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Los Angeles

Yiddish Songs of the *Shoah*

A Source Study Based on the Collections of Shmerke Kaczerginski

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Ethnomusicology

by

Bret Charles Werb

2014

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Doctor of Philosophy in Ethnomusicology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2014

Professor Timothy Rice, Chair

This study examines the repertoire of Yiddish-language *Shoah* (or Holocaust) songs prepared for publication between the years 1945 and 1949, focusing its attention on the work of the most influential individual song collector, Shmerke Kacerginski (1908-1954). Although a number of initiatives to preserve the “sung folklore” of the Nazi ghettos and camps were undertaken soon after the end of the Second World War, Kacerginski’s magnum opus, the anthology *Lider fun di getos un lagern* (Songs of the Ghettos and Camps), published in New York in 1948, remains unsurpassed to this day as a resource for research in the field of Jewish folk and popular music of the Holocaust period.

Chapter one of the dissertation recounts Kaczerginski's life story, from his underprivileged childhood in Vilna, Imperial Russia (present-day Vilnius, Lithuania), to his tragic early death in Argentina. It details his political, social and literary development, his wartime involvement in ghetto cultural affairs and the underground resistance, and postwar sojourn from the Soviet sphere to the West. Kaczerginski's formative years as a politically engaged poet and songwriter are shown to have underpinned his conviction that the repertoire of salvaged Shoah songs provided unique and authentic testimony to the Jewish experience of the war.

The second chapter contextualizes Kaczerginski's work by examining fourteen contemporaneous anthologies, beginning with the hastily-compiled first Shoah songbook issued in Bucharest within a month of the German surrender, and concluding with the politically aborted, never published major study prepared in 1949 by the Soviet-Ukrainian music folklorist Moshe Beregovski. The chapter compares the backgrounds and missions of each anthologist, and includes tabulated and annotated content listings for each collection discussed.

The third chapter, a detailed study of Kaczerginski's *Lider fun di getos un lagern*, anatomizes the book's four main sections and argues that its contents were organized according to a "narrative" structure. Interviews and correspondence with Kaczerginski's friends, colleagues and family-members inform a discussion of the author's working methods and the degree to which his background and cultural biases affected his collecting modus operandi. The chapter also includes Kaczerginski's introductory "Collector's Remarks" provided in full English translation for the first time, and a tabulated and annotated inventory of the anthology's 235 songs and poems.

Chapter four examines the musical genres favored by ghetto and camp songwriters. The discussion encompasses original compositions as well as contrafacta (or parody) works modeled after theater songs and popular dances such as the tango and the waltz. It also examines the use, especially by Jewish partisan songwriters, of melodies drawn from the repertoire of the Soviet mass song.

The final chapter considers the legacy of Kaczerginski's life and work. While the influence of his large collection has been pervasive—all subsequent anthologists of Yiddish Holocaust songs have directly or indirectly mined *Lider fun di getos un lagern* for source material—awareness of the central role he played in the preservation of the repertoire has inevitably declined with the passage of time.

The dissertation of Bret Charles Werb is approved.

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2014

Dedication

To my parents

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Vita

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- “Vu ahin zol ikh geyn?”: “Music Culture of Jewish Displaced Persons,” in *Jewish Music and Germany after the Holocaust*, ed. Tina Frühauf and Lily Hirsch (Oxford University Press, forthcoming, 2014).
- “S’brent: Muzik der Ghettos und Lager,” *Enzyklopädie jüdischer Geschichte und Kultur* (J.B. Metzler, 2014).
- “Yiddish Songs of the Holocaust: A Reclaimed Repertoire,” Teacher Seminar, Museum of Jewish Heritage, New York, July 2013.
- “Mayufes,” *Enzyklopädie jüdischer Geschichte und Kultur* (J.B. Metzler, 2013).
- “Lost Music of the Holocaust,” Keynote Speaker and Panelist, U.S. State Department, Washington D.C., June 2013.
- “A Little-Known Study of Musical Sadism” (co-authored with Barabara Milewski), conference “Music in Detention,” Georg-August-Universität, Göttingen, Germany, March 2013.
- “The Mystical Supper: Sacred Food Amid Spiritual Famine,” preconcert talk for the Washington Master Chorale, National Presbyterian Church, Washington DC, October 2012.
- “Auditory Snapshots from the Edges of Europe,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society XXII*, co-authored with Michael Beckerman (Cambridge University Press, 2012).
- “Jewish Nationalism, Jewish Non-Jewish Nationalism, and Jewish Internationalism in Music,” preconcert talk for Ensemble Shir Ami, Strathmore Mansion, Bethesda, January 2011.
- “*We Will Never Die: A Pageant to Save the Jews of Europe*” (OREL Foundation, 2010).
- “Music,” *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (Oxford University Press, 2010).
- “*We Will Never Die: A Pageant to Save the Jews of Europe*,” conference “Recovered Voices: Staging Suppressed Opera of the Early 20th Century,” UCLA, April 2010.

“Hans Gál’s *What A Life!*” Lecture-recital with Washington Musica Viva, Embassy of Austria, Washington DC, May 2009.

“Music as Attack / Music as Escape,” preconcert talk for Anne-Sofie von Otter, Strathmore Concert Hall, Bethesda, April 2009.

Aleksander Kulisiewicz, Ballads and Broadsides: Songs from Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp 1940-1945. Sound recording with program essay, annotations and translations (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2008).

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“Music, Holocaust: Hidden and Protest,” *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity* (Macmillan Reference, 2004).

“Who Was Pola Braun?,” preconcert talk, Benaroya Hall, Seattle, May 2004.

“From Madagascar to Sachsenhausen: Singing about ‘Race’ in a Nazi Camp,” co-authored with Barbara Milewski, *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 16 (2003).

Into the Arms of Strangers: Tales of the Kindertransport (music consultant for feature documentary film, Warner Bros, 2000).

“Jewish Music/Yiddish Art Song and Theater Song”; “Jewish Music/Holocaust,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Macmillan, 2000).

“*Majufes*: A Vestige of Jewish Traditional Song in Polish Popular Entertainments,” *Polish Music Journal* 6/1 (1999).

“*Es lebe Kulturkampf!*: Polish Parody Songs from the Nazi Concentration Camps” (co-authored with Barbara Milewski), 16th International Congress of the International Musicological Society, Royal College of Music, London, August 1997.

Hidden History: Songs from Kovno Ghetto. Sound recording with program essay, annotations and translations (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1997).

Rise Up And Fight! Songs of Jewish Partisans. Sound recording with program essay, annotations and translations (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1996).

“Jewish Partisan Songs of World War II,” Society for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting, Toronto, November 1996.

Kraków Ghetto Notebook. Sound recording with program essay, annotations and translations (Koch International Classics, 1994).

Music of the Holocaust: Highlights from the Collection, online exhibition (curator, 2001-).

Preface

Should we not eulogize murdered songs as well as lives? Should we not hold memorial services for the souls of words, of songs, of rhymes, which together with the lips that uttered them were destroyed by fire or in the gas chamber? Yes, we must also say *Yizkor* for murdered folksongs, that we should hold the more sacred those which were rescued. Through them, their authors shall forever remain in our thoughts, though we may not know their names. —H. Leivick*

This dissertation recounts the origins and influence of a single anthology of Yiddish folk songs, *Lider fun di getos un lagern* (Songs from the Ghettos and Camps) (1948), compiled by the poet and polemicist Shmerke Kaczerginski from fieldwork conducted mainly among Europe's displaced Jewish population soon after World War II. Drawing on the methodologies of ethnomusicology and historical musicology, and finding another model in the discipline of historical ethnomusicology, it seeks to examine this historic compendium of *Shoah* songs from a number of perspectives.

Ethnomusicology

The ethnomusicological model, particularly its “insider-outsider” and diachronic-synchronic paradigms, informs discussions of the reception of the Shoah song repertoire both initially (by its first audiences), and over time. Kaczerginski and many of his song-collecting colleagues, themselves Holocaust survivors, were insiders who often served as their own informants. Yet even as they set down this material for their peers, they sought to make it comprehensible to those who had not directly experienced the Shoah, pleading in some cases that readers not judge the songs without taking into account the context of their creation. Tracing the influence of Kaczerginski's collection in the decades following its publication, the study also

* “Dos folk zingt eybik” (The People Sing Eternally), introductory essay by H. Leivick to *Lider fun di getos un lagern* (Kaczerginski 1948a: XXX).

explores its signification for a readership increasingly comprised of outsiders. It also suggests how a winnowing process (partly determined by a hometown bias on the part of some anthologists) gradually favored the canonization of certain items of repertoire over others.

Ethnomusicological field research also played an important role in this study.

Kaczerginski and a cohort of other early song collectors (among them the eminent Soviet-Ukrainian folk music scholar Moshe Beregovski) gathered their material under highly unstable demographic conditions. Inevitably there were gaps in their findings, and I directed my own fieldwork toward filling these in, especially with respect to “orphaned” songs—lyrics missing their melodies. Furthermore, correspondence and interviews with Kaczerginski’s friends, colleagues, family-members and fellow musician-survivors helped shape an understanding of the author’s collecting methods and cultural allegiances, and how these affected the content and structuring of his published work.

Historical Musicology

The dissertation draws its preoccupation with a central figure, Shmerke Kaczerginski, from the discipline of historical musicology. As Bruno Nettl once observed, the penchant for biography—the championing of a “great man”—can appear antithetical to ethnomusicological practice: “Historians of Western music seem (at least on the surface) to be occupied principally with the work of individual composers, their roles and contributions as persons, while ethnomusicologists tend, with few notable exceptions, to be drawn to the anonymous” (1983: 278). I concede a partiality toward artist-as-hero narratives; however, the Kaczerginski portrayed in this study is as much “locus” as “focus,” not an epoch-making composer but a fashioner of folklore precisely in the manner of the anonymous productions he so passionately collected. Having launched his career with an anti-government song to which it would have

been dangerous to attach his name, his posthumous fate—the destiny of most untranslated Yiddish writers—would be, tellingly, a relapse into anonymity.

Kaczerginski's relative obscurity suggests a second tie-in to historical musicology. Ever since the turn of the nineteenth century, when the discipline's founder J. N. Forkel took up the cause of an unjustly unknown J. S. Bach, musicologists have been driven by what might be called an "ethical impulse." And this tradition of advocacy—almost a German-Romantic iteration of *tikkun olam*, the Jewish precept of "repairing the world"—underlies numerous current efforts to revive works by classical composers whose careers were wrecked during the persecutions of the Third Reich.¹ Kaczerginski's own mission to rescue Yiddish musical ephemera was similarly motivated, as is the present effort to situate his life, work and legacy within the province of academic discourse.

Historical Ethnomusicology

In an essay surveying the still-emerging discipline of historical ethnomusicology, Richard Widdess remarked that although "one cannot do fieldwork in the past...[o]ral histories, song texts, or the present-day structure and distribution of musical styles, repertoires and instruments, may also offer indirect but significant clues to past events" (1992: 219). Historical ethnomusicology indeed provided a constructive model for the evaluation and incorporation into my own work of several largely-overlooked songbooks published soon after the war (these early efforts, some by Kaczerginski himself, are discussed in chapter 2 of this dissertation,). My reliance on artifactual resources (including archival manuscripts, ephemera, and private and

¹ Organizations devoted to recovering and publicizing works by composers suppressed by the Nazi regime include Musica Reanimata (musica-reanimata.de); the International Centre for Suppressed Music (jmi.org.uk/music-genres/suppressed); the Orel Foundation (orelfoundation.org); Musica Concentrationaria (musicaconcentrationaria.org); and Forum Voix Etouffées (voixetouffees.org).

commercial recordings) again situates the present study within the framework of this field, as does chapter 4 of the dissertation, which treats at length the development and diffusion of period popular music genres.

In a subtler sense, the historical-ethnomusicological approach can also aid in understanding how material and memory interpenetrate and shape each other. The majority of Shoah song collectors (including Kaczerginski) had distinct narrative-building missions in mind as they chased down informants and repertoire. And while they by no means denied this—in fact, they believed their missions validated their work—this extramusical undercurrent is less evident at several generations’ remove. In casting new light on the rationales driving their achievements, the paper’s historical-ethnomusicological dimension allows that, in Kay Kaufman Shelemay’s formulation, “[e]thnomusicologists do not simply gather individual and collective verbal memories shared during interviews; they are also instrumental in elaborating memories in and about musical performance into narratives about the past. The ethnographer is thus an important but largely unacknowledged player in the elicitation of memories and the construction of histories” (2006:18). Moreover, in querying the motives of the early anthologists, and pointing out the relevance of past agendas to present-day perceptions of the Shoah repertoire, the dissertation again engages with the historical-ethnomusicological model. As Timothy Rice (2014) recently observed, such a model can help illustrate more broadly how people employ “their musical traditions inventively and strategically as resources to revitalize their communities, cope with devastation and change, make older forms of music meaningful in new social and cultural environments, and move toward a hopeful future.”

Transcriptions and Translations

The transcriptions of Yiddish texts into Latin characters used in this dissertation follow orthographic guidelines established by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research; capital letters (nonexistent in Yiddish) are employed at the beginnings of sentences and lines of poetry in the interest of clarity, and are not employed for proper nouns except when so used within a citation.² Transcriptions from the Russian alphabet generally follow American Library Association and Library of Congress precedents for Romanization (again, no attempt is made to normalize earlier usages when cited). Translations are by the author unless otherwise noted; all errors, of course, are the author's own.

Terminology

The words “Shoah” and “Holocaust,” widely accepted in popular and scholarly literature as referring to the Jewish genocide of 1939-1945, are used interchangeably throughout this paper. I am aware of past controversy over the suitability of one term over the other (see Laqueur 1980), but also recognize the de facto equivalence of the two and have alternated usage in these pages simply for the sake of variety.

² The YIVO transcription table is reproduced in Weinreich 1968: xxi (English section).

Chapter I

A Partisan-Troubadour

In the course of my work as music curator at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., I have identified sources for the Yiddish Shoah (Holocaust) song in archives, libraries, and private collections in Europe, Israel, and the United States, as well as within survivor interviews and publications dating from the war years to the present day.* Together these documents preserve a significant body of folklore and literature—indeed the creative writings of the Shoah constitute the last great phase of Yiddish artistic expression on its native European soil. Yet of this array of resources, one book, the anthology *Lider fun di getos un lagern* (Songs of the Ghettos and Camps), published in New York in 1948, remains the single indispensable point of reference for research in the field of Jewish folk and popular music of the Holocaust period.

This anthology owes its primacy both to its scope (435 pages, 235 songs and poems) and to the fact that its compiler, Shmerke Kaczerginski, a songwriter and folklorist who survived World War II as a partisan fighter in the forests of Lithuania and Belorussia, was himself a major contributor to the repertoire and among the first to systematically document and collect these songs.³

For at least a decade following the Second World War, Kaczerginski was a familiar figure to Yiddish speakers worldwide. Yet although he was a popular writer and speaker with a wide circle of friends and professional associates, very little about him appeared in print during

* A modified version of this chapter was published in Volume 20 of the journal *Polin* (Werb 2007).

³ Publications by other early anthologists are discussed in detail in chapter 2 of the present work.

his lifetime. That situation changed abruptly with his death, in 1954, and the publication the following year of the *Ondenk-bukh*, a memorial volume commissioned, edited, and financed by a committee of his admirers in Buenos Aires (Kaczerginski and Jeshurin 1955). In addition to a representative sampling of Kaczerginski's own writings, the volume gathered fifty tributes to the departed author, among them several personal reminiscences that add telling details to his biography. Nearly sixty years after its publication, the *Ondenk-bukh* remains the best source for information on Kaczerginski's life and works. Many anecdotes related in the following biographical sketch were drawn from essays collected in this volume.⁴

Shmaryahu (Shmerke) Kaczerginski was born on October 28, 1908 in Vilna, then an outpost of the Russian empire.⁵ His parents, Volf and Alte, worn down by years of deprivation, died during the early months of the First World War, leaving the six-year-old Shmerke and his younger brother Yankl to be raised by a grandfather and assorted other relatives. Kaczerginski was educated at the City Talmud Torah, a religious school for needy Jewish children. Describing this institution for the *Ondenk-bukh* as "a modern state school with Yiddish as the main language of instruction," one of his teachers there, the future Israeli folklorist Yom-Tov Lewinsky, drew special attention to its most conspicuous architectural feature: "an enormous dormitory accommodating over 300 orphans, most of them literally abandoned to the streets after

⁴ The *Ondenk-bukh* is divided into three sections: (1) "Writers on Sh. Kaczerginski" (appreciative essays of various lengths); (2) Kaczerginski's own creative work (as a journalist, songwriter, and dramaturge); (3) bibliography of Kaczerginski's writings and writings about Kaczerginski.

⁵ Birthdate according to Kaczerginski's 1952 Argentine passport in the Archivo de Shmerke Kaczerginski (IWO Foundation). "Shmerke" is an uncommon diminutive of "Shmaryahu" ("Shmarya" being the more familiar form). Kaczerginski seems never to have signed his given name to his professional work but did use it on official documents (e.g., his Argentine naturalization papers and passport).

the First World War and the Polish-Lithuanian conflict.” Lewinsky went on to reminisce about the young Kaczerginski:

[Shmerke was] short in stature with a swollen belly and enlarged forehead, symptoms of the “English disease” that had afflicted him in early childhood due to poor conditions during the war. A pair of good-natured eyes, slightly crossed, and a wise smile on his lips. I knew him as a 12-year-old boy, one of the oldest residents of the Talmud-Torah. His friends there adored him because he spoke up for their concerns to the institution’s managing committee, whose members also loved and accepted him. (Lewinsky 1955: 96)

“The English disease” remains a common designation for rickets in many parts of Europe, although not in England.⁶



Figure 1. Shmerke Kaczerginski with his younger brother, Yankl (holding a mandolin), Vilna, ca.1920 (Kaczerginski and Jeshurin 1955: facing 17). Yankl was among those massacred in Ponar during the summer of 1941.

⁶ Rickets (osteomalacia), a bone and muscle abnormality caused by a diet deficient in vitamins and calcium, can be diagnosed from various physiological traits: the “*groyse kop-simnim*” Lewinsky notes among Kaczerginski’s symptoms might refer to the enlarged or distended forehead known to medical science as craniosynostosis.



Figure 2. “Causes of the English Disease Rickets; Improper Feeding With Cow's Milk and Poor Living Conditions Almost Always Lead to Rickets.” Published by Maternity and Child Protection, Moscow, 1921 (Artist: V. Spassky;Soviet Poster Collection, Swarthmore College Peace Collection).

Despite the disruptions of war, the trauma of losing both parents, and post-war political upheaval that saw Vilna successively annexed by the newly formed republics of Lithuania and Poland, Kaczerginski distinguished himself at school as “a good scholar and even better

comrade.”⁷ After completing his primary education, he enrolled in a private night school for adolescents.⁸ To support himself, he became apprenticed to the lithographer Hirsh Ayzenshtat, whose shop’s motto, “professional work at the cheapest prices,” suggests a largely proletarian clientele.⁹ Reverence for literature drew him to the printer’s trade, but it also served another growing passion: radical politics. An idealistic teenager, Kacerginski was attracted to the communist youth organizations that evangelized among Vilna’s Jewish underclass. In constant need of printed matter—pamphlets, broadsides, newsletters—these groups, in turn, would have welcomed the apprentice writer and lithographer as a particularly well-placed recruit.

Kacerginski was popular, too, with the Polish police. Occasionally beaten and often detained, he reportedly organized a drama club for the Jewish inmates in Vilna’s Łukiszki prison (Kacerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 9; Sutzkever 1955: 112). Many details of Kacerginski’s early life remain obscure, yet it is clear that political activism gave direction to his literary path. His first published writings appeared at this time: pieces on class struggle and the living conditions of Polish workers, submitted, presumably under a pseudonym, to the underground press. This period also saw him find his calling as a politically engaged poet and songwriter, with two works launching his reputation while he was still in his mid-teens. “Baynakht iz gefaln a shney” (Snowfall at Night) is said to have been sung in many quarters, but was never collected and can

⁷ Kacerginski orphaned: cf. Niger and Shatzky 1956: iv, col. 48, and Sutzkever 1955: 112. The Vilna City Talmud Torah (shtotisher “talmud torah”) was founded in 1891; by the first decades of the twentieth century “[t]he number of orphans housed in its dormitory frequently reached between 250 and 300” (Abramowicz 1999: 222; see also Ran 1974/II: 285). Kacerginski as scholar and friend (“er tsaykhnt zikh oys vi a guter talmid un a nokh beserer khaver”), see unsigned introduction to Kacerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 9.

⁸ Kacerginski attended the Peretz ovnt-shul (night school) in Vilna (Kacerginski 1948: unpaginated section before p. xi; see also Ran 1974/II: 322).

⁹ Yid. “Firt oys ambiligstn ale litografishe arbetn. Fakhmenishe oysfirung”: advertisement reproduced in Kowalski and Grodzenski 1992: xxx. For samples of work produced by the Ayzenshtat firm while Kacerginski was employed there, see Ran 1974/II: 301; 317.

no longer be traced.¹⁰ In contrast, “Tates, mames, kinderlekh” (Fathers, Mothers, Children), also known as “Barikadn” (Barricades), written when Kaczerginski was 15, achieved phenomenal and lasting popularity (Rubin 1948).¹¹ The Polish Yiddish writer Moyshe Knaphays, in an *Odenk-bukh* essay, testified to the song’s rampant spread and impact:

At the start of the 1930s, a lively, mischievous song with a singularly cheerful melody rolled like a golden coin through every Jewish community in Poland, as if it were a lofty composition about the destiny of mankind. The simple, spirited words, which on the surface appeared innocently naive, were possessed of a magical power to disturb, to incite people to take to the streets, to head to their assembly points, to strike, to demonstrate. ... This revolutionary song, unleashed by a young trickster from Vilna, raced through Vilna’s alleys and onwards to the Polish countryside, where it was embraced by old and young alike, then on to the capital, to Warsaw’s crowded streets and byways—and was soon on every lip. From every poor home and workers’ local, every basement and attic, from everywhere, this joyful song issued forth, piped out by young, thin voices. (Knaphays 1955: 143)¹²

Kaczerginski, for his part, offered a purely benign account of the song’s origins. He wrote it, he claimed, for Vilna’s working-class youngsters to sing while strolling the city’s outskirts on Friday evenings (Rubin 1948). Whether or not the author intended “mischief,” his antic call to arms and catchy, folklike tune had evident broad appeal:¹³

¹⁰ For further on the underground communist press, see Ran 1974/I: 235-241. On “Baynakht iz gefaln a shney” see Kaczerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 9; cf. also Niger and Shatzky 1956: Vol. 8 col. 48; and Sutzkever 1955: 112. (These sources seemingly repeat the same information.)

¹¹ Kaczerginski recorded a total of twenty-one songs during an interview with Ruth Rubin conducted in New York City in 1948. The recordings are now part of the Ruth Rubin Collection at the Library of Congress’ Archive of Folk Culture (Rubin 1948).

¹² Since Kaczerginski by his own account wrote the song ca. 1924, Knaphays’s statement that its popularity dates from the “start of the 1930s” may indirectly document its steady spread through Poland. For notated music to “Tates, mames, kinderlekh,” see Kaczerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 229; see also Mlotek and Mlotek 1997: 84 (my translation of Knaphays’s text was adapted and modified from this source).

¹³ Stanzas 1-5. For the melody and complete lyrics, see Kaczerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 229-230, and Mlotek and Mlotek 1997. A bilingual (Yiddish-English) recording is featured on the CD *In Love and in Struggle: The Musical Legacy of the Bund* (1999).

טאַטעס מאַמעס קינדערלעך.

טעקסט: ש. קאַטשערגינסקי.



דן-קא-רי-בא ען-בוי לעך-דער-קינ מעס-מאַטעס-טא

דן-ריא-אַט טער-בע-אַר רום אַ גיין סן-גא די אויף

דן-ריא-אַט טער-בע-אַר רום אַ גיין סן-גא די אויף

טאַטעס, מאַמעס, קינדערלעך בויען באַריקאַדן,
אויף די גאַסן גייען אַרום אַרבעטער-אַטריאַדן.

ס'איז דער טאַטע פרי פון שטוב אַוועק אויף דער פאַבריק,
וועט ער שוין אין שטיבעלע ניט קומען היינט צוריק.

ס'ווייסן גוט די קינדערלעך, דער טאַטע וועט ניט קומען,
ס'איז דער טאַטע היינט אין גאַס מיט זיין ביקס פאַרנומען.

ס'איז די מאַמע אויך אַוועק אין גאַס פאַרקויפן עפל,
שטייען אין קיך פאַריתומטע די טעלער מיטן טעפל.

— ס'וועט ניט זיין קיין וועטשערע — זאָגט הנחלע די יאַטן, —
זייל די מאַמע איז אַוועק צוהעלפן דעם טאַטן...

Figure 3. “Tates, mames, kinderlekh” (excerpt). First publication with authorship credited to Kaczerginski (Kaczerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 229).

Tates, mames, kinderlekh,
boyen barikadn,
oyf di gasn geyen arum
arbeter-otryadn.

S'iz der tate fri fun shtub avek
oyf der fabrik,
vet er shoyn in shtibele
nit kumen haynt tsurik.

S'veysn gut di kinderlekh,
der tate vet nit kumen,
s'iz der tate haynt in gas
mit zayn biks farnumen.

S'iz di mame oykh avek
in gas farkoyfn epl,
shteyen in kikh faryosemte
di teler mitn tepl.

S'vet nit zayn keyn vetshere
zagt khanele di yatn,
vayl di mame iz avek
tsuhelfn dem tatn.

Fathers, mothers, children,
raising barricades,
To the streets are streaming forth
workers' brigades.

Father left home early,
to the factory gone,
He won't be coming home again
any time too soon.

The kids know well the reason why
father won't return,
He's taken to the streets today
and brought along his gun.

Mother, too, is in the street,
gone to buy some apples,
In the kitchen plates and pots
stand alone, abandoned.

Khane tells the boys that there
will be no chow tonight,
Because mother's gone away
to help dad in the fight!

In 1929 Kacerginski joined the literary and artistic group Yung Vilne (Young Vilna), whose entrée into the city's cultural mainstream had just been heralded on the front page of the influential daily *Vilner tog*.¹⁴ Inspired by the writer and teacher Moyshe Kulbak, whose rhapsodic poem "Vilne" appeared shortly before his departure for the Soviet Union, Yung Vilne, as a group, never endorsed a particular aesthetic agenda. Rather, its members sought to express,

¹⁴ "Der araynmarsh fun yung-vilne in der yidisher literatur" ("Yung Vilne's Triumphant Entry into Yiddish Literature"), *Vilner tog*, 11 Oct. 1929. The cover page is reproduced in Ran 1974/II: 362. The entire section is reprinted in *Di goldene keyt*, issue 101 (Sutzkever 1980a: 66-76). The author of the section was *Vilner tog* editor Zalman Reyzen (Reisen) (1887-1941), who may also have coined the name of the group. For more on Reyzen, see Abramowicz 1999: 313; and Fisher and Web 2006.

through individual voices and points of view, their collective deep allegiance to the society and culture of Jewish Vilna.¹⁵

During its decade of existence, Yung Vilne membership numbered about twenty writers, artists, and sculptors. Among these were Kaczerginski's close friends, the poets Chaim Grade (1910-82) and Avrom Sutzkever (1913-2010), both of whom went on to distinguished literary careers after the war, and the poet Leyzer Wolf (1910-43), who perished during the war in a refugee settlement in Soviet Central Asia. Kaczerginski, Yung Vilne's acknowledged live wire, was responsible for organizing its activities, editing its journal, and publicizing its accomplishments. Under the pen name Khaver Shmerke (Comrade Shmerke) he was also one of the group's most popular writers, prized for his animated, sometimes incendiary verses.¹⁶

Settling into a regimen he would maintain throughout his life, Kaczerginski at this time held several jobs simultaneously. In addition to his Yung Vilne duties and his day job at the print shop, he worked as a coordinator for "Agroid," a semi-legal pro-Soviet organization, and as a correspondent for the *Morgn frayhayt* (Morning Freedom), a New York-based newspaper also

¹⁵ Born in Smorgon, near Vilna, in 1896, Kulbak lived in Berlin before returning to Vilna in 1923, where as an instructor at the gymnasium he mentored many aspiring Yiddish writers. He left Vilna in 1928, initially for Minsk, Soviet Belorussia. A major Yiddish poet and author, Kulbak was murdered ca. 1940 during a Stalinist purge (see Howe, Wisse, and Shmeruk 1988: 379). On the genesis of Yung Vilne, see Cammy 2001: 170-191. Cammy maintains that Kaczerginski was not a "founding member" of the group (as sometimes stated) since his writings did not appear, nor was he even mentioned, in Reyzen's *Vilner tog* story. Within months of Yung Vilne's debut, however, Kaczerginski had become a pivotal member of the group (Cammy 2004).

¹⁶ Kaczerginski signed his work "Kh. Shmerke," "Kh.," abbreviating *khaver* (Heb., friend), an equivalent to "comrade" in Jewish political circles. According to Cammy (2004), Kaczerginski's editing tasks consumed time he might otherwise have spent on his own writing. However, both Sutzkever and the *Ondenk-bukh*'s bibliographer concur that during this period Khaver Shmerke produced a novel, *Yugnt on freyd* ("Youth without Joy"), and, with fellow Yung Vilna member Moyshe Levin, co-authored a play, *Azoy iz umetum* ("Thus It Is Everywhere"); neither work seems to have survived (Kaczerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 573). A novella (or novella fragment) by Khaver Shmerke, *Monyek in zayn svive* ("Monyek in his Surroundings") appeared in the third (1936) issue of the journal *Yung vilne* (Ran 1974/II: 362; Sutzkever 1955: 113).

affiliated with the communist party.¹⁷ The American historian Lucy S. Dawidowicz, later an eminent scholar of the Holocaust, became acquainted with him in 1938-9 during her study year at YIVO, the Yiddish Research Institute in Vilna. In her memoir, *From that Place and Time*, she offered this impression:

He was barely taller than I and, though I later learned that he was then thirty years old, he looked like a teenager. Behind his big, round, black-rimmed glasses you could see that he was slightly cross-eyed. He had a high forehead and a snubbed nose. He was shabbily dressed, but that didn't inhibit his boisterous sociability. ... He chose printing as his trade because he had fallen in love with the printed word, with books and writing. ... When I met him, he was still working in a printing shop, but he was still very poor. Genial and good-natured, he was also rough and tough, ready with his fists. He'd grown up in a harsh and brutal world where he learned to protect himself. He was known to have taken on anti-Semites spoiling for a fight. Today we'd call him street smart. He was reputed to be—or to have been—a dedicated Communist. [Dawidowicz's friend, Zelig] Kalmanovich knew his history and warned me that Shmerke had been arrested a couple of times for writing or publishing pieces the authorities considered subversive. Thereafter, he had been under police surveillance, though that was probably no longer the case when I was there. ... Shmerke's literary output was small. He had written some stories and journalistic pieces. His occasional verses were like folk songs, some sentimental, others bristling with leftist militancy. Some had been set to music and were sung in Vilna. He was all sociability and gregariousness. His greatest talent was organizing things—meetings, art exhibits, excursions, parties. He kept Young Vilna together as a group, socially and institutionally. (Dawidowicz 1989: 121, 122, 123)

The dynamism of Yung Vilne and the creative and administrative skills Kaczerginski developed while associated with the group were to inform his activities during the war years, already looming at the time of Dawidowicz's visit.¹⁸

Under the terms of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact, Vilna became the Lithuanian capital after Poland fell to Germany in September 1939. Having cast his lot with the

¹⁷ "Vilna Agroid," a "society for the encouragement of agricultural labor and home industry among Jews in Poland." According to Ran (1974/I: 238), this organization promoted Jewish settlement in Soviet Birobidzan.

¹⁸ Dawidowicz left Poland in Aug. 1939. For more on Kaczerginski's contribution to Yung Vilne, see Botoshanski 1955: 27-31.

communists, Kaczerginski left Vilna after the Red Army ended a month-long occupation of the city.¹⁹ He found a teaching position in a village newly under Soviet control, then moved to the formerly Polish city of Białystok, now also in the Soviet Zone, to join the army as a volunteer.²⁰ When, in June 1940, Red Army troops again entered Vilna, this time to proclaim Lithuania a Soviet Socialist Republic, Kaczerginski returned with them, ending his first lengthy sojourn away from his hometown.

In Soviet Vilna, Kaczerginski found work with various cultural organizations, including the Jewish writers' union. But the satisfaction he had taken in the Bolshevik coup began to sour as he personally witnessed the Stalinist experiment in societal transformation. Together with the majority of Vilna Jews of every political stripe, Kaczerginski had believed that the new regime would tolerate, even support, secular Jewish culture. Instead, he witnessed the censoring and shuttering of Yiddish newspapers and printing houses, and the arrest and deportation of prominent Jewish figures, including many long-standing party stalwarts, suddenly and inexplicably branded as “capitalists” and “reactionaries.”²¹ Among the arrested was Yung

¹⁹ Vilna, historically the Lithuanian capital, was annexed by Poland during the Polish-Soviet war of 1919-1921 (throughout the interwar period the nation's second city, Kaunas—Kovno in Yiddish—served as the capital). With the implementation of the Nazi-Soviet Pact (signed 23 Aug. 1939), Poland and the Baltic States were partitioned into German and Soviet spheres of interest; Lithuania's claim to Vilna was affirmed in a subsequent protocol of 29 Sept. The Red Army occupied Vilna from 18 Sept. until its transfer to the still nominally independent Lithuanian Republic on 10 Oct. 1939. Lithuania was formally absorbed into the Soviet Union on 3 Aug. 1940. See Arad 1990b; Levin 1990, and Spector 1990; see also Tuškenis 1986.

²⁰ Kaczerginski, a non-Soviet citizen, probably signed on as a *dobrovolets*, an irregular enlistee whose obligations to the military structure differed considerably from those of ordinary conscripts (Ozhegov and Shvedova 1995). The Białystok sojourn is recounted in Kaczerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 10.

²¹ Kaczerginski reports on his experiences during the Sovietization of Vilna in Kaczerginski 1950: 14-30.

Vilne's impresario, the *Vilner tog* editor Zalman Reyzen, a champion of workers' rights who, like Kacerginski, had fought for and welcomed the change of government.²²

In June 1941, not quite a year after the Soviet takeover, Germany turned against its ally and invaded the Baltic States, in the process stepping up its campaign to eradicate European Jewry.²³ In Vilna, as in all newly conquered eastern territories, Jews not murdered outright were forced into ghettos or sent to labor camps. Kacerginski evaded the initial round-ups by posing as a deaf-mute—his thick Yiddish accent in Polish would have betrayed his disguise—and with a tin cup and placard roved the city streets begging alms from the already hard-pressed citizens.²⁴ In Avrom Sutzkever's telling, his friend had "slithered through a hundred hells" before this imposture was discovered and he was finally sent to the ghetto, in early 1942.²⁵ Once there, he promptly turned his versifying skills and organizational genius towards the cause of resistance: writing songs to console and encourage the ghetto dwellers while drawing up schemes to undermine the enemy.

Kacerginski understood that diversion could be a positive force during trying times, and assumed a key role in organizing the ghetto's theatrical productions, literary evenings, and educational programs. It seems likely, too, that he met and married his first wife, Barbara Kaufman, in the ghetto; he was, in any event, widowed there in April 1943, and the lyrics he penned during this period mirror the uncertainty and also the obstinate hope that characterized ghetto life. Many became instant favorites, including his elegiac tango "Friling" (Springtime),

²² Arrested in Oct. 1939, Reyzen was shot by Soviet guards near Borisov, Belarus, in June 1941 (Fisher and Web 2006).

²³ See for example Arad 1976; Arad 1982.

²⁴ Concerning Kacerginski's Yiddish-accented Polish, see Gotlib 2004.

²⁵ Sutzkever 1955: 113; for partial English translation by Gerald Stillman, see Sutzkever 1995: 27.

written on the occasion of Barbara's death; "Shtiler, shtiler" (Quiet, quiet), an ode to the victims of the killing field Ponar, near Vilna; and "Yugnt himn" (Hymn of Youth), which was adopted as the anthem of the ghetto youth club.²⁶ Kacerginski later reflected on the creation and diffusion of such songs within the ghetto's surreal environment: "In ordinary times each song would probably travel a long road to popularity. But in the ghetto we observed a marvelous phenomenon: individual works transformed into folklore before our eyes." In retrospect, he was awed by the creativity and dedication of artists trapped behind the ghetto walls:

It seems unnatural when in a moment of high tragedy an actor on stage suddenly breaks into song. You would think: this does not happen in real life. But "real life" has shown us otherwise. On the day the partisans of the Vilna ghetto mobilized to defend their commander Itsik Vitnberg, though I knew my final hour was fast approaching, I continued to work on my diary. And when we partisans stood on the barricades, the Gestapo blasting away, Sutzkever, Opeskin, Hirsh Glik, and other armed authors kept on scribbling their creative work. (Kacerginski 1947a: 9)²⁷

In March 1942 representatives of Einsatzstab Rosenberg, the official Nazi agency for the confiscation of Jewish cultural property, arrived in Vilna intent on plundering the city's fabled collections of rare books and Judaica. From among the ghetto intelligentsia, the Germans assembled a team qualified to choose the most valuable items for shipment to the Institute for the Study of the Jewish Question, in Frankfurt.²⁸ (Afterwards contemplating the fate of those

²⁶ In his commentary to "Friling," Kacerginski notes only his wife's first name, family name, and place of birth, Kraków (Kacerginski 1948a: 71). The melody to "Shtiler, shtiler," independently composed by the 11-year-old Aleksander Wolkowski, had won a music competition sponsored by the Vilna ghetto Judenrat (Kacerginski 1948a: 89). Along with Sutzkever and other ghetto notables, Kacerginski taught and lectured at the youth club—and may have combined these duties with reconnaissance work for the underground resistance: in July 1943 the ghetto chief Jakob Gens disbanded the youth club after several members were found to have been concealing weapons (Kostanian-Danzig 2002: 97-98).

²⁷ The Vilna-born teacher and writer Leyb Opeskin (1908-44) was one of the founders of the ghetto underground movement (Kacerginski 1947b: 179-180).

²⁸ On Einsatzstab Rosenberg in Vilna, see Fishman 1996: 4-7.

volumes rejected by the German agents, Kaczerginski lamented: “Tens of thousands of books, many, many unique editions from Venice, Salonika, Amsterdam, Prague, Kraków, Vilna, hauled off to the paper crematoria.”²⁹) This team, which included Kaczerginski, Sutzkever, and the educator Rakhele Pupko-Krinski, was soon engaged in a dangerous rescue operation, smuggling precious cultural artifacts from the Rosenberg headquarters on the “Aryan side” of Vilna, past armed sentries, and into the ghetto (see Figure 4) (Fishman 2009: 8). Kaczerginski later acknowledged that many felt the band of smugglers—facetiously dubbed the “Paper Brigade”—had lost its collective mind: “[They] looked at us as if we were lunatics,” he wrote. “They were smuggling foodstuffs into the ghetto, in their clothing and boots—and we were smuggling books, pieces of paper, occasionally a *Sefer Torah* or *mezuzahs* (Fishman 2009: 35).³⁰ In fact, the Rosenberg office also served as a rendezvous point for arms merchants and members of the Vilna ghetto underground, the *Fareynikte partizaner organizatsye* (United Partisan Organization; FPO), which also counted Kaczerginski in its ranks (Pupko-Krinski 1949: 161).³¹

²⁹ Kaczerginski 1948b: 68. Completed in Łódź in April 1946, this memoir draws on journals Kaczerginski kept while a partisan fighter. The phrase “paper crematoria” (*papir-krematories*) refers to German paper mills where cast-off books were pulped and recycled into new paper.

³⁰ For the original Yiddish text, see Kaczerginski 1948b: 69.

³¹ See also Kaczerginski 1948b: 65-74; and Fishman 2009.



Figure 4. Kaczerginski (left) with the “Paper Brigade” members Rakhele Pupko-Krinski (center) and Avrom Sutzkever, Vilna ghetto, ca.1942 (Kaczerginski and Jeshurin 1955: facing 33).

Throughout these anxious months Kaczerginski continued to create new songs on topical ghetto themes: “Dos elnte kind” (The Lonely Child), inspired by the story of a Jewish girl adopted by her family’s Christian housekeeper; “Mariko” (Mary), a lullaby the origins of which remain enigmatic; and “Itsik vitnberg,” a ballad relating the dramatic self-sacrifice of a partisan leader.³² He took on the role of troubadour, as might any folk poet, for a practical purpose, later recalling: “I wrote only when I sensed our repertoire lacked a piece dealing with and needed for

³² “Dos elnte kind” (the “lonely child”) was Rachele Pupko-Krinski’s infant daughter Sarah, who with her mother’s consent had been “adopted” by her Polish governess and thereby spared the ghetto (Melezin 1995).

our specific given situation. Not everyone was suited for that simple but important type of handiwork” (Kaczerginski 1947a: 9).

Kaczerginski suspected as well that his songs of heroes and martyrs, of everyday life and death during the German occupation, might one day serve to document the dark history he was witnessing first-hand. The evocative power of these lyrics was later recognized at the opening of the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem, when the Israeli Attorney General, confessing the inadequacy of his own words to the dreadful acts he would be called upon to describe, read Kaczerginski's “Shtiler, shtiler” into the court record.³³

Shtiler, shtiler, lomir shvaygn,
kvorim vaksn do.
s’hobn zey farflantst di sonim:
grinen zey tsu blo.
S’firm vegn tsu ponar tsu,
s’vert keyn veg tsurik,
iz der tate vu farshvundn
un mit im dos glik.

Quiet, quiet, let’s be silent,
Graves are growing here;
The enemy has planted them,
See how green they are?
All the roads lead to Ponar,
There’s no road leading back;
Father’s vanished, no one knows where,
And with him went our luck.

Following the unsuccessful uprising of September 1943 and ensuing death of the partisan commander Itsik Vitnberg, Kaczerginski fled the ghetto with other members of his unit.³⁴ He spent the remaining months of the war in the forested borderlands between Lithuania and Belorussia, serving first with the FPO’s “Vitnberg Brigade,” for which he wrote the uncharacteristically grisly-worded “Partizaner-marsh” (Partisans’ March), and later with a Soviet unit named for the military leader and Stalin intimate General Kliment Efremovich Voroshilov.

³³ Adolf Eichmann Trial Session 7, 17 April 1961 (Nizkor Project n. d.). The Israeli Attorney General was Gideon Hausner.

³⁴ Abba Kovner, Vitnberg’s successor, led the ghetto’s remaining 80-100 FPO fighters through the city sewer system to the outlying forests on 21 Sept. 1943, the day the Germans liquidated the Vilna ghetto. Accounts of Vitnberg’s death vary; in his ballad, Kaczerginski suggests that the partisan leader committed suicide rather than risk revealing the names of his confederates under torture (Arad 1990a: 470-472).

For the Jews in this unit he composed “Yid, du partizaner” (The Jewish Partisan) and reworked a number of Soviet songs into Yiddish (Kaczerginski 1952: II/219-226; *Rise Up And Fight* 1996); he was also moved, on the first anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, to write a commemorative poem, “Varshe” (Warsaw), honoring its heroes. It was in his capacity as this brigade’s official historian (a title held jointly with Sutzkever) that Kaczerginski first began noting down the song lyrics and stories of his comrades-in-arms.



Figure 5. Jewish partisan leader Abba Kovner poses with Kaczerginski (right) in liberated Vilna, 13 July 1944 (U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York).

In August 1944 Kaczerginski participated in the liberation by Soviet forces of his hometown, and soon afterwards set to work locating and salvaging Jewish books, art works, and other cultural artifacts that members of the “Paper Brigade” had concealed from the Nazis. A portion of this recovered material went on display in the Vilna Museum of Jewish Art and Culture (later known as the “Vilna Jewish Museum” and the “Vilnius Jewish State Museum”) that Sutzkever and he successively curated until mistrustful authorities shut it down.³⁵



Figure 6. Kaczerginski amid books and artworks salvaged for the Vilna Jewish Museum, ca.1945 (Ran 1959: 187).

³⁵ The post-Soviet Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum in Vilnius was established in 1991 as the successor to the Jewish State Museum (adopting its present name in 1997). Its collections include material originally salvaged by Kaczerginski, Sutzkever, and other returnees. According to the Vilnius Museum’s website: “The activities of [Kaczerginski and Sutzkever’s] institution were not typical for a museum. Apart from collecting and preserving the Jewish cultural heritage, they also listed the addresses of returning Jewish survivors. The museum received numerous letters from the Soviet Union and from abroad, with inquiries about people’s relatives and acquaintances, the majority of whom were victims of WWII. The museum became the spiritual and cultural center for Vilnius Jews, where all current problems facing the community were discussed” (Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum 2009; see also Ran 1959: 166, and Fishman 2009: 11-15).

Almost immediately after the end of the war Kaczerginski sought to publish the songs and testimony he had created and compiled. In 1945, after a brief, nerve-wracking trip to Moscow left him convinced of the Soviet establishment's intractable antisemitism, he left Vilna for good, settling first in Łódź, a city largely spared physical devastation during the war and a major regrouping centre for Jewish refugees (see Figure 7).³⁶ There, while engaged by the Central Jewish Historical Commission, he helped compile and edit *Undzer gezang* (Our Song; 1947), the first anthology of Jewish songs published in postwar Poland, and the first general anthology anywhere to include "ghetto songs" as a category of Jewish music.³⁷

Since he lacked formal musical training, Kaczerginski's collecting method typically involved memorizing melodies and later singing them back to someone able to notate them. He was fortunate to find in Łódź two talented musical accomplices. Leon Wajner (1898-1979), a local composer recently repatriated from the Soviet Ukraine, took on the job of preparing the music scores for *Undzer gezang*. David Botwinik (b. 1920), a Vilna native and survivor of the ghetto and several camps, transcribed dozens of songs Kaczerginski had learnt in the ghetto, among the partisans, and after the war, and also noted down melodies directly from survivors whom Kaczerginski had arranged for him to meet. The songs Botwinik set to paper in Łódź are at the core of the repertoire of the Shoah music Kaczerginski would later disseminate in his anthologies. Both Wajner and Botwinik also composed new music to Kaczerginski's original poetry, Wajner setting the partisan lyric "Varshe," Botwinik the timely "Khalutsim"

³⁶ On the Moscow visit, see Kaczerginski 1949: 54-75; and Kaczerginski 1955a: 334-335.

³⁷ On Kaczerginski's work for the Jewish Historical Commission, see Blumenthal 1955: 32-33. For a description of *Undzer gezang*, see chapter 2 of the present work.

(Pioneers)—Kacerginski’s declaration of sympathy with political Zionism.³⁸ With Palestine still under a restrictive British mandate, “Khalutsim” was soon adopted as an anthem by stateless Jews eager to leave Europe behind, if even for an uncertain fate in the Middle East.³⁹



Figure 7. Kacerginski (left) and the surviving Yung Vilne members Avrom Sutzkever (second from left) and Chaim Grade (far right) pose with the Vilna native Yitzhak Zuckerman, a leader of the Warsaw ghetto uprising. Photo probably taken in Łódź, ca.1946 (Kacerginski 1947b: facing 97).

Kacerginski devoted his spare hours to helping the Jewish children of Łódź, many of them orphans, to make a new beginning in life. In early 1946 he organized and directed a commemorative pageant on the theme of the “Nazi ordeal and Jewish resistance” for the young residents of a preparatory kibbutz managed by the Zionist Gordoniya co-operative. One of the

³⁸ Wajner would later set to music Kacerginski’s children’s song “Vos? Vos? Vos?” (“What? What? What?”) (Kacerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 267).

³⁹ Kacerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 10-11; Botwinik 2002. An alternative title for “Khalutsim” is “Fun getos, oshvientshim” (“From Ghettos, Auschwitz”; after its first line); a copy at Yad Vashem dated “Łódź, February 1946” and a Polish variant, “Pieśń pionierów” (Pioneer Song), found on a newspaper dated simply “1945,” are housed at Yad Vashem, as is a copy of Botwinik’s setting of Kacerginski’s concentration camp-themed poem from 1946, “Men ruft mikh milyon” (“They Call Me ‘Million’”) (Kacerginski Collection P.18). The latter song was printed for the first time in Botwinik 2010: 57-67.

participants, Meir Shapiro-Vilnai, then 19, recalled this event (or one quite similar to it) nearly sixty years later:

The program consisted of about thirty minutes of recitations (that I believe Shmerke himself wrote) and song. One song was “S’vet zikh fun tsveygl tseblen ...” [“From a twig a tree will grow”]; and [the program] ended with “Zog nit keyn mol ... mir zaynen do!” [“Never say that you have reached the final road ... We are here!”], where I, as a leading figure, with about five [other] participants, remained “frozen” in a monument-like position. ... This was performed in a Łódź theatre, where, presumably, some Poles attended too. I remember us standing in that fixed position—that was Shmerke’s choreography—to a rousing long ovation. (Shapiro-Vilnai 2005)⁴⁰

Kaczerginski also found time to marry again in Łódź; his new wife, Mary (or Meri) Szutan, a native of Svintsyau (presently Švenčionys, Lithuania), had arrived as a refugee from Tashkent, Soviet Uzbekistan, where she had spent most of the war years working as a hospital nurse (Cordova-Kaczerginski 2005). Despite personal and professional commitments in Łódź, Kaczerginski chafed at the prospect of living under the Soviet-style governance then consolidating in Poland. With antisemitism also again on the rise, and above all after the Kielce pogrom of July 1946, most of the country’s remaining Yiddishists abandoned hope for a Jewish cultural renaissance in Poland. Kaczerginski, among them, decided to join the exodus of Jewish intellectuals to Paris.⁴¹

From this new base, in November 1947 he set out on a tour of the American Zone of occupied Germany, visiting seventeen displaced persons (DP) camps in as many days, lecturing

⁴⁰ “S’vet zikh fun tsveygl tseblen” (otherwise, “Es vet zikh fun tsveygl tseblen a boym” [From a twig a tree will grow]), Vilna ghetto theater song (ca. 1942) by Kasriel Brodyo and Yankl Trupianski (see Kaczerginski 1948a: 28; 368). “Zog nit keyn mol . . . mir zaynen do!” citing Hirsh Glik’s partisan anthem “Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg” (Never Say That You Have Reached the Final Road) (see Kaczerginski 1948a: 3; 361).

⁴¹ Kaczerginski’s report on the pogrom, “Vos ikh hob gezen un gehert in kelts” (What I saw and heard in Kielce), is reprinted in Kaczerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 385-391. On the flight of writers and intellectuals from postwar Poland, see Cohen 2004.

to survivors, gathering new material, and stopping to record several of his ghetto songs onto phonograph discs for the archives of the Jewish Historical Commission in Munich. He also recorded some new material for the Commission: “Undzer lid” (Our Song), a poem dedicated to the memory of Hirsh Glik, author of the famed partisans’ anthem "Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg" (Never Say That You Have Reached the Final Road) and “S’vet geshen” (It Will Happen), a song written in response to the headline-making story of the British naval attack on the refugee ship Exodus 1947. Presented by Sigmunt Berland, who also composed the musical setting, “S’vet geshen” was featured at a popular Parisian nightspot, circulated as a broadside, and, somewhat later, twice commercially recorded.⁴²

⁴² “Undzer lid,” unpublished typescript (Kaczerginski n.d., U. S. Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives). Kaczerginski recorded nine songs for the Jewish Historical Commission archives (the disks are currently housed in the archives of Yad Vashem); his reading of “Undzer lid” is available on the CD *Rise Up and Fight: Songs of Jewish Partisans* (1996). For more on the Jewish Historical Commission archives, see discussion of *Fun letstn khurbn*, chapter 2, below). Kaczerginski later recorded “Undzer lid” as a song with a musical setting by Nahum Nardi (Ben Stonehill Collection; this collection includes twenty ghetto and partisan songs recorded by Kaczerginski at a refugee gathering in New York City during the summer of 1948). Sigmunt (Zygmunt) Berland, who had been active as a musician in the Warsaw ghetto, arrived in Paris ca. 1946. He claimed sole credit for the music and co-credit for the lyrics on the printed broadside of “S’vet geshen” (where it bears the title “Exodus 47”; see Fig. 8); however, on the Yad Vashem copy, which features textual corrections presumably by Kaczerginski, Berland’s co-credit is forcefully struck through (Yad Vashem, Kaczerginski Collection; see Fig. 9). (Berland also claimed to have written both the music and the text to the popular DP anthem “Vu ahin zol ikh geyn?” [“Where Shall I Go?”]; in fact he created neither, although he altered and added to the text; cf. “Vi ahyn sol ich guen?” [Paris: Éditions Musicales Nuances, 1947].) A “picture disk” recording of “S’vet geshen” was issued in Paris in 1947, performed by Ben-Baruch (Saturne S-205; no author credit indicated); a later performance featuring Richard Joseph Inger appeared in the U.S. ca. 1953 (Columbia CO 4014; the song credited to “Berland and Minevitch”). “Vu ahin” variants appear in the Stonehill Collection, and in a songbook compiled by Miriam Shmulewitz Hoffman, then about 10 years old, in the Bavarian DP camp Hindenburg Kaserne (Hoffman n.d.; in private hands; copy at U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum archives). A contrafact to “S’vet geshen” titled “Zingt mir, vint” (Sing to Me, Wind), by Warsaw ghetto survivor Reuven Lipshits, appeared in Lipshits’s self-published songbook (Lipshits 1949: 58-59). For a discussion of “Vu ahin zol ikh geyn?,” see Werb 2010:77-79 and Werb 2014.



Figure 8. Advertisement for a nightclub program featuring Kaczerginski’s song “Exodus 47” (also known as “S’vet geshen”), Paris, 1947 (Yad Vashem, Kaczerginski Collection).



Figure 9. Broadside for “Exodus 47” with textual emendations and deleted co-lyricist credit for Sigmunt Berland (Yad Vashem, Kaczerginski Collection).

As usual, Kaczerginski held down several jobs at once. His main affiliation in Paris, however, was with the Jewish Culture Congress, and it was as a delegate from this bureau that he visited the United States in 1948 to attend the World Jewish Cultural Conference in New York. (Another delegate making the journey was Chaim Grade, his Yung Vilne colleague, now also living in Paris.) Following the conference, Kaczerginski embarked on a series of speaking

engagements that took him to thirty cities across North America over the course of two months and did much to boost his reputation as a writer and historian.

Productive even by his own industrious standards, the Paris years saw publication of the anthology *Dos gezang fun vilner geto* (The Song of the Vilna Ghetto; 1947a); the social history *Khurbn vilne* (The Destruction of Vilna; 1947b); the combat memoir *Partizaner geyen!* (Partisans Advance!; 1947c); the landmark collection *Lider fun di getos un lagern* (Songs from the Ghettos and Camps; 1948a); the political tract *Tsvishn hamer un serp* (Between Hammer and Sickle; 1949); and several new poems, including “In hartsn mit varshe” (Warsaw in My Heart), a lament for the ruined city with music by the American Yiddish composer Michl Gelbart (1889-1962).⁴³ Amidst this frenzy of writing and touring, in March 1947 Kaczerginski celebrated the birth of his only child, a daughter, Libele, an event that surely marked the high point of his very busy Parisian years.

⁴³ Gelbart served as music editor for Kaczerginski’s major anthology of Shoah songs (Kaczerginski 1948a). For Gelbart’s melody to “In hartsn mit varshe,” see Kaczerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 254-256. Gelbart also composed music to Kaczerginski’s exotic “Karavanen” (Caravans) (Gelbart 1961).



Figure 10. Shmerke and Libele Kacerginski, Paris, ca. 1948(Kacerginski and Jeshurin 1955: facing 256).

