

European Recordings of Jewish Instrumental Folk Music, 1911-1914¹

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What is now called "klezmer music" is the traditional instrumental folk music of the Ashkenazic Jews of Eastern Europe, especially the styles characteristic of eastern Romania (Moldova = Bessarabia and Bukovina), western Ukraine, and Galicia.² Yet despite its Old World origins, only a minuscule fraction of the estimated 500-600 purely instrumental selections recorded prior to the "klezmer revival" of the 1970s was actually recorded in Europe. The vast majority of the recordings were made in America by immigrant musicians, and later by some of their children who were born in America.

Much Jewish music was commercially recorded in Europe, but it was mainly from the cantorial tradition or the musical theater. The success of Emil Berliner's Gramophon company at the dawn of this century

encouraged the establishment of smaller labels such as Favorite and Sirena... which recorded and issued discs by regional musicians overlooked by the larger label. Though recorded in large numbers, European Jewish recordings were rarely exported to, or re-released in the U.S. (the offerings of Cantor Gershon Sirota being a major exception). With many recordings being destroyed during both World Wars, a complete idea of the richness and diversity of European-based Jewish recordings may never be clear. In general, Jewish instrumental recordings were waxed in far fewer numbers than either sacred or secular vocal discs; while in Europe, the ratio of instrumental to vocal recordings was even smaller than in America.³

Indeed, only about 40-50 instrumental selections made in Europe are currently known. A few of them are of solo instruments accompanied by a *tsimbl* (hammered dulcimer) or a piano. For example, several selections by the violinists H. Steiner, Josef Solinski, Oskar Zehngut and Leon Ahl, and of the flutist S. Kosch, are known.⁴ As for ensemble music, some 30 sides by Belf's Romanian Orchestra (actually a small Jewish group) are known.⁵ They were recorded on the Sirena-Grand⁶ label and have been thought to date from about 1910.

The present paper will document the fact, however, that at least 193 Jewish instrumental titles — in addition to the aforementioned violin and flute solos — were recorded in Europe between 1911 and 1914 alone.⁷ That these recordings have remained unknown until now is due to several causes:

1. While early recordings played a very important part in the revival of klezmer music which began in America about two decades ago, the recordings available here were almost exclusively American.
2. The excellent and comprehensive discographic survey of American klezmer by Richard Spottswood deliberately excluded European recordings, even the relatively few that were reissued on American labels.
3. Since World War I, the situation of the East European Jewish communities which would have been the main audience for such records has ranged from difficult to horrendous. Two world wars and the policies of communist regimes have caused tremendous destruction to the people, property, and culture of East European Jewry.
4. The same factors have isolated the klezmer heartlands of Eastern Europe, particularly after World War II, from ethnographers, musicologists and sound archivists in Western countries.
5. Klezmer music has suffered from generally low prestige within the spectrum of Jewish music, somewhat analogous to that of jazz at one time within American music. Thus, until recently, even Jewish music research has generally ignored this music.

The unavailability of old European "klezmer" recordings, especially of ensembles, has been lamentable. First of all, the entire recorded legacy is sufficiently small that any additional early recordings would add considerably to our knowledge of the music. Secondly, while it is clear that the music evolved when it came to America, we have no baseline for comparison other than the Belf ensemble, and we do not know how typical of European klezmer ensembles that group was. It certainly does not sound like any group that recorded in America.

Rubin and Ottens give a good sense of the problem:

"Besides the 24 (sic) known pieces by [the Belf] ensemble, and the recordings of the "State Jewish Orchestra" there exist recordings of only one other Eastern European klezmer orchestra. ⁸ Beregovski, who was very exact in his transcriptions of klezmer melodies, seems not to have dealt with ensembles or ensemble-playing. Thus we do not know how the music really sounded, how the harmonic structure was built up, how many instruments played the lead melody line and to what extent the musicians within the ensemble varied melodically from one another, and we ask ourselves what kind of contrapuntal and harmonic lines were played, what kinds of rhythmic accompaniments the pieces had, and which instruments played solos in various sections of the piece, etc."⁹

