

Historic Records as Historical Records: Hersh Gross and His Boiberiker Kapelye (1927-1932)¹

The Boiberiker Kapelye was a Jewish ensemble – what would today be called a “klezmer” band – active in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Although now mainly cited as an early vehicle for the great clarinetist Dave Tarras, the Boiberiker was much more. Tarras plays no major role on the three 1927 Boiberiker discs, but they are classics of klezmer artistry in their own right. Indeed, the Boiberiker, with its huge repertoire, consummate musicality, creativity, and idealistic musical and cultural goals, was one of the best and most interesting klezmer ensembles ever to record. With deep roots in the conservative Hasidic traditions of Galicia and Ukraine, also at home in more modern styles, the Boiberiker was the first “klezmer band” that owed its fame to the new medium of radio. This article gives a detailed account of the ensemble’s recordings, broadcasting career, and personnel, with special emphasis on long-forgotten founder and leader Hersh Gross. It presents evidence indicating that the Boiberiker made additional recordings under other names.

Research on the history of klezmer music, at least in the English language, was virtually nonexistent until about 25 years ago, and only in the past decade has it really taken off. Although it is now possible to get a basic overview of the subject, vast fields remain to be explored.

Given the paucity of written documentation and even of oral history, the backbone of this new research effort has been discography and recording history. Jazz research is the model that most readily comes to mind. In the current state of knowledge, klezmer researchers can only envy the accomplishments of their counterparts in jazz history, where it is normal to know the personnel, often the circumstances of the recording. Klezmer research is still in its infancy. It will never be as big as jazz research – the total number of records is certainly less than a thousand, and it got off to a very late start – but the example is stimulating. The influence of this music in the larger American culture has also been vastly less than that of jazz (although it certainly was the ancestral origin and training ground for many American musicians), and even within the American Jewish world its non-prestige status has discouraged research.

If we could find one organization that recorded, in which the personnel can be identified, we could then begin to branch our knowledge out from there. A good candidate would be the Boiberiker Kapelye, which also happens to be one of the finest and most interesting ensembles that ever recorded in the Jewish field.

Thanks to the renewed interest in earlier ensembles spurred by the klezmer revival, the Boiberiker Kapelye has become well known in a way, but not a historical

way. Of two known photographs of the band, one has been widely reproduced,² and of the six sides they recorded for Columbia in 1927, all are currently available on CD reissues – though it is necessary to buy three different compilations.³ But the emphasis has been not so much on the band itself as the fact that it was one of the first vehicles for the great klezmer clarinetist Dave Tarras. And even then, no particulars are given, except for one piece of information that researcher Richard Spottswood got from the octogenarian Tarras – his recollection of the band’s personnel.

Very little has been written about the Boiberiker itself, or its leaders Hersh Gross and Berish Katz. Henry Sapoznik, with the assistance of Chava Miller, in the notes to the anthology *Klezmer Music, 1910-1942*, originally issued by Folkways (FSS 34021) in 1981, provided Yiddish text, English translation, and a little commentary on what is heard on the first Boiberiker disc, “Di Boiberiker Chasseneh” (The Wedding in Boiberke). Elsewhere can be found a few brief paragraphs by Sapoznik (1992, 2002)⁴ and a short comment by Prof. Schwartz (c.1985) focusing on Berish Katz.⁵ Finally, Feldman, in passing, briefly discusses the Boiberiker Kapelye (as well as Berish Katz), in a lengthy article about klezmerim in Galicia based on interviews with Jeremiah Hescheles, a Yiddish poet, literary critic, and conservatory-trained violinist from Katz’s hometown of Glina. Unusual circumstances put Hescheles at the head of the Gliner klezmer kapelye for several years in the 1930s. Katz had been a friend of Hescheles’ parents but left for America before Hescheles was born; it was not until after Hescheles got to New York in 1938 that he met Katz. Since the Boiberiker was defunct by then, and since Hescheles did not work as a musician in New York, whatever he knew about the band came most probably through Katz.⁶

The Boiberiker Kapelye on the Radio

The Boiberiker Kapelye was the first “klezmer group” (as it would be called today) that owed its fame primarily to the radio. Seventy-two appearances on six different stations can be documented in the years 1927-1932, and this list is certainly not complete. For many of these broadcasts we even have some documentation of the musical program and/or the rhetorical “frame” within which the band was presented to the listening audience. Occasionally, changes in instrumentation are noted.

The history of the Boiberiker brings us back almost to the birth of Yiddish radio. Although there had been isolated Yiddish broadcasts earlier, the first regularly scheduled Yiddish musical hour was the Libby Hotel Program (May-August 1926) on WFBH, a 500-watt station broadcasting at 1100 kc. Josef Cherniavsky was the musical director and bandleader.

Cherniavsky’s Orientals, formed in 1924 and also known as the Oriental Syncopators, Hasidic-American Jazz Band, and Yiddish-American Jazz Band, was, in the klezmer world, one of the earliest signs of a new interest in the folk-culture of Hasidism, though it still had all the old “anti-hasidic” trappings (see Afterword to this article). It was actually a vaudeville act. The Cherniavskys were a renowned klezmer family from Berdichev, Ukraine – but young Josef, who had emigrated to New York only a few years earlier (1920), was a sophisticated, conservatory-trained musician. Cherniavsky dressed his men in fake beards and Hasidic garb, often using dancers on stage as well. Neither jazz nor true klezmer, his arrangements were modernistic, theatrical treatments of Jewish content.⁷ However, since the band was comprised of some of the best authentic musicians in the Jewish field, they must have played traditional klezmer music when occasion demanded.

The second scheduled Yiddish program, the WMCA Jewish Hour sponsored by the *Tog* (Day) newspaper, ran its pilot season from 21 February through 30 May 1927, Monday evenings, 9:15-10:15, broadcasting at 500 watts on 880 kc from a "circular glass-enclosed studio on the twenty-fourth floor of the [McAlpin] Hotel at Broadway and Thirty-fourth Street"²⁸ (Fig. 1). The earliest documentation of the Boiberiker is connected with a broadcast in this series. Indeed this may well have been what first brought the band together; i.e., it may have been its first performance anywhere. At any rate, there is no question that the Boiberiker Kapelye was intimately linked to radio and was the first klezmer ensemble that owed its fame to the new medium.

The Boiberiker Kapelye made its debut on the third program in this series on Monday evening, 7 March 1927, in the regular slot, 9:15 to 10:15 p.m. There is a peculiarity about the programming. With one additional exception (the following week, 14 March), every other *Tog* program featured a variety of guests, including one or more singers, at least a few of whom were big-name Yiddish entertainers. Contrary to this, the Boiberiker was unknown at the time of its first radio appearance and was the only group on the program. There must have been some reshuffling of schedules shortly before this, because the famous comedienne Molly Picon was supposed to top the bill for

WMCA—9.15 to 10.15 P. M.

Jewish Hour TO-NIGHT

First Jewish hour of
music at which leading
artists of concert and
dramatic stage will par-
ticipate. Under the aus-
pices of

הַדֵּינִי
The Day
THE NATIONAL JEWISH DAILY

183 EAST BROADWAY, N. Y.

Figure 1. Advertisement for first *Tog* program, *New York World*, 21 February 1927, p.6.

the opening program of 21 February but did not appear due to illness. Instead she led the second program along with the famous Cantor Mordechai Hershman. And, whereas all other programs in the series were regularly announced as coming attractions in the previous week's *Tog* in both Yiddish and English, those broadcast on 7 March and 14 March were not.⁹ Indeed the only known announcement of the 7 March program featuring the Boiberiker appeared one day earlier in – of all places – the *New York Times*.

*An authentic Jewish wedding, with all the Talmudical ritual and music that characterized the orthodox marriage ceremony hundreds of years ago, will be revived tomorrow night at 9:15 o'clock during the Jewish hour at WMCA. The entire program will be announced in Yiddish and then explained in English, so that the significance of the music may be understood by all listeners.*¹⁰

An advertisement that also appeared in the *Times* on 7 March gives no particulars.¹¹ All this suggests that the Boiberiker may have been a late choice and possibly even an ad-hoc creation for the 7 March broadcast. It is also interesting that in the *Times* notice, the musicians are identified neither singly or collectively, suggesting the possibility that they had not even chosen a name as yet. That it was indeed the Boiberiker Kapelye is corroborated only in a passing statement from a later description of a *Tog* Concert program in which Berish Katz's 17-year old son performed as pianist in a trio. "Their selections have been arranged by Hirsch Boiberiker [*sic*] and Berish Katz, the well known musician who arranged the broadcasting of the wedding ceremony at a recent DAY concert."¹² The wording, which is paralleled in the Yiddish version, reveals an important detail, namely, that it was Katz, not Gross, who arranged the broadcast.

A final detail is the fact that on its debut, the Boiberiker Kapelye was a much smaller group. We learn from a blurb for their second radio appearance (30 May) that the group "is now much larger."¹³ In fact the orchestration had already been expanded for their first recording in March, as also seen in their publicity photographs (ten men plus leader) and as heard on the recording itself.

Although a number of actual Jewish weddings are known to have been broadcast on radio around this time – one of them again with the Boiberiker in April 1928¹⁴ (see below) – it is not clear whether this one was an actual wedding or just a reenactment with emphasis on the music and explanatory comments in Yiddish and English. In either case, the didactic purpose was characteristic of the *Tog* ideals for the promotion of Yiddish language and culture.

Abe Schwartz and the Recording History of the Boiberiker Kapelye

According to Spottswood,¹⁵ "Di Boiberiker Chasseneh," parts 1 & 2, was recorded in March 1927 – thus within a few weeks after the radio broadcast. The thematic connection with that broadcast is obvious, and yet, the difference in time available made for a big difference in what was done in the two instances. On the radio they had an entire hour to themselves,¹⁶ and there is no indication that program was anything but serious.¹⁷ For their first recording, however, they had six and a half minutes. Thus the pace is so fast that on that basis alone it would have to be framed as a comic version. The rhymes

of the *badkhn* (traditional Jewish wedding jester) became a “black-humor” lampoon of what a *badkhn* typically said. (For analysis of the content of this and the other Boiberiker records, see the Appendix to this article.)

Columbia made its first commercial electrical recordings at the end of February 1925 and began issuing them in May. They bore black labels with gold lettering with the terms “Viva-tonal” and “Electrical Process”. Thus by the time the “Boiberiker Chasseneh” was released (second half of May 1927, when it was listed in a Columbia advertisement: see Fig. 6),¹⁸ Columbia had over two years of experience with electrical recordings. The sound quality of the Boiberiker records is excellent, especially when heard on restorations made from the original matrices on the CD *Abe Schwartz the Klezmer King* (see Discography).

Feldman says that “Katz collaborated with the violinist Abe Schwartz in founding the Boyberiker (*sic*) Kapelye” (p.53), and that “the personnel was mixed – Schwartz was a Romanian and Tarras Ukrainian”. (p.54). Schwartz was indeed from Romania, but he was not a member of the Boiberiker, and contemporary sources are unanimous in identifying Gross and Katz as the founders. Presumably Feldman’s source for the idea that Schwartz participated in the founding was Jeremiah Hescheles, and thus ultimately Katz himself.

In fact, as an independent contractor for Columbia’s East European (and possibly other ethnic) records, Schwartz did play a key role in recording the Boiberiker, and since the group’s first record was made very soon after their WMCA broadcast, and with an expanded ensemble, it is possible that Schwartz had something to do with the expansion. After all, it was Schwartz’s job to put bands together, and evidence shows that at that moment he needed a ten-man band. On the other hand, Gross and Katz helped Schwartz, as will be seen in what follows. “Collaboration” thus seems an appropriate word: Gross and Katz supplied the nucleus of the band and the prestige to attract excellent musicians; Schwartz supplied the recording date.

The label of their first disc, “Di Boiberiker Chasseneh,” actually credits the authors as “H. Gross and A. Schwartz,” and the copyright of the lyrics (i.e., the sung rhymes of the “*badkhn*” on the recording) was assigned to Abe Schwartz. Yet it should not be assumed that Schwartz really wrote the text.¹⁹ The piece is, after all, “The Boiberiker Wedding.” Hersh Gross was the eldest son of a klezmer family that played weddings in and around the Galician shtetl Boiberke. He was also an excellent writer and orator.²⁰ It makes no sense that he would hire Schwartz, who was from Romania, to write the text for him. Schwartz did write songs, but it is worth noting in this context that the authorship of his biggest success, “Di Grine Kuzine,” is highly doubtful, and even he eventually admitted he had not written the lyrics.²¹ There are other cases where Schwartz held the copyright for pieces he did not write. For example, the copyright of Naftule Brandwein’s famous tune “Firn di Makhetunim Aheyim” was assigned to Abe Schwartz.

The cue sheet filed for copyright of “Die Boiberiker Chasseneh” (E664207, registered 29 April 1927), though in Schwartz’s hand, betrays signs that he was not the real author. Large chunks of the actual text are omitted, and the portions included show small gaps, repetitions and, here and there, words that make no sense – as if he had been simply copying without paying much attention.²²

How is all this to be explained? At that moment Gross and Katz were in an interesting position – unknowns who had become instantly popular through radio exposure. One member of the Boiberiker Kapelye, Dave Tarras, had already done several

Columbia sessions as both soloist and sideman, beginning in September 1925.²³ He had been hired by Columbia's A&R man for foreign-language recordings, David Nodiff.

*Nodiff calls me up and books me to play a record... four sides, two recordings. He says "Mr. Tarras, I'm giving you \$40 and make me a session. And then if it's alright [sic] I'll give you more..." I was so... I was making a record!*²⁴

Normally however it was Schwartz, acting as an independent contractor, who put Columbia sessions together:

*He [Schwartz] was friends with Nodiff so he was the leader [though] Abe Schwartz was no leader. Nodiff worked for Columbia, Schwartz didn't; he was a shipping boy by Nodiff. He was the one Nodiff sent out to hire the band, and he tried to do good for Nodiff, so he'll hold him on.*²⁵

When it came to the Boiberiker, however, the leader was not Tarras but Gross. Though Nodiff would have had to okay the session, the "perks" Schwartz got from it suggest that he and Gross had their own understanding. And here it is worth noting that Schwartz and Gross belonged to the same fraternal order, the Odd Fellows; in all probability they were lodge brothers, since both lived on the Lower East Side.²⁶

The present author would suggest that Schwartz and Gross had a *quid pro quo*. Gross's group was at that time practically unknown, but on the heels of a very encouraging response to their broadcast, he had the opportunity to get a recording out quick. In the field of Jewish music, the number of "klezmer" recordings was quite limited compared with theatrical, folk and cantorial. Judging from the small number of groups represented, it must not have been easy to get recorded. This author's hypothesis is, then, that Schwartz received part of the copyrights on two of the three discs in exchange for getting Nodiff's assent to record the group, and for handing over to Gross two sides of an eight-side recording session otherwise led by Schwartz himself (More on this below.)

In other words, Schwartz had no creative role with the first record, he simply owned the rights to the words. (Gross maintained the rights to the music.) The same would go for their second recording, "Akdomes un af B'ri" / "Kinos, Tkios un Ashrei," where the music is credited to "H. Gross, B. Katz, A. Schwartz." (Schwartz's name does not appear on their third disc, "Ch'sidishe Nigunim.")²⁷

These recordings are recognized as true classics with regard to the authenticity of both repertoire and performance style. Despite the focus on Tarras by klezmer aficionados, the arrangements feature not a lead clarinet (Tarras gets only two brief solos), but rather the age-old convention of lead violin – in this case doubled to balance the rather large compliment of winds, two of which (trumpet and clarinet) simply double the violins, but with their own ornaments – this heterophony being another archaic feature of the arrangements. The addition of two saxophones and piano, instruments never used in the old Jewish wedding bands of Eastern Europe, is a modern touch, adding a spoonful of American sugar to the overall timbre.²⁸ Feldman is nevertheless quite right in observing that "...the phrasing and rhythm of the group are among the most traditional and artistic of any of the groups recording in America at that time." And he adds: "Hescheles had nothing but praise for their 1927 recordings..."

Nevertheless, this was not a traditional Galician kapelye, as it lacked a fully independent violin, as well as a real sekund fiddle, and it had no cimbalom. The model for the ensemble was probably the Yiddish theatre more than any kind of klezmer-kapelye [Feldman, p.54].

The main issue here is the group's size. The old European arrangement of first violin as an independent melodic part, *sekund* playing chords and rhythm, and cimbalom (hammered dulcimer), is practical only in a small ensemble consisting mainly of strings. Indeed it was because of the increasing size and volume of Jewish wedding orchestras towards the end of the nineteenth century that the soft-voiced cimbalom declined among Jews in Galicia and actually disappeared among Jews in Ukraine. (The Boiberiker's percussionist Jake Silber, who was from Lemberg, Galicia, actually could play the cimbalom.)²⁹ What remains traditional in the Boiberiker arrangements, however, is the fact that the melody is led by the violin, rather than clarinet or trumpet. But in an ensemble of that size, consisting mainly of more powerful wind instruments, the only way to achieve balance was to have the two violins playing together, usually in unison, and placed closer to the microphone on the recordings, with chords and rhythmic backup provided by piano and percussion rather than a *sekund* violin. That the orchestration was modeled on the contemporary Yiddish theatre orchestra is likely. We note that Josef Cherniavsky's band had a similar complement but was slightly larger, with an extra trumpet and an extra trombone.³⁰ According to retired bandleader Marty Levitt, Schwartz at that period was also musical director of the Hopkinson Theatre on Hopkinson Avenue between Sutter and Pitkin in Brownsville, Brooklyn.³¹

The Schwartz connection opens the door to a further observation. Schwartz was a "house conductor" in the foreign department, and his bands consisted of whomever he hired for the session. Since he often did without written arrangements, relying on his players to "know what to do," the playing on most of his band recordings is vernacular, spontaneous, and somewhat ramshackle. But among the large number of Jewish orchestral recordings that Schwartz made for Columbia between 1917 and 1930,³² there is a certain group from the years 1927-1929 that stands out for tight ensemble, fast tempos, and a "peppy" rhythmic feel, based on what are obviously written arrangements. And while syncopated rhythms are by no means alien to traditional Jewish music, these arrangements emphasize this idiomatic Jewish syncopation in a manner reminiscent of the jazz-tinged popular American music of the time. In short, these recordings have lots of "pep". Sapoznik seems to be thinking of this where he writes of...

[t]he contrast in ensemble sounds between Tarras playing dance tunes under Abe Schwartz's baton recorded around the same time ... [and]... the restrained and chamber ensemble quality of the "Boibriker Kapelle".³³

The first two "peppy" sides, both tunes by Peretz Sandler (1881-1926) from the recent hit show *Volodka in Odess* (1926), were recorded at the same March 1927 session as "Di Boiberiker Chaseneh" (matrix numbers W 107724, 107725) – in fact, immediately afterward, the matrix numbers being W 107726 ("Zorg Nit Mama") and W 107727 ("In Odess, in Odess").³⁴ Given the modern but still very Yiddish style of this band, it would not readily occur to the listener that it was the Boiberiker Kapelye. But since the instru-

mentation is almost the same³⁵ and it was recorded at the same session, it is hard to come to any other conclusion. True, the “peppy” band includes a tenor banjo. But Berish Katz played the tenor banjo – in fact, a banjo is seen at his feet in the Boiberiker’s 1927 photos (Fig. 5), despite the fact that there is no banjo on the Boiberiker recordings.

Advertisements from 1929 and 1930 (discussed below) specifically state that the Boiberiker play “not only Hasidic-Yiddish” but also “in the American style,” and “jazz in the most modern manner”. According to Katz’s son, Berish loved jazz and was a devoted admirer of pioneer jazz violinist Joe Venuti (1903-1978), whom he would go to hear every chance he got.³⁶ Obviously both bands have the same clarinetist: on the “Abe Schwartz’s Orkester” sessions of March and November 1927, as well as January 1928 (see below), our ears alone would tell us that the clarinetist is Tarras, if Spottswood had not specifically noted this.³⁷

But we are not through yet, because there was also a Boiberiker session in June 1927. Applying the same logic, we discover that just before the Boiberiker made the four sides for which they are known – “Akdomes un Af B’ri,” W 108027-2, “Kinos, Tkios un Ashrei” (W 108028-1), and the “Ch’sidische Nigunim” (W 108029-2, W 108030-2), Schwartz recorded two songs with vocalist Irving Grossman: “Levine Mit Zein Flihender Machine” (Levine with His Flying Machine) by Bernie and Coslow (W 108023-2), and his own composition, “Hurra! Far Unzer Held Levine” (Hooray for Our Hero Levine, W 108024-1).³⁸ Although these pieces are of no great musical interest, Jewish or otherwise, the large ensemble accompanying the vocalist plays very well. Again, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this is the Boiberiker Kapelye.

Before we come to the explicitly Boiberiker sides, two more numbers stand in the way, W 108025, “Morir Soñando” and 109026, “Las Cuatro Milpas,” by the “Orquesta Columbia”. Surely not the Boiberiker Kapelye? And yet, here too the instrumentation is almost the same. (Spottswood gives it as two trumpets, two violins, two saxes, trombone, piano, banjo/guitar, bass, and drums, which could have been easily accommodated simply by adding a trumpet and replacing Katz on violin with Gross.) Now this sequence of eight sides, (108023-108030) equals one complete session. As Tarras reminisced:

*A recording session [with Schwartz] consisted of four records, eight songs.... The whole pay was \$15 a musician to play 3 hours and make 4 sides [sic, he seems to mean “four records” here]. We came in at 9:00 and by 12 o’clock we were out. If we had to stay later, he paid us overtime. We played through the number and anything we needed to change – so the engineer took a test and he played it back right away, he played through the test. If the test was good we went through to the next.*³⁹

Having come this far, we can go farther. Another session of “Abe Schwartz’s Orkester” in November 1927 sounds very much like the “peppy” Boiberiker from the March session, this time with an up-tempo “Russishe Shehr” and yet a third tune from Sandler’s *Volodka*, “Lebedig un Frehlich” (the third section of which contains a cadential phrase strikingly reminiscent of the 1920 Gershwin hit *Swanee*). This session also included “Shlof Mein Kind” and “Die Neshomeh fun Mein Folk,” which, though not in fast tempo, display the same tight ensemble and lively rhythmic feel.⁴⁰ On the “Russishe Shehr” and “Lebedig un Frehlich” the melody is taken by trumpet, clarinet, and a single violin. Especially brilliant is the brass trio of trumpet, trombone and tuba. Rhythmic backup is supplied by tenor banjo and drums. However, this

November 1927 group is smaller – I don't hear the saxes and I am doubtful about a piano.