In early 1950 Kacerginski visited Israel and, excited at the prospect of helping to build a new nation, considered moving there. But a job offer from the Argentine branch of the Jewish Culture Congress made Buenos Aires a more practical place to settle, and in May 1950 the family sailed for South America. The authors of the introduction to the *Ondenk-bukh*, writing of his first days in Argentina, recalled that:

[Kacerginski's] arrival ... evoked powerful manifestations of affection and enthusiasm for the fighter and singer of Yiddish Vilna and for the indefatigable developer of a new Yiddish culture. [It] was a great occasion in the life of the Argentine community and thousands of people will long, long remember the grand reception honoring him and the overflowing halls during his first lectures, to which the audience listened with bated breath. Within a short time he had won the greatest affection of Argentine Jewry. His friends numbered in the hundreds, perhaps in the thousands. (Kacerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 12)

Not to be counted among Kacerginski's admiring legions, however, were party operatives in the Argentine Jewish community unwilling to forgive his conversion to the anti-communist cause. Provoked in part by the publication, soon after his arrival, of a new edition of his exposé of Soviet antisemitism, *Tsvishn hamer un serp* (Kacerginski 1950), they moved to boycott or disrupt Kacerginski's speaking engagements.⁴⁴ But such challenges, as the *Ondenkbukh* authors took care to point out, scarcely affected Kacerginski's pace of work or undermined his confidence.⁴⁵ In Argentina, as previously in Paris and Łódź, he maintained a heavy schedule, lecturing about ghetto life, guerrilla warfare, and the Soviet situation, writing songs, poems, and occasional pieces (including a theatrical drama with music about the Vitnberg affair), and tirelessly campaigning on behalf of Jewish culture.⁴⁶ And as he had done throughout his career, he also pursued a livelihood through journalism, signing on as a correspondent with the Israeli Labor Party newspaper *Hador*.⁴⁷

Kacerginski's major published work in Argentina was the two-volume memoir *Ikh bin geven a partizan: di grine legende* (I Was a Partisan: The Green Legend), for which he drew on

⁴⁴ The full title of Kacerginski's anti-Soviet tract is *Tsvishn hamer un serp: tsu der geshikhte fun der likvidatsie fun der yidisher kultur in sovetn-rusland* (Between Hammer and Sickle: On the History of the Liquidation of Jewish Culture in Soviet Russia).

⁴⁵ "Also in Argentina the *Evseksiya* aimed poisonous arrows at him, but its jeering minions did not have it in their power to diminish the affection and honor that greeted him" (Kacerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 12). The "*Evseksiya*" reference is to the Jewish section (the word is a contraction of the Russian "Evreyskaya sektsiya") of the Soviet communist party whose members sought to suppress Jewish religion and traditional culture within the Soviet Union. Although the organization was officially disbanded in 1929, the term evidently continued in colloquial use outside the Soviet realm.

⁴⁶ The play, *Tsvishn falndike vent* (Between Crumbling Walls), is printed in Kacerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 525-571. For an unpublished English translation by Ida Estrin see Yad Vashem Kacerginski Collection.

⁴⁷ Previously, in post-war Łódź, Kacerginski had worked as an editor for *Undzer vort* (Our Word), a Poalei Zion weekly. Toward the end of his life, he served as an editor at the Kium publishing house, allied, as was *Hador*, with the Socialist Zionist (Poalei Zion-Hahistadrut) movement in Israel (Kacerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 10-12).

his wartime journals. He also issued a booklet-sized collection of songs, *Geto un yisroel lider* (Songs of the Ghetto and of Israel), and, in collaboration with Michl Gelbart and the artist Artur Rolnik, had begun work on a new anthology of Yiddish folk songs. As a songwriter, he scored a late success with “Zol shoyrn kumen di geule” (Let Salvation Come). Set to a melody associated with Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935), the spiritual leader of the Jewish settlement in Palestine, and imbued with biblical and messianic motifs, this uncharacteristic song may have pointed toward a new creative direction for Kaczerginski.⁴⁸ Untethered to the war or to any specific political agenda, “Di geule” has gone on to become one of its author’s most enduring works.⁴⁹

A popular speaker, Kaczerginski often traveled abroad and regularly toured Jewish settlements in the Argentine provinces.⁵⁰ During the week of Passover in 1954, while visiting the Andean town of Mendoza for the Israel National Fund, he learnt that local communist sympathizers had called for a boycott of his lecture. Unwilling to forfeit an opportunity to reach the Jews of this outlying community, he vowed to stay on an extra day and speak to anyone who might care to listen. Kaczerginski expected a low turnout for this impromptu affair, but instead found more than a hundred people crowding the hall to hear him talk about the Vilna ghetto and his experiences as an underground fighter. Gratified at the turnout, and elated to have confounded his adversaries, but eager to return to family and friends in the capital, he decided to

⁴⁸ The composition date of “Zol shoyrn kumen di geule” is unknown. Its refrain is strikingly similar to a “Shema koleinu” (Hear Our Voices) recorded in 1948 in New York by Ben Stonehill (Ben Stonehill Collection song no. 50). Text and score to “Di geule” are printed in Kaczerginski and Jerushin 1955: 265-266.

⁴⁹ The online database of the Robert and Molly Freedman Jewish Music Archive lists 33 commercial recordings of “Zol shoyrn kumen di geule” (Freedman n.d.).

⁵⁰ Passport entries from March through June 1953 document visits to Ecuador, Brazil, Canada, and the United States (IWO Foundation).

fly home rather than make the long journey by train. At the airport early the next day, he met a young acquaintance, Julio Gotlib, a salesman also returning to Buenos Aires. When Gotlib impulsively changed his plans—declaring a sudden preference for rail travel—Kaczerginski, already boarding the aircraft, called back to chide him, “You were a partisan and now you’re afraid to fly?” (Gotlib 2004).⁵¹

Soon after takeoff on Friday morning, April 23, the flight from Mendoza developed engine trouble and crashed into a mountainside, killing all on board. News of the accident spread quickly, and the dozens of telegrams and letters that reached the Kaczerginski home from every corner of the Yiddish-speaking world shared a tone of disbelief at his sudden, untimely end.⁵² Almost one year after the tragedy, the tributes gathered in the *Ondenk-bukh* continued to register incredulity as well as sorrow. Chaim Grade, writing for the memorial volume, even foresaw in Kaczerginski’s death the inescapable end of the Old World Yiddish cultural community, already decimated and dispersed:

Ten months have now passed since Shmerke Kaczerginski left us, and everywhere I go I meet him. He is not unaccompanied. He has with him every Vilna street and every young person of Vilna who gathered around him twenty years ago. He meets me and escorts me to the ruins of the Vilna ghetto of ten years ago. He leads me past partisans in the forests, armed with rifles. He moves between high walls of books and sacred tomes gathered by his own hands from the ruined, butchered, and plundered Vilna ghetto. I see him directing a children’s choir in Łódź, and I see him lecturing at Pioneer kibbutzim in every Polish city. I see myself with him, shoulder to shoulder, at the funeral of the victims of the Kielce pogrom. I see him singing in the DP camps of Germany. I see him consoling survivors in a poor kitchen in Paris. I see him trembling with excitement in the brightly lit halls of the Zionist Congress in Basel. Shmerke moves on, leading a sea of faces and eyes; faces and eyes of thousands and thousands of Jews who

⁵¹ Jean Yofe’s account, “Di letste teg fun shmerke katsberginski” (“Shmerke Kaczerginski’s Last Days”), was also used in this retelling (Jofe 1955: 91-93).

⁵² See “Album of Condolences” (IWO Foundation, Buenos Aires).

heard him and loved him in Paris, in Israel, in every country in South America and every city in North America.

He lived his too-short life in song, in brotherhood, uplift, creativity, struggle. He spoke and sang in the language of his impoverished Vilna street. He had the words, the melody, and the confidence of the people, and his songs, likewise, were folk songs. He was descended from the people, lived with the people—and forgot himself in the people. He remained young in the ghetto, in the forests, in every mortal peril, in every disappointment. And when he, the personification of youth, was taken from us, the last spark of our own youth was extinguished. Now we, his friends, are old. (Grade 1955: 43)

Learning the news in Tel Aviv, a shaken Avrom Sutzkever telegraphed Meri Kaczerginski, “mir viln nit gleybn nito kayn werter” (we will not believe, there are no words), and denial and disbelief still color the eloquent eulogy he later contributed to the *Ondenkbukh* (Sutzkever 1955: 112-114).⁵³ On the twenty-fifth anniversary of Kaczerginski’s death, Sutzkever honored the memory of his friend with the poem “Mit shmerken, ven es brenen velder” (With Shmerke, when forests are burning). The setting is a Lithuanian forest on a cold winter night. As a fire touched off by the enemy blazes through the woods, we see Khaver Shmerke, agile as a squirrel, scrambling up a tall fir tree, itself about to explode in flame. The poet explains: his friend has scaled the flaming tree in order to take in—so as to better remember—the devastated landscape. Sutzkever concludes his poem as follows:

Di yodle tsitert mer fun im.
Shoyn brenen ire nodlen.
Di ringen platsn in ir layb.
Zi hert bald oyf tsu yodlen.
Vos tut mayn khaver oybn?
Zingt a folkstimlekhe stantse:
Es brenen velder. S’brent zayn shtam.
Di vortslen blaybn gantse.⁵⁴

The fir tree trembles more than he,
Its needles already on fire.
The rings have burst inside its trunk.
The fir tree has expired.
What is my comrade doing up there?
Singing a folk-like strain:
Forests are burning, tree trunks are burning,
But their roots intact remain.

⁵³ Telegram in “Album of Condolences” (IWO Foundation; original spelling retained).

⁵⁴ “Mit shmerken, ven es brenen velder” (1979); first published in Sutzkever 1980b. English translation adapted from Sutzkever and Zumoff 1996: 148.

Chapter II

Fourteen Songbooks

Apart from its importance as a sourcebook for succeeding generations of scholars and field researchers, *Lider fun di getos un lagern* may be considered a summa of the handful of similar publications, including some of Kaczerginski's own works, that preceded it or appeared at about the same time. In this chapter I've attempted to place Kaczerginski's volume in perspective by examining fourteen contemporaneous anthologies, beginning with the hastily-compiled first Shoah songbook issued in Bucharest within a month of the German surrender, and concluding with the politically aborted, never published major study prepared in 1949 by the Soviet-Ukrainian music folklorist Moshe Beregovski. The chapter compares the backgrounds and missions of each anthologist, and includes tabulated and annotated content listings for each collection discussed. Song types and contexts for singing—whether social, solitary, commemorative or military—are detailed in the “Collector's Remarks” section of the following chapter (no. 3), which focuses exclusively on *Lider fun di getos un lagern*.

1. *Mi-ma'amakim: folkslider fun lagers un getos in poyln 1939-1944* (Out of the Depths: Folk Songs from the Camps and Ghettos of Poland, 1939-1944)

The earliest of these publications was *Mi-ma'amakim: folkslider fun lagers un getos in poyln 1939-1944* (Out of the Depths: Folk Songs from the Camps and Ghettos of Poland, 1939-1944), edited by the Polish survivor Yehuda Ayzman and published in Bucharest in June 1945; that is, within a month of the Allied victory in Europe.⁵⁵ *Mi-ma'amakim* gathers twenty songs, twelve of which would reappear in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*; its contents are organized into

⁵⁵ The title alludes to Psalm 130, often referred to by its Latin incipit “De Profundis”; its first line reads (in the King James Version) “Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord.”

three sections, *Yiesh* (despair), *Bitokhn* (confidence), and *Kamfun nitsokhn* (battle and triumph), a scheme that prefigures (without having directly influenced) the arrangement of Kaczerginski's anthology. Ayzman notes in his introduction that "these songs had not even been printed...but were passed from mouth to mouth" and that "the *sheerit hapleitah* ("surviving remnant" of European Jewry) cherish [them] as a pious Jew his holy books." He concludes by expressing hope that "these few modest songs, 'written with blood and not with lead' would be a contribution to a memorial stone laid for the Jews of Poland" (Ayzman 1945: 14).⁵⁶

Ayzman sought informants among Bucharest's Jewish refugees, mainly transients, like himself, eager to embark for Palestine at the nearest opportunity. Despite limited time and means, he realized his main goal of memorialization: the book's dedication reads, "a headstone for my mother."⁵⁷ Compiled under pressure yet beautifully hand-lettered, the volume was issued by an obscure publisher and evidently poorly distributed.⁵⁸ Kaczerginski seemed unaware of it: most of the songs common to both volumes were Vilna-related pieces (three were Kaczerginski's

⁵⁶ The phrase "[W]ritten with blood and not with lead" ("geshriben mit blut und nit mit blay") is a reference to the Vilna partisan anthem "Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg" by Hirsh Glik (discussed in chapter 3, below). Little is known of Ayzman's background, although it may be supposed he was Polish-born; his use of the professional title "*inzsh*." (Yiddish, engineer) suggests he had earned a university technical degree (Ayzman 1945: 12). Ayzman's Yiddish introduction to *Mi-ma'amakim* is reproduced in Appendix A of this dissertation; an English translation appears as Appendix B.

⁵⁷ Ayzman hints at looming deadlines when expressing regret at having excluded a song ("Toytn-tango"; Death Tango) from the book because he "did not know it well enough" (Ayzman 1945: 11).

⁵⁸ Of the songbooks under consideration, only the Israeli publication *Min Hamitzar* (1949) drew on Ayzman's work; see discussion of *Min Hamitzar*, below. In connection with Romanian Jewish publishing efforts in the immediate postwar period, note also *Cântecul Popular Evreesc* (Jewish Popular Songs) (1946), a text-only anthology ed. by David Rubin that includes lyrics to seventeen songs or song fragments collected from survivors of Transnistrian camps (Rubin 1946); and the booklet *Der Grager, Geşriben in Lager* (The Noisemaker, Written in the Camp), a collection of songs, stories and anecdotes by Samson Först, mainly pertaining to Transnistrian camps (Först 1947).

own creations).⁵⁹ Yet Ayzman’s collection merits attention both as the first printed collection of Shoah songs, and because the handful of songs it gathers that do not also appear in Kaczerginski’s collection remain otherwise unrecorded and unknown.

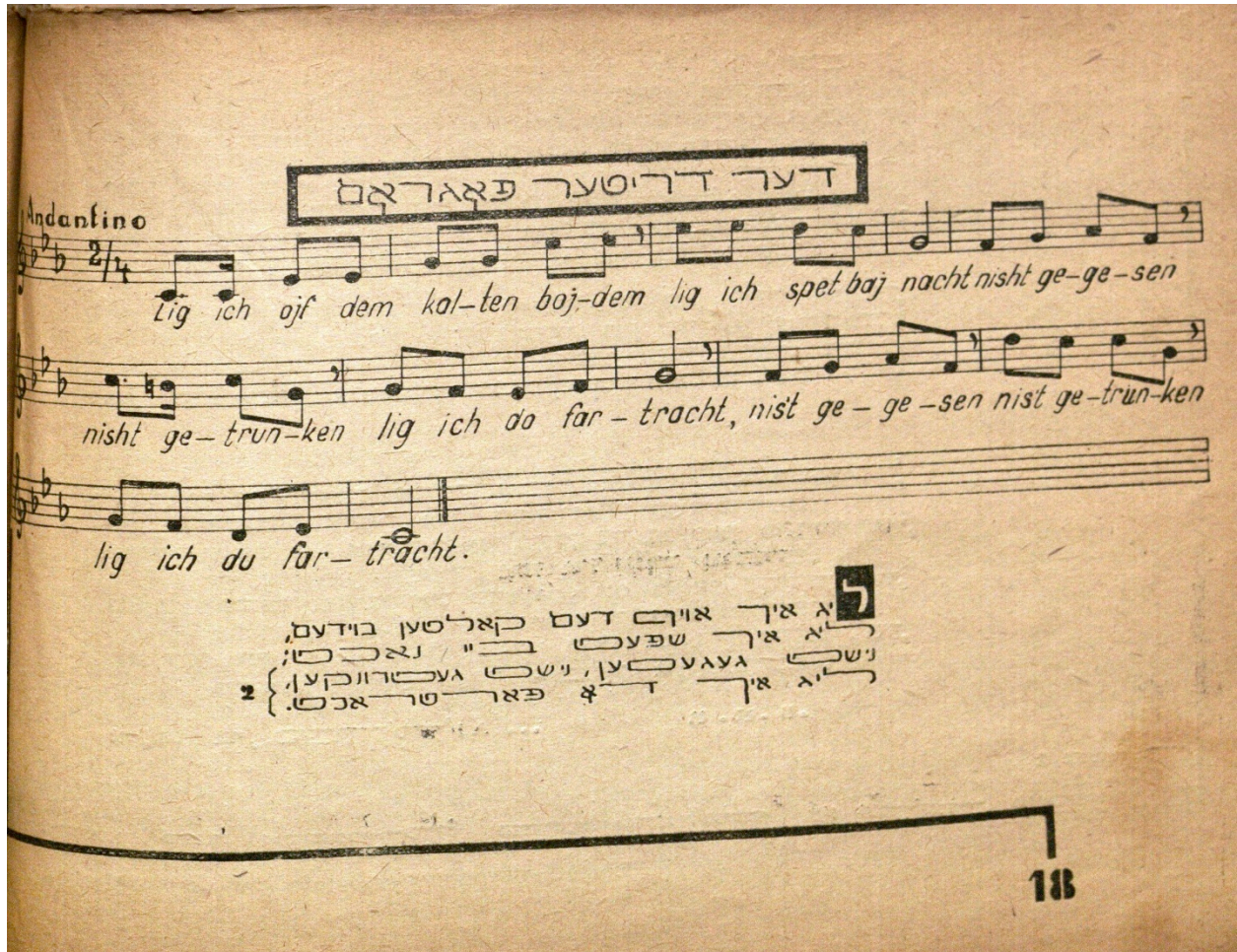


Figure 11. Excerpt from “Der driter pogrom” (The Third Pogrom), unique song from Rozyszcze, Poland, from *Mi-ma’amakim* (1945).

⁵⁹ Flora Rom, the book’s designer and calligraphist, was (or would become) Ayzman’s wife. See Eismann, Flora and Rom, Flora, Central Name Index, International Tracing Service Archive (USHMM). Rom (as Flora Rom-Eiseman) also published a memoir in the anthology *Women in the Holocaust* (Aibeshits and Eilenberg-Eibeshitz 1994). Born in Warsaw in 1911, Rom worked as an architect in Vilna, so may have been responsible for contributing the volume’s several Vilna ghetto songs. Rom immigrated to Palestine via Romania in October 1945, presumably in the company of her husband, whose Tracing Service record, however, has not been located.

Table 1

Mi-ma'amakim : folkslider fun lagers un getos in poyln 1939-1944 (1945)

Key: Title and Author/Informant data as in source songbook.

w=words; m=music; i=informant.

“K 1948” numbers refer to text/music pages in Kaczerginski 1948a (*Lider fun di getos un lagern*).

Asterisk indicates a song that does not appear in Kaczerginski 1948a.

Parenthetical information in the right-hand column indicates variant title or author information in cross-referenced works.

Italicized text indicates supplementary information supplied by the present writer.

i>

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
Yiesh					
1	Frilingslid	w: Sh. Kaczerginski <i>m: Avreml Brudno</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	70/379 (Friling)
2	Der driter pogrom	w: Itsik Flaysher m: unknown	Rozyszcze	ca.1944	*
3	Lid fun yanover lager	w: Dr. Zigfrid Shenfeld m: unknown	Lemberg forced labor camp	1942	*
4	Treblinke	w: unknown <i>m: Eduardo Bianco</i> i: M. I. Faygenboym	Biała Podlaska		215 (Treblinke [variant])
5	Dos eybike lid	w: Volf Sambol m: unknown	Rawa Ruska	1943	*
6	Shotns	w: Feyge Gurman m: unknown	Hrubieszów	1944	*
7	A farurtaylter	w, m: unknown i: Naftali Lozinger	“a Jewish POW camp”		*
8	Lager-marsh	w: Sholom Goldberg m: unknown	Landsberg labor camp	1943	*
Bitokhn					
9	Kh'vil tsaytn andere	w: Rivke Bosman m: unknown	Riga women's camp	1943	137 (attrib. to Kasriel Broydo)

Table 1 continued

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
10	Dos lid fun a shnayderin	w: Zoshia Mekhanik m: unknown	Lemberg women's camp	1942	*
11	Unter dayne vayse shtern	w: Avrom Sutskever [m: Avreml Brudno]	Vilna ghetto		74/380
12	Di gele late	w, m: unknown i: Naftali Lozinger	Blechhammer camp		*
13	Ikh vil aheym	w: <i>Leyb Rozental</i> m: <i>unknown</i>	<i>Vilna ghetto</i>		84/383 (Ikh benk aheym)
14	Tsur mamem	w, m: unknown	Międzyrzec Podlaski	1941	208 (Gib a brokhe; text only)
15	Ponar	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: A. Wolkowski	Vilna ghetto	1942	88/385 (Shtiler, shtiler)
Kamf un nitsokhn					
16	Es brent	w, m: Mordecai Gebirtig	<i>Kraków,</i> <i>prewar</i>	<i>c.</i> <i>1938</i>	330/424
17	Partizaner marsh	w: Hirsh Glik m: <i>Dmitri & Daniel Pokrass</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	3/361 (Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg)
18	Tsu eyns, tsvey, dray	w: <i>Leyb Rozental</i> m: <i>Hanns Eisler</i>	<i>Vilna ghetto</i>		343/426
19	Yungt marsh	w: <i>Sh. Kaczerginski</i> m: <i>Basya Rubin</i>	<i>Vilna ghetto</i>		325/427 (Yugnt-himn)
20	Partizaner lid	w: Hirsh Glik m: unknown	Vilna	1943	348/428 (Shtil di nakht iz oysgeshternt)

2. *Zamlung fun katset un geto lider* (Anthology of Songs and Poems from the Concentration Camps and Ghettos)

The second major anthology to appear, in early 1946, was *Zamlung fun katset un geto lider* (Anthology of Songs and Poems from the Concentration Camps and Ghettos), printed in the Displaced Persons Camp at Bergen-Belsen, in the British Zone of Occupied Germany, as a special edition of the camp newspaper *Undzer shtime* (Our Voice). This songbook came into

print largely through the efforts of Zami Feder (1909-2000), director of Bergen-Belsen's newly-formed Yiddish theater.

Born in Poland and raised in Germany, Feder was a theater professional who continued his creative activities in several Nazi camps, writing skits and staging entertainments whenever circumstances allowed. Soon after liberation he founded the Bergen-Belsen "Kazet-Theater," a performance unit at first so lacking in resources that Feder began programming Shoah songs simply to provide his actors with material (Feder 1957: 135-139).⁶⁰ Eventually numbering thirty members, Feder's troupe toured Germany, Belgium and France with a repertory ranging from Yiddish theatrical classics to newly-fashioned plays about ghetto life and the underground resistance. The Kazet-Theater disbanded in 1947 while on tour—most of the company preferred Paris and Brussels to Bergen-Belsen—and Feder himself remained in France for many years before emigrating to Israel in the 1960s.⁶¹

Like Ayzman, Feder felt charged with a mission: "Even while in the concentration camp," he wrote in the preface, "I began gathering camp and ghetto songs from authors known and unknown. Several times these songs were nearly lost when my clothes were searched or during other kinds of inspections. After liberation I resumed this same work" (Feder 1946: 2).

Divided into sections corresponding to "ghetto" and "camp" *lider* and illustrated with several evocative cartoons, the *Zamlung* contains twenty poems, four of which concern postwar

⁶⁰ The popular term *Kazet* (Yid., *katset*) derived from the German pronunciation of the letters *KZ*, a common abbreviation for *Konzentrationslager für Zivilpersonen*, concentration camp for "civilians"—i.e., noncombatants.

⁶¹ For accounts of Feder's life and activities Königseder, Wetzler and Broadwin 2001: 288-290; Lavsky 2002: 158-159; Zaretsky n.d., and especially Yantian 1997: 151-163 (which draws on Feder's testimony at the Yad Vashem archives); see also Fetthauer 2012: 129-163 for further details on the collection.

life in Bergen-Belsen, and thirteen songs, six however lacking music.⁶² Feder originally must have conceived a larger compendium than the work ultimately published: his production notebooks contain sixty songs and poems of which only twenty-two appeared in the *Zamlung*.⁶³ As noted, however, he had other outlets for this material, and several of these same poems and songs were used in his plays and heard during *Kleinkunst* programs hosted by the Kazet-Theater (Yantian 1997: 138 and 142).⁶⁴



⁶² The Yiddish word “*lid*” (plural, “*lider*”) can mean either “song” or “poem”—and in cases where music notation is omitted, the demarcation between sung and spoken poetry is not always apparent.

⁶³ Cf. Feder’s inventory at the Archives du Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine (Feder n.d.).

⁶⁴ See also incidental music to Feder’s productions of *Partizanen* (Partisans) (Yad Vashem archives) and *Der farkishefter shnayder* (The enchanted tailor) (Feder 1974: 229-234).

Figure 12. “Katset-lider” (Concentration Camp Songs), illustration by Icchak Naparstek for *Zamlung fun katset un geto lider*.

Demonstrating the emergence of a “core repertoire” of Yiddish Holocaust songs, the *Zamlung*, evidently independently, included four works also published in *Mi-ma’amakim*: “Undzer shtetl brent” (Our Town is Burning), “Yugnt-himn” (Hymn of Youth), “Shtil di nakht iz oysgeshternt” (The Silent Night is Filled with Stars) and “Zog nit keynmol” (Never Say That You Have Reached the Final Road). A further similarity to Ayzman’s anthology, one marking an emerging trend, is the inclusion of a perhaps disproportionate number of songs from Vilna ghetto: of the book’s seven songs with melodies, six originated in Vilna. Kaczerginski took note of these attributes when he first came across a copy of the *Zamlung* in Paris. But he also encountered in the volume a handful of songs he had not collected, and these he reprinted in *Lider fun di getos un lagern* duly annotated “from Zami Feder’s collection” (Kaczerginski 1948a: XX).⁶⁵

A final feature of Feder’s anthology, bespeaking its origins in a British DP Camp (and portending future directions as well), is its Zionist stance. This is most palpable in the volume’s unsigned English-language introduction, a plea to the authorities to sanction Jewish settlement in Palestine:

The following songs and poems are the only relics from the concentration camps and the ghettos that can possibly live. Memory dies with the men and women who suffered the agony of living in these infamous places where death was a release from the living torture of a sadist's paradise. Humbly then we offer the world these lyrics and poems in the hope that the world will remember the singers. Remember this: We sang as our beloved ones went to the gas chamber. We chanted as the Gestapo led us to the crematoria, and the poems consoled us in

⁶⁵ Kaczerginski reprints from Feder “Barakn-bau lid” (Barrack Song) by Ester Shtub, and “Mener-ferd” (Human Horses) by Rabbi Emanuel Hirshberg, and two texts by Yasha Rabinovitch (about whom see discussion of Songbook 5, below): “Di tsavoe” (The Testament) and “Dos lid fun katset” (Song of the *Katset*).

the miseries of the ghettos. After all, we sang because we hoped, and we still hope that a kinder fate will lead us to a happier land where we can sing these songs as a memory—and a warning. (Feder 1946: 45)⁶⁶

⁶⁶ The introduction to the volume may have been authored by *Undzer shtime* editors David Rosenthal and Paul Trepman. Created in July 1945, *Undzer shtime* (or “*Unzer sztime*,” as the name was rendered in Polish-Yiddish orthography), was the first Yiddish DP periodical (see Lavsky 2002: 154-155). Trepman (1999) credits the artist and actor Berl Friedler (or Fridler) and the pianist Babey Widutchinsky (later Mrs. Paul Trepman) with transcribing the melodies that appear in Feder’s anthology.

איך בין דא קיינמאל נישט געווען,
 איך האב עסטאניע נישט געזען,
 די גאסן און די מענטשן ווער דערקענט,
 איך קאן פיל זאכן נישט פארשטיין.
 ס'האט יעדע זאך אן אנדער מיין,
 ס'איז קאמיש מיר און מאדנע,
 אלץ איז פרעמד.
 ס'געפעלט זיי נישט מיין גענגל,
 ס'געפעלט זיי נישט מיין גרויס,
 אז ינדער ווער ס'דנזעט מיך,
 פרעגט גלייך ווי איך הייס.

רעפריין:

כ'הייס טאניע, כ'וויין אין עסטאניע,
 צו ווייסט איר, וווּ מיין אדעס מען געפינט?
 כ'הייס טאניע, כ'וויין אין עסטאניע,
 איך זוך א לאגער מיט א נארע, ווי עס פאסט,
 אז איך זוך אויף יעדן וועגל,
 איך פרעג ביי יעדן דייטש,
 אפשר ווייסט איר וווּ די ארבעט,
 וווּ מ'זאלט נישט מיט א קיין בייטש?
 כ'הייס טאניע, כ'וויין אין עסטאניע,
 איך זוך א לאגער מיט א נארע ווי עס פאסט.

א מאדע דא מען שיקט ארויס,
 איך לויף אהער, מען שרייט פארויס.
 איך זאג און באדויער, כ'וויל נישט פארן מער,
 דעווערף זאג, פאר אין ווייטן וועג,
 עס וועט דיר דארט אויך זיין נישט שלעכט.
 די דייטשן גוטע - נאר ס'נעמט זיי נישט די ערד.
 ס'געפעלט מיר נישט עסטאניע,
 ס'געפעלט מיר נישט דאס לאנד,
 איך וויל צוריק נאך ווילנע,
 כ'האב דארט א שטארקע האנד.

רעפריין:

כ'הייס טאניע.....
 איך האב א נומער און איך טראג אים ווי עס
 פאסט.



Figure 13. Verse 1 and refrain to “Tonie,” from *Zamlung fun katset un geto lider*.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ The similarity of the Hebrew-Yiddish characters *Samekh* (ס) and *Tes* (ט), made more pronounced by the *Zamlung*'s poor print quality, caused Kaczerginski and others to misread this title as “Sonie.” The correct title is

Table 2

Zamlung fun katset un geto lider (1946)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
1	Di tsavoe [text only]	w: Yasha Rabinovitsh	<i>K.Z. Riga</i>		118 [text only]
Geto-lider					
2	Es brent, briderlekh, s'brent	w, m: Mordechai Gebirtig	<i>Kraków, prewar</i>	<i>c. 1938</i>	330/424 (S'brent)
3	Zog nisht keymol az du geyst dem letstn veg	w: Hirsh Glik m: <i>Dmitri & Daniel Pokrass</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	3/361
4	Yugnt-himn fun vilner geto	w: <i>Sh. Kaczerginski</i> m: <i>Basye Rubin</i>	Vilna ghetto	1942	325/427 (Yugnt-himn)
5	Partizaner lid	w: Hirsh Glik m: unknown	Vilna ghetto	1943	348/428 (Shtil di nakht iz oysgeshternt)
6	Di mame [text only]	w, m: <i>Percy Haid</i>	Kovno ghetto	1943	109 (Di alte mamele) [text only]
7	Vu hin? [poem]	w: Rakhmiel Briks	Łódź ghetto	July, 1944	*
8	Di zelbe gasn un tramveyen	w: <i>Kasriel Broydo</i> m: unknown	Vilna ghetto		16/365 (Tsi darf es azoy zayn?)
9	Farvos?	w: Blume Foglgorn	Łódź ghetto	[1942]	*
10	Dos vilner pleytim-lid [text only]	w: <i>Leyb Rozental</i> m: unknown	Vilna ghetto		84/383 (Ikh benk aheym)
11	Torf-lid [text only]	w: Khane Kheytn m: <i>Henryk Wars</i>	Shavli (Šiauliai) ghetto	1943	169 [text only]
12	S'iz gevezn a tsayt (poem)	w: unknown	<i>Kovno ghetto</i>		*
13	Tonie	w: Tonie Reznik m: <i>Misha Veksler</i>	Vilna ghetto		276 (Sonie) [text only]
14	Di geto elite [text only]	w: Moyshe Sanek m: unknown	Łódź ghetto		*
Katset-lider					
15	Oysshtaygn, oysshtaygn! (poem)	w: Etká Boyarska			*

“Tonie,” after the poem’s author, Tonie (Tonya) Reznik. Cf. Reznik’s entry (Object Id: 52143831) in the Central Name Index, International Tracing Service, USHMM Archive.

Table 2 continued

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
16	Azoy hat es zikh ongehoybn (poem)	w: Zami Feder	Bergen-Belsen	October, 1945	*
17	Vi shlekht es iz a haymloze tsu blaybn	w: <i>Leyb Rozental</i> m: <i>Misha Veksler</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	158/399 (Peshe fun reshe)
18	Undzer goyrl [poem]	w: unknown			*
19	Dos lid fun katset [text only]	w: Yasha Rabinovitsh m: <i>unident. Hebrew melody</i>	Kaiserwald		222 [text only]
20	Der vind (poem)	w: Ester Rokhl Shental	Gleiwitz concentration camp	1943	*
21	Ikh benk (poem)	w: Miriam Vaksman	labor camp near Salzwedel, Germany	1944	*
22	A vig lid (poem)	w: unknown (trans fr. Polish by Berl Fridler)			*
23	Mit dir mayn kind (poem)	w: unknown (“dedicated to your birthday”)			*
24	Mit zikh aleyn (poem)	w: Berl Goldshtayn			*
25	Katsetn (poem)	w: Rakhmiel Briks	Büssing labor camp [subcamp of Neuengamme]		*
26	Barakn-bau lid	w: Ester Shtub		c 1945	282 (Barakn-lid) [text only]
27	Mener-ferd (poem)	w: Rabbi Emanuel Hirshberg	Łódź ghetto		150 [poem]
28	Ikh zing tsum takt fun ayer marsh [poem]	w: Rabbi Emanuel Hirshberg	Łódź ghetto		*
29	Vuhin? [poem]	w: Blume Foglgorn			*
30	Ikh bin a shotn (poem)	w: Zami Feder	Bergen-Belsen DP camp		*
31	Frayhayt (poem)	w: Zami Feder	Bunzlau labor camp; rewritten Bergen-Belsen DP camp]	June, 1942	*
32	Bukhnvald-bergen-belzn (poem)	w: Yehoshua Krotman	Bergen-Belsen DP camp		*
33	Bergn-belzn (poem)	w: Ester Shtub	Bergen-Belsen DP camp		*

3. *S'brent* (It's Burning)

S'brent (It's Burning), the second Shoah songbook to appear in 1946, and one of the first books issued by the Jewish Historical Commission, Kraków, gathers fifteen songs by the famed folk troubadour Mordecai Gebirtig (1877-1942).⁶⁸ Safeguarded from destruction after Gebirtig's death during an *Aktion* in the Kraków ghetto, the song sequence was quickly recognized as a moving testament to the trauma that had overtaken the poet's family, city and society. The book's focus on the work of a single artist, and its diary-like chronological arrangement, set it apart from the otherwise multivoiced, nonsequential anthologies surveyed. Regrettably, the collection includes only three musical settings: "Minutn fun bitokhn" (Moments of Confidence), "S'iz gut" (It's Good), and the title song (which, however, predates the war). The remaining songs, found in no other source, were apparently not known beyond Gebirtig's circle; their melodies, if they ever existed, must now be considered lost.⁶⁹

In his introduction to the book, the historian Joseph Wulf (1912-1974), a friend of Gebirtig's and chief editor of *S'brent*, observes that the texts fall into three categories: songs of the early war period; songs of the "resettlement" (when the poet and his family were removed to a Kraków suburb); and songs of the Kraków ghetto. Wulf goes on to characterize Gebirtig as "a man of the people" who was their "chief storyteller" and "witness." His essay ends with an expression of hope that the publication of *S'brent* will honor and commemorate "the people's

⁶⁸ *S'brent* takes its name from Gebirtig's best known song, more properly called "Undzer shtetl brent" (Our Town is Burning). Written in response to a 1936 Polish pogrom and considered prophetic of the Holocaust, it was widely sung in the ghettos and camps and printed in several Shoah anthologies, beginning with *Mi-ma'amakim* (1945). See Rubin 1979: 429-431.

⁶⁹ See liner notes to Gebirtig and Kempin 1994.

poet”: “Let this small book be his gravestone, and these few words flowers on his unknown grave” (Gebirtig et al. 1946: 12).⁷⁰



Figure 14. “Minutn fun bitokhn” (Moments of Confidence), one of three Gebirtigsongs to include notated music in *S'brent* (1946).

⁷⁰ Wulf's introduction is dated October, 1945.

Table 3

S'brent (1946)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
1	Erev yom kippur	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków	1939	*
2	Shifreles portret	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków	1939	*
3	S'tut vey	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków	1940	*
4	Minutn fun bitokhn	w, m: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków	1940	331/425
5	Blayb gezunt mir, kroke!	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków	1940	*
6	Ikh hob shoyn lang	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Łagiewniki	1941	*
7	Gehot hob ikh a heym	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Łagiewniki	1941	*
8	Mayn kholem	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Łagiewniki	1941	*
9	Glokn klang	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Łagiewniki	1941	*
10	A tog fun nekome!	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Łagiewniki	1942	*
11	Zun, zun, zang	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków ghetto	1942	*
12	Undzer friling	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków ghetto	1942	*
13	In geto	w: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków ghetto	1942	*
14	S'iz gut	w, m: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków ghetto	1942	130/397
15	Undzer shtetl brent	w, m: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków, prewar	ca. 1938	330/424 (Es brent)

4. *Lider fun bialistoker geto* (Songs from Białystok Ghetto)

The first anthology of songs to memorialize a single locale, *Lider fun bialistoker geto* (Songs from Białystok Ghetto), was published in 1947 by the Białystok Committee in Paris. Strained for capital but steered by a resourceful member, Izaak Rybalowski (1909-1995), the struggling *landsmanshaft* (hometown immigrant aid society) issued a slim but attractive booklet, with eye-catching cover art by the Parisian graphic designer and former Białystok resident, “Benn” (Bentsion Rabinovich; 1905-1989), and fluent music arrangements by the Polish-

Parisian cantor Eliahu Hirshin (1876-1960), who also received credit for selecting the songs.⁷¹

The volume's impassioned introduction, by committee-member Rivke Juchnowecki, makes plain the group's motivation to see these songs in print:

This songbook is our modest marker on the graves of our brothers. Because a marker is not just a stone in a cemetery. The word, the song, that they, our martyrs, created during days of sorrow and deprivation, sung in sadness and horror, can also be a marker, an eternal monument. The song created in Białystok ghetto, sung by our starved and tormented martyrs, is dear and precious to us, and holy. ...The songs are not poetry—they are a piece of a soul, a cry, a shudder, a moan. ...They go forth with great reverence from the Białystok Committee in Paris, with heads lowered in mute grief for our martyrs. (Rybalowski 1946: [unnumbered p. 5])

Lider fun bialistoker geto is notable as the earliest published source for two often reprinted Shoah songs: “Rivkele di Shabesdike” (Rivkele the Sabbath Widow), by Białystok journalist Pesakh Kaplan (1870-1943), and the widespread “In a litvish derfl” (In a Lithuanian Village; otherwise “A yidish kind” [A Jewish Child]), by Khane Khaitin, a poet from Shavli (Šiauliai, Lithuania) ghetto. Kaczerginski, who had sojourned to Białystok when it fell into Soviet occupation in 1940, and who had settled in Paris the same year *Lider fun bialistoker geto* appeared, must have been familiar with the book: four of its six selections turn up in *Lider fun di getos un lagern* (the omitted items, written by refugees in the Soviet Union, would not have been known in the ghetto).⁷² The Białystok songbook is notable, too, as the unique source for the

⁷¹ The songs in *Lider fun bialistoker geto* were reprinted in *Lider un bilder fun bialistoker geto* (Songs and Images from Białystok Ghetto (Club Bialystoker Friends 1948). In the introduction to that volume it is noted that Rybalowski (Rybal-Rybalowski), a typesetter and Białystok native who spent the war years in Tashkent, Soviet Uzbekistan, had also had a hand in collecting material from ghetto survivors. For a profile of Rybal-Rybalowski, see Kronick 1982: 176-177. For a profile of Benn, see Parizer 1982: 150.

⁷² The songs excluded from *Lider fun di getos un lagern* are “Bialistok mayn heym” (Białystok, My Home), written in Tashkent by Yitzchok Perlov, and an untitled poem—denoted in the tabulation by its first line, “Vi sheyn un prakhtful alts iz arum” (How Lovely and Wonderful, All Around)—by an anonymous Białystok native who likewise had fled to the Soviet interior. The Warsaw playwright Perlov (1911-1980) had been designated Director of the Białystok Yiddish theater-in-exile in 1942; he likely became acquainted with Rybalowski in Tashkent (Perlov 1967). Perlov's "Bialistok mayn heym" should not be confused with the identically-named

melody to “Markovtshizne” (Markowszczyzna), a topical song—revealed to be a tango—
detailing prisoners’ travails at a now obscure forced-labor site near the town.⁷³



Figure 15. Detail from “Markovtshizne” (Markowszczyzna), from *Lider fun bialistoker geto* (1947).

interwar waltz by the Polish (later Argentinian) Yiddish songwriting team of Abraham Szewach and Jeremia Ciganeri.

⁷³ Only the lyrics to “Markovtshizne” appear in Kacerginski’s omnibus volume (Kacerginski 1948a: 54).

Table 4

Lider fun bialistoker geto (1947)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
1	Bialistoker geto	w, m: unknown	Białystok ghetto	1942	56/373 (Dos lid fun bialistoker geto)
2	Rivkele di shabesdike	w: Pesakh Kaplan m: <i>unknown</i> (“ <i>Kegn gold fun zun</i> ”)	Białystok ghetto	1941	58/382
3	Markovtshizne	w: H. Goldshtayn m: unknown	Białystok ghetto	1943	54 (text only)
4	In a litvish derfl	w: <i>Khane Kheytn</i> m: <i>Henech Kon</i>	Shavli (Šiauliai) ghetto	1943	95/386 (A yidish kind)
5	Białystok mayn heym	w: Yitzchok Perlov m: unknown	Tashkent	1942	*
6	Vi sheyn un prakhtful alts iz arum (poem)	i: Shelke Grinberg	<i>Soviet</i> <i>Russia</i>		*

5. *Ghetto-und KZ. Lieder aus Lettland und Litauen* (Ghetto and Concentration Camp Songs from Latvia and Lithuania)

A fifth anthology, printed in Vienna under the auspices of the American Joint Distribution Committee, appeared in March 1947: *Ghetto-und KZ. Lieder aus Lettland und Litauen* (Ghetto and Concentration Camp Songs from Latvia and Lithuania), “transcribed, gathered, explicated and annotated” by Johanna Spector (1915-2008).⁷⁴ A trained musician who would later rise to prominence as an ethnomusicologist and ethnographic filmmaker, Spector arrived at the ghetto of her native Libau (Liepaja), Latvia, already adept at evaluating the social contexts of the songs she would memorize there and subsequently at several labor camps.⁷⁵ Like

⁷⁴ “Aufgezeichnet, gesammelt, erklärt und mit Begleitung versehen” [von Johanna Spector]” (Spector 1947: unnumbered title page).

⁷⁵ The prewar professions of both Johanna Spektor (sic) and her husband, Robert, are listed as “Musician, public works” in the online source *Jews in Liepaja/Latvia, 1941-45* (Anders 2008). Spector immigrated to the U.S. in 1947 and taught at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York (specializing in Asian and North African

the other early anthologists, Spector felt duty-bound to preserve these songs, declaring her book a “historical document” and dedicating it “to the memory of those killed in the ghettos and concentration camps” (Spector 1947: 4). She also remarked on the style of these works, noting that the influence of non-Jewish music on this repertoire should be understood as an “inevitable consequence of one thousand years of diaspora culture” (Spector 1947: 4).⁷⁶

Spector’s book of fifteen German and Yiddish songs follows a mostly chronological arrangement, mirroring the author’s personal odyssey from ghetto to camp to liberation. The ten German-language songs appear in no other source, although it should be noted that Spector—a native German speaker, as were most Libau Jews—wrote six of these herself, and that the collection’s first song, “Heimatlos” (Without a Homeland) predates the war by several years.⁷⁷ The Yiddish selections were clearly more widespread: all had previously appeared in Ayzman’s or Feder’s songbooks, or both, and all would reappear in Kaczerginski’s anthology, under different titles, with different attributions, and with variant texts and melodies.⁷⁸ And, following

Jewish folkways) for over 30 years. Although Spector was reluctant to discuss her wartime experiences in later life, her archive, currently (2014) being catalogued at the Seminary, is certain to yield information about this period, as well as details about the critical months after liberation, when she conceived of and began work on her anthology.

⁷⁶ Regarding this statement’s subtle pro-Zionism, it might be noted that Spector’s publisher, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, advocated for immigration to Palestine/Israel. Indeed, Spector lived in Israel for a period in the early 1950s before taking U.S. citizenship and settling permanently in New York. See Oertel 2002: 4-6; and Edelman 2009.

⁷⁷ The song, originally titled “Ich hab’ kein Heimatland” (I Have No Homeland), and subtitled “Jüdischer Tango,” was written in Paris in 1933 by German exile Friedrich Schwarz and commercially recorded in London the following year by émigré Jewish bandleader Marek Weber; due to a marketing error, the recording briefly circulated in Nazi Germany in the mid-1930s. The song’s inclusion in Spector’s anthology as an anonymous work attests to its popularity among ghetto and camp inmates; her assertion that its “refugee composer had died in Paris”—as did Schwarz, mysteriously, soon after writing the piece—may reflect a conflation of stories circulating at the time she was conducting her research. (See Lotz and Weggen 2006; and Lotz 2009.)

⁷⁸ For a detailed description of Spector’s anthology, see Braun 2004.

the already-established trend, Vilna ghetto repertoire is well represented, with three of five Yiddish works said to have originated there.⁷⁹

Of special note, perhaps, are a group of three songs—two in Yiddish, one in German—by Yasha Rabinovitch (Jaša Rabinovičs, or Rabinowicz), a Libau native and likely acquaintance and fellow camp-prisoner of Spector’s.⁸⁰ Rabinovitch’s balladic “K.Z.-Lied” documents the deportation of Liebau Jews to a labor camp in Riga; his German-language “Wiegenlied” (Lullaby) is addressed to the sole survivor of a *Kinderaktion*; while his “Mein Zawoe” (My Testament), ending with the line “ikh loz mayn tsavoe in klingnde lider, far mayne gematerte shvester un brider” (let my testament be the echoing songs I leave for my tormented sisters and brothers), was singled out by Feder for the envoy to his *Zamlung* of 1946.⁸¹

Spector was the first of only three music professionals among Shoah song collectors, and her skilled transcriptions and fully worked-out piano arrangements lend *Ghetto-und KZ. Lieder* a polished quality lacking in the earlier anthologies.⁸² This diligence with respect to music composition contributes to the book’s value as a source for melodies to songs published

⁷⁹ Spector misstates a Vilna provenance for “Vor der Aktion” (p. 31): the song, better known as “Di alte mame” (The Old Mother), actually originated in Kovno (cf. discussion of Feder 1946, above). Spector’s Baltic origins may account for the high representation of Vilna ghetto songs in her collection.

⁸⁰ Spector’s commentary includes biographical details on Rabinovitch, such as his death by shooting two hours before liberation; and she herself composed the melody to his poem “Mayn Zawoe” (although whether in collaboration with the lyricist or after their separation is unknown) (see Spector 1947: 16).

⁸¹ In Feder’s anthology, “K.Z.-Lied” is titled “Dos lid fun katset,” and “Mayn Zawoe” is titled “Di tsavoe” (The Testament). Rabinovich’s text is put to similar purpose in Gottlieb and Mlotek 1983 (see discussion in chapter 5, below).

⁸² Ernst Hurwitz and Moshe Beregovski were the other professionally trained anthologists; see discussions of songbooks 12 and 14, below. The fact that Spector’s volume was published in Vienna, a major music center, may also account for its superior production qualities. A number of striking illustrations by the noted German artist Arthur Fauser (1911-1990), apparently intended for the book but never used, survive among Spector’s papers at the Jewish Theological Seminary (Spector 2013).

elsewhere as lyrics only.⁸³ Spector's work is also significant in that it preserves rare and otherwise undocumented repertoire from Libau ghetto and the Riga-Reichsbahn (Preču) labor camp.

6. Reichsbahnlied

1943 im K.Z.-Arbeitslager „Preču“-Riga entsandt. Text und Melodie von Ljowa Berniker. An Entkräftung im K.Z. Stutthof bei Danzig gestorben, (April 1945.)
 L. B. war ein lustiger, achtzehnjähriger Bursche, der Tanzmusik sehr liebte und dessen Frohsinn auch in schweren Momenten durchbrach. So hat auch sein Lied eine kecke Melodie. Die Begleitung ahmt das monotone Rattern der Maschine nach.

Andante
 Schmie - de, schaf - fe, ar - bei - te für Drei,
 kriegst dann a - bends dei - nen Was - ser - brei;
 erweck' den An - schein, die Ar - beit fällt dir schwer,
 kriegst viel - leicht 'nen Tel - ler mehr.

„E. A. W.“ heißt un - ser La - ger,
 Sta - chel - draht läuft rings her - um;
 drin - nen woh - nen al - les Ju - den,
 bepín - selt sind sie rund her - um.

1. Schmiede, schaffe, arbeite für Drei,
 Kriegst dann abends deinen Wasserbrei;
 Erweck' den Anschein, die Arbeit fällt dir schwer,
 Kriegst vielleicht 'nen Teller mehr.
2. „E. A. W.“ heißt unser Lager,
 Stacheldraht läuft rings herum;
 Drinnen wohnen alles Juden,
 Bepinselt sind sie rund herum.

Anmerkung: Der vollständige Text war bei der Drucklegung nicht eingelangt.

Figure 16. “Reichsbahnlied” (Reich Railway Song), by Ljowa Berniker, Riga-Reichsbahn (Preču) labor camp (1943); arranged by Johanna Spector (1947). The editor notes that at press time she had not yet received the complete text to this German-language song.

⁸³ Spector was the first to publish the melody to “Vor der Aktion” (Before the Aktion; entitled “Di alte name” [The Old Mother] in Kaczerginski 1948), and is the sole source for the music to Rabinovitch’s three *lider*.

Table 5

Ghetto- und KZ. Lieder aus Lettland und Litauen(1947)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
1	Heimatlos [Ich hab' kein Heimatland]	w, m: <i>Friedrich Schwarz</i>	Buchenwald	1939- 1941 [1933]	*
2	Zur Arbeit	w, m: <i>Johanna Spector</i>	Libau (Liepaja) ghetto	1942	*
3	Ghettomarsch	w, m: <i>Johanna Spector</i>	Libau ghetto	1942	*
4	Im Gefängnis	w, m: <i>Johanna Spector</i>	Libau ghetto	1942	*
5	K.Z.-Lied	w: <i>Yasha Rabinovitsh</i> m: unident. Hebrew melody	Prėču labor camp [Riga (Reichsbahn)]	1943	222 [text only] (Dos lid fun kataset)
6	Reichsbahnlied	w, m: <i>Ljowa Berniker</i>	Prėču labor camp [Riga (Reichsbahn)]	1943	*
7	Ich will noch einmal sehn mein Heim	w: <i>Leyb Rozental</i> m: <i>Kasriel Broydo</i>	Vilna ghetto		84/283 (Ikh benk aheym)
8	Stiller, stiller...	w: <i>Sh. Kaczerginski</i> m: <i>Aleksander Wolkowiski</i>	Vilna ghetto	1942	88/385
9	Vor der Aktion	w, m: <i>Percy Haid</i>	<i>Kovno ghetto</i>	1942	109 (Di alte mame)
10	Wiegenlied	w, m: <i>Yasha Rabinovitsh</i>	Prėču labor camp [Riga (Reichsbahn)]	1943	*
11	Main Zawoe	w: <i>Yasha Rabinovitsh</i> m: <i>Johanna Spector</i>	Prėču labor camp [Riga (Reichsbahn)]	1944	118 (Di tsavoe) [text only]
12	Traum	w, m: <i>Johanna Spector</i>	Prėču labor camp [Riga (Reichsbahn)]	1943	*
13	Jeden Frih	w: <i>Ida Grodzianowski</i> m: Polish folk melody	Dünawerk labor camp, Latvia	[ca. 1943]	220/406 (Shoyn genug)
14	Möchte fahren...	w, m: <i>Johanna Spector</i>	Stolp labor camp, subcamp Stuthoff	1944	*
15	Ich möchte so gern glücklich sein	w, m: <i>Johanna Spector</i>	Schleswig- Holstein	1945	*

6. *Undzer gezang* (Our Song)

Two further anthologies—*Undzer gezang* (Our Song) and *Dos gezang fun vilner geto* (The Song of Vilna Ghetto)—were partly or entirely the work of Kacerginski himself. Both to a great extent would be incorporated into his later compendium.

Undzer gezang (Our Song) appeared in Warsaw in 1947, its purpose to foster the regeneration of Jewish life and culture in “the new Poland” (Wajner 1947: unnumbered page inside title page).⁸⁴ While recognizing that publishing a volume of Jewish melodies would represent an important symbolic step toward this goal, the editors also acknowledged, “unavoidably,” the need to include repertoire of more recent vintage, songs “dripping with the blood of wounds not yet healed” (Wajner 1947). Indeed approximately eighty of the book's 211 pages of music (comprising twenty-eight of ninety-four titles) are devoted, respectively, to “partisan” and “ghetto” songs.⁸⁵ Moreover (as mentioned in chapter 1 above), *Undzer gezang* is also notable as the first general Jewish music publication to include World War II “ghetto songs” and “partisan songs” as Jewish music genres.

Predictably, Kacerginski shows considerable Vilna bias in his selection of repertoire, with all but eight of *Undzer gezang*'s Shoah songs created in or otherwise associated with his hometown. Most of this material would be recycled in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*; of particular interest, then, are the handful of works Kacerginski omitted from his later anthologies. These include “Partizaner-libe” (Partisan Love), a mock epic drawn from a prewar marionette play by

⁸⁴ Leon Wajner (Vayner) served as the volume's music editor; Kacerginski's “active contribution” to the songbook is credited in a publisher's note following a list of *errata* (unnumbered page).

⁸⁵ The other chapters are “hymns and workers' songs” (including the partisan anthem “Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg,” which however must also be tallied among the Holocaust-related pieces); “children's songs”; and “shtayger” (traditional-styled) songs by Gebirtig, Warshawski and others.

the Ukrainian-American agitprop puppeteer Yosl Cutler (1894-1935); “Tsum roytarmeyer” (To the Red Army Man), a ballad in praise of Soviet soldiers; and the Hebrew-language “Nits’ada be-On” (We Will March in Strength), possibly written for Mandate Palestine’s special Jewish brigades that fought alongside British forces.

It is likely that Kaczerginski’s intensifying antagonism toward the Stalinist regime (addressed in his 1949 tract *Tsvishn hamer un serp: tsu der geshikhte fun der likvidatsie fun der yidisher kultur in sovetn rusland* [Between Hammer and Sickle: On the history of the liquidation of Jewish culture in Soviet Russia]) was a major factor in his decision to disown the more brazenly pro-Soviet material.⁸⁶ Similarly, the suppression of “Nits’ada be-On” may have been in response to Britain’s devastating blockade of Palestine, which saw tens of thousands of Jewish refugees barred from the country during the immediate postwar period.

⁸⁶ *Undzer gezang* begins with three agenda-laden “hymns”: the Communist anthem, “Internationale”; the Zionist anthem, “Hatikvah”; and the Partisan anthem, “Zog nisht keynmol.”