The present article is by no means a complete account of early European recordings of Jewish instrumental music, but merely contributes a few pieces of the puzzle by providing a tentative account of Jewish instrumental recording by Russian firms, from the beginnings in 1911 up until the First World War.¹⁰ With the exception of about one-third of the Belf sides, as well as some of the "Russian-Jewish Orchestra" titles on the Favorite label, the recordings documented in this article have until now been completely unknown, even to specialists. The other early European instrumental recordings referred to above, though closely related to these and in any case intrinsically important, raise numerous special discographic and musicological questions of their own, and for that reason require separate discussion elsewhere. Admittedly, the omission is artificial, but although some of the latter recordings are known only to specialists, they are at least known — some have even been reissued.

The tradition of Jewish klezmer is an ancient one, associated especially with weddings,¹¹ but efforts to study its history have barely begun.¹² In the late nineteenth century there were Jewish wedding bands all over Eastern Europe, and we know of a number of famous ensembles from that time. However, the heartland of the repertoire and style that has come to be known as "klezmer music" is southern and western Ukraine, Moldova (= Bessarabia, Bukovina), and Galicia, and to this day in Moldova and adjoining areas of Romania and Ukraine there are folk-musicians, mainly non-Jews and often Gypsies, that still preserve some of this tradition.¹³

One of the earliest European "klezmer" groups to record was the band of V. Belf, actually a small chamber ensemble. What appears to be their first recording was released in 1911.¹⁴ Jewish instrumental recordings were issued before the First World War in the Russian empire on Favorite, Sirena, Stella, Extraphon, Janus, Odeon, and Pishushchi Amur (the Gramophone Company's Russian label — affiliated with "Angel"). Zonophon (a cheaper Gramophone affiliate) had a large Jewish catalogue but I am not aware of any Jewish instrumentals issued on that label.

Most outstanding in terms of numbers was the Sirena company. Headquartered in Warsaw, its name refers to the heraldic symbol of that city, a mermaid, and the company logo depicts a mermaid holding a record. Yet Sirena must be considered a Russian company, since Poland was then part of the Russian empire, and Sirena was selling records in Russia by 1908. After the Russian Revolution, the company (under the Polish spelling Syrena) continued to exist in Warsaw and was still producing Jewish records in the 1930s.¹⁵

Under the company's dynamic director Philip Lazarevich Tempel, Sirena was by 1911 producing over two and a half million discs a year, and further expansions were being planned.¹⁶ A wide range of classical and popular music was represented in the Sirena catalogue, but Tempel also saw great potential for expansion in ethnic and exotic markets. Interest in ethnographic recordings had been growing for some years. As early as 1901, a commission on musical ethnography established at the University of Moscow began making (non-commercial) recordings of non-Russian nationalities of the Empire.

Some time later, record companies began to see the commercial possibilities of ethnic records. In the early years of this century, millions of Jews lived in Russia and the adjoining Austro-Hungarian empire. While the great majority were too poor to buy a gramophone, there was a growing middle class in towns and cities such as Odessa, Kiev, Minsk, Warsaw, and many others. The earliest Jewish cantorial recordings date from the turn of the century.¹⁷ Sirena was quick to capitalize on this interest. By the fall of 1910, the Sirena catalogue included Russian, Polish, Tatar, Georgian, "etc." selections.¹⁸ A year later, the company was listing Russian, Tartar (Crimean and Kazan),¹⁹ Armenian, Chechen, Sart,²⁰ Polish, and Jewish releases.²¹

An item in the trade magazine *Gramofonii Mir* (20 April 1911) notes that Sirena had recently begun an all-out effort to conquer the Russian market.²² At this time most of Sirena's Jewish repertoire was probably "dukhovny" (spiritual, i.e., cantorial), but the signing of the Belf ensemble was evidently part of this expansion effort. The Belf records proved extremely popular and many other "klezmer" recordings followed in their wake.