So the Boiberiker, in addition to the “retro” sound for which they are famous, was also quite at home in this up-to-date, “peppy” Jewish-American style. When I ran this past retired Jewish club date leader Marty Levitt, he added something very important: he was virtually certain that these “peppy” arrangements had been written for Schwartz by his father Jack Levitt, the Boiberiker's trombonist, who was doing a lot of arranging for Jewish bands at that period.⁴¹

It seems likely that at least a core from the Boiberiker were sidemen on many other Schwartz recordings, both Jewish and non-Jewish, especially from 1927 on. The whole issue remains to be explored.

The Boiberiker Kapelye at Carnegie Hall

From subsequent developments we can only infer that the Boiberiker's debut broadcast was a great success. As we have just seen, within a few weeks they had made their first recording and it would be released in late May.

Equally telling is the fact that the Boiberiker Kapelye played such a prominent role in the final *Tog* concert, the grandest and most publicized of the 1927 series, part of which was broadcast live from Carnegie Hall. “The Day's Final Radio Concert” at Carnegie aired on Monday evening, 30 May 1927 at 8:15 (see Fig. 2). According to the description in the *New York Times* (29 May, p.X6): “A concert of Yiddish music under the auspices of *The Day*, the Yiddish newspaper, will be given tomorrow night at Carnegie Hall for the benefit of a vacation camp at Whiteport, N.Y.”

After introductory remarks by *The Day*'s business manager Irving Altman, the Boiberiker opened the program with the “Boiberiker Chasena” (*sic*), “H. Gross, conductor”. They returned in the middle of the program with “Vi asoi a Yid Davent” (How a Jew Prays), and again with the penultimate selection, “Chassidische Nigunim” (Hasidic Melodies). According to the program announcement in the *Tog*, “the Boiberiker Kapelye, which is now much larger, will play several things which have been specially written for this concert by Berish Katz. Hersh Gross, the Kapellmeister, will conduct”.⁴²

Sharing the program were the famous Cantor Mordechai Hershman and choir, the Paterson Choir (Leo Low, director), Simeon Bellison (principal clarinetist of the New York Philharmonic and a great collector, arranger and performer of Jewish folk music), the popular Yiddish comedian Ludwig Satz, and young violinist Florence Stern playing Abraham Ellstein's “In Bes Hamedrish” with the composer at the piano. Additional speakers were Z.H. Rubinstein, *Tog* Radio Chairman, and Samuel Margoshes, the newspaper's editor-in-chief.

Their second and final Columbia session came shortly after this Carnegie appearance.

Hersh Gross and Berish Katz

How Gross and Katz first met, how they came up with the idea of the “Boiberiker Wedding,” is not known. We know they both came from nearby towns (*shtetls*) in eastern Galicia (belonging before the First World War to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, between the wars to Poland, and since World War II to Ukraine) and both grew up in the klezmer subculture. Katz was undoubtedly the more gifted musician, one of the most versatile and

creative instrumental musicians in the Jewish field. But Gross seems to have been at least a decent violinist and must have had at least a comparable knowledge of the traditions and repertoire of the Galician *klezmerim*⁴³ or Katz would never have worked with him. Gross was from Bobrka (Yiddish, Boiberke)⁴⁴ and Katz was from Gliniany (Yiddish, Glina). Klezmer bands in the same general area had to be aware of each other's existence. So if Gross and Katz did not actually know one another in Europe, it is almost certain they at least knew of one another. Katz emigrated to America in 1906, Gross in 1909.

Berish Katz (1879-1964) was born in Gliniany on 25 July 1879, the son of Jacob Katz and Zisl (Cecile) Wolf Katz (daughter of Leib and Chana Wolf). A child prodigy on the trumpet, Katz learned many other instruments, including violin, viola, cello, clarinet, saxophone, banjo, and guitar. On all of these he was self-taught, with the exception of the violin: that instrument he learned from Moshke-Mikhl Dudlsack, a fine *tsimblar* (cimbalom player), but a mediocre violinist, whom Katz rapidly surpassed.⁴⁵ Katz played not only in the kapelye of Glina, but later in Tarnopol,⁴⁶ Podvolochisk, and Zloczow.⁴⁷

Katz arrived in New York on the *Vaderland* on 3 April 1906. His name was mis-recorded as Bernard Wolf because he was traveling with his maternal uncle Paul (Psakhye) Wolf (1860-1938) and family. Wolf lived at 53 Thatford Avenue in Brownsville, where he kept a music store; Katz lived down the street at 29 Thatford. Katz married Tillie Kaufman on 27 October 1908. From at least the early 1920s and for much of his career he played viola in Broadway theatre orchestras. Playing clarinet he led his own wedding band under the name "Ben" Katz in the late 1930s and 1940s, while playing sax with other Jewish wedding bands. He was highly respected – a sort of klezmer's klezmer – but not well known to the general public, except in a number of Catskill hotels where he led summer bands from the 1930s into the 1960s.⁴⁸

Hersh Gross, or Herman Gross as he was officially known, was born on 11 June 1885 in Bobrka (Yiddish: Boiberke), Galicia, the eldest child (he had three brothers and three sisters) of Chaim Gross and Yocheved (Yetta) Weissnicht Gross (Figs. 3, 4). His brother Moishe (Morris) played clarinet and saxophone, Yekl (Joe) played flute and was also the dancing-master in Boiberke,⁴⁹ but they did not play professionally in America. The third brother, Aga (Adolph), showed no musical talent – nor did the sisters. Morris went into the hotel business, Joe became a beautician, and Adolph a barber.⁵⁰

In an article in the *Boiberker Memorial Book* (1964),⁵¹ Israel Gimpel gives a precious glimpse of Chaim Klineter and his family.⁵² Although his legal name was Chaim Gross, everybody in town, save the postman, knew him as "Chaim Klineter" ("clarinetist"). Not merely in Boiberke, but in the whole surrounding area, no wedding could be held without him. Chaim had a whole *kapelye klezmer*, but the main role was played by his clarinet, although in the "playing to the bride" at Jewish weddings a violin was used.⁵³

Chaim and his wife had fine children, and lots of them. All survived into adulthood, an extremely rare thing in those days. But even though he had a second job, Chaim was still dirt poor. Gimpel gives no dates, but extrapolating from the birth year of Hersh, his eldest child, and the usual age for marriage, Chaim must have been born approximately 1865, certainly in the 1860s. He was still alive in 1920 when Hersh returned to Europe for a time. Gimpel remembered Hersh as...

a very attractive young man. He could even play [p.159, col.2] all the instruments, but especially the violin – and was also an excellent barber. The Gross family was proud of

Carnegie Hall Program	Program Continued
<p>FIRE NOTICE Look around NOW and choose the nearest Exit to your seat. In case of fire walk (not run) to THAT Exit. Do not try to beat your neighbor to the street. JOHN J. DORMAN, Fire Commissioner.</p>	
<p>CARNEGIE HALL Monday Evening, May 30th, at 8.15 o'clock</p>	
<p>THE DAY'S FINAL RADIO CONCERT</p>	
<p>Introductory Remarks, Irving Altman, Business Mgr., THE DAY</p>	
<p>1. Boiberiker Kapelle, "Boiberiker Chasena" H. Gross, Conductor</p>	<p>6. Boiberiker Kapelle, "Vi asoi a Yid Davent"</p>
<p>2. Cantor Mordecai Herschman and Choir Solo</p>	<p>7. Ludwig Satz, "Ich Vil Nit Gehen In Cheder" "Ich Benk A Heim"</p>
<p>3. Z. H. Rubinstein, Radio Chairman's Remarks</p>	<p>8. Florence Stern, Violinist, "In Beth Hamedrish" By Abraham Ellstein, accompanied at the piano by the composer</p>
<p>4. Paterson Choir Folk Songs Leo Leov, Director</p>	<p>9. Cantor Mordecai Herschman and Choir Solo Leo Leov, Directing the Choir</p>
<p>5. Simeon Bellison, Solo Clarinetist, Philharmonic Orchestra</p>	<p>10. Dr. Samuel Margoshes, Address "Decoration Day" Editor, THE DAY</p>
<p>(a) Wedding March (b) Fairy Tales (c) Merry-go-round</p>	<p>11. Paterson Choir Folk Songs Leo Leov, Director</p>
<p>Program Concluded on Second Page Following</p>	<p>12. Cantor Mordecai Herschman Solo</p>
<p></p>	<p>13. Boiberiker Kapelle, Chassidische Nigunem</p>
<p></p>	<p>14. Paterson Choir Folk Songs Leo Leov, Director</p>
<p></p>	<p>Baldwin Piano Used</p>
<p></p>	<p>For special announcement see second page following. See top of next page for important Concert Announcements (See page inside back cover) INFORMATION BUREAU FOR LOST AND FOUND ARTICLES AT SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE</p>

Figure 2. Program for final Tog concert over station WMCA, 30 May 1927 (NY Public Library, Music Division)

Hersh. He had great powers of oratory (koyekh hadibur). He had such a mouth for speaking that he could have been a cabinet minister. In addition, he was very good-looking.⁵⁴

Chaim's eldest daughter, when it came time for her to marry, had no dowry – so she was sent to America, where a girl can find a husband without one. [This must be Lena, because she was the only daughter who came to America. In New York she married a waiter, Morris Turkel, who was later active in union politics.]⁵⁵

The second daughter [Sime] did in fact find a good match, marrying Fishel Ehrenzweig, a young man from Brozdowicz – although he was a barber – don't forget what it meant to be a bal-

melukhe [artisan] in those days. Sime also had a good trade – she was a midwife. They prospered, but unfortunately none of their children survived except for the youngest boy, Hersh. He went through all the seven gates of hell, survived the Nazis, had the privilege of getting to America, but fate was not kind to him or his wife, as they had no children. Later they went to Israel.⁵⁶

Another of Klineter's daughters [Elke] married a boy from Russia whom fate had by chance brought to our shtetl. He was a working man, a shoe-cutter – also not so ay-ay-ay.⁵⁷ There was no business, and they went to America. After spending a while there, they returned to Boiberke to increase the number of Hitler's victims.

Another son, Aga [Adolph] Gross,⁵⁸ was the opposite of Hersh – he resembled his mother. Aga learned barbering on my head. [Here follows an amusing anecdote about how Aga, on the first day of his apprenticeship in his brother-in-law Fishel's barber shop, at the urging of his younger brother Yekl (Joseph), who wanted to use the money to buy cherries, agreed to cut the author's hair, even though he didn't know how to operate the clippers.] When Aga grew up he also went to America.⁵⁹

Chaim Klineter had a big family – a nice-looking Jew with a nice-looking beard, seated in front of the big shul. But he never had the privilege of a little nakhes.⁶⁰

As Gimpel corroborates in a marginal jotting,⁶¹ Hersh Gross was “twice in America”. He arrived with his wife in New York on 11 August 1909 aboard the *President Lincoln*.⁶² Little is known about his first years here. He was still in New York just prior to America's entry into World War I, because he is listed in the 1917 New York City directory as “Herman Gross, music,” residing at 160 Ridge Street. After that, he and his wife returned to Europe; presumably they visited their families in Boiberke but settled in Vienna, though apparently with little success. As we shall see, the return to Europe must have been soon after the Armistice, as it would have been extremely difficult to make such a trip while the war was still on. Gross's background in charitable work as well as something about his time in Vienna is described by townsman Julius Haber in another article in the Boiberke memorial volume:⁶³

Here I must give praise to our townsman Hersh Gross... [with regard to charitable deeds] he followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather. We remember how his grandfather, and later his father, used to go around Boiberke from door to door with a sack every Friday before the Sabbath to collect choleh [Sabbath bread] for the poor people of the town. His father was a musician, he played the clarinet, and his grandfather played the cello and also the hammer-dulcimer [tsimbl]. (149)

Earlier in the article we read:

Moishe Gottlieb [leader of the Jewish Community in Boiberke] was the owner of a large house in town. Every year, the night after the fasting on Yom Kippur, the local band under the leadership of Chaim Gross, or Chaim Klineter (he played the clarinet), would come to his house and play their instruments, and many of Boiberke's younger people would stand



Figure 3. Gross's father Chaim Klineter (courtesy of Carol Cohn)



Figure 4. Gross's mother Jocheved Weissnicht Gross (courtesy of Carol Cohn)

by the windows for hours listening to the fine music.” (Author’s translation, synthesizing information from both English and Yiddish versions, which differ slightly, pp.19-20, 143.)

The article goes on (from the Yiddish):

Hersh modernized all this: It is recalled that when he came to America he founded the Boiberiker Kapelye, and the rest of his time he devoted to writing letters. These were answers to poor women whose husbands had abandoned them and had remained incommunicado. Hersh Gross took upon himself the task to search for the husbands, and with his tactfulness he would bring the couple back together, and in some cases he also helped the wife and children to come to America. And this brought peace to the family.

Unfortunately Hersh himself had no luck in his own family life, and left this world while still a young man. We who were close to him mourned him: may he rest in peace.” (p.148)⁶⁴

The same source goes on to explain that Gross’s charitable and philanthropic work extended to Zionism. As soon as World War I was over, a respected Boiberiker, on a business trip to Europe, went to inspect the situation in the home town, where he found the Jewish community in a state of indescribable poverty. When he returned and gave his report, the Boiberiker community in America raised \$5,000 and sent it with two emissaries to Boiberke.

On the way they stopped in Vienna, where they found Hersh Gross, who called their attention to the fact that there was stranded in Vienna a large group of Halutzim (“pioneers”) from Boiberke. They all had steamship tickets from Trieste to Palestine, but lacked money to get to Trieste. And on Gross’s advice they took out a small sum and saw to it that the halutzim could get to Trieste. (Author’s translation, 148)

A short time after helping the Zionist halutzim, Hersh and his wife returned to New York on the *Noordam*, arriving on 1 September 1920. The manifest also indicates that his father Chaim Gross was still living, and that passage had been paid by his sister Lena’s husband Morris Turkel of 1003 Simpson Street, Bronx. Gross gives his profession as “barber”.

Other Members of the Boiberiker Kapelye

Since a wedding is a one-time event, musical engagements for weddings fall under the category of single engagements, or as they have been called in New York since at least the 1930s, “club dates”. New York Jewish weddings even in the 1920s did not inevitably feature what is today called klezmer music as the sole or even major entertainment. But many of them did, thus offering, as in Europe, a major source of livelihood for musicians who could play this music. However, club dates were mainly engaged by the leaders, which means that the identity of a Jewish wedding band lay more in the leader than in the members. Put it another way, the leader would go down to the union floor to contract the best musicians he could engage for the particular date. He had people he liked to work with, and vice-versa, but not all were always available; also, who was hired depended on what kind of music, or mix of music, the client wanted.

The Boiberiker was different. It was one of a small group of more or less standing Jewish dance bands. Of course substitutes must have been used when necessary, and we can hardly expect the regular compliment of the band to have remained absolutely constant over a period of years. But it had the obvious musical benefits of being a hand-picked group that performed together regularly, rehearsed frequently, and formed an extremely cohesive musical ensemble.

While we cannot give a detailed history of the Boiberiker’s personnel, we do have more information on this than for practically any other Jewish band of this period. The principal sources are two photographs dating from 1927, showing the fully constituted band as of the time they made their first recordings (leader Hersh Gross with ten sidemen: Fig. 5). Eight of these can be identified: Jack Levitt (trombone), Izzie Drutin (tuba), Alex Fiedel (trumpet), Jake Silber (percussion), Dave Tarras (clarinet), Sam Heller (piano), Berish Katz (violin and tenor banjo), Benio Margulies (alto sax). One violinist and the tenor saxophonist remain unidentified. (In addition, an unknown flute player is heard on the two discs from the June 1927 sessions.)⁶⁵ Dave Tarras’s recollection of the personnel as given to Spottswood is different: Hersh Gross (director), Sam Spielman (trombone), Abe Constantinofsky (trumpet), Binyomin “Louis” Shuster (trumpet), Berish Katz (violin), unidentified second violin, Dave Tarras (clarinet), [Jacob] Lustig (second clarinet and sax), Sam Heller (piano), Hymie Pseudonis (*sic*, string bass), unidentified percussion.

How are the considerable differences between the two rosters to be explained? The first is based on the photographs taken in the Spring of 1927; the instrumentation in the photo matches the recordings, except for the flute added in the June session. Tarras’s account must represent a later version, although not too late, since after Spring 1929,



Figure 5. Boiberiker Kapelye in Spring 1927 (courtesy of Carol Cohn). Standing, from left: Izzie Drutin, Jacob Silber, Hersh Gross, Dave Tarras, unidentified saxophone, Benio Margulies; seated, from left: Jack Levitt, Alex Fiedel, Sam Heller, Berish Katz, unidentified violin.

Katz was no longer with the band. It would be surprising if the personnel, over the five and a half years of the band's existence, did *not* change. Without rejecting Tarras's recollection, it is always possible that his list may not represent any actual stage, but just a number of the men that played in it over the course of its existence (about five and a half years) whom he could remember nearly sixty years later.

The lists differ only slightly in orchestration, but greatly in personnel. Both had ten men, but the earlier list has one trumpet, two saxes, and sousaphone; the later, two trumpets, one sax (or second clarinet), and string bass. The only men who carry through from the first into the second version, apart from the leader Gross, are Berish Katz, Dave Tarras, and Sam Heller, as well as possibly Jake Silber on percussion, possibly Jacob Lustig on sax, and a second violinist who is unidentified in both versions.

The result is that we have a list of fifteen men who at one time or another played with this band. What can be learned from this list? We have already reviewed the backgrounds of the two original co-directors, Gross and Katz. It remains to say something about the others. The original full-compliment recording band of 1927:

1. Jack (Yankl) Levitt (1901-1974), trombone. He legally changed his name from Levinsky around 1929 and was the son of violinist Max Levinsky (1866-1938), from Kanev, Kiev province, Ukraine. Jack Levitt, who came to America as a young boy in 1911, was also a classically-trained violinist. He was the band's youngest member.
2. Izzie (Ayzik) Drutin (1884-1954), tuba and sousaphone. Born in Starokonstantinov, Ukraine, he arrived in New York in 1911. Sapoznik calls him "Moe," confusing him with his father Morris Drutin (1865-1941), a violinist, who was born in the nearby smaller shtetl Izaslyav (Zaslav). The Drutins were a large klezmer family, inter-married with the Nimoyes of Zaslav and the Stitmans of Kornitsa and Krasilov. Izzie Drutin was a popular sideman on tuba, also known to have played in Max Leibowitz's band, and later, that of Perry Voultsos.⁶⁶
3. Alex (Elye) Fiedel (1886-1957), trumpet. The Fiedels were a klezmer family from Yedinets, Bessarabia, but Philip Fiedel lived in Lubomil, Volyn, in the northwest corner of Ukraine, and Alex was born in Bershad, Podolia, also in Ukraine but not so far from Yedinets, where, before coming to the United States in 1907, he also lived. Alex Fiedel was one of the most brilliant of the New York klezmer cornetists. He recorded a solo doina around 1917 for Columbia, issued as E3445, and around April 1924 two more sides for Emerson with Raderman's and Beckerman's Orchestra, coupling "A Europaishe Kolomyka" and "Europaishe Kamariska" (Emerson 13254). "Raderman's and Beckerman's Orchestra," including Fiedel, consisted of no more than three men – probably Sammy Beckerman on piano and Harry Raderman on trombone.⁶⁷ Fiedel also appears in a five-piece band backing up the famous Ukrainian fiddler Pavel Humeniuk on four sides recorded for Columbia on 9 February 1940. At the piano was another Boiberiker veteran, Sam Heller.⁶⁸

4. Jacob Silber (1882-1952), percussion. Born in Lemberg, Austria (now Lviv, Ukraine), he emigrated to New York in 1903. In previous lists, the percussionist was unidentified. But this author received a definite identification from his grandson, Duke Freeman, who also sent me a copy of a badly damaged photo of the Boiberiker Kapelye that he inherited from his grandfather.

Now that we connect the name with the face, there are some interesting ramifications. We can see that the percussionist in Max Leibowitz's band, in a photo this author estimates was taken about 1912, is this same Jacob Silber. This leads to a further corollary: Jake Silber must be the "Silver" designated as accompanist on the label of Max Leibowitz's solo violin recording "Yidish Hora – A Heymish Freylekhs" and the other side, "Orientalishe Melodien," issued by Emerson in 1919. That Silber did in fact play the *tsimbl* is corroborated by an ad for a radio broadcast of the *Tog* program, 1929, announcing Dave Tarras playing a *doina* on flute(!) (which he did play prior to taking up the clarinet, though there are no known recordings of Tarras on flute), accompanied by "J. Silver (*sic*), 'Der Tsimbltiker Tsimble.'" ⁶⁹ Silber was a good friend of Berish Katz and continued to work with him at weddings and bar mitzvahs in the 1930s and 1940s. In later years he specialized on xylophone. He was much involved with the Lemberger Old Age Home in Brooklyn, founded by his wife Sophie, and always led the bands for their benefit affairs.