Table 6

Undzer gezang (1947)

(non-Shoah repertoire omitted from tabulation)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
Himnen un arbets-lider					
1	Zog nisht keynmol	w: Hirsh Glik m: <i>Dmitri & Daniel Pokrass</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	3/361
Partizaner-lider					
2	S'brent	w, m: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków		330/424
3	Tsayt-lid	w: Nakhum Yud m: Elye Taytelboym	<i>Vilna</i>		*
4	Dort baym breg fun veldl	w: Unknown m: Leon Wajner i: I. Yashuner			338
5	Varshe	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: Leon Wajner	Naroch forest	1944	313/422
6	Itsik vitnberg	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: <i>Matvey Blanter</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	341/426
7	Partizaner-libe	w: Yosl Kutler m: Elye Taytelboym	<i>Vilna</i>		*
8	Tsu eyns, tsvey, dray	w: Leyb Rozental m: <i>Hanns Eisler</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	343/426
9	Yugnt himn	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: Basye Rubin	Vilna ghetto		325/427
10	Troyer past nisht undzer ponim	w: Itsik Fefer m: Elye Taytelboym	<i>Vilna</i>		*
11	Nits'ada be-On (Shir ha-Brigada)	w: B. Rothman m: Daniel Sambursky			*
12	Yid, du partizaner	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: <i>Leonid Bakalov</i>	Naroch forest		351/428
13	Shtil, di nakht iz oysgeshternt	w: Hirsh Glik m: unknown	Vilna ghetto	1942	348/428
14	Partizaner-marsh	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: <i>Hanns Eisler</i>	Partisan forest near Vilna	1943	345/416
15	Es shlogt di sho	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown	Vilna ghetto	1943	354/429
16	Unter dayne vayse shtern	w: Avrom Sutzkever m: Avreml Brudno	Vilna ghetto	1943	74/380
Geto-lider					
17	Shtiler, shtiler	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: A. Wolkowiski	Vilna ghetto	1943	88/385

Table 6 continued

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
18	Yisrolik	w: Leyb Rozental m: <i>Misha Veksler (erroneously as "Nine Gershtayn")</i>	Vilna ghetto	1942	106/389
19	A yidish kind	w: Khane Kheytn m: <i>Henech Kon</i>	Shavli (Šiauliai) ghetto	1943	95/386
20	Makh tsu di eygelekh	w: Isaiah Spiegel m: Dovid Baygelman	Lodz ghetto		92/388
21	Dos elnte kind	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: Yankl Krimski	Vilna ghetto	1941	90/386
22	Dremln feygl oyf di tsvaygn	w: Leah Rudnitski m: <i>Leyb Yampolski</i>	Vilna ghetto		87/387
23	Froyen	w: Kasriel Broydo m: <i>Volf Durmarshkin</i>	Vilna ghetto		48/371
24	Es vet zikh fun tsvaygl tseblien a boym	w: Kasriel Broydo m: <i>Yankl Trupianski</i>	Vilna ghetto	1942	28/368
25	Friling	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: Avreml Brudno	Vilna ghetto	1943	70/379
26	Mir trinkn mitn toyt l'khayim	w: Helene Grin m: Yiddish folk song	Janowa camp		257/411 [L'khayim mitn toyt]
27	Bombes	w: L. Buzhanski m: <i>Pavel Armand</i>	Vilna ghetto	1942	27/267
28	Rivkele di shabesdike	w: Pesakh Kaplan m: <i>unknown ("Kegn gold fun zun")</i> i: Dora Rubin	Bialystok ghetto	1941	58/382
29	Tsum roytarmayer	w: Pesakh Binetski m: S. Grinfeld			*

7. *Dos gezang fun vilner geto* (The Song of Vilna Ghetto)

Kaczerginski's *Dos gezang fun vilner geto* (The Song of Vilna Ghetto) appeared in Paris in 1947 under the imprint of the Vilna Association of France. In contrast to the earlier anthologies (as well as to the impending *Lider fun di getos un lagern*), *Dos gezang* is a stylishly designed keepsake, featuring distinctive typography, carefully calligraphed scores, and original

artwork by a noted Parisian illustrator, Moyshe (Mayshe) Bahelfer (1908-1995).⁸⁷ As with each previous anthology, an introductory note marks the publication as historically significant and the fulfillment of a mission; in this instance, Vilna Association Vice-Chairman N. Faynshtayn reflects as well on the singular nature of these songs, which he places in a category “beyond criticism”:

In publishing this volume the Vilna Association of France lays a brick upon the foundation of a future edifice that will faithfully perpetuate the memory of those murdered and martyred in Vilna.... [In this book]we have songs created and sung in the face of death, in the clutches of the Germans, by known and unknown sons and daughters of our people. With their final breath they sang of ideas and emotions that would not vanish into thin air as a final agonized cry or groan, but instead remain as evidence perpetuated in the form of songs. These songs, whatever their lesser or greater artistic worth, are first and foremost a historical narrative, the spiritual inheritance of a tragically destroyed generation that shall again bear fruit in another era, despite the annihilation of its most important centers, its progeny and cultural treasures. (Kaczerginski 1947a: unnumbered page 5)

Excepting three works of poetry and the prewar popular song “Vilne” (Vilna), all thirty-six items printed in *Dos gezang fun vilner geto* would reappear in Kaczerginski's later anthology, sometimes in variant form.⁸⁸ As might be expected, editorial procedures remain consistent between Kaczerginski's three near-concurrent projects (*Undzer gezang*; *Dos gezang fun vilner geto*; *Lider fun di getos un lagern*), with lyricist, composer and informant credits provided when known, and remarks, if any, on personalities, localities, and topical references given in smaller typeface toward the page bottom. But in an endnote to this volume devoted exclusively to his native Vilna, Kaczerginski does allow that the songs had been collected by him, personally, and

⁸⁷ That the book was intended as a souvenir is affirmed by a notice on the publication page that seventy and thirty numbered copies, respectively, had been printed on two types of special paper.

⁸⁸ The poems were Sutzkever's *Di lereyin mire* (The Teacher, Mira) and *Strashun-gas tsvelf* (Twelve Strashun Street), and the anonymous *Sonie modaysker* (Sonia Modaisker).

expresses regret that, due to technical difficulties, he had been obliged to omit the music to several pieces (Kacerginski 1947a: unnumbered page 55).⁸⁹

⁸⁹ Kacerginski credits Dr. Ada Eber-Friedman, Dora Pupko and David Botwinik for notating the book's melodies. "Technical difficulties" likely included press deadlines and postwar paper shortages. Kacerginski would soon reprint (and comment on) his preface to *Dos gezang fun vilner geto* in the introduction to *Lider fun di getos un lagern* (1948).

ווילנע

מזיק: א. אלשאנעצקי מערקט: ל. וואלפסאן

נאות-תמי און גיטט פון מאמט נא - וויל

נאמא-וואגא וואו עס טאט ווי אַרמא-מאפּ פאר לעך-דיש-ווי נא - וויל

אין דיר אין-יע וואל-אפט טאט דער אין לען-תפּ לע-שוני טנס-שא

פּוּן נע - אוי און - און - אב - גע - טאט טום - ווי

שוּן קן-די-פל - נע איד אין טא-גע נער-וויל טע-אל די און

טוּמא-היים דער-און נא - וויל נע - וויל

אט אפט ווי אַך גער-בא און קשאפט-בען דער-און

טרע א רויס - א אונג טמן פון ווען-נא דין רופט

און באַרג דער-פעל נער-וויל כן - ווי נער-וויל לעך - געט נער-וויל

טאג א פון טן-א: די נאך זיך ברוקט פּעט-ע יעט-נא פּעט-ע טאג

Figure 18. The Yiddish-American nostalgia song “Vilne” (Vilna), by A. L. Wolfson and A. Olshanetsky (New York, 1935), became one of the most popular songs in Vilna ghetto. Ghetto version from *Dos gezang fun vilner geto*.

Table 7

Dos gezang fun vilner geto (1947)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
1	S'iz geven a zumertog	w: Rikle Glezer m: <i>Herman Yablokoff</i>	Vilna ghetto	1941	7/366 (Es iz geven a zumertog)
2	Farvos iz di himl	w: Leyb Opeskin m: <i>Viktor Belyi</i>	Vilna ghetto		78/382
3	Aroys iz in vilne a nayer bafel	w: unknown m: <i>A. Gurilev</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	32/363
4	Vilne	w: A.L. Wolfson m: A. Olshanetsky	<i>published in New York</i>	[1935]	*
5	Geto [text only]	w: Kasriel Broydo m: Misha Veksler	Vilna ghetto		6/362
6	Es benkt zikh, es benkt	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown	Vilna ghetto	1942	63/376
7	Friling	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: Avreml Brudno	Vilna ghetto	1943	70/379
8	Ikh benk aheym	w: Leyb Rozental m: unknown	Vilna ghetto		84/383
9	Di zelbe gasn	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown	Vilna ghetto		16/365 (Tsi darf es azoy zayn?)
10	Bombes [text only]	w: L. Buzhanski m: <i>Pavel Armand</i> trans. fr. Russian: Sh. Kaczerginski	Vilna ghetto	1942	27/267
11	Hot zikh mir di shikh tserisn [text only]	w: unknown m: <i>folk song ("In rod arayn")</i> i: Sheyne Bezdanski	Vilna ghetto		205/404
12	Peshe fun reshe [text only]	w: Leyb Rozental m: <i>Misha Veksler</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	158/399
13	Az a libe shpilm [text only]	w: Leyb Rozental m: unknown	Vilna ghetto	1942	200/404
14	Du geto mayn! [text only]	w: Rikle Glezer m: <i>Dmitri & Daniel Pokrass</i>	Vilna ghetto		151/396
15	Yisrolik [text only]	w: Leyb Rozental m: <i>Misha Veksler (erroneously as "Nine Gershtayn")</i>	Vilna ghetto	1942	107/389
16	Di lererin mire (poem)	w: Avrom Sutzkever	Vilna ghetto	1943	*
17	Der transport yingl	w: Kasriel Broydo m: <i>Misha Veksler</i> i: Dora Rubin	Vilna ghetto	1942	114/391 (Dos transport yingl)
18	Fun kolkhoz bin ikh	w: Leyb Opeskin m: Misha Veksler	Vilna ghetto		112/390
19	Dos elnte kind	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: Yankl Krimski	Vilna ghetto	1941	90/386

Table 7 continued

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
20	Vig-lid	w: Leah Rudnitski m: <i>Leyb Yampolski</i>	Vilna ghetto		87/387 (Dremen feygl oyf di tsvaygn)
21	Shtiler...	w: Sh. Kacerginski m: A. Wolkowski	Vilna ghetto	1943	88/385 (Shtiler, shtiler)
22	Froyen	w: Kasriel Broydo m: <i>V. Durmashkin</i>	Vilna ghetto		48/371
23	Shotns [text only]	w: Leyb Rozental m: unknown	Vilna ghetto		50 [text only]
24	Unter dayne vayse shtern	w: Avrom Sutzkever m: Aveml Brudno	Vilna ghetto	1943	74/380
25	Strashun-gas tsvelf (poem)	w: Avrom Sutzkever	Naroch forest	?1944	*
26	Es vet zikh fun tsvaygl tseblen a boym	w: Kasriel Broydo m: <i>Y. Trupianski</i>	Vilna ghetto	1942	28/368
27	Tsu eyns, tsvey, dray [text only]	w: Leyb Rozental m: <i>Hanns Eisler</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	343/426
28	Yugnt-himn	w: Sh. Kacerginski m: Basye Rubin	Vilna ghetto	1943	325/427
29	Itsik vitnberg	w: Sh. Kacerginski m: <i>Matvey Blanter</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	341/426
30	Sonie modaysker (poem)	w: unknown			*
31	Partizaner-marsh	w: Sh. Kacerginski m: <i>Hanns Eisler</i>	Partisan forest near Vilna	1943	345/416
32	Partizaner-lid	w: Hirsh Glik m: unknown	Vilna ghetto	1942	348/428 (Shtil, di nakht iz oysgeshternt)
33	Dos zangl [text only]	w: Hirsh Glik m: unknown	forest near Riešė, Lithuania	1943	349/429
34	Tsum besern morgn	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown	Vilna ghetto	1943	350/430
35	Yid, du partizaner	w: Sh. Kacerginski m: <i>Leonid Bakalov</i>	Naroch forest	?1944	351/428
36	Es shlogt di sho	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown	Vilna ghetto	1943	354/429
37	Zog nit keynmol	w: Hirsh Glik m: <i>Dmitri & Daniel Pokrass</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	3/361

8. *Zog nisht keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg* (Never Say That You Have Reached the Final Road)

Kaczerginski quite possibly also contributed to a third songbook published—like *Undzer gezang*, without author or editor credit—in 1947: *Zog nisht keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg* (Never Say That You Have Reached the Final Road).⁹⁰ Subtitled “a song collection for youth on the fourth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising,” this booklet (seven songs only) shows close kinship to the Kaczerginski-curated sections of *Undzer gezang*: the five songs in common (including two by Kaczerginski) were clearly pressed from the same plates (and even reproduce the same printing errors), and the sole song to bear an editorial remark, Kaczerginski’s “Yugnt-himn,” is glossed identically in both publications.⁹¹ And although the book’s title song, by Vilna partisan-poet Hirsh Glik, was inspired by the Warsaw uprising, and despite its stated purpose to pay tribute to this event, Vilna repertoire again prevails. Likewise, two songs unique to this collection, “Osygeshelt in glaykhe rayen” (Lined Up In Identical Rows) by Khaim Mekler and “Tsu lehakhes take zey” (If Only Just to Spite Them) by Hirsh Osherovitsh, were the work of authors associated with Vilna and Kovno, respectively, not Warsaw.

⁹⁰ Published in Warsaw, the book title reflects the central Yiddish dialectal variant “*nisht*” (not), rather than Kaczerginski’s preferred Lithuanian Yiddish pronunciation, “*nit*.”

⁹¹ See, for example, the identically misplaced key signatures in Wajner 1947: 73 and *Zog nisht keynmol*: 14.



Figure 19. “Oysgeshtelt in glykhe rayen” (Lined Up In Identical Rows) by Khaim Mekler. Unique song from *Zog nisht keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg* (1947).

Table 8

Zog nisht keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg (1947)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
1	Zog nisht keynmol	w: Hirsh Glik m: Dmitri & Daniel Pokrass	Vilna ghetto	1943	3/361
2	Yid, du partizaner	w: Sh. Kacerginski m: Leonid Bakalov	Vilna ghetto	1943	351/428
3	Es shlogt di sho	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown	Vilna ghetto	1942	354/429
4	Oysgeshtelt in glykhe rayen	w: Kh. Mekler m: unknown			*
5	Yugnt-himn	w: Sh. Kacerginski m: Basye Rubin	Vilna ghetto	1943	325/427
6	Troyer past nisht undzer ponim	w: Itsik Fefer m: Elye Taytelboym	Vilna		*
7	Tsu lehakhes take zey [text only]	w: Hirsh Osherovitch			*

9. *Umkum fun der yidisher kovne* (Destruction of Jewish Kovno)

Mention should also be made of two interrelated publications that, while not devoted exclusively to songs, nonetheless document important Shoah song repertoire. The first, published in Munich in 1948 (as a 400-plus page special edition of the DP [Displaced Persons] newspaper *Undzer veg*), is *Umkum fun der yidisher kovne* (Destruction of Jewish Kovno) by Joseph Gar. (The second related publication, by Israel Kaplan, is discussed immediately below.) A teacher and historian who survived both the Kovno and Riga ghettos, Gar (1905-1989) supplemented his in-depth examination of the ghetto's cultural climate with a section of "*Mustern fun geto-folklore*" (examples of ghetto folklore) featuring nine exemplary songs.⁹² All but one of these pieces appeared in print that same year (1948) in Kacerginski's *Lider fun di getos un lagern*; yet Gar's study remains the sole source for the melodies to two of these.⁹³ Gar also helpfully defines elements of ghetto jargon in the lyrics, both in his commentaries to individual songs and within the supplement's second part, "*Folks-vertlekh, vitsn un der glaykh*" (Folk-sayings, Jokes and the Like).

⁹² For a discussion of Gar's book, see Berman 1998: 102-103.

⁹³ Kacerginski (1948a) in turn provides melodies to two text-only songs in Gar's selection: "Yidishe brigades" (Jewish Brigades) and "Baym geto toyerl" (By the Ghetto Gate).

ס'איז שוין באלד א יאר אָוועק ...

The musical score consists of four staves of music in a single system. The melody is written on a treble clef staff with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The lyrics are written in Yiddish script below the notes. The lyrics are:
שמוען פון טאג אין טאג פון טאג אין טאג - א ליבליכע פאלק פון ערלייג
אין א שטאט וואס קען איר אירע פאלק פארשטאנדן
אין א שטאט וואס קען איר אירע פאלק פארשטאנדן
אין א שטאט וואס קען איר אירע פאלק פארשטאנדן

Figure 20. Excerpt from “S’iz shoybn bald a yor avek”(A Year Gone By Already), unique song from *Umkum fun der yidisher kovne* (1948).The melody was adapted from a prewar theater song, “Der neger dzhim” (The Negro Jim), by Henech Kon.

Table 9

Umkum fun der yidisher kovne (1948)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
1	S'iz shoy bald a yor avek	w: unknown m: <i>Henech Kon</i>	Kovno ghetto	1942	*
2	Yidishe brigades [text only]	w: Avrom Akselrod m: Polish march, "My, Pierwsza Brygada"	Kovno ghetto	1941	320/423
3	Der aerodromshtshik	w: Avrom Cypkin m: <i>Alexander Gurilev</i>	Kovno ghetto	1942	308 [Tsores un layd]
4	Baym geto-toyerl [text only]	w: Avrom Akselrod m: <i>Mark Warshawski</i>	Kovno ghetto	1941	155/394 (Fun der arbet)
5	Der komitetshik	w: Nosn Markovski m: <i>Isaak Dunaevskii</i>	Kovno ghetto	1942	192 [text only]
6	Yales	w: Avrom Akselrod m: folk song, "Tum Balalaika"	Kovno ghetto	1942	161/394 (Zog mir, du geto yidl)
7	Nit ayer mazl	w, m: Shaul Shenker	Kovno ghetto	1942	163/398
8	Hoykher man!	w: Nosn Markovski m: <i>Isaak Dunaevskii</i>	Kovno ghetto	1942	186/403 (Vegn lurien)
9	Yidish tango	w: Reuven Tsarfat m: <i>Henech Kon</i>	Kovno ghetto		206/405

10. Fun letstn khurbn (From the Last Extermination)

The educator and historian Israel Kaplan (1902-2003), who, like his colleague Joseph Gar, survived both the Kovno and Riga ghettos, was likewise obsessed with documenting and publishing evidence of Nazi crimes. Kaplan's work was the more comprehensive. Instrumental in establishing, in December 1945, the Central Historical Commission of the Central Committee of the Liberated Jews in the U.S. Zone of Germany, he tirelessly solicited artifacts from survivors in DP settlements throughout Germany. The call for objects of historical value, however, met an apathetic response from the materially bereft community, and Kaplan, grasping that "the only treasure [survivors] possessed...was their memory," soon shifted focus to the

gathering of testimony for the Commission's archive, in Munich (*Wiener Library Bulletin* 1958: 17).⁹⁴

Kaplan also founded and edited the official journal of the Central Historical Commission, *Fun letstn khurbn* (From the Last Extermination).⁹⁵ Ten issues appeared between 1946 and 1948, when the Commission was dissolved; each included testimony, photographs and documents from the Commission's archives, and reports on its collecting activities. Convinced that folklore constituted a valid form of historical documentation, Kaplan began collecting ghetto and camp jargon, proverbs and even jokes while still imprisoned at Dachau. His monograph, "Dos folks-moyl in natsi-klem" (Folk-expression within the Nazi Vise), appeared in the first issue of *Fun letstn khurbn*, and the poetry and songs Kaplan had sought for the Commission's archive would feature in every issue of the journal.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ According to this same article, the Central Historical Commission succeeded in collecting over 2,500 eyewitness accounts during its three years of existence.

⁹⁵ The title word "last" (here suggesting "most recent") is a reference to recurrent calamities in Jewish history, beginning with the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem by the Neo-Babylonians, ca. 586 BCE. Before the terms "Shoah" and "Holocaust" entered common usage, Yiddish writers referred to the Nazi epoch as "dem drith khurbn" ("the third destruction" or "catastrophe"). On this nomenclature, see Roskies 1984: 41; and Roskies 1988: 3-10; 19-21.

⁹⁶ Kaplan separately published the article in book form as *Dos folks-moyl in natsi-klem: reydenishn in geto un katset* (Kaplan 1949). For a discussion of Kaplan's folklore collecting efforts in Dachau and the DP camps, see Schwarz 1952: 78; 136-138; and Mankowitz 2002: 219. That Kaplan at one point intended to publish a selection of songs from the Central Historical Commission archives might be inferred from an interoffice memorandum drafted by American Joint Distribution Committee director Leo W. Schwarz on December 20, 1946. Headed "SCHEDULE OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE CENTRAL HISTORICAL COMMISSION IN ADDITION TO MONTHLY JOURNAL," the memo (essentially a caveat about anticipated paper requisitions) reads, in part: "[item] 2. Collection of Concentration Camp Songs, 200 pp. Desired edition: 20,000" (Schwarz 1946).

זינג אויס און פאראייביג דיין געטא!

קום אין צ. ת. ק. און גיב איבער אויף פאטעפאן - פלאטן די
געטא- און קאצעט-לידער, וואס דו קענסט. ז מינוט דויערע עס.

איבער א וועלט וועלן די פלאטן דעמאנסטרירט ווערן. די יווא-
אויסשטעלונג אין ניו-יאָרק וואָרט אויף זיי. —

מער פון אלץ פארדינט עס נאך דער כבוד און אַנדענק פון דיין
געטאָ קום, לאָז זיך ניט בעטן

אונזער אָדרעס:

Central Historical Commission at the Central Committee of Liberated
Jews in the American Zone of Occupation in Germany, Munich,
Möhlstr. 12a.

Figure 21. "SING OUT AND COMMEMORATE YOUR GHETTO!" Come to the Central Historical Committee and record onto 'Pathé-phone' disk the ghetto and concentration camp songs that you recall. These disks can record 7 minutes. These disks will be demonstrated around the globe. The YIVO exhibition in New York awaits them. This, more than anything, serves to honor the memory of your ghetto! Come, don't make us beg you!" Solicitation for ghetto and camp songs for the Archives of the Central Historical Commission (Kaplan 1946: 67).

In total, Kaplan published twenty-four poems and songs (all but one without melody) in *Fun letstn khurbn*. His selections demonstrate a certain hometown bias—fifteen pieces originated in Kovno—yet there is little overlap with the repertoire published by Gar, and several pieces printed in the journal are unique. Kaplan's greatest legacy, however, lies in his creation of an archive of sound recordings that preserved survivors' voices and songs within months of

their liberation. This collection of over 200 recordings, now housed at Yad Vashem, Israel, has yet to receive the intensive study its compiler believed it would merit.⁹⁷

זאמאָשטשער קאַזערנירטע

מחבר — אימבאקאנט
זאמאָשטש, 1940

I

אין שטאָט זענען דאָ מענטשן וועלכע זאָגן
אז מיר זענען נישט שלעכט אויס:
זאָלן זיי קומען צו אונז אין לאַגער
וועט זיי פון שרעק די נשמה ארויס.
רעפּרײן: האָפּ, האָפּ, צום אוי
פליען די פליי אויפן שטרוי (2 טאַל)

II

דער יוד־ראַט זאָגט אונזערע עלטערן
אז מיר האָבן גענוג כּרויט:
זאָלן זיי קומען צו אונז אין לאַגער
וועלן זיי בעטן אויף זיך דעם מײַט.
רעפּרײן ...

III

מיר ארבעטן א נאכען טאג
מיר ווערן געיאָגט און געפּלאָגט
ישׂער סאָוועט וואָס האָט נאָר אַ האַנט
הייסט אונז זינגען און ער שלאָגט.
רעפּרײן ...

IV

ס'וואָלט שוין געווען די העכסטע צייט
מיר זאָלן ארבעטן בײַ אונז אין לאַגער:
נאָר בעסער וואָלט געווען
ווען יאָסקע איז נישט אונזער קאָמענדאַנט.
רעפּרײן ...

איבערגעגעבן: יקותיאל צוויליך (צ.ת.ס. 229)

Figure 22. “Zamoshtsher kazernirte” (Zamość Prisoners), composer unknown (Central Historical Commission Archive entry no. 229). Unique song published in *Fun letstn khurbn* (Kaplan 1947:77-78 [pages combined for space]). An editorial remark notes that it is to be sung to melody of the Yiddish folk song “Oyfn boydem ligt der dakh” (Upon the Attic Lies the Roof).

⁹⁷ By its own reckoning, the Commission transcribed onto paper or recorded to phonodisc a total of 284 songs and poems (see Kaplan 1948: 164); see also *Wiener Library Bulletin* 1949: 15.

Table 10

Fun letstn khurbn (1946-48)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
Nr. 1 (August 1946)					
1	Shpere (poem)	w: Hershele Joachimowicz	Łódź ghetto	1942	*
2	Undzer lebn [text only]	w: Avrom Cypkin m: <i>Alexander Gurilev</i>	Kovno ghetto	1942	308/418 ("Tsores un layd")
3	Maystas [text only]	w: Avrom Cypkin m: <i>Isaak Dunaevskii</i>	Kovno ghetto	1942	183 [text only]
Nr. 2 (September 1946)					
4	Lomir shvaygn [text only]	w: <i>Leyb Rozental</i> m: <i>Volf Durmashkin</i>	Klooga Camp, Estonia	1943	248 [text only; attrib. to Hirsh Glik]
5	Geto dires [text only]	w, m: unknown	Kovno ghetto		*
Nr. 3 (October-November 1946)					
6	Vigliid [text only]	w, m: unknown i: Eliahu Drayshpul	Kovno ghetto		100 [text only] ("Shlof mayn zun mayn kleyner")
7	Lodzer geto [text only]	w: Yonatan Karp m: <i>medley of popular tunes</i>	Łódź ghetto		*
Nr. 4 (March 1947)					
8	Vigliid	w: unknown m: <i>folk song</i> i: Basie Prusak	Oshmene (Ašmiany) ghetto		122/390 ("Her mayn kind, vi vintn brumen")
9	"Bune" [text only]	w: Goldman m: unknown i: Mayer Levental	Auschwitz camp		*
Nr. 5 (May 1947)					
10	Mame, gib a brokhe! [text only]	w, m: unknown	Bochnia ghetto		208 [text only] ("Gib a brokhe tsu dayn kind")
11	Oy, kartofl! [text only]	w: Hersh Albus m: unknown	Łódź ghetto	1943	*

Table 10 continued

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
Nr. 6 (August 1947)					
12	Zamoshtsher kazernirte [text only]	w: unknown m: folk song, “Oyfn boydem ligt der dakh” i: Yekutiel Tsvilikh	Zamość	1940	
13	Di bone [text only] ⁹⁸	w, m: unknown i: Moshe Glazer	Warsaw ghetto		*
Nr. 7 (May 1948)					
14	Yidishe brigades [text only]	w: Avrom Akselrod m: “ <i>My, Pierwsza Brygada</i> ” i: Sholem Kaplan; Mikhl Kaplan	Kovno ghetto	1941	320/423
15	Baym geto-toyerl [text only]	w: Avrom Akselrod m: <i>Mark Warshawski</i> i: Sholem Kaplan; Mikhl Kaplan	Kovno ghetto	1941	155/394 (“Fun der arbet”)
16	Shantser lager [text only]	w: Avraham Hayman m: unknown i: Sholem Kaplan; Mikhl Kaplan	Kovno, Aleksot camp	1944	*
17	An alte yidene klapt in tir [text only]	w, m: unknown i: Sholem Kaplan; Mikhl Kaplan	Kovno ghetto		*
Nr. 8 (June 1948)					
18	Nit ayer mazl [text only]	w, m: Shaul Shenker i: Sholem Kaplan; Mikhl Kaplan	Kovno ghetto	1942	163/398
19	Der aero- dromshtshik [text only]	w: unknown m: <i>Isaak Dunaevskii</i> i: Sholem Kaplan; Mikhl Kaplan	Kovno ghetto		*
20	Der komitetshik [text only]	w: Nosn Markovski m: <i>Isaak Dunaevskii</i> i: Sholem Kaplan; Mikhl Kaplan	Kovno ghetto	1942	192 [text only]
Nr. 9 (September 1948)					
21	Brigades (poem)	w: Rokhl Salkia i: Rokhl Salkia	Kovno ghetto		*
Nr. 10 (December 1948)					
22	Di groyse aktsie (poem)	w: Sime Yashunski i: Leyzer Volpe	Kovno ghetto	1941	
23	Litvishe partizaner [text only]	w, m: unknown i: Sholem Kaplan; Mikhl Kaplan	Kovno ghetto		*
24	Mir zaynen yidn bay dem drot [text only]	w, m: unknown i: Sholem Kaplan; Mikhl Kaplan	Kovno ghetto		*

⁹⁸ No score to “Di bone” has surfaced, but a performance of the song is featured in the Yiddish-language Polish “semi-documentary” film *Undzere kinder* (Our Children) (1947-1948).

11. *Songs of the Concentration Camps from the Repertoire of Emma Schaver*

The year 1948 also saw the publication of *Songs of the Concentration Camps from the Repertoire of Emma Schaver*, significant as the first Shoah songbook intended for performers, rather than historians, folklorists or the survivor community. Emma Lazarus Schaver (1905-2003), a Detroit-based operatic soprano, had been among the first American entertainers to visit the German DP camps, in 1946; the following year she became the first to release a commercial recording of ghetto and camp songs.⁹⁹ She compiled her slender song anthology—only four songs—from repertoire acquired during her tour (Schaver 1948). Designed for practical use by concert and home recitalists, the book is laid out sheet music style, with each melody arranged for voice and piano by Lazar Weiner (1897-1982), a noted choir director and composer of Yiddish art songs.

Alone of the volumes surveyed, *Songs of the Concentration Camps* consists entirely of pieces already in print; also uniquely, it includes no mission statement on martyrology or memorialization.¹⁰⁰ Instead, Schaver offers a contextless quartet of songs themed to ideals of faith, optimism or resistance, and furnished with singable lyrics in English and Hebrew, alongside the original Yiddish texts. Published in the United States by authors lacking firsthand knowledge of the catastrophe, the collection presents an outsider's perspective on the repertoire. Its subtext is clear: the audience for such songs, while honoring its past, must move on to vital,

⁹⁹ Schaver and Sébastien 1947. The following songs appear on the album: “Kaddish”; “Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg”; “Es brent”; “Tsu eyns, tsvey, dray”; “Yugent-himn”; “Ani maamin.” See also Schaver 1948.

¹⁰⁰ The book itself bears a dedication to the memory of a member of Schaver's family who had perished in the Warsaw ghetto.

new concerns. A brief notice at the book's very end makes plain this agenda: "All profits of this publication will be used for cultural purposes in Israel" (Schaver and Weiner 1948: 13).

The image displays a piano-voice arrangement of the Hebrew prayer "Ani Maamin" by Lazar Weiner. The score is written in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Be-vi-as ha-mo-shi-ach. A-ni ma-min, A-ni ma-min, Ve-af al pi she-it-mah-mei-ha im kol zeh A-ni ma-min. A-ni ma-min, A-ni ma-min." The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and a more active treble line with chords and melodic fragments. Performance markings include *f*, *ff*, and *appassionato e poco accel*.

Figure 23. "Ani Maamin" (excerpt), piano-voice arrangement by Lazar Weiner. From *Songs of the Concentration Camps from the Repertoire of Emma Schaver* (1948).

Table 11

Songs of the Concentration Camps (1948)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
1	Ani Maamin / I Believe	[w: after Maimonides] [m: Azriel David Fastag]	Warsaw ghetto		314/422 (Varshever geto- lid fun frumer yidn)
2	Es brent, briderlekh, es brent / It's Burning, Brother, It's Aflame	w, m: Mordechai Gebirtig	Kraków	ca. 1938	330/424
3	Tsu eyns, tsvey, dray / To One, Two, Three	w: Leyb Rozental [m: Hanns Eisler]	Vilna ghetto	1943	343/426
4	Zog nit keynmol / Hymn of the Partisans	w: Hirsh Glik [m: Dmitri & Daniel Pokrass]	Vilna ghetto	1943	3/361

12. *Min Hametzar: me-shirei ha-getaot* (“In Distress”: Songs of the Ghettos)

Min Hametzar: me-shirei ha-getaot (“In Distress”: Songs of the Ghettos), the first Shoah songbook published in Israel, appeared in 1949, within a year of Schaver’s bequest and the emergence of the independent Jewish state. Conceived by Ernst Hurwitz (1914-1996), a pianist and choir director who had fled Germany for Palestine in 1934, the book was among the first issued by the fledgling cultural division of the Israel Labor Federation.¹⁰¹ *Min Hametzar* is significant both for its musical revelations and as a reflection of an ongoing nationalist discourse. Hurwitz, like Schaver, presumed a readership that had forsaken Europe for a fresh start elsewhere, and like Schaver’s book, *Min Hametzar* asserts its Zionist posture through language choice. But while Schaver supplies singable lyrics in Yiddish and English as well as Hebrew,

¹⁰¹ Hurwitz (the name occasionally appears as Ernst or Ernest Hurwitz, Hurvits, or Horowitz) was assisted by Efraim Dror (also known as Ephraim Troche), a professional translator responsible for rendering the original lyrics into singable Hebrew. The revised second edition (Hurwitz, Adema and Abn-Shushan 1987) adds fifteen new songs and drops two, but otherwise incorporates the contents of the earlier edition (refurbished, however, with new arrangements). I am very grateful to my colleague Daniel Neumann for translating Hurwitz’s introductory essay.

Hurwitz, acknowledging Hebrew's resurrection as a modern, national language, underlays his melodies in unromanized Hebrew translation only, consigning the original Yiddish texts to an appendix.

Hurwitz also resembles Schaver in his objective “primarily to revive [the repertoire] from a practical point of view and not for folklore”; that is, to create a performing edition (Hurwitz 1949: 6). As such, the book features, in addition to lead-sheet arrangements, several piano-vocal scores and a pair of choral settings. *Min Hametzar* is structured like a narrative, albeit from an Israeli nationalist perspective. Following an introductory set of “anthems” representing ghetto religious, partisan, and youth groups, the songbook's contents fall into sections that progressively unfold the Jewish wartime experience, from victimization and ghetto life (sections 1-2), to rejection of passivity and the status quo (sections 3-4), to resistance, heroism and martyrdom (sections 5-6).

Although familiar with the publications of both Ayzman and Feder, Hurwitz diligently sought out new informants for variant readings and fresh material in order to secure or synthesize the best performing version of a given song.¹⁰² The greater part of his collecting took place in Cyprus, where, beginning in September 1947, he had been recruited to work as an aid-provider to Holocaust survivors and Jewish refugees detained at the island's several British-supervised internment camps (Parag 2010).¹⁰³ The atypical collecting environment notwithstanding, Vilna

¹⁰² “Only comparing the various versions enabled me the selection of the proper version for this book” (Hurwitz 1949: 4). Fifteen of 31 songs in Hurwitz are also found in Ayzman 1945 and Feder 1946. Another point in common with Ayzman is the biblical derivation of its title: Hurwitz's source is Psalm 118, verse 5: “I called upon the Lord in distress” (King James Version).

¹⁰³ Hurwitz returned to Palestine at the outbreak of Israel's War of Independence, in May 1948. I am grateful to Hurwitz's daughter, Hava Parag, for sending details on his life and work (Parag 2010).

repertoire again dominates the music selections.¹⁰⁴ Hurwitz himself took note of this seeming paradox, explaining in his preface:

It is not due to coincidence or lack of research that the Vilna song consumes so much space. Vilna...was the “Jerusalem of Lithuania,” where every occurrence immediately found literary and artistic expression. There they had the suitable tools—orchestras, choirs, theaters, competitions: everything needed to foster and promote [artistic] creation (Hurwitz 1949: 5).



Figure 24. “Torf-lid” (Peat Song), from *Min Hametzar*, the sole source for the melody to this song. It is revealed to be a parody of the popular Polish foxtrot “Nikodem” (1933), composed by Henryk Wars.

Kaczerginski’s work was of course another, although less direct, influence. In his preface, Hurwitz remarks that his copy of *Lider fun di getos un lagern* (1948) arrived from New York too late to affect the contents of his book. However, he did incorporate into his prefatory

¹⁰⁴ Apart from Vilna, Baltic locales represented include Šiauliai (Yid., Shavli), Švenčionys (Yid., Sventsion) and Riešė (Yid., Reshe) in Lithuania, and the Kaiserwald and Dünawerk camps in Latvia. In this context one might note that Hurwitz’s birthplace was the Baltic seaport of Königsberg (presently Kaliningrad, Russia) and that he had lived at a Zionist youth camp near Riga in preparation for his departure to Palestine (Fetthauer 2010).

section parts of Kaczerginski's introductory essay to *Dos gezang fun vilner geto* (translated to Hebrew and duly credited) to better contextualize the selections in *Min Hamtezar*. Hurwitz also tellingly notes that the purposes of Kaczerginski's book and his own were "totally different":

We are in a new era. The State [of Israel] came into being and its establishment inspired many impressions in the nation, above all in its youth. Their experiences differ profoundly from those expressed in the ghetto songs, even from those expressed in the songs of the fighting partisans. What do these songs say to us now? Their content grows more foreign with each passing day. We have become more "normal," a nation among nations, a state among states. And young people in Israel do not deeply identify with a diaspora [culture] that was destroyed. What lends value to some of these songs is their musical form, and it seems possible to revive them today if we can provide the proper musical settings. By opening our eyes to the musical culture of our people in the diaspora, we can be enriched with remarkable popular and cultural assets. And this we need very much! (Hurwitz 1949: 3)

Table 12

Min Hametzar (1949)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INF ³ T	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
1	Ani maamin	w: <i>after Maimonides</i> m: <i>Azriel David Fastag</i>	Warsaw ghetto		314/422 (Varshever geto-lid fun frumer yidn)
2	Zog nit keynmol	w: Hirsh Glik m: <i>Dmitri & Daniel Pokrass</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	3/361
3	Yugnt-himn	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: Basye Rubin	Vilna ghetto		325/427
Es iz geven a zumertog					
4	Es iz geven a zumertog	w: Rikle Glezer m: <i>Herman Yablokoff</i>	Vilna ghetto	1941	7/366
5	Dos transport yingl	w: Kasriel Broydo m: <i>Misha Veksler</i> i: Dora Rubin	Vilna ghetto	1942	114/391
6	Rivkele di shabesdike	w: Pesakh Kaplan m: <i>unknown</i> (“ <i>Kegn gold fun zun</i> ”)	Bialystok ghetto	1941	58/382
7	Dremlen feygl oyf di tsvaygn	w: Leah Rudnitski m: <i>Leyb Yampolski</i>	Vilna ghetto		87/387
8	Hot zikh mir di shikh tserisn	w: <i>unknown</i> m: <i>folk song</i> (“ <i>In rod arayn</i> ”)	Vilna ghetto		205/404
9	Damua dovey	w, m: <i>unknown</i>			*
10	Shotns	w, m: <i>unknown</i>	Kaiserwald		*
Kh'vil tsaytn andere					
11	Kh'vil tsaytn andere	w: Rivke Bosman m: <i>unknown</i>	Riga woman's camp	1943	137 (text only; attrib. to Kasriel Broydo)
12	Tsi mus es azoy zayn?	w: Kasriel Broydo m: <i>unknown</i>	Vilna ghetto		16/365 (Tsi darf es azoy zayn?)
13	Friling	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: <i>Avreml Brudno</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	70/379
14	Ikh benk aheym	w: Leyb Rozental m: <i>unknown</i>	Vilna ghetto		84/383
15	Der shotn	w: Feyge Gurman m: <i>unknown</i>	Hrubieszów	1944	*
16	Farvos iz di himl?	w: Leyb Opeskin m: <i>Viktor Bely</i>	Vilna ghetto		78/382
Shoyn genug					
17	Shoyn genug	w: Ida Grodzianovski m: <i>Polish folk song</i>	Dünawerk labor camp, Latvia	[ca. 1943]	220/406

Table 12 continued

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
18	Torf-lid	w: Khane Kheytn m: <i>Henryk Wars</i>	Shavli (Šiauliai) ghetto	1943	169 [text only]
Troyer past nisht undzer ponim					
19	Troyer past nisht undzer ponim	w: Itsik Fefer m: Elye Taytelboym	<i>Vilna</i>		*
20	Tsum besern morgn	w: Kasriel Broydo m: "Soviet"	Vilna ghetto	1943	350/430
Shtey oyf tsum kamf!					
21	Shtey oyf tsum kamf!	w: Leah Svirski m: <i>Russian popular song</i> "Arestant"	Švenčionys ghetto		346/427
22	Es shlogt di sho	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown i: Dora Rubin	Vilna ghetto	1943	354/429
23	Shtil, di nakht iz oysgeshternt	w: Hirsh Glik m: unknown	Vilna	1943	348/428
Tsu eyns, tsvey, dray					
24	Tsu eyns, tsvey, dray	w: Leyb Rozental m: <i>Hanns Eisler</i>	Vilna ghetto	1943	343/426
25	Es brent	w, m: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków, ca. 1938		330/424
26	Unter dayne vayse shtern	w: Avrom Sutzkever m: Avreml Brudno	Vilna ghetto	1943	74/380
27	Ponar	w: Sh. Kaczerginski m: A. Wolkowiski	Vilna ghetto	1943	88/385 (Shtiler, shtiler)
28	Dos zangl	w: Hirsh Glik m: unknown	forest near Riešė, Lithuania	1943	349/429
29	Korene yorn un vey tsu teg	w: Kasriel Broydo m: Misha Veksler	Vilna ghetto	1942	197/402
30	Peshe fun reshe	w: Leyb Rozental m: Misha Veksler	Vilna ghetto	1943	158/399
31	Tonie	w: Tonie Reznik m: <i>Misha Veksler</i>	Vilna ghetto		276 (Sonie) [text only]

13. *Tsu zingen un tsu zogn* (To Sing and to Recite)

Tsu zingen un tsu zogn (To Sing and to Recite), appeared at the end of our survey period, self-published in Munich in 1949 by Reuven Lipshits (1918-1975).¹⁰⁵ Active as a writer and performer in Bergen-Belsen's DP Theater, the Warsaw-born Lipshits often incorporated into his theatrical sketches songs he had learned or himself created in the Warsaw ghetto and elsewhere.¹⁰⁶

Warsaw, despite its status as the most populous ghetto, is vastly underrepresented in the early song anthologies, with only one of 317 songs tabulated in these pages unquestionably originating there.¹⁰⁷ Lipshits' contribution of an additional five songs, then, represents a modest boost for the Warsaw repertoire, although two of these songs, "Mayn gesele" (My Street) and "Vayn nisht, royv'n" (Don't Cry, Reuven), almost certainly postdate the liberation of Warsaw in January, 1945.

It must also be noted that Lipshits' anthology is comprised entirely of *unica*. Despite the assertion that "in the Warsaw ghetto he...wrote songs that were sung as folk songs by anonymous

¹⁰⁵ See Lipshits' actor's identification card and program ephemera (Lipshits n.d.). Lipshits' name is sometimes transcribed "Lifschitz" (as in Schwarz 1953); he sometimes assumed the professional names Ryszard Lipschütz (cf. his Theater ID card) and R. Lipszyc-Green (cf. his DP song anthology *Lebedik amkho* (the [Jewish] People Live) (Lifshits 1946). Lipshits immigrated to the U.S. in 1950 under the name Richard Lipschutz (cf. Lipschutz, Richard, Central Name Index, International Tracing Service Archive [USHMM]).

¹⁰⁶ An undated "Jidisze Bilder/Jidiszer-Operetn-Teater" DP program booklet preserved at YIVO (Schwarz n.d.: R.G. 294.1, folder 721) provides evidence of a show that featured Korntayer's Warsaw ghetto hit (and later "DP anthem") "Vu ahin zol ikh geyn?" (Where Shall I Go?), as well as Lipshits' "Motele [fun varshaver gheto]" (Motele from the Warsaw Ghetto) and "A mames nign" (A Mother's Song). (Concerning "Vu ahin," see fn. 42, above.)

¹⁰⁷ Allowing for songs appearing in multiple volumes, the number is reduced to one of 236 individual songs. The sole Warsaw song to be collected was "Di bone" (The Ration Card), published as text only in the August 1947 issue of *Fun letstn khurbn*. The songs "Ani maamin" (printed in Kacerginski 1948a, Schaver 1948, and Hurwitz 1949) and "Treblinka" (printed in Azyman 1945) are associated with the Warsaw ghetto but may not have originated there. The population of the Warsaw ghetto at its height in mid-1942 "exceeded 400,000 people"; by contrast, the population of Łódź ghetto numbered approximately 200,000 inhabitants, and that of the Vilna ghetto approximately 20,000 toward the end of 1941 (U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum *Holocaust Encyclopedia* 2013; Shapiro 2010; Arad 1980: 215).

authors (a portion of them later appeared in his book *Tsu zingen un tsu zogn*),” none of his self-attributed pieces, including those glossed as ghetto or a camp creations, are found in any other contemporaneous collection (whether credited or anonymously), nor do references to Lipshits or his work turn up in period literature prior to the DP phase of his activities.¹⁰⁸

Tsu zingen un tsu zogn is also one-of-a-kind with respect to its commemorative purport, in that Lipshits seemingly brought it to press not primarily to disseminate evidence or honor victims (among them his mother, the book’s dedicatee), but rather as a means of asserting ownership over his material. Alone among Shoah songbooks, *Tsu zingen un tsu zogn* bears a standard legal disclaimer: “Presentation on the stage or reprinting without permission of the author is prohibited.” This caveat may in fact have kept his interesting and often attractive works from finding a place in the repertoire: the first reprints of any Lipshits songs occurred only in 1983, with the inclusion of his “Der hoyf-zinger fun varshaver geto” (The Street Singer of Warsaw Ghetto) and “Motele fun varshaver geto” (Motele from the Warsaw Ghetto) in the groundbreaking bilingual songbook *We Are Here!* (Mlotek and Gottlieb 1983: 35; 66).¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Niger and Shatzky 1956: vol. 5 col. 207; the statement is presumably based on information provided by the author himself. Lipshits’ name and its variants, and references to his traceable songs, whether or not as anonymous creations, are absent from Ringelblum 1939-1943; Pups 1962; Engelking-Boni 2011; and from publications documenting performers in the Warsaw ghetto, such as Turkow 1948. However, his name does appear in DP periodicals (as noted in Niger and Shatzky), and studies of DP theater (see for example Congress for Jewish Culture 1955: 159 and 164) and Fetthauer 2012: 178ff).

¹⁰⁹ For a discussion of Mlotek and Gottlieb’s Shoah song compilations, see chapter 5 of this dissertation. Both “Der hoyf-zinger” and “Motele” were subsequently reprinted in Silverman 2002: 71; 74. Lipshits’ songs have also been issued on compact disk (cf. *Remember the Children* 1991; *Heroes and Poets* 2003). There is no indication, however, that the authors or publishers of these reprint sources ever sought or received permission from the author or his survivors.

ס'ברענט דאס געטאָ

מוזיק: ר. גרין

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature (C). It begins with the tempo marking "Moderato!". The second staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics are written in Yiddish to the right of the music.

העלסט וי - בעם א שטימע, א מאמע טוילעם ס'קינד.
עס ברענדן צוגען פלאמען, צעברענעט פון ווינט.
ס'ברענט מירן הארץ פון האט, סייכן בלוט אין טאט -
ס'ברענט דאס געטא!
א שאסן נעבויגן, ער קלעמט זיך אין דער וואנט
און ס'פלאקערן די אויגן, די בוקס ער דריקט אין האנט
דעם טרויער פון דער גאט, צערייסט א היילער שאט -
ס'ברענט דאס געטא!

ס'קאלן קאנאנען, די לופט איז שטארק געדעמפט.
די רעשטלעך פון מיליאנען גרייטן זיך צום קאמף:
אויב שטארבן איז באשערט, איז סאר דער נעמא-ערד -
ס'ברענט דאס געטא!
דעם ווי שיקט די מאמע אין חושך פון דער נאכט
נייזאלסט נישט פארזאמען, זיין פאלקרום זיך אין שלאכט
ס'איז דעם דער וועלט, אז פאלן קאנאט א העלר -
ס'איז דעם געטא!

ווארשע, אפריל 1943

Figure 25. Excerpt from “S’brent dos geto” (The Ghetto’s Burning), a song about the Warsaw ghetto uprising, words by Reuven Lipshits, music by R. Grin (a possible Lipshits pseudonym), dated Warsaw ghetto, April 1943. From *Tsu zingen un tsu zogn* (1949).

Table 13

Tsu zingen un tsu zogn (1949)

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
I.					
1	Ikh bin eyner fun di letste trubadorn (poem)	Reuven Lifshitz			*
2	Motele fun varshaver geto	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Stelmakh	Warsaw	1943	*
3	Der hoyf-zinger fun varshaver geto	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: folk melody	Warsaw ghetto	March 1943	*
4	S'brent dos geto	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: R. Grin	Warsaw	April 1943	*
5	Golus vig-lid	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Frenkel	Bergen-Belsen	1946	*
6	A mames nign	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Boris Terentyev ("Pust' dni prokhodyat")			*
7	Kh'efn mayn bukh un gefin..	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Emanuel Haken	Munich	1947	*
8	Mayn gesele	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Albert Harris	Warsaw	1945	*
9	Katset-marsh	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Matvey Blanter ("Partizan Zhelezniak")	Gleiwitz Concentration Camp	1945	*
10	Vayn nisht, royvn	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Nellie Casman ("Yosl")	Warsaw	1945	*
11	Yankl der vaser-treger	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Fred Scher	Munich	1946	*
II.					
12	Rivkele un yankele	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Henech Kon ("Shpil zhe mir a lidele oyf yidish")	Munich	1947	*
13	Ekzodus—1947	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: R. Lapshin	Munich	1947	*
14	Vander-veg	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Albert Harris	Munich	1948	*
15	Mapilim-lid	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Matvey Blanter ("V lesu prifrontovom")			*
16	Tsvey toyznt yor	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Moishe Orbshtayn	Munich	1947	*
17	Khalutsim-lid	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: "L. F."			*
18	Dem shnayders kinder	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Boris Fomin ("Sinoviya")			*

Table 13 continued

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
19	Vyo, vyo, ferdelekh	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: R. Lapshin	Munich	1948	*
20	Erets-yisroel vig-lid	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Jerzy Petersburski	Munich	1949	*
21	Zing mir, vint	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Zigmunt Berland			*
III.					
22	Di libe	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: "Folk melody"			*
23	Lomir trinken a l'khaim	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Albert Harris			*
24	Ikh vart	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Matvey Blanter	Munich	1949	*
25	Mayn farloyrn glik	w: Reuven Lifshitz Consuelo Velázquez m: ["Bésame mucho"])			*
26	Der alte por	w: Reuven Lifshitz m: Albert Harris			*
27	Vig-lid	w: Reuven Lifshitz			*
28	Un ikh zol nit zayn in der mit	w: Reuven Lifshitz			*
29	Er un ikh	w: Reuven Lifshitz			*
30	Azoy redt teg-teglekh der spiker	w: Reuven Lifshitz			*

14. *Yidishe folks-shafung in di teg fun der groyse foterlandisher milkhome* (Jewish Folk Creations in the Days of the Great Patriotic War)

The final songbook did not appear at all. Readied for publication in 1949 in the Soviet Union, *Yidishe folks-shafung in di teg fun der groyse foterlandisher milkhome* (Jewish Folk Creations in the Days of the Great Patriotic War) was instead suppressed by the state, and its chief editor, the eminent Soviet Ukrainian music folklorist Moshe (Moise) Beregovski (1892-1961), dismissed from his post, brought to trial and imprisoned, a victim of Stalin's postwar purges (Soroker 1992: I/57; Beregovskaya 1994: 14-15).

Born to a musical family in Kiev, Beregovski trained at conservatories in his hometown and in Leningrad. In 1929 he was appointed director of ethnographic music research at the

Institute of Jewish Proletarian Culture, Kiev, where he presided over an incomparable archive of folkloric field recordings, transcriptions, and supplemental data, and made his life's work the collection and study of Jewish folk music.¹¹⁰ When German armies swept through Ukraine in August 1941, Beregovski was evacuated to Ufa, Soviet Bashkiria (Bashkortostan), and with his staff was soon engaged in collecting local folklore as well as songs and stories from fellow Jewish war refugees. He returned to Kiev in early 1944 to find that his archive had been carried off to Germany by "trophy hunters."¹¹¹ Despite this demoralizing setback, he quickly embarked on new expeditions that took him first to the Chernovsti region of southwestern Ukraine (November-December, 1944), then to the central Ukrainian area of Vinnitsa (August-September, 1945). Beregovski's daughter, Eda Beregovskaya, recalled these excursions in a memoir of her father, reporting that "from a few prisoners who managed by miracle to stay alive, he recorded seventy songs created and performed by those destined to die." Beregovskaya also cited compelling passages from her father's own account of these journeys:

The more we learned of the horrific and inhumane conditions of life in the camps and ghettos, the more difficult it was to imagine the possibility of the existence of song in this reality. [Nevertheless,] even the Chernovsti expedition provided us with enough material to conclude that songs, as well as art in general, occupied a prominent place in the life of the camps and ghettos. (Beregovskaya 1994: 12)¹¹²

¹¹⁰ For most of the 1930s, Beregovski's title was "Director of the Folklore Section of the Department for the Study of Jewish Literature, Language and Folklore of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic"; he styled himself a "folklorist-musicologist." See Beregovski et al. 2001: 3; 49 fn. 5.

¹¹¹ Repatriated soon after the war, the archive was confiscated by Soviet authorities when Beregovski's institute was dissolved in 1949. After many years in storage in Kharkov, eastern Ukraine, it was again returned to Kiev, and is currently housed in that city's V. I. Vernadsky Central Scientific Library (fond 190). Beregovski apparently never learned of the archive's ultimate recovery. See Beregovskaya 1994:12; and Sholokhova 2001: 20.

¹¹² For further on these expeditions, see Sholokhova 2001: 24-25; see also Sergeeva 2007: 87. For earlier descriptions of the Chernovsti expedition, see Blaushtayn n.d. (ca. 1945); and Beregovski and Maydanski n.d. (ca. 1945). I am grateful to my colleague Vadim Altskan for locating and translating passages from these Russian texts.

The monograph *Yidishe folks-shafung in di teg fun der groyse foterlandisher milkhome*, prepared in collaboration with the linguist and folklorist Reuven Lerner (1902-1972), was to have been the end-product of these physically and emotionally demanding collecting efforts.¹¹³ But, as noted, the book would never reach its public. As the communist apostate Kaczerginski reported in his 1949 exposé *Tsvishn hamer un tserp* (Between the Hammer and the Sickle), postwar Soviet domestic policy had turned intensely antisemitic—the book's subtitle, *Tsu der geshikhte fun der likvidatsie fun der yidisher kultur in sovetn-rusland* (On the History of the Liquidation of Jewish Culture in Soviet Russia), could stand as an on-the-spot allusion to the liquidation that same year of Beregovski's institute in Kiev.¹¹⁴ The music scholar's downfall unfolded in quick stages. Forced from his position in 1949, he was reassigned to teach music at a night school (his duties included scouting the local brewery for singing talent); arrested in 1950, he was tried, convicted and exiled to the eastern Siberian forced labor camp at Taishet the following year.¹¹⁵

Beregovski's prison term was belatedly commuted in 1955, two years after Stalin's death, and he returned from the Gulag determined to resume his research and hopeful of bringing several abandoned projects to press.¹¹⁶ Yet the authorities persisted in ascribing a "Jewish-nationalist agenda" to his work, effectively assuring that no manuscript he submitted would pass

¹¹³ Lerner was arrested and sentenced to the Gulag in 1951 (Flyat 2008).

¹¹⁴ Sholokhova (24 and fn. 26) cites correspondence dating from 1947 between Beregovski and I. Gutkovich, Kaczerginski and Sutzkever's successor at the Vilnius Jewish Museum, wherein the latter laments the loss of Vilna's prewar collections.

¹¹⁵ According to Soroker 1992 the charges against Beregovski were "cosmopolitanism" and "Jewish nationalism"; according to Beregovskaya 1994, the charge was "anti-Soviet agitation." Braun (1978: 108), citing Soviet Ukrainian documents, offers somewhat different chronologies for Beregovski's arrest, sentencing, and commutation of sentence.

¹¹⁶ Beregovski was freed from the camp on medical grounds in 1955 and returned to Kiev in 1956; in that same year he was officially "rehabilitated" (i.e., his trial and conviction declared illegal) (Braun 1978: 108).

the censor during his few remaining years. He might have found his posthumous career more gratifying. Beginning with Mark Slobin's influential English-language edition, *Old Jewish Folk Music: The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski* (1982), the decades since Beregovski's passing have seen the progressive publication of most of his major studies, and witnessed as well an ever-broadening recognition of his achievement. Today few in the field would dispute Slobin's assessment of Beregovski as "the foremost ethnomusicologist of Eastern European Jewry" (Slobin 1986: 253).¹¹⁷

Beregovski brought the full academic apparatus to bear on his music and folkloric research.¹¹⁸ Almost alone among Shoah songbook authors, he personally transcribed the songs he collected, scrupulously noting down their contextual details.¹¹⁹ It is all the more unfortunate, then, that his and Lerner's anthology may survive only as a series of drafts filed in Beregovski's reconstituted archive at the Vernadsky Central Scientific Library in Kiev.¹²⁰

But despite its attenuated form—comprising an introduction (dated 1946-1947), a table of contents, numerous song texts and text fragments (although not as many as listed in the table of contents), and, regrettably, only two music examples—the extant typescript still conveys a sense of the scope and aim of the project, just as the often politicized language of the introduction, and

¹¹⁷ Slobin's translated and edited volume is justly credited with broadening the international audience for Beregovski's work. For further on Beregovski's rising posthumous reputation, see Zemtsovsky 2001: ix-xv.

¹¹⁸ Again according to Slobin (1986: 253), Beregovski's is "the only corpus of research on its topic that stands up to present-day ethnomusicological standards of fieldwork, transcription, and analysis."

¹¹⁹ Music professionals Johanna Spector (Songbook 5) and Ernst Hurwitz (Songbook 12) also made their own transcriptions, although Spector worked from memory (and often created her own melodies), while Hurwitz conflated and normalized his material in order to produce a practical performing edition.