What I believe to be the first Belf recording, and one of the earliest known commercial recordings of a "klezmer" band, was released 1 April 1911.²³ It was "Gora-Golya, tan'ets v sadu (rumynski tan'ets)" coupled with "Rumynski tan'ets".²⁴ Though the release was credited to an anonymous "Rumynski Ork'estr," I believe this was actually the Belf Orchestra. In the Russian music business at the time, "Romanian" seems to have been the preferred term for what we today would call klezmer. Anything "Romanian" was popular with Jews. The word conjured up a vision of wine, women and song that was available nowhere else in eastern European Jewish culture. A significant

part of the contemporary "klezmer" repertoire was of Romanian (especially Moldavian and Bessarabian) origin, and indeed the Belf Orchestra was always known as Belf's Romanian Orchestra, not Belf's Jewish Orchestra. Despite the name, however, most of the Belf repertoire was actually not in the new "Romanian" fashion, but came from what Feldman (1994) terms the "core Jewish repertoire," while their playing style might be termed Hasidic or pseudo-Hasidic (i.e., Jewish).²⁵

Practically nothing is known about Belf. The only scraps of information I have been able to find appear in a long article on the Sirena company, signed "Turist" and printed in the 25 June 1912 issue (no. 11) of *Gramofonii Mir*. On p. 18 we read:

The artists, surrounded by all comforts and attention, and well paid, relate to the work in a totally different manner [than usual], and think nothing of re-recording an unsuccessful number two or three times if necessary. To be precise, I must state that all the business, all the reins of management are concentrated in the hands of chief director Ph. L. Tempel, who indeed turns out to be the energetic inspirer of all the projects and a specialist at ferreting out hit numbers. Who would have supposed that a poor Jewish musician, Belf, could have bought himself a house in his home town out of the proceeds which the factory paid him? ²⁶ But who dug up and contracted this Belf? — Tempel. And do you know, readers, how many of Belf's records the factory sells? Every day not less than two to three thousand items are shipped south, yet new orders pour in endlessly.²⁷

Meager as this is, it tells us a number of things we could not otherwise have known: (1) Belf was an ordinary, impoverished Jewish klezmer; (2) he was "discovered" by Tempel; (3) he was given a contract by Sirena; (4) the records sold very well; (5) Belf made money. (It would be interesting to know how the other musicians made out.)

Indeed, one can venture a reconstruction of Belf's recording career. His first release, two "Romanian" numbers (April 1911), do very well. Less than a year later (ca. January 1912), the band is "signed" as Belf's "Romanian" orchestra. Apparently the contract is for two-and-a-half years, since they record regularly and exclusively on Sirena for that length of time. In June 1914 they suddenly appear on two other labels, Extraphon and Pishushchii Amur, and their last Sirenas are issued in July.

That the record companies had discovered a lucrative market is corroborated by a passage from an item, datelined Odessa, sent in by correspondent "S.T." and printed in *Gramofonii Mir* no. 6-7 (5 April 1913) on p. 18. The text reads,

Among a significant part of the population, the marvellously recorded discs of the "Favorite" firm, mainly in band-format, have achieved colossal success, as for example "Sruilik," "Amerika," "Odessa Mama," "Nakhes fun Kinder," "Kishinyevskaya," and others. This is because for one part of the Jewish public it would be nice to have a band, and for another part of the population huge sales would be guaranteed.²⁸

These Favorite recordings are identical with those of the "Russian-Jewish Orchestra" mentioned by Martin Schwartz in his notes to band A.4 on Folklyric 9034.²⁹ At least six pairings were re-released in the United States by Columbia.

The first period of "klezmer" recording by Russian firms lasted less than four years. The following chronology of releases provides an overview (the numbers refer to the number of sides released):

April 1, 1911. Belf? (Sirena) under the name "Romanian Orchestra" (2 sides)
February 1912. Belf (Sirena) (10)

