Yuval Shaked
(Department of Music, University of Haifa, Israel)[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Arno Nadel – Music in the work of a man of many talents**

This article focuses on Nadel's activities, writings and works in the realm of music, and mentions a few of his works in other art fields that are variously linked to music. It provides an overview of Arno Nadel's biography and diverse activities in the field of music, which are still largely overshadowed in public perception by his work as a painter and poet. Written upon the recent completion of digitization of Nadel’s collection kept at the National Library of Israel in Jerusalem, it is based on the documents kept there, and some others. It combines data gathered from various secondary sources (see Endnote 5) with archival sources: Nadel's estate kept in Jerusalem, and materials kept at the Leo Baeck Institute at the Center for Jewish History in New York, and at Gratz College in Philadelphia. The latter isn’t yet publicly accessible. It should be evaluated in the future.

At first, Nadel’s biography is rather roughly sketched, while shedding focused light on his activities as synagogue musician, collector of Jewish folksongs, and composer of incidental music. Some of Nadel’s views on Jewish music are presented in this part of the article and are put in a broader context in the second part, devoted mainly to Nadel’s arrangements and compositions. Finally, a few items in Nadel’s estate are singled out, coupled with some thoughts to encourage further study.

# Biographical sketch of Arno Nadel as a musician and collector

Arno Nadel was born on October 3, 1878, in Vilnius (Vilna), then part of the Russian Empire. On March 12, 1943, he was deported with his wife from Berlin to Auschwitz, where he perished soon after.

Nadel was prolific with versatile talents. He was a poet, playwright, translator, painter, composer, collector of Jewish folk and synagogal music, synagogue musician, arranger, pianist, musicologist, and music journalist. The exhibition catalog *Juden in Kreuzberg* includes a chapter about Nadel. Its title cites the March 1935 (vol. 3 no. 3) edition of the *Monatsblätter des Jüdischen Kulturbundes*: "Anyone who does not yet know the painter Arno Nadel, knows about the poet and will recognize in him the musician".[[2]](#endnote-1)

Arno Nadel was talented, skillful, and successful in three disciplines of artistic activity – literature, painting, and music, and developed a unique, religious, mystic art, of which his writings and diaries bear moving testimony. On his 50th anniversary, the *Jüdische Rundschau* introduced him as follows:

On October 3rd, Arno Nadel – in a rare way triple artistic gifted: as a painter, poet, and musician – joins the line of 50-year-old persons […]. Nadel, the Jew, [knows] the way to a God, who is objective above all world, like all world is objective in him. Nadel's renewed mysticism of Judaism proclaims God not by sinking in the divine, but through the thin wall of life.[[3]](#endnote-2)

Nowadays, it seems that Nadel is better remembered for his work as a poet than as a musician, if he is remembered at all. In an obituary published in Zurich by the *Israelitisches Wochenblatt* in 1946, Felix Stössinger wrote:

In his obituary, Magnus Davidsohn reflected on the Jewish musician Arno Nadel […].[[4]](#endnote-3) But above all, Nadel was also a poet, and he would have become known in a completely different way if he had not been a great silent person who kept his books secret even from his friends and who was made anonymous by the strangest circumstances of life.

[…] Nadel's oeuvre survives perhaps only in a few copies of his scattered books. After 30 years of a friendship that goes beyond words, I would like to collect the debris of the work and try to put it back together again. Therefore, I ask everyone who owns or knows something about Nadel to say a word.[[5]](#endnote-4)

Arno Nadel was born into a Jewish family.[[6]](#endnote-5) His father David Nadel was a mechanic by profession, an orthodox Misnaged, who had much contact with Hasidim.[[7]](#endnote-6) In 1930, the editorial staff of the newspaper *Jüdische Rundschau* approached a few people known for their active interest in Jewish music and asked them to share with the readers their path to this field. Part of Arno Nadel's response, published on April 16, 1930, reads as follows:

That was no longer an option. This was birth and duration and death – this was a permanent place from the first breath. A single word, one can almost say: a single word says it: – Vilna. I was born in Vilna in 1878. Only a few know this Vilna. This was a sacred Jewish city with hundreds of 'schuls', schools in the truest sense of the word. Each craft guild had its own synagogue, and in the 'Keemenkehrers-Schul' (chimney cleaner synagogue) and in the 'Kazzewer-Klois' (master butcher synagogue) – not to mention the countless synagogues in the 'Schulhof' right in the center of the city […] In all synagogues people 'learned', which means: singing, lamenting, arguing, quarreling, but always singing, singing ancient Jewish, ancient oriental singing, studying, praying, preaching, speaking – and, truly, singing and singing and singing, Jewish, sweetly sung Jewish singing. My beautiful people have sung about life and death and God and everything in the world. That was Vilna, my native city. […] My path to Jewish music – it is too hard, too easy to describe, to shed light upon, revealing its rare and beautiful wonders.[[8]](#endnote-7)

On that same occasion, Nadel referred to his private experience of Hasidism:

What else would I not have to tell about my cousin Shaul, the Hasid with the long beard, who took me, the Misnaged child, to the Hasidic Shtibel, where the holy breath of the religious dancers blew, of rapture, of Dvekut niggunim, of heavenly groans, the dervish ranks, the sublime, pious wordless and wordy melodies.[[9]](#endnote-8)

Due to his father's loss of eyesight, Arno Nadel had to leave home at the age of 12. He went to Königsberg and studied there at the Bürgerschule (municipal school). His musical talent was soon recognized. He became a pupil of composer Robert Schwalm (1845, Erfurt – 1912, Königsberg) and, more significantly, a boy soprano at the Königsberg Synagogue led by Oberkantor (Chief Cantor) Eduard Birnbaum (1885, Cracow – 1920, Königsberg). Birnbaum was a former student of Salomon Sulzer (1804-1890), the Viennese cantor and reformer of traditional synagogue music. He was a great connoisseur and collector of synagogue music, and became Nadel's mentor and model.

On Nadel's occasional home visits, he met Hirsch Nissan Golomb (1853, Želva –1934, Vilna), a violin teacher and author of several textbooks on music theory.[[10]](#endnote-9) As a 13-year-old boy Nadel contributed a few Jewish folksongs arrangements as examples to one of Golomb's publications.[[11]](#endnote-10)

At the age of 17, in 1895, Nadel entered the Jewish Teachers' Institute (Jüdische Lehrer- und Bildungsantalt) in Berlin. At the same time, he studied composition privately with Ludwig Mendelssohn (1858, Striegau/Strzegom, now in Poland – 1921, Charlottenburg) and Max Julius Loewengard (1860, Frankfurt – 1915, Hamburg). Nadel married Anna Beate Guhrauer, and the couple had two daughters – Detta (later Okun, then Oklen) and Ellen (later Guillemin-Nadel). He stayed in Berlin for the rest of his life.

After earning his diploma in 1900 Nadel worked until 1916 as a private teacher of music, arts, and literature, and occasionally taught religion at Jewish schools. Already in 1902, he started to gain reputation as arranger of Jewish folksongs.[[12]](#endnote-11) From 1904 on he wrote articles for the music supplement of the Jewish magazine *Ost und West*, and music reviews for the *Vossische Zeitung*, *Vorwärts*, *Freiheit*, and a few other newspapers and magazines. He was a notable authority on XXX.[[13]](#endnote-12)

In the years 1916-1938, Nadel was employed by the Jewish community of Berlin. First, in June 1916, he was appointed choir conductor at the orthodox Synagogue ~~am~~ Kottbuser Ufer in Kreuzberg (nowadays Fraenkelufer des Landwehrkanals), which was inaugurated only a few months later, in September 1916. Since no mixed choir or organ was permitted in an orthodox synagogue to accompany the cantor’s singing, Nadel put together a small choir consisting of soprano and alto boys, and men’s (tenor and bass) voices. In the inauguration ceremony, the choir performed works by Louis Lewandowski (1821-1894) and Beethoven.