¹²⁰ Vernadsky Central Scientific Library, Kiev, Kabinet Evreiskoi Kulturi. The songbook folder (fond. 190) includes two drafts of the introduction, two drafts of the song texts, some inserted notecards and handwritten notes, and a Russian-language synopsis. Notated music (excepting two items), commentaries and informant/provenance data are absent from the folder (although in some cases scored-out details remain legible). The various drafts are described in Sholokhova 2003: 247-248.

the book's 107 haphazard, heavily reworked pages, signal the ideological constraints that proved the project's undoing. The contents-listing, for example, reveals that the editors intended to organize the music into three categories: *Milkhome lider* (War Songs), *Lider vegn felkerayfrayndshaft* (Songs of Friendship Between Peoples), and *Geto un lager-lider* (Ghetto and Camp Songs); and that, perhaps tellingly, the section of "friendship songs" would have been the briefest of these by far. The listing also shows that a fourth, non-music, section had been planned: *Mayses* (Stories), possibly the main contribution of co-editor Reuven Lerner.

Of course, the evidence to hand mostly testifies to what has been lost: approximately fifty otherwise unknown songs about the Soviet Jewish wartime experience.¹²¹ With its singular content and impressive scholarly pedigree, *Yidische folks-shafung* should have marked a significant addition to the Shoah repertoire, and would stand as such were a complete copy to come to light. This possibility, in fact, may not be too remote. In 1968, five Shoah songs with melodies were anonymously published in the Soviet Yiddish magazine *Sovetish Haymland* (Soviet Homeland), the material said to have been retrieved from the "home archive of the deceased M. Beregovski" ("Zayer lid iz dergangen tsu undz" 1968: 54).¹²² Of these songs, one appears without music in the 1949 typescript, while another is listed in the table of contents but

¹²¹ As also noted in my remarks to the tabulated songs (Table 14, below), two texts collected by Beregovski from Transnistrian survivors also appeared in Kaczerginski 1948a: "Tsezeyt un tsheshpreyt" (Scattered and Dispersed) and "Farvolknt der himl" (The Sky is Beclouded), the latter as "Eykho-vi azoy (variant)" (How Could it Be?) (only the index-listing attests to Beregovski's having collected "Farvolknt der himl"; the poem itself is missing from the manuscript). A third text, "Es loyfn, es yogn di mashin" (The Car is Running and Racing) was published as "Transnistrier Laiden" (Transnistrian Sorrows) in Rubin 1946 (see fn. 126, below). For a recent videorecording of "Tsezeyt un tsheshpreyt" sung by Bershad ghetto survivor Yosl Kogan (b. 1927), see Kogan 2014.

¹²² Titled "Zayer lid iz dergangen tsu undz" (Their Song is Passed Down to Us), the brief (three pages), unsigned article, evidently authored by a pair of researchers, reprints a total of four songs with melodies gathered from Ukrainian and Transnistrian ghetto and camp survivors, and one postwar song created in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan.

does not appear within the body of the typescript.¹²³ And in 1970, this same journal published as an independent article Beregovski and Lerner’s introductory essay to the songbook, together with a small selection of songs (texts only) also originally intended for the anthology (Beregovski and Lerner 1970: 143-149).¹²⁴ This fragmentary evidence strongly suggests that the complete work may be still extant.¹²⁵ In the event that such a version is identified and made available (and despite rhetorical strategies that can complicate and qualify certain of Beregovski’s findings), an unparalleled resource by a world-class scholar will at last receive due notice.

¹²³ The two songs intended for the anthology are “Dos lid fun petsherer lager” (The Song of Pechora Camp) and “Az me fort kayn balanovke” (When You Go to Balanovka), retitled “Avrom-itsie shteyt farkhalesht” (Avrom-Itsie Lies Unconscious) in *Sovetish Heymland*. Since the editors could not find the tunes to three of the texts they wished to publish—“Af der zibiter ploshtshadke” (On the Seventh Place), “Dos folk vet eybik zayn” (The People Will Endure Forever), and “Avrom-itsie shteyt farkhalesht”—they expediently outfitted these with melodies “from oral tradition.”

¹²⁴ The article reprints (with orthographical adjustments) Beregovski’s and Lerner’s *Araynfir* (introductory essay) to the projected 1949 volume; interestingly, this title follows the typescript’s first draft, which omits the adjective *groyse* (great) from the standard Soviet formulation “groyse foterlandisher milkhome” (Great Patriotic War). Of the five appended song texts, two appear in the 1949 typescript, two are listed in the table of contents but do not appear in the typescript, and one appears in neither the table of contents nor the body of the typescript.

¹²⁵ Beregovski’s “home archive” may currently be repositated at the State Archives of Cinematographic, Photographic and Audio Documents in St. Petersburg, Russia (see Beregovski and Lerner 1970: 143).

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 311.35
 7

1 איך גיי אונטן פון סיינ סונטערס גרום
 און קיינסאל, סאפע, וועל איך נייט קומען או דיר.
 אזי, ווער-זשע, סאפע, וועט סייך אופהעקני
 אזי, ווער-זשע, סאפע, וועט סייך אודעקני

2 דער סארבונשקער וועט דייך אופהעקני,
 דער רענובלאט וועט דייך אודעקני
 איך גיי ארום, ווי די שאפ איין פעלד
 און קיינסאל קען איך נייט קומען או קיין גרעב.

3 אמת סיינ סאפען האט איך נייט קומען
 פארברייטן א האנט סען פון יענער נייט דרען.
 פון געט אלס א סאטען, ווען קיינסאל קומט
 ווען גייט אלס א סאטען, ווען קיינסאל קומט

הארטרייבן דון רויטלינדער האלטיג
 בראטלאוו, 20/8, 1945

ix gey a-vek fun mayn muters grub, un kijnmal, mame, vel ix nit kumen en
 diz. Oj, ver ze, ma-me, vet mis uf ve-ku, oj, ver-ze, mame, ut mi en-de-ke-

Figure 26. Text with editorial corrections and melody to “Ikh gey avek fun mayn muters grub” (I Take Leave of My Mother’s Grave), by Volye Roytlender, Bratslav, Ukraine, August 20, 1945, one of two songs with music notation in the manuscript *Yidishe folks-shafung in di teg fun der groyse foterlandisher milkhome* (Beregovski and Lerner 1949).

Table 14

Yidishe folks-shafung in di teg fun der groyse foterlandisher milkhome (1949)

plain typeface indicates song text missing from typescript

bold typeface indicates song text in typescript

italic bold typeface indicates text and melody in typescript

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
milkhome lider					
1	Shlof, mayn kind, farmakh di oygn				*
2	Banakht af mayn geleger				*
3	Ikh hob dikh ibergelangt, mayn gelibter				*
4	Ver se vil visn fun vanen mir shtamen				*
5	Her mikh oys, her, mayn vayb				*
6	Mayn abe hot mir ongezogt un ongezogt				*
7	In a finstern mazl bin ikh, oy, geboyrn!				*
8	A brivele der kale				*
9	Ikh shtey in tsekh ba der mashin				*
10	Zits ikh mir in mosterskayie				*
11	Hitlers daytshland tseraysn				*
12	Mir zaynen ersht nekhtn gegangen				*
13	In der ergster tsayt, inem grestn gefar	Ida Rozhanskaya	Alma-Ata, Kazakhsan	May, 1945	*
14	Her oys, tate, her oys, mame				*
15	Ven der soyne iz gekumen inem tifn land				*
16	Draytsn tog in khoydesh elel				*
17	Ikh lig nebn pulemiot [”Ikh lig lebn puliemiot”]				*
18	Poykt a freylekhs in di tantsn				*
19	A shalakhmones hitlern fun a prostn yidn				*

Table 14 continued

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
20	Afn hoykhn barg un afn grinem groz	Sh. Kupershmid	Krasnogvardeyskaya, Uzbekistan	Summer, 1944	*
21	Es loyfn fun front di tseizhete daytshe				*
22	Di naye masen				*
lider vegn felkerayfrayntshaft					
23	A lid vegn kazakhstan				*
24	Toyznt naye hundert aynts un fertsikstn yor		Riga, Latvia		*
25	S'iz aroys a naye gzeyre	Sh. Kupershmid, Mirl Rubintshik	Alt-Konstantinovka		*
geto un lager-lider					
26	Dos lid fun petshorer lager	Volye Roytlender	Pechora camp, Transnistria	1942	*
27	Dortn af der ukraine	Henye Snaytser	Pechora camp, Transnistria	1942	*
28	Petshorer lager		Pechora camp, Transnistria		*
29	Karlovke		Karlovka, Ukraine		*
30	Hert oys, mentshn, vos in shtetele zhabokritsh hot pasirt		Zhabokrich, Ukraine		*
31	A troyer lid vel ikh aykh zingen		Proskurov (Khmelnyskiy), Ukraine		*
32	Tsi kon ikh den fargesn				*
33	Ikh bin gekumen fun der milkhome (Babi-yar) [fragment]				*
34	Dos eynznfertsikste yor iz ongekumen				*
35	Ikh gey avek fun mayn muters grub	Volye Roytlender	Bratslav, Ukraine	August, 1945	*
36	Kh'farshelt dem tog fun mayn geboyrn!				*
37	Az me fort kayn balanivke (avrom-itsik shteyt farkholesht)	Fride Gutmakher (Bershad, 1946)	Balanivka (near Bershad), Ukraine		*

Table 14 continued

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
38	Farvolknt der himl, kayn shtral zet men nit ¹²⁶				246
39	Tsezeyt un tsheshpreyt	Tolye Monastirske (Bratslav, 1945)	Pechora camp, Transnistria		244 (variant)
40	Es loyfn, es yogndi mashin ¹²⁷				*
41	Ikh kuk op yedns bild				*
42	Zol undz shaynen undzer lebn (kumt khotsh eynmol nokh dermonen)		Tulchin, Ukraine		*
43	Bafrayung-lid				*
44	Der naynter may				*
(Songs and song fragments not in Table of Contents)					
45	Oy, zogt-zhe, yidele* (Funem troyerikn lager)				*
46	Oy, di elnte yesoyim				*
47	S'rosht un zidt in gas atsind (oy oy s'kumen di royte)				*
48	Gedenken bizn toyt (fragment)				*
49	S'iz kumen oykh di ende				*
Mayses					
1	Yoshke shtarbt nit				*
2	Farshtunkene kep				*
3	Di shlitlen fun krimer erd				*

¹²⁶ Printed in Kaczerginski 1948: 246 as “Eykho—vi azoy (variant).” Beregovski lists this title but text and melody are absent from the typescript.

¹²⁷ Published as “Transnistrier Laiden” (Transnistrian Sorrows) (text only) in Rubin 1946: 70-71.

Table 14 continued

ITEM	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER	PLACE	YEAR	K 1948
Appendix A: songs with melodies in <i>Sovetish Haymland</i> 1968/4					
1	Slivner lager	Bari Zitserman, Peysi Liberman, transcribed by Ide Liberman	Bershad Camp, 1943		*
2	Af der zibeter plashtshadke	Transcribed by Lerner.	Belaya Tserkov, Ukraine		*
3	Dos lid fun petsherer lager	cf. nr. 26 above			*
4	Avrom-itsik shteyt farkholesht	cf. nr. 37 above			*
5	Dos folk vet eybik zayn	Mayerson	Alma-Ata, Kazakhsan, 1945		*
Appendix B: songs without melodies in <i>Sovetish Haymland</i> 1970/5					
1	In der ergster tsayt	cf. nr. 13 above			*
2	Inem tog, vos kh'hob zikh mitn man gezegnt				*
3	Zol undz shaynen undzere lebn				*
4	S'iz aroys a naye gzeyre	cf. nr. 25 above			*
5	Afn hoykhn barg un afn grinem groz	cf. nr. 20 above			*

Having reviewed, contextualized and tabulated fourteen anthologies prepared for publication between 1945-1949, we are now positioned to evaluate the achievement of (and consider certain gaps and flaws in) the largest and best-regarded Shoah song compendium, Kaczerginski's *Lider fun di getos un lagern*.

Chapter III

Lider fun di getos un lagern (Songs from the Ghettos and Camps)

The collecting and concealing of objects of possible interest to future generations was an exercise in optimism that sustained many intellectuals during the Shoah. Several collectors who did not survive in fact left substantial legacies, notably Emanuel Ringelblum, whose secret “Oneg Shabes” archive emerged partly intact from the ruins of Warsaw after the end of the war. The efforts of others have never been recovered, for example the Riga ghetto chronicles by the distinguished historian Simon Dubnow, whose reported last words, “Yidn, shraybt un farshraybt!” (Jews, write this down!), exemplify the documentarian’s unflinching faith in the judgment of a fact-based posterity (Wisse 2000: 203).¹²⁸ After the war, erudite, academically-inclined eyewitnesses such as Joseph Wulf, Michał Borwicz and Israel Kaplan carried on collecting, cataloging and disseminating Holocaust documentation, furnishing data for war crimes commissions and assuring that the historical record would not overlook or minimize anti-Jewish atrocities.¹²⁹ The songbook authors, meanwhile, felt morally compelled to honor the victims’ memories and pay homage to a creative spirit that endured, and ultimately outlasted, the Nazi ghettos and camps.

Kaczerginski embraced each of these collecting rationales—collecting for posterity, collecting for evidence, collecting to commemorate—in his major anthology *Lider fun di getos*

¹²⁸ For a discussion of Jewish historians as “archival custodians” during the Holocaust, see Dawidowicz 1989: 125.

¹²⁹ Borwicz’s *Pieśń ujdzie calo: antologia wierszy o żydach pod okupacją niemiecką* (The Song Will Survive: an anthology of verse about the Jews during the German occupation) (Borwicz 1947b) was among the earliest published anthologies of creative writings from the ghettos and camps. It was a successor volume to the underground anthology *Z otchłani* (From the Abyss) (Sarnecki 1944), which featured the debut publication of Czesław Miłosz’s celebrated poem “Campo dei Fiori.” (See also Scharf 1999: 31-41.)

un lagern. He also brought to bear the motivations and obsessions of the *zamlers*, the folksong collector, convinced that folklore provided a key not only to the psyche of the Shoah victim but to the cultural, and even to the general, history of the period. These objectives and methodologies are spelled out in the book's foreword, *Bamerkungen fun zamlers* (Collector's Remarks). A token of the author's peripatetic life and career, this section consists of two essays composed two years apart. The first, dated "Vilna, 1945," originally appeared as the preface to *Dos gezang fun vilner geto* (1946). The second, longer and more detailed, was written especially for *Lider fun di getos un lagern*. An excerpt has already been cited in chapter 1 of this paper; the entire text is now offered in translation below.¹³⁰

Collector's Remarks

It is impossible to communicate the reality of the German occupation, its apparatus of ghettos, concentration camps, extermination camps, and the like, in the language of normal human discourse. The totality of writings, documents and images cannot express the complete extent of its horror. Those who were not there personally will never comprehend the bloody nightmare millions of people lived through. Now, looking back, I often wonder what happened to us then. How could we have lived and died like this?

Even for those who survived the ghettos and concentration camps, this question will, in time, become a riddle without an answer. The few documents that survive cannot even remotely convey the actuality of the officially-permitted and commonplace experiences of Jews in the occupied territories. I therefore believe that the songs that emanated from the aggrieved hearts of Jews in the ghettos, death camps and partisan units represent a significant contribution to Jewish martyrology and combat history.

¹³⁰ Kaczerginski's original Yiddish text appears in the present paper as Appendix C. Lawrence Berson's translation of Kaczerginski 1948a forms the basis for Pasternak's partial edition (Pasternak 2003). Mr. Berson kindly presented a typescript of this translation to the Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1997, after I had begun translation work for this study. Although I occasionally turned to the Pasternak edition when categorizing song-types for the chapter descriptions (below), I did not think it proper to consult Berson's text while preparing the present translation. For help in this regard I gratefully acknowledge my debt to my museum colleague Dr. Motl Rosenbush.

The song, the witticism, the pointed joke accompanied Jews always and everywhere: on the way to work, in line for a small ration of soup, when driven to the slaughter, while preparing for battle. It seems unnatural when in a moment of high tragedy an actor on stage suddenly breaks into song. You would think: this doesn't happen in real life. But real life has shown us otherwise. On the day the partisans of Vilna ghetto mobilized to defend their commander Itsik Vitnberg, although I knew my final hour was fast approaching, I continued to work on my diary. When we partisans, guns in hand, stood on the barricades as the Gestapo tore apart a nearby house where our comrades had taken cover, Sutzkever, Opeskin, Hirsh Glik, and other writers, all armed with weapons, did not interrupt their creative work.

At such moments, when it seemed as if the single, inevitable outcome was death, the words of our poet-partisan, Hirsh Glik, pulsed through our souls: "*Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg!*" (Never say that you have reached the final road!).

We sang. Even if it were a sad tune, it kindled within us hatred and rage—healthy emotions that inspired us to action, to vengeance!

We can identify the author of nearly every song. In ordinary times each song would probably travel a long road to popularity. But in the ghetto we observed a marvelous phenomenon: individual works transformed into folklore before our eyes. Every newly-fashioned song that spoke to the feelings and experiences of the masses, the masses embraced and circulated as if it were their own. The creator of this folklore was the bloody times. Therefore, its subject matter, in this respect, is singular, and its expressive forms, rather than refined, are instead plain and direct.

In the ghetto one was not permitted to utter a bad word about the murderers. To signal the sight of a German one would say "Apple!"—meaning "German approaching!" (The expression originated during the winter months when Germans, returning from the front, arrived at the Vilna hospital to be treated for frostbite. People would say, "They look like frozen apples.") Or when the Vilna ghetto choir (under the direction of A. Sleps) performed the song "Shtiler, shtiler" (Quiet, quiet), the line "*s'firn vegn tsu ponar tsu*" (they were led off to Ponar) was changed to "*s'firn vegn yetst ahintsu*" (they were led there right now), while "*dos kind geyst oyf ponar*" (the child went to Ponar) became "*dos kind nemt tsu der har*" (the child was taken by the Master). One could not mention the word "Ponar," even though 80,000 Jewish martyrs had already been murdered there. No Ponar here—and no truth here. It was all merely a Bolshevik fabrication. Or so the Germans said.

They told us to perform plays. What sorts of plays? For an imprudent word, the consequence was dreaded Ponar. Authors were obliged to use allusive language. Consider, for example, merely the titles of the revues performed in the Vilna

ghetto theater: *Korene yorn un vey tsu teg* (Years of Grain and Days of Woe), a rephrasing of the Yiddish expression “*korene yorn un veytsene teg*” (years of grain and days of wheat); *Men ken gornit visn* (One Never Can Tell); *Moyshe halt zikh* (Hold Fast, Moyshe); or the name of the *Kleinkunst* theater: *Di yogenish in fas* (The Chase in a Barrel), punning on the phrase “Diogenes in a barrel.”¹³¹ Thus, while you will rarely encounter the word “German” within a song, you will recognize him, the murderer, behind every line of text. The only exceptions were songs sung in secret. Anyone caught with the texts to these songs, or overheard singing them, would be sent to their death by the Gestapo, after being treated to a special sort of torture.

Day-to-day Jewish life in the ghetto, with all its attendant phenomena—jail, death, forced labor, the Gestapo, Jewish powerholders, internal issues, and so on—found its mirror in this bloody folklore. It will enable future historians and researchers, as well as the reader, to fathom the soul of our people. –Vilna, 1945

II

Returning to the preface I'd written in Vilna toward the end of 1945, I now see the need—after two years during which time the collection's size increased dramatically—to make some further observations, and also to explain what happened to me with respect to the song collection.

The work of the folklore collector is long-term and difficult. The writing table of such an individual may be found in every remote provincial settlement, big-city attic and cellar, study-house, grade school, organization—indeed anyplace anyone wants to put it. If, before the war, the collector was thought to be something of an oddball, during the far more difficult conditions of the occupation (ghettos, camps, forests, and the like) even those who understood the value of his work considered him to be practically a maniac. In time, the public came to accept the staging of plays in the ghetto, and people even sent their children to school, so as to mislead them a little. But considering all that might happen within the course of a year, few volunteered for the foolish “how-who-what” of collecting. How greater, then, the marvel that some completely rational Jews were also drawn to this type of work. This speaks to the sanctity of their calling.

I do not wish, at this time, to make any noteworthy statements about the importance of folklore collecting. Nor would I care to analyze and evaluate the songs in the collection. With respect to my own collecting work, however, I do want to stress that I undertook this important task not only because my hometown had been destroyed, but because after the war virtually no one remained who was able to attempt a fresh start at this work.

¹³¹ For a history and chronicle of theatrical productions in the Vilna ghetto, see Beinfeld 1984.

Of the folklore collections we had buried in the Vilna ghetto, scarcely a trace could be found. Yet there survived a document by the folklorist and YIVO researcher Moishe Lerer, who had been responsible for organizing the material submitted by the ghetto's folklore collectors.¹³² In it, he explains how the collecting work was conducted and describes the collectors' areas of orientation. That document, to me, was like a testament from my nearest and dearest kin. That document would not let me rest until, with my limited means, I had renewed my interrupted labors.¹³³

The work in still-smoldering Vilna was burdensome indeed. One really had to be stronger than iron, in those days, not to give in to despair. And nowadays, who has the mind for this sort of thing?

—Tell me instead, where do we go from *here*?

—What do we do *now*?

How could I answer them? I, myself, one of them? I began the work...

Word by word, line by line, song by song. Then, quite quickly, work on the collection was interrupted. The great exodus to Poland had begun; Poland, where I also settled. There, I could expand the collection for the first time, because there I came into contact with Jews from the most diverse ghettos, camps and death-houses, and from the forests. I visited them at dawn, and went to them late at night. I sojourned to them in large and small communities. I also made contact with Jewish survivors in other countries (Germany, Romania and France, among others).

Now, when I look upon the approximately 250 texts gathered from some thirty ghettos, camps and forests, with more than one hundred examples of notated music, I realize that a major effort has been accomplished.

A few small anthologies of concentration camp songs had appeared in print as early as 1946. It was only in Paris that I first encountered one of them, Zami Feder's *Katset-lider* (Bergen-Belsen, 1946).¹³⁴ I permitted myself to include several of Feder's songs that were not already in my collection. I was also pleased to incorporate a number of songs gathered by my friend, the poet H. Leivick,

¹³² For more on Lerer, see Kacerginski 1947b: 109-110; 200; and Ajzen 1954: 311-315.

¹³³ Unfortunately, Lerer's document can no longer be identified; it may have remained in Vilnius after Kacerginski's flight to Poland.

¹³⁴ For details on Feder's anthology (Feder 1946), see the discussion in chapter 2, above.

during his tour of German Displaced Persons camps in 1946.¹³⁵ To be sure, the present collection is far from complete, but it is certainly the largest, and—it is not over-modest to claim—also the most comprehensive and definitive (in terms of texts, melodies, commentaries, etc.).

Of course, some survivors will point out that certain songs have been “incorrectly” transcribed. For example, Israel Segal—the well-known former director of the Vilna ghetto theater (and current director of the Yiddish Theater, Munich)—wrote to me, among other things, about several texts in my smaller anthology, *Dos gezang fun vilner geto* (The Song of Vilna Ghetto; Paris, 1947): “I hope you will take no offense if I draw your attention to some inaccuracies that have crept into the book, but rather that you might be pleased. The reason is that I, after all, am able to establish the authentic versions of these various song texts and commentaries...” My dear friend Segal, as I have mentioned, was certainly the director, and also one of the administrators, of the ghetto theater. It therefore may be concluded that he does not err. But of course he, too, is prone to make mistakes.

Friend Segal suggested that several songs I had collected from the performers Dora Rubin and Khayele Rozental had been noted down “incorrectly.” It is doubtful, I think, that the artists who personally performed these songs in the ghetto theater had communicated them incorrectly. But if this can be imagined (and that sorceress, time, has not spared even our memory!), then one can indeed imagine anything.

We may therefore conclude that today variants of certain songs are sung in different locales. Moreover, it is clear that once this collection appears I will hear from readers who maintain that I had incorrectly transcribed texts that they themselves had created in the ghettos or camps.

In my archive are gathered a number of different song-variants; only the most notable are included in the present collection. For those interested, I now offer a characteristic example to explain how melodic or textual variants, in form and content strongly reminiscent of other ghetto songs, came to be created. In a letter addressed to me, Elye Magid, author of the lyrics to “Di meztser vishedlenies in

¹³⁵ H. Leivick; pseud. Leivick Halpern (1888-1962), Yiddish poet and playwright. Leivick’s poetic cycle, *In treblinka bin ikh nit geven* (I Was Not In Treblinka; 1945), was among the first literary reflections on the Holocaust written by a non-witness (the author had long been a U.S. resident). A memoir of his postwar tour of Displaced Persons camps, *Mit der shayris hapliteh* (Among the DPs), appeared in 1947 (see Leivick 1945 and Leivick 1947). Kacerginski acknowledges Leivick’s significant contributions—both as *zamlar* and text-editor—to his anthology, but it is incorrect to claim co-authorship of the volume on his behalf (see Gilbert 2005). For a partial translation by Lawrence Berson of Leivick’s introduction to *Lider fun di getos un lagern*, see Pasternak 2003: unpaginated 9-10.

treblinke” (The Expulsion of Mezrits [Międzyrzec] Jews to Treblinka) (cf.), has written:

Dear friend, you've asked me who thought up the songs. I can tell you how they came to be. One day I'm sitting in my *krayuvke* (slang for “hiding place”—S.K.). Everyone is sleeping, but I happen to be awake. It's winter. I can't go outside. Then the thought struck me that I should create something. So I wrote a song, despite the fact that I'm not an educated person. You can see from the writing that it didn't turn out the way I had intended. When I read it to my friends, they told me: “You were there during the first expulsions. Write something for us to sing in our *krayuvke*.” (This conversation took place in an underground hideout in the Woroniec forest, where Magid and other Jews had fled after the liquidation of the Mezritsghetto; that is, after the expulsions and deportations to Treblinka.—S.K.) I wrote the words to “Di mezritser vishedlenies” and simultaneously made up a melody. When my comrades sang the song, I said to Dovid Gertsman, “Maybe we should turn out another one. Will you help?” So we sat down, Gertsman and I, and we dictated the words to one another. After completing a verse, we spontaneously came up with a melody, and since I have a singing voice, I immediately sang it over. And this became “Krayuvke.” Later, someone came from Lublin and asked me to write down the song for him. He didn't get the entire song—but he goes around telling everyone that he created it...¹³⁶

When the reader becomes familiar with the two text-variants of “Treblinke” in this collection, he will see that Magid and his friends, when writing their song, must already have known or heard the “Treblinke-lid.” Thus the theory put forth by Dr. Nakhman Blumental (in *Yidische kultur* 8, New York, July, 1947), that the song was created by Warsaw Jews who had escaped the Treblinka transports to the forests near Międzyrzec Podlaski and Biała Podlaska, would appear to be

¹³⁶ Bracketed remarks and editorial elisions as per Kacerginski. The Polish town in question is Międzyrzec Podlaski (Yiddish: Mezrits or Mezritsh; German: Meseritz), near Lublin. Kacerginski (and Magid) generally prefer “Mezrits” (מעזריץ). Drafted into the Polish army at the outbreak of the war, the Vilna native Elye (Eliahu, Elias, Eljasz) Magid (1910-?) was captured by German soldiers and sent to a POW camp, but fled when the Germans began murdering Jewish prisoners. Magid first escaped to Międzyrzec Podlaski, then to the Woroniec forest. Having outlasted the war, he was maimed in an antisemitic attack soon after the German surrender. Magid settled in Lublin (from where he corresponded with Kacerginski), and in the early 1950s apparently relocated to Israel (see U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Central Name Index, International Tracing Service Archive: “Magid, Eljasz”). Further details of Magid's biography are parcelled out in Kacerginski's commentaries to “Di mezritser vishedlenies” (1948a: 217) and “In krayuvke” 1948a: 303; see also the note to “In Kriuvke” (sic) in Kalisch 1985:101-102; and see especially Gross 2006: 60 for a summary of testimony Magid provided to the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw. Magid's songwriting comrade and fellow Polish POW Dovid Gertsman (Dawid Gercman; Vilna 1901 or 1905-?) also survived; records indicate that he immigrated to Italy, presumably en route to Palestine (see “Gercman, Dawid” 1995: reel 1).

correct.¹³⁷ Magid's letter indeed indicates that the Mezrits refugees were already familiar with this song. (The Mezrits deportations to Treblinka took place after the deportations from Warsaw.) The above-cited excerpts from Magid's letter will surely help the researcher and the serious reader reach the appropriate conclusion.

It is well known that during the occupation Jews wrote songs in languages other than Yiddish, and we are sufficiently familiar with songs in Polish, Hebrew, Russian, Romanian, Hungarian, German and other languages. This collection, however, includes only a few Polish songs, and just one Russian song (“Bombes” [Bombs]), in Yiddish translation. Sooner or later, however, an anthology encompassing foreign language songs, as well as those Yiddish songs that remain in oral tradition, should certainly appear in print.¹³⁸ It would surely also be worthwhile to include works by recognized authors who were active during the occupation (I. Katzenelson, S. Shayevitch, M. Gebirtig, A. Sutzkever, Y. Spiegel, and others), even though books of their poetry have already been published.¹³⁹ In the present collection, however, I have only included poetic works by these authors that were *sung* in the ghettos.

¹³⁷ Dr. Nakhman Blumental (Nahum Blumenthal) (1905-1983), co-director of the Jewish Historical Institute, Łódź; expert witness at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials; author of scholarly articles and books on the literature of the Shoah. For his *memento mori* of Kaczerginski, see Blumenthal 1955.

¹³⁸ Kaczerginski's prediction has since come to pass, beginning with Lammel and Hofmeyer 1962, the first postwar anthology of German-language camp songs. Subsequent publications comprised of or featuring non-Yiddish repertoire include Kalisch 1985 and Silverman 2002, as well as various commercially-issued recordings of Polish and international repertoire by the former Nazi prisoner and song collector Aleksander Kulisiewicz (e.g., Kulisiewicz 1975; Kulisiewicz 1979; and Kulisiewicz and Wortsman 1979). Revived interest in Holocaust repertoire is taken up in chapter 5 of the present study.

¹³⁹ Itzhak Katzenelson (1886-1944), educator, poet, playwright, active in the Warsaw ghetto; killed at Auschwitz. His epic poem *Dos lid fun oysgehartn yidishn folk* (Song of the Murdered Jewish People), recovered after the war, is among the best-known literary testaments of the Shoah; it was first published in 1948 (Katzenelson 1948). Simkha Bunem Shayevitch (Pol., Szajewicz; 1907-1944), rabbi, factory worker and writer; lived in Łódź ghetto, perished at the Dachau subcamp, Kaufering. His long poems *Lekh-Lekho* (Go Forth) and *Friling 1942* (Spring 1942), written in Łódź ghetto, were among the first literary efforts by a Jewish victim published in book form in postwar Poland (Szajewicz and Blumenthal 1946); see also fn. 142, below. Mordecai Gebirtig (1877-1942), Yiddish poet and songwriter; killed in the Krakow ghetto. His collected ghetto poetry had been published in Poland in 1946 (see discussion in chapter 2, above). Avrom (Abraham) Sutzkever (1913-2010), Yiddish poet and partisan was (as noted in chapter 1, above) a close friend of Kaczerginski. The Yiddish newspaper *Einikeit* (“Unity”), official organ of the Soviet Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, printed several Sutzkever poems toward the end of the war (Sutzkever n.d.), and Sutzkever's memoir, *Fun vilner geto* (From Vilna Ghetto), appeared soon afterward (Sutzkever 1946a). Early volumes of his Shoah poetry include *Di festung: lider un poemes geshribn in vilner geto un in vald 1941-1944* (The Fortress: songs and poems written in the Vilna ghetto and in the forests) (Sutzkever 1945) and *Lider fun geto* (Songs of the ghetto) (Sutzkever 1946b). Isaiah (Yeshayahu) Spiegel (1906-1990) was a poet and novelist whose stories *à clef* of life in the Łódź ghetto were gathered in *Malkhes geto* (Ghetto Kingdom) (Spiegel 1947) and *Shtern ibern geto* (Stars over the Ghetto) (Spiegel 1948). For Spiegel's popular ghetto songs (written with composer Dovid Beygelman) “Makh tsu di eygelekh” (Close Your Little Eyes) and “Nit keyn rozhinkes un nit keyn mandlen” (No More Raisins, No More Almonds), see Kaczerginski 1948a: 92/388 and 93/387.

The melodies to the texts make up an entirely separate and previously unexplored field of study. Here I can offer some clarifications of possible use to researchers, and of interest to readers and singers. If our professional literati were capable of writing poems or prose (and non-professionals, too, thought up texts), the same cannot be said about the creation of melodies for these texts. The number of Jewish composers, small enough before the war, grew yet smaller in the ghettos and camps. In some places, these composers never even entered the ghetto, but were murdered by the Germans before the onset of “normal life.”¹⁴⁰ Those composers who did manage to reach the ghetto were engaged by the theater collectives to write music for the stage. One can state with certainty that only those melodies written to song texts (and of those only a certain number) were preserved by ghetto and camp survivors. Melodies lacking words, or songs unknown to a broad audience, vanished along with their composers. Consequently, few original ghetto compositions remain of the dozens known to have been created by the likes of Dovid Beygelman, Paulina Braun, Akiva Durmashkin, Misha Veksler, and others.¹⁴¹

The majority of song texts created at that time were immediately outfitted with melodies. Or, better said, the songwriters availed themselves of pre-existing melodies that might readily be outfitted with new words. These melodies did not always suit their new texts; rather their use often reflects the circumstances and creative needs of the ghetto or camp songwriters. One might, for example, encounter utterly depressing texts set to lively melodies. (“Katset kayzervald” [Kaiserwald Camp] was written for the young women who washed the camp hallways and stairs, and this they had to do rather quickly.)

¹⁴⁰ “Normal life”: between round-ups, deportations and *Aktions*, ghetto Jews attempted to assert a sense of normalcy by establishing schools and social clubs, staging cultural events, etc. (see Kassow 2007: 93).

¹⁴¹ Dovid Beygelman (Beigelman; Baigelman; 1887-?1945), leading composer and conductor in interwar Łódź, primarily for the Yiddish stage. Paulina (Pola) Braun (?-1943), composer, lyricist and performer whose Polish-language topical songs were popular in the Warsaw ghetto and Majdanek Camp. Braun’s songs appear in Yiddish translation in Kacerginski 1948a and in the original Polish in Borwicz 1947b; the melodies to these songs are unfortunately no longer extant. Akiva Durmashkin (1881-1941), composer, cantor, music-teacher active in Vilna; among the musicians murdered at Ponar before the onset of “normal” ghetto life. Kacerginski has confused Akiva with his son, the conductor and choir leader Volf (Vladimir) Durmashkin (1914-1944), who took part in many music activities in the ghetto (see Durmashkin-Gurko 1986: 629-630). Misha Veksler (1907-1943), composer, director of the Vilna ghetto theater orchestra (for further on Veksler, see chapter 4 above). Kacerginski’s claim that ghetto and camp survivors preserved only “melodies written to song texts” seems overstated yet remains essentially valid. For example, two of Volf Durmashkin’s ghetto songs have been recovered from informants (albeit with conflicting attributions), while his contemporaneous classical compositions, including *Elegie oxfponar* (Ponar Elegy), first-prize winner in a music ghetto competition held on 13 February 1943, and his incidental music to the ghetto’s Hebrew Dramatic Studio production of David Pinsky’s play *Ha’Yehudi haNitzhi* (*The Eternal Jew*) have disappeared without a trace (Kazdan 1952: 125-126; Ran 1974/2: 455; see also Kruk and Harshav 2002: 577). Similarly, instrumental compositions by Łódź ghetto’s Dovid Beygelman are known today only from surviving documents or by conjecture.

Songwriters drew melodies from a few major sources:

Old Jewish folk melodies. This category also includes hasidic *nigunim*, familiar melodies from the repertoire of Yiddish operetta, and so on.

Tango melodies. With their minor-key, melancholy aura, tango melodies were among the most frequently exploited by ghetto songwriters—and not a few original tangos were created in the ghetto as well. Incidentally, many prewar tangos continued to be sung in the ghettos, where songs of love, longing, and mother had not lost their relevance.

Soviet melodies. Catchy, singable Soviet tunes were widely known before the war and became even more popular during the years 1939-1941, when the Soviets occupied portions of Polish territory. The singability of these melodies inspired new texts from several writers.

Selecting the melodies was far more difficult than collecting the texts. As a consequence, I gratefully relied on dedicated friends who accompanied me on my visits to informants. (On more than one occasion I was obliged, by various creative means, to deliver an informant to my music-transcriber.) The hundred-plus melodies successfully gathered and now offered in this volume will, I hope, mark a genuine contribution to Jewish cultural history.

In the course of my collecting work I also encountered skeptics. The skeptic would say: “I can understand publishing texts that perhaps contain a few lines of poetry. But why perpetuate, why canonize, mere graphomania?” To this I reply: “Just as we cherish every stray leaf of a sacred book discovered in the ruins or found atop the ashes of our homes, so must we treasure the voices of our predecessors, whose simple, clear words tell us of their lives and of their destruction.”

As the martyred writer S. Szajewicz made clear to us, there is “no other counsel than to emulate the ancient troubadours, minnesingers and our Jewish *broder-zingers*: carry our own songs with us; become the preachers who go to the people with their sermons...” (Łódź ghetto, February, 1942)¹⁴² At issue here is not who may be the better orator, or who the better singer (although this distinction is surely important). It is above all, that these “sermons”—these melodies and texts—be rescued from oblivion. Time and history will surely not do an injustice to this material.

¹⁴² This admonition appears in a letter of 10 February 1942 from Simkha Bunem Szajewicz to the ghetto functionary Sh. Rozenshteyn, to whom he entrusted his poems. For a reproduction of this document, see Szajewicz and Blumental 1946: 25 and 27. (For a partial English translation of *Lekh-Lekho*, see Roskies 1988: 515-516; and 520-530; see also Morgentaler 2003.) *Broder-zingers*, nineteenth-century Jewish minstrel troupe originating in the town of Brody (in present-day Ukraine).

A great many devoted friends, recognizing the importance of such a publication, spared no effort to help me with this collection of texts, melodies, and corresponding photos. I am honored to mention the martyr Lusik Gerber (deported from Kovno ghetto to Dachau, and murdered there), whose notebook of Kovno ghetto songs was found in the ghetto ruins after the war.¹⁴³ These songs are included in the collection. I also express, in passing, heartfelt thanks to my friends, the performers Diana Blumenfeld and Jonas Turkow (survivors of the Warsaw ghetto); the performers Dora Rubin and Khayele Rozental (of Vilna ghetto); the singers Perele Shekhter (Lemberg ghetto) and Zise Hershkovitch (Łódź ghetto); the artistic director of the Yiddish theater in Munich, Israel Segal (Vilna ghetto and camps); the writer Moyshe Shternberg (Bucharest); the writer Joseph Wulf (Kraków ghetto, Auschwitz); the tailor Eliahu Magid (German prison camps, Międzyrzec ghetto, Woroniec forest); the community activist Irke Yanovski (Warsaw ghetto, Auschwitz, and other locales); the worker Sara Kogan-Goldman (Vilna ghetto, five camps); the composers Moishe Novoprutski (from the Land of Israel) and David Botwinik; the skilled photographers Kadushin and E. Gershater; the composer Michl Gelbart (New York) for preparing and editing the musical texts; and especially my friend, the poet H. Leivick, for attentively editing the collection, and for the songs he himself contributed to it; the World Jewish Culture Congress, for taking great pains to assure that the collection would appear among its first publications; the “CYCO” Press and my friend Kh. Pupko for endeavoring to make this edition the best and most attractive possible.

Sh. Kacerginski
Paris, 1948

Organization

In common with most of its precursors, *Lider fun di getos un lagern* is organized according to thematic, rather than geographical or chronological criteria. Kacerginski's personal stamp is evident, however, both in the selection of material—notably the prominence of partisan repertoire—and in its presentation, which betrays his theatrical sensibility. Indeed, the book's organizational scheme, apparent at a glance from the chapter headings, itself underscores

¹⁴³ This manuscript is not referenced again in the volume. I was unable to find any details on Gerber's life beyond the brief sketch in Kacerginski's introduction; his notebook of ghetto songs may have suffered the same fate as Moishe Lerer's (see fn. 132, above).

some larger Kacerginski concerns: to show proof of Jewish resistance and regeneration during and after the war, and to advocate and promote Jewish self-defense against present and future antagonists.

Each of the book's four main sections is named for its title song or poem: 1) "Zog nit keynmol" (Never Say); 2) "Geto lebn" (Ghetto Life); 3) "Treblinke" (Treblinka); 4) "Kontratak" (Counterattack). The celebrated resistance anthem "Zog nit keynmol" sounds the opening salvo, proclaiming as well the editorial choice to forgo a standard thematic presentation in favor of a narrative that begins at its climax then unfolds, as it were, in flashback.¹⁴⁴

"Zog nit keynmol" (Never Say)

The book's first section is a mixed bag of theater songs, folksongs, poems and topical ballads, suggesting a random chronicle of lives and events in Lithuanian and Polish ghettos and labor camps, 1940-1944. Here, as elsewhere, Kacerginski draws on the repertoire he knows best, with fifty-two of eighty-three songs and poems originating in the Lithuanian ghettos of Vilna, Kovno and Šiauliai (Shavli). He was doubtless his own best informant (the chapter includes four of his own ghetto songs), yet even with respect to his native Vilna, Kacerginski methodically sought out fresh eyewitnesses and sources of documentation. The poet Gite Sudenski, for example, submitted a triptych of songs about Jewish collaborators ("Der gazlen" [The Robber]; "Der 'Jude' fun geto" [The "Jew" of the Ghetto]; "Oberhardt" [the name of a particularly scurrilous individual]), while the partly-unearthed Vilna ghetto archives yielded up a fragmentary text, "Blik inem kiem" (A Glance at Existence), by the otherwise unknown author,

¹⁴⁴ Assessing the organizational scheme of Kacerginski's volume (as well as the perhaps detrimental contribution of text editor H. Leivick), David Roskies (2004: 339) notes, "Although Kacerginski always identifies the names of his informants, tries to credit the original author(s), and provides a thumbnail sketch of their *Sitz-im-Leben*—whether the concert hall, the ghetto street, the work battalion, or the camp barracks—the songs are nowhere listed either by point of origin or by author. Instead, they are grouped thematically, impressionistically."

A. Bang.¹⁴⁵ For his substantial grouping of Polish material (twenty-seven songs and poems), Kacerginski largely depended on newly met informants, historians and collectors, among them Zise Hershkovitch (Łódź), Joseph Wulf (Kraków) and Jonas Turkow (Warsaw).

Finally, Kacerginski emphasized his use of texts literally salvaged from the ruins, the last testaments of writers who did not survive the war. Such works include the Vilna ghetto poem by Bang, and Lusik Gerber's Kovno ghetto songbook (both aforementioned), and a manuscript by the Białystok poet and partisan Yakov (Dzhek) Gordon.

“*Geto-lebn*” (Ghetto Life)

Unlike the catch-all section preceding it, the book’s second chapter explores a single theme, “*Geto-lebn*” (ghetto life).¹⁴⁶ The works gathered here may challenge the expectations of readers familiar with post-Holocaust testimonies and memoirs. Heroic deeds and exemplary behavior are largely absent from these pages; rather, the greater part of the texts speak to the fact that ghetto life, with its isolation, uncertainties, deprivations and degradations, often brought out the worst in people.

Lithuanian sources again predominate, with a particularly rich selection of material—twenty-three songs and poems—originating in the Kovno ghetto. Many are broadsides, satiric ballads aimed at Judenrat members and privileged cronies that lay bare the people’s resentments toward ghetto “elites.” They also validate, however inadvertently, the German scheme to subjugate the ghettos by perversely authorizing Jewish “self-rule”—a ploy to foster internecine struggle by diverting Jewish hostility from the perpetrators onto the ghetto leadership. Fixated

¹⁴⁵ Kacerginski notes that Sudenski (b. 1908) had immigrated to Israel (USHMM Central Name Index, International Tracing Service Archive: “Sudenski, Gitta Jossipovicz”).

¹⁴⁶ Almost half of the chapter’s song titles include the word *geto* (ghetto).

on Jewish “haves” and “have nots,” songs of ghetto life in Kovno scarcely note the presence of Germans (three songs in this chapter refer to Lithuanian and Latvian auxiliaries, visible surrogates, in the ghetto, for the Gestapo and the SS).

Kacerginski primarily chose songs written for the ghetto stage for his portrait of life in Vilna. Intended for a broad audience, and calculatedly inoffensive to the Jewish Police and the Judenrat (which held censorship powers over the theater), these songs characteristically conclude with appeals for solidarity, patience and hope. Vilna songs of non-theatrical origin, however, often tap the same satiric vein as the Kovno material, with caustic references to influence-peddling, bribery and the black market. Rounding off the survey of Lithuanian ghettos are three topical songs from the smaller town of Šiauliai (Yid., Shavli). These are the work of a single author, Khane Kheytn, whose popular lyrics recount in sometimes personal, sometimes droll or dispassionate tones, scenes of overcrowding, rampant begging, and forced labor that marked daily life for the ghetto’s inhabitants.¹⁴⁷

Kacerginski gathered far fewer testaments—nine songs total—to ghetto life in Poland. The Warsaw repertoire, replete with brazen black humor and references to smuggling, begging and bribery, often seems of a kind with that of Kovno. One telling distinction, however, is language. Home to an increasingly assimilating Jewish population before the war, Warsaw remained a cultural nexus for Polish-speaking Jews throughout the ghetto period. Unsurprisingly, then, two of this section’s five “Warsaw” songs were originally written to Polish texts and had to be translated into Yiddish for inclusion in the volume.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Kheytn (b. 1922) immigrated to Israel and later moved to the U.S. Kacerginski did not interview her personally but collected her texts from two different informants (Kacerginski 1948: 132; 139; 169).

¹⁴⁸ Polish-to-Yiddish translations in this section include “Di tfile fun khaper” (The Prayer of a Pickpocket) and “Hot's rakhmones, yidishe hertser” (Have Mercy, Jewish Hearts). The previous chapter, “Zog nit keymol,” also

The two items from Łódź recall the tropes and formulas of the Vilna repertoire. Both concern the grind of forced labor and both end on a note of hope, while one (“Dos shnayderl” [The Little Tailor]) almost certainly originated in a ghetto stage production, and thus would have been subject to censorship by the Judenrat chief, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski. Inexplicably, Kacerginski did not collect (or at least never published) any texts by Łódź ghetto’s best known street-singer, Jankiel Herszkowicz (1910-1972), whose irreverent, subversive topical songs often derided Rumkowski and other prominent ghetto officials.¹⁴⁹

“S’iz gut” (It’s Good), the sole song of life in Kraków ghetto, offers the perspective of Kraków’s beloved Yiddish folk bard, Mordechai Gebirtig (1877-1942). Composed in May, 1942, this sarcastic blast at perceived Jewish complacency would be Gebirtig’s final statement (he was killed during a deportation the following month). Uniquely for the ghetto repertoire, this work’s thoroughgoing irony extends beyond the lyrics to the music itself, which is set to the meter of a cheery Aryan waltz. “S’iz gut” may not have been known beyond the poet’s immediate circle of intimates; Kacerginski’s source was the published volume of Gebirtig’s ghetto songs edited by Joseph Wulf (see discussion of “S’iz gut” in chapter 4, below; see discussion of *Es brent* in chapter 2, above).

included a pair of texts translated from Polish: “A Yid” (A Jew) by Pola Braun, and “Der kleynere shmugler” (The Little Smuggler) by Henryka Łazowertówna. On Łazowertówna (Lazovert) see Kassow 2007: 181-182.

¹⁴⁹ “Both the composer, Dovid Beygelman, and the lyricist, Szymon Janowski, of “Dos shnayderl” had been theater professionals before the war. On Janowski, see Dobroszycki 1984: 58 fn. 70. Fragments of Herszkowicz’s songs turn up without attribution in two issues of *Fun letstn khurbn*; see “Lodzher geto” (No. 3, Oct-Nov. 1946); and “Oy, kartofl” (Oh, Potato) (No. 5, May, 1947); his work otherwise appears in none of the early anthologies. Although a Łódź Ghetto Chronicle entry for 8-10 June 1942 affirms Herszkowicz’s celebrity as the “ghetto troubadour” (Dobroszycki 1984: 203), and his street songs were evoked in Shammai Rosenblum’s 1950s radio play *Yizkor: in Memory of the Victims of the European Jewish Catastrophe: 1940-1945* (Rosenblum 1958), it was only with the publication of Frenkiel 1986, Flam 1992, and Herszkowicz 1994 (compiled by the singer’s friend Joseph Wajsblat) that Herszkowicz’s name at last became generally associated with his well-remembered songs. (For a biographical statement, see Herszkowicz 2005.)

By design or coincidence, the book's first two sections conclude with songs about children. Themes of family separation and forlorn hope characterize the last entry on ghetto life, "Gib a brokhe tsu dayn kind" (Say a Blessing for Your Child). The anonymous text, from Bochnia ghetto in southern Poland, movingly describes the leave-takings preceding a sudden roundup of Jews for "resettlement" to parts unknown.¹⁵⁰ As such, it is a fitting prelude to the following chapter, "Treblinka."

***"Treblinka"* (Treblinka)**

Synonymous with certain death even while the war still raged, the extermination camp Treblinka, north of Warsaw, stood for many years afterward as a byword for brutality, mechanized killing and genocide.¹⁵¹ Kaczerginski employed this generic sense of "Treblinka" in his penultimate chapter, a grouping of eighty-three songs largely dwelling on themes of displacement, dehumanization, suffering and despair.¹⁵² In keeping with the volume's classic narrative structure, this chapter marks the low-point of the storyline. The general mantra of misery is, however, punctuated by a scattering of comparatively optimistic texts portending the climax and denouement to come.

The chapter also offers the book's greatest diversity of provenance sites, introducing, alongside poems and songs from the Baltic states and Poland, material from France and Germany to the west, and Romania and Ukraine to the east. Kaczerginski nonetheless continued

¹⁵⁰ The event chronicled in "Gib a brokhe" may have been the "first Aktion" of August, 1942, the "second Aktion" of November 1942, or the final liquidation of the Bochnia ghetto, which occurred in September 1943 (Phillips and Dean 2012: 488-491).

¹⁵¹ Auschwitz assumed this symbolic role in the wake of the heavily publicized Frankfurt Auschwitz Trials (1963-67). See further discussion in chapter 5, below.

¹⁵² Even songs whose titles or lyrics recognize Treblinka as a geographic entity might still evoke the camp's symbolic resonance. A line in "Treblinka (variant)" reads in part, "dort iz far yedn yid an ort" (every Jew will find a place [i.e., grave] there (Kaczerginski 1948a: 215).

to draw most frequently on the sources he knew best. Vilna ghetto deportees Sara Kagan and Raya Gilels contributed the largest grouping of songs, from the Latvian camps Kaiserwald, Dünawerk, and Strasdenhof, while much of the Lithuanian repertoire, primarily from the labor camps Kaišiadorys (Yid., Koshador) and Žiežmariai (Yid., Zhezhmer), originated with another one-time Vilna ghetto denizen, Leah Svirski.¹⁵³ Former Vilna ghetto prisoners were also responsible for a pair of songs from the Estonian forced-labor camps Klooga and Vivikon.

By contrast, the chapter's twelve songs from occupied Poland arrived from diverse locales—the concentration camps Auschwitz and Janowska, the labor camps Auschwitz-Buna, Kamionka and Rusocin (Ger., Russoschin, a sub-camp of Stuthoff), and the Warsaw and Międzyrzec ghettos—and a disparate group of informants: Elye Magid, a Vilna tailor and Polish army veteran; Joseph Wulf, an erudite historian raised in Kraków; and Irke Janowski, a community activist who had survived the Warsaw ghetto and several camps. As did the previous two chapters, “Treblinka” also includes material translated from Polish, in this case a single song, “Der tango fun oshvientshim” (The Tango from Auschwitz).¹⁵⁴

Sites to the west of Poland make a first appearance in this chapter. The provenance of the two songs from Germany remains obscure: Kaczerginski's gloss to “A shtikele broyt” (A Piece

¹⁵³ The concentration camp Kaiserwald was established in early 1943. Workers at the forced-labor camp Dünawerk were engaged in the manufacture of munitions. The forced-labor camp Strasdenhof (variously Strassenhof, Strazdenhof, Strazdemuiza, Riga-Strasdenhof) was the site of a silk-spinning factory (White 2009). Sara Kagan (as “Sara Kogan-Goldman”) had been singled out by Kaczerginski as an important informant (Kaczerginski 1948a: XXVI; see his introduction, translated above). Svirski (b. 1926), a native of Švenčionys, near Vilna, never met Kaczerginski, who received her lyrics from another survivor. When I interviewed her in Israel, she pointed out an important error of transmission in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*: the dropped final verse of her partisan song, “Shtey oyf tsu kamf” (1948a: 346) (Svirski 1997); see also the booklet to the CD *Rise Up and Fight!: Songs of Jewish Partisans* (1996).

¹⁵⁴ Joseph Wulf, Elye Magid, and Irke Yanovski (Irena Janowska) are personally thanked in the introduction for their contributions. (Yanovski appears on a list of former Warsaw ghetto residents compiled shortly after the war; see “Janowska, Irka” in Engelking-Boni 2011.)

of Bread) reads “sung in a camp near Bremen”; while the place of origin of “Ikh vil zen mayn meydele” (I Want to See My Girl) can only be inferred from a line of text that reads “*kh’bin in daytshland dokh nokh a shklat*” (I am in Germany, again a slave) (Kaczerginski 1948a: 238 and 256). On the other hand, the single entry from France is decidedly site specific: “Undzer mut iz nikht gebrokhn” (Our Courage is Unbroken), written in 1941 by Polish refugees Israel Cendorf and Mendel Zemelman, was the acknowledged (though unofficial) anthem of the transit camp Pithiviers, in north-central France.¹⁵⁵

Notably, the chapter also includes a selection of six songs from Ukrainian and Transnistrian (Romanian) ghettos and camps. Contributed by Moyshe Shternberg of Bucharest, an author in correspondence with Kaczerginski, this sequence represents a rare instance of commonality between Kaczerginski’s and Beregovski’s collecting activities—although in fact only one song, “Tsezeyt un tshshpreyt” (Scattered and Dispersed), reportedly from Shargorod ghetto, in Ukraine, actually appears in both anthologies.¹⁵⁶ Lastly, Kaczerginski again depended on the published work of Sami Feder, and, especially, his co-editor H. Leivick, whose memoir, *Mit der shayris hapliteh* (Among the Survivors) (Leivick 1946), was the source of lyrics by the Warsaw ghetto songwriter S. Shenker and the young underground fighter Pesye Mayevska.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ The song is otherwise known as the “Chant du Pithiviers” (see Cendorf’s entry in U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, *Holocaust Encyclopedia*).

¹⁵⁶ See Table 14, chapter 2, above. Although text and music are now missing, Beregovski had clearly collected another song, “Farvolknt der himl,” ultimately printed in Kaczerginski 1948a: as “Eykho-vi azoy (variant)” (see fn. 121, above, and fn. 195, below.) Shternberg might be identified as Mosche Sternberg, b. Czernowitz 1900, listed as a prisoner in Transnistrian camps (USHMM Central Name Index, International Tracing Service Archive: “Sternberg, Mosche”).

¹⁵⁷ Leivick collected Mayevska’s poems in the Bavarian DP Camp, Leipheim, noting that he had abbreviated and edited these “beginner’s works” for publication (Leivick 1946: 273-274.). Although reflective on wartime themes, Mayevska’s poems may in fact have been composed in the Displaced Persons camp. To Leivick’s reportage, Kaczerginski added that Mayevska currently (1948) resided in Cyprus, presumably en route to Palestine/Israel.

“Treblinka” concludes, inevitably, on an ominous note. “S’iz finf minut tsu tsvelf” (It’s Five Minutes to Twelve), written in an Estonian camp, conjures storm clouds, blood and the Angel of Death (“who goes everywhere without a visa”) to generally gloomy effect. But Kaczerginski brushes aside the poem’s pessimism and morbidity, and, perhaps relating its “storm clouds” to the meteorological metaphor employed by Hirsh Glik in the celebrated “partisan song” that opens the volume, seizes on the title image as heralding the resistance theme of the book’s fourth and final chapter.¹⁵⁸

“Kontratak”(Counterattack)

The anthology’s concluding section, on Jewish resistance, opens forcefully with “Kontratak” (Counterattack) by Władysław Szlengel (1914-1943). A rising literary figure in interwar Poland, Szlengel pursued his craft in the Warsaw ghetto as a scenarist and Master of Ceremonies at the popular Café Sztuka (Art Café).¹⁵⁹ As a sometime member of the Jewish police, Szlengel stood witness to serial Gestapo *Aktions* and the relentless erosion of hope for the ghetto's inhabitants; as an activist and cultural worker, he aided efforts to document ghetto life for Emanuel Ringelblum's covert “Oneg Shabbes” archive. Increasingly fatalistic about the community's prospects for survival, he finally joined the Jewish underground, taking part in the anti-German uprisings of January and April, 1943.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ The evocative line from Glik’s poem is “Khotsh himlen blayen farshteln bloye teg” (though leaden skies conceal days of blue). See also fn. 264, below.

