up such a heart-rending tune?" That there is such a thing as a composer, a musician who composed the tune during sleepless nights, this doesn't occur to him. (Perlmutter 1952:315-16)

Thus, Dorson's observation (1972:465) that "a printed source is a publication in which folk traditions have found lodging more or less accidentally and casually" does not really hold for the Yiddish tradition. Firstly, as we shall see below, even commercial musicians at times refashion folksong material deliberately, relying upon the close emotional association existing between the folksong and its singers. Secondly, the printed sources themselves enter tradition and give rise to what have been called "folksongs of literary origin" or "folklorized songs".

The principal data used here stem from the tapes of the YIVO Yiddish Folksong Project (tapes dated 1954-1977), directed by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, and a large collection of sheet music copyrighted ca. 1898-1925 acquired by the present author from the

Hebrew Publishing Company for Wesleyan University (an analogous collection was deposited at YIVO by Kirshenblatt-Gimblett)[1]. The analysis of the data will proceed on a case-by-case basis, using songs which are particularly fruitful for illustrating comparative use of printed and oral sources. The cases fall into two large categories: examination of variants within the Yiddish repertoire and analysis of the Yiddish repertoire in the context of coterritorial Euro-American song traditions.

INTRODUCTORY CASE: "DER YOLD IS MIKH MEKANE"

Let us begin with a clear case in the internal Yiddish repertoire of nearly simultaneous publication of a folksong and its arrangement. "Der yold is mikh mekane", a song of the Warsaw underworld, was transcribed from a folksinger in Zamoszcz in 1917 by S. Lejman, who published it in his collection *Ganovim-lider* (Lejman 1928:23-4). The song was also printed in New York by S. Schenker in 1920 in sheet music form, as arranged by one M. Leibowitz. Ex. 1 gives the texts of the two versions, placed to show corresponding stanzas.

"Der yold" is something of an anomaly in the Jewish-American sheet music repertoire. While anthologies of Yiddish songs published in the United States may contain other European folksongs about the robber-hero, none of the 300-odd songs in the Wesleyan collection of sheet music comment on that stereotyped figure. This rare appearance of the outlaw-hero in song sets off the Jewish-American repertoire sharply from the non-Jewish tradition, with its countless songs commenting on such figures as Jesse James (Laws 1964:175-89). We do not know what impelled Leibowitz and Schenker to publish "Der yold"; nevertheless, this isolated example of a genre might shed some light on the American commercialization of a significant type of Old World folksong.

The parameter of context is of some interest. According to M.N. (b.1916), who grew up in Lublin, underworld songs were quite popular in the early 1930's in his city, and tended to be written and sung by the

Ex. 1 "Der Yold iz mikh mekane." Lejman and Schenker versions.

Lejman, *Ganovim-lider* (Warsaw, 1928)  
transcribed in 1917 in Zamoszcz

1. Der yold iz mikh mekane  
Der yold iz mikh mekane  
Der yold iz mikh mekane  
Mit mayn laykht shtikele broyt.  
Er vil fun gornisht visn  
S'iz di keshene iz tserisn  
Es kumt mir on shver vi der toyt.

2. Mayn mame mit mayn tate  
Zey zaynen gevezn blate  
Rebele ikh zol vern  
Bas iz zeyr farlang.  
Iz 13 yor kseydr  
Hob ikh gelernt in kheydr  
Iz 13 yor hob ikh gekvetsht di benk.

3. In dem bin ikh gezesn  
Getrinken un gegesn  
Mayn mamenyu fleg mir untershtekn a kleyn bisele broyt.  
Geshtorb'n iz der tate  
Un bald nokhdem di mame  
Geblibn bin ikh elend oyf di velt.

4. A yerushe hob ikh bakumen  
Mit andere mezumen  
Kortn-shpiln un koleges arayngelozt zikh shtark.  
S'gelt hob ikh farlorn  
In kortn ongevorn  
Gebliba bin ikh rayn on a mark.

5. Kum ikh arayn in mark  
Un pak a gutn targ  
A masematn fun dolarn hot zikh mir gemakht.  
Kukt oyf mir a yente  
Un shikt on oyf mir a mente  
M'neht mikh glaykh un m'tsintevet mir arayn.

6. In turme bin ikh gezesn  
Un aroysgekukt durkh di kratn.  
Zumer zey ikh regns gisn, vinter zey ikh shney.  
Ale mayne yorn  
Bin ikh in kitsh opgezesn  
(Warsaw: zenen in tfise opgeforn)  
Un haynt tut mir in yedn eyver vey.

New York, publ. Schenker, 1920, arr. M. Leibowitz

(labeled "Chorus")  
Der yold iz mikh mekane  
Der yold iz mikh mekane  
Der yold iz mikh mekane  
Mit mayn gring shtikele broyt.  
Er vil dokh gor nit visn  
S'iz mir erger far im  
Es kumt mir on oy biter vi der toyt.

1. Mayn mame un mayn tate  
Zaynen gevezn blate  
Gut iz mir geven  
Bay zey gor on a shir  
Ven ikh bin gevorn elter  
Zaynen zey tsu mir gevorn kelter  
In ganvenen farglist oy hot zikh mir.

2. Ikh gey aroys in market  
Ikh khap zikh tsu tsi a pocket  
A masematn hob ikh bald dortn oykh gemakht.  
Plutsem kumt a yente  
In bring nokh mit a mente  
In station house hot zi mir bald gebrakht.

3. In droysn geyt a regn  
In droysn geyt a regn  
In s'iz nokh tsugefaln oy a kleyn bisele shney.  
Ale mayne yorn  
In prison opgezesn

A yeder eyver tut mir dokh ash vey.

thieves themselves, who were folk-heroes to the local teenagers. He cites (interview 1973) "Der yold" as a particularly well-known song of the genre among those Lejman published. The texts of Lejman's songs often seem autobiographical, or are at least frequently couched in first-person narrative. The New York version, however, is meant to be played at home in the ubiquitous parlor piano context pictured so often on sheet music (both Jewish and non-Jewish) of the period, which depicts the daughter of the family performing for the satisfaction-gathering old folks, a scene far removed from the Warsaw (or New York) prison described in the song text, or from the Lublin street-corner crowd recollected by M.N.