From 1931 on, Nadel served as a choir conductor and organist at a series of synagogues: the Old Synagogue (Alte Synagogue) in the Heidereuterstrasse in Berlin-Mitte, at the Pestalozzistrasse-Synagogue, and finally at the Synagogue in the Münchenerstrasse in Schöneberg. As a synagogue choir conductor, Nadel was in charge of liturgical services, auditions for candidates for cantors, organists, and interim conductors, as well as for the musical parts of funeral services held at the Weißensee Cemetery, Berlin.

Throughout his life, Nadel collected and notated Jewish music.[[14]](#endnote-13) His collection of manuscripts included a few cantors' manuals. A very special among them was the 1744 manual of Judah Elias of Hanover, which Nadel called the "Hannoversche Kompendium".

According to a letter, from February 10, 1922, written by Nadel to Martin Buber, the Berlin Jewish Community commissioned him to create a compendium of traditional liturgical melodies.[[15]](#endnote-14) Nadel worked on the 7-volume work for sixteen years, which should have borne the title *Hallelujah* – *Chants for the Jewish service by Arno Nadel; At the same time a systematic selection of important synagogue composers*.[[16]](#endnote-15) The introduction to the compilation states:

The author had in mind a completely new Jewish service on a grand scale. This style was initially to be expressed in the dramatically accentuated rendition of what was said and sung. Although the '*Perush hamillus'* [i.e. an interpretation of the Scriptures which is committed to the words] was of great importance to the great synagogue composers and cantors of all times, the result is still completely different and new if one elevates it to a conscious principle of the arts, as is the case in the present work.[[17]](#endnote-16)

Regrettably, so far none of the volumes has been found.[[18]](#endnote-17)

Nadel composed the incidental music for Stefan Zweig's *Jeremias* which had been performed by the Kulturbund-Theater in October 1934. The play describes the struggle of the Jewish people with their fate upon the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar (586 BCE), their escape into exile, and their mission to make God’s plan for a humane society be known among the nations. The score calls for three soloists (soprano, tenor or high baritone, and bass) and an instrumental ensemble consisting of two trumpets, two trombones, percussion (two timpani, snare drum, bass drum, triangle, cymbals), a harp, and two or three cellos. Oskar Guttmann reviewed the performance for the *Jüdische Rundschau* of October 25, 1934:

Arno Nadel […] often uses exotic and archaic elements as color, and his basic artistic attitude comes much more strongly from the Jewish area than that of the poet […]. Nadel has tried, so to speak, to create with the music what one misses by Zweig: the strangely unfamiliar and yet familiarly touching, something of the spirit that takes us away from a recently passed period of artistic word sequences. Apart from the beginning, where Nadel uses the old accent melody of the lamentations, the musical additions are freely composed.[[19]](#endnote-18)

Some further engagements of Nadel with the activities of the Kulturbund are documented. As a painter, he participated in three exhibitions in Berlin (in October and November 1933, and in 1935).[[20]](#endnote-19)

On September 6, 1936, in the framework of the Culture Conference of the Reich Association of Jewish Culture Leagues in Germany (*Kulturtagung des Reichverbandes der jüdischen Kulturbünde in Deutschland*), Nadel held a talk entitled “Jewish liturgical music and Jewish folksongs” (“*Jüdische Liturgische Musik und jüdisches Volkslied*”).[[21]](#endnote-20) In his talk, Nadel stated that “the Jewish folk song is the most genuine when it gets its impulse from synagogue music”.[[22]](#endnote-21) In view of Nadel's interests and work, as will be detailed below, this position might seem surprisingly decisive and one-sided. Nadel referred in his talk to a then 13-year-old piece in which he elaborated on these issues, and laconically listed seven musical aspects which he considered characteristic of true Jewish music: the recitative, the diatonic (in contrast to harmonic), the anapestic, the meditative, the ‘parallelistic’, the mixed character of tonality, and the changing character of rhythm.[[23]](#endnote-22)

The documentary album (book and recordings) *Vorbei…: Dokumentation jüdischen Musiklebens in Berlin, 1933-1938* presents a few more cases of Nadel’s involvement with the Kulturbund activities:

* Nadel’s settings of two different versions of the Passover song “*Chad Gadya*” (sung in Aramaic and German) were recorded in the spring of 1934, interpreted by Chief Cantor Karl Neumann accompanied by string orchestra and piano.[[24]](#endnote-23)
* Nadel composed the introductory music for the short film “*Schir Iwri (Hebräische Melodie)*”, produced in the winter of 1934/35 commissioned by the Reich Association of the Jewish Culture Leagues in Germany (*Reichsverband der jüdischen Kulturbünde in Deutschland*). The film features violinist Andreas Weißgerber interpreting Joseph Achron’s “Hebrew Melody” on the scenery of the old city of Jerusalem.[[25]](#endnote-24)
* As a pianist, Nadel had been recorded in Berlin in 1936 accompanying Cantor Israel Bakon in two prayers (“*L’man Jirbu” und “Elouheinu W’lohei*”).[[26]](#endnote-25)
* Nadel’s arrangement for “*Elohai Ad Schelo Nozarti*” was recorded by J. Blumberg accompanied by harp.[[27]](#endnote-26)

The notorious *Lexikon der Juden in der Musik*, published in 1940 by the NSDAP Institute for Research on the Jewish Question (*Veröffentlichung des Instituts der NSDAP zur Erforschung der Judenfrage*) includes an entry on Arno Nadel.[[28]](#endnote-27)

Immediately after the pogrom known as *Reichskristallnacht* (November 9-10, 1938), Nadel was arrested and imprisoned in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. There is no information as to the duration of his stay there. Nadel’s typoscript diaries (from June till September 1942) include some – clearly restrained yet heart-breaking – memories of the time in ‘S.’, as Nadel referred to Sachsenhausen.

After his return from the concentration camp, Nadel could no longer work at the destroyed Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue. So long as the community’s financial situation enabled it, he was engaged as organist and choir director in the Münchenerstrasse Synagogue. This lasted until March 1941. In mid-May 1941 Nadel and his wife were forced to leave their apartment and move into a single room at an apartment of another Jewish family in Berlin. Until September the same year he continued to conduct a choir and play the organ in services at the Weißensee cemetery.

From October 1941 Nadel was forced to work at the *Jüdische Bibliothek Amt VII of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (in the Logenhaus, Eisenacherstrasse 11). Together with other Jewish forced labourers (*Zwangsarbeiter*), and under the supervision of Gestapo officers. He had to register Jewish books and writings which were robbed in Germany and Nazi-occupied territories and transported to Berlin. In his diaries, Nadel referred to this “place of work” using an enigmatic abbreviation of his invention – ‘G-U’.[[29]](#endnote-28)

In the diaries, there are numerous notes dealing with music.[[30]](#endnote-29) Some of them express fleeting ideas, and others elaborate on musical subjects. Together with seemingly unimportant or irrelevant reports on personal experiences or musical activities, these notes illustrate the centrality and existentiality of music in Nadel’s holistic spiritual world.[[31]](#endnote-30) Several diary notes include short, hand-written musical notations – a melody remembered or invented, with or without words.[[32]](#endnote-31)

On March 10, 1943, Nadel returned from that G-U to the room on the Bamberger-Straße he had inhabited with his wife, and found it locked. In his absence he, his wife had been taken by the Gestapo. He had been sent a written summons to come to Alexanderplatz. Upon his arrival there, he was deported from the Moabit railway station to Auschwitz with the 36th transport (*Ortstransport*).