¹⁵⁹ Szlengel sometimes shared the bill at Café Sztuka with songwriter Pola Braun (see fns. 141 and 148, above).

¹⁶⁰ On Szlengel's role in the ghetto cabaret, see Engelking-Boni and Leociak 2009: 587. On his association with and resignation from the Jewish Police, see Kassow 2007: 316. On his association with the Ringelblum archive, see Engelking-Boni and Leociak 2009: 663. Engelking-Boni and Leociak place Szlengel in the “wider circle” of Oneg Shabbes “co-workers”; on the other hand, Kassow, who terms Szlengel “the most popular Polish-language poet in the ghetto” and cites Ringelblum’s admiration for his work, believes “Szlengel did not appear to be an actual collaborator [of Ringelblum] probably because of his membership in the Jewish police which he quit at the

Szlengel's poetry, too, was radicalized by the times. His early ghetto lyrics, dwelling on current events or personal moods and feelings, were couched in the standard poetic formulas of the day.¹⁶¹ The later works, however, were self-styled “*wierszy-dokumentów*”—documentary poems—fusions of free verse and frontline reportage that sought to transcribe in real time the author's rapture in battle and life-and-death urgency.¹⁶² A bitter irony also pervades these lines, as when Szlengel, as if mimicking the mindset of a Nazi soldier (or a German butcher), refers to the ghetto Jews as “meat”:

Bullets ring in joyous song
 Revolt of the Meat!
 Revolt of the Meat!
 Meat spits grenades out the window
 Meat bites with scarlet flames
 And life hangs on from the beams—
 Hey! What joy to shoot at their eyes
 HERE IS THE FRONT gentlemen!¹⁶³z

beginning of the Great Deportation” (2007: 181). For Ringelblum's response to Szlengel's poetry, see Kassow 2007: 316-319. On Szlengel's possible association with the *Żydowski Związek Wojskowy* (ŻZW; the Jewish Military Union), see entries for Szlengel and Szymek Kac in Engelking-Boni, *Warsaw Ghetto Database* (Szlengel 2011; Kac 2011). Several sources state that Szlengel was billeted at Świętojerska Street 36, where he was killed (Kassow: 323, citing Mark 1954: 149). Kaczerginski (1948a: 299) erroneously claims that Szlengel perished during the first uprising, whereas he almost certainly met his death during the April 1943 insurrection.

¹⁶¹ “[Szlengel's] early ghetto poetry shares with the [Polish] *Skamander* movement, popular in the first decade of the interwar period, a predilection for colloquial idioms, a lighthearted poetic voice, as well as satiric and ironic modes” (Aaron 1990: 21). See for example the irregularly rhymed quatrains of *Telefon* and the mock balladry (also rhymed) of *Legandy wigilijne* (Christmas Legends) (Szlengel and Maciejewska 1977: 61-64 and 65-69).

¹⁶² On Szlengel and the “*wierszy-dokumentów*,” see Aaron 1990: 17-22 and 39-53. Szlengel's confessional essay (“in the form of a prose-poem”) justifying these literary efforts, and bearing as well on Kaczerginski's work as poet and collector, might be cited at length:

With all my senses I feel myself being suffocated by the diminishing air in a boat that is irrevocably going down. The distinction is minimal: I'm in this boat not carried by heroic gestures but rather thrown in without volition, guilt, or higher law. / Still, I am in this boat, and if I don't perceive myself as its captain, I am nonetheless the chronicler of the drowning. I don't want to leave mere statistical ciphers. I want to enrich (wrong word) future history with a legacy, documents, and illustrations. / I write document-poems on the wall of my boat. To the companions of my tomb, I read elaborations of a poet, a poet *anno domini* 1943, who sought inspiration in the dismal chronicle of his day. (Aaron 1990: 41; translation by Aaron. See also Szlengel and Maciejewska 1977: 37-38.)

¹⁶³ English translation excerpted from Roskies 1989: 489. Kaczerginski's Yiddish version (1948a: 297-299) does not reproduce Szlengel's (and Roskies') expressive orthography.

Written during the first uprising and prophetic of the second (during which Szlengel lost his life), “Kontratak” is unlike any other work in Kacerginski’s anthology.¹⁶⁴ Yet its conspicuous placement at the head of the last chapter is purposeful. Its “resistance theme” harks back to “Zog nit keynmol,” the partisan anthem that commenced the volume (and likewise engendered its own chapter title), thus underscoring the book’s claims to structural coherence.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, Szlengel’s documentary poem, translated and showcased in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*, advances a historical narrative particularly important to Kacerginski—one that affirms Warsaw as the fount and symbol of Jewish strength and self-reliance. In this retelling, the ghetto rebellion stands as the period’s transformative event, a touchstone not only for Kacerginski and his partisan cohort in wartime, but for his postwar readership of Jews striving to regain a place in society, or fighting to establish a nation of their own.

Kacerginski also addressed Warsaw’s emblematic status with “Varshe” (1944), an original lyric written to mark the uprising’s first anniversary (Kacerginski 1948a: 313 and 422). And yet even in his book’s *Kontratak*-inspired final chapter the quantitative contribution of Warsaw to the Shoah song catalogue continued to lag well behind that of the larger Lithuanian ghettos, totalling only four numbers compared to sixteen and ten, respectively, from Vilna and Kovno. Kacerginski’s hometown bias surely played a role in this imbalance, but another weighting factor would simply have been a lack of source material.¹⁶⁶ The Germans virtually

¹⁶⁴ Kacerginski’s source for “Kontratak” was Borwicz 1947b: 190-193, which included an excerpt (approximately one-third) of Szlengel’s poem. According to the literary scholar Irena Maciejewska, “Kontratak” survived in two versions, the first dated 18 January 1943, the second undated (Szlengel and Maciejewska 1977: 134). Some of Szlengel’s documentary poetry surfaced many years after the war, discovered inside a piece of dilapidated furniture that had been split apart for firewood (Szlengel and Maciejewska 1977: 165).

¹⁶⁵ Kacerginski noted elsewhere that “Zog nit keynmol” author Hirsh Glik had been inspired by news of the Warsaw ghetto uprising (Kacerginski 1952: 106-109).

¹⁶⁶ On the paucity of Warsaw sources, see also discussion in chapter 2, above.

obliterated the ghetto in the wake of the uprisings, then razed much of Warsaw city itself as the war drew to a close. And although the ghetto chronicler Ringelblum diligently sought out folkloric artifacts—songs, poems, proverbs, jokes, anecdotes—the Oneg Shabbes archive emerged from the ruins too slowly to prove a useful resource for Kaczerginski. Indeed, the convoluted social, political and institutional factors at play in postwar Poland, as well as a degree of proprietary guardedness on the part of its custodians at the Żydowski Instytut Historyczny (*ŻIH*, the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw), effectively ensured that the Ringelblum Collection would remain generally closed off to outside scholars for decades after its partial recovery in 1946.

In terms of song research, the dearth of source material from the largest and most populous ghetto, as well as from other Polish territorial sites canvassed by Ringelblum's corps of *zamlers*, meant that Kaczerginski's successors emulated, often unknowingly, his regional prejudices. As a consequence, Lithuanian repertoire continued to overshadow repertoire originating elsewhere, not only in subsequent publications devoted to Shoah song, but in mixed-category Jewish songbooks, anthologies of Holocaust and Yiddish literature, recordings of ghetto and camp poetry and song, and documentary and fiction films.¹⁶⁷

The texts gathered in the *Kontratak* section fall into five basic categories (allowing for a degree of overlap in subject matter). “Songs of patience and encouragement” make up the largest grouping (twenty numbers), with texts typically urging listeners to bear sorrows, endure hardships, and summon strength to last out the war. Most works in this category originated in labor battalions attached to Lithuanian ghettos, but Kaczerginski draws special attention to five

¹⁶⁷ See, for example, the *Warsaw Ghetto Memorial Program* prepared and narrated by Ruth Rubin, which features seven songs from Vilna ghetto (and none from Warsaw ghetto) drawn from Kaczerginski's collection (Rubin 1967). This aspect of Kaczerginski's legacy will be discussed in chapter 5.

songs from *Moyshe halt zikh!* (Hang on, Moyshe!), the last theatrical revue staged in the Vilna ghetto before its liquidation in August 1943. Two pieces from this revue, “Di psure fun nekhome” (Tidings of Consolation) and “Es shlogt di sho” (The Hour Strikes), might further be considered “songs of portent.” Boldly foretelling the imminent German collapse, these works—strategically introduced toward the very end of the book—comprise a small but important subset of the “patience and encouragement” category.

As might be expected, a large amount of the “Kontratak” chapter is given over to “partisan songs” (seventeen numbers). Replete with allusions to vengeance, weaponry and the Red Army, the partisan repertoire in fact ranges over a variety of themes and emotions, from maudlin sentimentality (the anonymous “Dort baym breg fun veldl” [There By the Edge of the Forest]) to martial bloodlust (Kaczerginski’s “Partizaner-marsh” [Partisan March])—and even allows for a fleeting foray into romance (Hirsh Glik’s “Dos zangl” [The Cornstalk]). Songs commemorating important events and individuals are another fixture of the partisan repertoire. Kaczerginski’s “Varshe” (already mentioned) falls into this category, as does his “Itsik vitnberg” (Yitzhak Wittenberg), named for the martyred Vilna underground commander, and Glik’s “Shtil di nakht,” a tribute to the female resistance fighter Vitke Kempner.¹⁶⁸

Two “songs of despair” offer a measure of contrast. “In voronetser vald” (In Woronic Forest), by Elye Magid, and “In kriyuvke” (In a Dugout), by Magid and Dovid Gerstman, speak to the situation of isolated individuals facing constant peril while on the run from German forces. The lyrics to these songs emanate anxiety and pessimism, emotions not typically expressed in the

¹⁶⁸ For another poetic tribute to female resistance fighters, see “Der kemfnder shvester” (The Fighting Sisters) by Sara Sapir (Kaczerginski 1948a: 337).

partisan repertoire because the communal structure and camaraderie fostered by the organized underground helped keep such fears in check.

Rounding out the picture, Kaczerginski introduces two “songs of religious faith.” “Oyb nit keyn emune” (If There is No Faith) and “Varshever geto-lid fun frume yidn” (Warsaw Ghetto Song of Pious Jews) are simple, prayerful affirmations of trust in God's plan for Jewish salvation—if only one believes. First printed in book form in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*, “Varshever geto-lid fun frume yidn,” now far better known as “Ani Maamim” (“I believe,” after its opening phrase), has become a fixture in Holocaust commemoration ceremonies worldwide.¹⁶⁹

“Kontratak”'s remaining song-category, and the book's takeaway message, might be labeled “Am Yisroel Khay”—“the Jewish people live.” Here, the enduring “Jewish spirit”—manifested in remembrance, national consciousness, and the perpetuation of Jewish DNA—is invoked as proof of the enemy's failure to achieve its genocidal goal. The dying synagogue official of “In slobodker yeshive” (In the Slobodka Yeshiva), for example, assures that the story of his ghetto will not be lost to history by bequeathing his survivors the vow to “tell the children of the torments we suffered” (*dertseyln di kinderlakh fun undzer payn un gehenem*), while the partisan narrator of “Shtey oyf” (Rise Up) rouses and reassures her comrades in tones reminiscent of biblical prophecy: “But you, my sorrowful people, will elude death; [you] are eternal as the southern sun and the northern cold” (*Nor du, mayn folk fun laydn, du vest dem toyt farmaydn, vi dorem-zun bist eybik, un oykh vi tsofn-kelt*).

¹⁶⁹ Emma Schaver recorded “Varshever geto-lid” (as “Ani Maamin”) for her 1947 album *I Believe: A Collection of Songs* (Schaver and Sébastien 1947); it also appears in her pocket-anthology (Schaver 1948), and in Hurvitz 1949.

Chapter and book culminate with a last selection from the Vilna revue *Moyshe halt zikh!*, “Mir lebn eybik!” (We live forever!). Its title alone might mark this song as the inevitable finale, but “Mir lebn eybik!” offers in addition a direct reference to “Zog nit keynmol,” the partisan anthem that commenced the volume and purposefully resonates throughout. Poet Leyb Rozental, writing at a time of near-unbearable tension in the ghetto, understood the electrifying response Hirsh Glik's affirmation “mir zaynen do!” (we are here!) would provoke in his audience, and, like Glik, made this phrase the climax of his song. Kaczerginski had been present at the partisan gathering where Glik introduced “Zog nit keynmol,” and the song had immediately struck him as the very distillation of a people's defiance and will to survive.¹⁷⁰ A constant source of inspiration and encouragement throughout the remainder of the war, it then provided Kaczerginski a governing motif—“we are here!”—for *Lider fun di getos un lagern*. He naturally returned to this phrase, now incarnated in Rozental's soaring lyric, to bring his book full circle and to a close:

Mir lebn eybik, mir zaynen do!
 Mir lebn eybik in yeder sho.
 Mir viln lebn un derlebn,
 Shlekhte tsaytn ariberlebn,
 Mir lebn eybik, mir zaynen do!

We live forever, we are here!
 We live forever, in every hour.
 We want to live and to survive
 And outlast these evil times,
 We live forever, we are here!

¹⁷⁰ As previously noted, Kaczerginski describes the birth of “Zog nit keynmol” at length in his memoir, *Ikh bin geven a partizan* (Kaczerginski 1952: 104-109).

Table 15

Lider fun di getos un lagern (1948)

This table lists all 235 songs in the collection, which are divided among four thematic chapters: “Zog nit keynmol,” “Geto-lebn,” “Treblinke,” and “Kontratak.”

An asterisk (*) following a song title signifies that its melody appears in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*.

Italicized text indicates information retrieved from sources other than Kaczerginski’s volume.

“Zog nit keymol”

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
1	Zog nit keynmol!*	w: Hirsh Glik m: Dmitri & Daniel Pokrass	Vilna	1943
2	Bay undz iz shtendig fintster*	w: Kasriel Broydo m: Henech Kon ¹⁷¹	Vilna	1942
3	Geto ¹⁷²	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown	Vilna	1942
4	Es iz geven a zumer-tog*	w: Rivke Glezer m: <i>Herman Yablakoff</i>	Vilna	1941
5	Kolones	w: Bela Gurvitsh	Kovno	
6	Gro un finster iz in geto	w: Rivke Glezer	Vilna	
7	Vi sheyn bistu, o velt	w, m: unknown	Kovno	
8	Lid fun grodner geto	w, m: unknown	Grodno	1941
9	Eykho ¹⁷³	w, m: unknown	Białystok, Borki-Komionka	
10	Tsi darf es azoy zayn?*	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown	Vilna	
11	Di brik klingt unter unzere fis-trit	w: Dzhek Gordon ¹⁷⁴	Białystok	

¹⁷¹ Contrafact to a prewar song by Kon and his frequent partner, the famed poet and playwright Moshe Broderzon (1890-1956).

¹⁷² This and the preceding originated in the 1942 Vilna ghetto revue “Men ken gornit visn” (You Never Can Tell) (Beinfeld 1984).

¹⁷³ Melody printed in Mlotek and Mlotek 1999: 277.

¹⁷⁴ According to Kaczerginski (1948a: 17) this and three further poems by Yakov (Dzhek) Gordon (ca. 1916-ca. 1943) (nos. 12, 15, 17) were found in a manuscript recovered from the ruins of Białystok ghetto. For English translations of three of Gordon’s four ghetto poems, see Kramer 1998: 137-141.

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
12	Tsi zaynen undz teg nokh a sakh geblibn?	w: Dzhek Gordon	Białystok	
13	Mir zaynen oykh fun flaysh un blut ¹⁷⁵	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown i: Keyle Efron	Vilna	1943
14	Bay undz in geto	w: Eta Gurvitsh	Kovno	
15	Ven ikh zol kenen redn tsu dir	w: Dzhek Gordon	Białystok	
16	Di zun iz arayn in di volkns	w: Yitskhak Berman	Riga	1943
17	Mir hobn baym trogn di kletser	w: Dzhek Gordon	Białystok	
18	In der yeshive	w: Moyshe Diskant	Kovno	
19	Di eybikayt*	w: Moyshe Shimel m: Yakov Vayngortn	Kraków	
20	Bombes* ¹⁷⁶	w: Lazar Buzhanski m: Pavel Armand i: Brakha Grenadir	Vilna	1942
21	Es vet zikh fun tsvigl tseblien a boym* ¹⁷⁷	w: Kasriel Broydo m: Yankl Trupianski	Vilna	1942
22	Der gazlen	w: Gite Sudenski	Vilna	
23	Der “jude” fun geto	w: Gite Sudenski	Vilna	
24	Aroys iz in vilne a nayer bafel*	w: unknown m: Alexander Gurilev i: Sheyne Klaynberg	Vilna	
25	Di nakht* ¹⁷⁸	w: Aharon Domnitz m: Mikhl Gelbart	Vilna	
26	Di serenade	w: Moyshe Diskant	Kovno	
27	Akh, gevald, vi halt ikh oys	w: Moyshe Diskant	Kovno	
28	Lebn	w: K. Brener	Kovno	
29	Tsigayner-lid*	w, m: Dovid Baygelman i: Zise Hershkovitsh	Lodz	
30	A yidish lidl	w, m: Dovid Baygelman i: Tole Serpinski	Lodz	

¹⁷⁵ From the 1942 Vilna ghetto revue “Moyshe halt zikh!” (Hold On, Moyshe!) (Beinfeld 1984).

¹⁷⁶ This song and no. 26 written in response to Soviet bombardment of Vilna in March, 1942.

¹⁷⁷ Original title “Kinder fun geto”; used in the 1942 Vilna ghetto revue “Korene yorn un vey tsu teg” (Years of Wheat and Days of Woe); also used as introduction to the *Maydim* (ghetto marionette) theater production of Peretz’s “Tsvey brider (Two Brothers) (Kaczerginski 1948a: 29).

¹⁷⁸ Prewar song popular in the Vilna ghetto.

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
31	Oberhardt	w: Gite Sudenski	Vilna	
32	Neger-lid ¹⁷⁹	w: Leyb Rozentel m: Misha Veksler	Vilna	1943
33	Froyen*	w: Kasriel Broydo m: <i>Volf Durmashkin</i> i: Dora Rubin	Vilna	
34	Shotns ¹⁸⁰	w: Leyb Rozentel m: unknown i: Dora Rubin	Vilna	1942
35	Ikh benk	w: Lerke Rozenblum m: unknown ¹⁸¹	Kovno	
36	In bialistoker geto (fragment)	w: unknown	Białystok	
37	Markovtshizne	w: H. Goldshteyn m: unknown	Białystok	1943
38	Dos lid fun bialistoker geto*	w, m: unknown	Białystok	1942
39	Rivkele di shabesdike*	w: Pesakh Kaplan m: unknown	Białystok	1941
40	In der kazarme*	w, m: unknown	Zamosc	1940
41	Zamdn glien oyf der zun*	w: A. Volman m: Dovid Beygelman i: Zise Hershkovitsh	Łódź	
42	On a heym*	w: unknown m: <i>Israel Shayevich, Alexander Olshanetsky</i> i: Irke Yanovski	Sosnowiec	1943
43	Es benkt zikh, es benkt zikh*	w: Kasriel Broydo	Vilna	1942
44	Ikh vart oyf dir	w: Leyb Rozentel m: unknown i: Dora Rubin	Vilna	
45	Kleyner volkn*	w: Abraham Joachimowicz m: Dovid Baygelman i: Zise Hershkovitsh	Łódź	
46	Kinder-yorn*	w, m: Dovid Baygelman i: Zise Hershkovitsh	Łódź	
47	Dos farklemter harts	w: Shaul Shenker	Kovno	

¹⁷⁹ From the 1943 Vilna ghetto theater production “Der mabl” (The Flood) (Beinfeld 1984).

¹⁸⁰ This song and no. 43 from the 1942 Vilna ghetto revue “Korene yorn un vey tsu teg” (Years of Wheat and Days of Woe) (Beinfeld 1984).

¹⁸¹ Melody (possibly by Henech Kon) in Kon 1960: 36.

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
48	Friling*	w: Shmerke Kacerginski m: Avreml Brudno	Vilna	1943
49	A lid fun riger geto	w: Yofe m: unknown	Riga	
50	Blut ¹⁸²	w: <i>Tsvi Garmiza</i>	Kovno, Šiauliai	
51	Unter dayne vayse shtern* ¹⁸³	w: Avrom Sutzkever m: Avreml Brudno i: Golde Kaplan	Vilna	1943
52	Mariko*	w: Shmerke Kacerginski m: unknown	Vilna	1943
53	Ikh hob mayn man farloyren*	w: Tsvi Garmiza m: <i>Zygmunt Karasiński and Szymon Kataszek</i>	Kovno	
54	Farvos iz der himl*	w: Leyb Opeskin m: <i>Viktor Belyi</i> i: Nemi Markels	Vilna	
55	Di letste nakht	w: Rivke Glezer	Vilna	1943
56	Kulis*	w: Sh. Shaynkinder m: unknown i: Diana Blumenfeld	Warsaw	
57	Ikh benk aheym*	w: Leyb Rozental m: unknown	Vilna	
58	Shpiglt zikh oyf shoyb di zun	w: Abraham Joachimowicz m: Dovid Baygelman i: Zise Hershkovitsh	Łódź	
59	Dremlen feygl oyf di tsvaygn*	w: Leah Rudnitski m: <i>Leyb Yampolski</i>	Vilna	
60	Shtiler, shtiler*	w: Sh. Kacerginski m: A. Wilkowiski	Vilna	1943
61	Dos elnte kind*	w: Sh. Kacerginski m: Yankl Krimski	Vilna	
62	Makh tsu di eygelekh*	w: Isaiah Spiegel m: Dovid Baygelman	Łódź	
63	Nit keyn rozkhenkis, nit keyn mandlen*	w: Isaiah Spiegel m: Dovid Baygelman	Łódź	
64	Shlof in der ruikayt	w; m: unknown i: Shlomo Yashuner	Vilna	
65	A yidishe kind*	w: Khane Kheytn m: <i>Henech Kon</i>	Šiauliai	1943

¹⁸² Kacerginski labels this work a “fragment” and gives author as anonymous. For full text and author attribution, see *Shirim me-geto Shavli* 2003: 79-81.

¹⁸³ This song and no. 52 written for the revue “Di yogenish in fas” (The Chase in a Barrel) (Beinfeld 1983).

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
66	Kinder-fragas	w: Eta Gurvitsh	Kovno	
67	A yid ¹⁸⁴	w, m: Pola Braun i: Diana Blumenfeld	Warsaw	
68	Shlof mayn zun mayn kleyner	w, m: unknown	Kovno	
69	Blik inem kium	w: A. Bang	Vilna	
70	Mayn kleyner martirer*	w: Moyshe Diskant m: unknown	Kovno	
71	Der kleyner shmugler	w: Henryka Łazowertówna m: <i>Konrad Tom</i>	Warsaw	1941
72	Yisrolik*	w: Leyb Rozental m: Misha Veksler i: Sheyne Klaynberg	Vilna	1942
73	Tsvey meydlekh	w: Avrom Cypkin	Kovno	
74	Di alte mamele	w: Percy Haid m: <i>Percy Haid</i>	Kovno	1944
75	Di broyt-farkoyferin*	w: Sh. Shaynkinder m: <i>Herman Yablokoff</i> i: Diana Blumenfeld	Warsaw	
76	Fun kolkhoz bin ikh*	w: Leyb Opeskin m: Misha Veksler i: Ete Gutman; Musye Yakimovski	Vilna	
77	Dos transport-yingl*	w: Kasriel Broydo m: Misha Veksler	Vilna	1942
78	Rose*	w: Keyle Efron m: unknown	Vilna	
79	Di tsavoe	w: Yasha Rabinovitch m: <i>Johanna Spector</i>	Riga (camp)	1944
80	Me hot ze in dr'erd	w: Abraham Rubinshtayn	Warsaw	
81	In lager*	w; m: unknown i: Shlomo Yashuner	Vilna	
82	Habeit mishamayim ur'ei*	w, m: unknown i: Yoel Pontshek	Lublin, Chelm	
83	Her mayn kind, vi vintn brumen*	w, m: unknown	Oshmene (Ašmiany) ghetto	

¹⁸⁴ “A Yid” and “Der kleyner shmugler” (song no. 71), originally written in Polish, were translated to Yiddish for inclusion in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*.

Table 15 continued

“Geto-lebn”

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
84	Geto-lebn	w: unknown m: <i>Alexander Gurilev</i> ¹⁸⁵	Kovno	
85	Geto-lebn (variant)	w: unknown m: <i>Alexander Gurilev</i>	Kovno	
86	S'iz gut	w, m: Mordecai Gebirtig	Kraków	1942
87	Ikh leb in geto, in kavkaz	w: Khane Kheytn m: Dovid Beygelman i: Yerushalmi	Šiauliai	
88	In geto oyf di gasn	w: unknown	Kovno	
89	Baym toyer	w: unknown	Kovno	
90	Kh'vil tsaytn andere	w: Kasriel Broydo	Vilna	
91	Oyf shnорite	w: Khane Kheytn m: Elye Taytlboym	Šiauliai	
92	Hot's mitlayd, hot's rakhmones	w, m: unknown i: Irke Yanovski	Warsaw	
93	Ale birger fun geto-land	w: Moishe Diskant	Kovno	
94	Koyft geto-beygele	w: unknown m: <i>Russian popular song, "Bublitchki"</i>		
95	Der aerodromshtshik	w: B. Gurvitsh	Kovno	
96	Oyfshteyn tsum flug-plats	w: G. Shenker m: unknown	Kovno	
97	Mener-ferd	w: Rabbi Emanuel Hirshberg	Łódź	
98	Du geto mayn	w: Rikle Glezer m: Dmitri & Daniel Pokrass	Vilna	
99	Di tfile fun khaper ¹⁸⁶	w: Irena Gajzler m: Teresa Wajnbaum	Warsaw	
100	Fun der arbet	w: Visnesetski ¹⁸⁷ m: <i>Mark Warshawski</i>	Kovno	
101	Hot's rakhmones, yidishe hertser ¹⁸⁸	w, m: Pola Braun	Warsaw	
102	Dos geto-land	w: Moyshe Diskant	Kovno	

¹⁸⁵ Composer attribution speculative based on Cypkin's "geto-lebn" variant and text scansion.

¹⁸⁶ Original Polish title: "Modlitwa Chopera" (The Pickpocket's Prayer).

¹⁸⁷ Most other sources name Avrom Akselrod as lyricist.

¹⁸⁸ Original poem in Polish, with Yiddish title.

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
103	Zog mir, du geto-yidl	w: Avrom Akselrod m: <i>folk melody, "Tum Balalaika"</i>	Kovno	1942
104	Nit ayer mazl	w, m: Shaul Shenker	Kovno	1942
105	Ikh bin shoyng lang do nit geven	w: Leyb Rozental m: unknown	Vilna	1943
106	Peshe fun reshe	w: Leyb Rozental m: Misha Veksler	Vilna	1943
107	Torf-lid	w: Khane Kheyting m: <i>Henryk Wars</i>	Shavli (Šiauliai)	1943
108	Dos shnayderl	w: Szymon Janowski m: Dovid Beygelman i: Zise Hershkovitch	Łódź	
109	Vayl do git men	w, music: unknown	Vilna	1943
110	Men darf geyn in maline	w, music: unknown	Vilna	
111	Yidishe geto-politsey	w: unknown	Kovno	
112	Moes, moes	w: unknown m: <i>Bob Carleton (American popular song, "Ja-Da")</i> i: Rokhl Oyerbakh; Yehuda Elberg; Zofie Rotenstraukh	Warsaw	1942
113	Eksprompt	w: M. Zandberg	Vilna	
114	In dzoynt kumt tsu geyn a yid (fragment)	w: unknown m: folk song i: Zofie Rotenstraukh	Warsaw	
115	In Kovner geto-komitet	w: unknown	Kovno	
116	Maystes-lid	w: Avrom Cypkin m: <i>Isaak Dunaevskii</i>	Kovno	1942
117	Tilka	w: Avrom Cypkin m: unknown	Kovno	
118	Vegn lurien ¹⁸⁹	w: Nosn Markovski m: <i>Isaak Dunaevskii</i>	Kovno	1942
119	Di toyer-vakh	w: unknown	Kovno	
120	Der komitetshik	w: Markovski m: <i>Isaak Dunaevskii</i>	Kovno	1942
121	Lid fun vesharay	w: K. Brener	Kovno	
122	"Vitamin"	w: Shenker	Kovno	
123	Korene yorn un vey tsu di teg	w: Kasriel Broydo m: Misha Veksler	Vilna	1942
124	Efsher vet geshen a nes	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown i: Sender Vaysman	Vilna	

¹⁸⁹ Alternative title: "Hoykher man" (Lofty Man).

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
125	Zuzi	w: Leyb Rozental m: unknown	Vilna	
126	Az a libe shpiln	w: Leyb Rozental m: unknown	Vilna	
127	Finsternish	w: Avrom Cypkin m: folk song	Kovno	
128	Lekoved der gramen-fabrikatsie in geto	w: Lerke Rozenblum	Kovno	
129	Hot zikh mir di shikh tserisn	w: unknown <i>m: folk song ("In rod arayn")</i> i: Sheyne Bezdanski	Vilna	
130	Yidish tango	w: Reuven Tsarfat m: <i>Henech Kon</i> ¹⁹⁰	Kovno	
131	Gib a brokhe tsu dayn kind	w, m: unknown i: Meyer Lamer	Bochnia ghetto	

“Treblinka”

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
132	Treblinka	w, m: unknown i: Shlomo Yashuner	Warsaw	
133	Treblinka (variant)	w: unknown <i>m: Eduardo Bianco</i> i: Feygele Yashfan	Warsaw	
134	Di mezritser vishiedlenies in treblinka	w: Elye Magid m: unknown	Międzyrzec (Mezrits)	
135	Kum tsu mir	w: Joseph Wulf ¹⁹¹ <i>m: Jacques Andret</i> i: Joseph Wulf	Auschwitz-Buna	1944
136	Shoyn genug	w: Ida Grodzianovski m: Polish folk song	Dünawerk, Kaiserwald, Latvia	
137	In lager shtrasenhof	w: Mashe Mekhanik m: unknown	Strasdenhof camp	1944
138	Dos lid fun katset	w: Yashe Rabinovitch m: unident. Hebrew melody i: S. Feder anthology	Kaiserwald	

¹⁹⁰ Author and composer listed as “unknown” in Kaczerginski 1948a.

¹⁹¹ Kaczerginski lists author as unknown (informant: Yosef Volf [sic]) and year as 1943; Wulf (on his recording) declares himself the author and gives the year of creation as 1944 (Wulf 1966/67a).

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
139	Sport	w: Masha Rolnik (Rolnikaite) m: unknown i: Sara Kagan	Strasdenhof camp	
140	Khoyshek iz di nakht	w, m: unknown i: Sara Kagan	Strasdenhof camp	
141	A nes fun himl	w: unknown m: <i>Z. Karasiński & S. Kataszek</i> i: Sara Kagan	Strasdenhof camp	
142	Der shtrasenhofer himn	w: unknown m: (<i>cf. song 225</i>) i: Sara Kagan	Strasdenhof camp	
143	Di eybike trep	w: Rivke Bosman m: unknown i: Raye Gilels	Kaiserwald Camp	
144	Ver zaynen mir?	w: Rivke Bosman m: unknown i: Raye Gilels	Kaiserwald Camp	
145	Shales	w, m: unknown	Strasdenhof camp	
146	Lakh, tayvl, lakh	w: Masha Rolnik(Rolnikaite) ¹⁹²	Strasdenhof camp	
147	Kh'shem zikh	w, m: M. Shenker i: Leivick Collection	Warsaw	
148	Shlof, mayn kind	w, m: M. Shenker i: Leivick Collection	Warsaw	
149	A shtikl broyt	w, m: Khave Ledik	camp near Bremen	
150	Nayntseyen hundert eyn un fertsik ¹⁹³	w: Silu Elenbogen i: Moyshe Shternberg	Ataky (Otaci); Kayeovov Guru Humorului (near Bukovina), Romania	1941
151	Ikh kuk oyf yedes bild ¹⁹⁴	w, m: unknown i: Moyshe Shternberg	Bucharest	1942
152	Shushke, vintl	w: Silu Elenbogen m: Feyvish Rozenblum i: Moyshe Shternberg	Romanian ghettos (Murafe, Trihati)	
153	Tsezeyt un tsheshpreyt ¹⁹⁵	w: Khane Shvartsman m: unknown i: Moyshe Shternberg	Shargorod ghetto	1943

¹⁹² According to the author, this lyric was written for reciting, not singing (Rolnikaite 2010).

¹⁹³ 3 of 4 stanzas (text only) in Rubin 1946: 68.

¹⁹⁴ Variant (text only) in Rubin 1946: 69. Rubin identifies his informant as “Kupferberg, age 24, Suceava.”

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
154	Eykho (variant)	w, m: unknown i: Moyshe Shternberg	Transnistrian ghettos and camps	1943
155	Lomir shvaygn	w: Hirsh Glik m: <i>Volf Durmashkin</i>	Klooga, Estonia	1943
156	El-Khet	w: Yudl Peker m: unknown i: Leivick Collection		
157	Tsvey veltn	w: Golde Gordonovitsh i: Zhenie Golomb	Rusocin (Russoschin Camp,	
158	Der tango fun oshvientshim	w, m: unknown i: Irke Yanovski trans fr Polish	Auschwitz	
159	A mame	w: Khayele Poznanski m: unknown i: Irke Yanovski	Kaišiadorys (Koshedar) Camp	
160	Ikh vil zen mayn meydele	w, m: unknown	[Germany]	
161	L'khaym mitn toyt	w: Helene Grin m: folk song, "Vos bistu ketsele, broyges"	Yanova (Janowska) Camp	
162	Kukt di levone	w: Leah Svirski m: unknown	Žiežmariai (Zhezhmer) Camp	
163	Undzer gurl	w: Leah Svirski m: unknown	Žiežmariai (Zhezhmer) Camp	
164	In dinaverk	w: Lilke Levin m: unknown i: Keyle Efron	Dünawerk Camp, Latvia	
165	Dinaverker yidn (variant of above0	w: Rokhl Sarabski and Sara Kagan- Goldman (Grodzonovski sisters) m: unknown	Dünawerk Camp, Latvia	
166	Ven s'kumt der friling vider	w: Rokhl Sarabski and Sara Kagan- Goldman (Grodzonovski sisters) m: unknown	Dünawerk Camp, Latvia	
167	Lager-lid	w, m: unknown i: Sara Kagan-Goldman	Dünawerk Camp, Latvia	

¹⁹⁵ Beregovski (1949) collected a variant of this text: the only instance of the same song appearing in both Kaczerginski's and Beregovski's anthologies. (See Beregovski 1949: draft 1 p 73; draft 2 p 59.) In his table of contents Beregovski lists "Farvolknt der himl, kayn shtral zet men nit," a song identifiable as "Eykho—vu ahin? (variant)" (no. 154, above). However, the song text itself does not appear among Beregovski's surviving songbook material (see chapter 2 fn. 121, above).

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
168	Lager vivikon	w, m: unknown (<i>attrib. Hirsh Glik</i>) i: Leah Serapay	Vivikon Camp, Estonia	
169	Lager Rusoshin	w: Golde Gordonovitsh m: unknown	Rusocin (Russoschin) Camp, Poland (near Danzig)	
170	Kop hoykh!	w, m: Adam Zinger	Ponar	
171	Undzer mut iz nit gebrokhn	w: Israel Cendorf <i>m: Mendel Zelman</i> i: Stella Cendorf	Pitiviers, France	
172	Katset kayzervald	w: Ida Grodzianovski m: unknown i: Sara Kagan	Kaiserwald	
173	Mayn shtetl	w: Leah Svirski <i>m: Russian folk song, "Vasilki"</i>	Žiežmariai (Zhezhmer) Camp	
174	Lager koshedar	w: Leah Svirski m: unknown	Kovno ghetto; Kaišiadorys (Koshedar) Camp	
175	Sonie [Tonie]	w: Sonie [Tonie] Reznik m: Misha Veksler	Vilna ghetto	
176	Pis'chu Li Sha'arey Tsedek (fragment)	w: unknown m: Russian folksong i: Avrom ben Mayer Estlayn	Forced labor camp Kamyanka, near Podwoloczyska (near Tarnopol), Poland	
177	Vu ahin zol ikh geyn?	<i>w: S. Korntayer</i> <i>m: Oskar Strok</i>	Warsaw	1943
178	Di gute psure	w, m: unknown i: Moyshe Shternberg	Shargorod ghetto	1944
179	Aleyn on a fraynd	w: Khane Faygenberg m: unknown i: Dr. Mikhal Faygenberg	Kaiserwald	
180	Shpalt zikh himl	w, m: unknown	Diverse camps	
181	Barakn-lid	w: Ester Shtub i: S. Feder anthology	Bergen-Belsen	
182	Tsvey brigades	w: Leah Svirski <i>m: unidentified Yiddish folk song</i>	Žiežmariai (Zhezhmer) Camp	
183	Pantserke	w: Levit m: Misha Veksler i: Sander Vaysman	"Pantserke" H.K.P. (Heereskraftpark; vehicle repair) Lager, near Vilna	1943
184	Baym taykhl	w: Leah Svirski <i>m: Tadeusz Górczyński</i>	Žiežmariai (Zhezhmer) Camp	

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
185	Undzer brigade	w: Leah Svirski m: <i>unidentified Yiddish folk song</i>	Žiežmariai (Zhezhmer) Camp	
186	Der yidishe konzert	w: Pesye Mayevska i: H. Leivick collection	Leipheim DP Camp [poet residing in Cyprus]	
187	S'iz friling in daytshland	w: Pesye Mayevska i: H. Leivick collection	Leipheim DP Camp [poet residing in Cyprus]	
188	Shtetele mayns	w: Pesye Mayevska i: H. Leivick collection	Leipheim DP Camp [poet residing in Cyprus]	
189	S'iz finf minut tsu tsvelf	w: Khane Faygenberg m: unknown i: Dr. Mikhal Faygenberg	Estonia	

“Kontratak”

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
190	Kontratak	w: Władysław Szlengel translator: Sh. Kaczerginski	Warsaw	1943
191	Moyshe halt zikh ¹⁹⁶	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown i: Dora Rubin	Vilna	1943
192	Rozhinkes mit mandlen (fragment)	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown i: Dora Rubin	Vilna	1943
193	Rozhinkes mit mandlen (epilogue)	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown i: Dora Rubin	Vilna	1943
194	In kriyuvke	w: Elye Magid and Dovid Gerstman m: <i>Henech Kon</i>	forest near Mezric, Poland	
195	Ikh bin der umgliklekh er yid	w, m: unknown	Kovno	
196	In slobodker yeshive	w: Avrom Akselrod m: <i>Avrom Goldfadn</i>	Kovno	
197	Nor nit geklogt	w: unknown m: <i>Pierre Degeyer</i>	Kovno	

¹⁹⁶ Song no. 191 initiates a cluster of pieces originating in the ca. August 1943 Vilna ghetto revue, *Moyshe halt zikh!* (Hold Fast, Moyshe!). See also songs 192, 193, 217 and 233.

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
198	Tsores un layd	w: Avrom Cypkin m: <i>Alexander Gurilev</i>	Kovno	
199	In voronetser vald	w: Elye Magid m: unknown	Woroniec forest near Mezric, Poland	
200	Vi es kumt nor on der frimorgn ¹⁹⁷	w: Khana Kheyten m: <i>Isaak Dunaevskii</i> i: Shoshana Edelman	Šiauliai	
201	Shtey oyf	w: Sara Safir i: Yitkhok Tsukerman	Derechin forest, Belarus	
202	Varshe ¹⁹⁸	w: Shmerke Kaczerbinski m: Leon Wajner	Narocz forest	1944
203	Varshever geto-lid fun frume yidn	w: <i>traditional (after Maimonides)</i> m: <i>Azriel David Fastag (attrib.)</i>	Warsaw	
204	Oyb nit keyn emune	w, m: unknown i: Yehuda Elberg	Warsaw	
205	Der yidisher gelekhter	w: Rikle Glezer	Vilna	
206	Brekhn di kaytn	w: Khane Breger	Kovno	
207	Mayn folk	w: Golde Gordonovitsh	<i>Vaivara camp,</i> <i>Estonia</i> ¹⁹⁹	
208	Yidishe brigades	w: Avrom Cypkin m: unknown ²⁰⁰	Kovno	
209	Hofenung ²⁰¹	w: Avrom Cypkin m: <i>Isaak Dunaevskii</i>	Kovno	
210	Vos darfn mir vaynen	w, m: unknown ²⁰²	Warsaw	
211	Yugnt-himn	w: Shmerke Kaczerbinski m: Basye Rubin	Vilna	1943
212	Himl un erd veln zingen	w: Moyshe Diskant	Kovno	
213	Genug shoyn tsitern	w: Moyshe Diskant	Kovno	1943
214	Es brent ²⁰³	w, m: Mordecai Gebirtig i: Joseph Wulf	Kraków	ca. 1936

¹⁹⁷ Source melody “Marsh Traktoristov” from the film *Bogataya Nevesta* (1937). See discussion in chapter 4, below.

¹⁹⁸ Musical setting created after the war.

¹⁹⁹ Kaczerbinski gives Rusocin camp, Latvia. Correction in Dvorzhetski 1970: 314.

²⁰⁰ Source melody, “Pierwsza brygada” (First Brigade), also known as the “Marsz Pierwszej Brygady” (March of the First Brigade). Based on a nineteenth-century Russian march, it was a favorite of the Polish military and political leader, Józef Piłsudski (1867-1935).

²⁰¹ Lyricist Avrom Cypkin’s daughter, Diane Cypkin, notes an alt. version entitled “Frayhayt” (Cypkin 1997).

²⁰² Source for melody Kon 1960: 12 (Kon credits himself as lyricist in this source).

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
215	Minutn fun bitokhn	w, m: Mordecai Gebirtig i: Joseph Wulf	Kraków	1940
216	Tsu dem toyer ²⁰⁴	w: Moyshe Diskant	Kovno	1943
217	Der rayter	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown i: Dora Rubin	Vilna	1943
218	Oyfn postn	w: Sara Sapir i: Yitzkhok Tsukerman	Derechin forest, Belarus	
219	Der kemfnder shvester	w: Sara Sapir i: Yitzkhok Tsukerman	Derechin forest, Belarus	
220	Dort baym breg fun veldl	w: unknown m: Russian folksong	Lithuania, Belarus forests	
221	Un er vet mikh rufn	w: Dzhek Gordon	Bialystok ghetto	
222	Itsik vitnberg	w: Shmerke Kaczerginski m: <i>Matvey Blanter</i> ²⁰⁵	Vilna	1943
223	Tsu eyms, tsvey, dray	w: Leyb Rozental m: <i>Hanns Eisler</i> ²⁰⁶	Vilna	1943
224	Partizaner-marsh	w: Shmerke Kaczerginski m: <i>Hanns Eisler</i>	Vilna	1943
225	Shtey oyf tsum kamf	w: Leah Svirski m: <i>Russian popular song</i> “ <i>Arestant</i> ”	Žiežmariai (Zhezhmer) camp	1943
226	Pak zikh ayn	w: Leyb Rozental m: unknown i: Sender Vaysman	Vilna	1943
227	Shtil, di nakht iz oysgeshternt	w: Hirsh Glik m: unknown	Vilna	1942
228	Dos zangl	w: Hirsh Glik m: unknown	Rzesza forest, Vilna ghetto	1942
229	Tsum besern morgn	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown	Vilna	1943
230	Yid, du partizaner	w: Shmerke Kaczerginski m: unknown	Narocz forest	1944
231	In barak	w: unknown i: H. Leivick collection		

²⁰³ Songs 214 and 215 from Gebirtig et al. 1946.

²⁰⁴ “Anti-partisan song”; as used here, the word “partisan” refers to Lithuanian-German collaborators. Stanza 7 includes a satiric reference to the national anthem of independent Lithuania.

²⁰⁵ Source melody, “Partizan Zheleznyak” (1935).

²⁰⁶ Source melody for this and subsequent song, “Einheitsfrontlied” (United Front Song) (1934).

Table 15 continued

K 1948	TITLE	AUTHOR/COMPOSER/INFORMANT	PLACE	YEAR
232	Di psure fun nekhome	w: Khane Faygenberg i: Dr. M. Faygenberg (Munich)		
233	Es shlogt di sho	w: Kasriel Broydo m: unknown i: Dora Rubin	Vilna	1943
234	Ikh bin fray	w: Rikle Glezer	Vilna	1944
235	Mir lebn eybik!	w: Leyb Rozental m: unknown	Vilna	1943

Chapter IV

Concerning Music

Lider are poetic texts often, but not always, intended for singing. Kaczerginski's collection comprises both types—verse wedded to melody and, to a lesser extent, recitational poetry.²⁰⁷ Although Kaczerginski had a lifelong passion for music (and was of course a gifted songwriter) it is clear that the song texts, and the personal and historical narratives they unfold, are the book's true *raison d'être*. Indeed, the author was disinclined to separately evaluate the musical component of his collection, noting in his foreword only that his informants often borrowed or adapted pre-existing popular or folkloric melodies, and providing brief overviews of the most commonly employed sources and genres (Kaczerginski 1948a: XX; see Appendix C).

It is fair, then, to question the materiality of music per se to a discussion of a repertoire dominated by musical contrafacta.²⁰⁸ Like Kaczerginski, the majority of Shoah songwriters could not themselves compose or notate music: for them, a melody was primarily a memory aid. Where traditionally analyzable elements of song composition (such as tone painting, text underlay, or harmonic practice) are beside the point, the standard tools of musical analysis are also of questionable utility. And while it might be argued that the rich repertoire of pre-existing popular melodies available to Kaczerginski's informants could itself repay study, such research would contribute little to an understanding of the Shoah-specific aspects of the collected *lider*.

²⁰⁷ "Recitational poetry," i.e. poetic texts meant to be read aloud as opposed to lyrics associated with a melody or melodies. See "Recitation" in Green et al. 2012: 1149-1151.

²⁰⁸ The *Harvard Dictionary of Music* defines "Contrafactum" as "a vocal work in which a new text has been substituted for the original one"; and "Parody" as "a work in which a new text has been substituted for the original, often without humorous intent" (Randel 2003: 211 and 632 (def. 2)). For present purposes these terms are used interchangeably.

Finally, musical innovation or stylistic novelty comparable to the literary kind achieved, for example, by Szlengel in his recitational poem “Kontratak” was not an objective of the composers represented in Kaczerginski’s collection.²⁰⁹ Original period creations were, by intention, indistinguishable in form and style from the prewar popular repertoire that these songwriters drew on and that (needless to say) continued to resound in the ghettos and camps. The present chapter, therefore, will focus on a pair of exemplary original compositions, as well as on contrafacta works where familiarity with source material might serve to elucidate a certain piece or the context of its creation.

Stats and Graphs

Of the 235 titled works in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*, ninety-eight are musical contrafacta, sixty-six are recitational poems, and sixty may be considered original creations—although melodies were recoverable for only forty-three of these. Four further songs were either certainly or likely to have been in circulation before the war, while an additional four belong to a rare but revealing subset: labor camp contrafacta of still-current ghetto songs. (Four remaining *lider* remain “without category” owing to vagaries of form and structure.) In a section titled “*Noten tsu di lider*” (scores to the songs; pages 361-431), Kaczerginski and his musical amanuensis Michl Gelbart provide melodies to one hundred of the volume’s song texts. Thirty-seven of these prove to be original works, to which may be added a handful of melodies omitted from *Lider fun di getos un lagern* but retrievable from other sources.²¹⁰ The remaining cases,

²⁰⁹ Volf Durmashkin’s *Ponar elegie* (Ponar Elegy), a cantata that won first prize in a Vilna ghetto music competition held in February 1943, may have breached some boundaries, at least with respect to subject matter. Unfortunately, neither score nor text have been preserved, nor could any quality of its content or style be recalled by Durmashkin’s surviving sister (Kostanian-Danzig 2002: 95; Durmashkin 1999).

²¹⁰ Sources for recovered melodies are provided in the footnotes to Table 15 of chapter 3, above. The Yad Vashem Kaczerginski Collection includes draft copies of several songs published in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*,

seventeen presumably original songs whose melodies however are not extant, I have categorized according to the following criteria (in descending order of significance): 1) Kaczerginski indicates in his commentary that a given song’s melody had been composed in a ghetto or camp; 2) the song text follows the strophic verse-chorus form typical of much of the era’s popular music (the chorus [Yid., *refren*] generally expressed on the printed page as a textincipit followed by an ellipse); 3) the song text is laid out in the regular stanzas, rhythms and rhyme schemes (e.g., quatrains of rhymed couplets or alternate rhyme) characteristic of sung lyrics; 4) the text author is primarily represented in the collection as a lyricist, rather than the author of poems.

Figures 27-29 below illustrate the distribution of these various categories at a glance.

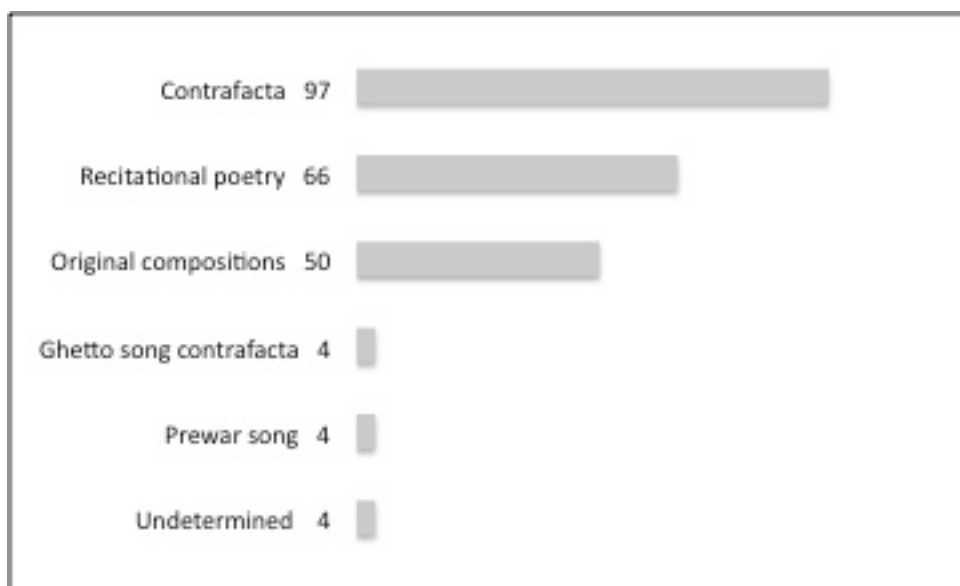


Figure 27. *Lider fun di getos un lagern*. Songs by type (235 total texts).

but none of songs that do not appear in the collection. Kaczerginski’s “archive” of material related to his song-collecting activities (referred to in his above-cited “Collectors Remarks,” chapter 3) has apparently vanished, perhaps in Argentina as recently as the 1990s.

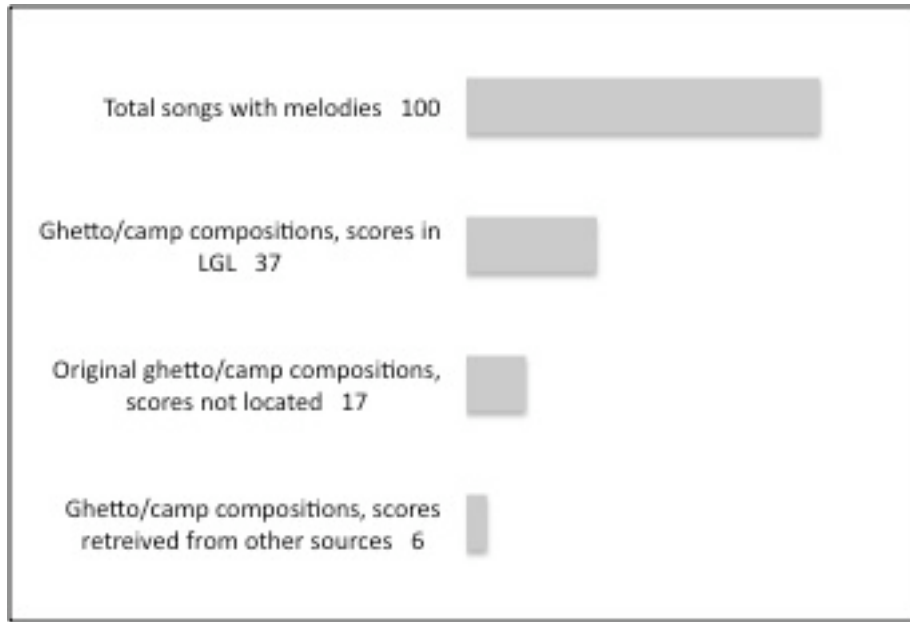


Figure 28. *Lider fun di getos un lagern (LGL)*, original melodies categorized.

Newly-Composed Songs

Newly composed music as a rule originated in the ghetto theater, cabaret or concert-hall, venues that benefited from the contributions of experienced writers and performers. Dovid Beygelman, a theater composer and conductor of international repute, had a hand in every one of the nine Łódź ghetto songs in the volume; Mordecai Gebirtig, the revered “Yiddish troubadour” of Kraków, wrote two of the book’s three original Kraków ghetto songs (the third is a fortuitously-recovered effort by the promising young composer Jakub Weingarten [Vayngortn: 1910-1942]); and Percy Haid (1913-1977), a conservatory-trained composer-instrumentalist, produced perhaps twenty songs in the Kovno ghetto, although only a single work, the affecting tango “Di alte mame” (The Old Mother), ultimately found its way into the anthology.²¹¹

²¹¹ For Beygelman’s biography, see Zylbercweig 1967: 3725-3729. On Gebirtig, see discussion in chapter 2, above. Although an intuitive rather than trained musician, Gebirtig was a productive, published songwriter as

Quantifiably speaking, Warsaw again fares poorly compared to its smaller sister ghettos. Melodies by music professionals Pola Braun, Tereza Wajnbaum and M. Shenker unfortunately have not been preserved—although Wajnbaum, a pianist, was said to have written “many compositions in the ghetto,”²¹² and Braun’s popular cabaret set-pieces continued to be performed into the postwar period.²¹³ Moreover, the two Warsaw-associated melodies that actually do appear in the collection are in fact of questionable provenance. “Kulis” (Coolies), according to Kaczerginski’s informant, derived from a “Chinese source” (although the tune might plausibly be credited to its arranger, the pianist Lili Goldberg)²¹⁴, while documentation for the Warsaw origin of “Varshaver geto-lid fun frume yidn” (Warsaw Ghetto Song of Pious Jews)—often attributed to the prolific hasidic songwriter Azriel David Fastag and now far better known as “Ani Maamin” (I Believe)—remains elusive.²¹⁵

well as an accomplished stage performer (Gross 2003). For a biographical statement on Weingarten, see Wulf 1966/1967b. On Haid’s professional background and career, and for a reference to “twenty ghetto songs” in an undated (ca. 1948) Yiddish newsclipping, see Haid and Greene 1995. Most songbook compilers, and Haid himself, referred to his widely-known “Di alte mame” simply as “Mamele” (cf. chapter 2, above). On Haid’s other surviving ghetto song, “Shneyele” (Snowflakes), see notes to *Hidden History: Songs of the Kovno Ghetto* 1997.

²¹² “Di komponistorin—a bakante pianistin, geshafn fil kompozitsies in geto, umgekumen in treblinke” (the composer, an established pianist who created many compositions in the ghetto, was killed in Treblinka) (Kaczerginski 1948a: 154). Variants of the pianist’s last name include Vaynbaum (Yid.) and Weinbaum; her first name appears variously as Tereza or Teresa (Turkow 1948: 244).

²¹³ On posthumous performances of Braun’s works, see concert program, Vienna, 13 November 1945 (Blumenfeld and Turkow Papers, YIVO). Shenker’s two song texts had been reprinted from Leivick’s collection; Leivick’s informant, Sh. P. Rayzman, did not know (or at least did not communicate) the composer’s first name.