In the case of this song, context can be coupled with the parameter of text. The New York version of "Der yold" differs textually from Lejman's transcription in the substitution of English for Yiddish terms and in the perhaps significant alternation of the narrative. Lexically, we can summarize the differences in tabular form (Table 1):

Table 1. Americanisms in "Der yold"

<i>Lejman</i>	<i>Leibowitz</i>
mark	market
kitsh, tfise	prison
targ	pocket
tsinteven	station house

To this list we might add the omission of Europeanisms such as *mark* as local currency and the black market trading in *dolaren* in the Leibowitz text. These textual substitutions constitute linguistic interference which is worth more than passing notice. Song texts offer prime material for the study of the Americanization of Yiddish; point-for-point comparison of Old World and New World texts can furnish signposts along the path of linguistic change. It can be seen that Americanization is not a process of simple borrowing for new concepts or items, but a steady displacement of Europeanisms as well.

Differences in narrative in the two versions of "Der yold" can also be noted. The American version is sketchier, compared to the almost ethnographic character of the autobiography in Lejman's text. Some details of plot vary considerably, e.g. the American parents "grow colder" as they "grow older", instead of dying, to provide the impetus for the narrator's turning to crime. Of course, there is not enough evidence to draw conclusions as to the significance or motivation behind the differences, but they could be seen as reflecting the folk-popular dichotomy of contexts cited earlier, if not actually mirroring a variance between American and European audience expectations of plot.

Musically, "Der yold" has undergone two basic structural changes. First, it is now in a verse-chorus format, and second, it has acquired a piano accompaniment. These are the basic trappings of commercialization, which again relate to the shift in context, tied as well to the socioeconomic fact of a striving for betterment reflected in the appearance of the piano in immigrant homes. Interestingly, the tune of the song itself scarcely differs in the two versions under discussion. It appears that commercialization need not include melodic alteration; a new format will suffice. This conservatism of the melodic component calls attention to itself by virtue of the fact that judging from earlier sheet music, melodic acculturation of Yiddish songs began at least as early as the 1890's. It would of course be useful to examine the recording referred to on the sheet-music cover ("Sung on Emerson Records by Gustav Goldstein") to gain additional insight into performance practice, a parameter not covered in the present analysis of "Der yold".

The Americanization of the text and commercialization of the song structure of "Der yold", ratified by the issuing of a recording to complement the sheet music, points to the strong claim the popular song industry makes on the researcher's attention. Although commercialization occurred in Warsaw as well as in New York, there appear to be differences in the manner of dissemination of commercial versions. To take one case

history, an examination of the repertoire of Lifshe Shekhter-Widman, a prime informant for the YIVO Yiddish Folksong Project [2], shows that in her youth in the Bukovina (1893-1906) she acquired commercial and art songs indirectly, through a sometimes rather long chain of oral transmission, whereas in her first American period (1906-14) she picked up popular songs directly from first-hand theater experience or, of special interest to our discussion, in printed form from street vendors of broadsides (both Yiddish and English). It is hard to imagine she was not also in touch with the parlor-piano context, described as a major twentieth-century New York Jewish musical phenomenon by Rumshinsky (1944:267-78), who both taught and wrote a considerable body of sheet music, including commercialized versions of folksongs. Dissemination of commercial versions in the European context seems thus to have followed a network of oral transmission to reach a significant portion of the non-urban population whereas in the American context, it would appear that a greater number of people came into first hand contact with the commercial versions. A comparison of statistics for both theater attendance and sheet music sales in Europe and America would be interesting in this connection.

This brief foray into our topic indicates that examination of printed and oral sources leads to a widening circle of problems relating to the distinction between the spheres of folk and popular song, the refashioning of Old World material in America via commercialization, and the history of song genres, all topics we will examine at greater length in the following cases of song analysis.

*FOLK SONG, POPULAR SONG, ART SONG: THE CELEBRATED  
"SCHUBERT SERENADE"*

The major early collectors of Yiddish folksong (Ginzburg and Marek 1901, Cahan 1912, and others) searched for "authentic" old folksongs or for a newer layer of emerging folk repertoire (Beregovskij 1934). While at times willing to discuss the question of interrelation-

ships between the folksong repertoires of the Jews and of the coterritorial peoples (Beregovskij 1935, Skuditski 1935), these fieldworkers tended to avoid the questions of defining levels of style and the problem of diversity of acquisition patterns within a single informant's repertoire. One great strength of Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's design of the YIVO Yiddish Folksong Project is that for the first time large and diverse repertoires were collected with the specification that *all* types of song material be included and fully documented: Yiddish folk, Yiddish popular, coterritorial (including American) folk and popular, and even folklorized versions of art songs, such as the Schubert lied we will examine shortly. Only through careful internal examination of this wide variety of repertoire and of corresponding printed versions can we begin to approach the knotty question of the style, role, and evolution of the song repertoire of Eastern European Jews, both in Europe and in America.

Lifshe Shekhter-Widman, a native of the Bukovina region, grew up near the border of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires. Living in a region dominated by the German language and culture, she picked up Schiller poems in her brief period of formal schooling instead of the Pushkin learned in the nearby Russian cultural area. Musically, she acquired a group of German songs from two aunts; among these is the Schubert "Ständchen", usually known in America as the "Schubert Serenade". An examination and comparison of her unaccompanied version (recorded in 1970) with that of a contemporary art singer (Jussi Björling) and of three sheet music variants of the period sheds light on the process of folklorization of the art song by Yiddish singers and on the complexity of determining levels of style among Eastern European Jews. Ex. 2 gives Widman's version of the first verse of the "Ständchen", compared with a contemporary standard art edition (Schirmer, 1895). The Schirmer edition is in the original 3/4 meter, while Widman's pitches are lined up pitch by pitch, but do not correspond in terms of duration.

As Ex. 2 shows, Widman has radically transformed the structure of the Schubert lied. Schubert makes a

Ex. 2. "The Schubert Serenade." Widman and 1896  
Schirmer versions.

Widman 63-69

Le- ei- se fle- hen mei- ei- ne Lie- der durch die Nacht zu dir

Schirmer

Und durch die stil- len Hain her- nie- der Lieb- chen komm zu mir.

Durch die stil- len Hain her- nie- der Lieb- chen komm zu mir Lieb- chen

komm zu mir.

etc.

harmonic pause at measure 14, but keeps on moving so as to extend the six-bar phrase another four bars in order to make a typical shift from minor to the parallel major mode (G). The lied also contains a concluding section after two full stanzas, creating a through-composed, rather than strophic, structure. Rich piano introductions, interludes and coda fill out the overall form of the song.