April 1912. Belf (Sirena) (10)
 July 1912. Belf (Sirena) (12)
 August 1912. "Jewish Merry Wedding Orchestra" (Stella-Kontsert) (10)
 August 1912. "Virtuoso clarinetist" (Stella-Kontsert) (6)
 September 1912. Stafesko's Romanian Orchestra (Sirena) (2)
 February 1913. P. Gegner, clarinet (Extraphon) (6)
 March 1913. "Romanian Orchestra" (Sirena) (8)
 March 1913. Belf (Sirena) (8)
 Before April 1913. "Russian Jewish Orchestra" (at least 17)
 June 1913. P. Gegner, clarinet (Extraphon) (4)
 October 1913. G. Tsy-pin, clarinet (Janus) (6)
 December 1913. Jascha Gegner, violin (Extraphon) (4)
 February 1914. Jascha Gegner, violin (Extraphon) (6)
 April 1914. Belf (Sirena) (10)
 June 1914. Belf (Pishushchii Amur) (6)
 July 1914. Belf (Sirena) (4)
 July 1914. Belf (Pishushchii Amur) (4)
 July 1914. Belf (Extraphon) (18)
 July 1914. Romanian Orchestra of Mihai Viteazul (Sirena) (2)
 1914 or earlier. Stupel's Wind Band (Odeon) (12)
 1914 or earlier. Olevski's Wind Band (Odeon) (16)
Total = 193 (+ ?)

It will be seen from this chronology that in July of 1914, 28 sides were released on three different labels, more than in any previous month. The detail that by mid-1912 the Sirena factory in Warsaw was shipping thousands of Belf records "south" every day suggests that the main market was Ukraine, Moldova and Bessarabia. Cities like Odessa and Keshinev were undoubtedly big markets, but probably in any half-way decent *shtetl* there would have been a few families that could afford a record-player.

At any rate it is clear that large numbers of Jews wanted to hear the party music they had grown up with, and it was a lot cheaper to buy a few records than to hire a band every time they wanted to hear it. Although emigration to America was high in these years, the market need not have been lost; it might even have increased due to better economic opportunities for potential customers in America. Indeed, copies of the Belf records are not unknown in the United States. The YIVO collection in New York has a few, and the Gratz College collection in Philadelphia has about 12. This is probably due to the fact that

"Sirena" was the first Russian [recording] company setting up export of its products to the American continent. The trade was conducted via a big wholesale dealer in Baltimore to which address large batches of discs were sent every month. Jewish and Polish music was a particular hit with American music-fans.³⁰

If the Russian companies had been able to work out good exporting or licensing arrangements for sales in the United States, there might have been a lot more European klezmer recordings. But it was not to be. Immediately following the high point of July 1914, there was an abrupt and total cessation of releases. This is because the World War began in August.

The war brought an immediate change in the programming of the record companies. Ethnic releases came to a virtual halt and there was a large increase in Russian

patriotic, military, and religious music. Also featured was patriotic and military music of the allies such as England and France.

Aside from the obviously topical nature of this change, there is perhaps another reason. Sirena, Stella, and Extraphon were all founded by German businessmen, some if not all of them Jews. Obviously they would have been under particular pressure to demonstrate their support for the Russian war effort.

The absence of foreign competition left the recording field wide open to American bands such as those of Abe Elenkrig, Max Leibowitz, Abe Schwartz, and Harry Kandel, all of which released a large number of records during the war years. (The United States did not enter the war until 1917.)

The Russian economy was ruined by the war and the subsequent chaos of revolution. In the years 1919-1921, a wave of pogroms devastated the Jewish communities, especially in the Ukraine. After the revolution, whatever record companies still existed were forced to close or were nationalized. The Jewish middle class, most of which consisted of small shop-owners and artisans eking out a precarious existence, was classified as counter-revolutionary and their businesses were liquidated.

Under the Soviet regime in the 20s and 30s, aside from the ethnographic field recordings made by Beregowski,³¹ commercial Jewish instrumental recordings were undoubtedly made. As mentioned earlier (see note 7), we know of several excellent klezmer recordings from the late 30s under the direction of M.I. Rabinovich, and there may have been more. But these records were produced under very different conditions and will require a separate treatment on some future occasion.