²¹⁴ Kaczerginski’s note to “Kulis” reads: “Aranzhirt loyt dem khinezishn motif—froy goldberg” (arranged after the Chinese motif by Mrs. Goldberg), although the tune calls to mind period “musical Chinoiserie” à la the once popular “Chinese Lullaby” (1919) by Broadway composer Robert Hood Bowers. Kaczerginski’s informant was the Warsaw actress and singer Diana Blumenfeld (1903-1961), who had introduced the song in the ghetto. Composer Goldberg was an accomplished pianist; her first name, Lili, and details of her fate during the ghetto period were related by Blumenfeld in the spoken introduction to her recorded performance of “Kulis” (Blumenfeld 1948; see also Turkow 1948: 243).

²¹⁵ Nearly all accounts of the genesis of “Ani Maamin” depend on the narrative “Ha-Rakhevet Ha-Mitnagenet” (The Train that Sang) (Flexer 1952: 123-125). According to this telling, the tune was conceived by the Warsaw-based Modzitz (Modrzyce) hasidic singer and composer Rabbi Azriel David Fastag while on a transport train to Treblinka. Complicating this narrative, however, are International Tracing Service Central Name Index files

Given Kaczerginski’s aptitude as a cultural organizer and deep ties to his hometown’s creative community it is not surprising that more original songs—a total of 36—were collected from Vilna ghetto than from all other sites combined (see Figure 29, below).²¹⁶ Contributors to this repertoire included established professionals such as Misha (Michal) Veksler, Volf (Vladimir) Durmashkin and Yankl Trupianski, as well as the gifted amateurs Avreml Brudno, Yankl Krimski and the young prodigy (and future concert pianist) Aleksander Wolkowiski.²¹⁷

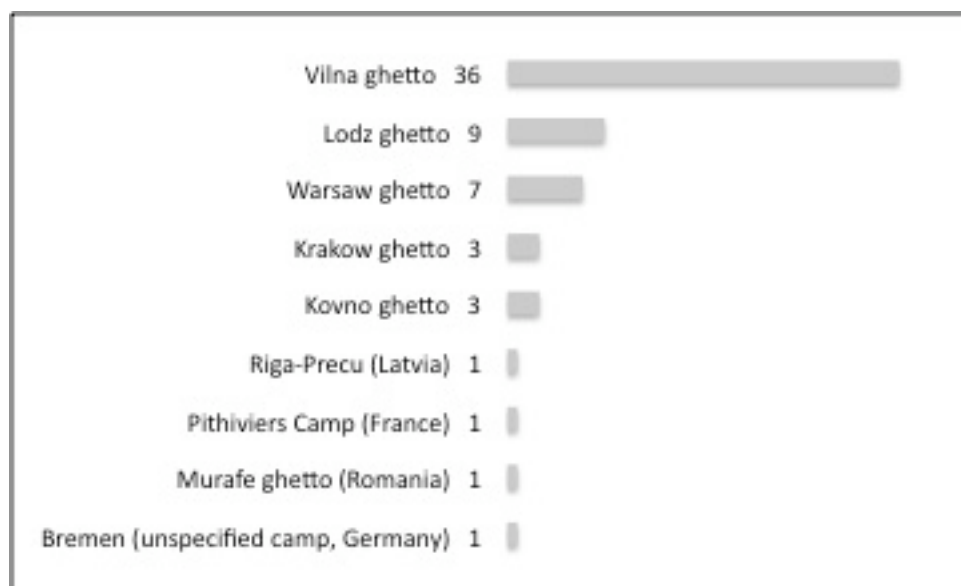


Figure 29. *Lider fun di getos un lagern*: Original songs by place of origin.

listing Azriel (Ezriel) David (Dawid) Fastag (Phastag) as a Warsaw native (b. 1916) who fled to Vilna in 1939 and eventually found sanctuary in Shanghai, where he enrolled in a rabbinical college (USHMM Central Name Index, International Tracing Service Archive “Fastag”). (For a partial English translation of Flexer, see “‘Ani Ma'amin’—A Song of Ultimate Faith” 2004; see also section on “Ani Maamin” in Ben-Arza n.d.) Muddled origins notwithstanding, no writer contends the melody’s wartime origin and Warsaw connection, nor has a prewar variant come to light.

²¹⁶ This tally includes works by Vilna composers Durmashkin and Zinger written in Estonian labor camps.

²¹⁷ Biographical details on Veksler, Durmashkin and Trupianski may be found in their respective entries in Zilberzweig 1967. On Wolkowiski (Volkoviski), see Fater 1970: 294; Biber 2006: 223, 254. After settling in Israel Wolkowiski (b. 1931) adopted the professional name Alexander Tamir; he is best known as part of the celebrated duo-piano team Eden & Tamir.

Songs for the Ghetto Theater

Popular-styled songs figure overwhelmingly in the book's music scores section. As already noted, many of these creations originated in theatrical productions, and Kaczerginski's volume remains the best source for works firstheard at ghetto entertainments—especially (although not exclusively) those staged in Vilna. In his study “Cultural Life of the Vilna Ghetto,” the historian Solon Beinfeld provides a chronology of programs mounted at the ghetto's two major venues, the large “Geto Teater” and its intimate *Kleinkunst* counterpart, “Di yogenish in fas” (The Chase in a Barrel) (Beinfeld 1984). Coupled with Kaczerginski's commentaries, Beinfeld's datamakes possible a partial reconstruction of the sung portion of several of these remarkable events.²¹⁸

²¹⁸ In addition to theatrical productions with songs, Kaczerginski (1947b: 223) makes note of a play that featured incidental music, David Pinski's *Ha'Yehudi ha-Nitzhi* (The Eternal Jew), to which Volf Durmashkin contributed a substantial score. According to Beinfeld (1984), this play, which opened in the large theater on 10 June 1943, was the only Hebrew-language production to be mounted in the ghetto (see also fn. 141 above).

Table 16

Songs for the Vilna Ghetto Theater in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*

SONG TITLE	SHOW TITLE	DATE	VENUE	LYRICS/MUSIC
Yisrolik	(Second Public Concert)	25 Jan 1942	“Geto teater”	Rozental/Veksler
Korene yorn un vey tsu di teg	<i>Korene yorn un vey tsu di teg</i>	July 1942	"	Broydo/Veksler
Es benkt zikh, es benkt zikh	"	"	"	Broydo/unknown
Es vet zikh fun tsvaygl tseblen a boym	"	"	"	Broydo/Trupianski
Dos transport-yingl	<i>Men ken gornit visn</i>	Oct 1942	"	Broydo/Veksler
Geto	"	"	"	Broydo/unknown
Bay undz iz shtendik fintster ²¹⁹	"	"	"	Broydo/Kon
Peshe fun reshe	<i>Peshe fun reshe</i>	June 1943	"	Rozental/Veksler
Ikh bin shoyn lang do nit geven	"	"	"	Rozental/unknown
Neger-lid	<i>Der mabl</i>	Summer 1943	"	Rozental/Veksler
Moyshe halt zikh	<i>Moyshe halt zikh</i>	Aug-Sept 1943	"	Broydo/Veksler
Der rayter	"	"	"	Broydo/unknown
Es shlogt di sho	"	"	"	Broydo/unknown
Mir zaynen oykh fun flaysh un blut	"	"	"	Broydo/unknown
Rozhinkes mit mandlen (prologue)	"	"	"	Broydo/unknown
Rozhinkes mit mandlen (epilogue)	"	"	"	Broydo/unknown
Mariko	"	unknown	“Di yogenish in fas”	Kaczerginski/unknown
Unter dayne vayse shtern	"	1943	"	Sutzkever/Brudno

²¹⁹ Contrafact to a prewar song. See fn. 171 above.

With six songs to his credit, Misha Veksler, a frequent collaborator of lyricists Kasriel Broydo and Leyb Rozental, emerges as the ghetto's most prolific tunesmith.²²⁰ Kacerginski's brief note on this composer, appended to his commentary on Rozental's "Neger-lid" (Negro Song), reads: "Born in 1906, Veksler was the music director of the Vilna ghetto Yiddish theater orchestra and composed melodies to many of the songs he conducted in the theater. He was killed during the liquidation of the ghetto in September, 1943" (1948a: 47).²²¹ Other sources reveal that this gifted musician suffered from a crippling spinal disorder that rendered him unfit for hard labor, thus sealing his fate once the Germans disestablished the ghetto (Zylbercweig 1967: 4055).²²²

Veksler's "Yisrolik" can serve as a model of the theater song. Described by the Vilna theater director Israel Segal as "the first song created in the ghetto," it debuted on January 25, 1942, and remained popular throughout the period, becoming something of a template for subsequent hit songs (Figure 30).²²³

²²⁰ All four Shoah *lider* that parody other ghetto tunes are based on Veksler's melodies (one of them, "Peshe fun reshe," was recycled twice)—a testament to their widespread popularity.

²²¹ "Neger-lid" was written for the Ghetto Theater production of Swedish playwright Henning Berger's three-act drama *Syndafloeden* (The Deluge), known in Yiddish as *Der mabl*. Although Kacerginski appended his biographical note on Veksler to "Neger-lid," the score to this song was omitted from the volume and is now presumed lost.

²²² Zylbercweig (1967: 4055) lists Veksler's year of birth as 1907; according to Biber et al. (2006: 254) he "perished in Majdanek." As the ghetto theater's music director, it is likely that Veksler composed or had a hand in several of the book's uncredited Vilna ghetto theater songs.

²²³ "Dos iz geven dos ershte lid, vos iz geshafn gevorn in geto un oyf geto-tema.... KhayeLe rozental hot gemuzt dos lidl iberzingen etlekhe mol un azoy iz es avek fun moyl tsu moyl." (It was the first song created in the ghetto and on a ghetto theme. KhayeLe Rozental was obliged to sing it many times, and thus it passed from mouth to mouth.) (Segal cited in Zylbercweig 1967: 4054-4057.) On KhayeLe Rozental's popularity, see also Biber 2006: 258.

ישראלִיק

Con Moto . א. סלון 1170711

O koift-ze pa-pi-ro-sn o koift-ze sa-cha-
 rin ge-vö-ron iz haint shoi-re bi-lig vert
 a le-bn far a gro-shm a pru-te a-far-
 dinst fun ge-to hend-ler hot iz doch ge-heret
 eh'heis yis-ro-lik ich bin dos kind fun ge-to
 eh'heis yis-ro-lik a hef-ker-di-ker yung
 ehotch far-bli-bn go-le ne-to der-
 lang ich altz noch a swis-tche un a zung.

Figure 30. "Yisrolik" (Kaczerginski 1948a: 389). Transcription by Michl Gelbart.

Nu koyft zhe papirozn,
Nu koyft zhe sakharin,
Gevorn iz haynt skhoyre bilik vert.
A lebn far a groshn,
A prute—a fardinst—
Fun geto-hendler hot ir dokh gehert.

Kh'heys yisrolik
Ikh bin dos kind fun geto,
Kh'heys yisrolik
A hefkerdiker yung.
Khotsh farblibn gole-neto
Derlang ikh alts nokh
A svistshe un a zung!

A mantl on a kragn,
Takhtoynim fun a zak,
Kaloshn hob ikh—s'fel'n nor di shikh.
Un ver es vet nor vagn
Tsu lakh, oy, a sakh—
Dem vel ikh nokh vayzn ver bin ikh!

Kh'heys yisrolik...

Nit meynt mikh hot geborn
Di hefkerdike gas—
Bay tate-mame oykh geven a kind.
Kh'hob beydn ongevorn,
Nit meynt es iz a shpas,
Kh'bin geblibn vi in feld der vint.

Kh'heys yisrolik,
Nor ven keyner zet nit
Vish ikh shtil zikh
Fun oyg arop a trer.
Nor fun mayn troyer—
Bese az men redt nit,
Tsu vos dermonen
Un makhn s'harts zikh shver.

So, buy some cigarettes,
So, buy some saccharin,
My merchandise today is going cheap.
A life is worth some small change,
A penny's all I earn—
Of the ghetto peddler, surely you have
heard.

I'm Yisrolik,
A kid straight from the ghetto;
I'm Yisrolik,
A devil-may-care lad.
Though I'm left with next to nothing,
I reply with
A whistle and a song!

A coat without a collar,
From a sack, some underwear,
I've got galoshes—haven't any shoes.
And should anybody feel the urge
To laugh at me, watch out—
I'll let them know just who they're
dealing with!

I'm Yisrolik...

Don't think that I was born in
Some wild and lawless street;
I was my parents' dear, beloved child.
They've both been taken from me,
Don't think that was a joke!
I remain, as lonely as the wind.

I'm Yisrolik,
And when nobody's watching,
From my eye, in secret,
I brush away a tear.
But maybe it's better
Not to speak of all my sadness—
What use is thinking of the past?
Why lash at your own heart?

Stylistically and formally, the piece hews to then-current conventions for the theatrical “entrance song,” defined by cabaret scholar Wolfgang Ruttkowski as a type of couplet “in which a person introduces her/himself to the audience and at the same time reflects on profession, social status, life and world” (2001:54).²²⁴ It is cast in the minor mode, an earmark of ethnicity in twentieth-century Jewish music (and atypical of contemporaneous mainstream European and American popular fare); the text-setting is syllabic and strophic, prioritizing comprehensibility of text and story; the tune is concise, repetitive and memorable, owing to extensive use of sequencing and stepwise motion; and its 32-bar “verse-chorus” structure—AABC—counts among the era’s more familiar and representative musical formulas.²²⁵ “Yisrolik,” moreover, is particularly instructive because its original performer, Khayele Rozental (sister of the lyricist, Leyb Rozental), chose to record it, in Paris, within a few years after the end of the war (Rozental [ca. 1948a]).²²⁶ Featuring a cabaret orchestra of the sort that had accompanied Rozental in Vilna, this recording grants the listener a rare glimpse into the sound-world of the ghetto theater.²²⁷ It

²²⁴ Ruttkowski calls the “entrance song” the most frequently employed type of stage couplet; “Yisrolik,” again according to Ruttkowski’s formulations, might also be categorized as a (modified) “Viennese Couplet” (taking the form AABC, rather than AAB) (Ruttkowski 2001: 53-54).

²²⁵ See Wilder 1972 and Tawa 2005 for apposite discussions of popular song forms and styles.

²²⁶ In the recording Rozental was backed by the Orchestre Ben-Horris, a mainstay of Parisian Jewish nightclubs before and after the war. (For more on Ben-Horris [Benjamin Alexandre Moscovitz, 1894-1980], see Moscovitz 2009)

²²⁷ Although documentation is lacking on the makeup of Rozental’s accompanying band, it is worth noting that Boris Rozenberg (1911-1943?), a veteran jazz musician and conferencier, served as artistic director of the “Yogenish in fas” cabaret (Kaczerginski 1947b: 230; Biber et al. 2006: 251). A partially-preserved poster from Vilna ghetto announcing a November 1942 “Dzhaz-konzert” (Jazz Concert) featuring both Khayele Rozental and Boris Rozental (among others) is reproduced in Biber et al. 2006: 104-105.

also offers insight into aspects of performance practice—harmonization, instrumentation and interpretation—absent from the necessarily spare notations of the book’s music section.²²⁸



Figure 31. Khayele Rozental recreating her role as the ghetto street peddler “Yisrolik,” Paris, ca. 1948 (Naava Piatka/United States Holocaust Memorial Museum).

The recorded song affirms the continuity of the prewar popular idiom inside the ghetto walls and through to the post-liberation period. Music director-pianist Ben-Horris’s orchestration calls for clarinets, saxophones, brass, strings and piano, a standard configuration for theater bands of the day and still feasible for ghetto performance groups, whose players—despite everyday privations—could even then avail themselves of an array of serviceable

²²⁸ Veksler’s unaccompanied melody-line (as transcribed by Gelbart) offers no interpretive cues whatsoever, apart from a “con moto” marking and a 2/4 time signature perhaps employed to indicate a relatively brisker tempo than common time (4/4).

instruments.²²⁹ The harmonizations are likewise straightforward, following the melody's clear-cut chordal implications and eschewing any coloristic touches that might draw attention away from the vocal presentation. Rozental's rendition generally retains the work's metric and melodic contours but is otherwise character-driven: at times *parlando*, at times *sotto voce*, with tempi fluctuating between and within verses, it favors actorly interpretation over allegiance to a received melody-line. One of these interpretive gestures, perhaps, is her inflecting the five-note descending passage set to the words "fun geto hendler hob ir dokh gehert" (of the ghetto-peddler surely you have heard; mm 23-25) with the augmented-second interval (here, B-natural to A-flat), whereas this same passage in Gelbart's transcription follows the intervallic pattern of the Western natural-minor scale. As Slobin (1995: 183-195) has pointed out, the interval of the melodic augmented-second often served as an ethnic marker—a purveyor of pathos or generalized symbol of "*yidishkayt*"—in twentieth-century Jewish popular music.²³⁰

Formally, too, the recorded account differs from the version presented by Gelbart and Kaczerginski. Rozental, presumably faithful to the intentions of the original creative team of Veksler and her poet-brother, Leyb, invariably repeats the final phrase (C) of the chorus, yielding the overall 40-bar structure AABCC, rather than the anthology's 32-measure AABC. In jazz nomenclature such last-phrase echoing, used to extend a work's ending, is sometimes referred to as a "tag" (David 1998: 50). Here, however, the device functions not formalistically but dramatically, to reiterate the title character's take-home message: "*Khotsh farblibn gole neto,*

²²⁹ The importance of maintaining professional-quality performing ensembles in the ghetto is underscored by the police proclamation of 17 April 1942 calling for the registration of all privately-owned musical instruments for use on demand by theater and orchestral players (Yad Vashem 2011).

²³⁰ It is possible, of course, that Gelbart (or another of Kaczerginski's musical assistants) mistranscribed or smoothed over "Yisrolik"'s augmented-second passage.

derlang ikh alts nokh a svistshe un a zung” (though I’m left with less than nothing, I come back with a whistle and a song). For an audience savoring a brief escapist interlude in the midst of overwhelming catastrophe, such lines sung by the orphaned ghetto smuggler “Yisrolik”—“little Israel”—could well bear repeating.²³¹

Apart from harmonization, interpretive inflections and the repeated last stanza, the work-as-recorded diverges from the printed score in several lesser respects, such as the incorporation of first and second verse endings and transposition of keys (Rozentel’s f-minor as opposed to Gelbart’s d-minor; see fig. 32, below). But however significant or slight, these discrepancies serve to remind the researcher how far removed Kaczerginski’s music printing efforts were from the world of Urtext editions and ethnographic field transcriptions. Rather than preserve a work in an unmediated state reflecting, perhaps, its creator’s original intentions, or offer a detailed recounting of a representative performance, each of the book’s scores serves as a prescriptive transcription—in Charles Seeger’s formulation, “a blueprint of how a specific piece of music should be made to sound” (Seeger 1958: 184). Such considerations are especially valid for repertoire that originated on the ghetto stage, where creative, period-informed instrumentation and artistic embellishment are essential if a given song is to sound again with some degree of authenticity.

²³¹ In a memoir, Khayele Rozental’s daughter remarked of the song, “[‘Yisrolik’] became an anthem of Jewish survival, symbolizing the street-savvy but tough attitude of the small but brave child who helped smuggle messages and contraband goods in and out of the ghetto” (Piatka 2009: 181). After the war the song itself became something of a creed for Khayele Rozental, who resolved never to discuss her misfortunes with her children, friends and audiences (Piatka 2001).

“Yisrolik” (M. Veksler and L. Rozental)

orchestra: pickup and intro C-tag vamp

11 A Fm voice, freely C
 Nu koyf-zhe pa-pir-ros-n, nu koyf-zhe sakh-a - rin. Ge - vo rn iz haynt skhoy re bi-lik

18 Fm A' (spoken—pitch approximate) Db7 C7
 vert. A le-bn far a groshn A pru-te a far dinst Fun get-o hend-ler hot ir dokh ge-hert

27 B Fm C7 Fm Ab Eb Ab
 Kh'heys yis - ro-lik ikh bin dos kind fun ge-to Kh'heys yis - ro-lik A hef-ker-di-keryung.

36 C C Fm G7 C7 Fm C C-tag
 Khotsh far - bli-bn go - le - ne-to Derlang ikh alts nokh a svis-tshe un a zung! Khotsh far

45 Fm G7 C7 Fm repeat twice Fm orchestra
 bli-bn go - le - net-to Derlang ikh alts nokh a svis-tshe un a zung!

54 C7 Fm Ab Eb Ab C Fm
 Nor fun mayn troy-er Be-ser az men

65 G7 C7 F C C-tag voice (coda, from verse 3) Fm
 Nor fun mayn troy-er Be-ser az men

72 G7 C7 F
 redt nit, Tsu vos der - mon-en Un makh-n s'harts zikh - shver

Figure 32. “Yisrolik,” transcribed by the author from the recording by Khayele Rozental with the Orchestre Ben-Horris (verse 1 and refrain; “c-tag” from verse 3).

In Folk-Style

Recognized by his contemporaries as the preeminent Yiddish bard of his day, Mordecai Gebirtig (1877-1942) had always sought creative inspiration in domestic life, current events and the everyday struggles of ordinary Jews.²³² These same themes were thrust upon him during the German occupation of his hometown, Kraków—and his response as a folk-artist was to chronicle his personal trials, and the fate of Kraków’s Jewish community, in a series of *lider* that are by turns despairing, hopeful and animated by fantasies of revenge. The notebook to which Gebirtig consigned these works passed from hand to hand after his death in the ghetto on June 4, 1942, and arrived at the offices of the Jewish Historical Commission in Kraków soon after the war drew to a close in Poland.

Gebirtig, who was not musically literate, ordinarily relied on musician friends to transcribe his compositions onto paper. With these friends lost to the chaos of war, it is not surprising that the great part of his Shoah melodies should have vanished; indeed only two songs memorized by survivors—“Minutn fun bitokhn” (Moments of Confidence) and “Si’z gut” (It’s Good)—have been preserved with their music intact. As the historian Gertrude Schneider recognized while preparing her edition of Gebirtig’s works, the likely agent of this recovery was the graphic artist and “Schindler-Jew,” Józef Bau (1920-2002). According to Schneider (1999:4), it was Bau who, as a junior member of the Historical Commission, “drew the lines for the scores, used a piano to find the right notes, and then, painstakingly, printed the Yiddish words” beneath the noteheads of the three songs that would appear in the Commission’s

²³² For contemporaneous recognition, see Kipnis 1935. For details on Gebirtig’s life, death, and the transmission of his works, see Fater 1970: 96-118; Gebirtig and Schneider 1999: 1-6; Gebirtig and Leichter 2000: 285-289.

published volume of Gebirtig's Shoah *lider*.²³³ It was, of course, also Bau who inscribed own his name in small capital letters under the bottom staff-line of each of these song's final measures (Figure 33).²³⁴

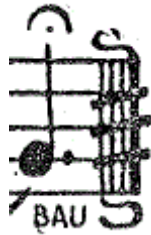


Figure 33. “Undzer shtetl brent,” final measure (detail) “signed” by [Józef] Bau (Gebirtig et al. 1946: 35).

Bau's transcription of Gebirtig's penultimate surviving song, “Minutn fun bitokhn,” has already appeared as an illustration in chapter 2 of this study. It might now be appropriate to discuss his final work as an example of original music by an established “folk composer.”

According to the manuscript notebook of songs, now preserved at the YIVO Institute in New York, Gebirtig completed “S'iz gut” in the Kraków ghetto sometime in May, 1942. As a final effort (and conceivably a self-conscious swan song), the work is surprisingly uncharacteristic of the composer's output as a whole. The “last and greatest of the Yiddish folk-troubadours...the true son of the Jewish people” typically wrote in an unforced, artless style that aspired to (and sometimes attained) the smooth anonymity of folksong (Fater 1970: 97).²³⁵

²³³ Apart from Bau himself, it may be conjectured that, among others, Julia and Hania Hoffman (Gebirtig family intimates who ultimately rescued the poet's notebook) and Joseph Wulf, chief editor of *S'brent*, also knew and communicated the melodies.

²³⁴ Bau's habit of affixing his name to each of his creations was broken only when he began to take on assignments for the Israeli secret service (Bau and Bau 2013).

²³⁵ The full text of Fater's Yiddish encomium reads: “Dem letstn, der grestn fun di yidishe folks-trubadorn in farmilkhomedikn poyln, dem bazinger un bavayner, shtrofer un dermontiker, troymer un munterer, dem getrayen

Indeed, Gebirtig titled his first published collection *Folkstimlekh* (“folk-style”), a term descriptive of his lyrics and melodies alike, whatever the theme or tone of a given text, and notwithstanding the range of music genres (Yiddish show tunes, religious *nigunim*, internationally popular dances such as the Charleston and the tango) that informed his compositional style (Gebirtig 1920).²³⁶ With its inspirational lyrics and four-bar untexted melodic tag (surely reserved for extemporized hasidic vocables, such as “*bay-bay-bay*”), “*Minutn fun bitokhn*” is of a piece with Gebirtig’s *folkstimlekh* ideal.

“S’iz gut,” on the other hand, represents if not a break then at least a turning away from this customary mode of expression. As was the case with the urbane Szlengel (otherwise the unpretentious Gebirtig’s songwriting opposite), this aesthetic recalibration was fostered in the ghetto by an unflinching vision of imminent catastrophe. Here, scorn and bitter irony threaten to subsume the folk poet’s reassuring “folkiness.” He castigates his fellow Jews for their complacency in the face of an implacable enemy—and at the same time he mocks this enemy, spinning the proverbial German national obsession with bodily functions into an extended metaphor on gluttony and its grotesque consequences.²³⁷

zun fun yidishn folk...” (The last and greatest of the Yiddish folk-troubadours of prewar Poland, the singer and scourge, critic and comforter, dreamer and doer, the true son of the Jewish people).

²³⁶ Gebirtig’s *Folkstimlekh* is a text-only compilation.

²³⁷ On this obsession, see Dundes 1984.

ס'איז גוט

Allegro

ג'י גוט ס'איז גוט ס'איז גוט ס'איז גוט

דער גוט ס'איז ען-שרי" לעק-דע-"

און זאגל און זאג-ריו" גיט דער-ויל דער נה-שו

אין זאגל א א-ל-קא ווען טאטא ווען אר זאג וו

אין גוט ס'איז ען-שרי" לעק-דע-"

ס'איז גוט ס'איז און-קויע לעק-דע-"

ס'איז גוט ס'איז ווען זאגל ווען זאגל ווען זאגל

Figure 34. Mordecai Gebirtig, "S'iz gut"; Krakówghetto, May, 1942 (from *S'brent*, 1946).

S'iz gut, s'iz gut, s'iz gut!
Di yidelekh shrayen s'iz gut,
Der soyne der vilder
Geyt groyzam un shnel,
Un vi nor er kumt, vert
Fun lebn a tel –
Un yidelekh shrayen s'iz gut!
Un yidelekh kveln s'iz gut!
S'iz voyl, s'iz fayn,
S'ken beser nit zayn.

S'iz gut, s'iz gut, s'iz gut!
Di yidelekh shrayen s'iz gut,
Di soyne geyt faroyes
Mit blut un mit shand,
Un shlingt ayn tog-teglekh
A land nokh a land.
Un yidelekh shrayen s'iz gut!
Un yidelekh kveln s'iz gut!
S'iz voyl, s'iz fayn,
Vos mer er shlingt ayn.

S'iz gut, s'iz gut, s'iz gut!
Di yidelekh shrayen s'iz gut,
Di soyne frest lender
Un nemt on oyfher,
Der mogen a fuler
Fartsayt shoyne nisht mer.
Un yidelekh shrayen s'iz gut!
Un yidelekh kveln s'iz gut!
S'iz voyl, s'iz fayn,
Zayn mogn nisht rayn.

It's good, it's good, it's good
The little Jews cry out: It's good!
The foe like a wild beast
Moves cruelly and quick,
He arrives and in no time
Your lives are a wreck.
And the little Jews cry out: it's good.
And the little Jews sing out: it's good!
It's great, it's fine,
Things couldn't be better.

It's good, it's good, it's good
The little Jews cry out: it's good!
The foe pushes onward
With blood and disgrace,
And swallows up day by day
Place after place.
And the little Jews cry out: it's good.
And the little Jews sing out: it's good!
It's great, it's fine,
The more he imbibes.

It's good, it's good, it's good
The little Jews cry out: it's good!
The foe gobbles countries,
He works without cease,
His stomach is full now,
What more can he eat?
And the little Jews cry out: it's good.
And the little Jews sing out: it's good!
It's great, it's fine,
His stomach's unclean.

S'iz gut, s'iz gut, s'iz gut!
 Di yidelekh shrayen s'iz gut,
 Der soyne eyrope
 Hot halb shoyne bazetst,
 Un halt in aynnemen
 Der boykh im shier pletst.
 Un yidelekh shrayen s'iz gut!
 Un yidelekh kveln s'iz gut!
 S'iz voyl, s'iz fayn,
 S'ken mer nisht arayn.

It's good, it's good, it's good
 The little Jews cry out: it's good!
 The enemy rules over
 Half of Europe,
 He won't stop himself
 Till his belly blows up.
 And the little Jews cry out: it's good.
 And the little Jews sing out: it's good!
 It's great, it's fine,
 He can't get more in.

S'iz gut, s'iz gut, s'iz gut!
 Di yidelekh shrayen s'iz gut,
 Der soyne fun nemen
 Iz mid shoyne un krank,
 S'iz ibergefresn
 Un hot keyn oysgang.
 Un yidelekh shrayen s'iz gut!
 Un yidelekh kveln s'iz gut!
 S'iz voyl, s'iz fayn,
 Zayn sof vet bald zayn.
 OMAYN.

It's good, it's good, it's good
 The little Jews cry out: it's good!
 The foe's weary and sick
 Of his plundering deeds,
 He's stuffed his guts full,
 Now he can't find relief—
 And the little Jews cry out: it's good.
 And the little Jews sing out: it's good!
 It's great, it's fine,
 His end will soon come.
 AMEN.

As these verses make clear, the folk poet gradually modified his self-recriminatory tone, allowing by poem's end that acquiescence might prove a tactical measure after all, and prophesying the enemy's downfall in an orgy of overindulgence. Gebirtig's fervent anti-Germanism, however, is sustained throughout—and not only by means of derisive words. It can be argued that the melody underscoring this text intentionally satirizes the style of that intrinsically Germanic musical form, the waltz.²³⁸ Of course, this conjecture can never be proved: Gebirtig provided no performance indications in his notebook of song lyrics, nor could he leave a recorded imprimatur to his ghetto repertoire, as did “Yisrolik”'s Khayele Rozental. Yet

²³⁸ On the origin of the familiar ballroom-style “Viennese Waltz,” see Sachs 1952: 434.

certain anomalies of the transcription favor the case for satiric intent: 1) the 3/8 time signature, suggesting a faster, less dignified, performance speed than standard 3/4 “waltz-time”; 2) the “allegro” tempo indication, again implying hurried rather than stately movement; and 3) the “breath marks” [’], equivalent to *Luftpausen*, which impose a waltz-type “hesitation cadence” onto phrase-endings (see mm 4, 8, 16 and 20 in Figure 34 above).²³⁹

That Kaczerginski and music editor Gelbart also envisioned a “waltz” might be construed from a suggestive scribal error in the “*Noten*” section. Although Gelbart replicates the earlier publication’s three-eighths-to-the-bar meter (while transposing the music from E to Eb, switching the underlaid text from Yiddish to Latin characters, and eliminating the *Luftpausen*), the time signature itself reads 3/4—waltz-time—rather than 3/8.

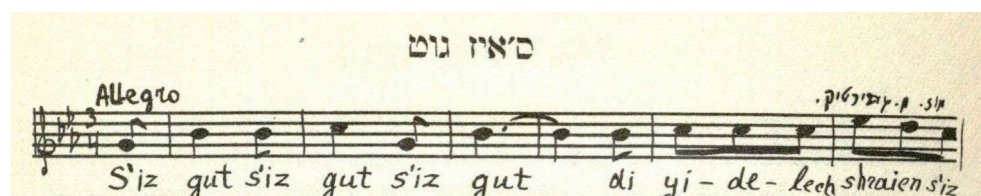


Figure 35: Gebirtig, “S’iz gut” (mm 1-6; plus pickup), with erroneous “waltz-time” signature (Kaczerginski 1948a: 397).

The choice of a major key should weigh in as well. Major modality, characteristic of the Austro-German waltz (and its tellingly-named folkloric precursor, the “*Deutsche*” [Sachs 1952:434]), is extremely rare in Gebirtig’s output: Fater, in his study of Gebirtig’s compositional style, records only three instances (including “S’iz gut”) of fifty songs surveyed (1970:114).²⁴⁰ It can be plausibly argued, then, that the affects of triple meter and major modality, deployed to

²³⁹ Music historian Stephen Banfield refers to the *Luftpause* as “an archetypal waltz feature” (1993:243).

²⁴⁰ To Fater, however, the brisk triple meter of “S’iz gut” suggested the medieval *Totentanz*, the dance of death (1970: 114).

conjure a waltz-drenched “Aryan” soundworld, are essential to the work’s thoroughgoing satire, and that “S’iz gut” stands as an example of a ghetto song that draws on a purely musical device—stylistic parody—to reinforce or encode a message. Gebirtig’s last song is thus revealed as all the more unsparing of Teutonic pretensions, deriding Germany’s apocalyptic martial mindset with its words while skewering the *Volk*’s vaunted sentimentality by means of musical burlesque.²⁴¹

Tango

As if anticipating a frequent question from future readers, Kaczerginski endeavored to explain the high incidence of tango melodies in his collection: “With their minor-key, melancholy aura, [tango compositions] were among the most frequently-exploited by ghetto songwriters—and not a few original tangos were created in the ghetto as well. Incidentally, many prewar tangos continued to be sung in the ghettos, where songs of love, longing, and mother had not lost their relevance” (1948a: 14).²⁴²

Commentators in Kaczerginski’s wake have indeed remarked on the prevalence of the tango, noting either its aptness or incongruity as a genre-of-choice among Shoah songwriters and performers. The Argentine journalist José Judkovski, for example, in his study *El Tango, una*

²⁴¹ National and ethnic groups tend to parody one another’s musical styles, and this tradition may be particularly pronounced during wartime. German patriotic songs and military marches made ripe targets for British and American musical satirists during both world wars, while Poles, Germans and others often found occasion to parody Jewish-styled music. See, for example, “Der Fuehrer’s Face” (1941), a parody of the “Horst Wessel Marsch” by British songwriter Oliver Wallace; Soviet composer Dmitri Shostakovich famously parodied German militarism in the “march” section of the first movement of his *Seventh Symphony* (1941) (a movement itself parodied by Béla Bartók in the latter’s *Concerto for Orchestra* [1944]). More recently, the American satirist Tom Lehrer took swipes at the Austro-German *Weltanschauung* in a trio of waltz-parodies, “The Wiener Schnitzel Waltz” (ca. 1953), “Alma” and “Wernher von Braun” (both ca. 1965).

²⁴² This passage from Kaczerginski’s introduction was also cited in chapter 3, above. Of original ghetto tango compositions included in the anthology, two of the best-remembered are “Di alte mamele” (also called “Mamele”), with music and words by Percy Haid (Kovno ghetto) (1948a: 109; text only); and Kaczerginski’s own “Friling” (Springtime), with music by Avreml Brudno (1948a: 70/379). Also see above for discussions of the “Markovtshizne” tango from Białystok ghetto, and Kaczerginski’s postwar “protest” tango, “S’iz geshen.”

historia con judíos (The Tango, a History with Jews), argued that the form was inherently suited to the ghetto and camp context, citing its origins among society's outcasts, textual motifs of violence and oppression, and Jewish contribution to its creation and propagation in the Americas and worldwide. Having identified thirty-eight tangos in Kaczerginski's volume, Judkovski asserts that "Jewish blood is linked with this noble musical genre" (Judkowski 1998: 19, 26).²⁴³

The performer and researcher Lloica Czackis, on the other hand, registered astonishment at the very existence of a ghetto and camp repertoire styled after this iconic Latin-American dance. In her study "*Tangele: the History of Yiddish Tango*," Czackis recalls: "[M]ost unexpectedly, I was handed a set of songs from Eastern European ghettos and concentration camps during the Second World War, written to the rhythm of tango. Here tango, the quintessence of dance and sensuality, was not only associated with a quite different language [i.e., Yiddish, rather than Spanish] but transformed into a symbol of life and endurance during the utmost misery" (Czackis 2003: 45).

An explanation that addresses both factions would point to the tango's preeminent place in European popular music, and in Polish commercial music culture in particular, during the decade preceding the war. Although sales figures from music publishers and record companies are lacking, circumstantial evidence strongly supports this premise. A survey of 256 pieces of Polish sheet music published between 1928 and 1939 in my personal collection, for instance, revealed 119 songs—more than 46% of the total—specifically designated as "tangos."²⁴⁴

²⁴³ "De las obras musicales encontradas por Kaczerginsky [sic], publicadas con letra y musica en su libro, treinta y ocho son TANGOS"; "El judío está ligado con sangre a esta noble género musical" (emphasis in the original). Judkovski does not itemize the thirty-eight tangos he has found in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*.

²⁴⁴ The tally includes several tango-hybrids, such as a toasting tango ("tango toastowe"), a drunken tango ("tango pijackie"), a Hungarian tango ("tango węgierski") and a sentimental tango ("tango sentymentalne"). The collection, acquired on eBay in 2006, represents the inventory of a shuttered music shop in Buffalo, NY, and

Publisher's catalogues and promotional literature likewise affirm the pervasiveness of the genre in the 1930s: of 108 "hit songs" ("*przeboje*") advertised on the back page of the 1936 offering "Nie chcę wiedzieć" (I Don't Want to Know), no less than sixty-eight (or 63%) are tangos (see Figure 36, below).²⁴⁵ Thus, rather than a manifestation of "racial cognition" or an emblem of Jewish endurance and pluck, the tango style is more accurately understood as a musical lingua franca of its day, well-established before the war and habitually employed by songwriters within and outside the Nazi sphere of domination.²⁴⁶

consists of first- and second-tier hit songs (and a modest selection of art and salon pieces) intended for sale to the city's once-burgeoning Polish population. The collection is both random and representative in that it includes serially-released music sheets from major publishing houses in Warsaw, Krakow and Lwów. (It might be noted that the percentage of tangos would rise slightly were the art and salon selections factored out of the equation.)

²⁴⁵ For an excellent overview of the rise and development of the Polish tango, see Płaczkiwicz 2005, or the same author's "Tango in Poland, 1913-1939."

²⁴⁶ The tango genre thrived in both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union during this same period. On Germany, see Kater 2003; on the Soviet Union, see Starr 1992: 29-30; Nelson 2004: 97; and MacFadyen 2002 (especially the discussion of star performer Petr Leshchenko): 44 ff. The famed Argentinian tango composer Eduardo Bianco (1892-1959) toured Poland, Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia for several months in the 1930s and 1940s; according to Pinsón (n.d.), he later reminisced: "I was congratulated by Marshal Stalin after a performance in Moscow." Aleksander Kulisiewicz, the collector of camp repertoire, reported that Bianco's "Tango Plegaria" (Prayer Tango) (1929; published in Poland as "Oración"), was transformed into "Das Todestango" (The Death Tango) in the Polish camp Janowska, near Lwów (Wortsman 1979).



„NOWA SCENA”

WYDAJE TYLKO PRZEBOJE!

W WYDANIU PO 95 GR.

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1) Abdul Bej, 2-gie wydanie | — foxtrot arab-ki | 56) Daj mi tylko jedną noc... | — tango |
| 2) Niesamowite oczy... | — tango | 57) Merci, Madame... | — tango |
| 3) Pieśni o matce, 3-cie wyd. | — tango | 58) Ilona! | — foxtrot węgierski |
| 4) Nie bądź głupi | — walczyk | 59) Wszystko już wiem... | — tango |
| 5) Walc złączył nas | — walc | 40) Dowidzenia... | — tango |
| 6) Ostatnia noc | — tango | 41) Tak w życiu bywa... | — tango |
| 7) Świeże mam bajgelki | — slow-fox | 42) Piękne Rumunki! | — foxtrot |
| 8) Stary walc | — walc | 43) Życie jest jak błękit nieba | — tango |
| 9) Tyle miłości, 2-gie wydanie z filmu „Jego Ekscelencja Subjekt” | — slow-fox | 44) Odeszłaś, jak sen | — tango |
| 10) Złociste włoski, 2-gie wydanie z filmu „Jego Ekscelencja Subjekt” | — foxtrot | 45) Za jedno słowo | — tango |
| 11) Oj powoli... | — tango | 46) Walc Tyrolski (Magda) | — walc |
| 12) Wszystko mi jedno | — tango | 47) W majową noc | — tango |
| 13) Żebyś ty wiedziała... 4-te wyd. | — tango | 48) Kobieta jest jak róża | — tango |
| 14) Całuję rączki, 2-gie wyd. | — tango | 49) Pamiętajsz małą kawiarenkę | — tango |
| 15) Dziś będziesz moja | — tango | 50) Nie można zmuszać do miłości | — tango |
| 16) Strzeż się mojej miłości | — tango | 51) Nad kołyską... | — tango i pieśń |
| 17) 100 lat! | — tango toastowe | 52) Powiedz tylko „tak”... | — slow-fox |
| 18) Siup, Marysiu!... | — tango | 53) Bo jesteśmy młodzi | — foxtrot |
| 19) Znadto dobrze cię znam... | — slow-fox | 54) Miłość trwała krótko | — tango |
| 20) Marie | — tango sentymalne | 55) To nic nie szkodzi | — tango |
| 21) Andriusza | — foxtrot rosyjski | 56) Graj skrzypku 6 wyd. | — tango |
| 22) Narkoza | — walc angielski | 57) Przyjdzie taki dzień | — walc angielski |
| 23) Nanette | — tango | 58) Ja kocham cały świat | — slow-fox |
| 24) Marika | — foxtrot węgierski | 59) Twe oczy mówią „kocham” | — tango |
| 25) Żebyś ty mnie zrozumiał, 4 wyd. | — tango | 60) Twoje kwiaty | — tango |
| 26) Wspomnienia | — tango | 61) Noc cygańska | — tango |
| 27) Nie kocham Cię | — tango | 62) Śpij maleństwo | — kołysanka |
| 28) Jola | — tango węgierskie | 63) Kłam | — romans walc |
| 29) Ostatnia moja miłość | — tango | 64) Gdy się noc zaczyna | — tango |
| 30) Słowa bez treści | — tango | 65) Dla Ciebie... | — slow-fox |
| 31) Nie płacz, Baby | — walc angielski | 66) Klementyna | — foxtrot |
| 32) Lotnik to zalotnik! | — tango-fox | 67) Pensjonarka | — tango |
| 33) Przytul, uściśnij, pocałuj... 4 wyd | — tango | 68) Tulipany | — tango |
| 34) Młoda wdowa | — foxtrot | 69) Wiem że odejdziesz | — tango |
| 35) Kto tańczy walca? | — walc wiedeński | 70) Miłość pali jak słońce | — tango |
| | | 71) Codziennie inna... | — tango |
| | | 72) Nie chcę wiedzieć | — tango |

W WYDANIU PO ZŁ. 1.50

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------|---|------------------|
| 1) Tylko z tobą i dla Ciebie, 2 wyd. z filmu „Pieśniarz Warszawy | — tango | 21) Piosenka o miłości | — tango |
| 2) Zrób to tak | — slow-fox | 22) Ja nie byłem Ciebie wart | — tango |
| 3) Miłość jak piosenka | — tango | 23) Od miłości nikt się nie wykrepi | — slow-fox |
| 4) Dla Twojej miłości | — tango | z filmu „Dwie Joasie” 2 wyd. | |
| 5) Wańka | — tango rosyjskie | 24) Dlaczego właśnie dziś? | — walc angielski |
| 6) Odrobinę szczęścia (3 wyd.) | — tango | z filmu „Dwie Joasie” | |
| 7) Cztery nogi | — foxtrot | 25) Ostatnia niedziela 12 wyd. | — tango |
| 8) Najpiękniejsza Signorina | — tango | 26) Mnie wystarczy słówko | — slow-fox |
| 9) Już nie mogę! | — slow-fox | z filmu „Kochaj tylko mnie” | |
| 10) Ty jeszcze wrócisz do mnie | — tango | 27) Kochaj tylko mnie | — walc angielski |
| 11) Tak smutno mi bez ciebie | — tango | z filmu „Kochaj tylko mnie” | |
| 12) Szkoda żyć, gdy niema dla kogo | — tango | 28) Została nam piosenka | — tango |
| 13) Codzień mi jesteś bardziej bliska... | — tango meksykańskie | 29) Najśłodsze tango | — tango |
| 14) Batuszka! | — foxtrot rosyjski | 30) Jest tylko jedna miłość | — tango |
| 15) Ach, ty mi się tak podobasz! | — walc | 31) Panna Zuzanna gra na fortepianie | — foxtrot |
| 16) Niech nikt o tem nie wie | — tango | 32) Skonliskowane tango | — tango |
| 17) Przepraszam | — tango | 33) Jadzia z filmu „Jadzia” | — slow-fox |
| 18) Sybiracy | — marsz | 34) Bez przerwy śmieje się „ ” | — foxtrot |
| 19) Gondolo płyn | — tango | 35) Jak drogie są wspomnienia z filmu „Jadzia” | — tango |
| 20) Ta jedna noc | — tango | 36) Wiem, że nie byłam dla ciebie z filmu „Trędowata” | — walc angielski |

Wszystkie nasze przeboje nagrane są na płytach gramofonowych.

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Drak „Dziennik”
Warszawa

Figure 36. Back page of “Nie chcę wiedzieć” (tango) by Zenon Friedwald and Fred Scher (Warsaw: Editions Nowa Scena, 1936). Sixty-eight of 108 songs then available from this publisher were classified as tangos. The company slogan: “‘Nowa Scena’ wydaje tylko przeboje!”—Nowa Scena only publishes hits! (Author’s collection).

Tango Contrafacta

As Judkovski, Czackis, Płaczkiwicz and others have pointed out, much of the songwriting talent behind the Polish tango was Jewish, and many of the genre's creators and performers were destined for the ghettos and camps.²⁴⁷ The three artists responsible for the enduringly popular tango “Serce Matki” (A Mother's Heart; 1933)—composers Zygmunt Karasiński and Szymon Katuszek, and lyricist Ludwik Szmaragd—were indeed all Jews. Their backgrounds and wartime ordeals can be briefly recounted before discussing the transformations their best-remembered song underwent during the Shoah.

Friends and performing partners since their student days, Karasiński and Katuszek, both born in Warsaw in 1898, enjoyed sustained success as co-directors of the popular and influential “Karasiński & Katuszek Jazz-Tango Orchestra” (Dąbrowski 2008a: 29).²⁴⁸ Katuszek, at the start of the war, fled to Lwów, the largest Polish city then under Soviet occupation (and a common destination for refugees), but returned to Warsaw when German armies overran eastern Poland in 1941. Surviving documents from the Warsaw ghetto attest that he conducted the Ghetto Policemen's Orchestra on at least one occasion, in May 1942—but his ultimate fate remains unknown.²⁴⁹ According to some accounts he escaped again to Lwów where, under an “Aryan”

²⁴⁷ Other treatments of this subject include Nudler 1998, and Furio 2002.

²⁴⁸ The ensemble underwent a variety of configurations and was known by a variety of titles (see also Polish Jazz Network 2008).

²⁴⁹ For a description of the Policemen's Orchestra (officially known as the Order Service Orchestra) see Engelking-Boni and Leociak 2009. According to these authors, the orchestra had been established to “collect money for the assistance and self-assistance activities of the police” (2009: 210). On Katuszek's musical presence in the ghetto, see diary entry by Judenrat head Adam Czerniaków (1880-1942) in Czerniaków and Fuks 1983: 281. As translated in Engelking-Boni and Leociak (2009: 210), this entry reads: “At noon a concert of the Order Service Orchestra under the baton of Katuszek. Jewish compositions were played and sung. The auditorium was full. A very good performance.”

alias, he was engaged as a pianist at a nightclub frequented by the SS. Eventually recognized, he was returned to Warsaw and executed (Lerski 2004c: 668).²⁵⁰

Karasiński likewise traveled east to avoid the Germans, fleeing first to Białystok (where he established “Jazz Białoruski,” the first Belorussian jazz band) and then to Soviet Lwów (Lerski 2004b: 664). Unlike his partner, he eluded detection through to the war’s end, taking refuge in Gubałówka, a mountain village near the fashionable ski resort of Zakopane, where Karasiński and Kataszek, in better days, had held forth to great acclaim. Soon re-established as a force in Polish popular music, he worked steadily in radio and television until the late 1960s when, heartsick at the fresh wave of antisemitism then engulfing the country, he emigrated to Denmark, passing away there in 1973.²⁵¹

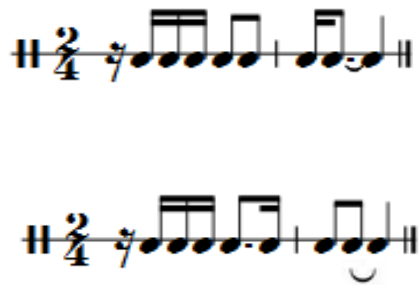
Ludwik Szmaragd’s story, less calamitous, is equally convoluted. Born Ludwik Sonnenschein in Warsaw in 1913, Szmaragd (the Polish pseudonym means “emerald”) was a literary prodigy with several hit songs to his credit—including “Serce Matki”—before he reached his twentieth birthday. A journalist as well as lyricist (and fluent in both German and English), he relocated to London in 1934 to work as a foreign correspondent. During the war Szmaragd—now “Larry Bradley”—served as an intelligence officer in the British Army, and in 1944 took part in the Normandy invasion. He next emerged as a competitive bridge player, making his only return visit to Warsaw in 1966 as Britain’s representative in an international

²⁵⁰ See also Turkow (1948:108), who notes that Kataszek conducted the Ghetto Policemen’s Orchestra in a program for children, and later posed as a Volksdeutsch musician in Lwów.

²⁵¹ See also Karasiński’s entry in Chomiński 1964: 262.

tournament. In later life he retired to a villa in the south of Spain, where he died in 1977 (Lerski 2004d: 767).²⁵²

“Serce Matki,” first recorded in 1933, remains a favorite of the Polish public to this day. In style and content it is a typical “Continental Tango,” with verse and refrain of sixteen measures each, and music, characteristically in the minor mode, featuring two of the genre’s trademark rhythms.²⁵³



²⁵² Adam Aston (1902-1993), a key figure in popularizing the song, was another Polish Jewish musician whose biography warrants mention here. Born Adolph Loewinsohn in Warsaw, Aston was a top-name entertainer who under a variety of aliases often crossed-over from Polish into Yiddish and Hebrew repertoire. Like Karasiński and Kataszek, Aston found himself in Lwów soon after the outbreak of the war. Traveling east, he joined the Polish II Corps (informally known as General Anders’ Army) in Soviet Russia, eventually taking part in the invasion of Italy and the Battle of Monte Cassino (January 1944), while also performing and recording for the Anders Army entertainment unit. Although Aston afterward emigrated to South Africa and finally to England, he remained a celebrity in his homeland and occasionally returned there to perform (Lerski 2004a: 581; see also Anders 1944 for the General’s personal recollections of the Polish II Corps).

²⁵³ The “Continental Tango” is a tango type more suited to European-style ballroom dancing (Nelson 1969: 6.31). “Serce Matki” is, however, somewhat atypical in that it remains in the minor key throughout, whereas most Polish tangos set the refrain section in the contrasting relative major.

SERCE MATKI.

Prawo wykonania
publicznego zastrzeżone.

(TANGO)

Słowa Lud. SZMARAGDA.



Muz. Z. KARASIŃSKIEGO.
i S. KATASZKA.

1. Ży-je-my wśród za - mę - tu
2. Naj-lep-si przy - ja - cie - le

I bra - ku sen - ty - men - tu. Tu sztuczny śmiech, tam znów sztuczne łzy,
Dać mo - gą smutku wie - le. I wiedz, że naj - bardziej wierny ci

O - bli - da, fałsz to są ży - cia gry. Mi - łość ci szcze - rej
Za - pomnieć cię mo - że, wierzaj mi. U - mar - ty poświę -

niema, E - po - ka kłamstw, krzywd i mąk Nikt nie jest so - bą,
ce - nia, E - go - izm dziś wia - dzą ma, Nieszczerość rządzi

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Czas rządzi fo-bą. O - krut-na o - bo-jętność wkrąg.
A ludzkość błą-dzi, Chłód w każdym ką-cie ci-cho ła...

REF.
1.2. Je-dy-nie ser-ce matki U-czułem zaw-sze tchnie.
Je-dy-nie ser-ce mał-ki Owszystkiem do-brze wie.
Dać trochę cie-pła u-mie I każdy ból ro-za-mie.
A gdy przesta-je dla nas bić Tak ciężko, ciężko żyć.

FINE

Litograf. 1 sztych. nut J. Honarzewski, Warszawa.
L. 7329 I.

Johner i Wolff
Szybczyński, K. Drzewiecki.
w Zakopanem.

Figure 37. “Serce Matki” (1933), tango by Zygmunt Karasiński & Szymon Kataszek, and Ludwik Szmaragd (Source: Jagiellonian University, Kraków).

At once a tango and a “mother song,” “Serce Matki” owes its appeal as much to Szmaraǵd’s sharp yet affecting text as to Karasiński and Kataszek’s memorable tune. And as will be seen, the lyricist’s Polish words and conceits resonated, to a lesser or greater extent, in two Yiddish-language Shoah incarnations of “Serce Matki.”

Serce Matki

Żyjemy wśród zamętu i braku sentymentu,
 Tu sztuczny śnieg tam znów sztuczne łzy,
 Obluda, fałsz, to są życia gry.
 Miłości szczerzej nie ma, epoka kłamstw,
 krzywd i mąk,
 Nikt nie jest sobą, czas rządzi tobą
 Okrutna obojętność w krąg.

refren

Jedynie serce matki uczuciem zawsze
 tchnie,
 Jedynie serce Matki o wszystkim dobrze
 wie;
 Dać trochę ciepła umie i każdy ból
 zrozumie,
 A gdy przestaje dla nas bić, tak ciężko,
 ciężko żyć.

A Mother’s Heart

We live amid turmoil and lack of sentiment,
 Here, fake snow; there, fake tears,
 Duplicity, falseness, these are life's games.
 No true love here, it's an era of lies, crime
 and torment,
 No one’s himself, time’s your master,
 Savage indifference all around.

refrain

Only a mother's heart always breathes with
 feeling,
 Only a mother's heart knows well
 everything;
 It gives warmth and understands every pain,

 And when it stops beating, how hard, how
 hard it is to live.

“Ikh hob mayn man farloyrn” (I Have Lost My Husband) appears in the anthology’s catch-all first section, “Zog nit keymol.” Attributed to Šiauliai (Yid., Shavli) ghetto bard Tsvi Garmiza (also spelled Germize and Garmize) (b. 1920), the song is among the book’s most graphic and despairing: the lament of a woman who, having escaped a mass execution and seen her entire family slaughtered, now wishes only for her own death.²⁵⁴ To the eye and ear

²⁵⁴ Folklorist Ben Stonehill recorded Garmiza’s song in New York during the summer of 1948; his informant, an 18-year-old female survivor, referred to the song as “Di elnte mame” (The Lonely Mother) (Stonehill 2005: reel 3, disk 3). A close variant, collected by Yefim Kaplan of Riga, appeared in 1991 in the Soviet Yiddish journal *Yungvald* (No. 2: 67-75). On Garmiza, see *Shirim me-geto Shavli* 2003: 73; “Ikh hob mayn man farloyrn” appears on pages 75-77 of this volume, again titled “Di elnte mame.” According to the commentary, Garmiza’s

accustomed to period practice, Gelbart’s transcription, with its distinctive syncopations and rhythmic patterns, clearly points to a source-work in the tango style:

איד האב מיין מאן פארלערן

Moderato

Shoin ge-nug zich tzu kle-men an en-de
 muz shoin ne-men du host shoin kain tre-ern mer
 Kei-ner vil mir nit he-ern mer ze tu es mir ich
 bet dich tzi far-shteistu main ge-vein in har-tern noyt mich
 ge-vi-sn ploht mich an end tzum le-bn vil ich shoin der-
 sho-sn oi main ma-men hob ich a-lein ge-zen
 main ta-tn oich tzu-za-men a groi-se grub ge-
 ven ich hob main man far-loi-ern in tog fun
 Kinds ge-boi-ern dos kind hot koim der-zen di
 sham fun shois in grub in grub a-ram

Figure 38. “Ikh hob mayn man farloyrn” (1941), words by Tsvi Garmiza, transcribed by Michl Gelbart(Kaczerginski 1948a: 381).

lyric is based on a true incident about a Shavli woman who survived an Einsatzgruppe mass killing in 1941. Garmiza’s “Blut,” printed as an anonymous fragment by Kaczerginski (1948a: 72), likewise concerns a massacre and also seems well-suited to a tango melody.