5. Dave Tarras, (1895-1989)⁷⁰, clarinet. Born in Ternivka, near Uman, Ukraine, his grandfather and father were *badkhnim*; his grandfather also played violin, his father, who led a ten-man wedding band, played valve trombone. The family was from Teplik, but moved to nearby Ternivka shortly before Tarras was born. He began the flute at nine; four years later he studied clarinet for three weeks with a teacher in Uman and did so well that he decided to make it his instrument. After playing in a Russian military band in World War I and experiencing the chaotic and dangerous conditions in Ukraine after the war, Tarras arrived in New York in 1921. Believing he was not good enough to make a living playing clarinet in New York, he worked for a year as an operator in the fur trade, then began playing small weddings with a cousin, a trumpet player. His first big break came when, through the urging of percussionist Joe Helfenbein, he was hired by Josef Cherniavsky to replace Naftule Brandwein, then considered the premiere klezmer clarinetist in America, in his "Hasidic Jazz Band". In September 1925 Tarras made his first recording for Columbia, and he appeared regularly on the radio with Cherniavsky's band on the Libby Hotel program in 1926. Trained as a traditional klezmer, also an excellent sightreader, versatile as soloist or sideman, Tarras was a natural choice for the Boiberiker. After its demise he worked for many years with Alexander Olshanetsky, who was not only a composer and leader in the Yiddish theatre but ran a major contracting agency for Jewish music. Although from the musical point of view Tarras had rivals in the top rank of klezmer instrumentalists, including clarinetists Naftule Brandwein and Shloimke Beckerman, it is hard to dispute that from the 1930s on, he was the single

most successful and influential figure in the entire Yiddish instrumental scene in America, and the fact that he lived to the age of 94 brought his direct influence even into the klezmer revival of the 1970s-1980s. Since Tarras's long and illustrious career has been covered far better than that of any other klezmer musician, I shall not attempt to review it with any completeness here.⁷¹

6. Sam Heller (1899-1988), piano. Born in New York, he was the eldest son of violinist Abe Heller (1872-1952), a klezmer bandleader from Sokolow Malopolski, Kolbuszowa Region, Poland.⁷² Sam Heller himself led the Hazimra Ensemble, heard on the radio in the late 1920s-early 1930s. He later made his career as a successful "cocktail pianist" in hotels, etc. Heller also continued to work frequently with Tarras.⁷³
7. Benio Margulies (1889-1966), saxophone. Born in Lemberg, Austria (now Lviv, Ukraine), he was not from a klezmer family – his father was a businessman. A soldier in the Austrian army in World War I, Margulies was captured by the Russians. As prisoner of war he played in a Russian military band. Around 1923 Margulies emigrated to Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he played in the opera orchestra. He arrived in New York in the mid-1920s. During the 1940s Margulies did a lot of work for Dave Tarras (usually as Tarras's sub-leader) on clarinet. He also played in American-style bands as well as Broadway theatre orchestras.
- 8, 9. Unknown violinist and unknown saxophonist.

To these we can add, according to Dave Tarras's recollection of the personnel as given to Spottswood:

10. Sam Spielman, trombone (seemingly a slip of the tongue for Louis Spielman). There were several musicians in New York named Sam Spielman. One was a classical cellist, another a classical flutist, and a third a violinist from Warsaw who arrived in 1920; but the only trombonist Spielman this author can identify was Louie (Leizer) Spielman, who also played saxophone. He was born in Wlodawa, Siedlec, Russian Poland in 1886 and died in the Bronx in 1965. Well-known in the "klezmer" field, Leizer Spielman played with the Brandwein Brothers and toured with Cherniavsky's Hassidic Jazz Band.⁷⁴
11. Abe Constantin, trumpet. Originally Abraham Constantinofsky, he was born in 1891 in Tarashcha, Ukraine, about sixty miles south of Kiev (the same town as the famous Yiddish actor and producer Boris Thomashefsky). He died in Miami, Florida in 1953. Sapoznik (liner notes, *Abe Schwartz the Klezmer King*) lists him as playing piccolo on two Boiberiker sides (the instrument is a flute anyway), but I know of no evidence for this.
12. Binyomin "Louis" Schuster (1881 or 1882-1947), trumpet. Born in Ukraine, the son of David Schuster, emigrated to America about 1905. Schuster played in Max Leibowitz's orchestra,⁷⁵ later with the Brandwein Brothers and Louis

Spielman.⁷⁶ His son Morris was a drummer, and his daughter Rose as a young woman played piano in a silent movie theatre.

13. [?] Lustig, second clarinet and sax. I believe this was Jacob Lustig, listed in the 1927 union directory as a saxophone player. Born about 1886 in Chelm, Government of Lublin, Poland, he came to the United States in 1920.
14. Hymie Psevdonis, string bass. I believe this is an error for Hymie Millrad (1882-1971). Not a single example of the apparently Greek surname Psevdonis or Pseudonis comes up on a Google search or a Yahoo people search, and it would be unusual, though certainly not impossible, to find a Greek playing in a klezmer group at that time, let alone a Greek with the very Jewish name of Hymie. Perhaps Tarras told Spottswood that the bass player was a “Hymie” whose surname he could not recall other than that it was a *pseudonym*, and Spottswood later misread this from his notes as “Psevdonis.” In fact, a string bass player Hymie Millrad was very active at that time as a sideman in what is now called klezmer music. He had previously worked with Max Leibowitz and certainly worked with at least some of the other musicians on this list. Spottswood himself identifies him as a member of Joseph Cherniavsky’s Hasidic Jazz Band.⁷⁷ But why a “pseudonym”? When this author ran the question by Jack Levitt’s son Marty (who actually played a couple of jobs with Millrad in 1950), he suggested that by “pseudonym” Tarras might simply have meant that, like many immigrants, he had changed his original family name in Europe, i.e., to Millrad, a German but not a particularly Jewish name. All this is speculation, but the bottom line is that there is no such surname as Psevdonis or Pseudonis, whereas it is very plausible that Millrad would have played with this band. Chaim Millrad was born in Mogilyov, Podolia, Ukraine (Yiddish: Molev). He emigrated to New York in 1901.

15(?) 16(?) unidentified second violin and unidentified percussion

In sum, of the 14 musicians whose provenance is known, the only ones from Galicia proper, besides Gross and Katz, were Jacob Silber and Benio Margulies, both from Lemberg. Jacob Lustig came from Lubliner Gubernie, which is sometimes referred to as “North Galicia”. Sam Heller was born in New York – the only American-born member – but his father was from Sokolow Malopolski in western Galicia. All others were from Ukraine. As to age, the oldest member was Katz (b.1879), while the “baby” was Jack Levitt (b.1901). Tarras, Spielman and Millrad were veterans of Cherniavsky’s band. Silber, Schuster and Drutin had worked with Max Leibowitz, as had Millrad – although the bass player in the 1912 photograph is too old to be him.

Further Radio Broadcasts

The following by no means purports to be a full history of the subsequent career of the Boiberiker Kapelye, it merely provides an outline of its development and activities. In particular, the information about their radio appearances makes no claim to completeness.

The 30 May 1927 Carnegie Hall broadcast was the last of the series sponsored by the *Tog*. When the program, technically known as the WMCA Jewish Music Hour, resumed after the summer break, it was now under the sponsorship of the Branfman kosher meat company and was known as the “Branfman Idishe Shtunde” (Branfman Jewish Hour). The 21 November 1927 broadcast featured a real Jewish wedding (Mollie Stritman and Maurice Berg), for which the music was provided by Cantor Ringel and (Louis) Frohman’s choir – no orchestra is mentioned. But the blurb (*New York Times*, 11.21.1927, p.18)⁷⁸ includes the comment: “It will be the second Jewish wedding at WMCA. The first took place about a year ago during the regular Jewish hour.”⁷⁹

The second Boiberiker record, “Akdomes un af B’ri”/“Kinos, Tkios un Ashrei,” was released in mid-October 1927 to coincide with the High Holiday season (Fig. 6).⁸⁰ The third and last, “Ch’sidishe Nigunim,” parts 1 and 2, was released in early December 1927.⁸¹ The next known radio appearance of the band was also for a wedding, on Monday, 2 April 1928, 9-10 pm, also on the Branfman Jewish Hour. This one was definitely real, but still had a show-business atmosphere, since the *khusn* (groom) was none other than the show’s popular master of ceremonies, Rubin Goldberg. The cantor was the same one with whom the Boiberiker had already appeared in the Carnegie Hall benefit – the world-famous Mordechai Hershman. The Boiberiker would reappear on this program two weeks later (16 April 1928) “in Jewish and Hasidic selections”.⁸²

The Tog Returns to the Airwaves

The *Tog* program was off the air from June 1927 through September 1928. But on 30 September 1928, the newspaper launched a new series of concerts on WABC. The format was the same as the earlier series, but many external factors made for a better situation. First of all, the Boiberiker Kapelye now had a prime-time slot: Sundays from 12:30 to 1:30. Secondly, they would be virtually every week for the first nine months. And, thirdly, WABC (Atlantic Broadcasting Company, unrelated to the present WABC or the ABC network), was powered at 5,000 watts, ten times that of their previous station, WMCA, potentially reaching a much larger audience.

This higher power for WABC had been approved by the FCC on the grounds that only a few weeks earlier (2 September), the station had become one of two New York City affiliates of the fledgling Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS). Then in late January 1929, the CBS network, which already linked 47 stations from coast to coast, bought WABC outright, making it its flagship station and one of the major players in the American radio industry.⁸³ At that time, WABC’s studios – described by CBS president William Paley as in poor condition – were located on the seventeenth floor of Steinway Hall at 113 West 57th Street. WABC would move into state-of-the-art studios at CBS headquarters, a newly constructed building at 485 Madison Avenue, in July of 1929.⁸⁴

Starting with the second program of 7 October 1928, the Boiberiker would appear on no fewer than 42 *Tog* broadcasts – every week for nearly nine months, plus five more appearances in September and October 1929. As Sapoznik points out, the *Tog* program was the first Yiddish show to be broadcast on a national network.⁸⁵ Yet this fact is barely relevant to the Boiberiker Kapelye. Although WABC joined the Columbia system in September 1928, there is no evidence that the *Tog* program was carried by any affiliated

נײַע
קאלאמניא דעקארדס
 מאַרײ פּיקאַן, סאַפּראַנאַ
 8148-F } שפּילט אַ דאָברודשיען (פּון רײזעלע).
 10\" } עס מעהלט אײַהר די ראָזשונקע (פּון רײזעלע).
 075 } (טויק פּון יענע רוסשיסקי).
 אײדיש־נאַציאָנאַלער אַרבייטער פאַרבאַנד כאָר
 5 5 א 11 — דירעקטאָר
 8142-F } פּרענט די וועלט און אַלטע קשיא
 10\" } טשה'לאַר און שלמה'לאַר
 075 }
 8141-F } זרנגווא, פּסח־ליעד
 10\" } דער חסיד'ל, דער צינגינערל און דער אײוואַנסקע
 075 }
 מישאַ אפּעלבוים, באַריטאָן
 8143-F } די חסידים, דער רבי און דער נבאי
 10\" } (פּינע מיט'ן קונעל)
 075 }
 בױבעריקער קאַפעליע — תּ. גראַסס, לידער
 8145-F } אַקטות און אַפּ ברי
 10\" } (קינות, תקיעות און אַשרי)
 075 }
COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH COMPANY
 1819 BROADWAY, NEW YORK CITY
Columbia
NEW PROCESS RECORDS
Made the New Way - Electrically
Viva-tonal Recording - The Records without Scratch

Figure 6. Columbia advertisement announcing second Boiberiker release, *Morgn Zhurnal*, 14 October 1927, p.2.

stations until the Passover broadcast of 28 April 1929, when it began to be heard over WCAU Philadelphia. Thus the Boiberiker was heard weekly in two cities, New York and Philadelphia, for less than two months in the spring of 1929, and on five programs in the autumn. Later, the *Tog* show was carried by some other CBS affiliates around the country, but by that time the Boiberiker was no longer on the program.

Unlike its competitor, the *Forverts* (Forward), which originated from a merger between Russian-speaking radical socialists and Eugene V. Debs's American socialist party, and was printed in Yiddish simply because that was the language of its target audience, *The Jewish Day* (*Tog*) actively promoted Yiddish language and culture. This ideal was the guiding principle of its radio program. For example, on the occasion of their special program "Bam Rebn's Tish," broadcast 14 October 1928, the newspaper remarked:

*In coming broadcasts the Tog will make every effort to bring you similar musical performances – in such a way that the Tog's Jewish radio hour should achieve its great goal of disseminating the most beautiful Jewish music among the masses.*⁶⁶

Similarly, in connection with the broadcast of 11 November 1928, the newspaper notes:

*The Tog is interested in rejuvenating old Yiddish musical art [neginah] and reawakening it in the hearts of Jews, who heard this kind of music in their youth.*⁸⁷

The Boiberiker Kapelye on the 1928-1929 Tog Programs

The Boiberiker Kapelye made its first appearance of the new season on the second broadcast, 7 October 1928, along with George Jessel, Samuel Goldenberg, and Lucy Levin.

*...and finally – the Boiberiker Kapelye. The radio listeners of the first “Tog” programs two years ago must certainly remember this kapelye, and they will of course be glad to hear this same kapelye again and again.*⁸⁸

Many of the ensuing programs were organized by themes.

Holiday themes

Simkhas Toyre (broadcast 7 October 1928): “In honor of Simkhes Toyre, Hersh Gross and Berish Katz, the leaders of the kapelye, have prepared an outstanding program of merry Yiddish music, and one can depend on them for numbers that will be remembered for a long time to come.”⁸⁹

Chanukah (broadcast 9 December 1928), with Florence Stern, violin, Israel Lutzky, poet, and Cantor Israel Beria: “Boiberiker Kapelye ...has prepared a new program of merry numbers in honor of Chanukkah.”⁹⁰ “The Boiberiker Kapelle, that popular Jewish orchestra, will add to the holiday cheer.”⁹¹

Purim (broadcast 24 March 1929): “Purim in the Old Home Town,” a Purim-play written by Z.H. Rubinstein, city editor of the *Day*. The cast included Menasha Skulnik, David Vardi, with Joseph Shapiro as town cantor. “Mark Schweid will direct the performance and will also offer a number of ‘witty songs’.” (English) “The Boiberiker Orchestra will do itself full justice under the direction of Berish Katz and Hirsch Gross.”⁹² (trans.) “The Boiberiker Kapelye will shine this time, as it should be. Berish Katz has prepared just the right *nigun*, and Hersh Gross will direct the ensemble.”⁹³

Peysakh (Passover; broadcast 28 April 1929 – also carried by WCAU Philadelphia);⁹⁴ Zavel Zilberts with the choir: (trans.) “The Boiberiker Kapelye, directed by Hersh Gross, will play prayers for the holiday [*yontefdike tfiles*] – a bit of holiday evening prayers, a bit of *sfire* melodies,⁹⁵ and motifs from the prayer for dew (*tal*).”⁹⁶

Shevues (broadcasts of 9 and 16 June, 1929): (1) 9 June: (trans.) “The Boiberiker Kapelye this Sunday will play things for Shevues. A bit of ‘Akdomes’ and other melodies for this holiday.”⁹⁷ (Engl.) “...that ever-popular Jewish orchestra the Boiberiker Kapelye, has its place on our program today.”⁹⁸ (2) 16 June 1929” (transl.) *Megilas Rut*, a “biblical idyll”. (The story of Ruth

is always read as part of the Shevues service. This was not an opera but a dramatic play with musical accompaniment. The text was by Abraham Blum, the music by Joseph Rumshinsky, with an enlarged Boiberiker Orchestra conducted by Abraham Ellstein.⁹⁹

Rosh Hashone (Jewish new year; broadcast 29 September 1929): (trans.) “The Boiberiker Kapelye will this time play melodies from New Year prayers – the composition is a very attractive one, and you will listen to it with pleasure.”¹⁰⁰

Yom Kippur (broadcast 13 October 1929), with Nochem Goroshin, cello, a teacher at the Toronto Conservatory, director of the Schubert Concert Orchestra: (trans.) “...with the Boiberiker Kapelye which is directed by Hersh Gross – Mr Gross has prepared prayer melodies from Yom Kippur, in which Mr Goroshin will play the solos.”¹⁰¹

Sukkes (broadcast 20 October 1929): “The Boiberiker Kapelye will play a new medley of holiday tunes.” (This program was broadcast on the second day of Sukkos.)¹⁰²

Simkhas Toyre (broadcast 27 October 1929 – note; 24 October 1929 was Black Thursday, 29 October was Black Tuesday) with Molly Picon, Joseph Rumshinsky, Betty Simonoff, Mark Schweid: (trans.) “The Boiberiker Kapelye, directed by Hersh Gross, will regale you with ‘Ato Horeiso’” (the celebration of this holiday commences with the reading of a selection of verses, beginning “*Ato horeiso loda’as*” (You Have Been Revealed), recounting how God revealed Himself to the Jewish People at Mount Sinai), and with *hakufes*¹⁰³ “in their own unique style” (*af ir eygenem shteyger*).¹⁰⁴ This was the last *Tog* program on which they appeared.

“Operas”¹⁰⁵

Broadcast 10 February 10, 1929: “The Boiberiker Kapelye, led by Hersh Gross and Berish Katz, will play a medley of songs (*krantz lider*) from Goldfaden’s operettas.”¹⁰⁶ (The English adds: “The Boiberiker Kapelye, playing string instruments.”)¹⁰⁷

Broadcast 24 February 1929 (English only): “For the first time in the history of the radio an entire Jewish opera will be broadcasted (*sic*), the popular *Bar Kochba*, written about fifty years ago by Abraham Goldfaden and adapted for this unique performance over the air by Alexander Olshanetzki (*sic*) of the National Theatre, who will conduct it today.” The all-star cast includes Cantor Mordecai Hershman in the lead tenor role; as Dina, Regina Zuckerberg; and a choir selected from the Hebrew Choristers Union. The Boiberiker Orchestra will accompany the singers. (An advertisement for this broadcast was printed in the *New York Times*, 23 February 1929, p. 9: Fig. 7.)

Broadcast 10 March 1929: “The Boiberiker Kapelye, led by Hersh Gross, will as always give a concert. In addition they will play the introduction to *Liederkrantz* [a children’s opera] by (Leo) Low” (director of the full choir of the Jewish National Workers Alliance”. (Yidish Nationaler Arbeter Farband)¹⁰⁸

Broadcast 21 April 1929. The Goldfaden opera *Akeydas Itskhok* (“The Binding of Isaac”) with Betty Simonoff as Sara, Peakh’ke Burstein (Lot), David Lindt, a bar-mitzvah boy, as

Isaac, Cantor Abraham Hyman as Abraham): (trans.) “The whole opera has been rewritten, both text and music, to suit a radio performance. All the familiar melodies from this wonderful operetta will be heard in a new arrangement. The well-known young musician Abraham Ellstein has re-orchestrated the music, added an overture and a finale, and the old *Akeydas Itzhok* will sound more modern and more beautiful. Ellstein has “symphonized” – if one can put it this way – the beautiful old melodies, and the result is quite a successful job.” The text was rewritten by Ts. H. Rubinstein.: (trans.) “In this radio presentation, our listeners will have the opportunity to hear the fall of Sodom and Gemora. This radio effect will be attempted for the first time. We hope the illusion will be effective. (English only adds: “The Boiberiker Kapelye, with ten added players, will do its highly important share as usual, under the direction of Abraham Ellstein.”)¹⁰⁹

Broadcast 8 September 1929. *Bas Yerusheloyim*. Libretto by Isaac Auerbach; Khone Wolfsthal, a famous musician, composed the music... The Boiberiker Kapelye, with Hersh Gross as their leader, have been away all summer. They are therefore guests on our program.¹¹⁰

See also above, under holidays: Purim, 24 March 1929; Shevues, 16 June 1929.

Various other themes

Broadcast 14 October 1928. Hasidism: “Baym Rebns Tish.” (“Chassidic Music on the Radio”¹¹¹): Baym Rebns Tish: (trans.) ‘At the Rebbe’s Table.’ “Naturally the Boiberiker Kapelye will take part in the upcoming concert under the direction of the two successful musicians, Hersh Gross and Berish Katz.”¹¹² (On the program, Shmuel Niger¹¹³ gives a talk on “Hasidism”. “The first two broadcasts were a great musical success, and now for the third “hour” quite a new experiment is being made in the carrying out of the program. ‘Bam Rebns Tish’ is a musical presentation that required a lot of work and a lot of study. Maurice Schwartz however spared no effort, and now the thing is ready to be splendidly presented. “Bam Rebns Tish” is a kind of intertwining (*geflekht*) of Hasidic song from various times and the synthesis is such a successful one, that the Jewish public will surely experience a satisfaction of spirit (*nakhes ruakh*) listening to the songs. Besides Maurice Schwartz, the young, heartfelt singer Lazar Freed will also be heard in several solo songs. Lazar Freed has a wonderful voice and it is a pleasure to hear him. A Hasidic “shteyger”¹¹⁴ will be presented by Miriam Elias, the well-known actress formerly with the “Habimah” and now with the Yiddish Art Theatre. The “Hasidim” at the rebbe’s table will all be actors from the Art Theatre; with the members of the dramatic school approximately 50 voices will be heard altogether.¹¹⁵ (Gross had a professional connection with this theatre – see below at n.189.)

Broadcast 21 October 1928. Eretz Yisroel (Palestine) Hour “Eretz-Yisroel-Shoh”: (trans.) “And finally – our own Boiberiker Kapelye, led by Hersh Gross and Berish Katz. This time the Boiberiker Kapelye will be a kind of Tel-Aviver Kapelye, and it will really be something to hear.”¹¹⁶

Broadcast 28 October 1928: “A Shabbes in Shtetl” (“A Real Sabbath in the Home Town”), with Bina Abramovich, Cantor Leiebele Glantz, David Vardi, Lazar Freed, Abe Ellstein,



Will Broadcast Tomorrow
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“בר-כוכבא”
“BAR KOCHBA”

one of the oldest and most popular Jewish operettas by the famous composer, A. Goldfaden; especially adapted for its first performance over the air by A. Olshanetzki.