# Arno Nadel as researcher, collector, reviver, and composer of Jewish music

Nadel’s research in the field of Jewish music aimed to discover, restore and preserve old musical traditions, those he thought were true Jewish music, while simultaneously trying to renew traditional synagogue music. His efforts raised the performing standards of synagogue choirs. He has devotedly collected and studied synagogal music and East European Jewish folk songs, looking for manuscripts and notating oral traditions. He published many of these materials were published with commentary in the *Gemeindeblatt der jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin*, *Ost und West*, *Der Jude*, and in the articles on Jewish Music Nadel written for the *Jüdisches Lexikon* (among others, on Jewish folksongs)[[33]](#endnote-32) and the German *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (among others, on *Akzente*, the *te’amim*).[[34]](#endnote-33)

From February 1905 through January 1919, Nadel published 49 arrangements of folksongs in *Ost und West*. Most of the pieces were written for a singing voice and piano. 12 pieces are for piano solo; four for violin (or cello) and piano; and two for singing voice, violin, and piano. One of the songs ("Der Oriman") was arranged by Nadel together with composer Bogumil Zepler (1858-1918).[[35]](#endnote-34) Most of these arrangements come from Leo Winz' Jewish folksong collection. Leo Winz (1876-1952) was the editor of *Ost und West.* A few songs mention informants – M. Gibianski; E. Sacher of Kolomyya, Western Ukraine; Dr. Götz of Berlin, one song each. Two songs were communicated by Leo Rosenstein of Paris, and another one ("Benê hecholo") by poet Salman Schneur.[[36]](#endnote-35)

The songs have various origins and represent a range of traditions, including folksongs, Hasidic songs, wedding songs, cradle songs, festive songs (for Chanukka, Sukkoth, and Havdalah), prayer nussach (*Singweise*), the Megillah of Esther and the Kol Nidrei service, and a setting of a melody by the Lithuanian poet and badchan Eliakum (Eljokim) Zunser (1840-1913), "*Die Maskierte Welt*".[[37]](#endnote-36) One of the songs ("*Rachelina*") is a Judeo-Espagnol folksong.[[38]](#endnote-37) Yet another (communicated by Abraham Zvi Idelsohn) is, according to Nadel, a Jewish-Palestinian peasant song ("*Po* *beeretz*").[[39]](#endnote-38)

An interesting case among the arrangements is Lord Byron's "*Israels Klagelied*", the German (by Eduard Saenger) and Hebrew (by Jehuda Leib Gordon) translations (from English) of which can be sung to the same melody as the English original.[[40]](#endnote-39) As a pianist, Nadel accompanied many performances of his arrangements at concerts organized by *Ost und West*.

In 1916 in Martin Buber's *Der Jude*, Nadel published a 5-part series of articles on Jewish religious folksongs (based on folksongs collections in New York, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Warsaw, and Moscow);[[41]](#endnote-40) and in 1916-1917, a 4-part series of articles on Jewish love folksongs.[[42]](#endnote-41) The 1923 edition of Jewish love folksongs (lyrics only, without commentary) includes a sheet music supplement – five arrangements made by Arno Nadel.[[43]](#endnote-42)

In 1917 and 1918, Nadel published in *Der Jude* five arrangements: “El Odaun”, "Jankele mit Riwkele", "Schickt der Harr a Poor", and “Di Jontewdige Täg”, all set for piano with the text attached to the notes, and “Der Marschalik besingt den Bräutigam” for voice and piano.[[44]](#endnote-43) The latter is special among Nadel’s arrangements. It is notated unmeasured and without bar lines. The rather reduced accompaniment nestles into the singing voice.

Some of Nadel’s arrangements of Yiddish folksongs were published also in his *Jontefflieder* (1919) – dedicated "to the artist and *'Menagen'* (musician), the most learned amongst the scholars of synagogal liturgies, my esteemed teacher, Chief Cantor Eduard Birnbaum".[[45]](#endnote-44) One rare work is Nadel's arrangement of "an old Hassidic melody" published In 1917 in *Der Jude* – "*El Odaun*", set for piano, yet the text appears underneath the melody:[[46]](#endnote-45)

**אֵ**ל אָדוֹן עַל כָּל הַמַּעֲשִׂים
**בָּ**רוּךְ וּמְבֹרָךְ בְּפִי כָל הַנְּשָׁמָה
**גָּ**דְלוֹ וְטוּבוֹ מָלֵא עוֹלָם
**דַּ**עַת וּתְבוּנָה סוֹבְבִים הוֹדוֹ

A gentle Lord of all that is
Blessed and loved by each soul alive.
Great and good You fill all space.
Delight there is in knowing You.

This piyyut had presumably been written during the Talmudic era (2nd to 4th century) in Eretz Israel and was among the very first to enter the sacred service. It is included in the Sabbath service as part of the Yotzer Or (I form the light) prayer.

Generally, Nadel’s arrangements follow the methods and style developed by composers of the so-called “New Jewish School of Music”, which began in 1908 with the founding of the Society for Jewish Folk Music in St. Petersburg. The outstanding composers among its first members were Yoel Engel, Joseph Achron, Lazar Saminsky, Moshe Milner, Alexander Krein, Mikhail Gnessin, and Solomon Rosowsky. Based on collecting folksongs and arranging them, the named composers and many others created numerous original, compositionally fully-fledged works, committed to the idea of forming a Jewish national art music style.

Nadel’s arrangements seem to have achieved a rather modest goal. Yet, in their background lies comparable passion, diligence, and artistic will. Despite this, the aesthetic (and therefore the) working conditions of Nadel seem different from those of the Russian-Jewish composers. They discovered and collected most of their folkloristic musical material in their own region and worked it out according to the compositional know how they acquired and to their artistic capacities. It seems though that in the 1920s Nadel had only a limited knowledge of the creative activity of the New Jewish School. In Germany, Nadel participated in a deliberate generalization of the term 'Jewish folk music'.[[47]](#endnote-46) He interpreted the source material he (and others) had collected – melodies of various Jewish traditions, geographically and temporally – and aimed at presenting them “as is”, ostensibly with minor compositional interventions, as if merely to make them match conventions of western art music.[[48]](#endnote-47)

For the synagogue too, Nadel compiled melodies from a similarly diverse repertoire of cantors and traditions, as if they could all be used in practice under a single, all-encompassing notion of synagogal music.

In 1921, Martin Buber's *Der Jude* published under the title "Das Judentum in der abendländischen Musik" – which provocatively echoed Richard Wagner's infamous essay – an article written by (gentile) musicologist Heinrich Berl refering to the question of the originality of Jews in music.[[49]](#endnote-48) Berl’s text brought up a wide range of issues, among them, ethnic typing of music, and Jewish identity in music. He argued against Max Brod's conception of Jewish music.[[50]](#endnote-49)

Arno Nadel had been among those who struck out against Berl's position. In his aforementioned article on Jewish Music published in 1923 in *Der Jude*, he argued that there is no Jewish music beyond the liturgical. Nadel denied the existence of any secular Jewish music:

There is only one piece of Jewish music that we know that is clearly comprehensible: that is synagogue music. […] Both the Jewish folk song and the religious house music is only “Jewish” where it touches on synagogue music, where it laments with melodies for worship and meditates on higher powers. […] There is no such thing as Jewish secular art music at all unless one is allowed to call so a few more or less successful attempts by modern musicians, above all by the group around Engel, who should be taken seriously. The reasons for this fact are obvious. We know of ancient Judaism, a living Jewish religion that leads its own existence and is intertwined with music, but there is no Jewish empire. […] So: Jewish music is primarily synagogue music. The music of our service lives and works as a living force, as a mysterious power that is connected to divine space. […] If you want to deal seriously with the term "Jewish music", there is only one thing to do: examine the real synagogue music, namely the best Nussach, for its essential characteristics.[[51]](#endnote-50)

Nadel's collection at the National Library of Israel includes a typoscript of his article "Die synagogale Musik". It had been published in an anthology entitled *Jüdischer Fest Jüdischer Brauch* (Jewish festival Jewish custom), edited by Friedrich Thieberger.[[52]](#endnote-51) The 12-page supplement to this publication includes sheet music – traditional melodies for the Sabbath (including for prayer and Thora reading) and the Jewish holidays, and the “Chassene-Tanz” arranged by Nadel for piano, which had been published before in his *Jontefflieder*.[[53]](#endnote-52)