Widman, on the other hand, finishes her stanza at Schubert's measure 14 on a somewhat ambiguous cadential b-flat. Her entirely melodic understanding of the song leaves the listener unsure as to whether he is still in the original g minor or whether there has been a modulation to B-flat major. If one wants to interpret the cadence as being in g, then Widman has remained in the minor mode, which would put the song in the mainstream of Yiddish folksong style. If one interprets the b-flat as an implied modulation to B-flat major, then Widman has strayed somewhat from normal Yiddish folksong practice in modulating at the end of a song, but has done so in a direction not taken by Schubert, who made his modulation to G major. The feature which most obviously keeps Widman's performance in the orbit of mainstream Yiddish folksong style is the compression of the Schubert song into quatrain, strophic structure as opposed to the composer's through-composed original. Structurally, Widman has turned the Schubert lied into an approximation of a lyric Yiddish folksong, which she sings in somewhat accented German.

Turning from the parameters of text and melody to performance practice, it is worth comparing Widman's rendition of the "Ständchen" to that of Jussi Björling, a well-known singer of lieder who, like Widman, stems from a peripheral region of the German culture area and who represents performance practice of the early twentieth century. Ex. 3 gives the first few bars of Widman's version, with Björling's interpretation underneath, followed by three sheet music variants to be discussed below.

Let us first compare Widman and Björling. Both display a strong inclination towards prolonging key notes and introducing marked downward vocal glides as

## Ex. 3. "The Schubert Serenade": Five variants.

ornaments. This is most clear when the two are grouped together against the "standard" Schirmer edition. Seen in this light, Widman's stretching of the musical fabric is in the same league as Björling's; in other words, in the parameter of performance practice she approaches an art-song model more clearly than would be apparent from examination of melodic and structural change alone. This convergence of approach represents a reliance on the oral tradition vs. strict dependence on learning from the printed page, a perspective common to both singers and standard for the period under review in both the folk and art music spheres.

The existence of multiple sheet music versions of the "Ständchen" complicates the differentiation of layers of style considerably. The early twentieth-century Jewish musical milieu displays its own taxonomy of styles which follows categories not necessarily akin to those either of the mainstream culture of the period or of ethnomusicology and which we must examine to understand the position of the "Ständchen". One category of pieces is grouped by supposed ethnic origin: Table 2 gives the listing of "New Russian, Polish & Roumanian Melodies" printed on the back of a whole series of Hebrew Publishing Co. editions of the period

Table 2. "New Russian, Polish &amp; Roumanian Melodies" (Hebrew Publishing Co.)

*Russian*

Ozidanie. Valse.  
 Kamarinskaya. Russian National Dance.  
 Moscow. A Russian Melody.  
 Tosca (Longing for Home). March.  
 Dubinushka, uchnem. Folk Songs.  
 Russian Gypsy. From Tolstoi's last play,  
 "The Living Corpse".  
 Waves of the Danube. Russian Waltz.  
 Mazurka Russe.

*Polish*

Polka Mazurka. Dance.  
 Polonaise. Dance.

*Roumanian*

Doina. Folk Song.  
 Volach & Sirba.  
 Zi die Serbatore. Roumanian Holiday.

Table 3. "Classical Pieces for Piano" (Hebrew Publishing Co.)

A Child's Prayer  
 My First Dance  
 Rachil, from the opera "The Jewess"  
 Maria mari, Waltz.  
 Gypsy Love. Chansonette.  
 Arabian Two Step.  
 A Maiden's Prayer  
 Chanson Russe

around World War I, all arrangements by Rumshinsky of the type he cites in his autobiography (Rumshinsky 1944: 267-78) or by Louis Friedsell, another prolific arranger of theater songs and parlor music.

This listing clearly groups a number of disparate genres of music of the period, from music for the stage

to popular Russian urban music of the type Rumshinsky himself composed for a Russian audience prior to his arrival in America in 1906 and folk or folk-like material of Poland and Rumania. The taxonomy becomes even more complex when we look at the listing of "Classical Pieces for Piano" given immediately under the grouping just cited as Table 2 (Table 3). The "classical" listing brings together a nineteenth-century opera aria, an Italian waltz, Jewish-composed sentimental parlor music in general Euro-American style and a popular dance. Theodore Lohr's publications employ a listing of "Select Compositions by Favorite Composers" (pieces dating back to 1896; listing reprinted at least to 1914), involving yet another criterion for organization: the named producer of works. This listing involves marches, opera excerpts, lyric pieces, waltzes and ethnically-titled compositions ("Adieux Polka Mazurka"). Yet a fourth overlapping categorization groups pieces by difficulty of execution, such as Lohr's contemporaneous categorization of "Easy pieces for young students", which includes items found under any of the other three rubrics cited above, e.g. "Chanson Russe" and our "Schubert Serenade". These various taxonomies continued in use through at least the 1930's. The same pieces at times continue in similar columns, at times move under new headings, as can be seen in an untitled and undated Kammen catalogue of the later period (1930's).

Let us return to the "Ständchen", noticing the considerable discrepancies between the five versions of Ex. 3, which have been standardized to the same pitch level and key for ease of comparison. Left out of the Teres version is the introduction tacked on by the arranger, which has nothing in common with the Schubert original. The only continuity in the sheet music versions is the classification of the lied as an easy piece: Teres gives it as "simplified", Lohr lists it under "easy pieces", a contemporary S. Schenker edition cites it as "very easy", and even the much later Kammen catalogue puts the piece under the heading of "simplified arrangements", rather than as an "original classic" or under "favorite composers". It would thus appear that the "Schubert Serenade" was viewed in the

Jewish-American subculture as an elementary teaching piece for piano rather than as an example of a rarefied, vocal, art music tradition. Lifsha Shekhter-Widman viewed the piece as an item acquired from non-Jewish culture via her sister, and cites it in connection with her unfulfilled wish to become musically literate, hence tying it to an approach she maintains by singing the song in the original language, German. However, her impulse was to mold it into a Yiddish folksong structure, which results in a semiacculturated version of the lied.

In view of this complexity, how are we to view the Schubert "Ständchen" as an item in the Jewish musical repertoire of the early twentieth century? Clearly, standard categorizations of folk, popular, and art will prove difficult to support as the evidence washes over these improvised disciplinary dikes. Once again, the purpose of the present paper is not to provide definitive answers, but to demonstrate the interesting interplay between oral and printed versions on both sides of the Atlantic, and to call for reexamination of the content of "Yiddish" music culture.