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מרדכי הערשמן
 Cantor Mordecai Hershman

רעינא זוקערבערג
 Regina Zuckerberg

באריס ראזענבלאט
 Boris Rosenthal

אל הערשקאָוויץ
 Al Hershkovitz

A. Olshanetzki Will Lead
the Boiberiker Orchestra

Figure 7. Advertisement for *Tog* Program, NY Times, 23 February 1929. p.9.

and others: (trans.) “A *melave-malke* (after *havd-ule*, of course) – and here you will be able to hear the Boiberiker Kapelye.”¹¹⁷

Broadcast 4 November 1928, in honor of the fourteenth anniversary of the *Tog*, with Cantor Yosele Shapiro and Meyer Machtenberg’s choir:¹¹⁸ (trans.) “... and finally, the Boiberiker – Berish Katz and Hersh Gross every week write new things and put together special musical programs. The Boiberiker have become extremely popular with the Jewish public.”¹¹⁹

Broadcast 11 November 1928, a program of Yiddish song and cantorial music: (trans.) “...and to close, the Boiberiker Kapelye with Berish Katz and Hersh Gross at the top. An important musical number from the Boiberiker Kapelye this coming Sunday will be the composition of an old Jewish klezmer, Psakhya Wolf, who was famous in the old country. This composition was played many years ago at the wedding of a famous rabbi, and now Psakhya Wolf’s pupil (*talmid*), Berish Katz, has arranged this music (*neginah*) for the Boiberiker Kapelye, which will be heard next Sunday.”¹²⁰ (This is a wonderful example of the paradox of the immigrant generation. Psakhya Wolf, “the old Jewish klezmer,” “famous in the old country”, and Berish’s *rebbe* in music – now known as Paul Wolf – lived just down the street from Katz on Thatford Avenue in Brownsville (Brooklyn), and no doubt had lots of *nakhes* listening to this broadcast.)

Broadcast 16 December 1928. Sam Heller (the pianist of the Boiberiker Kapelye) will accompany the artists: “...an exceptional program of songs.” “The Boiberiker Kapelye is preparing special *nigunim*.”¹²¹

Broadcast 30 December 1928: “An Hour of Folk Songs.” The Boiberiker will play a medley of folk-song motifs.¹²²

Broadcast 19 May 1929: “A Yiddish Cabaret.”¹²³ (trans. of an advertisement:) “The *Tog* radio hour for next Sunday. Station WABC and station

WCAU, 12:30-1:30 pm. 'A Yidisher Kabaret' will be presented with all the trimmings. Participating: Mark Schweid, kupletist deluxe; Yetta Zwirling, *lebedig un freylich*; Cantor Joseph Gloveritch, a beautiful singer; Luba Vesolaia, flame of fire; Mischa Besarabov, a serious singer; Dave Tarras, a Romanian doina – 'Yiddishly'. J. Silver, '*der tsimbldiger tsimbler*.' Boiberiker Kapelye, as always. Abraham Ellstein – pure music."¹²⁴

Non-thematic programs

Broadcast 18 November 1928. The Boiberiker Kapelye plays Boruch Kintzler's "Avodah" Chazn Berel Chagy *et al.* (trans.) "As every Sunday, so also this time, the Boiberiker Kapelye, which has prepared Boruch Kintzler's 'Avodah' for the concert, will not be missing."¹²⁵

Broadcast 25 November 1928: Boiberiker Kapelye "...will be heard in several new selections."¹²⁶

Broadcast 23 December 1928. "...also the Boiberiker Kapelye, led by Hersh Gross and Berish Katz, has prepared a special program, and as always they will bring you lots of pleasure."¹²⁷

Broadcast 3 & 10 February 1929, with string instruments only: (trans.) "A new feature this week will be the Boiberiker Kapelye as a string orchestra. Up to now they have played only (together) with wind instruments [*sic*] and this week they will be heard as a string ensemble."¹²⁸

Broadcast 5 May 1929. (trans.) "The Boiberiker Kapelye in a series of Jewish motifs."¹²⁹

Broadcast 12 May 1929. (trans.) "The beloved Boiberike Kapelye, under the outstanding direction of its conductor Hersh Gross, will play a series of expressive [*hartsige*] Jewish motifs."¹³⁰

Formulaic mentions

Broadcast 2 December 1928: "...will be heard as usual to do its bit". 13 January 1929 "...the Boiberiker Kapelye has its usual important place in our program."¹³¹ Similar wording for programs of 20 January, 31 March, 7 April, 14 April, 26 May, and 2 June 1929. The lack of details should not be interpreted as a lack of anything interesting. It probably means that they did not prepare new music or new arrangements for these programs, but played traditional numbers from their vast repertoire.

Exit Berish Katz

Just past the two-year mark in its history, the Boiberiker Kapelye came to a turning point. The program of 24 March 1929 (the Purim play) would be the last for co-director Berish Katz. The feature that week was a Purim play, with text by Z.H. Rubinstein, city editor of the *Tog*, for which Katz wrote the music. Before this, his name had invariably been mentioned in the credits, usually following Gross's. For this program (*Tog*, English page, 24 March 1929), the billing reads: "...under the direction of Berish Katz and Hersh Gross"

(cit.). That Katz's name is mentioned first is quite significant. The Yiddish program announcement (*Tog*, Saturday 23 March 1929, p.1) states: "The Boiberiker Kapelye will shine this time, as it should be. Berish Katz has prepared just the right *nigun*, and Hersh Gross will direct the ensemble." (*Di Boiberiker Kapelye vet dus mol glantzen vi es geher tsu zayn, Berish Katz hot tsigegreyt dem rikhtign nign, un Hersh Gros vet dirigiren di kapelye.*)

This is corroborated by an article that appeared in the *Tog* more than two decades later, based on an interview with Katz: "Berish Katz ... played a part in this newspaper: i.e., he wrote music for the first and now famous radio programs of the *Tog*... For those programs he wrote folk-like music for Simkhes Toyre, songs for Chanukah and for a Purim play."¹³² (Author's trans.)

As we have seen, while Katz was still involved with the Boiberiker Kapelye, they did take part in a program for Simkhes Toyre (7 October 1928) and one for Chanukah (9 December 1928). For the first, both are credited, with Gross mentioned first: "In honor of Simkhes Toyre Hersh Gross and Berish Katz, the leaders of the kapelye, have prepared an outstanding program of merry Yiddish music..." For the second, neither are specifically credited. Music for a Purim play occupying an entire hour, written by one of the main editors of the *Tog* and performed by leading Yiddish singers and actors, a cast of more than 80 in all, would have been a much more important credit.¹³³

That something about this Purim program crystallized resentments that had been developing in Katz raises questions about his professional goals, musical ideals, and personality. These questions are difficult to answer, but some evidence exists. Katz was an extremely talented musician and a gifted composer and arranger. From the 1949 Younin article we learn that he had always dreamed of working in the Yiddish theatre, but never did because "in those days" there was "a sort of monopoly" on Second Avenue. Instead he settled for being a pit musician on Broadway.

Katz's walkout occurred at a time when the *Tog* program was engaging major Yiddish theatre composers for big productions. Alexander Olshanetsky's new version of *Bar Kochba* had already been aired (24 February 1929), Abraham Ellstein's recasting of *Akeydas Yitshkok* (20 April 1929) and Joseph Rumshinsky's new *Megilas Rut* (16 June 1929) were coming up in the near future. Such collaborations were obviously advantageous for Gross and for the band as a whole, but Katz must have found them frustrating. One can imagine him wondering why he wasn't getting opportunities to compose for the "big" productions.¹³⁴ This is not to suggest that Gross did not appreciate his partner's talents, but rather that his strategies for advancing the band were more "political" than Katz could accept.

Katz had a chance with the Purim Play. Yet this was "the straw that broke the camel's back". Most likely his music was well received; there is no reason to think otherwise. But then it would only have been all the more frustrating to find it made no difference, because "big names" were being brought in for future big productions. No doubt it was some combination of these factors and others unknown, but clearly Katz chose this moment to leave. His name, until then always paired with Gross's, never again appears, although the Boiberiker itself would continue under Gross's direction for at least another three and a half years – until at least November 1932.

As for musical ideals and personality differences, there are several further pieces of anecdotal evidence from people who knew Katz. Two come from Joshua Hescheles, by way of Feldman:

Hescheles does mention that... Katz was being marginalized within the ensemble because his taste was too artistic. (p.53)¹³⁵

*On more than one occasion Hescheles recalls arguments with Katz when he tried to “correct” the rhythm of certain klezmer pieces they had learned in Galicia. Hescheles’ final argument was usually “but I learned this from Moshke Mikhl” [Dudlsack].*¹³⁶

Katz’s son and daughter-in-law spoke of him with the greatest love and affection. But when I read the second of these passages to them, they laughed softly. “When you say about the argument – Pop arguing with that other man. That’s so much like Pop, you know,” Mrs. Kaye said. “My father had a very bad temper,” Mr. Kaye added. “I mean he could get mad. Oy!” “And he was opinionated,” noted his wife. “Oh was he ever,” Mr. Kaye agreed, “oh was he ever.” He described Berish as having “a very short fuse”.¹³⁷ “Pop argued with anybody, you know,” concluded Mrs. Kaye. “But most of the time he was right.”¹³⁸

All signs are that Gross was just the opposite. Gross embodied the combination of musicality, connections, social and business skills needed in a bandleader. He could be a paragon of tact, for example, comforting distraught wives and coaxing back runaway husbands. His philanthropic activities and reputed attraction to politics [see further, below] similarly indicate a man who liked dealing with all kinds of people and knew how to get along. Otherwise it is impossible to understand how he could have worked as co-director with his brilliant but argumentative partner for as long as he did.

Weddings, Bar Mitzvahs and Society Balls

Did the Boiberiker Kapelye play weddings and other affairs? Of course they did. A short time after Katz’s walkout an advertisement for the Boiberiker Kapelye appeared in the *Tog*:

*The Boiberiker Kapelye announces that that they play not only Hasidic-Yiddish music, but also classical, operatic music, as well as jazz in the most modern manner; The ensemble accepts engagements for weddings, banquets, concerts, and so on.*¹³⁹ (Fig. 8.)

In the nature of things, we have little information about any weddings they played. Aside from the above advertisement showing that they did this kind of work, niece Sylvia (daughter of Hersh’s brother Morris), told this author:

*I heard them – on the radio of course – the Boiberiker Kapelye. I also heard when they played at this one’s wedding, that one’s bar mitzvah. I remember his playing, he was leading the orchestra and playing the violin.*¹⁴⁰

As for mutual-aid societies, here again we have very limited information. It is difficult to find this sort of data, but the following examples would be representative of many other such jobs:

2 March 1929. Masquerade and Civic Ball of the Amshtshenover Independent Benevolent Society, Manhattan Lyceum, 66 E. Fourth Street. “The orchestra for the ball is a big surprise – the well-known Boiberiker Kapelye.”¹⁴¹

די בויבריקער קאפעליע לאזט ווייסען

די בויבריקער קאפעליע לאזט ווייסען.
 אז זי שפילט ניט נאר חסידיש - אידישע
 מוזיק. נאר אויך קלאסישע, אפערעטישע
 מוזיק און אויך דזשעז אויפ'ן מאדערנ-
 סטען אופן.

די קאפעליע נעמט אן חתונות, באנקע-
 טען, קאנצערטען, א. א. וו.

אדרעסירט:

H. GROSS

95 Ridge Street :::::: New York
 Telephone, Dry Dock 4913



הערש גראס

דער קאפעליסטער
 פון דער בויבריקער
 קאפעליע

Figure 8. Advertisement for the Boiberiker Kapelye, *Tog*, 16 May 1929, p.2.

11 May 1929. Mayflower Ball, Kolomeyer Branch 528, Arbeter Ring, Beethoven Hall: "The famous Boiberiker Kapelye will entertain you."¹⁴²

13 December 1930. "Hersh Gross with his Boiberiker Kapelye will participate" in the 27th anniversary ball of the *Poltaver Briderlikher Untershtitzungs Sosayeti* (the Poltava Fraternal Support Society) at Lorraine Hall, 790 Broadway corner Sumner, Brooklyn.¹⁴³

The Boiberiker certainly played at many more events of this kind for regionally-defined Jewish mutual-aid societies, even if we cannot cite particulars. But these three are enough to suggest the broad appeal, and no doubt also the wide regional repertoire, of the Boiberiker Kapelye. The Amshtshenover represents central Poland, the Kolomeyer, southeastern Galicia, and the Poltaver, Russian Ukraine southeast of Kiev. Feldman (p.54) suggests that the fact that "the personnel (of the Boiberiker) was mixed" was part of the reason why the band was "not a traditional Galician *kapelye*". In fact all the members were from either Galicia (broadly defined) or Ukraine (Fiedel had also lived in Bessarabia not far from the Ukrainian border). The traditional ensemble of two violins, cello and cimbalom seems to have disappeared from Ukraine in the late nineteenth century, but the very close historical relationship between Galician and Ukrainian Hasidism is enough to explain why the old Hasidic phrasing and ornamentation was a common heritage of all members of the Boiberiker Kapelye, most of whom grew up during the 1880s and 1890s. (In the Afterword, the author will point to cultural influences in the 1920s that were creating a new interest in this style among Jewish audiences, whether or not they came from a Hasidic background.)

The Spring Carnival and Ball of the Jewish Students League

In this last respect, one “single engagement” the Boiberiker played deserves special notice. On 19 April 1930 they provided music for the “Spring Carnival and Student Ball” of the Jewish Students League of the Yiddish Culture Association, held at Mecca Temple, 131 West 55th Street, Manhattan (now the New York City Center). Weekly advertisements that appeared in the Yiddish magazine *Vokh* in the six weeks leading up to the ball provide important information. The first two are identical: they say that the music will be provided by “the Boiberiker Kapelye, under the leadership of Hersh Gross – a special hour of Hasidic and folk-melodies”.¹⁴⁴ The next is headed with the tag: “Dancing? – of course!”¹⁴⁵ The following week the tag reads: “Hasidim! The Rebbe will dance/ to the sounds of the Boiberiker Kapelye...”¹⁴⁶ The fifth begins: “Dreamers! Dreamers! Make your dreams of vengerkas, troikas, polkas, shers, come true at the ball of the Jewish Students League,” etc.¹⁴⁷ The last two read:

Hasidim will dance at the Yiddish Students League Ball. – Saturday night, 19th April, Hasidim will dance away [zikh tsetantsn] at the Yiddish Students League Ball. The Boiberiker Kapelye will play specifically-Hasidic and folk music, and those who have long been dreaming of an opportunity to dance vengerkas (Russian for “Hungarians,” i.e., czardas’s), troikas, padespans [pas-d’espagne], polkas, shers, horas, freilekhs and on and on, will be able to dance away [veln zikh kenen tsetantsn] to their heart’s content. The ball will take place Saturday night, 19th April, at Mecca Temple... All the Jewish youth of New York, the students at the New York colleges will be there. It will be the most beautiful gathering of the Jewish student youth.

and...

*Dancing? Come dance with us!!! Partying? So, of course with us!!! Youth! Joy! Spring and Hasidic ecstasy!!! The famous Boiberiker Kapelye will play vengerkas, troikas, padespans, polkas, shers, horas, waltzes, fox-trots, tangos – in both American and Hasidic style.*¹⁴⁸

Note that references to Hasidism and to the Boiberiker gradually increase as the month goes on, to the point where it is hard to believe – as stated in the first two – that the band would devote only a “special hour” to “Hasidic and folk-melodies”. Yet of all the dances mentioned, only the sher, freylakhs and hora (depending on what is meant by hora) are danced to music that is actually Hasidic. We will come back to the other dances shortly, but first something about the sponsoring organization.

The Idisher Kultur-Gezelshaft (Yiddish Culture Society) was founded in 1929, with the aim of gathering and unifying the creative forces of Yiddishism¹⁴⁹ to “enrich our spiritual life, and strengthen our cultural positions in this country.”¹⁵⁰ Its Student League (which grew out of an earlier Jewish Students’ Youth Branch)¹⁵¹ was inaugurated in December 1929 as a national organization with branches throughout the country for students of the secular Yiddish middle schools and teacher-training institutions (*lern-seminaren*), as well as Jewish students at colleges and universities.¹⁵² This student youth branch points up the Society’s educational goals and the importance it gave to building a base for the future – a sustainable, indigenous Yiddish speaking community in America – especially in the wake of the Johnson-Reed immigration exclusion

act of 1924, which ended large-scale immigration from southern and eastern Europe. The Yiddish Culture Society was the first organization to specifically enunciate these goals.¹⁵³

Phrases such as “the Rebbe will dance” and “Hasidim will dance away” are of course only culturally-resonant figures of speech, since the Society was anything but a Hasidic organization; a ball is not something one would see real Hasidim at, and in any case this ball was being held on the seventh night of Passover, when no strictly observant Jew would have attended.¹⁵⁴ But it points to the same trend we discuss in the Afterword, acknowledgement of the great importance of Hasidism for the development of Yiddish culture, here expressed in the area of folk music and dance. The Boiberiker Kapelye was the perfect choice, for the goals formulated by the Yiddish Culture Society grew out of the same cultural impulse that made the Boiberiker Kapelye so appealing to the broad Yiddish radio audience.

Finally, a word of comment on the dance forms mentioned in the advertisements – vengerka (czardas), troika, padespan (pas-d’espagne), polka, sher, hora, freilekhs, waltz, fox-trot, tango – “in both American and Hasidic style”. What is interesting is that among all of these, only the sher, hora (presumably the slow hora or *zhok*), and the freilekhs, were considered “klezmer music” by the man who actually coined the term “klezmer music” – Soviet ethnomusicologist Moishe Beregovsky. Of course the fox-trot and the tango were modern dances – both took America by storm in the years just before World War I – but in 1930 there could have been few Jewish weddings at which they were not played; the tango, which originated in Argentina, was popular in Europe about a decade before it hit America, and became extremely popular among Jews in eastern Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. (The melodies of many Yiddish songs from this period have a tango rhythm.)

The vengerka, troika, pas d’espagne, polka, waltz, along with many other cosmopolitan and coterritorial dances comprised a very important part of the Eastern European klezmer repertory in the nineteenth century. Yet Beregovsky includes none of these forms in his collection, nor have they been revived in the klezmer revival. Beregovsky writes in the *Jewish Instrumental Folk Music*.¹⁵⁵

For the dance repertoire one cannot notice any ethnic exclusivity. At late nineteenth-century weddings, along with specifically Jewish dances... such as the sher, freylekhs, baroygstants, beygele, more widely known dances were also played, such as the polka, quadrille... lancier, and rondo. The kazatchok... was long the popular favorite among the solo dances at Jewish weddings. Similarly, in earlier centuries current European dances enjoyed popularity among the Jews. (pp.8-9)

And further,

I do not have to speak here about the widely known dances done at Jewish weddings. Jews, like all urban populations, regardless of social stratum, have consistently adapted the popular dances of the day. (p.10)

Feldman (1994, 6-10)¹⁵⁶ analyzes the repertoire of the Eastern European klezmer into a “core” Jewish repertoire, basically of Hasidic origin, along with “coterritorial” (Polish, Ukrainian, Ruthenian), “transitional,” or “orientalized” (i.e., Romanian, *musica lautareasca*), and “cosmopolitan” (couple dances of Western and Central European origin, such as the *pas*

d'espagne, quadrille, polka, waltz) components. This provides a good beginning; the complications raised by Rubin,¹⁵⁷ while certainly valid, need not detain us here. What is worth noting, however, is the fact that the Boiberiker Kapelye, so famous for its old, Hasidic style, was also still playing this cosmopolitan/coterritorial repertoire in 1930, and that the Jewish Students' League still wanted it. The key to the problem, this author believes, is that in traditional Jewish communities, men and women did not dance together, and that the Hasidic or "core" dances were mainly for men, whereas the international/cosmopolitan dances were mainly for women. It is beyond the scope of this article to go any further into this question, but it needed at least to be raised because of the striking absence of most of the dances named, from what is today thought of as the "klezmer repertoire".

The Boiberiker Kapelye After Berish

Katz's walkout did not end the Boiberiker Kapelye's connection with the *Tog* program; as we have seen, they finished the season without him. But the band took the summer off – the very summer in which ABC moved into its new state-of-the-art studios – and in the fall season appeared on only five programs: 8th and 29th September, 13th, 20th and 27th October. On 2 October, the station upped its power tenfold, to a colossal 50,000 watts,¹⁵⁸ but the Boiberiker benefited from the increased listening area for only their last three broadcasts.

Between 24 October ("Black Thursday") and 29 October 1929 ("Black Tuesday"), Wall Street collapsed, ushering in what would later be known as the Great Depression. At the time, nobody understood just how bad it would be or how long it would last, but the fact is that the final broadcast of the Boiberiker on the *Tog* program coincides exactly with the Wall Street crash. This ended neither the program nor the ensemble, but they went their separate ways.¹⁵⁹ No doubt it was a blow to the Boiberiker to lose a steady source of employment at the start of the "crisis," especially as the music business was already in serious crisis before the Depression even started.¹⁶⁰

Radio was already having a negative impact on the phonograph industry as early as 1924.¹⁶¹ Obviously the Depression dramatically worsened this.¹⁶² The small Yiddish recording market was hit especially hard.¹⁶³ If Gross had any hopes of further recording, they were at this point dashed. Nevertheless, the very reason for recordings' failure was the reason for radio's success. Since most people already had radios by that time, it was a source of free entertainment, and new and improved radios continued to sell. Thus radio remained a prosperous business during the Depression; only a miniscule fraction of musicians were able to get steady work on radio, but if they did, they tended to do well.¹⁶⁴

To judge from continuing radio appearances, the Boiberiker Kapelye maintained its popularity in the Depression. After the *Tog* program, there is documentation of nine broadcasts on stations WBBC/WCGU, fourteen on WRNY, one on WLTH, and two on WFAB. Again, no claim is made for completeness.

The blurbs for the programs, short as they are, are at times very interesting, especially since we no doubt have in these little snippets of Yiddish discourse Hersh Gross's own understanding of the band and how he wanted his audience to think of it.

WBBC/WCGU

The following programs were broadcast jointly over WBBC and WCGU, Brooklyn, NY.¹⁶⁵

12 December 1929, 9:30-10 on the Parmet Brothers Jewish Hour, "Hersh Gross with his Boiberiker Kapelye".

24 December (Sunday), 9-10 pm, 1929. Branfman's Jewish Concert (or Jewish Hour), "the famous Boiberiker Kapelye".

1 January 1930, 7:30-8:30, Beim Brothers and Friedberg Jewish Hour, "Hersh Gross with his Boiberiker Kapelye".

7 January 1930 (Tuesday), Branfman's Radio Concert (Jewish Hour), "Hersh Gross and his famous Boiberiker Kapelye".

30 January 1930 (Thursday), 9:30-10 pm, Parmet Brothers Jewish Hour: "The Boiberiker Quintet under the direction of Hersh Gross." (It is unclear whether this only known reference to the Boiberiker as a "quintet" indicates that the band had been reduced from ten to five men permanently, or just for this occasion.) Note that it is called "Jewish Hour," although it is actually only a half hour.