The piece Nadel attached to an article he wrote for the *Gemeindeblatt* in 1925, “Altes ‘Bor’chu’ für die drei Wallfahrtsfeste (mit einer Musikbeilage)”, clarifies his approach and methods while creating his compositions. Following the piano score, Nadel provided his own notation of “The Nussach [the exact manner of reading or praying/singing the text, it’s cantillation] as it was handed down to us” (“Die Weise, wie sie uns mitgeteilt ist”).[[54]](#endnote-53) This melody was notated using fermatas and articulating bar lines; without time signature(s) or tempo indication; in D major, ending on the tone E. In contrast, Nadel’s piano score used fermatas, had (sometimes changing) time signatures, and tempo indications (starting rubato, ending andante and grave); beginning with an instrumental prelude, and concluding with an instrumental postlude, in D major. Comparing two melodies yields an understanding of how Nadel balanced adherence to solid principles and the artistic freedom he kept open for himself, first and foremost, concerning development of melodic motifs, harmonization and harmonic progressions. This balance is also maintained in Nadel’s “Orgelvorspiel (oder Zwischenspiel) für die drei Trauerwochen”, which was published some months before in the same magazine as a supplement to an article.[[55]](#endnote-54) A meticulous and thorough analysis of a similar, yet more elaborate case – the organ *Passacaglia über "We'Adonay pakad et ssarah"* for organ – is presented by Tina Frühauf.[[56]](#endnote-55)

# Afterword

Nadel’s endeavors in the field of synagogue music seem as ambitious and comprehensive as those in the field of Jewish folksongs. Nadel’s lifework demonstrates his commitment to his subject matter, in an extremely animated intellectual sphere and partly during turbulent times. He contributed to Jewish music in various ways and from different perspectives, transforming findings and thoughts into vivid spiritual and practical deeds.

Recordings of Nadel’s music do not abound. Recently (2021) the publishing house of the Potsdam University released a CD entitled "Schire Simroh".[[57]](#endnote-56) It features, among others, five pieces for cantor, choir, and organ for the Friday evening service. These pieces were first included in an anthology entitled *Schire Simroh: Synagogal compositions by contemporary authors from the competition of the General Cantor Association*, published in Frankfurt in 1926 by J. Kaufmann Verlag. The pieces were reprinted in 1968 in the *Journal of Synagogue Music* in 1968.[[58]](#endnote-57)

Somewhat unexpected among Nadel's writings is his essay "Arnold Schönberg: Wesenhafte Richtlinien in der neuen Musik" ("Arnold Schoenberg – Essential guidelines in new music"), published as early as June 1912 in *Die Musik*. Specifically referring to the fourth of the Orchestral Songs, op. 8 ("Nie ward ich, Herrin, müd"; lyrics by Petrarca); the second of the Three Piano Pieces, op. 11; and the second String Quartet, op. 10, Nadel wrote enthusiastically about Schönberg's urge: "The desperation and impotence of an entire epoch are at work in his blood." He stated: "I want no new Liszt; I want no new Wagner […]; I also want no new Beethoven, and no new Bach. Both are still alive. I want a new new one.”[[59]](#endnote-58)

Another rather special item in Nadel's collection that deserves close scrutiny is the private printing "Hymne auf Beethoven" with text by Hans Steiner.[[60]](#endnote-59) It had been prepared for Beethoven's 150th anniversary on December 17, 1920. Three years later, Nadel provided etchings for the poem "Eroica" by Justus Lichten.[[61]](#endnote-60) These should be reflected in the context of the evolving reception of Beethoven's music and personality since the second half of the 19th century (in fact, since Wagner's input), and the values attributed to it.

Given the versatility, proliferation, and influence of Nadel’s work even if one looks only into the musical parts of it, it becomes obvious how much search and study are still needed to cope with the many aspects of this vast material and significant subject matter, for all its implications and consequences. It seems, that special attention should be devoted to Nadel’s motivations, and a close look is required to discover and understand the complicated cross connections between Nadel’s ideas, impulses, initiatives, and those of other intellectuals and musicians active during his time and in his milieu. It is high time that Nadel's arrangements and compositions be performed and recorded.

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1. yshaked@univ.haifa.ac.il [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Notes

 Christine Zahn, "'Wer den Maler Arno Nadel noch nicht kennt, weiß von dem Dichter und findet in ihm den Musiker wieder'", in *Juden in Kreuzberg*: *Fundstücke, Fragmente, Erinnerungen*, ed. Andreas Ludwig (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1991), 299-304.
“Wer den Maler Arno Nadel noch nicht kennt, weiß von dem Dichter und findet in ihm den Musiker wieder.” (Ibid., 299)
All translations from German are my own. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
3. Citated from Andreas Kilcher, "Nadel, Arno," in *Metzler Lexikon der Deutsch-jüdischen Literatur*, ed. Andreas B. Kilcher, 2nd ed., (Stuttgart und Weimar: Metzler, 2012), 384.

“Am 3. Oktober tritt Nadel – auf seltene Art dreifach künstlerisch begnadet: als Maler, Dichter und Musiker – in die Reihe der 50jährigen […]. Nadel, der Jude, [kennt] den Weg zu einem Gott, der gegenständlich über aller Welt da ist, wie alle Welt gegenständlich in ihm. Nicht im Göttlichen versinken, sondern Gottes durch die dünne Wand des Lebens hindurch innewerden, also Gott nahe sein, verkündet die in Nadel erneuerte Mystik des Judentums.” [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
4. Magnus Davidsohn served as Chief Cantor at the Fasanenstrasse Synagogue, Berlin-Charlottenburg in the years 1912-1938. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
5. Felix Stössinger, “Der Dichter Arno Nadel,” *Israelitisches Wochenblatt* 46, no. 32 (August 9, 1946): 21. “Magnus Davidsohn hat in seinem Nachruf auf Arno Nadel […] des jüdischen Musikers nachgedacht. Nadel war aber vor allem auch Dichter, und er wäre noch ganz anders bekannt geworden, wäre er nicht ein großer Schweiger gewesen, der seine Bücher selbst von seinen Freunden geheim hielt und den die merkwürdigsten Lebensumstände anonym gemacht haben. […] Vielleicht ist Nadels Oeuvre nur noch in wenigen Exemplaren seiner verstreuten Bücher erhalten. Nach 30 Jahren einer Freundschaft, die über alle Worte geht, möchte ich die Trümmer des Werkes sammeln und versuchen, sie neu zusammenzufügen. Daher bitte ich alle, die etwas von Nadel besitzen oder wissen, um ein Wort.” [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
6. The biographical information throughout this article is based principally on Jascha Nemtsov’s thorough and detailed chapter entitled “‘Kunst gehört zum höheren Leben’: Arno Nadel’” (pp. 37-125), in Jascha Nemtsov, *Deutsch-jüdische Identität und Überlebenskampf: Jüdische Komponisten im Berlin der NS-Zeit* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010). See also Friedhelm Kemp’s “Nachwort” in Arno Nadel, *Der weissagende Dionysos* (Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1959): 685-687;
and on the following encyclopedia and lexicon entries:
Alfred Einstein, “Nadel, Arno,” in *Jüdisches Lexikon: Ein enzyklopädisches Handbuch des jüdischen Wissens in vier Bänden*, ed., Georg Herlitz and Bruno Kirschner, vol. 4/1 (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1927), 377-378;
Sol Liptzin and Bathja Bayer, “Nadel, Arno,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica,* ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, 2nd ed., vol. 14 (Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), 723, https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.haifa.ac.il/apps/doc/CX2587514446/GVRL?u=haifa&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=f22ec6c6;
Thomas Schipperges, “Arno Nadel,” in *Lexikon verfolgter Musiker und Musikerinnen der NS-Zeit*, ed. Claudia Maurer Zenck, Peter Petersen, (Hamburg: Universität Hamburg, 2008), https://www.lexm.uni-hamburg.de/object/lexm\_lexmperson\_00002835. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
7. In a commentary on his arrangement of “El Adon”, an “old Hasidic melody”, which was published in *Der Jude* Arno Nadel wrote: “I heard this authentic Jewish melody when I was young from my father, who was himself a Misnaged but, by lucky coincidence, socialized a lot with Hasidim.” Arno Nadel, “El Odaun,” *Der Jude* 2, no. 3 (1917): 197. “Diese urechte jüdische Melodie habe ich in meiner Jugend von meinem Vater gehört, der zwar selbst ein Misnagid war, aber durch glücklichen Zufall viel mit Chassidim verkehrte.” [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
8. Arno Nadel, “Mein Weg zur jüdischen Musik,” *Jüdische Rundschau* 35, no. 30 (April 16, 1930): 215. “Wilna. Das war kein Weg mehr. Das war Geburt und Dauer und Tod – das war eine bleibende Stätte vom ersten Atemzug an. Ein einziges Wort, fast kann man sagen: ein einziges Wort sagt es: – Wilna. Ich bin in Wilna 1878 geboren. Dieses Wilna kennen nur noch wenige. Das war eine heilige Judenstadt mit hunderten von 'Schulen', von Schulen im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes. Jede Handwerksgilde hatte ihre eigene Synagoge, und in der 'Keemenkehrers-Schul' (Schornsteinfeger-Synagoge) und in der 'Kazzewer-Klois' (Schlächtermeister-Synagoge) – von den unzähligen Synagogen im 'Schulhof' mitten im Zentrum der Stadt ganz zu schweigen […] in allen Synagogen wurde 'gelernt', das bedeutet: singend, klagend, disputierend, zankend, aber immer singend, alt-jüdisch, alt-orientalisch singend, studiert, gebetet, gepredigt, geredet, ‒ und wieder wahrhaft gesungen und gesungen und gesungen, jüdisch, süß jüdisch gesungen. Mein schönes Volk, was hast Du nicht in der Welt um Tod und Leben und Gott zusammengesungen! Das war Wilna, meine Geburtsstadt.” [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
9. Ibid.