#### FOLKSONG AND THEATER SONG: "AKEYDAS YITSKHOK"

Internal Yiddish material will provide the basis for the following discussion of the folklorization of songs of the early Yiddish theater, drawn from the oeuvre of Abraham Goldfadn, founder in 1876 of the modern Yiddish theater and its first major composer. We will again rely on a performance by Widman, here discussing songs she said she heard originally in local Purimshpil (folk drama) productions. Both the folk and the popular drama traditions existed simultaneously from ca. 1876 on, though for a small-town dweller like Widman, the Purimshpil was a much more immediate source. She knew of theater songs only through second- or third-hand encounter until her arrival in America in 1906.

In an interview taped in 1973, Widman sang two songs while reciting the plot of an "Akeydas Yitskhok" ('Sacrifice of Isaac') Purimshpil, which she herself

says was probably based on Goldfadn. The first is a lament by Abraham bemoaning his lack of offspring (Ex. 4), while the second is a lullaby Sarah sings to the long awaited child, Isaac (Ex. 5). Widman introduces both songs with commentary placing them in the play narrative; however, she said (in a different interview) that she also used the lullaby for her own children in a domestic music-making context. The two songs are so close in text and melodic outline to the Goldfadn items that it seems reasonable to speak of folklorization. However, given the composer's penchant for integrating folk material into his works, it is possible that he took both numbers from contemporary folk sources.

What we will be looking for in our analysis is signs of folk structure and performance practice vs. Goldfadn's newly created Yiddish stage style and context. Ex. 4 gives the two versions of the first song. Let us begin by noticing what Goldfadn (n.d. #5) has written by way of creating a new musical style. The florid piano introduction and simple chordal accompaniment of the opening measures (up to the double bar) lend a somewhat cantorial air to the song. Tonally, a decisive shift is made at the end of the passage from a strongly melodic feeling based on the Yiddish *frigish* scale (with the augmented second between flat second and raised third scale degrees) to a purely European harmonic basis in a minor. The song continues after the double bar in a pulsed a minor, reverting to the tonal and metric emphasis of the opening after a transitional passage (measures 19-24), reaching the initial tonic level by means of a unison passage, typical for later sheet music compositional style. A brief instrumental coda (marked "music") brings the song to a close.

As in the case of the Schubert "Ständchen", Widman condenses a complex structure into something approaching folksong style. Textually, she uses only four lines from the Goldfadn setting; two are reworded and two are taken from a different stanza. The result is a quatrain which stays in the *frigish* mode and which incorporates a repetition of a musical line as the concluding line, both features typical of folksong style.

Ex. 4. Folklorization of a Goldfadn Aria,  
"Abraham's Fantasie" (continued on next page)

## Abram Fantasie

MUSIC

№5

ABRAHAM

Ach! vie un glik lich filt sich der mensh, wen er bleibt in sein ge zelt

Widman

Un-glik-likh filt zikh der mentsh ven er blaybt ey-ner a-ley

mied, von sein le ben a lein un darf gehn von der welt.

Widman

U-rem iz zayn ge-tseht nisht keyn kind un keyn fraynd

un auf die el te re Yuhr bleibt er e lend gur on ko ach on ge sind

Widman

Got hot ge-bentsht mayn hoys, mayn fer-me-gn iz groys Vos toyg es mir a-tsid

Wid-  
man

a ye-ru-she on a kind, oy vey, on an eyn-tsig kind. Ikh dank dir  
far dem glik, nem es dir tsu-rik. Vus toyg es mir a-tsind a ye-ru-she  
on a kind, oy vey, on an eyn-tsig kind.

Gold-  
fadn

un ohn ein ein zig kind ya ohn an ein zig kind Wer ken ihm treis ten wen  
er wert ne bach krank, wer wet im beg lei ten wen  
er get dem lez ten gang, sein ke ver shteit in pis te fel der ei ner a lein  
kein trer fon kein kind ba nezt kein mul - dem kal ten shtein far  
ge sen fer loi ren vert sein no men of oi big oj on a kind  
oj on a kind

MUSIC

Ex. 5. Folklorization of a Goldfadn Aria,  
"Sarah's Lullaby"

oj go - tu niu ta ye rer ta ye rer ge  
tra Yer geloibt sai wus du host in mir ge  
deinkt Bas tich im sho - no dankt dir yezt far der ma  
tu ne wus du host oif der el ter ihr ge shenkt.  
men vet von dir nit la - chen nisht mehr choisck ma - chen  
shluf ze shluf mein sro-re le dich wet dein mu ter so re le  
Oy shluf mayn tay-er shur-re-le Dikh vigt dayn mu-ter Gu-re-le  
seht wie so re die a ko re wegt ihr einzig kind  
got der gi ter is dein hi ter shluf mein ta-yer kind

As in the Schubert example, Widman avoids sharp changes in tonality and any hint of a harmonic base for the melodic line. In short, she has once again displayed a capacity for keeping her performance within the familiar bounds of Yiddish folksong style.

Let us turn to the second Purimshpil-Goldfadn song, "Sarah's Lullaby". Ex. 5 gives the Goldfadn (n.d.:#21) song, with Widman's version laid under the "chorus" section of the stage version, where it belongs. In her pared-down version of the song, which omits the entire "verse" section of the Goldfadn, Widman essentially takes the same path as in the Schubert and first Goldfadn songs cited above in minimizing the sense of a harmonic framework and in laying principal stress on a purely melodic structure consonant with folksong style. In the lullaby, the shift in emphasis is apparent most clearly in measures 5-6. The Goldfadn setting here features a sequential melodic line obviously based on the simple underlying chordal progression flat II-I, echoing the characteristic interval of the traditional *frigish* scale. This is, of course, somewhat removed from the art music world of Schubert's song setting; Goldfadn is involved with pioneer attempts to create a "Yiddish" coloration of the harmony.

It would seem that, if Widman is folklorizing the Goldfadn song, a simple singing of the melodic line would uphold her interest in maintenance of a Yiddish folksong sound. Yet she deviates sharply from any harmonic sense, "Yiddish-colored" or not, in her version of measures 5-6. She builds measure 5 on a descending melodic line that stresses the characteristic interval (augmented second) of the tune, then counterposes a dramatic rising-falling contour in measure 6, using a pitch sequence that avoids Goldfadn's flat II-I progression, carrying the melody on to resolution only in the next two, cadential measures of the song. Once again, comparison with a printed version, in this case a specimen of the emerging Yiddish theater repertoire, helps define the basic character of Yiddish song style [3]. On the other hand, the Goldfadn sheet music reveals an early leaning towards complex verse-chorus structures and greater reliance on a harmonic

base, thus presenting, in black and white, an important moment in the evolution of the music culture.