4 March 1930 (Tuesday), 9-10 pm, Branfman Jewish Hour, Pincas Levanda (a very popular Yiddish radio singer) accompanied by "Hersh Gross and his Boiberiker Kapelye".¹⁶⁶

25 March 1930 (Tuesday), 9-10 p.m. Branfman's Jewish Hour. "Gustave Goldstein together with Hersh Gross and his Boiberiker Kapelye, will celebrate a Boiberiker wedding."¹⁶⁷

2 April 1930 (Wednesday) 9-10 p.m. Branfman's Jewish Hour. "Hersh Gross and his Boiberiker Kapelye in new musical numbers." (Passover began on the evening of 12 April 1930.)

15 April 1930 (Tuesday), 9-10 p.m. Branfman's Jewish Hour: "Hersh Gross with his Boiberiker Kapelye in new numbers in honor of Passover."¹⁶⁸

WRNY, WLTH & WFAB

In June and July of 1931, and again from December 1931 through February 1932, the Boiberiker Kapelye broadcast regularly on the Tuesday night Jewish Program on WRNY.¹⁶⁹ The blurbs for these programs sometimes provide important details:

On Tuesday, 9 June 1931, an unusually long program (6:30-8:00 p.m.) was broadcast:

"Hersh Gross with his Boiberiker Kapelye in a program of down-home, old fashioned wedding music, "Broigetz Tantz," "Kosher Tantz," "Beygele," "Sherele," "Khusidl," and just straight-out hopkes, freylekhs, kazatshkes, bulgars and so on and so on..."

They appeared 6:30-7:30 on Tuesdays, 16 June and 23 June; again on 30 June “in a program of Jewish wedding music” and on 14 July, “in Jewish orchestra music.”¹⁷⁰

On Tuesday, 20 October 1931, 7:30-8:00 they appeared on the Tribitz Shoe Program on WLTH, Brooklyn:¹⁷¹ “*Hyman [sic] Gross. Poiri Briker [sic for Boiberiker!] and others, Music from Boiberiker Kapelye.*”¹⁷²

A new series of broadcasts on Friday evenings at 6:30 p.m. on the WRNY Jewish Program (following services from temple Emanuel at 5:15) began, as far as is known, on 18 December with the band “in a new program of Jewish melodies”. This was followed on 25 December, “in a program of Jewish melodies”; 8 January 1932, “Jewish program, Boiberiker Kapelye”; “Hersh Gross with his Boiberiker Kapelye – Jewish *nigunim* and wedding dances in the manner in which they used to be played by the small-town klezmer in the Old Country – long, long ago.” On 15th January was heard a “Program of Jewish melodies, nigunim and dances, featured by Hersh Gross with his Boiberiker Kapelye.” Starting with the broadcast 22 January, “Old, characteristic Jewish melodies, nigunim and dances, played by Hersh Gross’s Boiberiker Kapelye,” the time was moved up to 7 p.m. On 29 January (7 p.m.) was featured “Hersh Gross with his Boiberiker Kapelye klezmorim”. They also played on the WRNY Jewish programs for February 5, 12 and 19. With the Boiberiker broadcasts immediately following Friday night services from a reformed temple favored by New York’s Jewish elite (an incongruous juxtaposition from either a cultural or a traditional-religious point of view), the copywriter allowed himself a rare moment of humorous irony, the tone of which scarcely comes through in English: “Sabbath music and profane music from a Reformed temple and a band of klezmorim: the Cantor, choir, soloists and organ of Temple Emanuel, 5:15 p.m. and Hersh’s Gross’s Boiberiker Kapelye at 7 p.m.” After 19th February the Jewish program continues, but there is no further mention of the Boiberiker Kapelye.¹⁷³

The last known radio broadcasts were on WFAB, Tuesdays from 9 to 9:30, 8 (Hersh Gross’s Boiberiker Kapelye”) and 15 November 1932 (“Hersh Gross with his Boiberiker Kapelye”).¹⁷⁴ Unfortunately no program details are available.¹⁷⁵

From among all these broadcasts – and no doubt others as yet unknown – there is little likelihood that any audio recordings have been preserved. But one can dream – miracles do happen.¹⁷⁶

The End of Boiberiker Kapelye

We have no definite information on when or how the Boiberiker Kapelye came to an end. The last known evidence of the band’s existence, the WFAB broadcast of 15 November 1932, is suggestive but not conclusive. In any case they could not have gone on very much longer. Little more than a year later, on 18 December 1933, Hersh Gross died under tragic circumstances, and for some time prior to his death he had been unable to work in New York. The story of Hersh Gross’s demise has long been forgotten. This author heard an “urban legend” version from perhaps the only person still around who could have known it¹⁷⁷ – to wit, that Gross jumped off the Williamsburgh Bridge when he found out that his wife was cheating on him. The story as this author has been able to piece it together from surviving relatives

of Gross and his second wife is rather different and more complicated. Even so, it is only an outline, and many significant details are not known and may never be known.

Hersh Gross had been married as a young man in Europe. His wife, Amalie (Makhle), was said to be quite attractive, but “mentally unstable”. According to Israel Gimpel:¹⁷⁸

Hersh Gross was a very attractive young man. He could even play [159 col.2] all the instruments, but especially the violin – and was also an excellent barber. He was not very attracted to barbering. He wanted to be a man of the world, he was interested in politics. But it didn't go that way for him. It's not as we want it. He married twice. He buried his first wife, but for that, his second wife buried him.¹⁷⁹ The Gross family was proud of Hersh. He had great “power of speech” [koyekh hadibur]. He had such a mouth for speaking that he could have been a cabinet minister. In addition, he was very good-looking. So what did God do? Hersh fell in love with a girl, Makhle Stein, and it seemed that as much as he loved her, she loved him even more. But the match did not suit her mother. What – a daughter of hers should marry a klezmer from the Zhidibaska Vilitza (“Jewish Street”)?¹⁸⁰

The love was so great however that the girl attempted suicide [hot zikh opgetun a mayse] and was only barely saved by Dr. Roth.¹⁸¹ Of course her mother now had to agree to her marriage with the good-looking klezmer. The marriage, however, was not a success: as poverty came in the door, love went out the window; there was lots of torment and no children. They rolled around Vienna and were twice in America, where Gross had an original Boiberiker Kapelye. But there was no nakhes.¹⁸²

Hersh's niece Sylvia, daughter of Morris, told this author:

He was a very good, friendly, bright man – only he made a mistake when he married – she was very pretty, but a little off the beam. (In Boiberke) they found her dancing in the street one night half-dressed. She did crazy things here too.¹⁸³

She also said:

[Makhle was] an erratic, mixed-up lady – the stories I heard later from my mother – when Makhle was single in Europe she was dancing in the street naked. She was related to cousins of mine on my father's side – that's how I heard these stories. I remember as a young girl I went to my uncle and aunt's [Hersch and Makhle's] apartment right near the Williamsburgh Bridge and stayed with them for the weekend.¹⁸⁴

A few years before his death, they divorced and Hersh remarried. His new wife's maiden name was Rose Nadaner. She was in her late twenties (born 19 October 1904), thus nearly twenty years younger than Gross. A cashier in a bank, Rose was herself a divorcée, having been briefly married to a young man named Harry Indianer, and she had a son Arnold about 6 or 7 years old.

The date of her marriage with Gross is not known, but cannot have been earlier than April 1930, since at the beginning of that month she was still living with her parents, Joseph and Eva Nadaner, at 830 Fox Street near Intervale Avenue in the South Bronx.¹⁸⁵

Rose and Harry Isadore Indianer had been married on 29 May 1922 in a double wedding

with Rose's brother Max and Harry's sister Kate, their courtship inspired by that of their younger siblings. When Harry and Rose's son Arnold was born around 1924, Harry found fatherhood uncongenial and the couple was soon divorced, while the marriage of their younger siblings proved a happy and lasting one. According to Rose's grand-niece:

Rose and Harry Indianer's divorce was not a happy matter for either side. Harry did not seem to want to support Arnold and Rose and Arnold moved in with Rose's parents. I think Sam Indianer felt compelled to help find a suitable husband for Rose. My understanding was that Harry Gross fell head over heels with Rose and, though it was never spoken, I think [this] may have caused the Gross divorce. Rose was attractive, not beautiful but very stylish, popular and outgoing. She was always a social butterfly even into her nineties.¹⁸⁶

It turns out that both the father of the bride, Joseph Nadaner, and the father of the groom, Samuel Indianer (who had for some time used the name Inden), were good friends of Hersh Gross. Indianer, who came from Jaroslaw, Galicia, had been living in New York a long time. He emigrated with his family around 1884, when he was about 11 years old. It is curious that in the early 1890s, Indianer made his home at 93 Ridge Street (according to his naturalization papers [1891] and marriage license [1894]), while Gross's business address twenty years later (a barber shop), was 95 Ridge Street – exactly next door.¹⁸⁷

We have already seen that Harry Gross was drawn to philanthropy. He was a member and the second president of the Independent Greater New York Sick and Benevolent Association, founded in June 1918. Under his leadership, this organization purchased a cemetery plot in Baron de Hirsch Cemetery in Staten Island.¹⁸⁸

Max H. Indianer (Inden) worked as costumer in Maurice Schwartz's famous Yiddish Art Theatre, sometimes appearing on stage as well. He was also a member of the board of directors and traveled with them on all their tours. It is believed that Hersh Gross played violin in the orchestra of that theatre.¹⁸⁹

In 1933 Hersh and Rose were living in Newark, New Jersey, at 18 Stratford Place, apartment 22.¹⁹⁰ The story goes, as this author heard it from two of Gross's nieces, that after he remarried, Makhla sued him. Knowing that his predictable presence at booked engagements made him a sitting duck for process servers, Gross was terrified to set foot in New York. Fortunately Rose, as before, had a job in a bank, but his whole career was on ice. This appears to be corroborated by a curious fact.

On the two known Boiberiker studio photographs from 1927, one of which is reproduced here (see Fig. 5), the words "H. GROSS'S BOIBRIKER KAPELIE" (*sic*) are painted on the bass drum, with "Boiberiker Kapelye" repeated in Yiddish. However, on the copy of exactly the same photograph from Sapoznik's collection (reproduced on the cover of the Yazoo "Dave Tarras" CD and the jacket of Sapoznik's *Klezmer!*), this sign had been carefully blanked out and replaced with the words "Boiberiker Kapelie" – in Yiddish horizontally just above the center of the drumhead, and in English, slightly out of parallel, just below. The typeset Yiddish inscription is printed in black on what appears to be a strip of paper applied over the drumhead image, whereas the English appears to have been written by hand in white ink (or possibly in black ink on the negative). The result is not too legible, since the darker Yiddish is very faded and the English is white against the light grey of the drumhead. The point is that Gross's name is not there.

The obvious inference is that at some point an intention arose to continue to the band without Gross; whether or to what extent this was actually carried out is unknown. As virtually every known blurb up to the last (15 November 1932) specifies “Hersh Gross’s Boiberiker Kapelye,” the photo must have been altered subsequent to that date. After all, if Gross could not work in New York, the band itself was still popular. There were contracts that had to be honored whether or not he was able to show up. It must have been unspeakably sad for Gross to know that the band he created and led for five and a half years, was working without him. That no later evidence of the Boiberiker Kapelye without Gross has surfaced may mean that the situation did not last for very long. And just because his name is still found in notices does not guarantee that he was actually present when the band played. Evidence of the band’s continuation without Gross may exist, however. If there was any dispute between Gross and the band on the question, the union would no doubt have had to adjudicate. This whole aspect of the story is unknown.¹⁹¹

In any case, the term “great depression” must describe Gross’s inner world as accurately as it does the economic situation. He had a life insurance policy and the family believes he wanted his wife and stepson to get the benefits. On Monday, 18 December 1933, while Rose was out at work, Arnold was in the kitchen. Harry went out the kitchen window. There was a big commotion – neighbors came running. He had jumped!

Gross was buried the next day in the same Independent Greater New York Sick and Benevolent plot that he himself had been instrumental in purchasing. Today his friends and in-laws, Joseph and Eva Nadaner, lie beside him.

Rose moved back with her parents (she had been living with them before her marriage to Harry).¹⁹² After this traumatic experience, Arnold was raised largely by his grandparents. Rose did not stay in contact with the Gross family – but in speaking to his nieces, this author found that it was Makhla, not Rose, that was seen as the cause of his troubles, and that Rose was remembered with affection and respect.

One niece (Sylvia, daughter of Morris) told this author: “She was a little younger than him. Many times she came to our house with him before he left (to New Jersey).”¹⁹³ “She visited us with him, my mother was very happy to receive her.”¹⁹⁴ “She was a very bright, intelligent, pretty woman. I think she worked in a bank.”¹⁹⁵ [Asked about this, Frances Wallach, daughter of Adolph, commented: “She was known in our family as a modern woman.”¹⁹⁶] Rose went on to marry an amazing five more times, surviving into her 97th year; she died in a nursing home in Long Beach, Long Island on December 21, 2001.¹⁹⁷ This tragic story adds another layer of irony to the black humor of “badkhn” Hersh Gross in the “Boiberiker Khasene” (see Appendix):

*At this moment you are still among human beings in an honorable house –
In another minute the dark, eternal grave opens before you.*

*Just take a look at that cholera – the affliction, the witch –
Your angel of death, whom you are now about to wed...*

***Afterword: Cultural Revival,
Hasidic Revival, Klezmer Revival***

In retrospect, the Boiberiker Kapelye can be seen as part of a “klezmer revival” of sorts, though its nature was different from the more recent one that began about thirty years ago: it was simply the klezmer component of a Yiddish folk-cultural revival that had been gathering steam for decades and naturally gravitated towards Hasidism as the quintessential expression of Yiddish folk culture. At that time, many European-born musicians brought up in the old tradition were still playing at Jewish weddings (and making recordings), but the old Hasidic style was already antiquated and a newer, more Romanian influence was coming in, not to mention the inescapable influence of American popular music. But this change of consciousness somewhat changed the way the music was perceived, at least by the intelligentsia, and renewed interest in a playing style that was consciously “retro,” not as a parody but rather a true revival of what the musicians themselves had grown up with.

Although concern for the dying out of musical as well as other East European Jewish folklore had already motivated Marek and Ginsburg (1901)¹⁹⁸ and the An-sky Expedition (1911-1914),¹⁹⁹ in both of which the composer and ethnologist Joel Engel (1868-1927) played a major role, some of the attrition of Yiddish folk arts in Eastern Europe was simply due to the massive emigration that had begun in 1881. At first, a high proportion of the new Jewish immigrants came from larger cities where Jews already favored more modern, cosmopolitan European music. The professional musicians among these immigrants, most of whom would have been called “klezmer” in Europe, found in New York a musical world of still greater diversity and opportunity. As long as the East European Jewish community remained relatively small, it was highly vulnerable to assimilatory pressures, and this applies to the musicians as well; but as conditions for Jews in Europe continued to worsen in the years before the World War I, the immigrant community grew to a huge size, with a greater component of both musicians and audience from the more rural, small-town districts, the real klezmer heartland. “Critical mass” seems to have been reached around 1912-1914, which may explain the new vogue for Jewish instrumental folk recordings that began in both Eastern Europe and the United States at exactly that period. (A few “klezmer” recordings had been made earlier in Europe and America, but these were harbingers rather than the wave itself.)²⁰⁰

With sufficient audience and musicians, the popularity of this music was simply a continuation of familiar lifeways and functions to the extent possible in the New World. In this sense we cannot speak of revival, but rather, survival and adaptation to new conditions. However, the Yiddish intellectual world in America had from the start of the Great Immigration been dominated by radical thinkers, most of whom preferred to speak Russian (though they knew enough to reach a broad audience in Yiddish), and who were far more interested in revolutionary politics than in traditional Jewish culture, least of all klezmer music. In the 1920s that changed – though the change had been brewing for at least 15 years, as seen for example in the move to legitimize Yiddish as a full and valid language (Czernowitz Conference, 1908).²⁰¹

The leading folk trends were epitomized in Hasidism, which until the 1920s had been nothing but the target of satire and ridicule for its supposed social backwardness, etc., superstition, etc. As Abraham Goldberg explained in 1925:

A generation ago ... The opinion makers among the maskilim ("enlighteners," i.e., modernists) did not see even a single ray of light in the entire Hasidic movement. They ridiculed and laughed at everything in the Hasidic style. They saw in it nothing more than boorishness and ignorance... Hasidic tales were for them no more than wild foolishness, superstitious absurdities that were intentionally made up by the tsadikim (holy men) and their henchmen in order to be able to keep the people in darkness, to get as much milk from the cow – the poor Jewish masses – as possible, and to be all the more able to shear the wool from the holy Jewish lambs. The maskilim considered their struggle against the Hasidim a holy war. The literature of the Haskala ("Enlightenment," i.e., modernist movement) is full of satires and tendentious depictions directed against the "good Jews" in shtreymlekh (fur-mitres).

Then suddenly... the whole attitude to Hasidim changed. The opinion makers of the new Hebrew and Yiddish literature saw a new light, found pearls and gems in the Hasidic literature. There began a reevaluation of values, and a new world was revealed, a world of holy people, elevated souls, magnates, and noble spirits, people with pure hearts and bright eyes, who created a bright, heartfelt mysticism, a religious philosophy, and a deep moral teaching.

The new attitude to Hasidism enriched Hebrew and Yiddish literature with beautiful things. Great artists have come and demonstrated to us what can be made from the Hasidic materials – fantastic, colorful magic-tales that at the same time have a high moral content. (He mentions three writers in particular: Bardichevsky, Peretz, and Yehuda Shteinberg.)²⁰²

This was not, let it be emphasized, a revival of Hasidism itself, but rather, of its reputation among largely secular Jews. There were many reasons for this change, but probably the most immediate catalyst was the appearance of Shmuel An-sky's folk drama *The Dybbuk*, or *Between Two Worlds* – especially in its English-language production.

An-sky and his close friend and collaborator Chaim Zhitlovsky had started out as typical Russian-Jewish radical intellectuals, but they developed a new approach inspired by Russian populism, which brought respect and interest for everything having to do with the artistic creativity of the folk. Ansky died in Warsaw on 8 November 1920, never having seen his play professionally staged. Prepared by the Vilna troupe (in Yiddish), the play opened a month after his death at the Elyseum Theatre in Warsaw (9 December 1920), going on to become the most successful play in the Troupe's repertoire. A year later Maurice Schwartz produced it at the Yiddish Art Theatre in New York. A Hebrew version, translated by H.N. Bialik, was staged in Moscow some months later by the Habima troupe, directed by Yevgeny Vakhtangov.²⁰³ An article on "The Changing East Side," published in 1925, states:

(The audience of the ordinary Yiddish theatres) "is substantially the following of the second-rate Broadway musical comedies. But Second Avenue also has its art theatres...

(Maurice Schwartz's 1921 Yiddish production of The Dybbuk) had been practically ignored... But by producing it (in Winter 1925) in English translation, the (Neighborhood) Playhouse (on Grand Street) aroused a wide interest on the East Side...²⁰⁴

*Interest was stimulated, not only in the Yiddish theatre, but in the whole fascinating subject of Chassidim...*²⁰⁵

Additional catalysts for this new cultural awareness were the improved economic situation of most of the Yiddish-speaking public after the war, which allowed for a more reflective attitude; the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924, which, in drastically curtailing immigration from the Yiddish heartlands of central and eastern Europe, raised alarm for the future of Yiddish language and culture in America; and even the popularization of Zionism, in which Yiddish culture and left-wing politics played far more prominent roles at that period than is the case today.

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Appendix: Content of the Boiberiker Records

Die Boibriker Chasseneh (parts 1 & 2) – H. Gross, A. Schwartz. Part 1 3:15; Part 2 3:10. Columbia 8129-F, matrices W 107724-3, W 107725-3 (recorded March 1927)

On the first disc we hear a parody of *badkhones*, the extemporized rhymes chanted by the *badkhn* or wedding jester to the bride and groom respectively, at an old-fashioned Jewish wedding. The day before the wedding, through the end of the marriage ceremony itself, is traditionally considered a *yom ha-din* (day of repentance and judgment) for bride and groom, and therefore a day of fasting. The rhymes, punctuated by instrumental flourishes and chords, were filled with sadness in order to draw out and purge the normal fears and regrets besetting two young people on the verge of a life-changing experience who in many cases barely knew each other. The bride and other women were expected to cry, and if the groom himself cried it certainly was not amiss. This recording, however, is a parody, a kind of “black humor” that must have come naturally to klezmerim who had been through it all hundreds of times. While Hersh Gross’s delivery²⁰⁶ is entirely traditional, the words themselves are often “over the top”. Interspersed are brief renditions of music for a number of other functions at a traditional Jewish wedding.

The sound quality is excellent for the period, enabling us to hear with comparative precision the subtle stylistic details that give character to the music – the distinctive ornamentation and nuances of tempo, pitch and phrasing.

Transcription & Translation

Shat, klezmerim! Genig shoy'n gestroyet!
Lomir beser upshpiln a mazltov di machetunim.
Khevre, shpilt mir tsi... a melodi.

(Shush, klezmerim! Enough with the tuning already,
 Better let's play a mazl-tov (congratulations) for the parents of the bride and groom.
 Boys, accompany a melody for me.)²⁰⁷

Author's note: Brief introduction in 3/4 time

Oy a mazltov uptsegeybn
Darf men zikh itst bashtreybn, [chord]
Un azoy iz men mehana khusn-kale
vus hubn keyn tate un keyn mame. [chord]
Glik in tsufridenhayt zol bay akh hershn fun unheyb biz'n sof –
Boybriker Kapelye shpilt up dem ershtn – in a listikn – mazltov.

(Oh – one must now strive for oneself to offer up congratulations – and one is obliged to do so for a bride and groom who have neither father nor mother.
 May joy and contentment reign over you from beginning to end –
 Boiberiker Ensemble, play the first congratulatory piece, and make it a jolly one!)

Author's note: Here follows an anything but jolly piece – a lugubrious albeit exquisitely played gasn-nign in triple metre.