“Was hätte ich nicht noch von Vetter Schaul, dem Chassid mit dem langen Bart zu erzählen, der mich, das misnagdische Kind, in die chassidische Stibel mitnahm, wo der heilige Odem der religiösen Tänzer wehte, der Verzückung, der Dweikelachs, des himmlischen Stöhnens, der Derwischreigen, der erhabenen, frommen wortlosen und wortreichen Melodien.” [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
10. ###  See Hakohen, Eliyahu, [“Because his Books are the very first fruits in Hebrew Literature: On the Musician Zvi Nissan Golomb,”] *Oneg Shabbat*, last modified July 31, 2015, https://onegshabbat.blogspot.com/2015/07/blog-post\_31.html. [Hebrew]

 [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
11. This publication of Golomb was written in Hebrew. Nadel, *Jüdische Rundschau*, 215 mentions specifically “W’hawinu l’schalaum” of chasan Joel-David Lewenstein Straschunsky (1816-1850), the legendary so-called “Vilna Balebessel”. An arrangement of this melody for piano, made by Nadel, was published in February 1905 in *Ost und West* – see Arno Nadel, “Berühmte Melodie (Wahawienu l’scholaum) des Wilnaer Balebessel,” *Ost und West* 15, no. 2 (February 1905): 103-106. Notice the different spellings of the title. For the time being, it cannot be excluded that the arrangement published in 1905 is a republication of the one made in Vilna for Golomb by 13-year old Nadel. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
12. Erich Mendel, “Der Musiker” [under “Arno Nadel 60 Jahre”], *Jüdische Rundschau* 43, no. 78 (September 30, 1938): 3 reads: “As early as 1902, Arno Nadel published his first arrangements of Yiddish folk songs with piano arrangements in an appendix to the ‘Jewish Almanac’.” “Schon 1902 veröffentlicht Arno Nadel seine ersten Bearbeitungen jiddischer Volkslieder mit Klavierbearbeitung in einem Anhang zum “Jüdischen Almanach”.” [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
13. This has also been the case within his family cycle. See the 2017 *Neue Züricher Zeitung* article on artist Samuel Bak, born in Vilna in 1933 (Judith Leister, “Die langsame Heimkehr,” *Neue Züricher Zeitung*, December 2, 2017, <https://www.nzz.ch/gesellschaft/die-langsame-heimkehr-ld.1334282>). Samuel Bak was his parents' only child, a sheltered and talented boy from a Jewish family in Vilna. At the end of the 1930s, when Samuel was in kindergarten, his mother sent some of his drawings to an uncle in Berlin [i.e., Samuel Bak’s great uncle – YS]. Uncle Arno, actually Arno Nadel, was a well-known musicologist, poet and painter. He replied immediately, enthusiastically: “You must not torture this child with anything other than art, art and art.” “Art, art and art” became fate for little Samuel. “Uncle Arno was held in high regard by us,” says Samuel Bak, now 84 years old. “His words about me were like God’s words to Moses. I grew up as an artist because Uncle Arno said so.”

“Samuel Bak war das einzige Kind seiner Eltern, ein behüteter und begabter Knabe aus einer jüdischen Wilnaer Familie. Ende der 1930er Jahre, da war Samuel im Kindergartenalter, schickte seine Mutter einige seiner Zeichnungen an einen Onkel in Berlin. Onkel Arno, eigentlich Arno Nadel, war ein bekannter Musikwissenschafter, Dichter und Maler. Er antwortete umgehend, enthusiastisch: ‚Ihr dürft dieses Kind mit nichts anderem quälen als mit Kunst, Kunst und Kunst.‘ ‚Kunst, Kunst und Kunst‘ wurde zum Fatum für den kleinen Samuel. “Onkel Arno besass bei uns hohes Ansehen”, sagt der heute 84-jährige Samuel Bak. ‚Seine Worte über mich waren wie Gottes Worte zu Moses. Ich wuchs als Künstler auf, weil Onkel Arno das sagte.”

See further a conversation with Samuel Bak, recorded by the Florida Holocaust Musum, Bak, Samuel. Conversation with Bernie Pucker. February 1, 2022. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YafQvCoT8Cc (at 32:20-34:45 minutes). [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
14. In Arno Nadel’s recently digitized collection at the National Library of Israel, there is a 2-page manuscript (NLI 3717275-10\_0006 & 0007) of the New Year and Yom Kippur prayer “Hineni [he’ani mima’ass]”, a recitative composed by Chief Cantor Samuel Guttmann (1879, Königsberg – 1943, Theresienstadt), dedicated to Arno Nadel on his 63rd anniversary (October 3, 1941). [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
15. Letter from Arno Nadel to Martin Buber, dated February 10, 1922, The National Library of Israel, Arc. Ms. Var. 350, 537: 72. For some years, Nadel was friends with Buber, shared with him his interest in Hasidism, and had various discussions with him. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
16. *Gesänge für den jüdischen Gottesdienst von Arno Nadel. Zugleich eine systematische Auswahl bedeutender Synagogenkomponisten*. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
17. Citated from Magnus Davidsohn, “Synagogenmusiker der Neuzeit,” in *Israelitisches Familienblatt* 30, no. 22 (May 31, 1928): 15.

“Dem Autor schwebte ein völlig neuer hebräischer Gottesdienst großen Stiles vor. Dieser Stil sollte sich vorerst in der dramatisch akzentuierten Wiedergabe des Gesagten, Gesungenen ausdrücken. Wenngleich das 'Perusch hamillus' [d.h. eine dem Wort verpflichtete Schriftauslegung] bei den großen Kantoren- und Synagogenkomponisten aller Zeiten viel gegolten hat, so ist das Ergebnis doch noch ein völlig anderes und neues, wenn man dies, wie es im vorliegenden Werke geschieht, zum bewussten Kunstprinzip erhebt."