*QUESTIONS OF GENRE: ORPHAN AND DISASTER SONGS*

To examine possible uses of sheet music in defining the genres of Yiddish song, we will begin by examining a song that appears to cross genre lines, combining the disaster theme and the orphan theme, and attempt to follow some of the ramifications of the case. The song is "Mamenyu! oder der troyer oyf di trayengel korbonos" 'Mamenyu! or the elegy on the Triangle Fire victims', with words by Anshel Schorr and music by Rumshinsky (Hebrew Publishing Co., 1911).

Ex. 6.

Oy vey mamenyu  
 Iz dos ershte vort fun kindenyu  
 Nor a mames harts  
 Oy halt dem kind zayn shmerts.  
 Ir leben in gefar shtelt zi  
 Vey dir, yesoyemele  
 Bist an obgehaktes boymele  
 Keyner kukt zikh um  
 Bist elend umetum  
 Oy mame, mame, vu bistu, vu?  
 Oy vey kindenyu!  
 Rayst zikh bay di hor di mamenyu  
 Tsulib dem shtikl broyt  
 Hot a shreklikher toyt  
 Geroybt mir mayn ayntsig kind.  
 Toyt lig mayn meydele  
 Takhrikhim shtot a khupe kleydele  
 Vey iz mayne yor  
 A kind fun l6 yor  
 Oy mame, mame, vey iz mir, oy!

Verse 1 and chorus 1 are good examples of the sheet music orphan song, which I have described elsewhere (Slobin 1976) as a standard genre of the early twentieth

century Jewish-American repertoire. There is no mention of the disaster cited in the song's title. Verse 2 describes the bitter fate of the poverty-stricken child. Verse 3 introduces a completely new topic, the disaster, and its refrain brings in a hitherto ignored situation, that of the mother who has lost a child, quite different from the orphan's plight dwelt on in the first two verses! Essentially, we are given a description of a tragic event and its aftermath, putting "Mamenyu" squarely in the category of topical songs on the disaster theme.

"Mamenyu" is not the sole example of songs on the topic of the Triangle Fire. There are other folk and folklorized songs on the topic recorded for the YIVO Yiddish Folksong Project, and Levin (1976:86) even includes a recent English-language song on the subject written by Ruth Rubin, the well-known Yiddish folksong researcher. Interestingly, Rubin's song stresses the inhuman working conditions that preceded and helped cause the Triangle Fire; this approach to the disaster is echoed in the usual citations of the event in history texts, which stress the fire as an impetus towards the move to improve working conditions.

In "Mamenyu", it is the personal side of the disaster that comes to the fore. Such differences in outlook between the historian (and later commentators such as Rubin) and the immediate topical-song response to the event underscore the value of examining sheet music to gain a rounded view of social history. Curiously, a book (Stein 1962) entirely devoted to the Triangle Fire fails to mention songs about the tragedy.

To understand the import and structure of "Mamenyu", we must examine it in the context of both Yiddish and coterritorial (European and American) song genres on the two themes of disaster and the orphan's plight. This includes 1) the Yiddish orphan song in Europe and America; 2) the Yiddish disaster song in Europe and America; and 3) the mainstream American orphan and disaster songs of the period under discussion.

1. *The Yiddish Orphan Song.*

The transcribed Yiddish folksong repertoire barely antedates the publication dates of the sheet music under review here. Ginzburg and Marek's (1901) ground-breaking anthology (which included no tunes) appeared only in 1901, and the next major collection (Cahan 1912) came out the same year as our song, so we are in the situation, described at the outset of the present study, of looking at simultaneous publications of folk and popular sources. While I have not undertaken an exhaustive study of published Yiddish orphan songs and those in field recordings, it does appear even from an overview that we are dealing with a recognizable genre.

Ginzburg and Marek (1901:252-3) include three orphan songs, of which their #302 can serve as an example; it begins with the following quatrains:

Ex. 7.

Zind ikh bin ayn yesoyemele gebliben  
Azoy hob ikh gekrogen farshtand, oy farshtand.  
M'hot shoyt far mir dem takhles gefunen  
Tsu geben di mlokhe in der hand, in der hand.

Di mlokhe iz far mir tsu shver  
Un ikh bin tsu kleyn, oy tsu kleyn.  
Un haynt bin ikh ayn bitere yesoyemele  
Dertsu nokh elend vi ayn shteyn, vi ayn shteyn.

The last two verses include a dialogue between the orphan and her deceased father. Two features of this song--the concluding line "elend vi a shteyn" and the dialogue--are characteristic of a number of orphan songs, including commercial items we will discuss below. "Elend vi a shteyn" also occurs in numerous songs of lovesickness (e.g. Ginzburg and Marek's #178), indicating it is a generalized formula of complaint.

A song collected by Pipe in southern Poland (Pipe 1970:112-13) and also found in Widman's Bukovina reper-

toire introduces the parent-child dialogue and adds another dimension: mention of the stepmother. "Oyf dem beys oylem", according to Mlotek (personal communication) is a folklorized version of Mikhl Gordon's poem "Di shtifumter". Verses 1 and 2 of Pipe's "Oyf dem beys oylem" (not cited here) detail the mother's complaining voice arising from the grave; verse 3 has the dialogue and verse 4 presents an appeal from the mother to the child's father for kindness to the child. Widman knew another orphan song, "Vi shvarts", which takes up the same theme in slightly different terms. In verses 1 and 2 of "Vi shvarts" the burial of the mother is described. She is described as being "a *fri-shn korbon*" a fresh victim, perhaps of a disaster. In verse 3 Widman introduces the concluding formula cited above:

Ex. 8.

Yankl iz dokh fun der heym antlofn  
Er shluft nokh dort oyf dem alten shteyn  
Shtey oyf, du yosem, hast dokh shoynt a mame nit  
Elend blaybst du do vi a shteyn.

The close relationship between orphan songs and the theme of disaster is nicely illustrated in a song-pair in Ginzburg and Marek (1901:56-7). Song #58 describes the plight of a beautiful beggar-girl who, in a dialogue, explains the cause of her distress:

Ex. 9.

In Kiev geboren, eydel dertsoygen gevorn  
Mit'n shensten shtot  
Der umglik iz gekument un alts avekgenumen  
Alts vos mir hoben gehat.

The narrative implies a disaster, perhaps a pogrom, leaving a family destitute. In the following variant (Song #59), the girl is clearly identified as an orphan, and the disaster is only hinted at:

Ex. 10.