Yet only foreknowledge of the Polish original could lead to the realization that the “mother” invoked in the first refrain’s opening line, “dershosn, oy, mayn mamen” (my mother, oh, was shot), surely derives, however inadvertently, from the “mother” of Szmargd’s plangent refrain, “*Jedynie serce matki*” (only a mother’s heart).

Ikh hob mayn man farloyrn

Shoyn genug zikh tsu klemen,
An ende muz shoyn nemen.
Ikh hob shoyn keyn trenn mer,
Keyner vil mikh nit hern mer.
Ze, tu es mir, ikh bet dikh,
Tsi farshteystu mayn geveyn?
In hartsn nogt mir,
Gevisn plogt mikh—
An end tsum lebn vil ikh shoyn.

refren 1

Dershosn, oy, mayn mamen—
Hob ikh aleyn gezen,
Mayn tatn oykh tsuzamen,
A groyse grub geven.
Ikh hob mayn man farloyrn,
In tog fun kinds geboyrn,
Dos kind hot koym derzen di shayn—
Fun shoys in grub arayn.

Ikh ben aleyn geblibn,
Der goyrl hot mikh getribn,
Di koyl iz mir a durkh farbay,
Ikh bin gelofn durkh veygeshrey.
Ikh bin in vald gelegn,
Es griltst mir alts mayn kinds geshrey.
Oy, haynt geboyrn,
Un shoyn farloyrn—
Tsi muz es, got, zayn azoy?

refren 2

O, got fun nekome,
Vu bistu dokh atsind?
Tsi zestu mayn neshome,
Un efsher bistu blind?
Gerehtikayt—nishto mer,
Ikh veyn un klog un yomer,
Genug dayn veynen in getselt—
Sadizm hersht nor oyf der velt.

I Have Lost My Husband

Enough of this lamenting,
My life will soon be ending;
I have no more tears to cry,
No one wants to hear me cry.
So do me in, I beg you,
Can you understand my grief?
My heart is breaking,
My conscience plagues me,
I want to end this life.

refrain 1

Shot and killed, my mother,
I saw with my own eyes,
Together with my father—
There was a giant grave.
I have lost my husband,
And gave birth that very day;
The child had scarcely seen the light—
From my bosom to the grave.

All alone remaining,
Fate, somehow, has saved me,
The bullet missed, it passed me by,
I fled amid the anguished cries.
Now in the forest, hiding,
I still hear my screaming child!
Born on this day,
Taken away—
God, was this your will?

refrain 2

Oh, God of vengeance,
Where are you at this time?
Can you look into my soul,
Or are you perhaps blind?
Justice: there is none here,
I weep and wail and mourn;
Enough of “crying in your tent”—
Sadism rules this world of ours.

Far more revealing of its origins is “A nes fun himl” (A Miracle from Heaven), an anonymous song from Strasdenhof camp, near Riga.²⁵⁵ The grim text is presented without commentary in the book’s bleakest section, “Treblinke”; nor does Kaczerginski print the melody. Yet anyone familiar with “Serce Matki” will recognize the camp poet’s source of inspiration from the very first line, where the sense and sound of Szmaraqd’s opening, “*Żyjemy wśród zamętu i braku sentymentu*” (we live amid turmoil and lack of sentiment), are Yiddishized and transformed into “*Mir lebn in momentn, nito keyn sentimentn*” (we live in moments without sentiment).²⁵⁶ And while echoes of the original grow fainter as the song progresses, they resound again in the pathos-laden last line, “*Vi shver s’iz undz, vi shver*” (how hard for us, how hard)—a near paraphrase of Szmaraqd’s touching “*tak ciężko, ciężko żyć*” (how hard, how hard to live).

²⁵⁵ The official name of the camp is Strasdenhof (White 2009: 1252-1253); however, Kaczerginski and his informants (in this case, Sara Kogan of Vilna) consistently refer to it as “Strassenhof” (see also fn. 153, above). A virtually identical text appears in Nizer 1948: 582, the editor noting that the piece had been sung by a Strassenhof (sic) survivor named Yitskhok Horvits during an interview published in the 29 June 1946 issue of the New York Yiddish newspaper *Der Tog*.

²⁵⁶ A Yiddish version of “Serce Matki,” titled “A Mames Harts” (A Mother’s Heart) and known only from an undated 78rpm commercial recording by entertainer Mark Moravsky, adapts the song’s opening in very similar fashion (“*Mir lebn in momentn, in harts fun sentimentn*” [we live in the moment, with sentimental hearts]) and may have influenced the writer of “A nes fun himl” (Moravsky 2003). Another contrafact, “Mame, mir lebn in momentn” (Mother, we live in moments) (also titled “Mame!”), written down soon after the war by Kovno ghetto survivor Edith Goetz Bloch, differs in many respects from both Szmaraqd’s Polish and Moravsky’s Yiddish, but tellingly retains the final “*vi shver!*” (how hard) (Bloch 2001). And while the Russian-language reworking recorded in 1935 by tango specialist Petr Leshchenko completely alters the text, it too remains faithful to the last trope of the original in its own final line: “*Kak tyazhelo mne zhit*” (how hard it is for me to live). (For a discussion and translation of Leshchenko’s adaptation, see MacFadyen 2002: 60.)

A nes fun himl

Mir lebn in momentn, nito keyn sentimentn,
Genug gevaynt un genug geshmakht,
Der tayvl hot dokh zayn shpil gemakht.
Nito far undz kayn rakhmones, mir lebn in
sakones,
Kayn khokhme gilt nit,
Kayn harts es fil't nit,
S'iz der gedank shver vi a shtayn.

refren

Vayl nor a nes fun himl hon undz helfn atsind;
Vayl nor a nes fun himl zol kumen gikh,
geshvind.
Mir vartn oyf nekhome, a trayst far der
neshome,
Vayl dos oyshaltn konen mir nit mer,—
Vi shver s'iz undz, vi shver!

A Miracle from Heaven

We live in moments without sentiment,
So much crying and pining away,
The devil is surely enjoying his play.
There is no pity for us, just constant threats
before us,
Our wits are useless,
Our hearts feel nothing,
Our thoughts lie heavy as a stone.

refrain

For only a miracle from heaven can help us
now,
For only a miracle from heaven—it must
come quickly, now.
We wait for consolation, some comfort for
the soul,
For we can't hold out much longer,
How hard for us, how hard!

“Ikh hob mayn man farloyrn” and “A nes fun himl,” based on the same hit song, not only illustrate the impact of the prewar Polish tango on the ghetto and camp repertoire. These and similar examples point to a more broadly-contextualized understanding of Shoah-era creativity—one that accounts for cultural commonalities formerly taken for granted but now glimpsed only occasionally in a stray word, phrase or rhythm. As has been shown, attending to such signposts can aid in the recovery of otherwise unidentified source material. Moreover, familiarity with mid-century popular music phenomena (such as the Polish tango craze) and to aspects of period performance practice (which can be gleaned from sheet music, recordings and film) should prove useful to present-day and future interpreters of Shoah repertoire, both as markers of era-appropriateness and as a springboards to the creative reworking of historical styles.

Soviet Popular Song

Kaczerginski identified songs from Soviet Russia as a final major source for the ghetto, camp and partisan repertoire:

Catchy, singable Soviet tunes were widely known before the war and became even more popular during the years 1939-1941, when the Soviets occupied portions of Polish territory. The singability of these melodies inspired new texts from several writers. (1948a: XXIV; also cited in chapter 3, above)

This statement notwithstanding, Soviet themes in fact figure less prominently in the collection than either original compositions or melodies borrowed from other sources. If Kaczerginski perhaps overplays the significance of Soviet music, his misperception is best understood in light of his political upbringing and wartime experiences. As a communist operative (and music aficionado) in interwar Vilna he would have been familiar with the array of protest, workers' and revolutionary songs considered vital to Soviet propaganda efforts. Such songs undoubtedly influenced his own creative work. Lucy Dawidowicz, in her student memoir of Vilna in the late 1930s, recalled that his songs at that time were "bristling with leftist militancy" (1989: 123)—and the stripped-down aesthetic of the Soviet "mass song" is discernible even in his earliest musical call-to-arms, "Barikadn" (Barricades).²⁵⁷

The first few months of the war offered Kaczerginski an opportunity to pick up fresh repertoire when he served alongside Soviet troops as a Red Army auxiliary in Białystok. Returning to Vilna he witnessed Lithuania's quick absorption into the USSR in a coup facilitated by "cinefication," a campaign of cultural transformation waged by means of crowd-pleasing,

²⁵⁷ Dawidowicz's characterization of Kaczerginski's songwriting style was previously cited in chapter 1, above).

ubiquitously exhibited, song-filled propaganda films.²⁵⁸ Not long afterward, in the Vilna ghetto, these same indoctrinary songs took on symbolic import for Kaczerginski and his partisan comrades, inevitably calling to mind the great ally to the east and expectations of deliverance by the Red Army.

The Vilna partisans broke out of the ghetto in the fall of 1943 and in due course joined up with a Soviet underground combat battalion. Again, the association proved to be a musically enriching experience for Kaczerginski. In “*Velder zingen*” (Forests Sing), a chapter of his memoir *Ikh bin geven a partizan* (I was a Partisan), he recorded his impressions of the nostalgia-soaked musicales held deep in the partisan forests, where gifted singers and instrumentalists introduced him to a wealth of unforgettable music:

Strange and wonderful is the picture before me: I see heroes made hard as oaks by life in the forest, strong men who wouldn't blink an eye when the time came to kill, slaughter, destroy. And here in the twilight, they turn sentimental as women and pour their feelings of love and longing into songs they created themselves or refashioned from prewar songs, which they've embellished with their own stories....

We would often gather around Zundele, who had brought with him to the forest his most prized possession: an accordion. At such times we would not even heed the call to supper. Zundele was a masterful performer. He knew just when to execute a *forte* and when to play softly, *piano*. A raised eyebrow sufficed to let the fighters understand that they should now sing *pianissimo*....

At nightfall, when gossiping trees huddled together to whisper secrets about the day's events; at nightfall, when weary branches drooped earthward or stretched toward the heavens in prayer—then the sound of singing carried across the entire wilderness. From their concealed hideaways, partisan sentries let fly with a tune. In their dugout, pensive commanders sing to themselves as they plan the day ahead. Partisans sing out as they scamper down dog-trails toward the object of their vengeance. Fighters struggling to doze on their cots subdue their restlessness with a song. But everyone sang. Songs of

²⁵⁸ Rus. *kinofikatsiia*: on the Soviet use of film as a means of mass indoctrination, see Kepley 1994: 262-277, and Lahusen n.d. The string of hit musical comedies directed by the former Eisenstein disciple Grigori Aleksandrov (1903-1983)—*Vesyolye rebyata* (Jolly Fellows) (1934); *Tsirk* (Circus) (1936); and *Volga-Volga* (1938)—proved to be the most palatable and popular of these indoctrinary films. All featured scores by Isaak Dunaevskiii, whose music is discussed further on in this chapter.

war, of homesickness, of days long ago, of days just past, and of days to come. Of days when, after all is said and done, “we shall rest peacefully in our graves” (Kaczerginski 1952: 220 and 225).

Elsewhere in this study attention has often been drawn to the preponderance of Lithuanian sources in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*. Kaczerginski’s life story—his devotion to Vilna, and his experiences as a political activist, ghetto prisoner, and partisan fighter—again clearly informed his collecting modus operandi with respect to songs of Soviet origin. But just as his familiarity with these songs is best understood in light of his prewar sensibilities, so his remembrance of them is most meaningfully understood in the context of the war’s aftermath. Like any number of writers striving to shape a cogent story from the recent catastrophe, Kaczerginski chose to emphasize Jewish heroism and resistance over Jewish passivity and victimhood. As previously shown, this historiographical bias undergirds the anthology’s own “narrative structure,” from its opening salvo (“Zog nit keynmol”) to its score-settling last chapter (“Kontratak”) and transcendent last song (“Mir lebn eybik!”—We Live Forever!). Partisan songs, tokens of Jewish strength and renewal, drew largely on Soviet musical sources. Not only were these songs important to Kaczerginski personally, they were crucial to the larger story he wanted to tell.

Of the anthology’s 235 song texts, the melodies to eleven can be ascribed with certainty to Soviet Russian sources. Perhaps predictably, the substantial majority of these derived from film scores, with the others drawn from the (non-cinema) popular and Soviet partisan repertoires. A single pre-Revolution melody, “Raskinulos more shiroko” (The Broad Expanse of the Sea), also merits inclusion here. Prominently featured in the first Soviet musical comedy film,

Vesyolyye rebyata (The Jolly Fellows) (1934), the song gained such widespread popularity in the USSR that it can be regarded as musically contemporaneous to the others.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁹ According to MacFadyen (2002: 133), the song [text] “has its origins in a Greek shanty translated to Russian in the mid-nineteenth century”; the melody is generally attributed to Russian composer Alexander Gurilev (1803-1858).

Table 17

Soviet Origin Songs in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*

	TITLE	TEXT	ORIGIN	ORIGINAL TITLE	COMPOSER	SOURCE
1	Zog nit keynmol	Hirsh Glik	Vilna ghetto 1943	To ne tuchi, grozovye oblaka	Dmitri and Daniel Pokrass	film: <i>Ya, syn' trudovogo naroda</i> (1938)
2	Bombes	Lazar Buzhanski	Vilna ghetto March 1942	Tuchi nad gorodom vstali	Pavel Armand	film: <i>Chelovek s ruzhem</i> (1936)
3	Aroys iz in vilne a nayer bafel	Anonymous	Vilna ghetto	Raskinulos more shiroko	Alexander Gurilev	film: <i>Vesyolye rebyata</i> (1934)
4	Farvos iz der himl	Leyb Opeskin	Vilna ghetto	Orlyonok	Viktor Beliy	stage play: <i>Zyamka Kopacz</i> by Mark Daniel (orig. Yiddish) (1936)
5	Maystas-lid	Avrom Cypkin	Kovno ghetto	Pesnya o Rodinye	Isaak Dunaevskii	film: <i>Tsirk</i> (1936)
6	Hoykher man!	Nosn Markovski	Kovno ghetto	Pesenka a Kapitane	Isaak Dunaevskii	film: <i>Deti kapitana Granta</i> (1936)
7	Du geto mayn	Rikle Glezer	Vilna ghetto	Moskva Mayskaya	Dmitri and Daniel Pokrass	film: <i>Dvadsatyy may</i> (1937)
8	Der komitetshik	Nosn Markovski	Kovno ghetto	Pesnya Vodovoz	Isaak Dunaevskii	film: <i>Volga-Volga</i> (1938)
9	Vi es kumt nor on der frimorgn	Khane Kheytn	Šiauliai (Shavli) ghetto	Marsh Traktoristov	Isaak Dunaevskii	film: <i>Bogataya Nevesta</i> (1937)
10	Tsores un layd (Der aerodromshhtshik)	Avrom Cypkin	Kovno ghetto	Raskinulos more shiroko	Aleksander Gurilev	film: <i>Vesyolye rebyata</i> (1934)
11	Hofenung	Avrom Cypkin	Kovno ghetto	Marsh Traktoristov	Isaak Dunaevskii	film: <i>Bogataya Nevesta</i> (1937)
12	Itsik vitnberg	Shmerke Kaczerginski	Vilna ghetto	Partizan Zheleznyak	Matvey Blanter	Popular song (1936)
13	Yid, du partizaner	Shmerke Kaczerginski	Partisan song	Tshernomorskaya Zharkovskiy	Leonid Bakalov	Soviet partisan song, ca. 1944 (pub. 1948)

As Table 17 illustrates, each of these songs had been collected from former inmates of Lithuanian ghettos, Kaczerginski himself among them. It will be further observed that individual authors (again including Kaczerginski) contributed multiple songs, and that two pieces, “Marsh Traktoristov” (March of the Tractor Drivers) and “Raskinulos more shiroko,” were parodied twice.²⁶⁰

The high percentage of Jewish composers is also of note. In fact, of the Soviet songwriters listed above, only one, Leonid Bagatov, was not a Jew; and even Alexander Gurilev’s nineteenth-century ballad “Raskinulos more shiroko” had by the 1930s become inextricably associated in the public mind with Leonid Utesov, the charismatic Jewish showman who had revived it on screen.²⁶¹ One might see in this concurrence a parallel to the Polish “ghetto tango” phenomenon already discussed, namely that Jewish prisoners responded intuitively to a “semitic tinge” in music by their often-unknown co-religionists.²⁶² Joachim Braun, in his study *Jews and Jewish Elements in Soviet Music*, offers a subtle rationale for this apparent *cri du sang*. Portraying the mass song style as rooted partly in Jewish, partly in Russian folklore (“declamatory intonations, elements of *freylekhs*, and certain rhythmical patterns, such as that of the march” admixed with “prison and exile songs, urban folklore, and ‘*blatnaya pesnya*’

²⁶⁰ Rothstein (1995:81) notes that “Raskinulos more shiroko” was frequently outfitted with new Russian texts during the war. (I have borrowed Rothstein’s translation of the song title.)

²⁶¹ Two songs of Soviet Yiddish (rather than Soviet Russian) origin should be mentioned in this context, if only in passing, as both provided melodies for Vilna ghetto lullabies: “Proletarke, shvester mayne” (Proletarian Woman, My Sister), a melody likely arranged (although possibly composed) by Samuil Polonskii, became the source for the anonymous “Shlof in der ruikayt” (Sleep Peacefully); and Leyb Yampolski’s art song “Ibervander-vigliid” (Migrant’s Lullaby) was parodied by the Vilna poet and journalist Leah Rudnitski as “Dremlen feygl oyf di tsvaygn” (Birds are Sleeping in the Branches). On Polonskii and “Proletarke, shvester mayne,” see Rubin and Ottens 2010: 35-36. For “Ibervander-vigliid,” see Yampolski 1935: 125-134.

²⁶² Yet nowhere in the anthology do Kaczerginski or Gelbart attribute a Soviet tune to its actual composer.

[thieves' chant]”), Braun suggests that the genre would have proved naturally attractive to Soviet and ghetto audiences alike.²⁶³

“Mass song” (Rus. *massovaya pesnya*), characterized by Richard Taruskin (2009:262) as “that most quintessentially Soviet of all musical genres,” is often identified by its ideologically-conformative texts rather than its purely musical features. The historian of Soviet jazz S. Frederick Starr, for example, describes the genre as follows: “Written to simple melodies which drew on folk songs, marches, and even jazz, the mass songs were vehicles for light-hearted and enthusiastically affirmative lyrics on the glorious future of socialism” (Starr 1994: 172). Even the authoritative Soviet *Encyclopedia of Music* attends to the genre’s “sociopolitical” and “heroic” themes before vaguely alluding to its compositional style, as “using march rhythms,” “reflecting the meaning of the words,” and being “concise, clear, and catchy” (Rus. *lakonichnyye, chetkiye, broskiye*) (Sokher 1974).²⁶⁴ Although the origin and evolution of the mass song cannot concern us here, a look at its most salient musical features, at least as evinced in the ghetto contrafacta, might be instructive.

Kaczerginski’s Soviet-origin parodies reveal, in effect, two types of mass song. The first, succinct, martial-rhythmed, and suitable for group singing, reflects its descent from old-order European military marches and revolutionary songs (such as “La Marseillaise” and

²⁶³ Following this thread, Braun cites the statistical prevalence of Jewish composers of mass song: “Some 45% of the mass song composers mentioned in the *Entsiklopedicheskiy Muzikalniy Slovar* (Moscow, 1966) are Jewish. Eight out of the 17 most popular mass songs in the Soviet Union named by the *Encyclopedia* are written by Jewish composers. [...] Dunaevskiii, Blanter and Pokrass laid the foundations of the Soviet mass song. [...] Intonations of Jewish urban folk music appear frequently in their songs and had a great impact on their entire work. This is so obvious that it was even recognized by Soviet musicology: ‘Jewish folk music, song and dance melodies became one of the idiomatic components of “Soviet mass songs”’ (1978: 80; author’s transcriptions and punctuation normalized; author’s footnoted references omitted). See also Braun 1985: 68-80.

²⁶⁴ Sokhor (1974) notes that the genre’s name derived from its self-descriptive performance forces (“intended for the joint execution of large masses of people”).

“L'Internationale”). The second, longer in form, more metrically relaxed and better suited for solo performance, recalls the style of Western popular music and operetta. Interestingly, the two song types are distinguishable by their utilitarian as well as their musical attributes. Partisan fighters, unsurprisingly, favored the minimalist-militarist type. The rousing theme “To ne tuchi, grozovye oblaka” (First Rain Clouds, Then Storm Clouds), with music by the brothers Dmitri and Daniel Pokrass and text by Soviet poet and literary figure Alexei Surkov, can serve as a model of this mass song style. Featured in the 1937 patriotic film *Ya, syn' trudovogo naroda* (I, a Son of the Working People), the tune inspired Hirsh Glik's famed partisans' anthem “Zog nit keynmol az du geyst dem letstn veg” (Never Say That You Have Reached the Final Road), written for a furtively observed May Day celebration in the Vilna ghetto in 1943.

V7
 То не ту-чи гро-зс. вы-е-об-ла-
 i VII7
 -ка по-над Те-ре.ком на кручах за-лег.
 III I7 iv V7/iv
 -ли, кличут тру-бы мо-ло-до-го ка-за-
 iv III V7
 -ка, пыльсе.да-я вста.ла об-ла.ком вда-
 i I7 iv V7/iv
 -ли, кличут тру-бы мо-ло-до-го ка-за-
 iv III V7 i
 -ка, пыльсе.да.я вста.ла обла.ком вдали.

Figure 39. “To ne tuchi, grozovye oblaka,” by Dmitri & Daniel Pokrass (music) and Alexei Surkov (text)(*Pesni boyevoy slavy* 1957: 84-85; chords symbols added).

As can be seen, this is a tightly-constructed work: monopartite in form, set in a quadruple meter inflected by driving, dotted rhythms, and in the minor mode. The melody is diatonic and isometric throughout, comprised of four 2-bar phrases with a built-in choral repeat of the final two phrases, for a total of 12 measures (inclusive of the pick-up beat). As is typical of popular music genres, the text setting is syllabic, with words extending over multiple beats only toward cadential points. Harmonically, the composition is distinguished by simple root progressions and altered-third chords, commencing with a dominant seventh cadence (mm 1-2), abruptly modulating to the relative major (mm 3-4), reverting to the tonic via a chain of secondary

dominants (V7/iv), and concluding with a cadential sequence (mm 5-8), which is then repeated (mm 9-12). With allowable exceptions, such as the waltz-time hit “Tuchi nad gorodom vstali” (Clouds Hung Over the City), parodied in Vilna as “Bombes,” this formulaic yet vigorous songwriting style typifies Kaczerginski’s partisan selections overall (nos. 1-2; 4; 12-13).²⁶⁵

The second, more varied, mass song style is exemplified in the work of Russia’s leading purveyor of the genre, Isaak Dunaevskii (1900-1955). Dunaevskii’s manner of musical expression clearly appealed to ghetto lyricists. In fact, all of the anthology’s non-partisan Soviet song parodies draw on melodies by this versatile stage and film composer (nos. 5-6 and 8-9 and 11 in Table 17, above). While Dunaevskii does not shy from march rhythms, minor modality, or heroic and sloganeering texts, he often combines these mass song markers with stylistic conventions borrowed from other popular forms. His “Marsh Traktoristov” (March of the Tractor Drivers), written for the 1937 collective farm musical comedy *Bogataya Nevesta* (The Wealthy Bride), follows the verse/refrain structure standard for western popular tunes, such as tangos, foxtrots and waltzes. Shifting between the minor and major modes, this song well suited the alternately somber and hopeful sentiments of its ghetto parodists (songs 9 and 11, above). His “Pesenka a Kapitane” (Song of the Captain) and “Pesnya Vodovoz” (Water-Carrier’s Song), from the mid-1930s musicals *Deti kapitana Granta* (Captain Grant’s Children) and *Volga-Volga*,

²⁶⁵ Hirsh Glik’s Yiddish poem has no thematic ties whatever to Surkov’s Russian text, which concerns mounted Cossacks taking up arms for the Revolution (the poem’s original title was “Kazach’ya” [Cossack]). Yet, recalling the “palimpsest effect” noted in reference to the Polish tango “Serce Matki,” it seems plausible that Glik had in mind (if only subliminally) “To ne tuchi”’s metaphoric imagery when he penned his poem’s second line, “khotsh himlen blayene farshteln bloye teg” (though leaden skies conceal days of blue). This surely echoes Surkov’s opening lines, “To ne tuchi, grozovyye oblaka/ Po-nad terekom na kruchakh zalegli;/ Klichut truby molodogo kazaka,/ Pyl’ sedaya vstala oblakom vdali” (First rain clouds, then storm clouds/ The Terek Cossack lay on the steep slopes;/ Pipes are calling to the young Cossack,/ Gray clouds of dust rise in the distance). Similarly, the opening imagery of partisan poet Lazar Buzhanski’s “Bombes”—“In shtot zaynen bombes gefaln” (Bombs fell on the city)—was surely sparked by Soviet filmmaker Pavel Armand’s Russian original, “Tuchi nad gorodom vstali” (Clouds Rose Over the City) (see Kaczerginski 1948a: 27, 367).

draw on the familiar tropes of central European operetta. The former, a playful quasi-romance, and the latter, a series of comic couplets, were seized on to bitterly satirical effect by songwriters in the Kovno ghetto, where (as previously noted) the subversive muse had relatively free reign.²⁶⁶ Neither work is suitable for choral singing, and both are quite removed from the mass song's paradigmatic "heroic" mould.

Dunaevskii's best-known song, however, fully embodies the genre's epic ideal. "Pesnya o Rodine" (Song of the Motherland) attained instant anthem status upon its debut in the patriotic musical *Tsirk* (Circus) (1936), and so highly did it rate with the authorities that its opening motif (played on vibraphone) soon pervaded the airwaves as the official broadcast signal of Central Soviet Radio.²⁶⁷ Lyricist Vasily Lebedev-Kumach's first two stanzas set a suitably lofty tone:

Shiroka strana moya rodnaya,
Mnogo v ney lesov, poley i rek!
Ya drugoy takoy strany ne znayu,
Gdye tak vol'no dyshit chelovyek.

Wide is my Motherland,
Her abundant forests, fields, and rivers!
I know of no other country
Where one can breathe so freely.

Ot Moskvy do samykh do okrain,
S yuznykh gor do severnykh morey
Chelovyek prohodit, kak hozyain
Neobyatnoy Rodiny svoey.

From Moscow to the suburbs,
From the southern mountains to the northern sea
A man stands as a master
Over his vast Motherland.

The melody, too, with its wide melodic range and octave leaps, is appropriately sweeping and spacious:

²⁶⁶ As in songs 5, 6 and 8 in Table 17, above (see discussion under "Geto lebn" (ghetto life) in chapter 3, above).

²⁶⁷ The song is often titled "Shiroka strana moya rodnaya," after its first line. According to Rothstein (1990: 92) "the melody...attained such stupendous popularity that it became in May 1939 the station signal of Radio Moscow and was played on the Kremlin chimes for many years" (see also Asafyev 1947: 258). The song's fame was so widespread that both Aaron Copland (in his score to the 1943 film *North Star*) and Dmitri Shostakovich (in his 1947 cantata *Poem of the Motherland*) made arrangements of it. Twenty-one recordings of the work (including Hebrew-language and karaoke versions) currently featured on "Muzei russkikh gimnov" (the Museum of Russian Hymns), a website for devotees of old Soviet anthems, attest to its enduring popularity.

В темпе марша, очень энергично

Припев

Музыкальный фрагмент с нотами и аккордами. Текст песни:

Ши - ро - ка стра - на мо - я род - на - я, мно - го
 в ней ле - сов, по - лей и рек! Я дру -
 .гой та - кой стра - ны не зна - ю, где так
 1. во - лья ды - шит че - ло - век. Я дру - //
 2. (Конец) // 1. От Мо - сквы до са - мых до о -
 // жизнь при - воль - но и ши -
 - кра - нк, с юж - ных гор до се - вер - ных мо -
 - ро - ко, точ - но Вол - га пол - на - я, те -
 - рей че - ло - век про - хо - дит как хо -
 - чет. Мо - ло - дым вез - де у нас по -
 1. - зя - ин не - объ - ят - ной Ро - ди - ны сво - ей. Все - ду //
 2. - ро - га, ста - ри - кам вез - де у нас по - чет. Ши - ро -

Figure 40. "Pesnya o Rodine" (Dolmatovskii 1973: 133-136).

While this work hews to the mass song march-time ideal, it differs from “To ne tuchi”’s “partisan style” in many respects. The form is tripartite, A-B-A, with two 12-bar A sections framing the central 16-bar B section to yield an expansive 40-measure structure. Unlike the short-winded partisan repertoire, where unprepared modulations and sudden modal swings lend a sense of theatrical compression, the melodic and harmonic pace here is leisurely, allowing for a comparatively subtler and more diversified compositional palette: major-minor contrast between the A and B sections; chromaticism in the melody-line (m. 7); augmented triads; and minor- and major-sixth chords in the accompaniment (*passim*).

The musical and poetic rhetoric of “Pesnya o Rodine,” however grandiose, is thoroughly deflated in “Maistas-lid”(Maistas Song), one of seven ghetto parodies in Kaczerginski’s anthology by the Kovno tailor Avrom Cypkin (1910-1979).²⁶⁸ Far removed from the anthem’s socialist-realist utopianism, Cypkin’s song is instead a good-humored ode to smuggling. Set to Dunaevskii’s magisterial strains, its verses valorize a corps of female prisoners assigned to work at a suburban meatpacking plant—women who marched out of the ghetto early every morning, and every evening marched back with poultry pieces concealed beneath their clothes.

²⁶⁸ Kaczerginski prints the text only to “Maistas”; the source melody was revealed to me in a letter from Avrom Cypkin’s daughter, Diane Cypkin (Cypkin 1997). The title “*Maistas*” (Lith. “food”) refers to the Lithuanian state meat processing plant “AB ‘Maistas’” (Maistas Corporation), then headquartered in Kaunas. Seized by the Germans during the war, the Maistas plant supplied provisions for the occupying German forces (Mažrimas 2012).

S'iz der shtot in tifn slof farzunken,
Oyf di felder a shneyele zikh shpreyt,
Kh'volt dos lid far aykh do nisht gezungen,
Nor freylekh, vayber, brigade "maystas" geyt!

Khotsh der frost er rayst un tsupt di glider,
Oyf di shoybn a blumen-krants er flekht,
Nor in fabrik es arbet shoyn der koyler,
Katshkes, gendz un hindlekh er shekht.

Freylekh ale flikt di oyfes, kinder,
Khotsh di hertselekh bay aykh farshmakht,
Ikh ken aykh alemen, ir groyser zinder,
Ayer meyn, un vos derbay ir trakht.

Ir, katshkes, gendz, ir krikht tsu undz in geto,
Ir, hindlekh, ir loyft mit undz oykh mit,
Es meg blaybn fleysh un shmalts do neto,
Tsvey kilo, mit dray brakir ikh nit.

S'iz a glik tsu trakhtn nor a guter,
Fun di oyfes keyne nisht gerirt,
Nor in di heyzlekh lign vi in puter,
Katshkes, gendz un hindlekh bandazhirt.

In a shlang oysgeshtelt in reyen,
Brigade maystas geyt aheym tsurik,
Hertslekh shpringen, tantsn un zikh freyen,
Yede tseylt un freyt zikh mit ir glik.

S'iz di shtot in tifn shlof farzunken,
Oyf di felder a shneyele zikh shpreyt,
Kh'volt dos lid far aykh do nisht gezungen,
Nor freylekh, vayber, brigade maystas geyt!

The town is sunken deep in slumber,
Over fields, the snow begins to fall;
This is a song perhaps I shouldn't sing here—
As the "Maistas Brigade" women pass, all smiles.

While the cold frost nags at feet and fingers,
And weaves flower garlands on the glass,
In the plant, the butcher's working early,
Ducks and geese and chickens, he's dispatched.

Joyously, they pluck the poultry, children,
Though with hearts so faint they're apt to swoon;
I know you all, you great colossal sinners,
Your present thoughts, and what you plan to do!

You ducks and geese, we'll sneak you in the ghetto,
You chickens, too, you'll migrate there with us,
Should some chunks of meat and fat remain, though—
I'd not say no to four pounds, even six!

You're in luck should you detect a good one,
A specimen of fowl as yet untouched;
Beneath your clothes they're cozy as in butter,
Ducks, geese, chickens, wrapped and bound and trussed!

In long and snaking ranks and columns,
The Maistas Brigadeers are marching back,
Each woman's heart is leaping, dancing, cheering,
Each delighting in her fortune and good luck.

The town is sunken deep in slumber,
Over fields, the snow begins to fall,
This is a song perhaps I shouldn't sing here—
As the "Maistas Brigade" women pass, all smiles.

In all likelihood the ghetto poet Cypkin, when writing his song, simply availed himself of a well-made, universally known tune.²⁶⁹ Yet taking cognizance of its mass song source adds a new dimension to this mock-epic. Taruskin (2000:529), critiquing socialist realism in an essay on Shostakovich, cites "Pesnya o Rodine"—Dunaevskii and Lebedev-Kumach's "egregious" mass song—as a paragon of the state-ordained "public lie," noting that the dissident writer Anna Akhmatova parodied its lines in her long-incubated protest poem *Rekviem* (1935-1961).²⁷⁰ The

²⁶⁹ Cypkin did, however, emulate Lebedev-Kumach's "formalistic" device (common to mass song) of concluding his poem with a recapitulation of its first verse.

²⁷⁰ Taruskin credits this observation to Susan Amert (who in turn references works by Gleb Strub and Lebedev-Kumach); according to Amert, in the later 1930s "Pesnya o Rodine" enjoyed the status of a "sort of unofficial national anthem"; it was played repeatedly on the radio and was "printed in *Pravda*, *Izvestiia*, *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, and in a number of newspapers, journals, and collections" (1990: 384 and 384 fn. 39).

“life-asserting” patriotic optimism lauded (and fostered) by mass songs such as “Pesnya o Rodine” has long since been exposed as fraudulent. Ironically, the marginal history recounted in Cypkin’s parody, with its audacious and resourceful cast of players, can be recognized as genuinely affirmative, a paean to otherwise unsung heroes who put their lives at risk to help their families and friends survive.²⁷¹



Figure 41. AB “Maistas” meat processing factory (1940) (Miestai.net).

²⁷¹ Taruskin (2000: 529) refers to the “‘life-asserting principle’ demanded by the theorists of socialist realism.”

Chapter V

Legacy

It is no exaggeration to claim that every scholar currently researching the Yiddish Shoah song, every editor compiling an anthology of creative writings from the ghettos and camps, and every performer planning a Holocaust-themed recital or recording, owes a debt to Shmerke Kaczerginski. That this debt nowadays often is incurred at second-hand speaks less to the lasting value of *Lider fun di getos un lagern* than to the sharp decline of the Yiddish language during the second half of the twentieth century.

Staggering in the wake of a genocidal war, Yiddish was dealt a fresh series of blows in its immediate aftermath: the Stalinist move to quash Jewish “nationalistic aspirations,” evidenced by Beregovski and Lerner’s ill-fated compilation of Yiddish folklore; the linguistically coercive policies of the new State of Israel, where Hebrew was proclaimed the official tongue and Yiddish disparaged as a victims’ language; and assimilation in the West, which led to the gradual abandonment of the mother-tongue. In the diasporic world at large—in the United States and Canada, Latin America, South Africa and Australia—Yiddish speakers, for a time, could carry on almost as before. But the language, now lacking a viable speech community in its European birthplace, had become unmoored from its roots.²⁷²

If the deracination of Yiddish did not ultimately prove fatal,²⁷³ the dwindling number of native speakers inevitably constrained the transmission of its literary culture. Kaczerginski’s

²⁷² On the postwar fate of Yiddish, see Katz 2008. Shandler (2006:15) states that “within less than a decade [after the end of World War II] the number of Yiddish speakers in the world had been cut in half.”

²⁷³ On the resurgence of Yiddish in Haredi (ultra-orthodox) communities in the United States and Israel, see Isaacs 1999.

anthology, meant for a mass readership, soon became the province of specialists, as did so many works intimately bound to the vanished world of Jewish Eastern Europe. In the event, no new Shoah songbook would appear for a full generation after 1949, the last year covered by the survey of anthologies in chapter 2 of this dissertation.

Interest in the ghetto and camp repertoire first revived in the 1960s, stimulated by some of the political and cultural reckonings that later came to characterize the decade. The highly-publicized Eichmann Trial (1961-1962) and Frankfurt Auschwitz Trials (1963-1967) had drawn fresh attention to German war crimes, while the internationally bestselling *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*, adapted to film in 1959 and winner of several Academy Awards the following year, had made the face of Jewish persecution visible for the first time to a broad and diverse audience. Later in the decade, Israel's decisive victory in the Six Day War, followed within a year by worldwide commemorations marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, rekindled past narratives of Jewish heroism and resistance, and made them seem newly relevant. Finally, the folk music revival movement, then in full swing in Europe and America, brought a wider perspective to bear on the ghetto and camp repertoire, situating the songs in a continuum of protest music alongside related genres such as prison songs, anti-war songs, and songs of oppressed peoples (Milewski 2014).²⁷⁴

The 1960s saw the publication, for example, of two songbooks wholly spun off from *Lider fun di getos un lagern*, albeit uncredited: *30 Songs of the Ghetto* (1960), and *20 Songs of the Ghettos* (1963), both compiled by Henech Kon, a onetime composer for the Polish Jewish

²⁷⁴ Mention should be made here of *Dos lid fun geto* (The Song of the Ghetto), a text-only anthology of Yiddish poems and songs edited by Rute Pups in 1962. A historian at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, Pups (later Pups-Sakowska) (1922-2011) noted and made liberal use of Kaczerginski's anthology but drew her selections mainly from the Institute's archival holdings (including the Ringelblum collection) as well as her own correspondence and fieldwork.

stage.²⁷⁵ It was during this period, too, that Folkways Records, a signature label of the folk music revival, released a pair of Holocaust-themed albums: *Songs from “The Wall”* (1961), performed by Yiddish theater veterans Norbert Horowitz and Rita Karin (Karpinovich), war refugees who had fled to the Soviet Union, and *Songs of the Ghetto* (1965), performed by Cantor Abraham Brun, a survivor of the Łódź ghetto. Both recordings demonstrably relied on Kacerginski’s work, with *Songs from “The Wall”*, an album of musical selections from a stage play set in the Warsaw ghetto, incongruously featuring three Vilna songs published in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*.²⁷⁶

The most significant songbook dating from this period was *25 geto lider mit muzik un transliteratsie / 25 Ghetto Songs with Music and Transliteration*, compiled by the music pedagogue Malke Gottlieb and the folk song scholar Eleanor (Chana) Mlotek, and issued to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising in 1968. Reading from right to left, yet bearing an English-language title on its back (or front) cover, the slim volume is tellingly transitional by design. As noted in the publisher’s preface: “The present selection differs from

²⁷⁵ Born in Łódź, Kon (1890-1972) arrived in the U.S. just prior to the outbreak of the war (Fater 1970: 204). Choosing his selections exclusively from *Lider fun di getos un lagern* (except for the final song of the second volume, a memorial “Kaddish”), Kon also took the expedient of simply cutting and pasting (sometimes in abridged form) Kacerginski’s song-commentaries into his own anthology. (Kon’s publisher, Cyco [the Congress for Jewish Culture], which owned the rights to Kacerginski’s book, likely encouraged this practice.) Kon’s songbooks remain valuable for their stylish piano-vocal arrangements that flesh-out Gelbart’s minimalist lead-sheets with knowing interpretive clues. Significantly, Kon supplies melodies for two of Kacerginski’s orphaned texts (see song nos. 35 [”Ikh benk”] and 210 [”Vos darfn mir vaynen”] in Table 15, chapter 3, above), although it remains unclear whether Kon had recognized (or learned) these melodies from survivors, or had newly-composed them (he credits himself with the words [sic] to “Vos darfn mir vaynen”).

²⁷⁶ Folkways owner Moses Asch (1905-1986), son of the Yiddish novelist Sholom Asch, was a devotee of Jewish music who had earlier released several recordings by the Yiddish folk song scholar Ruth Rubin. A French-produced album of Shoah-related songs released during this same decade by Sarah Gorby was likewise aimed at the folk music market (Gorby 1966; discussed later in this chapter). The period also saw the release of several Yiddish niche market long-play records featuring Shoah repertoire; see, for example, Belarsky 1965; Danto (n.d. [ca. 1965]; Durmashkin and Durmashkin (n.d. [ca. 1965])).

most previous ones in providing parallel transliterations of all song texts, thus making the songs available to those who understand Yiddish but do not read it” (Gottlieb and Mlotek 1968: 59).

Intended primarily as a resource for commemoration planners, Gottlieb and Mlotek’s songbook also sought to pass on Kaczerginski’s legacy to a generation that had come to maturity after his death. His influence on their book is pervasive and acknowledged—the editors diligently note that they had consulted *Undzer gezang* and *Dos gezang fun vilner geto* (both 1947) as well as *Lider fun di getos un lagern*—and it extends, as might be expected, to his penchant for hometown repertoire.²⁷⁷ In fact, apart from two “in memoriam” compositions, “Kadish” (possibly borrowed from Kon 1960) and “Babi-Yar” (a landmark of Soviet Yiddish song, transcribed by the editors from a recording),²⁷⁸ every one of the book’s songs will be found in *Lider fun di getos un lagern*, and of these all but two can be associated with Vilna.

Yet another generation would pass between the publication of *25 Ghetto Songs* and the appearance of the next (and the century’s last) notable Yiddish Shoah song collections. These, inescapably, were no longer principally addressed to Yiddish speakers.²⁷⁹ The sea change is most conspicuously reflected in *We Are Here: Songs of the Holocaust* (1983), Mlotek and Gottlieb’s updated edition of their anthology of fifteen years before. The volume, enlarged to forty songs to mark the fortieth anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, now reads from left to right and is thoroughly bilingual, featuring lyrics in Yiddish and “singable” (i.e., rhyming)

²⁷⁷ Co-editor Mlotek’s position at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research may also partly explain the preference for Vilna repertoire, given that institution’s origin in and deep ties to that city.

²⁷⁸ Gottlieb and Mlotek credit “Kadish” to composer Ben-Yomen and poet Zusman Segalovich (as “Kaddish,” it is uncredited in Kon); “Babi-Yar,” written in 1951 by Rivke Boyarska (music) and Shike Driz (lyrics), circulated surreptitiously in the Soviet Union for many years (Werb 2010: 487).

²⁷⁹ As discussed in chapter 2, however, the outreach to non-Yiddish speakers (that is, to American and Israeli audiences) began as early as Schaver 1948 and Hurwitz 1949.

English, song commentaries in both languages, and a foreword by famed memoirist Elie Wiesel.²⁸⁰

Mlotek (1922-2013), the long-serving music archivist at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York, and fully acquainted with all precedent literature, alludes in her preface to the early efforts of Ayzman and Feder, and cites in her bibliography works by Spector, Schaver and Lipschitz (two of whose songs she reprints for the first time).²⁸¹ But Kaczerginski (whom Mlotek knew personally) remains the guiding spirit, and not only in terms of the quotient of songs derived from his collection. In reorganizing their anthology, the co-editors chose to emulate the narrative form of *Lider fun di getos un lagern*. Grouping the songs into thematically-defined sections (each named for a characteristic title or first line), and ordering these in plot-like succession, they fashioned a storyline that, following Kaczerginski's model, begins with a warning cry, ends on a note of triumph, and touches along the way on aspects of ghetto life, the experiences of children, and spiritual consolation in times of crisis. Even the book's revamped title takes a cue from Kaczerginski, who (it may be recalled) named his first chapter after the first three words of his friend Hirsh Glik's inspiring partisan anthem, *Zog nit keynmol* (Never Say). Mlotek and Gottlieb emulate this gesture for their own new title (thus paying tribute to the tribute), but borrow instead the last three words of Glik's song, "*Mir zaynen do!*" (We Are Here!).

Yes, We Sang! Songs of the Ghettos and Concentration Camps, Shoshana Kalisch's unique melding of songbook and memoir, appeared in 1985, two years after Mlotek and

²⁸⁰ The book's untranslated bibliography section remains a last bastion of "Yiddish only" (Mlotek and Gottlieb 1983: 99).

²⁸¹ In a nod to Feder 1946, Mlotek and Gottlieb also use Yasha Rabinovich's poem "Di tsavoe" (The Testament; here translated as "The Bequest") as the envoy to their songbook (1983: 10).

Gottlieb's compendium. An amateur singer with a day job as an office manager in New York, Kalisch (1926-2011) was born to a Hungarian-speaking Jewish family in Galanta, Slovakia, and had lost both parents and most of her siblings to the Holocaust. Building a new life in the United States, she attempted to suppress memories of her wartime ordeals, but one day in the 1970s caught herself singing a song she had heard while a prisoner at Birkenau. As she wrote in the prologue to her songbook: "At first, I would sing these songs to myself. They forced to the surface the mourning I had denied myself for so many years.... As the songs came back, memories and thoughts came with them, and claimed their place in my present life. I left my job and started collecting songs from other survivors. Many songs I found in the archives of various Jewish institutions in New York and abroad" (Kalisch 1985:2).

Having gathered sufficient material, Kalisch launched a new career and began performing a program of "Songs from the Holocaust" in venues across the country.²⁸² As a singer drawn to the stories of other singers, she sought to contextualize these songs for her audience, and the songbook that resulted ultimately devoted greater attention to the personalities and events associated with her repertoire than to the melodies and lyrics themselves.²⁸³ Kalisch's commentary to "Treblinka" (Treblinka), for example, runs over two pages, taking in the locale and history of the site, the methods of mass extermination utilized there, the prisoners' revolt of 1943, and early reports of the killing center to reach the outside world.²⁸⁴ The note turns

²⁸² The Yiddish song scholar Ruth Rubin began a series of lecture-recitals on this topic at about the same time (Rubin 1987).

²⁸³ Kalisch's former husband Mordecai Sheinkman, a professional pianist, composer and theater music arranger, prepared the somewhat Broadway-inflected piano-vocal scores.

²⁸⁴ In his anthology, Kacerginski titled this song "Treblinka variant," as it sequentially follows the related "Treblinka" (1948a: 215). His two-sentence commentary to both songs is exceptionally understated compared to Kalisch's.

personal, however, when Kalisch divulges how she herself first learned of the camp's existence. Deported from Auschwitz to the Silesian slave-labor camp of Peterswaldau, she encountered a group of women who had already arrived from ghettos and camps in Poland. "It was they who sang the 'Treblinka' song," she writes. "I can still recall the ominous awareness that the song conveyed as we listened to it in the midst of our own misery and deprivation, little though we then knew about the horrifying details of that death camp" (1985: 106).

Also personal are two songs of the Hungarian Jewish Holocaust experience, "Ne Csüggej" (Do Not Despair), a children's song Kalisch learned in the Galanta ghetto, and "Ásó Kapa Vállamon" (Spade and Hoe and My Shoulder), a marching song collected from a survivor of a Hungarian forced-labor brigade. While the element of memoir lends the book singular value, its musical lineage plainly traces back to *Lider fun di lagers un lagern*, where fifteen of Kalisch's twenty-five songs had already appeared.²⁸⁵ Yet with this songbook, Kaczerginski's contribution retreats into the background. This not to say that he is altogether absent from *Yes, We Sang!*. In fact, he is well represented as a lyricist (with four songs in the volume), and his story is told at length during the discussion of "Yugnt-himn" (Hymn of Youth) (1985: 137-138). Kalisch even selects Kaczerginski's hasidic-messianic postwar anthem "Zol shoy'n kumen di geule" (Let Salvation Come) as the capstone to her book.²⁸⁶ Still, *Lider fun di lagers un lagern* is not listed in her bibliography (to be fair, she lists no prior anthologies, only historical studies and memoirs), nor does Kalisch anywhere credit Kaczerginski's pioneering achievements as a song collector. Considering that all but two of Kalisch's Yiddish selections can be found in

²⁸⁵ Of the ten songs Kalisch prints that are not found in Kaczerginski's anthology, five were memorial works dating from well after the war (including two English language pieces by Peter Wortsman), and two are the Hungarian (non-Yiddish) songs already discussed.

²⁸⁶ For a brief discussion of "Zol shoy'n kumen di geule," see discussion in chapter 1, above.

Mlotek and Gottlieb's recent compendium, it is indeed conceivable that Kalisch received nothing directly from Kaczerginski's book.²⁸⁷ Rather than a sign of waning influence, however, this would point to the diffusion of his legacy beyond the pale, as more and more performers, programmers and researchers gained access to Shoah repertoire without recourse to primary sources in Yiddish.

The last collection to be discussed, and the twentieth century's last significant Shoah song compilation, appeared in the *Anthology of Yiddish Folksongs*, a four-volume, trilingual (English, Hebrew, Yiddish) series issued between 1983-1987 by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Jointly edited by the Polish-born historian Sinai Leichter and Abba Kovner, a poet and onetime partisan comrade of Kaczerginski's, the *Anthology* was the brainchild of a third collaborator, Aharon Vinkovetsky, whose collection of Soviet Yiddish songs formed the core of the entire endeavor. Born in Odessa and trained as a nautical engineer, Vinkovetsky (1903-1986) had an innate love of Yiddish songs and sought them out wherever he traveled in the Soviet Union. A longtime refusenik, he had managed to have his collection safely smuggled to Israel years before he himself was finally permitted to emigrate, in 1979 (Vinkovetsky n.d.).

Volume IV of the *Anthology*, published in 1987 (shortly after Vinkovetsky's death), comprises a sizeable selection of thirty-seven "Ghetto and Partisan Songs," sandwiched between sections devoted to "Struggle and Resistance Songs" and "Religious and National Songs" (the volume concludes with a section entitled "Homeward to Zion"). Given the breadth of

²⁸⁷ The two Yiddish songs unique to *Yes, We Sang!* are "Tsvey taybelekhn" (Two Doves), a prewar song popular in the Vilna ghetto; and "Tsen brider" (Ten Brothers), a folk song adaptation by Sachsenhausen prisoner Martin Rosenberg (a choral conductor professionally known as Rosebery D'Arguto) that Kalisch learned from Aleksander Kulisiewicz (1918-1982), the leading collector of World War II Polish prisoner songs. It is scarcely coincidental that Kalisch had met Kulisiewicz during the latter's 1979 visit to New York to record an album of songs for Asch's Folkways Records (Kulisiewicz and Wortsman 1979; Kalisch 2003).

Vinkovetsky's collecting excursions—he even examined Beregovski's private archive in Leningrad—it might be supposed that his anthology would include a sampling of Shoah songs of Soviet origin.²⁸⁸ Unfortunately, no such material appears in the published volume. Instead, the book's ghetto and partisan selections consist mainly of songs garnered, directly or indirectly, from Kaczerginski's collection (and again mirroring his Vilna bias), supplemented by postwar repertoire found in Mlotek and Gottlieb's anthology, and, somewhat remarkably, a substantial number of songs taken from a single commercial recording, *Le chant du ghetto*, by the popular folksinger Sarah Gorby (Gorby and Lasry 1966).²⁸⁹

Placing themselves squarely in the tradition of Kaczerginski and the other early anthologists, the editors of the *Anthology of Yiddish Songs* declared as their mission the preservation and perpetuation of a repertoire:

The 350 songs presented in these four volumes are by no means the sum total of the musical tradition of the Jews in Eastern Europe before the most terrible calamity in human history was perpetrated upon them. We hope that there are still enough survivors of the Holocaust (in a sense all Jews are survivors of the Holocaust) whose lives were deeply rooted in this unique Yiddish language and culture, capable of continuing the sacred task of saving what can still be saved and encouraging the younger generations of Jews throughout the world to keep it alive as a great treasure of beauty and feeling as well as a source of historical knowledge. (Vinkovetsky 1987: VII)

²⁸⁸ According to the Jewish Music Research Centre in Jerusalem, Vinkovetsky had “worked at the Beregovski archive.” (*Online Thesaurus*, “Beregovski,” n.d.)

²⁸⁹ Volume IV of the *Anthology* includes fully ten of Gorby's twelve recorded selections. Gorby's recordings enjoyed great popularity in both Israel and the Soviet Union, although editor Sinai Leichter may himself have provided the connection through his friendship with Stefan Wolpe, the German-Jewish composer who had been Gorby's onetime music arranger.

Nonetheless, these editors, like Kalisch, somewhat slight Kaczerginski's contributions to Holocaust song preservation.²⁹⁰ For example, they refer to *Dos gezang fun vilner geto* (The Song of Vilna Ghetto) (1946), and not *Lider fun di getos un lagern*, as Kaczerginski's "large collection" (Vinkovetsky 1987:48); they also erroneously credit Kaczerginski for a song he did not write, and fail to credit him for one widely recognized as his.²⁹¹ Moreover, throughout the volume Kaczerginski's name appears not as Shmerke but as "Shmerl," a diminutive (as is Shmerke) of the Hebrew Shmaryahu, but one that the author never used.²⁹² Pointing out such mistakes can seem a trivial exercise, speaking more perhaps to the publication's relaxed editorial standards than to anything else. But the accumulating oversights and errors in both Vinkovetsky's and Kalisch's books also signal the gradual fading-away of Kaczerginski's palpable legacy.

These errors and omissions can lastly be interpreted as vestiges of once-raging ideological struggles over the establishment of a Jewish national language (long since settled in favor of Hebrew), and the continuing viability of the entire diaspora enterprise. The *Anthology's* editors, all native Yiddish speakers, had fled European oppression for the hope of a new Jewish homeland; reading between the lines of their preface, it becomes clear that they viewed the Old World as permanently poisoned by the past. Asserting that "in a sense all Jews are survivors of

²⁹⁰ The editors also failed to acknowledge *Min Hamitzar* (1949), Israel's first Shoah songbook, an expanded and revised edition of which appeared the same year as the *Anthology* Vol. IV (Hurwitz et al. 1987). For a discussion of *Min Hamitzar*, see chapter 2, above.

²⁹¹ "Koyft geto-beygele" (Buy Ghetto Bagels), attributed to Kaczerginski in the *Anthology* (Vinkovetsky 1987: 136), appears anonymously in Kaczerginski 1948a: 145/396; Kaczerginski's "Barikadn" (Barricades) appears as an anonymous creation in the "Struggle and Resistance" section of the *Anthology* (Vinkovetsky 1987: 13).

²⁹² The possibility of chauvinistically Hebraized diasporic Yiddish names in Israeli publications was first suggested to me in the 1990s by Chana Mlotek, and later affirmed by Prof. Miriam Isaacs (email correspondence and personal conversations, 2014).

the Holocaust,” they implicitly extend the concept of victimization and survivorhood not only to songs that emerged from the war but to the totality of the Yiddish song repertoire. Both the set and the subset of songs are, by this reckoning, equally relics of an extinguished culture, artifacts capable of imparting historical data, as well as aesthetic pleasure, to future generations.

Earlier in this chapter I alluded to the presence in Vinkovetsky’s *Anthology* of a number of songs from Sarah Gorby’s recording *Le chant du ghetto*. Although the impact of live and recorded performances on the dissemination of the Shoah song cannot be fully addressed in this dissertation, it is indisputable that folksingers often acquire repertoire from other performers rather than from books.²⁹³ In the case of the Shoah song, however, the confluence of social phenomena noted above—the decline in Yiddish literacy, the rise of Holocaust awareness, the quest for fresh repertoire inspired by the folk music revival movement—led to the primacy of print media over oral tradition as the most practicable means of transmission.²⁹⁴ Beginning in the 1980s, the newly-published bilingual songbooks, particularly Mlotek and Gottlieb’s English-Yiddish *We Are Here*, but also Vinkovetsky’s and Hurwitz’s (expanded) Hebrew-Yiddish volumes, became principal way-stations for the introduction of the Shoah repertoire to the postwar generation, and for its reintroduction into oral tradition.

My own experience bears this out. When I first came to work at the Holocaust Memorial Museum, in 1991, I assisted in the production of the recording *Remember the Children: Songs by and about Children of the Holocaust*. At that time it scarcely seemed remarkable to me that the songs on this album had been chosen exclusively from Mlotek and Gottlieb’s collection, *We Are Here*. In fact, reliance on secondary sources was then common practice—or so one might

²⁹³ See discussion of oral transmission in Nettl and Myers 1976: 20-27.