Renewal of the Jewish service was in 1922 already a subject matter in discussion. See, for instance, Bogumil Zepler, “Gedanken zu einer Neugestaltung der musikalischen Liturgie,“ *Ost und West* 17, no. 10 (October 1917): 485-488. Further, see Arno Nadel, „Die Renaissance der synagogalen Musik,” *Jüdische Rundschau* 33, no. 76-77 (September 28, 1928): 545. This text is was published together with two other texts – by Felix Saul (“on choir and organ in the future sacred service”) and by Alice Jakob-Lewenson, (“on old and new liturgical music”), under the title “Probleme der Synagogen-Musik” (Problems of synagogue music). [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
18. Nemtsov, *Deutsch-jüdische Identität und Überlebenskampf: Jüdische Komponisten im Berlin der NS-Zeit*: 72-74 gives a detailed account on the progress of Nadel’s work. Volume 1 is 1927-1932, four more volumes, 1932, completion of the two remaining volumes 1938; informs about the contents of the 692-page strong second volume (Sabbath morning sacred service); and tells the fate of the manuscripts. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
19. Oskar Guttmann, “Die Musik zu Stefan Zweigs ‚Jeremias‘,” *Jüdische Rundschau* 31, no. 84 (October 26, 1934): 13. “Arno Nadel […] wendet oft exotische und archaische Elemente als Kolorit an, und seine künstlerische Grundhaltung kommt viel stärker aus dem jüdischen Bezirk als die des Dichters […]. Nadel hat sozusagen mit der Musik das zu gestalten versucht, was man bei Zweig vermisst: das fremdartig Ungewohnte und uns doch vertraut Berührende, etwas von dem Geist, der uns wegführt von einer eben vergangenen Periode artistischer Wortfolgen. Abgesehen vom Anfang, wo Nadel das alte Akzentmelos der Klagelieder verwendet, sind die musikalischen Beigaben frei erfunden.” [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
20. Akademie der Künste Berlin, ed., *Geschlossene Vorstellung: Der Jüdische Kulturbund in Deutschland 1933–1941* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1992), 141 & 144. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
21. Kurt Singer, Chairperson of the Jewish Culture League, opened the conference. The other speakers were Hans Nathan (on Jewish orchestral and chamber music), Karl Adler (on Jewish choral music), and Anneliese Landau (on Jewish art song). See Akademie der Künste Berlin, ed. “Kulturtagung des Reichsverbandes der Jüdischen Kulturbünde in Deutschland, 5.-7. September 1936,” in *Geschlossene Vorstellung: Der Jüdische Kulturbund in Deutschland 1933–1941* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1992), 284-297. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
22. Arno Nadel, “Jüdische liturgische Musik und jüdisches Volkslied,” in *Geschlossene Vorstellung*, 285. “Das jüdische Volkslied dort am echtesten ist, wo es seine Impulse aus der synagogalen Musik schöpft.” [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
23. Akademie der Künste Berlin, ed. *Geschlossene Vorstellung*, 284-285.
The mentioned former text: Arno Nadel, “Jüdische Musik,” *Der Jude* 7, no. 4 (1923): 227-236. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
24. Horst J. P. Bergmeier et al., eds. *Vorbei…/Beyond Recall: Dokumentation jüdischen Musiklebens in Berlin, 1933-1938* (Holste: Bear Family Records, 2001), 217. Two versions of the song, both sung in Aramaic (Hamburg and Vilna traditions) from the collection of Leo Winz, were arranged by Nadel for piano and published in *Ost und West* – see Arno Nadel, “Zwei Chad-Gadjo’s,” *Ost und West* 4, no. 2 (April 1912): 377-380. Nadel’s arrangement of the song included in the 1927 edition of the *Jüdisches Lexikon* differs slightly from the Hamburg one – Arno Nadel, “Chad Gadjo,” in *Jüdisches Lexikon: Ein enzyklopädisches Handbuch des jüdischen Wissens in vier Bänden*, ed. Georg Herlitz and Ismar Elbogen, vol. 1 (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1930), [1296a]. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
25. Horst J. P. Bergmeier et al., eds. *Vorbei…/Beyond Recall*, 136-137 & 388-389. Nadel’s piano score (about three and a half minutes long), orchestrated by Sigmund – later: Shabtai – Petruschka was interpreted by the Kulturbund Orchestra with the mentioned solo violinist, conducted by Joseph Rosenstock. The soundtrack of the entire film is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqk-OQ\_hIq4&list=OLAK5uy\_l532\_oDnApcoRo3SgoAN4N-nW3YxqqdhY&index=14 (accessed on September 18, 2023). [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
26. Horst J. P. Bergmeier et al., eds. *Vorbei…/Beyond Recall*, 288. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
27. Ibid., 284. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
28. Theo Stengel and Herbert Gerigk, “Nadel, Arno”, in *Lexikon der Juden in der Musik* (Berlin: Bernhard Hahnefeld Verlag, 1940), 201. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
29. The National Library of Israel, Arno Nadel Archive, NLI 493334 [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
30. Similarly, there are notes focusing on literature, painting, philosophy, and theology. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
31. For example, The National Library of Israel, Arno Nadel Archive, NLI 493334:

June 1, 1942:
I'm going to Frohne. Singing the bell chorale [from *Prélude, choral et fugue*, M. 21 (1884)] by César Franck sadly, almost violently, in front of me, I walk along B.'s [Ferruccio Busoni's] house, the last apartment of the person who performed this miraculous work most beautifully. I think “I want to hear this music in death, just this one. Not a God-screaming Bach or a spirit-talking Beethoven, no, this one, which plays as if by itself, as naturally as the French soul.” (p. 1)

“Ich gehe zur Frohne. Den Glockenchoral [aus *Prélude, choral et fugue*, M. 21 (1884)] von César Franck traurig vor mir hersingend, gewaltsam fast, gehe ich am Hause B.‘s [Ferruccio Busonis] vorbei, an der letzten Wohnung dessen, der dieses Wunderwerk am schönsten spielte. Ich denke: diese Musik möchte ich im Tode hören, gerade diese. Nicht eine gottschreiende Bach’s oder eine geistredende Beethoven’s, nein diese, die sich wie von selbst spielt, so selbstverständlich wie die französische Seele.”

June 5, 1942:
Spring is Mozart, autumn is Beethoven. (p. 4)

“Der Frühling ist Mozart, der Herbst ist Beethoven.”

June 21, 1942:
By the way, I spent the whole day wonderfully working on the “Yom Kippur” symphony commissioned by Altmann in my head. Oh, if I could only have held on to that. (p. 27)

“Übrigens an der von Altmann beauftragten Symphonie ‚Jom Kippur‘ im Kopf die ganzen Tage herrlich erarbeitet. O, wenn ich das hätte festhalten können.”

June 26, 1942:
The glasses that Schubert put on his nose when he sank dead tired into his miserable bed at night so that he could pick up his pen more quickly in the morning. That's how I feel too. And I'm a slave to the G-U. (p. 31)

“Die Brille, die Brille, die Schubert sich auf die Nase gesetzt, wenn er nachts todmüde aufs elende Lager sank, damit er am Morgen rascher zur Feder greifen könne. So geht es auch mir. Und ich bin ein Sklave der G-U.”

June 27, 1942:
I […] would demand that the Singakademie help Mendelssohn, who helped Bach achieve true meaning and recognition, that they place a bust of this wonderful man on the holy spot where this happened and announce this. […] If such a desire is not German but Jewish, I want to triumphantly come to terms with it. (p. 34)

“Ich […] würde von der Singakademie verlangen, dass sie Mendelssohn, der Bach zur eigentlichen Bedeutung und Anerkennung verhalf, dass man diesem wunderbaren Manne auf der heiligen Stelle wo das geschah eine Büste setze und dies vermelde. […] Wenn so ein Verlangen nicht deutsch, sondern jüdisch ist, will ich triumphieren damit mich abfinden.”