In Kiev geboren, un eydel dertsoygen  
Gor fun a meshpokhe a sheyne

...

Nishto keyn foter, nishto keyn muter  
Nishto keyn shvester un bruder.

The similarity of treatment between folk and popular versions can be seen in, for example, Secunda's "Die lebedige yesoyim" (1912, S. Goldberg), though we note the absence of the dialogue feature:

Ex. 11.

Vey dir yosem vey  
Umzist iz dayn geshrey  
Bist oyf der velt aleyn  
Elend vi a shteyn  
Ver filt mit dayn shmerts  
Dayn farveytigt harts  
Vey un vind iz ven a kind lebt  
On a tate mamenu oy vey.

Abe Schwartz's "Aleyn oyf der velt, oder dos elende kind" (1921, Hebrew Publishing Co.), while including the "elend vi a shteyn" formula, comes closer in linking the orphan state to a specific disaster:

Ex. 12.

Libe fraynd hert mikh oys  
Un bedoyert mikh do atsind.  
Mayn harts derteylen vel ikh far aykh  
Ikh bin oykh gevezen a tatens a kind.  
Mayn mame iz geshtorben ikh gedenk es koym  
Mayn taten derharget in a pogrom  
Mayne brider hob ikh ferloren  
Ikh bin elend azoy vi a shteyn.

The introductory "*libe fraynd*" address connects the song to folksong style as much as does the concluding formula.

To round out this survey, it is particularly useful to look at another orphan song by Rumshinsky, composer of the Triangle Fire song (words by Gilrod; 1914, Hebrew Publishing Co.). In the chorus, the second and last lines are identical to lines in "Mamenyu", which was published three years earlier, while the first line and title of the song ("Lebedig yesoyemele") nearly duplicates Secunda's "Lebedike yesoyemim" cited above:

## Ex. 13.

Oy lebedig yesoyemele  
 Du opgerisen boymele  
 Du host keyn heym nit un keyn ru  
 Ven dayn mame iz nito.  
 S'iz nito ver zol fleygn dikh  
 Mit tsertlikhkayt shlofn leygn dikh  
 Un beten got far dayn gezind  
 Mame, mame, vi bistu atsind.

Putting together the folk and folklike sheet music orphan songs, all of which existed contemporaneously, we can isolate several general tendencies in the genre: 1) association of the orphan with the plight, or at least mention, of the deceased parent(s); 2) the use of specific textual formulae; 3) possible association of the origin of orphanhood with disaster, particularly in the commercial songs.

2. *The Yiddish Disaster Song.*

The early collectors of Yiddish folksong noted little in the way of songs relating to specific disastrous events, outside of those generally about outbreaks of war. A particular category which occasionally emerges is that of the local drowning, found with similar text and melody in Pipe (1971:115), Beregovskij (1934:146) and in the tapes of Lifshe Shekhter-Widman's repertoire. A striking American example of the disaster song for a specific event is a sheet music item on the sinking of the Titanic ("Khurbon titanik, oder der naser keyver", Hebrew Publishing Co., 1912), paralleled

in spirit by a disc entitled "El mole rachmin (für Titanik)" sung by Yosele Rosenblatt (Victor 35312-B).

Another type of disaster, the pogrom, has produced a particularly noteworthy set of songs. This subgenre is strikingly illustrated by a matched pair of pieces on the Kishinev pogrom of 1903, which reflect a folk and popular version of the same tune. A song beginning "Oy libe yidn hots rakhmones" was taped by Leybl Kakn in 1954 from Lifshe Shekhter-Widman. She explained that she learned the song from survivors of the pogrom, who had fled to her native region of Bukovina shortly after the event in 1903. She stressed the fact of having acquired the song in Europe, and vividly recalls the plight of the fugitives, who sang it while soliciting alms. Her version of the song is an emotionally charged performance with a strong narrative quality. Ex. 14 gives the melody of the first stanza, a classic folk double quatrain with *abac* rhyme scheme and a single-line refrain:

## Ex. 14. "Libe yidn." L. Shekhter-Widman.

$\text{♩} = 66-72$

Oy li-<sup>3</sup>be yi-dn hots rakh-mo-nes Lozt der-vey-khn ay-er-e harts.  
 Ra-te<sup>3</sup>vet men-tshn fun a sa-ko-ne Filt mit un-zer shmerts.  
 Me-ner fa-len, kley-ne kin-der Be-th tsi aykh mit a bi-ter ge-shrey.  
 Yi-dn helft, helft ge-shvin-der Di kor-bo-nes fun-em Ke-shi-ne-ve  
 po-grom (unclear) Oy oy oy a-za fin-ste-re tsayt.

An item in the sheet music collection, titled "Der yidisher troyer-marsh", bears the following inscription (portrayed on a tombstone, over which an allegorical figure in mourning drapes): "Inspired by and written for the demonstration of December 5th 1905 participated by 250,000 citizens of greater New York in tribute to the memory of the victims of Russian brutal massacres". The music is copyrighted 1906; a listing of the songs on the back cover includes items copyrighted as late as 1914, indicating the "Troyer-marsh" remained in public consciousness for a good many years after the demonstration that occasioned its composition. The music is given as being composed by Perlmutter and Wohl, two prolific producers of Jewish-American popular music of the period, and comes from their operetta *Kishinever Korbones*. Joseph Rumshinsky's memoirs describe the effect of the music at the event:

א גרויסער אַרקעסטער האָט געשפּילט אַ טרויערמאַרש פֿון די באַרימטע מוזיקערס פּערלמוטער און וואָל, טאַקע פֿון זייערן אַ געזאַנג־נומער, ״שענקט אַ נדבָה״ פֿון דער פּיעסע ״חורבן קעשענעוו״. די טרויערטענער האָבן זיך געטראָגן איבער ניו־יאָרק. די טויטע שטילקייט מיט די האַרצריסנדיקע טענער פֿון דער טרויער־מוזיק, מיט די גלאַקן פֿון די קירכן האָבן צוזאַמען־געשטעלט אַ ווייגעשריי.