O...dus iz geven a mazltov far ale mekhetunim, far ale frant, af alder gantser mishpukhe.

(That was a congratulations for all the aunts, uncles, and their cousins,²⁰⁸ all other relatives, upon the whole family.)

Vaber, makht nit aus – khusn-kale fastn nokh?

(Ladies, it doesn't matter that the bride and groom are still fasting? (i.e., don't talk so much, the sooner we're done, the sooner they can eat).)

*A klal, lomir geyn badekn un bazingen di kale.
Klezmurim, helft mir tsi!*

(Without further ado, let's go veil the bride and sing to her.
Klezmer, help me out here.)

Author's note: violin flourish by Berish Katz.

*Oy, koydem a khipe miz men dertseyln dem emes, khusheve kale:
Der khusn vet fun dir shnadrn shtiker vi men shnat fun a piremdiker khale –
Dan khusn veyst shoyrn vi tsu ba'andlen a kale yesoyme:
Sheltn, patshn, trabn, yugn vekedoyme.
Nokh itst bisti tsvishn mentshn in an erlekher shtib,
In a minit arim efnit zikh far dir der eybiker, finsterer grib.
In gehakte tsures vet ir beyde tsi der khipe geyn,
Oyf dem veln ale zugn "venoymar umeyn."*

Author's note: violin flourish.

(Oh – before you “go down the aisle,” the truth must be told, respected bride: Your husband will slice pieces from you the way one slices up a Purim *challah*.²⁰⁹ He knows how to treat an orphan bride: cursing, slapping, slavedriving, chasing, and so on. At this moment you are still among human beings in an honorable house – In another minute the dark, eternal grave opens before you. You will both go to the marriage ceremony in a hash of troubles – and to that, everyone will say “Amen.”)

Oyrey! der khusn gayt badekn di kale, Mazltov, lomir gayn tsim khusn!

(Hooray! The groom is going to veil the bride. Congratulations, let's go to the groom!)

Author's note: Here the band strikes up a *freylekhs* – a happy piece – in two sections.²¹⁰

*Ho... dus iz geven zeyer a voyl shtikele,
Atsinder klezmurim git mir a tun, un lomir bazingen dem khusn.*

(Ho... that was a VERY nice piece.
Now, klezmorim, give me the pitch, and let's sing to the groom.)

Author's note: violin flourish.

*O-ho-ho... tayerer khusn un gliklekhes kind,
Her vus a badkhn zugt dir atsind:
Es zenen dikh mekane di mekhetunim ale tsizamen,
Vus di bist burikhashem a yusim, un a tatn in un a mamen – [chord]
Gib nur a kik af der khulerye – di tsure, di klipe –
Dayn malekhamuves, mit vemen di geyst itst tsi der khipe,
Makht nisht aus vus zi iz gants toyb un halb shtim,
Derfar iz ir eyn aksl hekher, in eyn oyg klener,
Un beyde fis krim. [chord]
Es gezegenen zikh itst ale dayne khaverim un frant,
Vayl dayn letster tug iz dir mit indz hant.*

(Oh, dear groom and fortunate child,
Hear what a badkhn says to you now:
All the aunts and uncles put together
Envy you because, G-d be blessed, you are an orphan, without a father or a mother.
Just take a look at that cholera – the affliction, the witch –
Your angel of death, whom you are now about to wed,
It doesn't matter that she's stone deaf and half mute,
Since she has one of her shoulders higher than the other, and one eye smaller than the other,
And both legs crooked.
Now it's time to say farewell to all your friends and relatives,
Because today is your last day with us.)

Author's note: violin flourish.

*A klal, interfirers, tit dem khusn un dem kitl,
Un me vet geyn tsi der khipe.
Klezmer, shpilt dem khipe-marsh!*

(Without further ado, attendants of the groom – dress him in his white robe, it's time for the marriage ceremony. Musicians, play the wedding march!)

Author's note: Here the band plays one strain of a spirited march in minor key.

*Burikh habo!
Harey – at – mikudeyshes – (zug) li – b'tavaas – zi –
K'das moyshe ve'yisrael.²¹¹*

(Welcome! – “Behold, thou art consecrated unto me with this ring in accordance with the laws of Moses and Israel.”)

Author’s note: End of the *sheva brukhes* (seven blessings).²¹²

Koil soston ve-koil simkho
Koil khuson ve-koil kaloh,
Koil mits’halos khasanim mekhipusom
Ine’urim mimishtey neginusom –
*Burikh atu Adoshem, misameyakh khuson im hakaloh.*²¹³

(...the voice of joy and the voice of celebration, the voice of a bridegroom and the voice of a bride, the happy shouting of bridegrooms from their weddings and of young men from their feasts of song. Blessed art Thou, oh Lord, who maketh the bridegroom and the bride rejoice together.)

mazltov, mazltov, mazltov, mazltov
*shpilt a leybedik shtikele!*²¹⁴

(congratulations, play a lively piece!)

Interfirers, firt inter di khusn-kale!
*A gite nakht! Mazltov, zol zayn mit mazl, mazltov!*²¹⁵

(Attendants, escort the bride and groom! Good night! Congratulations, may it be with good fortune, congratulations!)

Akdomes un af B’ri/Kinos, Tkios un Ashrei – H. Gross, leader (H. Gross, B. Katz, A. Schwartz). Columbia 8145-F, matrices W 108027-2, W 108028-1 (recorded June 1927)

Akdomes is a reference to the late-spring holiday of Shevuos, celebrating the giving of the Torah to the Jews – *Af B’ri*, to the end of the autumn holiday of Sukkos. Although both festivals belong to the *sholosh regalim*, (“three pilgrimages,” originally agricultural festivals, the third being Passover), the connection, if any, between *Akdomes* and *Af B’ri* is not immediately clear. *Akdomes* (“Introductions,” *Akdamos* in modern Hebrew) is a hymn (*piyut*) written in Aramaic by the medieval rabbi Meir ben Isaac of Worms (11th century), included in the Shevuos service. Its special tune has practically become the musical motif of this holiday. *Akdomes* contains, as part of a reference to Messianic legend, a reference to the autumn festival of Sukkos:

The sport with the Leviathan and the ox ...When they will interlock with one another and engage in combat, with his horns the Behemoth will gore with strength, the fish [Leviathan] will leap to meet him with his fins, with power. Their Creator will approach them with his mighty sword (and slay them both).” [Thus] “from the beautiful skin of the Leviathan, God will construct canopies to shelter the righteous, who will eat the meat of the Behemoth (ox) and the

Leviathan amid great joy and merriment, at a huge banquet that will be given for them.... And each righteous one under his canopy will sit in the Sukkah made from the skin of Leviathan, and in the future He will make a dance for the righteous ones, and a banquet in Paradise, from that Great Fish and the Wild Ox and from the wine preserved from the Creation.

Akdomes also says that: "...Angels of Heaven of all kinds, All full of fear and terror of their Master, Have permission to praise him only at set times..." Now, "Af B'ri" is the angel of rain mentioned in "Geshem," the prayer for winter wind and rain, composed by the 8th Century rabbi Elazar ha-Kallir. It is recited in the morning during the repetition of the Shemoneh Esray on the last two days of the autumn holiday of Sukkos, known as Shemini Atseres and Simkhas Torah:

Af-B'ri is designated as the name of the angel of rain; to thicken and to form clouds, to empty them and to cause rain. Water with which to crown the valley's vegetation. May He obligate (the Angel Af B'ri) to give us portions of the segregated rain, to soften the wasteland's face when it is dry as rock.

Af means "anger" and b'ri "health," referring to two kinds of rain, violent and gentle. In fact, water is a central symbol of Sukkos. And in mystical terms, the rain on the dry rock symbolizes the *tkhias ha-meysim* (resurrection of the dead) that will take place at the coming of the Messiah.

In the prayer recited upon leaving the sukkah (outdoor booth in which Jews are supposed to eat meals during this holiday) for the last time, there is exactly the same reference: "May it be your will, Lord our God and God of our forefathers, that just as I have fulfilled and dwelled in this sukkah, so may I merit in the coming year to dwell in *the sukkah of the skin of Leviathan*. Next year in Jerusalem."

So there is a direct link between the "farewell to the sukkah" and the Geshem that mentions the angel Af B'ri: The very reason why one leaves off sitting and eating in the sukkah on the afternoon before Geshem is said, is that one does not want to pray for rain while the sukkah is still in use, since it is deliberately built frail and open to the elements; one bids farewell to the sukkah with the words *leshone habo in yerusheloyim* (next year in Jerusalem), which is of course a reference to the coming of messiah; and this in turn connects with the reference to the sukkah in Akdomes. So the symbolism of the whole piece is Messianic.

For this session (both discs) a flute was added to the ensemble – a very good player.²¹⁶ Tarras could play the flute, but this is not Tarras, because one can still hear his clarinet, although often with difficulty since it is doubling the violins – it is best heard on "laughs," "chirps," and mordents.

1. Akdomes begins with samples of the flute, clarinet, trumpet and piano in successive short solos – then the two violins, which are heavily featured in this piece. The second tune is reminiscent of a well-known mnemonic song for children, "Az nisht keyn emunah tsuzamen mitn gelt." The two violins lead with Berish on top.
2. "Af B'ri" begins with trumpet and sax playing a discordant motif probably meant to symbolize threatening clouds, followed by piano tremolo and flute running up and down, symbolizing a storm. There follows a "cantorial" recitative by the two violins in unison (alternating with tuttis), with clarinet doubling.

3. The composition concludes with a *khusidl* (risoluto), which may well represent the “dance for the righteous ones” at the “banquet in Paradise” in the sukkah made of the skin of Leviathan.

Kinos, Tkios, un Ashrei 2:58

Kinos are lamentations (from the Book of Lamentations) – read out on the late-summer fast day of Tisha b’ov (ninth of Av) to mourn the destruction of the Temple, and the exile. *Tkios* are blasts of the shofar (ram’s horn) on Rosh hashona (Jewish New Year). Once again, the connection is not immediately clear. However, Tisha b’ov is the last holiday preceding the Jewish New Year, and the concluding verse of *Kinos* is “Return us, O Lord, to you – and we shall return, renew our days of old” (Lamentations 5:21). Rosh Hashona is not simply “new year;” but the anniversary of the creation of the world, and each person is also a “little world” (microcosm) – physically, but more important, spiritually.²¹⁷ The blast of the shofar on Rosh hashona symbolizes the sound through which the world was created, and there is a tradition that when hearing the *tkia* of the shofar, one should recall that final verse from *Kinos*. The message then, is that through our genuine effort of repentance we are returned to God and created anew. (This is also the deeper meaning of return to Zion and rebuilding of the Temple so frequently alluded to in the Jewish prayers.)

In this context, the *Ashrei* itself takes on a special meaning. *Ashrei* (*Ashrei yoshvei veisekho* – “Happy are they who dwell in thine house” – from Psalm 145,²¹⁸ is said three times during the daily prayers every day of the year, including holidays – (a) in the introductory morning *pesukei de-zimra* ; (b) again toward the end of the *shakharis* (morning) prayers; and (c) at the start of the *minkha* (afternoon) prayers. Only on Rosh-hashona, near the end of the *shakharis* (morning) prayers, does an *ashrei* in fact come immediately after the shofar blasts (*tkios*). The music:

1. *Kinos* opens, after an introductory chord, with longish violin solo in cantorial style, followed by a clarinet solo in middle register.
2. *Tkios* motif follows, with *tkios* and *truas* (broken blasts) on trumpet and trombone. This interpolates with the shofar (ram’s horn) in response to the *chazan*’s call (here imitated by the trombone) for each set of blasts, as in the actual service; but what sounds like a shofar on the record is probably just the trumpet mouthpiece (played by somebody other than Fiedal, perhaps Berish Katz, since the brief trumpet coda follows too immediately for it to be the same person) quickly inserted back into the trumpet for a very brief coda.

To sum up, “*Akdomes un Af B’ri*” is a piece in honor of Sukkos/Shmini Atzeres with an allusion to the festival of Shevuos; “*Tkios, Kinos un Ashrei*” honors Rosh Hashona with an allusion to the lamentations of Tisha b’ov. The symbolism of the first is messianic, of the second, cosmological and redemptive for both the individual Jew and the people Israel; Rosh Hashona and Sukkos/Shmini Atzeres are themselves related as the beginning and end, respectively, of the autumn new year holiday season; and the two groups of symbols are in all other ways closely complimentary. It should come as no surprise, then, to find that this disc, though recorded in June 1927, was released in mid-October. An advertisement for it can be found in the Yiddish newspaper *Morgn Zhurnal* for Friday, 14 October 1927. Rosh Hashona

began that year on the evening of 22 September and ended on the evening of the 24th; Sukkos began at sundown on 10 October and ended at sundown on the 19th.

Ch’sidische Nigunim (parts 1 & 2) – H. Gross, B. Katz. Part 1 2:58; Part 2 2:57. Columbia 8146-F, 8221-F, matrices W 108029-2, 108030-2 (recorded June 1927)²¹⁹

1. Part one begins with a slow *khusidl*, *risoluto*, and concludes with a lively *freylekhs* in duple meter. Part Two begins with a *gasn-nign* in triple time, followed by a clarinet solo leading into a lively *freylekhs* resembling the well-known wedding tune “*Ot azoy, ot azoy, nart men op a shviger...*” (That’s the way, that’s the way, you fool a mother-in-law.) The trumpet is also doubling the violins; it can be better heard in the second part of this side; you can hear it clearly in an occasional “filler.” Everything can be heard better on Part 2, which is available in a superior restoration.

These three records, taken together, contain a large number of distinct pieces and motifs (seventeen) reflecting the religion and folklore of East European Jews – “insider” performances for an “insider” audience – almost as if the intent was to provide as much of a sample as possible in the smallest number of discs. In all likelihood, the arrangements were preponderantly the work of Berish Katz. He was elsewhere given credit for arranging the original “*Boiberiker Chasene*” broadcast (7 March 1927),²²⁰ as well as for the pieces in the Carnegie Hall concert of 30 May 1927 – “*Boiberiker Chasene*,” “*Vi Asoi a Yid Davent*,” and “*Chasidische Nigunim*.” (“*Vi Asoi*,” although never recorded under that title, suggests a concept similar to *Akdomes un Af B’ri/Kinos, Tkios un Ashrei*.)

Appendix: Discography

Items with an asterisk (*) were released as Abe Schwartz Orchestra

March 1927

Die Boibriker Chasseneh (parts 1 & 2), H. Gross, A. Schwartz

Part 1. 3:15; Part 2. 3:10

Columbia 8129-F, matrices W 107724-3, W 107725-3

Reissues: *Klezmer Music 1910-1942: Recordings from the YIVO Archives* – Compiled and annotated by Henry Sapoznik (Folkways Records - FW34021 (issued 1981) – available from Folkways as a custom CD. Tracks 12 & 13, also under the same album title on Global Village CD (GBLV 104).

Abe Schwartz Klezmer King, Sony CK86321 (2002) track 21. Die Boibriker Chasseneh (Pt. 1) - (with Boibriker Kapelle) – part one only (recommended for the exceptional quality of the restoration).

***Zorg Nit Mama (Nie Platch Mama), fun “Volodka in Odess” (Peretz Sandler)**

CO 8131-F, matrix W 107726-2

(March 1927)

Reissue: Abe Schwartz the Klezmer King, track 12

***In Odess, in Odess, fun “Volodka in Odess” (Peretz Sandler)**

CO 8131-F, matrix W 107727-2

June 1927

Levine Mit Zayn Flying Machine (Levine with His Flying Machine) by Bernie and Coslow, sung by Charles Cohan. Matrix W 108023-2

Reissue: Music from the Yiddish Radio Project (2002), Shanachie CD 6057, Track 15

Hurra! Far Unser Held Levine” (Hooray for Our Hero Levine) by Abe Schwartz, sung by Irving Grossman. Matrix W 108024-1

Reissue: *Abe Schwartz Klezmer King*, Sony CK86321 (2002), track 9.

Morir Soñando. Matrix W 108025

Las Cuatro Milpas, as Orquesta Columbia. Matrix W 108026

Spottswood gives instrumentation as two trumpets, two violins, two saxes, trombone, piano, banjo/guitar, bass, and drums.

Akdomes un af B'ri /Kinos, Tkios un Ashrei – H. Gross, leader. (H. Gross, B. Katz, A. Schwartz)

Akdomes un Af B'ri 3:13. Kinos, Tkios un Ashrei 2:58.
Columbia 8145-F, matrices W 108027-2, W 108028-1
(June 1927);

Reissues: *Abe Schwartz Klezmer King*, Sony CK86321 (2002) – track 16: Akdomes un af B'ri - exceptional sound restoration

Dave Tarras, Yiddish-American Music, 1925-1956 (compiled and annotated by H. Sapoznik). Yazoo Records CD 7001 (1992)
Track 17: Kinos, Tkios un Ashrei

Ch'sidishe Nigunim (parts 1 & 2) – H. Gross, B. Katz
Part 1. 2:58: Part 2. 2:57

Columbia 8146-F, 8221-F, matrices W 108029-2, 108030-2

Reissues: *Klezmer Music: Early Yiddish Instrumental Music, The First Recordings: 1908-1927* (from the collection of Dr. Martin Schwartz); Arhoolie Folklyric CD 7034, (1997).²²¹ Track 9, Ch'sidishe Nigunim (Part 1).

Abe Schwartz Klezmer King, Sony CK86321 (2002): track 2. Ch'sidishe Nigunim (Hasidic Melodies; this is Part 2, though not labeled as such).

November 1927

***Russische Shehr CO 8155-F, FW FSS 34021(33), GV 104 (c)**; matrix W 108486-2
Reissue, *Abe Schwartz the Klezmer King*, track 1.

***Lebedig un Frehlich, fun “Volodka in Odess” (Peretz Sandler) CO**; matrix W 108487-1
8155-F FW FSS 34021(33), GV 104 (c)
Reissue, *Abe Schwartz the Klezmer King*, track 25

***Shlof Mein Kind CO 8156-F; *W 108488-2**
Die Neshomeh fun Mein Folk CO 8156-F; matrix W 108489-2

Endnotes

1. A shorter version of this article was presented in Yiddish at a seminar "Hersh Gross and His Boiberiker Kapelye – the First Klezmer Revival?" held at Yivo (the Yiddish Scientific Institute), New York, on 12 January 2007.
2. By Henry Sapoznik on the cover of his Dave Tarras CD, as well as the cover of his book *Klezmer! From Old World to Our World* – in the first edition of which, the photograph is not identified.
3. See Appendix 2: Discography.
4. Liner notes to *Dave Tarras, Yiddish-American Music, 1925-1956* (compiled and annotated by H. Sapoznik). Yazoo Records CD 7001 (1992); liner notes to *Abe Schwartz Klezmer King*, Sony CK86321 (2002).
5. *Klezmer Music: Early Yiddish Instrumental Music, The First Recordings: 1908 - 1927* (from the collection of Dr. Martin Schwartz), (1997); Arhoolie Folklyric 7034, CD 7034, 1997 (first issued in 1985 as *Klezmer Music: The First Recordings 1910 - 1927*, Folklyric Records 9034).
6. Walter Zev Feldman, "Remembrance of Things Past: Klezmer Musicians of Galicia, 1870-1940." *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, 16 (2003), pp.29-57. Feldman's statements on Katz, Gross, and the Boiberiker Kapelye (pp.39, 41, 54-55), though mostly inaccurate, contain one or two valuable nuggets. The errors in Feldman's account relate to (1) the dates of Berish Katz's birth, death, and immigration; (2) Katz's relation to the town of Radikhov and the kapelye there; (3) the klezmer background of Katz's family; (4) where Katz learned the violin; (5) the relation of bandleader Abe Schwartz to the Boiberiker (although there is a "nugget" here); (6) Hersh Gross's main instrument; (7) the instrumentation of the Boiberiker; (8) the relative size of the Boiberiker "by New York standards"; (9) how many records they made. These issues will be addressed in the appropriate places.
7. The fullest available account of this band is in Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*, pp.110-116 (cf.193-194). Dave Tarras characterized their music as "very nice theatre music...No jazz was played; it was what Cherniavsky called Jewish jazz, a novelty" (quoted *ibid.*, p.115). In his first years in America, Cherniavsky composed for the Yiddish stage. By 1921 Schirmer had already published his *Three Jewish Melodies* – (No. 1.) Mazal-Tov. (No. 2.) Die Yiddishe Traiern. (No. 3.) A Freilachs for violin and piano; he wrote the Ludwig Satz hit "Ikh Vil Nit Geyn in Kheder" ("I don't want to go to school"). For Cherniavsky discography, see Richard K. Spottswood, *Ethnic Music on Records (1893-1942)*, Urbana & Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1990, vol.3, pp.1315, 1364 (Philip Greenberg).
8. The call letters WMCA stand for "McAlpin." Bill Jaker, Frank Sulek, Peter Kanze, *The Airwaves of New York: Illustrated histories of 156 AM stations in the Metropolitan Area, 1921-1996* (Jefferson, NC & London, McFarland, 1998), p.119. The former hotel, largest in the world when it opened in 1912, is today an apartment building known as Herald Towers.
9. Because of this, no particulars are available regarding the broadcast of 14 March. It may well have had a Purim theme, since that holiday began on the evening of 17th March.
10. *NY Times*, 6 March 1927, p.X.19.
11. *NY Times*, 7 March 1927, p.16.
12. *Tog*, English page, 24 April 1927. The word is definitely in the singular, "musician," thus referring specifically to Katz. The Yiddish version (*ibid.* 23 April) gives Gross's name as "Hersh Boiberiker (Gros)."
13. *Tog*, 27 May 1927.
14. The wedding of Miriam Tauber and Benjamin Alperowitz was broadcast from the Libby Hotel over WFBH on 6 July 1926. The wedding fea-

tured Brooklyn cantor Joseph Hoffman with David Schleger's choir, as well as Charles Silvey's band "The Broadway Serenaders." Nor did this claim to be the first Jewish wedding on radio. (*Morgn-Zhurnal*, 11 June 1926, p.6.)