Conspectus of Recording Artists, 1911-1914

- (a) "Romanian Orchestra under the Direction of Kapellmeister V. Belf" between April 1911 and July 1914 released 56 sides on Sirena. (Note: the two sides of April 1911 were credited only to "Romanian Orchestra.") (b) In July 1914 they released 10 sides for the Pishushchii Amur company on the 10" dark-blue label. (c) Also in July 1914 they released 18 sides on the Extraphon label in Kiev.
- "Jewish Merry (i.e., Freylakh) Wedding Orchestra" released 10 sides on Stella-Kontsert-Rekord in August 1912.
- "Romanian Orchestra under the Direction of K. Stafesko" released 2 sides on Sirena in September 1912.
- "Romanian Orchestra" (probably not Belf) released 8 sides on Sirena in March 1913.
- "Romanian Orchestra under the Direction of the well-known Viteatso (=Viteazul) released 2 sides on Sirena in July 1914.
- Jascha M. Gegner (violin, Poltava), "well-known performer of Jewish melodies" released 10 sides on Extraphon in December 1913 and February 1914.
- "Virtuoso clarinetist, performer of Romanian - Oriental melodies" released 16 sides on Stella-Kontsert-Rekord in August 1912.
- "P.E. Gegner, well-known performer of Romanian and Oriental pieces on clarinet with tsimbl accompaniment" released 6 sides on Extraphon in February 1913 and 4 sides in June 1913.
- "The famous soloist G. Tsy-pin," clarinetist with orchestral accompaniment, released 6 sides on the Warsaw label Janus in December 1913.
- At least 17 Jewish orchestral recordings were released on Favorite before 1913 under

the name "Russian-Jewish Orchestra." They seem to have been originally recorded between 1909 and 1911 in Hannover, Germany (see note 29).

11. A wind band under the direction of Stupel' released 12 sides on Odeon by 1914.
12. A wind band under the direction of A. Olevski released 16 sides on Odeon by 1914.

Discography

(all couplings are as shown.)

SIRENA

Rumynski Ork'estr

April 1911³²

- 10524- "Gora-Golya," tan'ets v sadu
(Rumynski tan'ets)
10525- "Rumynski Tan'ets"

Rumynski Ork'estr pod Upr[avl'e- niem] Kap[el'meistera] V. Bel'fa

February 1912³³

- 11080- "Moldavanskaya dudochka"
11084- "Bolgarskaya"

11081- "Chaban"

11082- "Zhok" Rumynski tan'ets

11085- "Bolgarskii Zhok"³⁴

11086- "Moldavanskoye Ang'e"

11088- "Nukh Gavidul'e"

11087- "U rabina"

11079- "Ikhes"

11083- "Simkhas Toir'e"³⁵

April 1912³⁶

11078- "Rumynski Zhok"

11092- "Rumynski Motiv"

11094- "Bessarabskii Zhok"

11091- "Bessarabskii Freilikhs"

11097- "Mayufis"

11096- "Zait Lustig"

11089- "Fun der Khup'e"

11090- "Na razsv'et'e"

11093- "Dem rebens gavidul'e"

11095- "Lomir beiten Got"

July 1912³⁷

12417- "Turetskaya"

12421- "Amerikanskaya"

12418- "Tsu di akufes"

12420- "Khotinskaya"

12423- "Freilikhs bruder"

12424- "Skvirskaya"³⁸

12422- "Der arbaysman"

12426- "Lipov'etskaya"

12429- "Surra u raboty"

12436- "Baym rebens tish"

12431- "Der ferzorgter yid"

12419- "Khusidl"³⁹

March 1913⁴⁰

12899- "Pyesn chumaka"

13075- "Gopak"

13072- "Rumynskii tan'ets"

13074- "Rumynskii chaban"

13071- "Tan'ets rabina"

13073- "Nakhes fun kinder"⁴¹

13078- "Platch Yevreia"

13079- "Yevreiskaya"⁴²

April 1914⁴³

3309- "Vospominanie o rodin'e"

3311- "Toska rummyntsa"

3313- "Gulyashchina" (posl'e svadby)⁴⁴

3325- "Freilikhs"

3321- "Khersonskaya"

3310- "Mogil'evskaya"

3315- "Khasin u rabina"

3317- "Od'esskaya"

3319- "A gruss fun dem [sic] geim"

3318- "Chumak"

July 1914⁴⁵

3314- "Di mekhitonim freid"

3322- "A gute vokh dem reben"