A large orchestra played a funeral march by the famous musicians Perlmutter and Wohl... The sounds of mourning carried across New York. It (the music) stole into everyone's hearts... The dead silence, along with the heart-rending tones of the mourning music and the church-bells, constituted a cry of woe... (Rumshinsky 1944:288)

Ex. 15 reproduces the music of the "March Funebre" (as the piece is called on the inside title). After one discounts the introduction and overlooks the florid accompaniment, it becomes clear that this so-called funeral march is nothing more than an arrangement of the song Lifshe Shekhter-Widman called "Libe yidn". We are thus able to witness the "apotheosis" of a topical folk song. Thanks to the sheet music, we know exactly what was performed at a specific demonstration

Ex. 15. "Der yidisher troyer-marsh".

DER YIDISHER  
**TRAUER-MARCH**  
BY  
PERLMUTTER  
AND  
WOHL

דער יידישער  
טרויער-מארש

INSPIRED BY AND WRITTEN FOR  
THE DEMONSTRATION OF  
DECEMBER 5<sup>th</sup> 1905.  
PARTICIPATED BY 250,000  
CITIZENS OF GREATER NEW YORK  
IN TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF  
THE VICTIMS  
OF RUSSIAN BRUTAL MASSACRES

Piano 50  
Violin 30

HEBREW PUBLISHING CO.  
40-52 ELDRIDGE ST.  
NEW YORK  
COPYRIGHT 1907

# March Funebre.

PERLMUTTER & WOHL.

The first system of the score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower in bass clef. It begins with a *ff* dynamic marking, followed by a *p* marking, then another *ff* and *p*. The music features a mix of chords and moving lines, with some triplets indicated by a '3' over a group of notes.

The second system of the score continues the piece across two staves. It features a variety of textures, including dense chordal passages and more melodic lines. Dynamics range from *p* to *ff*. Numerous triplets are present throughout the system, marked with a '3' and a slur over the notes.

in New York, i.e. we are given a glimpse into the American musical reaction to a European event: Americanization of the appropriate Old World song. Simultaneously, we have seen a folksong appear in a popular music setting.

It is difficult to say whether "Libe yidn" is a sample of a preexistent subcategory of the disaster song concerned with pogroms because so little historical folksong material in Yiddish was collected and published prior to the turn of the century. What is clear is that the pogrom song remains an identifiable song-type among American Jews, as witnessed by "Hot rakhmones", "based on a poem written in 1909, following a pogrom in Russia" (Levin 1976:118). The song, with words by the poet S. Frug, contains phrases and images quite close to those of "Libe yidn", and the overall structure of verses describing the disaster followed by a refrain soliciting aid also parallels the pattern of the Kishinev pogrom song [5]. Thus, both songs might reflect the existence of a pogrom song genre, one which crosses the border of folk and popular song of the period.

### 3. American Orphan and Disaster Songs.

Like continental Europe (see e.g. Petzoldt 1973) and England, America was rich in disaster and orphan songs, both in the folk and popular spheres, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The question of folk vs. popular categorization is cloudy for American songs of this period since, as Laws (1964:46-7) has pointed out, most American ballads have their origin in printed versions. The distinction seems largely to consist of local creation and circulation vs. urban commercial production and dissemination networks; we will cite both types of songs here.

The topical and orphan-based melodramas of the period act as an additional medium cementing the importance of the two themes. For example, Denner's *The Two Orphans* had an extraordinary impact: "Possibly no play ever written equals it in emotional voltage if

the quantity of tears made to flow in the theatres of Christendom during the final quarter of the nineteenth century is a criterion" (Rahill 1967:97). American disaster-cum-orphan songs seem to have created a special genre combining the strength of both subjects. One particularly interesting song in this respect is "The Brooklyn Theater Fire", which describes the disaster of 1876, in which some 300 lives were lost when fire broke out during a performance of *The Two Orphans*. According to Laws (1964:226), the song has become a folksong.

Levy (1967:324-8), surveying American sheet music from 1820-90, pays special attention to a song of 1872 titled "Homeless Tonight, or Boston in Ashes", for which "there was a large and immediate demand... it ran through several editions, and the picture of the two waifs fleeing the horrendous flames could be observed on many thousands of piano racks, not only in Boston but throughout the country". The text plays upon the double tragedy of the early death of the mother and the subsequent demise of the father which Abe Schwartz included in his orphan song of 1921 cited above, and features the burden of homelessness mentioned in Widman's "Vi shvarts":

#### Ex. 16.

Lone and weary thro' the streets we wander  
 For we have no place to lay our heads.  
 Not a friend on earth is left to shelter us  
 For both our parents now are dead.  
 Poor mother died when we were both young,  
 Yet father made for us a home,  
 But now he's killed by falling timbers,  
 And we are left here all alone.

The disaster theme can also be touched on more lightly in orphan songs, as seen in an 1875 Oklahoma example (probably broadside-based) entitled "Two Little Children" (Moore 1964:366):

Ex. 17.

"Mama got sick. Angels took her away",  
She said, "to a home warm and bright.  
She said she would come for her darlings some day  
Perhaps she is coming tonight.

Papa was lost on the sea long ago;  
We waited all night on the shore.  
He was a lifesaving captain, you know,  
But he never came back any more".

Here we find once more the natural death of one parent followed by the disastrous death of the other, a structure already cited for both Yiddish and mainstream material. To round out this survey, we can cite one of the many non-disaster orphan songs of the period, "Why did they dig Ma's grave so deep", by J.P. Skelly (1880's), in which the mother's cause of death is not given (Gilbert 1942:128-9).