15. Spottswood, vol. 3:1301-1302.
16. Of course it is entirely lost, as are virtually all American radio broadcasts from this period. Magnetic wire recording technology already existed (I.R. Lounsbury, "Making Permanent Records of Radio Programs, *Radio Broadcast* 5, no.5, September 1924, pp.363-368), and at the end of the 1920s, transcription companies began to record broadcasts on aluminum discs, mainly for program sponsors and advertising agencies. Very few of these fragile recordings are known to have survived. For example, researcher Elizabeth McLeod can authenticate only five American broadcast recordings from the year 1929. Thus while it is not impossible that transcriptions of these programs were made, if so they are entirely unknown and extremely unlikely to have survived. According to the same writer, "1932 is the first year for which a significant number of shows seem to exist." Indeed the earliest surviving aircheck of a Yiddish program dates from 1932 – a single broadcast of Ben Gailing's "Der Freylekher Kabtsn," <http://www.yv.org/gailing/alt-radio-oldtime.html> (viewed September 29, 2006) from WDLW, Boston. For a full review of the problem, see Elizabeth McLeod, "Documenting Early Radio," a review of existing pre-1932 radio recordings." <http://www.midcoast.com/~lizmcl/earlyradio.html> (viewed September 29, 2006).
17. It may even have been an actual wedding, but this is by no means certain. See below, note 79.
18. See *Morgn Zhurnal* (N.Y.), 20 May 1927, p.2.
19. Feldman goes further, stating that Schwartz was a member of the Boiberiker Kapelye.
20. See Gross's article, "The Battle of the Belzer Hasidim against the Svirzher and Stretiner, in Boiberke," (in Yiddish), in *Lezekher kehilat Bobrka u-benoteha* (Boiberke Memorial Book, 1964), pp.172-174; and Gimpel, *ibid.*, 159 col.2, quoted below, p. 54. The editor indicates that the article was written in 1932 and that the author is deceased.
21. See Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*, pp.99-100, 144.
22. Examples (differences in spelling/transliteration are irrelevant): "azoi is men mihamin" (for mehane) "inglikes kind," (for "un gliklikhes") "es zenen dir moiken di machitunim," (for mekana) "ein ozil hecher in ein oxil klener," (for eyn aksl hecher in eyn oyg klener) "Gizein dikh yetzt," (for gezegenen) "der letzter tug iz tug is [sic] dir heint." (for der letster tug iz dir mit indz haynt).
23. See Spottswood, vol. 3, p.1534.
24. Sapoznik, notes, *Dave Tarras, Yiddish-American Klezmer Music*.
25. *Ibid.*
26. In Schwartz's case this is known from a statement in his obituary, *New York Times*, 9 May 1963, p.37. As for Gross, a search in the Odd Fellows (IOOF) records was unsuccessful, but he must have been a member because he served as the second president of the Greater New York Sick and Benevolent Association, the insurance and burial society of the Odd Fellows of Greater New York. Engraved on the gate of the GNYSSBA – erected 3 June 1926 – at Baron de Hirsch Cemetery, "H. Gross, President" (immediately above that line M. Lunenfeld is listed as "EX PRES" – the NYSSBGA was organized 1 June 1918). Furthermore, Gross's close associate in the GNYSSBA was his friend and later father-in-law, Joseph Nadaner, who was definitely an IOOF member. An IOOF New York Grand Lodge source informed me: "Sometimes the Associations were [from] individual lodges and sometimes they were comprised of Districts. All cemetery plots previously owned by Associations reverted back to this Grand Lodge."

27. As it turned out, none of the Boiberiker Kapelye repertoire was ever published in sheet music form, except for the “Boiberiker Wedding Bulgar” (see below, note 214).
28. The saxophone, at least, was becoming common in European “klezmer” bands, however, by the 1920s/1930s; one is prominently seen, for example, in a photograph of the band for the Munkaczer Hasidic wedding (1933) reproduced with the cassette “Neginei Chasidei Munkacs [vol.2],” arranged by Mona Rosenblum (N.C.M. 102, distributed by SMT Productions, Brooklyn, N.Y., telephone [718] 575-8629).
29. See biographical notice below.
30. See the photograph in Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*, p.111.
31. Interview, 4 January 2007. This is perhaps more relevant for the repertoire (*Volodka*) Schwartz wanted to record, and the instrumentation, than for the actual personnel. Levitt’s father Jack, trombonist with the Boiberiker, was not in the Hopkinson orchestra. “He worked for Olshanetsky and Rumshinsky on Second Avenue!” – unquestionably more prestigious venues, with better musicians.
32. Spottswood, vol.3, pp.1497-1503.
33. Liner notes, *Dave Tarras, Yiddish-American Music, 1925-1956*.
34. Spottswood, vol.3, p.1501.
35. In the liner notes to the CD *Abe Schwartz, Klezmer King*, on which a number of these 1927-1928 Abe Schwartz recordings have been reissued, Henry Sapoznik designates instrumentations that are somewhat less like the known Boiberiker grouping. Of course most if not all these musicians could play more than one instrument, but I must say I do not entirely agree with Sapoznik’s instrumentations. First, I do not hear an accordion on any of them. In the “Rusishe Sheht” I do hear two saxophones. I don’t hear a second cornet on “Lebedig un Frehlich” either.
36. Interview, 15 November 2005.
37. Vol. 3, p.1501.
38. Schwartz didn’t waste any time: Charles Levine had just become the world’s first transatlantic air passenger, setting off from Roosevelt Field in Garden City, Long Island on 4 June 1927 in a Bellanca monoplane piloted by Clarence Chamberlain and landing in a wheat field forty miles short of Berlin 42 hours later. Charles Lindbergh had made the first transatlantic solo flight just two weeks earlier.
39. Interview, liner notes to Sapoznik, *Dave Tarras, Yiddish-American Klezmer Music 1925-1956*, Yazoo CD7001.
40. Matrix numbers W 108486-2, 108487-1, 108488-2, and 108487-1.
41. Interview, 4 January 2007.
42. *Tog*, 27 May 1927. The English version (29 May) says the same: “several selections especially composed for this concert by Berish Katz.”
43. In an e-mail dated 9 August 2005, Dr. Alex Feller (Chicago) writes the author: “...a story passed down through my family (states that [Hersh Gross] was a good friend of my great-great-grandfather from Rohatyn who was a musician (Moses Faust). The story states that Moses had given Hersh some of his own sheet music...” A now-famous photograph of the Faust Kapelye was first printed in the Yiddish *Forverts* Sunday rotogravure “Art Section” on 7 October 1923, but the photograph is much older, possibly from 1912 or earlier. The violinist seated on the left is the Kapellmeister, Moses (Moyshe) Faust. – “Every Jew in Rohatyn knew of the friendly Faust family *kapelye*. They were: Moyshe, Duvid, Itsik-Hirsh, Mordechai-Shmiel, and Yankev.” Yehoshua Shpigel, “The Kapelye in Our Town,” in *Kehila Rohatyn Ve-ha-seviva* (The Jewish Community Rohatyn and Environs). Ed. by M. Amihai. Tel Aviv, Former Residents of Rohatyn in Israel, 1962. (In Hebrew, Yiddish, and English), p.140.

44. In the liner notes to *Abe Schwartz, Klezmer King* (2002), Sapoznik states that the Boiberiker Kapelye was “named for the mythical shtetl invented by the beloved Yiddish writer Sholem Aleichem”. Prof. Schwartz (liner notes, Klezmer Music (c.1985, reissued 1997) says the same. Sholem Aleichem does portray in his “Tevye der Milkhiger” stories a fictional shtetl called Boiberik, modeled on the summer resort of Boyarke near Kiev and a real milkman named Tevye. However, the Boiberiker Kapelye was not named for that, but rather for Boiberke (Polish, Bobrka, Ukrainian, Bibrka) a real town 20 km southeast of the city of Lviv (Yiddish Lemberik) and the home of the band’s founder, Hersh Gross. Gliniany (Yiddish, Glina) is almost the same distance east of Lviv and northeast of Boiberke.
45. Feldman (2003) seems to imply that Katz was *not* from Glina, describing him as “the trumpeter in the kapelye of nearby Radikhov (Radziechów, Radekhiv),” (p.39) “the trumpeter of the neighbouring Radikhover kapelye, and who had known Psakhye Wolf, the famous Gliner *kapelmayster*... (p.41), and “the trumpeter for the Radikhover kapelye... It is not known whether Katz learned to play the violin in Radikhov or in Gline.... He had close relations with Gline...” But Katz was indeed born in Glina, as proved by his birth certificate (for which I am also indebted to Mr. Robert Silverstein, a great-nephew on Katz’s wife’s side), and there is no question that he grew up there, as his son, the late Milton Kaye, assured me and all evidence attests. Moreover, Psakhye Wolf was his mother’s brother, and Katz learned the rudiments of violin-playing from Moshke-Mikhl Dudlsack in Glina. Finally, I was assured by Mr. Hescheles that although Dudlsack had played in the Radikhover kapelye, Berish Katz never did.
46. This was the famous Wolfsthal Brothers kapelye, on which see Feldman (2003), p.32.
47. Wolf Younin, “Fun Glina biz Brodvey,” *Tog*, 4 February 1949, p.8. **N.B.** This article is not found in the edition of the *Tog* microfilmed by the New York Public Library. However, a copy that Katz himself had saved was generously furnished by Mr. Silverstein.
48. For reasons of space and subject matter, the biographical information on Katz has been kept to a minimum here, whereas Gross is given full treatment. Important as Katz was to the group, he left after two years and his life and career extended several more decades; whereas the last part of Hersh Gross’s life is completely enmeshed with the history of the band. I intend to devote a separate article to Berish Katz.
49. Telephone interview with Carol Cohn, Joe’s daughter, 10 January 2007.
50. That Hersh, his father, and two of the brothers were barbers, the other a beautician, was no coincidence. It was an old tradition sanctioned by rabbinic authority that the most acceptable “day job” for a klezmer, if there was not enough business to support his family solely through music, was to cut hair.
51. Yisroel Gimpel, “Khaim Klinetor (*sic*),” in *Lezekher kehilat Bobrka u-benoteha*, edited by Dr. Shraga Feivel Kallay (Jerusalem: Sivan Press, 1964), pp.159-160.
52. This short article appears in Yiddish only. Transcribed from his spelling, the name would be “Klinetor,” but I prefer the more usual Klineter, which is also Haber’s spelling (see immediately below). As one of our few sources on the Gross family, as well as a personal account, Gimpel’s account is of great value, though very unsystematically written: the author refers to siblings without always giving their names, and from comparison with information from the nieces, there are siblings he does not mention at all; not a single date is given in the entire piece. Fortunately I was able to fill these in with the help of the nieces.
53. It is of great interest that the kapelye in Boiberke was led by a clarinetist. On the violin, cimbalom

and clarinet in Jewish kapelyes, cf. Feldman (2003), 50-52. Feldman say, "In Galicia the possibility of a clarinetist taking the position of *kapel-mayster* would seem to have been nil" (48); "Whereas [Joachim] Stutchevsky [1891-1982, from Romny, Poltava, Ukraine] admits that an exceptional clarinetist might perhaps become an ensemble leader – his own father [Kalman Stutchevsky] was such an exception – nothing in the Galician evidence would suggest such a possibility" (52). On this basis, Chaim Klineter must also have been "an exceptional clarinetist."

54. Gimpel, p.159, cols. 1-2.

55. Frances Wallach, telephone interview, 11 September 2006.

56. I was told by Carol Cohn (interview, 10 January 2007) that Hersh Ehrenzweig (also a very good-looking young man) escaped from Auschwitz and was hidden by a young Russian woman who fell in love with him. After the war she converted to Judaism and became his wife.

57. Yiddish for "nothing to write home about," i.e., a worker of low social status.

58. "Aga" is the Yiddish version of Haggai.

59. The seven sentences that follow here in the article as printed have been transposed to a previous paragraph. For explanation, see below, note 179.

60. For explanation of *nakhes*, see below, note 182.

61. For explanation of what is meant by Gimpel's "marginal jotting," see below, note 179.

62. They traveled as part of a group of immigrants from Bobrka: Isack Millett, 17 years old, single; his sister Gittel, 16, single; Minie Rosenwald, 26, married (evidently on a visit, because her daughter Sadie Rosenwald, 2 years old, is listed as born in the U.S.A.); Hersh Gross, 24, married; Amalia Gross, married, 21; Jochwed Schmier, female, 16 years old, single.

63. *Lezekher kehilat Bobrka u-benoteha* (Boiberke Memorial Book, 1964). This article appears in

both Yiddish and English. I give here my own translation from the Yiddish version because it contains a number of nuances and details that are absent from the English version in the book. The Yiddish is from pp.143, 148-149; the English, from pp.19-20, 25-26, 26-27.

64. This last statement will be explained later in this article.

65. In his liner notes to *Abe Schwartz, the Klezmer King* (under band 2, "Ch'sidishe Nigunim," Henry Sapoznik's personnel list shows two discrepancies; a "Harry" (instead of Jacob) Lustig on "baritone" saxophone (the saxes are actually alto and tenor), and a "Hymie Shuster" on drums. With a tip of the hat to Sapoznik's longstanding interest in the Shuster family, I am nevertheless positive that the percussionist is Jacob Silber.

66. Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*, p.129.

67. There were many professional musicians named Beckerman in New York. Spottswood's inclusion (vol.3, 1486) of Shloimke Beckerman on clarinet in this lineup is puzzling, as there is no clarinet on the recording (or saxophone, for that matter, which Shloimke also played). Also listed is "unknown drum," which is hardly surprising, as no drum can be heard either. The piano is credited to Sam Heller, which would be a good guess were there not a better one available – Sammy Beckerman was a well-known pianist and accordionist active in the Jewish field. Harry Raderman was a celebrated trombonist best known for his work in popular music. – Harry Beckerman's Metronome Orchestra recorded two Yiddish instrumentals on 30 October, 1928, "Ich Benk a Heim," a doina, and "Trauben Zeit," a bulgar, issued together as Brunswick 67129 (Spottswood, vol.3, p.1297) – but Harry played saxophone. The town of Proskurov in Podolia, Ukraine was an important center for both the Beckerman and Raderman families, but there were also Beckermans from Zamosc (Shloimke and Morris) and Rozyshche (Harry), I have not yet succeeded in determining where Sammy Beckerman was from.

68. For details see Spottswood, vol.2, p.1083.
69. *Tog*, 16 May 1929, p.2. The phrase “tsimblidiker tsimblar” comes from a well-known satirical song “Der Rebbe Elimelekh” (the Hasidic Rabbi Elimelekh). To translate it requires taking some license with English: the effect is something like “the dulcimerous dulcimerist.”
70. Some sources say 1897, but according to Social Security records he was born 15 March 1895. His obituary (*New York Times*, 14 February, 1989, p.B6) gives his age as 95.
71. The best accounts are by Sapoznik, liner notes to *Dave Tarras: Yiddish-American Klezmer Music* (some of which is incorporated, with a few slight changes, in his book *Klezmer!*), and Joel Rubin, liner notes (in German) to *Yikhes: Frühe Klezmeraufnahmen von 1911-1939 aus der Sammlung Prof. Martin Schwartz*, Trikont US-0179 CD, and also in Rita Ottens & Joel Rubin, *Klezmer-Musik*, Bärenleiter Verlag, Kassel 1999.
72. Abe Heller led “Prof. Heller’s Double Brass Band,” which furnished the music for Bennie Bernstein’s dancing school (“B.B.’s College of Dancing”) on Second Street and Avenue B, where George Burns, before he became famous as a comedian, taught ballroom dancing. See George Burns, *I Love Her, That’s Why!: an autobiography* (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1955), pp.50, 51, 52, 53, 54.
73. Information from his daughter Florence Weiss and nephew also named Sam Heller.
74. He is seen with the Brandweins in a photo in Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*, p.103, and with Naftule Brandwein on tour with Cherniavsky’s band *ibid.*, p.113.
75. He appears in a photograph of Max Leibowitz’s band (reproduced in Rita Ottens and Joel Rubin, *Klezmer-Musik* (Kassel & Munich, Baerenreiter/dtv 1999). I would date the photograph to about 1912.
76. He is seen with them in a photo reproduced in Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*, p.103,
77. *Op.cit.*, vol. 3, 1315. Spottswood identifies his instrument as “tuba,” and in a publicity photograph of this band (Sapoznik, *Klezmer!*, there is a sousaphone but no string bass. I have no evidence that Millrad played the tuba. It is difficult to make out the face of the sousaphonist, but what can be seen is not inconsistent with Izzie Drutin. However, personnel changes are only to be expected, as this band existed for four years and toured extensively.
78. See also *Morgn Zhurnal*, 25 November 1927, p.11.
79. This seems to be a reference to the first Boiberiker broadcast, even though that took place actually only 8 1/2 months earlier and it is not clear whether it was a real wedding. It is also doubtful whether a Jewish hour on WMCA even existed as early as November 1926.
80. See the advertisement in the Yiddish newspaper *Morgn Zhurnal*, 14 October 1927.
81. See advertisement, *Morgn Zhurnal*, 2 December 1927, p.2.
82. *Morgn Zhurnal*, 1 April 1928, p.14; 16 April 1928, p.10.
83. “Station WABC Joins the Columbia Chain,” *NY Times*, 27 July 1928, p.22; “Columbia System Taking Over WABC,” *ibid.*, 28 December 1928, p.26; “New Columbia Chain Makes Debut on Air,” *ibid.*, 9 January 1929, p.37. – CBS was formed in 1927 as the “United Independent Broadcasters” network. Originally nothing but a syndicating agency with an AT&T hookup, it went on the air in October 1927 with 16 affiliates but owned no stations itself. The Columbia Phonographic Manufacturing Company (which also owned Columbia Records), bought the struggling network in 1928, renaming it the “Columbia Phonographic Broadcasting System.” <http://dumont.television.network.en.wikipedia.biz>
84. Jaker *et al.* p.27. (See note 8.)

85. Liner notes, *Dave Tarras: Yiddish-American Klezmer Music*; liner notes, *Abe Schwartz, the Klezmer King*; cf. his *Klezmer!*, p.129-130.
86. *Tog*, 11 October 1928.
87. *Tog*, 8 November 1928.
88. *Tog*, 4 October 1928.
89. *Tog*, 4 October 1928.
90. *Tog*, 5 December 1928.
91. *Tog*, 9 December 1928, English page.
92. *Tog*, 24 March (English only). Purim began on the evening of 26 March.
93. *Tog*, 23 March 1929, p.1.
94. From at least this date, the program was networked on sister-station WCAU, the first station bought by CBS.
95. This refers to *sefiras-ha'omer* (the counting of the omer). The 49 nights of *sfire* begin on the second night of Passover and end with the start of Shevues.
96. *A bisl yontefidigen mayrev, a bisl sfire-nigunim, un motiven fun tal.* – *Tog*, 25 April 1929 (Pesakh began on the evening of the 25th)..
97. *Tog*, 7 June 1929. Cfo their recording of “Akdomes un Af B’ri,” discussed in Appendix.
98. *Tog*, 9 June 9 1929, English page. Shevues began on the evening of 13 June.
99. *Tog*, 14 June 1929.
100. *Di Boiberiker Kapelye vet dos mol shpiln nigunim fun rosh-hashonedige tfiles – di kompozitsie iz zeyer a gerotene un ihr vet zi heren mit far-genigen.* – *Tog*, 27 September 1929. *Rosh hashone* began on the evening of 4 October.
101. *Tog*, 11 October 1929. Yom Kippur began on the evening of 13 October (*Kol Nidrei*).
102. *Tog*, 19 October.
103. *Hakufes* (mod. Hebrew, *Hakafot*, “circling”). Seven rounds of circling the *bima* with the Torah scrolls on Simkhes Toyre (last day of the sukkos cycle) with a special tune. Technically, the circling procession with the *lulav* and *esrog* (four plant species) on Hoshana Rabo (last day of sukkos proper) is also *hakufes*, but is normally referred to as *hoshanas*.
104. *Tog*, 25 October 1929.
105. In the Yiddish theatre, what is meant by the term Opera or Operetta is more like what we would call a musical.
106. *Tog*, 9 February 1929.
107. *Tog*, 10 February 1929, English page.
108. *Tog*, 9 March 1929.
109. *Tog*, 20 April 1929, p.1; 21 April 1929, English page.
110. *Tog*, 6 September, 1929,
111. *Tog*, 14 October 1928, English page.
112. Note deleted.
113. Original name, Shmuel Charni (1883-1955), famous Yiddish writer and literary critic, a leader of the renewed cultural interest in Hasidism.
114. Literally “mode,” but in this context a melodic improvisation in a particular modal pattern.
115. *Tog*, 11 October 1928.
116. *Tog*, 18 October 18, 1928
117. *Tog*, 28 October 1928, English page; Yiddish, *ibid.*, 25 October 1928, p.1. *Havdule* is a short ceremony ending the Sabbath and ushering in the new week with prayers and good wishes; Saturday evening immediately after the end of the Sabbath is called *moitse-shabbes* and at that time the custom of *melave-malke* (lit., “accompanying the Queen,” i.e., the Sabbath) is often observed with a meal and festive atmosphere to

let the spirit of the Sabbath linger on into the beginning of the week. According to Jewish law, all instrumental music is forbidden on the Sabbath, but to have instrumental music for *melave-malke* makes for an especially festive atmosphere.