July 18, 1942:
Dreamed: my scalp was the title of a book by a son of Maimonides with a stave and notes on it. The sheet played music, sound, it was a wonderful thing to listen to, to listen as only in a dream. (p. 73)

“Geträumt: meine Kopfhaut sei Titel eines Buches von einem Sohne Maimonides mit Notenlinien und Noten darauf. Das Blatt spielte Musik, Klang, es war ein Wunderbares zu lauschen, zu lauschen wie nur im Traum.”

August 4, 1942:
The Germans gathered in front of the overturned Mendelssohn monument in Leipzig: “We all wish you back.” (Goethe to Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy) (p. 109)

“Die Deutschen vor dem umgeworfenen Mendelssohn-Denkmal in Leipzig versammelt: ‘Wir wünschen Dich allesamt zurück.’ (Goethe an Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy)”

August 6, 1942:
Tonight, my master and teacher Beethoven sent me in a dream one of his most beautiful tunes with text: [notated – the opening theme of the 3rd movement from Beethoven's 5th Symphony] The sun rose, with it: Fate, / Bring your God back to the world / The sun back. / Do you feel the beat? / Guess what it can! / The day is new. / Dare it, oh, dare!
I think I've already told you how, around the age of twenty, I had, in a dream for a long, long time, chamber music lessons from. (p. 113-114)

“Diese Nacht schickte mir mein Meister und Lehrer Beethoven im Traume eine seiner schönsten Weisen mit Text: [Noten – Das eröffnende Thema des 3. Satzes aus Beethoven’s 5. Symphonie] Die Sonne ging auf, mit ihr: Geschick, / Bringst deinen Gott der Welt zurück / Die Sonne zurück. / Fühlst du den Schlag? / Ahnst, was er mag! / Neu ist der Tag. / Zag’s! Trag’s! Wag es o, wag!
Ich glaube, ich habe es schon erzählt, wie ich um mein zwanzigstes Lebensjahr lange, lange im Traum bei Beethoven in Kammermusik Unterricht hatte.”

August 8.1942:
Yesterday [...] in a few minutes I composed a “theme”, a larger one, for variations. (p. 127)

“Gestern […] in wenigen Minuten komponierte ich ein ‘Thema’, ein größeres, für Variationen.”

August 10, 1942:
I lay in bed from 3-6, half awake, half asleep, composing on the “theme”. What remains in the middle of it is only a minor symbol. (p. 128)

“Ich lag von 3-6, halb wachend, halb schlummernd im Bett und komponierte am ‘Thema’. Was in der Mitte davon geblieben ist, ist nur ein geringes Symbol.”

August 11, 1942:
I long for piano playing in the highest sense and would also like to combine creating and playing: Chopin. (p. 132)

“Ich sehne mich nach Klavierspiel im höchsten Sinne und möchte auch hier Schaffen und Spielen vereinen: Chopin.” [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
32. The National Library of Israel, Arno Nadel Archive, NLI 493334, pp. 42, 44, 45, 48, 53, 55, 70, 95, 104, 105, 111, 114, 118, 126, 128, 130, 136, 150, 157. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
33. Arno Nadel. “Volkslieder, Jüdische,” in *Jüdisches Lexikon: Ein enzyklopädisches Handbuch des jüdischen Wissens in vier Bänden*, ed. Georg Herlitz and Ismar Elbogen, vol. 4/2 (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1930), [1240a-e]. The entry includes five (unnumbered) pages presenting four arrangements by Nadel of the following songs: “Fregt die welt an alte kashe”, Mark Warschawski’s “Dem milners trern”, “Jossl mit dem fidl”, “Tîf in weldale”. The same volume of the Lexicon includes also Nadel’s arrangement of “Kinder, mir huben simches toire” (ibid., [416a].
Vol. 1, [1296a] of the Lexicon includes an arrangement by Nadel of “Chad Gadjo” (s. note no. 23), identified as a south-German Weise (“süddeutsche Weise”).
Vol. 3, [1372a] of the Lexicon includes an arrangement by Nadel of “Moaus Zur Jeschuossi”.
Vol 4/1 [1492a] includes “Das große Borchu”, an original composition of Nadel for voice (cantor) and piano, linked to the entry on Rosch Hashana (New Year). The melodic style and pronunciation are typical to the Eastern European Jewish tradition. Philip V. Bohlman sees this work as part of the then current strive for Jewish music per se, i.e. for a form of Jewish musical identity, and in relation to the resistance embodied by Jewish music in Germany in the years 1933-1940 – Philip V. Bohlman, "Musik als Widerstand: Jüdische Musik in Deutschland 1933-1940”, in *Jahrbuch für Volksliedforschung* 40 (1995): 49-74. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
34. As mentioned by Nadel in his talk on September 6, 1936, in the framework of the Culture Conference of the Reich Association of Jewish Culture Leagues in Germany – Arno Nadel, “Jüdische liturgische Musik und jüdisches Volkslied,” in *Geschlossene Vorstellung*, 285. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
35. Arno Nadel, “Der Oriman,” *Ost und West* 17, no. 10 (October 1917): 517-520. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
36. Arno Nadel, “Benê Hecholo,” *Ost und West* 16, no.1 (January 1916): 69-72. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
37. Arno Nadel, “Die maskierte Welt,” *Ost und West* 14, no. 4 (April 1914): 301. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
38. Arno Nadel, “Rachelina,” *Ost und West* 14, no. 8 (August 1914): 559. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
39. Arno Nadel, “Po beeretz,” *Ost und West* 15, no. 1 (January 1915): 65
The Hebrew lyrics “Po be’eretz chemdat avot” were written by Israel Dushman. In 1912 in Tel Aviv, composer Hanina Karchevsky chose the melody, written some years earlier by Hermann Ehrlich (probably in Lvov) to the Yiddish lyrics “Goluss Marsh” (“The Exile March”) written by Morris Rosenfeld. In its Hebrew version, the song became very popular in Eretz Israel – see https://www.zemereshet.co.il/m/song.asp?id=150 (accessed on September 18, 2023). [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
40. Arno Nadel, “Israels Klagelied,” *Ost und West* 11, no. 10 (August 1911): 903-906. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
41. Arno Nadel, “Jüdische Volkslieder: Religiöse Lieder,” *Der Jude* 1, no. 2 (May 1916): 112-122; no. 3 (June 1916): 182-194; no. 4 (July 1916): 255-267; no. 5 (August 1916): 326-39; no. 7 (October 1916): 465-479. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
42. Arno Nadel, “Jüdische Volkslieder: Liebeslieder,” *Der Jude* 1, no. 9 (December 1916): 623-630; no. 10 (January 1917): 691-700; no. 11 (February 1917): 759-771; no. 12 (March 1917): 834-846. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
43. Arno Nadel, *Jüdische Liebeslieder (Volkslieder)* (Berlin, Wien: Verlag Benjamin Harz, 1923), 107-120. The presented songs are “A Meed’l in di Johren”, “Joime, Joime”, “Geh ich mir spazieren”, “Amol is gewen a Majsse,” and “Her nor du scheen Meedele”. A performance of these songs is accessible on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cHUFvFZQlDw (accessed on September 17, 2023). [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
44. Arno Nadel, “El Odaun”, *Der Jude* 2, no. 3 (June 1917): 196-197;
Arno Nadel, “Jankele mit Riwkele”, *Der Jude* 2, no. 4 (July 1917): 265-266;
Arno Nadel, “Di Jontewdige Täg”, *Der Jude* 3, no. 3 (July 1918): 139-141
Arno Nadel, “Schickt der Harr a poor”, *Der Jude* 2, no. 5-6 (September 1917): 413;
Arno Nadel, “Der Marschalik besingt den Bräutigam,” *Der Jude* 2, no. 8 (November 1917): 567-571. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
45. Arno Nadel, *Jontefflieder* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1919). “Dem Künstler und M’nagen, dem Gelehrter aller Gelehrten auf dem Gebiet synagogalen Liturgik, meinem hochverehrten Lehrer, Herrn Oberkantor Eduard Birnbaum“ [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
46. Arno Nadel, “El Odaun,” *Der Jude* 2, no. 3 (June 1917): 196-197. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
47. See Philip V. Bohlman, “Folk Music in the Urban German-Jewish Community, 1890-1939,” *Musica Judaica* 9, no. 1 (1986-87): 22-34. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
48. For a directly relevant discussion of this subject matter held at the time, see Heinrich Berl, “Bearbeitungen jüdischer Melodien,” *Der Jude* 8, no. 10 (October 1924): 618-624. Right at the beginning of the text Berl poses the question: “Should Jewish melodies be arranged for performance by using harmonic means?” (“Sollen jüdische Melodien zum Vortrag mit harmonischen Mitteln bearbeitet werden?”) [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
49. Heinrich Berl, “Das Judentum in der abendländischen Musik’” *Der Jude* 6, no. 8 (1921-1922): 495-505. The essay was published as a book in 1926: Heinrich Berl, *Das Judentum in der Musik* (Stuttgart, Berlin und Leipzig: Deutsche Veralgs-Anstalt, 1926). Notice the title change. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
50. Max Brod’s mention of Nadel’s “subtle article” (“feinfühlige[r] Aufsatz”) – Max Brod, “Jüdische Volksmelodien,” *Der Jude* 1, no. 5 (August 1916): 344-345 – referred, apparently, to the first part of Nadel’s “Religious Songs” series – Arno Nadel, “Jüdische Volkslieder: Religiöse Lieder,” *Der Jude* 1, no. 2 (May 1916): 112-122. In his text, Brod commented specifically on Nadel’s assertion at the very end of this part: “If folk songs are primarily songs and not poems, the Jewish ones are songs in a very special way. They give the text the touch of specifically Jewish essence.” (Ibid., 122). “Wenn Volkslieder vor allem Lieder und nicht Gedichte sind, so sind es die jüdischen auf eine noch ganz besondere Art. Sie erst verleihen dem Text den Hauch des spezifisch jüdischen Wesens.”