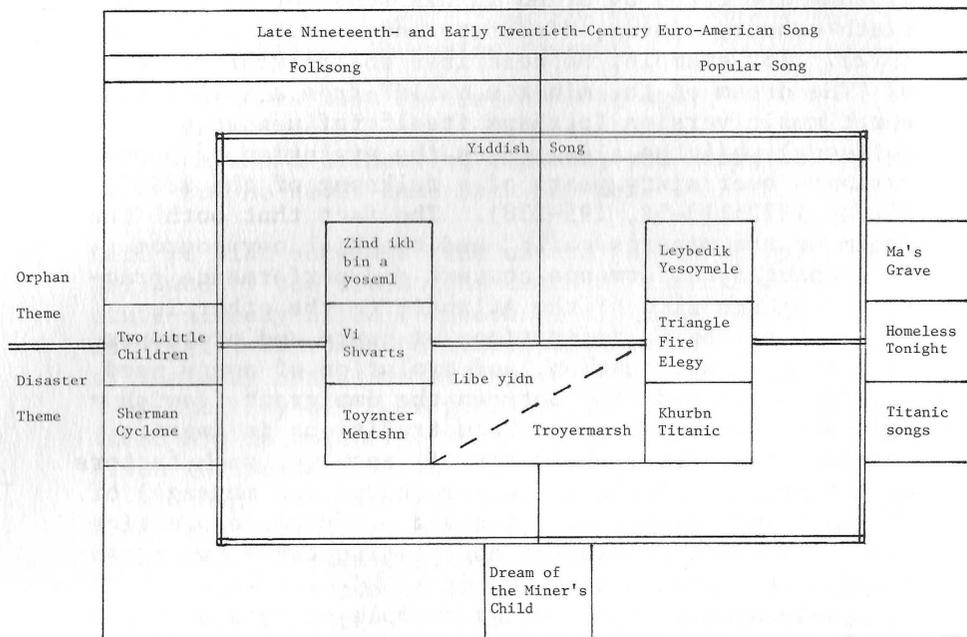
Songs on disasters lacking mention of the orphan theme are legion, with the topics ranging from the localized "Sherman Cyclone" (Moore 1964:339-40) about an Oklahoma tornado of 1896, to the nationally celebrated wreck of the Titanic in 1912. The latter disaster touched a wide cross-section of the national audience; the Yiddish response to the event has already been cited. Hickerson (in Green 1972:411) discovered 106 variants in the Copyright Office files for 1912-15. His observation (ibid.) that nearly half the songs resulted from direct commercial solicitation by a single publishing firm indicates the power of the urban-based sheet music industry to attract national interest. The further fact that all 106 of the songs contain the hymn "Nearer my God to thee" underscores the growing uniformity of structure in the commercial song. Here the Yiddish version would particularly stand out as a distinctive minority-group statement through omission of the hymn.

The flexibility of the disaster song in straddling the folk-popular line can be seen in both the Yiddish and American traditions; we have noted the process in the Yiddish repertoire via the Kishinev pogrom song. In the mainstream song tradition researchers have noted

numerous mine, flood, trainwreck, and shipwreck songs which may begin as folksongs and then turn into popular songs when commercialized, and vice versa. Both types of song are cited by Green in his study of early twentieth-century mining, disaster, and convict songs (Green 1972). For example, he describes the folklorization of "The dream of the miner's child" from a 1910 English sheet music version (perhaps itself influenced by a folksong) while he also traces the evolution of popular variants over sixty years of a folksong of the 1890's (Green 1972:113-54, 195-238). The fact that both "The dream of the miner's child" and the Kishinev pogrom song changed performance context and performance practice from one side of the Atlantic to the other is noteworthy. Basic definitions of genre and processes of origin, dissemination, and evolution of songs need not necessarily differ between the immigrant (Jewish and non-Jewish) and mainstream traditions in America. Outside of the obvious factor of language, such factors as differences in the affective charge (or message) of the text and details of style and performance practice provide a useful basis for contrasting these two broad areas of American song.

Returning to the opening example of this section, the Triangle Fire song "Mamenyu", we can now see it on the one hand as part of a Yiddish song tradition including both the folk and popular worlds, and on the other hand, as a legitimate descendant of American songs like "Homeless tonight", which even features a fire as the orphan-producing disaster. In other words, the song relates both to an in-group development and to external coterritorial patterns of song-making. The web of coterritorial connections could, of course, be extended to all of Europe, for the pathetic side of both the orphan and the disaster themes recommended itself to the Russians, Germans, French and others as much as to Anglo-American folksingers and publishers. The situation of "Mamenyu", then, can be summarized in diagram form as in Table 4 below, where Yiddish items are placed in a framework of general Euro-American song genres of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; only American song examples are adduced here.

Table 4. Yiddish Orphan and Disaster Songs in the Context of Euro-American Song Genres (late 19th-early 20th centuries)



This study presents no firm conclusions, as it is meant as an introductory exposition of research possibilities. We have compared printed and oral versions of songs in Yiddish (or adapted by Yiddish singers from coterritorial repertoires) and have found the Yiddish song to be extremely complicated in its interactions of levels of style (folk, popular, art) and of genres, using only two genres--the orphan and disaster songs--as examples. It should again be stressed that Yiddish song must be seen in the context of European and American coterritorial song to clarify both the links and the disparities between the two repertoires. On the one hand, the data show distinctive types of evolution for the Yiddish song, as in the case of the folk drama-popular drama connection of the "Akeydas Yitskhok" songs, while on the other hand, Yiddish song seems only one part of a generalized popular response to events or commercial processes (e.g. creation of songs on the Titanic disaster or the rise of the parlor piano context). In all cases, four major parameters of song need to be examined, with a study of text taking its place alongside examination of melody, context, and performance practice to fully understand a song, though the factors need not unanimously point towards a unified interpretation. Finally it is hoped that commercial sources will have been shown to be a powerful tool in the evolution of the Yiddish song tradition, and that what Dorson has called the "mutually stimulating camaraderie" (Dorson 1972:466) of printed and oral texts will have been demonstrated.

#### NOTES

1. I am grateful to Yosef Gordon for funding the Wesleyan collection of Yiddish music and theater source materials, to Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett for indispensable advice, and to Dan Ben-Amos, Elanor Gordon Mlotek, Bella Gottesman, and Beatrice Weinreich for their helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper. The YIVO Yiddish folksong project (East European Jewish folksong in its social context: An analysis

of the social systematization of folksong performance) was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities during the period January 15, 1973 to September 15, 1975, and by the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture.

2. The traditional Yiddish folksongs in Lifshe Shekhter-Widman's repertoire were first recorded in 1954, shortly after she settled in America, in the Bronx. Leybl Kahn, who made these recordings, kindly deposited the tapes with the YIVO Yiddish folksong project. From 1970 until 1973, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett recorded interviews and songs from Mrs. Widman, which spanned the full range of her repertoire. Shortly before her death in 1973, Mrs. Widman published her memoirs. This material forms part of the basis for the present study.

3. Elanor Gordon Mlotek has brought to my attention a folklorized version of "Sarah's Lullaby" published in Beregovskii & Fefer 1938. It is closer in its final two measures to the Goldfadn version than to Widman's variant.

4. E.G. Mlotek (personal communication) notes that the song was written by Anshel Schorr and was printed in *Kvutsat shirim*; this information, received as the present article was in press, could not be integrated into the discussion.

5. Indeed, E.G. Mlotek (personal communication) states that Frug's text was inspired by the Kishinev pogrom and was published in 1903 with different music, by A.M. Bernstein. She adds that in the Yiddish song repertoire there are pogrom songs about Lida, Homel, Lemberg, Odessa, Stashev, Lodz, Bialostok and other cities.

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