118. Meyer Machtenberg (1884-1979). "B'rosh Hashono"(1929) sung by Cantor Joseph Shapiro is on Yazoo CD7002, (*Mysteries of the Sabbath, Classic Cantorial Recordings 1907-47*), Band 3.
119. *Tog*, 1. November 1928.
120. *Tog*, 8 November 1928.
121. *Tog*, 12 December 1928.
122. *Tog*, 29 December 1928, p.1.
123. The word "cabaret" in the Yiddish context has more innocent connotations than was the case in contemporary Berlin. See Popkin, "Changing East Side," 171-172.
124. *Tog*, 16 May 1929, p.2.
125. *Tog*, 16 November 1928.
126. *Tog*, 25 November 1928, English page.
127. *Tog*, 22 December 1928.
128. *Tog*, 2 February 1929.
129. *Tog*, 3 May 1929.
130. *Tog*, 10 May 1929.
131. *Tog*, 13 January 1929, English page.
132. Wolf Younin, "Fun Glina biz Brodvey," *Tog*, 4 February 1949, p.8.
133. This program was unusually well publicized. There is even a paragraph on it in the *Times* naming the main stars, but neither Katz nor Gross nor the Boiberiker are mentioned ("Purim Feast Begins at Sunset Tomorrow," *New York Times*, 24 March 1929, p.24) – Among the few other times Katz got specific credit was for the music to the original "Boiberiker Wedding" broadcast on 7 March 1927; for the pieces played in the 30 May 1928 Carnegie Hall Concert (Boiberiker Chasena (sic), "Vi asoi a Yid Davent", and "Chassidische Nigunim"); as well as for the arrangement of wedding music by his uncle and teacher Psakhye Wolf, broadcast 11 November 1928.
134. Of course it would have given him the opportunity to work with Ellstein (a man very much younger than himself) and Rumshinsky.
135. The elided phrase reads, "when he (Hescheles) arrived in New York in 1938..." This interpretation cannot be correct, because by 1938 Hersh Gross was dead and the Boiberiker Kapelye long defunct. However, we can assume that the comment refers to Katz's view of the situation at the time he left the band, as told to Hescheles, and that it reflects at least part of the reason why he left.
136. Feldman (2003), p.54.
137. Interview with Mrs. Shannon Kaye and the late Milton Kaye, New York, 15 November 2005.
138. Interview, 29 December 2005.
139. *Tog*, 16 May 1929, p.2. Wedding bandleaders did not often advertise. There was no need – business came for the most part through word of mouth, connections with halls and caterers, or customers having heard them at other affairs. This advertisement may reflect Gross's anxiety at the loss of Katz, as well as the generally tight employment situation for musicians due to sound films and the growing popularity of jazz already setting in by the end of the 1920s. (Cf n.160)
140. Sylvia Tucker, telephone interview, 11 September 2005.
141. *Morning Frayhayt*, 23 February 1929, p.8; *Forverts*, 2 March 1929, p.16. Amshtshenov is the Yiddish name for the town of Mszczonów, Poland. In addition, to the community from Mszczonów, the ad specifically invites countrymen from Zyrardow, Warszawa, Lodz, Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Wiskiti (a suburb of Zyrardow), and Sochaczew – delineating a swath of Polish territory between Lodz and Warsaw.

142. *Forverts*, 11 May 1929, p.5.
143. *Forverts*, 13 December 1930, p.17.
144. *Vokh*, I, no.24 (14 March 1930), p.23; no.25 (21 March 1930), p.23.
145. *Vokh*, no.26 (28 March 1930), p.23.
146. *Vokh*, no.27 (4 April 1930), p.14.
147. *Vokh*, no.27 (4 April 1930), p.14. (Although issues 26 and 27 are separate, they are both dated 4 April.)
148. *Vokh*, no.28 (11 April 1930), p.15; no. 29 (18 April 1930), p.16 (all translations J.W.)
149. In his keynote address at the opening session of the first American convention of the Yiddish Cultuere Society on 28 March 1930, Dr. Chaim Zhitlovsky, intellectual leader of the "Yiddishists" – "those holding that Yiddish culture is the peculiar, national creative development of the Jewish people all over the world.... declared that the movement...aimed to promote and spread the knowledge and appreciation of Yiddish creative work and literary achievement..." *New York Times*, 29 March 1930, p.9.
150. *Vokh*, no.32, 9 May 1930 p.12.
151. *Souvenir Journal from the Jewish Students Youth Branch of the Yiddish Culture Society* (New York, Idisher Kultur-Gezelshaft, 1929).
152. *Vokh*, 27 December 1929 p.20.
153. See Anon., "Dos Ponim fun der Idisher Kultur Gezelshaft" [The Face of the Jewish Culture Society], *Vokh*, 1 no.7 (15 November 1929), p.3; H. Leivick, "Amerike – Unzere" [Our Own America], *Vokh*, 1 no.16 (17 January 1930), pp.4-5; no.20 (14 February 1930), pp.4-5.
154. Passover ended the 20th, so this was no longer *chol'hamoid* (the middle days of the week-long holiday, when one is allowed to participate in most everyday activities).
155. *Jewish Instrumental Folk Music: The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski*, ed. by Mark Slobin (Editor), Michale Alpert, Robert A. Rothstein (Editor), with introd. by Izaly Zemtsovsky (Syracuse University Press, 2001).
156. W.Z. Feldman, "Bulgareasca/Bulgarish/Bulgar: the transformation of a Klezmer dance genre," *Ethnomusicology* 38 (1994):11; 1-35.
157. Joel Rubin, *The Art of the Klezmer* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Department of Music, City University of London, September 2001), pp.156-157.
158. Jaker *et al.* p.27.
159. The *Tog* Jewish Hour was still broadcasting at least as late as December 1931, but was eventually forced off the air by the national network programming. "It made sense for WABC to carry a good portion of the network feed. Soon programs of purely local interest – including a few ethnic broadcasts aimed at Jewish and African-American listeners –were displaced by enjoyable but often undistinguished hours of music and talk for the national audience (Jaker *et al.*, p.27).
160. A great many Jewish club-date musicians had worked in theatre orchestras. The introduction of feature "talkies" in 1927 precipitated a rapid decline in movie theatre orchestras, which had been a major source of steady employment in the music industry. See James P. Kraft, *Stage to Studio: Musicians and the sound revolution, 1890-1950*, (Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1996), 37-58. Cf. Paula Eisenstein Baker, "Leo Zeitlin's Musical Works on Jewish Themes for New York's Capitol Theatre, 1927-1930," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, 20.1 (2001), 74-93. – In addition, the growing popularity of jazz and jazz-influenced popular music at weddings, which few European-born Jewish musicians could play, worked to the detriment of the older musicians (cf. Sapoznik, pp.117-118.)

161. "Phonograph Sales Have Declined; Competition from Radio Affects the Industry and Reduces Number of Manufacturers, *Wall Street Journal* (16 May 1924) p.6.
162. William Howland Kenney, *Recorded Music in American Life: The Phonograph and Popular Memory, 1890-1945* (Oxford University Press, 1999, pp.158, 163; Tim Brooks, "High Drama in the Record Industry: Columbia Records, 1901-1934." *ARSC Journal* 2002; 33(1):21-76.
163. Sapoznik, *Klezmer*, 126; Paul Vernon, "A Quick Cantor: The Early Days of Recording Jewish Music," *FolkROOTS*, no. 127/8 (January/February 1994).
164. Sapoznik, 128.
165. WCGU (Jaker *et al.*, pp.53-54), In August 1928, WCGU moved its transmitter from the oceanfront at Sea Gate to the Half-Moon Hotel on the Boardwalk at West 29th Street in Coney Island, and opened their studio in the hotel. A 16-story, 400-room hotel in Spanish Colonial style, the \$3 million Half-Moon had opened in the spring of 1927 (Jaker *et al.* p.54; Christopher Gray, "The Half Moon Hotel; A Symbol of Coney Island Is About to Be Eclipsed," *NY Times*, 7 May 1989). – From November 1928, WBBC and WCGU (along with several other stations) broadcast jointly at 500 watts on 1400kc, WBBC, "Brooklyn's Own station" (39), "specialized in foreign-language broadcasting," (39); "The influential Dave Tarras, a popularizer of Jewish klezmer music, was WBBC's music director." (Jaker *et al.* p.39, but does not say exactly when.) – "For a while in 1929, WCGU operated jointly with WBBC, identifying with the slogan "Brooklyn's Own Stations," (Jaker *et al.* p.54), an arrangement still in effect at the time of the Boiberiker broadcasts. – A "snapshot" of the station at exactly this moment in history (1930) is provided by radio announcer Andre Baruch, as quoted in Leonard Maltin, *The Great American Broadcast: A Celebration of Radio's Golden Age* (New York, Dutton, 1997), p.10: "At the base of the Half-Moon Hotel on the boardwalk were some storefronts... and on the window of one of them were the letters WCGU" "[inside was] a room that was surrounded by red velvet drapes and a piano in the center and an old carbon mike. And you had to tap it to make sure it was O.K." "We don't open here until 3:30 or 4, and then we close at 11 or 12." The Boiberiker programs were broadcast 9 or 9:30 to 10:00 pm, so they must have emanated from this studio.
166. I have no documentation of appearances on 11 March or 18 March, but this is certainly possible. Note that in 1930, the holiday of Purim fell on 14-15 March.
167. Gus Goldstein was a popular Yiddish comedian with Samuel Rosenstein's Lenox Theatre in Harlem, and at the time of this broadcast, with the People's Theatre. He recorded prolifically on virtually all "Jewish" labels between 1916 and 1929. Many of these records were made with Clara Gold in the popular "Mendel un Yente Telebende" series based on the characters of *Forverts* humorist B. Kovner. Goldstein was known for his comic wedding records: (1) "Drushah Geshank" & "Der Badchen," Columbia E3938, 1918; (2) "Der Badchen" & "Drosche Geshank ouf a Yiddische Chasone," Emerson 1308, ca. January 1919; "Der Badchen" & "Drosche Geshank," Emerson 13122, ca. November 1920; (3) "A Cale Bazetzen" & "Der Mesader Kedushen," Cardinal 1112, August 1921; (4) "Der Mesader Kedushen" & "A Kaleb Bezetzen," Columbia E7656, 8199-F, May 1922; (5) "Der Mesader Kedushen" & "A Cale Bazetzen," Okeh 14055, ca. November 1922. "Der Mesader Kedushen," Victor 78124, 8 December 1924. "Der Mesader Kedushen," recorded for Victor on 15 January 1924 (matrix B 29317-1), was rejected.
168. *Morgn Zhurnal*, 12 December 1929, p.2; *Forverts*, 24 Dec, 1929, p.2; *Morgn Zhurnal*, 1 January 1930, p.2; *Forverts*, 7 January 1930, p.11; *Morgn Zhurnal*, 30 January 1930, p.2; *Forverts*, 4 March 1930, p.2; 2 April 1930, p.11; 15 April 1930, p.9.

169. WRNY (Jaker *et al.*, pp.174-175). From 1928: 500 watts, 1010kc, shared time – A small, forward-looking station that was an early pioneer in TV broadcasting (beginning August 1928). The station went bankrupt in 1929, prior to the crash, and was sold in April of that year: (175) – “In September 1929 WRNY moved from [its original home in] the Hotel Roosevelt to 27 W. Fifty-seventh Street.” This seems to have more or less coincided with their expansion into foreign-language programming (apparently in 1930 or a little after; 175). WRNY shared time with WHN, WPAP, and WQAO at this period.
170. *Forverts*, 12 June 1931, p.2; 9 June 1931, p.2; *Morgn Zhurnal*, 15 June 1931, p.6; 23 June 1931, p.10; *Forverts*, 30 June, p.6; 14 July, 1931, p.7.
171. WLTH (Leverich Towers Hotel – Jaker *et al.*, p.115), broadcasting as of November 1928 at 250w on 1400 kc, shared time with WBBC, WCGU, WSDA (WVFW). “On 21 October 1931 (curiously, one day after the Boiberiker broadcast), WLTH opened a [new] studio at 105 Second Avenue in the Yiddish theatre district. Station owner Sam Gellar moved his office there, and the station became known as “The Radio Theatre of the Air.” The station maintained a one-hundred seat auditorium...” (*ibid.*)
172. *Morgn Zhurnal*, 20 October 1931, p.10.
173. *Morgn Zhurnal*, 17 December 1931, p.6; *Forverts*, 18 December 1931, p.7; 25 December 1931, p.8; 8 January 1932, p.5; *Morgn Zhurnal*, 14 January, 1932, p.6; *Forverts*, 15 January 1932, p.7; *Morgn Zhurnal*, 21 January 1932, p.6; *Forverts*, 22 January 1932, p.2; 29 January 1932, p.7; 5 February 1932, p.2; *Morgn Zhurnal*, 11 February 1932, p.6; *Forverts*, 19 February 1932, p.7.
174. WFAB – Fifth Avenue Broadcasting (Jaker *et al.*, p.67). This was a new station, first broadcast 19 April 1932, operating at the low power of 100 watts on 1300kc, shared time with WEVD and WBBR. – “Fifth Avenue Broadcasting Corporation set up studios at 29 W. Fifty-seventh Street... WFAB had only one studio, equipped with two 78-rpm turntables whose heavy Pacont pickups used steel needles...“WFAB operated on WHAP’s old schedule, sharing time with WEVD, WBBR and WHAZ. It was on the air only thirty-six hours a week, initially with just 100 watts of power from the old WHAP transmitter in Carlstadt, NJ. It called itself “The Voice of the Foreign Language.” (Jaker *et al.* p.67)
175. *Forverts*, 8 November, 1932; 15 November 1932, p.2.
176. On their web page in 2006, Living Traditions “Yiddish Radio Project” announced that they had recently discovered 176 transcription discs from WEVD Yiddish radio programs from the 1930s. <http://www.livingtraditions.org/docs/proj.htm> (viewed 12 November 2006).
177. Marty Levitt, son of Jack Levitt, youngest member of the Boiberiker Kapelye. This is all he remembers hearing about Hersh Gross.
178. “Khaim Klinetor [sic],” in *Lezekher kehilat Bobrka u-benoteha*, pp.159-160. (translation, JW)
179. The words in Italics are transposed here from further below, where they seem completely out of place. They read like marginal jottings and perhaps that is why the printer inserted them in the wrong place. In the printed context, they would have to refer to Hersh’s brother Adolph; but Adolph only married once, was perfectly happy being a barber, and while interested in current events, had no political ambitions. Hersh’s niece Frances Wallach pointed out that these comments were relevant only to Hersh. The phrase “he buried his first wife,” etc. sounds like a Delphic oracle; its meaning is clear only if we know something of the story.
180. Giving this low-prestige phrase in the low-prestige language Ukrainian emphasizes the point.
181. An M.D. in Boiberke, said to be one of the town’s few intellectuals; see *ibid.*, pp.19-20 (Hebrew).
182. A Hebrew and Yiddish word with great resonance. The basic meaning is pleasure and satisfaction from one’s family, especially from children and their accomplishments.

183. Telephone interview, Sylvia Tucker, 18 September 2005.
184. That would have been 142 Rivington Street, between Norfolk and Suffolk. Telephone interview with Sylvia Tucker, 11 September 2005. She estimated that her visit must have been some time between 1930-32.
185. Source, Federal Census, 1930.
186. Ellen Graham, e-mail, 5 July 2006.
187. It would be strange if this were a complete coincidence, yet I do not know how to explain it. By the time Hersh Gross first arrived in New York (1909), the Indianers were long gone from 93 Ridge Street. There was already a barber shop at 95 Ridge Street, corner of Rivington, before any of the Grosses arrived in New York. This is proved from the fact that, as the polling station for the 6th Election District of the 4th Assembly District of Manhattan, the address is identified in a legal notice in the newspapers (e.g., *New York Times*, 7 October 1907, p.14) as "Barber." The 1910 census shows an Aaron Goldberg, barber, owner of his own shop, living directly around the corner at 191 Rivington Street. He came from Russia, was 58 years old, had arrived in New York in 1901; his wife was Rosie, and children Ida, Harry, Gussie, Joseph, Flora, and boarder Annie Schonberg lived with them.
188. It is not entirely clear whether Gross was a founding member, but it would seem so. Ellen Graham, a descendant of the Nadaner family, was certain that Gross was involved in the purchase of the plot, and as providing cemetery plots is one of the main purposes of such societies, this was presumably done not long after the founding. The gate was not erected until 3 June 1926.
189. Ellen Graham, e-mail, 4 July 2006.
190. Newark City Directory, 1934, 408; Local 802, American Federation of Musicians directory for 1934 lists the telephone number as Bigelow 3-7695.
191. There is another curious detail. Of the three nieces of Hersh Gross that I spoke with – daughters, respectively, of Adolph, Morris, and Joe – each asserted, with no prompting from me, that Naftule Brandwein played with the Boiberiker Kapelye. Oddly, the name Dave Tarras was not familiar to them. Although I know of no documentation to that effect, it is possible that Brandwein later replaced Tarras. For now, this remains just one of many puzzles.
192. Ellen Graham, telephone interview, 12 September 2006. She got this story from her Aunt Harriet.
193. Telephone interview, Sylvia Tucker, 11 September 2005.
194. Telephone interview, Sylvia Tucker, 18 September 2005.
195. Sylvia Tucker, 11 September 2005.
196. Telephone interview, Frances Wallach, 18 September 2005.
197. Steven Spitz, Ph.D. (her grandson), e-mail correspondence, 22 & 25 January 2007.
198. See Albert Weisser, *The Modern Renaissance of Jewish Music*, New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1954; Irene Heskes, *The Society for Jewish Music in St. Petersburg*, Cedarhurst, NY: Tara Publications, 1998.
199. See *The Worlds of S. An-sky: a Russian Jewish intellectual at the turn of the century*, ed. by Gabriella Safran and Steven J. Zipperstein (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006). The book includes a CD of music collected by the An-sky expedition.
200. See J. Wollock, "European Recordings of Jewish Instrumental Folk Music, 1911-1914," *ARSC Journal* (1997; 28(1):36-55.
201. See Joshua Fishman, *Ideology, Society and Language: The odyssey of Nathan Birnbaum*. (Ann Arbor, MI: Karoma Press, 1987), pp.38-71.

202. "Isaac Ewen, the Collector (on his fresh grave)," *Morgn Zhurnal*, 5 March 1925, p.6. (Translated from Yiddish by J.W.)
203. *Jewish Heritage Online Magazine*, <http://www.jhom.com/personalities/ansky/dybbuk.htm> (viewed 23 October 2006).
204. See H.I. Brock, "East Side, Too, Has 'Synthetic Theatre,' NY Times (31 January 1926), SM 13, 18; J. Brooks Atkinson, "The Play: Between Two Worlds," NY Times (16 December 1925), 22.
205. Zelda F. Popkin, "The Changing East Side," *American Mercury* 10 (February 1927) p.173.
206. Nowhere is he explicitly identified as the *badkhn*, but it is difficult to come to any other conclusion. Gross was a good writer and an excellent speaker. He was intimately familiar with traditional wedding versification (*badkhones*) from earliest childhood. It is hard to believe that any other person taking such a major role on a recording like this would not have been credited. For a radio broadcast of 25 March 1930 with the Boiberiker, it was advertised that the popular comedian Gus Goldstein would take the role of the *badkhn*. The voice on this recording is definitely not Gus Goldstein.
207. The transcription and translation given here largely agrees with Chava Miller in Sapoznik's 1981 liner notes, but corrections have been made to both where necessary.
208. Normally the term *mekhetunim* would include the bride and groom's parents first and foremost, but he has already stated that they are dead.
209. A special, very large *challah* (braided white bread loaf) baked for the holiday of Purim, also called a *koylatch*
210. This freylekhs has the same tune as the *khedder-song* "Asher Nosan Lonu Toras Emes" – "He that gave us the Torah of truth," as sung e.g., by Leon Schwartz on *Like in a Different World*, Global Village CD, GBV 109, Band 15 – but in half-time. The first section of the freylekhs concludes side one, and the second section begins side two. The same tune is also sung, slowly, in free metre and without text, by Cili Schwartz (of Iasi, Romania, wife of Itzik Schwartz, no relation to Leon) on a Budowitz album, *Mother Tongue*, as "Cili's Kale Bazingns," Koch International GmbH CD 3-1261-2, Band 1.
211. Here Gross switches to the role of the *khazan* (cantor) as well as *mesader kidishin* (the one who sees to it that the marriage ceremony itself is properly carried out – usually though not necessarily, a rabbi). The Hebrew words here are said by every groom in a Jewish wedding, but the joke is that this groom is so ignorant he has to be fed each word one at a time, and when, with the fourth word the *mesader kidishin* says, "Say 'li' – the groom repeats: "Say 'li'".
212. The rabbi or cantor makes the traditional "seven blessings" after the groom places the ring on the bride's right index finger. The end of the seventh blessing signals that the actual marriage ceremony has been completed.
213. Here, as is traditional, the groom stamps on a wine glass, and everyone immediately shouts "mazel tov!"
214. A printed version of the freylekhs played here, with some minor differences, can be found as No.16 under the title "Bulgar (Freilach), Boiberiker Wedding Bulgar" in the well-known *Kammen Folio No. 9* (= *Kammen International Dance and Concert Folio... no. 9*, New York, J. & J. Kammen Music Co., 1937 [1934], arranged for solo piano by Jack Kammen & William Scher, compiled by Joseph Kammen. There is no mention of Gross.
215. Normally this would be far from the end of the celebration, and no one would have said "Good night!" yet. Rather, the attendants would take the bride and groom to *yikhid* (to be alone in a room together for the first time, and break their fast with the special wedding broth), then they

- would be led out to join the feast. But as he had only six and a half minutes, Gross has made a syncope and jumped several hours ahead to the point where the bride and groom would be escorted to the wedding chamber, and wished "Good night." Even after that, the guests would go on dancing until dawn.
216. Sapoznik, in the liner notes to *Abe Schwartz, Klezmer King*, tracks 2 and 16, identifies the instrument as piccolo and the player as Abe Constantinofovsky; but the instrument is definitely a flute, and Constantinofovsky (who had in any case shortened his name to Constantin) was a trumpet player.
217. "...the Kabbalists, on the principle that the microcosm perfectly mirrors the macrocosm, held that the *sefirot* were not only the dimensions of the universe, but also the constituent elements of the human mind." Sanford L. Drob, "The Sefirot: Kabbalistic Archetypes of Mind and Creation," at <http://www.aril.org/Drob.htm> (viewed on Internet 24 October 2006).
218. Also Psalms 84:5, 115:18 and 144:15.
219. This recording seems to have been released at the beginning of December 1927. It is advertised in the *Morgn Zhurnal*, 2 December 1927, p.2. Although there is no thematic connection, the holiday of Chanukkah is, like Christmas, a good season for gift purchases, at least in America. It began that year on the evening of 18th December.
220. *Tog*, English page, 24 April 1927: "...Berish Katz, the well known musician who arranged the broadcasting of the wedding ceremony at a recent DAY concert."
221. Also on the earlier version of this album, *Klezmer Music: The First Recordings 1910 - 1927*, Folklyric Records 9034 (about 1985).

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