This assertion of Nadel and Brod’s experience of Eastern European sacred service (“the most sublime thing I have ever been privileged to feel in my life” – Max Brod, “Jüdische Volksmelodien,” *Der Jude* 1, no.5 (August 1916): 344);
“[das] schlechthin Erhabenste[…], was mir je in meinem Leben zu fühlen vergönnt war” triggered Brod to reflect on Gustav Mahler’s melodies: “Mahler simply had to make music in this way and not in a different way from the same unconscious reason of his Jewish soul from which the most beautiful Hasidic songs, which he probably never knew, arose.” (Ibid., 344) “Mahler [musste] ganz einfach aus demselben unbewußten Urgrund seiner jüdischen Seele so und nicht anders musizieren, aus dem die schönsten chassidischen Lieder, die er wohl niemals gekannt hat, entsproßen sind.”

Brod’s text was reprinted, see Max Brod, “Gustav Mahlers Jüdische Melodien,” *Abbruch* 2, no. 10 (May 1920): 378-379. For more contemporaneous background, see also Ludwig Landau, “Das jüdische Element bei Gustav Mahler,” *Der Morgen* 12, no. 2 (May 1936): 67-73. For a recent perspective on the standpoints and disputes at the time, see Karen Painter, “Polyphony and Racial Identity: Schoenberg, Heinrich Berl, and Richard Eichenauer,” *Music & Politics* 5, no. 2 (Summer 2011): 1-15. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
51. Arno Nadel, “Jüdische Musik,” *Der Jude* 7, no. 4 (1923): 227-236. “Es gibt nur eine einzige jüdische Musik, die wir kennen und die klar faßbar ist: das ist die synagogale Musik. […] Sowohl das jüdische Volkslied wie auch die religiöse Hausmusik ist nur dort ‚jüdisch‘, wo sie mit synagogaler Musik sich berührt, wo sie mit gottesdienstlichen Melodien klagt und sinnt sich an höhere Mächte wendet. […] Eine jüdische weltliche Kunstmusik vollends gibt es überhaupt nicht, wenn man nicht einige weniger oder mehr gelungene Versuche moderner Musiker, vor allem der ernst zu nehmenden Petersburger Gruppe um Engel, so nennen darf. Die Gründe für diese Tatsache sind naheliegend. Wir kennen ein altes Judentum, eine lebendige jüdische Religion, die ihr Eigendasein führt und mit Musik verquickt ist, aber es existiert kein jüdisches Reich. […] Also: jüdische Musik, das ist vorerst synagogale Musik. Die Musik unseres Gottesdienstes lebt und wirkt als lebendige Kraft, als geheimnisvolle Macht, die mit göttlichem Raum in Verbindung steht. […] Will man sich ernst mit dem Begriff ‚jüdische Musik‘ beschäftigen, so gibt es nur eines: man untersuche die echte synagogale Musik, nämlich den besten Nussach, auf seine wesenhaften Merkmale.” A response appeared in the next issue of the same magazine –Adolf Schreiber, “Zum Problem einer jüdischen Musik,” *Der Jude* 7, no. 5 (1923): 309-320. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
52. The National Library of Israel, Arno Nadel Archive, NLI 3717250. In the published edition the pages bear the numbers 46-51. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
53. Arno Nadel, *Jontefflieder* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1919). [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
54. Arno Nadel, “Altes ‘Bor’chu’ für die drei Wallfahrtsfeste (mit einer Musikbeilage)”, *Gemeindeblatt der jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 15, no. 5 (May 27, 1925): 99-103. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
55. Arno Nadel, “Orgelvorspiel (oder Zwischenspiel) für die drei Trauerwochen,” [Musikbeilage zum Artikel “Melodien um Tischa b’aw,” pp. 139-145], *Gemeindeblatt der Jüdischen Gemeinde zu Berlin* 14, no. 9 (August 1924): 141-144. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
56. The story about Itzhak's birth is read on the first day of the New Year.
Tina Frühauf, *The Organ and Its Music in German-Jewish Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009: 154-162.
Sheet music: Arno Nadel, “Passacaglia über ‘Wadonaj pakad ess ssarah’,” in *German-Jewish Organ Music: An Anthology of Works from the 1820s to the 1960s*, ed. Tina Frühauf (Middelton, Wisconsin: A-R Editions, 2013), 62-67. A recording of the piece is available on a CD produced in 2019: Arno Nadel, “Passacaglia über “Wadonaj pakad ess ssarah,” in *Organ music for the synagogue: Repertoire of Jewish themes by composers of the 19th and 20th centuries* [CD] (Georgmarienhütte: cpo, 2019), track 18. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
57. Arno Nadel, *Schire Simroh* [CD] (Potsdam: Universitätsverlag Potsdam, 2021). [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
58. Arno Nadel, “Synagogengesaenge von Arno Nadel,” *Journal of Synagogue Music* 1, no. 4 (September 1968), 53-67. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
59. Arno Nadel, “Arnold Schönberg: Wesenhafte Richtlinien in der neuen Musik,” *Die Musik* 11, no. 43 (June 1912): 353-360. It should though be noticed, that the last mention of Schönberg in the essay appears on page 357, about a “little half” of the article to its end.

“Es treiben in seinem Blute die Verzweiflung und die Ohnmacht einer ganzen Epoche ihr Wesen. […] Ich will keinen neuen Liszt, Ich will keinen neuen Wagner […]; ich will auch keinen neuen Beethoven und keinen neuen Bach, sie sind beide noch urlebendig. Ich will einen neuen Neuen.” [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
60. Arno Nadel, *Hymne auf Beethoven: zum 17. Dezember 1920* [Privatdruck] (The National Library of Israel, Arno Nadel Archive, NLI 3717290). [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
61. Justus Lichten, *Eroica – Gedicht […]: mit einer Radierung von Arno Nadel* (Berlin: Drei-Welten-Verlag, 1923) *–* The National Library of Israel, Arno Nadel Archive, NLI 3717291. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)