²⁹⁴ See “The Dialectic of Oral Tradition” in Bohlman 1988: 25-32.

conclude after examining a decade's worth of representative commercially-released Holocaust-themed records. Like *Remember the Children*, the albums *We Shall Live! Yiddish Songs of the Holocaust* (Zim 1990), *Our Town is Burning: Cries from the Holocaust* (Lishner 1994), *Hear Our Voices: Songs of the Ghettos and Camps* (Jacobson 1995), and *Composers of the Holocaust: Ghetto Songs from Warsaw, Vilna and Terezin* (Stern-Wolfe 2000), wholly rely on the recently published bilingual anthologies for their Yiddish Shoah song content.

Between the publication of the earliest song collections (1945-1949) and the arrival of the second-generation anthologies (1962-1987), survivor memory had been occasionally tapped for recollections of ghetto and camp repertoire—several of the period's proliferating *Yizkor* (memorial) books featured songs or song fragments—and the effort to retrieve lost repertoire from living memory has continued to the present day.²⁹⁵ But with hundreds of songs already inscribed and sealed within their covers, the anthologies, especially *Lider fun di geto un lagern*, helped put to rest, among Yiddishists, the need for further collecting activities.

That texts, not survivor memory, had become a common repository of the Shoah song was driven home to me during a 1994 fieldtrip to Kaunas, Lithuania, where I had been sent with a group of museum colleagues to conduct background research for an upcoming exhibition. Our liaison, a leader of the town's remnant Jewish community, had arranged for me to interview an elderly survivor who (I was assured) recalled many songs she had learned and sung in the Kovno ghetto. After introductions and a cup of tea I set up my tape recorder, and as we prepared to begin the session she called to her son to take a book down from the shelf. I would like to report that this book was Kaczerginski's *Lider fun di geto un lagern*, but in the event it was Joseph

²⁹⁵ For examples of music and dance published in *Yizkor* books, see Winkler 2009. On latter-day retrieval, see Mlotek and Mlotek 1988 and 1997.

Gar's *Umkum fun yidisher kovne* (Destruction of Jewish Kovno) (1948), a historical account that includes examples of ghetto folk-sayings and *lider* (see discussion in chapter 2, above).²⁹⁶ As it happened, I'd photocopied the same group of songs from the same source in preparation for my visit, so could easily follow along (and even offer the occasional prompt) as my informant sang her ghetto songs to the same texts and in the same order that Gar had published decades before. The sound of shuffling paper as she and I turned our respective pages during the course of her recital remains audible on the tape (Bargman 1994).

The hometown Kacerginski returned to in the summer of 1944 was an almost unrecognizable shadow of the once-proud "Jerusalem of Lithuania" whose Judaic treasures the "Paper Brigade" had valiantly sought to safeguard from destruction. Appalled at the prospect that no tangible scrap of Vilna's storied Jewish past should remain, desperate to prevent its memory from slipping into oblivion, he wrote to the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Moscow urging that someone "please intervene and save this material from annihilation!" (Kacerginski 1945).²⁹⁷ With no official response forthcoming, however, Kacerginski realized that cultural preservation would be best achieved by collecting non-material objects—namely, Yiddish *lider*, the sung and recited folklore of the Shoah. Several contemporary collectors, notably Sami Feder and Israel Kaplan, had arrived at the same conclusion, but it was Kacerginski above all who systematized the gathering of repertoire and secured its transmission across generations through the medium of print.

²⁹⁶ The informant was interested in many aspects of local history apart from ghetto songs, and it is entirely reasonable, of course, for her to have kept a copy of the large-scale monograph on Kovno by the former ghetto prisoner Gar.

²⁹⁷ Kacerginski's unsuccessful attempt, with Sutzkever, to operate a "Museum of Jewish Art and Culture" in Vilnius has already been described in chapter 1.

The large part of Kaczerginski's work remains embalmed in Yiddish, untranslated and frequently overlooked by researchers increasingly interested in the phenomenon of music making in the ghettos and camps. Given the pervasive influence of Kaczerginski's anthology on the editors of the intermediating bilingual songbooks, this general lack of accessibility may, paradoxically, have helped accelerate the diffusion of his work into the mainstream. That his legacy is often taken for an anonymous bequest is also symptomatic of the work being most readily available through secondary sources. In her memoir of interwar Vilna, Lucy Dawidowicz declared that Kaczerginski's "greatest talent was organizing things" (1989: 123); certainly he deployed his organizational skills to the fullest in collecting, arranging and publishing the volume of Shoah *lieder* that stands as his lasting achievement. Yet a talent for organization does not typically confer a high degree of posthumous name recognition.

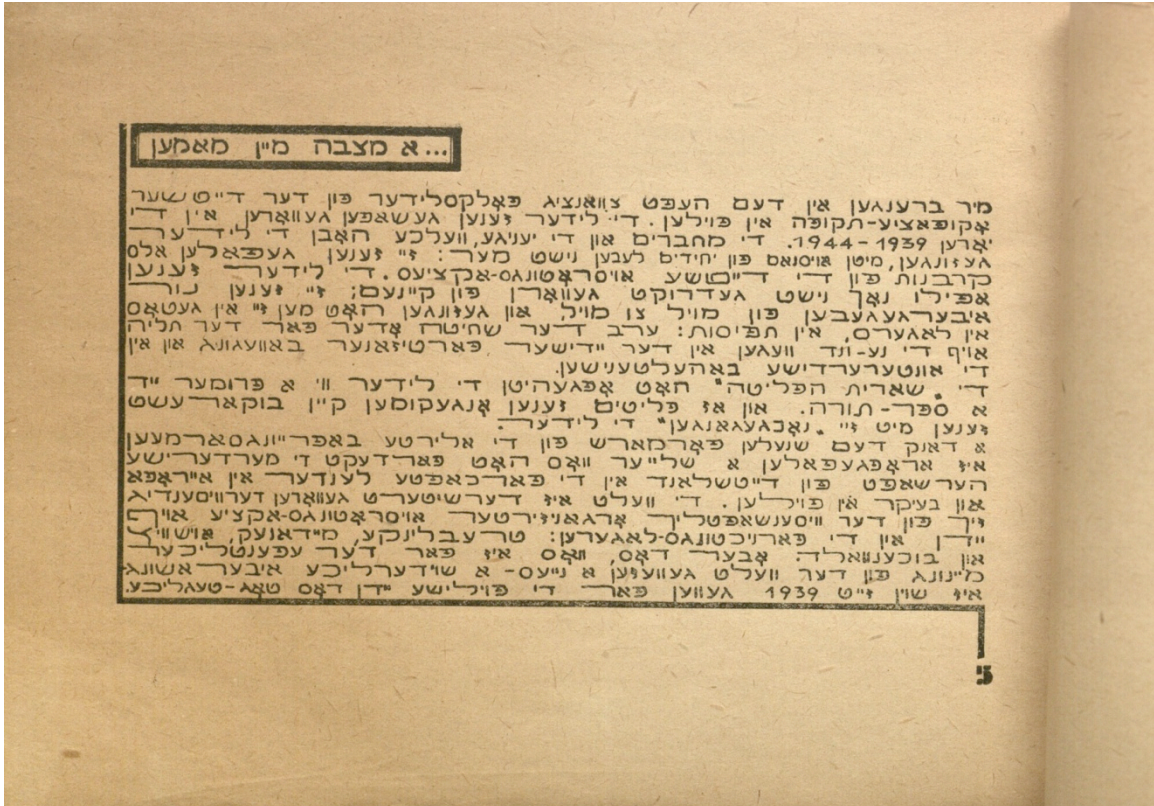
The teenaged provocateur, people's poet, ghetto troubadour, chronicler of catastrophe, and Latin American Yiddish propagandist Shmerke Kaczerginski had always been sustained by, and contributed to, the common stock of Jewish folklore. If his reputation has only waned since his passing, if the collector of anonymous folk creations has himself become largely anonymous, this, too, can be understood in light of the very folkloric process that had held his attention, and given him direction, throughout his tumultuous life.



Figure 42. Shmerke Kacerginski's Book Cabinet, on exhibit during Yiddish Book Month at the Kehilá-Salón, Buenos Aires, 1954(Kacerginski and Jeshurin 1955: 545).

Appendix A

Yehuda Ayzman, *Introduction to Mi-ma'amakim: folkslider fun lagers un getos in poyn 1939-1944* (1945) (original Yiddish text).



Y. Ayzman, *Mi-ma'amakim* Introduction (i)

און האט די דייטשען רזאבען יעדען י"ד באצייכענט מיט א געלער לאטען
 כאָטש זיי האָבען די באצייכענע פאר צוימט הינטער מויערען פון געטאָס און
 מיט שטאכל-דראָטען אין לאַגערס, האָבען זיי נישט באוויזען צו פֿיר-
 צוימען די געדאַנקען און די געפילען פון דעם פּאַרל-קס-פּאַעט, וועלכער האָט
 געבראַכט צום אויסדרוק זיינע איבערלעבענישען אין סטראָפּען און
 אין גראַפֿען.
 די גרויסע פארניכטונג, וואָס האָט פארשלוגען 95 פראָצענט פונם
 פּוילישען יידנטום האָט דער וועקט דאָס נשמה דיקע ביי אסך פּאַעטן
 און זיי באוואויגען צום שאַפּען. דאָס באוואונזטן פון דעם טויט, וואָס שטייט
 פאר די אויגען באַקרעפטיגט דעם גרויסען איינז כח פונם ליד:
 "און כאָטש דאָס לעבן איז פארלוירען,
 ווערט דאָס ליד פון ליד געבוירען.
 פאַר דעם נייע דור"

לאַגער-מאַרש-שליס אַגל-דער-ג
 "ווי אַ פאַרזאָל וועט גייען דאָס ליד פון דור צו דור"
 פאַרזאָל-מאַרש-הירטקע גליבן

דריי מינים פון לידער זענען דאָ אויסגעטיילט. די ערשטע ענטהאַלטן
 דעם אויסדרוק פון **האַרץ** - פער צווייפּרונג, צוליב דער לאַגע
 וואָס איז אנטשטאַנען נאָך די ערשטע שרעקליכע קריגעפֿע:

Y. Ayzman, *Mi-ma'amakim* Introduction (ii)

די ברידער דער שאַסען, די שוועטער פארלירען,
 אַרײַן בין איר װי דײַ נאַכט,
 דעם טאטען פאַרנומען האָט די געטאפּאַ
 דער װאָר אַמען שװן געװאַכט.
 דער דריטער פאַראַס-אַײַק פּלייטער

אַן אײב עס פאַרלט אױף דיר דער אורל
 אײַן צום קבר, האָב נישט מור אַ!
 מיר זענען אַלס אַן אַנדײַד אַטען
 אַרײַן צו זײַ אין טאַטען-טאַטען.
 מירש פּון יאַנאַװע-לאַגער: זענענעלד

מיט אַנעכטער פאַרן קאַסימאליכער קללה קעגען די ״טשען
 ענדײַקט זײַך דאָס פאַרצװײפּלוּנגס-לייד, װאָס אײַז מיט אַ תּלײַה-
 הוכזאָר געשריבען.
 דאָס אײַז געװען די ערשטע רעאַקציע.
 אָבער אױך אַנדערע רעאַקציעס געפֿינען מיר: דער גלױבען אין
 אַ גיכען קריגס-ענדע װעקט אױך געפֿירען פֿון בטחון בײַ דײַ
 פאַרװאַרטײַטע ״דען און עס אַנטשטייט אַ פֿונק פֿון האַפֿנונג צו
 אַבערלעבען דעם קריג און צו דערװאַרטען זײַך די שעה פֿון
 אױסרעפֿונג.

מיט דער פֿרײַט קוכט דער טאַטע
 שלאַף זשע, קינד-מײַנס, שײַן אַרײַן!
 װײַגלייז, קאַטשעראַ יסקי

דעם טרויריגען הינט װעל איר הויך באַזינגען
 עס װעלען זײַך טענער פֿון פֿרײַהײַט צערקלינגען.
 דײַ געבן-לאַבטע

Y. Ayzman, *Mi-ma'amakim* Introduction (iii)

נור דער א"ב גער יידישער בטחון האָט באַוויזן די יידן
 ווערנע זענען יעדען טאָג אַעשטאָנען פֿינף אָר פֿינף מיטן
 טויט צו דער האַל טען די גייסטליכע כּוחות, וואָס האָבען אַעשאַפֿען
 דער דריטער מין פֿון פֿאַלקס-יידער - ליידיג פֿון
האַרץ און נצחון. מאַרשען הימניו פֿאַרטייאַנער - ליידיג פֿון
 וואָס ופֿען צום האַמך מיט דעם שוואַ צום ווידער שטאַנד קעגן
 דעם אַקופּאַנט. עס הוּבט אָן מיט אַבירטיגס אונפֿאַר אַעס יכּען
 ליידיג עס ברענט און ענדיגט מיט דעם פֿאַרטייאַנער מאַרש
 פֿון הירשקע גליק.

דער מוזיק איז ביי א טייל פֿון די ליידיג נישט יי קאַמפּאָנירט
 אַעוואָרען, נור צוגעפֿאַסט צו אַלטע יידישע פֿאַלקס-מעלאָדיעס. זיי
 ני קאַמפּאָנירטע ליידיג שטיצען זיך אויף פֿאַך מאָטיווען ווי
 אויך אויף דער יידישער סינאָגאָגאַל-מוזיק און טראַדיציאָנעלע
 נסחאות. איברגענס האָבן די דייטשען איינגעפֿירט אין די אַגעראַס
 אַ גאַנצען טאָג און בפרט אין די טראַגישע מאָמענטען פֿונם לאַגער
 לעבען: מוזיק, אַעשפּירט פֿון יידישע כלל-זמר פֿון יידישע
 דייגענטען טייל פֿון ווערטבאַרימטקייט ווי יעקב מונד, אין
 יאַנאווער לאַגער, כּדי צו באַטויבען דעם מוח פֿונם לאַגער
 מענש, אים צו מאַכען פֿאַרגעסן אַז זיין מאַרש צום טויט. אין דער
 מוזיקאלישער אַטמאָספֿערע איז פֿאַרפֿאַסט אַעוואָרען דורך אַ יידיש
 מיידעלע דער היסטאָרישער טויטן-טאַג, אַקאָס איז נישט אַרײַן
 אין דעם העפּט, צוליב דעם, מחמת ער איז אונז נישט אַענוג גוט
 באַקאַנט.

די שפּראַך פֿון די ליידיג איז אַעבויט אויפֿן רייז-אַרט אויפֿן
 לעבעדיגען אַעשפּירעכעמאַען רייז-שטייגער פֿונם פֿאַך

Y. Ayzman, *Mi-ma'amakim* Introduction (iv)

און טאקע צוליב דעם ברענגען מיר די לידער מיט
דיער נאטירלעכער רעגיאנאלער אויסשפראך און ארטיק-
גרענעצן.
נישט אלע לידער זענען זיין איין קינסטלערישען באדייט אָבער
זיי אלע אנטפלעקען אונז דעם טיפּען אויסגעזעכטען פּאָליקס-גייסט,
זיי אלע זענען עדות פון לידען און קאמף פונם יידישען פּאָלק
אין דער מלחמה-צייט.

זאָלען די באשיידענע פּאָר לידער געשריבען מיט בלוט
און נישט מיט בר"י אין די רוטע נעכט פון פּער אַקסען יידיש
בלוט און פון קרעמאָבאָריע-פּייער - זיין אַ צושטייער
צו אַ מצבת-זכרון נאָך דעם פּוילישען יידישען פּאָלקס-
אוינזש. יחודה איינזשאן

בוקארעסט, יוני 1943

גראפישע אויספירונג: אינזש. פלאָרא ראָם
מוזיקאלישע באארבייטונג: י. שויןדלער - אינזש. ע. אָפּנער

Y. Ayzman, *Mi-ma'amakim* Introduction (v)

Appendix B

Ayzman, Introduction (English translation)

Mi-ma'amakim: folkslider fun lagers un getos in poyln 1939-1944

Out of the Depths: Folk Songs from the Camps and Ghettos of Poland, 1939-1944

Introduction by Yehuda Ayzman

A gravestone for my mother

Gathered in this volume are twenty folk songs from the period of the German occupation in Poland. The songs were created between the years 1939-1944. The poets and the others who sang the songs are for the most part no longer living: they fell victim to the German policies of extermination. The songs were never printed but passed from mouth to mouth. And they were sung in ghettos, camps, prisons, on the eve of massacres or before the gallows, on Jewish partisan byways, and in underground hideaways.

The “surviving remnant” cherishes these songs as a pious Jew his holy books. And as the refugees arrive in Bucharest, the songs arrive with them. Thanks to the quick advance of the allied armies of liberation the veil was lifted that the murderous German ruler had cast over the captive nations of Europe, especially Poland. And although the Germans branded every Jew with a yellow patch, although they fenced them in behind walls in ghettos and barbed-wire in camps, they did not succeed in imuring the thoughts and feelings of the folk poets, who brought forth impressions of their experiences in strophes and in rhymes.

The horrific annihilation, that extinguished ninety-five percent of Polish Jewry awakened the souls of many poets who began to create. This is known. The death that stood before their eyes validated faith in the strength of the song:

*“And although a life was forfeit,
From suffering a song was born
For new generations to come.”* —“Camp March,” Sholom Goldberg

Let this song ring out for generations to come.—“Partisan March,” Hirshke Glik

Three types of songs are presented here. The first manifests the expression of despair—desperation, due to the situation resulting from the first terrifying assault:

*“The brothers shot, the sister lost,
I am bereft as the night;
The Gestapo has taken father away,
Already, three pogroms they’ve made.”* —“The Third Pogrom,” Itsik Flaysher

*“And if this should be your fate,
Then go to your grave and have no fear!
We are all candidates,
A curse on them in this dance of death!”* —“March of Janowa Camp,” Z. Shenfeld

The song of desperation, written with gallows humor, concludes with a genuine folk-voiced curse against the Germans.

That was the first response.

But we find also other responses: the faith in a quick end to the war awakened feelings of confidence among the condemned Jews and it kindled a spark of hope to survive the war and await the hour of redemption.

*With freedom father returns
Sleep my child, sleep.* —“Lullaby,” Sh. Kaczerginski

*The sorrowful present I loudly proclaim
will sound forth in tones of freedom one day.*—“The Yellow Patch”

Only their eternal Jewish confidence enabled Jews who everyday stood face to face with death to preserve the spiritual strength that created the third type of folksong: songs of battle and victory. Marches, hymns, partisan songs that called to fight the enemy and resist the occupier. It begin with Gebirtig’s unforgettable song “Es Brent” and ended with the “Partisan March” by Hirshke Glik.

The music for a number of the songs was not newly composed, but fashioned from old Jewish folk melodies. The newly-composed songs also rely upon motives found in Jewish synagogal music and other traditional formulations. The remainder the Germans ordered played in the camps all day, particularly during the most tragic moments of camp life: music, played by Jewish klezmers with Jewish conductors (among them, some world-famous, such as Yakov Mund, in Janower camp), so as to becalm the minds of the camp-prisoner and make him forget that it is a march to death. In such a “musical” atmosphere, a Jewish girl created the historic “Death Tango,” which could not appear in this volume because we did not know it well enough.

The language of the songs is constructed from spoken communication, from the living, voluble speech practices of the people. And on this account, we have recorded the songs with their natural regional expressions and orthography.

Not every song was imbued with artistic significance, but all reveal to us the deeply awakened folk spirit. They all testify of the sorrow and struggle of the Jewish folk during wartime.

May these few modest songs, “written with blood and not with lead” in the “red nights” of gushing Jewish blood and crematoria-fire, be a contribution to a memorial stone for Polish Jewry.

Bucharest, June 1945. Engineer Yehuda Ayzman. Graphic Design: Engineer Flora Rom. Musical Arrangements: Y. Shindler; Engineer E. Opner.

Appendix C

Collector's Remarks:

Kaczerginski's Introduction to *Lider fun di getos un lagern* (original Yiddish text).

באַמערקונגען פון זאַמלער

I

די דייטשע אַקופאַציע מיט אירע אַלע סיסטעמען (געטאָס, קאַנצערן, לאַגערן, פּאַרניכטונגס-לאַגערן א.ד.גל.), וועגן דעם איז אוממעגלעך צו געבן אַ וועלכע ניט איז פּאַרשטעלונג מיט געוויינלעכע ווערטער אויף אַ געוויינלעכער מענטשלעכער שפּראַך.

אַלע באַשרייבונגען, דאַקומענטן און בילדער וועלן דעם גרויס ניט קענען שילדערן מיט זיין גאַנצן פּאַרנעם. ווער עס איז אַליין ניט ביי געווען, וועט ניט קענען באַנעמען מיטן פשוטן שכל וואָס פּאַראַ בלוטיקע קאַשמאַרן מידיאַנען מענטשן האָבן דאָ איבערגעלעבט. איצט, ווען איך טו אַ קוק אויף צוריק, גיב איך אַפּט אַ קלער: וואָס איז דאָ געשען מיט אונדז?

ווי האָבן מיר געקענט אַזוי לעבן און שטאַרבן? אַפילו פאַר די יעניקע, וואָס האָבן איבערגעלעבט די געטאָס און קאַנצלאַגערן, וועט עס מיט דער צייט אויך ווערן אַ רעטעניש ניט צו באַשיידן. ווייניק דאַקומענטן זיינען פאַרהיט געוואָרן, כדי צו באַקומען אַפילו אַ טיילווייז בילד פון דעם פּאַקטישן, אַפּיציעל־רעכטלעכן און שטייגערישן לעבן פון די יידן אין די אַקופירטע געביטן. דערפאַר, מײן איך, וועט זיין אַ גרויסער צושטייער פאַר דער יידישער מאַרטירער און קאַמפּס־געשיכטע, די לידער, וואָס די יידן פון די געטאָס, טויט־לאַגערן און פּאַרטיזאַנקע, האָבן פון זייער טרויעריק האַרץ אַרויסגעזונגען. דאָס ליד, דאָס גלייכווערטלי, דער שאַרפּער וויץ — האָבן באַגלייט דעם יידן שטענדיק און אומעטום: ווען ער איז געגאַנגען צו דער אַרבעט, ווען ער איז געשטאַנען אין ריי נאָך אַ שייסעלע זופּ, ווען מען האָט אים געפירט צו דער שחיטה און ווען ער איז געגאַנגען אין קאַמף. עס קומט אונדז אים ווי ניט נאַטירלעך, ווען דער אַקטיאַר אויף דער בינע אין אַ טראַגישן מאַמענט הויבט פּלוצלונג אָן צו זינגען. אין לעבן קומט אַזוי ניט פאַר — דוכט זיך אונדז, אָבער גראַד דאָס לעבן האָט געוויזן עפעס אַנדערש. אין טאָג ווען די פּאַרטיזאַנער־מחנה

אין ווילנער געטא האט מאביליזירט אירע קעמפער צו פארטידיקן איר קאמאנדיר וויטענבערג — האב איך ניט אויפגעהערט צו פירן מיין טאג' בוך, וויסנדיק, אז באלד קומט די לעצטע שעה מיינע. ווען מיר, פאר טיזאנער, זיינען געשטאנען פארבאריקאדירט מיט געווער אין די הענט און די געשטאפא האט ניט ווייט פון אונדז אויפגעריסן א הויז, וואו עס האבן זיך אויפגעהאלטן אונדזערע פארטיזאנער, האבן סוצקעווער, אפעסקין, הירש גליק און אנד. שרייבער, באוואפנט מיט געווער, ניט איבערגעריסן זייער דיכטערישע ארבעט.

אין מאמענטן, ווען ס'האט זיך געדוכט, אז דער איינציקער, אומ פארמיידלעכער סוף — איז דער טויט, האבן אין דער נשמה א ציטער געטאן די ווערטער פון אונדזער יונגן דיכטער פארטיזאן, הירש גליק, „זאג ניט קיינמאל אז דו גייסט דעם לעצטן וועג“ . . .

מיר האבן געזונגען.

אפילו ווען מיר האבן געזונגען א טרויעריקס . . . דאס טרויעריקע האט אנטוויקלט אין אונדז האס און צאָרן — געזונטע געפילן, וואס האבן גערופן צו טאט, צו נקמה!

מיר קענען די אויטארן פון כמעט אלע לידער, אין א געוויינלעכער צייט וואלט יעדעס ליד מסתמא באדארפט דורכמאכן א לאנגן וועג צו פאפולאריטעט. אבער אין געטא האבן מיר צוגעזען א וואונדער לעבן פראצעס: אינדיוידועלע שאפונג איז פאר אונדזערע אויגן פאר וואנדלט געווארן אין פאלקלאָר.

יעדעס נייגעשאפן ליד, וואס האט אויסגעדרוקט די געפילן און איבערלעבונגען פון דער מאסע, איז דורך דער מאסע גלייך אויפגענומען און פארשפרייט געווארן ווי איר אייגנס. דער שעפער פון דעם פאלקלאָר איז געווען די בלוטיקע צייט, דערפאר איז די טעמאטיק אין א געוויסן הינזיכט איינארטיק, דערפאר איז די פארם — ניט קיין גע' הובלטע, — א פשוטע, אבער אן אומיטלכארע.

מען האט אין געטא ניט געטארט רעדן קיין שלעכט ווארט אויף די מערדער. האט מען דערזען א דייטש, איז גלייך געקומען דער סינגאָל: — עפ"י!

דאס האט געהייסן: ס'גייט א דייטש! (עס נעמט זיך דערפון, וואס ווינטערצייט פלעגן אַנקומען אין די ווילנער שפיטאלן פון פראַנט פאר מראַרענע דייטשן, „ווי פארפראַרענע עפ"י פלעגט זאָגן דאָס פאלק). אָדער ווען דער יידישער כאָר אין ווילנער געטא (אונטער א. סלעפס אַנפירונג) האט געזונגען דאָס ליד „שטילער, שטילער“ האט מען געמוזט דעם זאָץ „ס'פירן וועגן צו פאַנאַר צו“ איבערבייטן אויף „ס'פירן וועגן איצט אַהינצו“ און אַנשטאָט „דאָס קינד גייט אויף פאַנאַר“ זינגען:

„דאס קינד נעמט צו דער האר“; ס'האט ניט געטארט דערמאנט ווערן דאס ווארט „פאנאר“ כאטש דארטן זיינען שוין אומגעקומען אכציק טויזנט קרבנות.

— ניטא קיין פאנאר, ניט אמת, ס'איז אן אויסטראכטונג פון די באַלשעוויקעס — פלעגן זאגן די דייטשן.

מען האט געהייסן שפילן טעאטער. וואס שפילט מען? פאר אן אומפארזיכטיקן ווארט דראט פאנאר. האבן די אויטארן פון די טעקסטן געמוזט שרייבן מיט רמזים. נעמט צום ביישפיל בלזיו די נעמען פון די רעווי־פארשטעלונגען אין ווילנער געטא־טעאטער: „קארענע יארן און ווי צו די טעג“ (איבערפראזירונג פונעם יידישן ווערטל „קאָרענע יארן און וויצענע טעג“). „מען קען גארניט וויסן“, „משה האלט זיך“, אָדער דער נאָמען פון דער קליין־קונסטבינע: „די יאָגעניש אין פאָס“ (נעמאכט אַ וואַרטשפיל פון „דיאגענעס אין פאָס“). דערפאר וועט איר זעלטן אין די לידער טרעפן דעם נאָמען „דייטש“. איר דערקענט אים אָבער, דעם מערדער, אינעם הינטער־טעקסט פון יעדער שורה. אן אויסנאָם זיינען בלזיו די לידער, וואָס מען האָט געוואָנען אין געהיים. וואָלט מען געפונען ביי עמיצן דעם טעקסט פון די לידער, אָדער גע־הערט זיי זינגען, וואָלט די געשטאָפּאָ צום טויט נאָך צוגעגעבן ספּע־ציעלע ענויים.

דאָס טאָג־טעגלעכע יידישע לעבן אין געטא מיט אַלע באַגלייט־דער־שיינוגען, ווי תפילה, טויט, אַרבעט, געשטאָפּאָ, יידישע מאַכטהאַבער, אינערלעכער שטייגער א.א.וו. — געפינען אן אַפּשפּיגלונג אין אַט דעם בלוטיקן פּאַלקלאָר. ער וועט אַזוי אַרום העלפן דעם קומענדיקן גע־שיכטע־שרייבער און פאַרשער ווי אויך דעם ליענער צו דערגרונטעווען זיך צו דער נשמה פון אונדזער פּאַלק.

ווילנע, 1945

II

ברענענדיק די הקדמה צו דער לידער־זאַמלונג, וואָס איך האָב נאָך אָנגעשריבן אין סוף 1945, אין ווילנע, האָלט איך פאַר נויטיק איצט, נאָך צוויי יאָר, ווען די זאַמלונג איז זיך שטאַרק צעוואַקסן, צוגעבן צו דער הקדמה נאָך עטלעכע באַמערקונגען און אויפקלערונגען, וואָס זיינען אויפגע־קומען פאַר דער צייט ביי מיר אין שייכות מיט דער לידער־זאַמלונג.

אַרבעט פון אַ פּאַלקלאָר־זאַמלער איז פון שטענדיק אָן זייער אַ שווערע. דער שרייבטיש פון אַזאַ זאַמלער דאַרף זיך געפינען אין יעדן פאַרוואַרפנסטן העק פון אַ פּראָווינג־ישוב, אויף בוידעמער און אין קע־לערן פון דער גרויסשטאָט, אין בית־מדרש, אין קינדערשול, אין פאַראיין

XVIII

און — וואו מענטשן זיינען נאָר ביכולת צו זיין, אויב פאַר דער מלחמה האָט מען טיילווייז געקוקט אויף אַזאַ זאַמלער ווי אויף אַ טשודאַק, האָבן אפילו מענטשן, וואָס פאַרשטייען שוין זייער גוט דעם ווערט פון אַזאַ זאַמל־אַרבעט אין די נאָך שווערערע באַדינגונגען, אין דער אַקופאַציע־צייט (אין געטאַ, לאַגער, וואַלד אדגל), געקוקט אויף אַזעלכע זאַמלער כמעט ווי אויף מאַניאַקעס. דער עולם האָט שלום געמאַכט מיט שפּילן טעאַטער אין געטאַ, מיט שיקן דערווייל קינדער אין שול, כדי זיי צו פאַרטומלען אַביסל, אַבער טראַכטן וואָס עס וועט זיין איבערצויגן און צוליב דעם זאַמלען אַלע נאַרישקייטן ווי, ווער, וואָס עס זאָגט אַרויס, — אויף דעם האָבן זיך ווייניק בעלנים געקענט געפינען. און... דאָך זיינען אויך אַזעלכע געווען, דער וואונדער איז נאָך גרעסער וואָס עס האָבן זיך אויך געפונען אינגאַנצן זייטיקע יידן וואָס זיינען אין דער אַרבעט אַריינגעצויגן געוואָרן און עס באַטראַכט פאַר זייער הייליקסטער עובדה.

איך וויל דאָ אַיצט ניט אַנטדעקן קיין חידושים וועגן דער וויכטיקייט פון זאַמלען פאַלקלאָר. איך וויל דאָ אויך ניט פונאַנדערקלייבן און אַפּשאַצן די לידער וואָס גייען אַריין אין דער זאַמלונג. איך וויל בלויז, געבנדיק עטלעכע באַמערקונגען וועגן מיין זאַמל־אַרבעט גופא, אונטערשטרייכן, אַז צו דער וויכטיקער אַרבעט האָב איך זיך גענומען, ווייל נאָכדעם ווי די מלחמה האָט זיך געענדיקט, האָב איך דערפילט אַז ניט נאָר מיין היימ־שטאָט איז חרוב, נאָר עס איז אויך ניטאָ כמעט קיינער פון די, וואָס זאָלן פּראַוון אָנהייבן די אַרבעט פון דאָס ניי.

גראַד די פאַלקלאָר־זאַמלונגען, וואָס מיר האָבן געהאַט פאַרגראַבן אין ווילנער געטאַ, זיינען כמעט ווי ניט אַפּגעפונען געוואָרן. ס'איז געבליבן אַ דאַקומענט פון דעם פאַלקלאָריסט און וויסנשאַפּטלעכן מיט־אַרבעטער פון יוהאַ משה לערער, וואָס איז געווען פאַראַנטוואָרט־לעך פאַרן אויפקלייבן דעם מאַטעריאַל פון די פאַלקלאָר־זאַמלער אין געטאַ. ער דערציילט ווי די זאַמל־אַרבעט איז געפירט געוואָרן און אויף וואָס פאַר אַפּצווייגן די זאַמלער האָבן זיך אַריענטירט. דער דאַקומענט איז פאַר מיר געווען ווי אַ צוואה פון מיינע נאָענטסטע, דער דאַקומענט האָט מיך רוען ניט געלאָזן ביו וואָגען איך האָב מיט מיינע באַשיידענע מעגלעכקייטן אָנגעהויבן די איבערגעריסענע אַרבעט אויף דאָס ניי.

די אַרבעט איז אין דער נאָך ברענענדיקער ווילנע געווען זייער באַ־שווערט. אַז דאָס האַרץ האָט אין יענע טעג פון ווייטיק ניט געפלאַצט איז מען טאַקע שטאַרקער פון אַיזן, און דעריבער —
— ווער האָט עס אַיצט אַ קאַפּ צו דעם ?

— זאג מיר בעסער, וואו טוט מען זיך אהין?

— וואס טוט מען איצט?

וואס האב איך זיי געקענט ענטפערן, איך — איינער פון זיי?

איך האב אנגעהויבן די ארבעט. . .

ווארט נאך ווארט, שורה נאך שורה, ליד נאך ליד, גיך האט זיך די זאמל־ארבעט איבערגעריסן, ס'איז געקומען די גרויסע וואנדערונג קיין פוילן, וואו אויך איך בין אועק, ערשט דא האב איך די זאמלונג געקענט אויסברייטערן, כ'האב זיך צוזאמענגעטראפן מיט יידן פון די פארשיידנסטע געטאס, לאגערן, טויט־הייזער, יידן פון וואלד, כ'בין געגאנגען צו זיי פארטאג, כ'בין געקומען צו זיי שפעט אין דער נאכט, כ'בין געפארן צו זיי אין גרעסערע און קלענערע ישובים, כ'האב זיך אויך געשטעלט אין פארבינדונג מיט געראטעוועטע יידן אין אנדערע לענדער (דייטשלאנד, רומעניע, פראנקרייך אאנד).

איצט, ווען איך טו א קוק אויף די אויפגעזאמלטע ארום 250 טעקסטן פון אן ערך 30 געטאס, לאגערן, וועלדער מיט די איבער 100 נאטן נומערן, זע איך אז א גרויסע ארבעט איז אפגעטאן געווארן.

אין אנטאג 1946 נאך, זיינען דערשינען א פאר קליינע קאצעטלידער־זאמלונגען, בלויז איינס פון זיי (זאמי פעדערס, קאצעטלידער, בערגן בעלז 1946), האב איך ערשט אין פאריז דערזען, עטלעכע פון די „קאצעטלידער“, וואס זיינען אין מיין זאמלונג ניט געווען, האב איך זיך דערלויבט אריינצונעמען אהער, איך בין צופרידן וואס איך קאן אין דער זאמלונג אריינעמען אויך א צאץ לידער וואס מיין פריינט דער דיכטער ה. ליוויק האט געבראכט פון זיין באזוך אין די דיי־פיל־לאגערן אין דייטשלאנד אין 1946, געוויס איז נאך אויך די זאמלונג ניט קיין פילשטענדיקע, אבער זיכער — די גרעסטע, אין איך וועל ניט זיין צו באשיידן ווען איך וועל זאגן, אז אויך די פולקומסטע און ריכטיקסטע (אין טעקסט, מעלאדיע, באמערקונג אדגל).

זיכער וועלן אנדערע יידן־קאצעטניקעס מיך אויפטערקומען טאכן, אז טייל לידער זיינען אין מיין זאמלונג „ניט ריכטיק“ איבערגעגעבן, אזוי זמשל שרייבט מיר וועגן עטלעכע טעקסטן פון מיין קורצער לידער־זאמלונג „דאס געזאנג פון ווילנער געטא“ (פאריז, 1947), דער געוועזענער דירעקט־טאר פון געטא־טעאטער אין ווילנע ישראל סעגאל (איצט אנטפערער פון יידישן טעאטער אין מינבען) צו, אנדערס, אט וואס: „איך האף אז איר וועט ניט נאר ניט האבן פאריבל ווען איך וועל איך אנהייבן אויף דער ניט פינקטלעכקייט וואס זיינען אריינגעפאין אין בוך, נאר איר וועט אויך זיך צופרידן, ווארום איך בין סוף כל סוף אויסן פעסט־צושטעלן די אויטענטישקייט פון פארשיידענע טעקסטן און קאמענטן“

XX

טארן . . . פריינט סעגאל, ווי געזאגט, איז דאך געווען דער דירעקטאר און איינער פון די רעזשיסארן פון געטא־טעאטער און דעריבער קען אויסקומען אז ער קען קיין טעות ניט האבן, אבער אויך ער איז מסתמא ניט באווארנט פון טעותן.

גראד האט מיר פריינט סעגאל אנגעוויזן אויך אויף עטלעכע לידער, „ניט ריכטיק“ פארצייכנטע, וואס עס האבן מיר איבערגעגעבן די ארטיסטישע דארע רובין און חיהלע ראזענטאל. ס'איז צו צווייפלען, מיין איך, אז די טעקסטן וואס די ארטיסטישע האבן אליין אויסגעפירט אין געטא־טעאטער, זאלן זיין ניט ריכטיק איבערגעגעבן, אויב אבער דאס קאן יא געמאלט זיין (די צייט־מכשפה האט דאך אויך אונדזער זכרון ניט געשאנעוועט?). קען עס געמאלט זיין ביי יעדערן.

דערפאר טאקע זיגט מען שוין איצט אין א סך ערטער געוויסע לידער אין פארשיידענע וואריאנטן. ס'איז דעריבער קלאר, אז נאכדעם ווי די זאמלונג וועט דערשיינען, וועל איך הערן פון ליענער, אז איך האב די טעקסטן, וואס זיינען ביי זיי אין געטא אדער לאנער געשאפן געווארן, ניט ריכטיק פארצייכנט.

עס ליגט ביי מיר אין ארכיוו א היבשע צאל וואריאנטן, בלויז עטלעכע ווענטלעכע פון זיי האב איך אריינגעגעבן אין דער זאמלונג.

א כאראקטעריסטישן פרט וויל איך דא ברענגען פאר די פאראיניגטערעסדיטע, וואס וועט קלאר מאכן אויך דעם הינטערגרונט ווי אזוי ס'האבן זיך געשאפן וואריאנטן, אדער טעקסטן, וואס דערמאנען שטארק מיט זייער פארם און אינהאלט אנדערע געטא־לידער:

וועגן טעקסט „די מעזריצער ווישע־לעניעס אין טרעבלינקע“ (זע שרייבט צו מיר דער אויטאר: „טייערער פריינד, דו פרעגסט ביי מיר ווער עס האט אויסגעקלערט די לידער, קען איך דיר שרייבן ווי אזוי עס איז געקומען דערצו. איך זיך איינמאל אין קרייאווקע (באהע־טעניש — ש.ק.), אלע שלאָפן, מיר איז אויסגעקומען צו זיין וואך, עס איז ווינטער, ארויסגיין קען מען ניט, הייב איך אָן צו קלערן אַז מען דארף עפעס שאַפן. איך האָב (דאָן) אָנגעשריבן אַ ליד, טראץ דעם וואָס איך בין ניט קיין געלערנטער, דו זעסט נאָכן שרייבן אַז ס'איז אַרויסגע־קומען ניט אזוי ווי איך האָב געוואָלט, ווען איך האָב איבערגעלייענט פאַר מיינע חברה, זאָגן זיי צו מיר: „דו ביסט געווען ביי די ערשטע ווישע־לעניעס (דער שמועס קומט פאַר אונטער דער ערד, אין אַ באַ־העלטעניש, אין די וואַראַנעצער וועלדער, וואו מגיד און נאך אַנדערע יידן זיינען אַנטלאָפן נאָך דער ליקוידאַציע פון מעזריצער געטא, ס'הייסט נאָך די ווישע־לעניעס — אַרויסשיקונגען אין טרעבלינקע. — ש.ק.), שרייב עפעס אָן, כדי מען זאל האָבן וואָס צו זינגען אין קרייאווקע.

איך האָב געשאַפן „די מעזריצער ווישעדלעניע“ און גלייכצייטיק צוגע-
פּאַסט אַ ניגון. ווען די חברה האָבן געזונגען דאָס ליד, רופּ איך זיך
אַפּ צו גערצמאַן דוד „אפשר שאַפן מיר באַלד נאָך אַ ליד? איר וועט
מיר העלפן?“ מיר האָבן זיך אַוועקגעזעצט, איך און גערצמאַן, און
איינער דעם צווייטן האָט געגעבן ווערטער. ווען עס האָט זיך געשאַפן
אַ פּערה, האָבן מיר גלייך צוגעקלערט אַ ניגון, און אַזוי ווי איך האָב
אַ שטימע האָב איך דאָס גלייך איבערגעזונגען. עס איז אַרויסגעקומען
דעמלט די „קרייאווקע“ (זע) . . . ווייטער איז געקומען איינער פון לובלין,
האָט ער מיך געבעטן איך זאָל אים איבערשרייבן דאָס ליד. דאָס גאַנצע
ליד אָבער האָט ער ניט. ער גייט אַרום און ער זאָגט. אַז ער האָט דאָס
געשאַפן. . . .“

אַ דער לייענער וועט זיך באַקענען מיט די 2 טעקסטן וואָריאַנטן
„טרעבלינקע“ וואָס איך ברענג אין דער זאַמלונג, וועט ער זען, אַז מגיד
און זיינע חברים האָבן, שאַפנדיק זייערע לידער, שוין געקענט אָדער גע-
הערט פונעם טרעבלינקע-ליד. עס זעט דעריבער אויס צו זיין ריכטיק
די השערה פון דר. נחמן בלומענטאַל (זע „ייד, קריסטור“, נומ. 8, ניו-
יאָרק, יולי 1947), אַז דאָס טרעבלינקע-ליד איז געשאַפן געוואָרן דורך
וואַרשעווער יידן וואָס זיינען געפירט געוואָרן קיין טרעבלינקע און וואָס
זיינען פון טראַנספּאָרט אַנטלאָפן און אָנגעקומען אין די וועלדער פון
מעזריטש און ביאַלאָ-פּאָדליאַסקאַ. מגידס ציטירטער בריוו באַווייזט טאַקע
אַז די אַנטלאָפּענע פון די מעזריצער ווישעדלעניעס אין די וועלדער,
זיינען שוין מיט דעם ליד געווען באַקאַנט. (די ווישעדלעניע פון די
מעזריצער יידן קיין טרעבלינקע איז פּאַרגעקומען שפּעטער ווי די ווי-
שעדלעניע פון די וואַרשעווער).

די פּאַר געבראַכטע בריוו-ציטירונגען וועלן זיכער העלפן דעם פּאַר-
שער און דעם ערנסטן לייענער צו מאַכן דערפון די געהעריקע מסקנות.
עס איז אַ באַוואוסטע זאַך, אַז אין דער אַקופאַציע-צייט האָבן יידן
געשאַפן לידער ניט נאָר אין יידיש. עס זיינען באַקאַנט גענוג לידער
אויך אין פּויליש, העברעאיש, רוסיש, דומעניש, אונגאַריש, דייטש אָנאָד,
בלויז עטלעכע לידער פון פּויליש און איינע פון רוסיש („באַמבעס“)
האָבן איך אין דער זאַמלונג אַריינגעגעבן אין יידישער איבערועצונג.
אַזאַ זאַמלונג וואָס זאָל אַרייננעמען אויך די לידער אין פרעמדע
שפּראַכן און די לידער אין יידיש, וואָס וואַנדערן נאָך אַרום אין מויל
פון פּאָלק, וועט זיכער מיט דער צייט דאַרפן אַרויסגעגעבן ווערן.

עס וועט זיכער אויך אין אַזאַ זאַמלונג ווערט זיין צו ברענגען כּאָ-
ראַקטעריסטישע מוסטערן פון די אָנערקענטע דיכטער, וואָס האָבן אין

דער אקופאציע געשאפן (יצחק קאצענעלסאן, ש. שאיעוויטש, מ. גע-
 בירטיק, א. סוצקעווער, י. שפיגל אאנד.), כאטש זייערע לידער-זאמ-
 לונגען זיינען שוין דערשינען, אין דער זאמלונג האבן איך געגעבן פון
 די דיכטער נאך יענע לידער, וואס זיינען אין די געטאס געוונען געווארן.
 א באזונדער לחלוטין ניט באארבעט פערל זיינען די מעלאדיעס צו
 די טעקסטן, איך וויל דא אָנגעבן עטלעכע אייבנאוויפיקע דערקלערונג-
 גען, וואס קענען נוציק זיין דעם פארשער און אינטערעסירן דעם ליענער
 און די זינגערס:

אויב שרייבן לידער אָדער פראָזע האָבן געקענט אלע עברדיקע
 (און אפילו ניט-עברדיקע האָבן אויך אויסגעטראַכט טעקסטן).
 קען אָבער דאָס זעלבע ניט געזאָגט ווערן וועגן דער שאַפונג פון די
 מעלאדיעס צו די טעקסטן, די צאל יידישע קאָמפאָזיטאָרן, וואָס איז
 אויך פאַר דער מלחמה געווען זייער אַ קליינע, איז אין די געטאָס און
 לאַגערן געוואָרן נאָך קלענער, אין אַ טייל ערטער זיינען זיי אפילו אין
 געטאָ ניט אַריין, די דייטשן האָבן זיי אומגעבראַכט נאָך אידער עס
 האָט זיך אָנגעהויבן דאָס „נאַרמאַלע“ לעבן אין די געטאָס, די קאָמ-
 פאָזיטאָרן, וואָס זיינען אין געטאָ יאָ אַריין, האָבן זיך דערנאָך פאַר-
 בונדן מיט די טעאַטער-קאלעקטיוון און פאַר זיי געשאַפן די מעלאדיעס.
 מען קען אויף זיכער זאָגן אַז בלויז די מעלאדיעס, וואָס זיינען גע-
 שריבן געוואָרן צו טעקסטן, זיינען (אַ געוויסע צאל) געראַטעוועט גע-
 וואָרן דורך די יידן פון געטאָ און קאַצעט. מעלאדיעס אָן ווערטער,
 אָדער אַזעלכע לידער, וואָס זיינען ניט באַקאַנט געווען צו ברייטערע
 קרייזן, זיינען פאַרלוירן געגאַנגען צוזאַמען מיט זייערע קאָמפאָזיטאָרן.
 ווייניק זיינען דעריבער באַקאַנט אַריגינעלע געטאָ-קאָמפאָזיציעס, כאַטש
 עס האָבן צענדליקער ניגונים געשאַפן דוד בייגעלמאַן, פּאָלינאַ בראַון,
 עקיבא דורמאַשקין, מישע וועקסלער אאנד.

צו דאָס רוב טעקסטן וואָס יידן האָבן דאָן געשאַפן, האָבן זיי גלייך
 מיט די ווערטער אויך צוגעקליבן אַ מעלאדיע, בעסער געזאָגט — זיי
 האָבן די מעלאדיע געדאַרפט האָבן פריער כדי עס זאל זיין גרינגער
 צו שרייבן, ניט לויט דער צוגעפאַסטקייט צום טעקסט איז שטענדיק
 די מעלאדיע גענומען געוואָרן, נאָר אָפט איז די מעלאדיע צוגעפאַסט
 געוואָרן צו די אַרבעטס-פראָצעסן פון אויטאָר אין געטאָ אָדער אין
 לאַגער. אזוי למשל קען מען אַנטרעפן גאַנץ טרויעריקע טעקסטן מיט
 הייטערע מעלאדיעס (דער ניגון צום ליד „קאַצעט קייזערוואַלד“ איז
 געשאַפן געוואָרן פאַר די מיידלעך וואָס האָבן געוואָשן די קאַרדאָרן
 און טרעפן און זיי האָבן עס געמוזט טאָן זייער גיך).

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פון עטלעכע הויפטקוואלן האָבן די מחברים גענומען די מעלאַ-
דיעס צו זייערע טעקסטן:

אַלטע ייִדישע פּאַלקס־ניגונים. דאָ גייען אַרײַן אויך חסידישע מע-
לאַדיעס, ניגונים פון אַלטן ייִדישן אַפּערעטן־רעפּערטואַר אדגל.

טאַנגאַ-מעלאַדיעס, די מינאַרע, טרויעריקע טענער פון די טאַנגאַס,
זיינען געווען פון די אַנגענומענסטע מעלאַדיעס וואָס מחברים האָבן
עקספּלואַטירט. אויך ניט ווייניק אַריגינעלע מאַטיוו זיינען פון די גע-
טאַיקאַמפּאָזיטאָרן קאַמפּאָנירט געוואָרן לויטן טאַנגאַ־נוסח. אַגב זיינען
אַ סך טאַנגאַס געזונגען געוואָרן אויך מיט די פּאַר־מלחמה־טעקסטן.
טעקסטן וואָס האָבן אויך אין געטאָ ניט פּאַרלאָרן זייער אַקטועליקייט.
ווי למשׁל די ליבע־ בענקונגס־ און מאַמע־מאַטיוו אדגל.

טאַנעטישע מעלאַדיעס, די זינגעוודיקע סאַוועטישע מעלאַדיעס זיינען
נאָך פּאַר דער מלחמה, און דער עיקר אין די יאָרן 1939-1941, ווען
די סאַוועטן האָבן פּאַרנועמן שטיקער פון דער פּוילישער טעריטאָריע, —
ברייט באַקאַנט געווען דער באַפעלקערונג. די זינגעוודיקייט פון אַזעלכע
מעלאַדיעס האָבן דעריבער סטימולירט פיל אויטאָרן מעדן צו זיין זייערע
טעקסטן צו זיי.

די שוועריקייטן פון אויפקלייבן די מעלאַדיעס זיינען געווען אַ סך
גרעסערע ווי אויפּזאַמלען די טעקסטן. איך האָב דעריבער מיט דאַנק־
באַרייט אויסגענוצט די איבערגעגעבנקייט פון פּריינד, וואָס זיינען גע-
גאַנגען מיט מיר צו די יעניקע וואָס האָבן די מעלאַדיעס פּאַרגעזונגען.
ס'האַט ניט איינמאַל געטראָפּן, אַז איך האָב געמוזט אַנווענדן כלערליי
מיטלען כדי צו ברענגען די זינגער צו די נאַטן־פּאַרשרייבער. די איבער
100 ניגונים, וואָס מיר האָט זיך איינגעגעבן יאָ אויפּזאַמלען, וועט
האַפּ איך, זיין אַ ווערטיקער צושטייער צו דער ייִדישער קולטור־געשיכטע.
אין גאַנג פון דער זאַמל־אַרבעט האָב איך זיך אַנגעשטויסן אויך
אויף צווייפּלער. דער צווייפּלער האָט געוואָנט: „איך קען נאָך פּאַר־
שטיין דאָס פּאַרעפּנטלעכן טעקסטן, וואָס האָבן אין זיך קאָטש אַ פּאַר
פּאַעטישע שורות, אָבער צו וואָס פּאַראַייביקן גראַפּאַמאַניע, צו וואָס עס
קאָנאַניזירן. . .“ אויף דעם האָב איך געענטפּערט: „אַזוי ווי עס איז
אונדז טייער יעדע געפּונגענע שמה אין די הורבות אַדער אויפּן אַש פון
אונדזער היים, פּונקט אַזוי אוצרויך דאַרפן מיר אויפהיטן די שטימען
פון די פּאַרגאַנגענע, זייערע פּשוטע, קלאַרע ווערטער וואָס דערציילן
אונדז וועגן זייער לעבן ביז דעם אומקום.“

דער קדוש ש. שאַעוויטש קלאַרט אונדז אויף (לאַדזשער געטאָ,
פּעברואַר 1942) אַז ס'איז „ניטאָ קיין אַנדער עצה, ווי נאַכצוטאָן די

אמאליקע טרובאָדורן, מינענוינגער און אנדזערע יידישע באַדער־זינגער : אַרויסטראַגן אַליין דאָס אייגענע ליד, ווערן די דרשנים, וואָס גייען צום פּאָלק מיט זייערע דרשות. . . . " ניט אין דער אָפּשאַצונג ווער עס איז אַן ערגערער צי בעסערער דרשן, אָדער ווער ס'איז אַ בעסערער זינגער גייט דאָ די רייד (אויך ר' סעגרעגאַציע איז זיכער נויטיק), קודם־ כל מוזן די „דרשות“ די ניגונים, די טעקסטן אָפּגעהיט ווערן פון פאַר־לוירן צוגיין, די צייט, די געשיכטע וועט זיכער דעם מאַטעריאַל ניט באַ'עוולח'ן.



די שרייבער יוסף וואַלף און מ. באַרוויס ביים אויסלאַזן די אויסגעגראַבענע מאַטעריאַלן פון דינגעלבלום־אַרכיוו אין האַרשעווער געטאָ.

ס'איז קלאַר אַז אין דער דאָזיקער זאַמלונג פון טעקסטן, מעדאַדיעס און אייניקע פּאַטאַס האָבן אַ גרויסן חלק איבערגעגעבענע פריינד, וואָס האָבן, פאַרשטייענדיק די היכטיקייט פון אַזאַ אויסגאַבע, ניט געקאַרגט זייער מי, מיר אין אַדעם באַהילפיק צו זיין.

איך דערמאָן מיט כבוד דעם קדוש לויטיק גערבער (אָוועקגעשיקט פון קאַזינער געטאָ אין דאַכאַ, און דאַרטן אומגעקומען), זיינע אַ העפט לידער, געזונגענע אין קאַזנער געטאָ, איז דאַרטן געפונען געוואָרן צווישן די רואינען נאָך דער מלחמה, די לידער האָבן איך אַריינגעגעבן אין דער זאַמלונג.

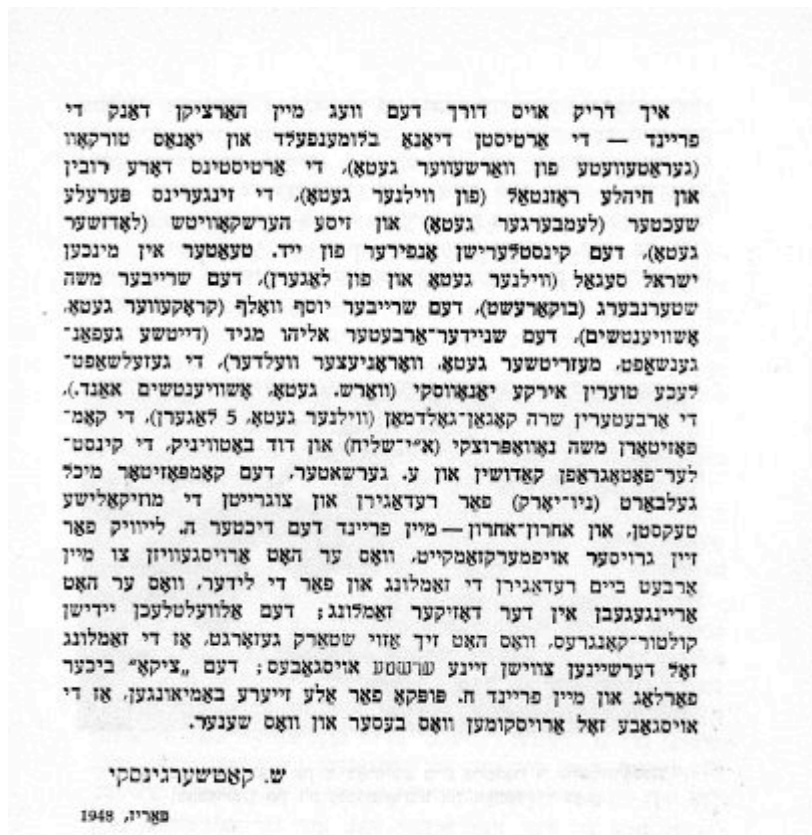


Illustration 1: Invitation from Volf Durmashkin (conductor of the Vilna Ghetto Orchestra and Hebrew Choir) to Zelig Kalmanovitsh (writer and scholar) to a concert in Vilna ghetto. [p xvii]

Illustration 2: A page found among the material from the Vilna ghetto. The side-note testifies that this written-down song had been concealed in the ghetto archive after the death of the singer Levitska. [p xvii]

Illustration 3: The writers Joseph Wulf and M. Borwicz recovering buried material from the Warsaw ghetto Ringelblum Archive. [p 25]

Appendix D

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