3323- "Kievskiya vospominaniya"

3326- "Dzhok," tan'ets

PISHUSHCHII AMUR

Sinii Etiket (Dark Blue Label Series)

10th Grand (65 kopeks)

Rumynskii Ork'estr V. Belfa

June 1914⁴⁶

P.550- Khonts'e in Amerika⁴⁷

Dy koly oyf ulyashchiny

P.551- Gora-Golya, Rum. tan'ets

Rumynskii motiv

P.552- Bessarabskii zhog

Gop lyalya Rum. piesnya

July 1914⁴⁸

P.595- Rumynskoye olyandr'e, ch[ast] 1-ya

Tozhe, ch[ast] 2-ya

P.596- Sl'ezy. Yevreiskaya-melodiya

Dus khusidl oyf der shif

EXTRAPHON (Kiev)

Rumynskii Ork'estr pod upravleniem

Kapel'meistera V. Belfa

July 1914⁴⁹

22.611- Moldavanskoye Ange

22.612- Bessarabskii Zhok

22.615- Plach Beilisa

22.616- Osvodozhdenie Beilisa⁵⁰

22.617- Surra u raboty

22.618- Dem rebens gavidul'e

22.619- Der ferzorgter yud

22.620- Khusidl

22.621- Tur'etskaya

22.622- Lemir beiten Got

22.623- Amerikanskaya

22.624- Dem Toilem (sic) rebens

22.625- Bessarabski freylikhs

22.626- Na razsv'et'e (posl'e svadby)

22.627- Fon der khupe

22.628- Ikhes

22.629- Nakhes fun kinder

22.630- Skvirskaya

STELLA-KONTSERT-REKORD

Yevreiskii Ves'elii Svadebnii Ork'estr

(Jewish Merry Wedding Orchestra)

August 1912⁵¹

13846- "Shmarovoznik"

13847- "Der feter Shloime, in di mume

Zlate fon Amerika"

13848- "Sholim-bais", iz op. "Yom-akhupo"

13855- "Idl mit zain fidl"

13849- Erlikha No. 914, Tan'ets⁵²

13854- Dvadtsatii v'ek XX

13850- "Yosel furt avek"

13851- "Pol shestovo 5 1/2"

13852- "Dii V'eter"

13853- "Davidka of dem kater"

SIRENA

Rumynskii Ork'estr pod upravl'e- niem Kapel'meistera K. Stafesko

September 1912⁵³

12147- "Bolgarskaya" (Bolgarskii Tan'ets)

2061- "Misha uyezzhayet"

(Odesskaya Pyesnya)

SIRENA

Rumynskii Ork'estr⁵⁴

March 1913⁵⁵

3063 "Pyatnitsa" of Shmayef

3061- "Chainik" of A.V. Russofsky

3078- "Nakhis"⁵⁵
3079- "Tsures"

3080- "KiriyaK"
3081- "Kheishik," iz op.
"Amerikanerin"⁵⁷

3088- "Freilikhs" I chast
3089- "Freilikhs" II chast

SIRENA
Rumynskii Ork'estr pod upravleniem
Viteatso⁵⁸
July 1914⁵⁹

3349- "Rumynski bolgar" I chast
3350- "Rumynski bolgar" II chast

EXTRAPHON
Ya. M. Gegner, Poltava⁶⁰
Izv'estnii ispolnit'el evreiskikh
melodii (well-known performer of
Jewish melodies)

December 1913⁶¹
22.115- Kol-nidrei. Perel. M. Erdenko⁶²
22.116- Yevreiskaya molitva "Khtsoss"

22.117- Yevreiskaya melodiya, muz. Ya.
M. Gegner
22.118- Fantaz na yevr. temu. muz. Ya.
M. Gegner

February 1914⁶³
22.091- Otryvok iz op. "Sulamif"⁶⁴
22.092- Melodiya iz op. "Sulamif"

22.093- Piesenka rabbina
22.094- Subbotnyaya molitva
"Avurakhm'en"

22.095- "Taksim" (Doina), yevreiskii tan'ets
22.096- Yevreiskii kontsert, soch. Ya.
M. Gegner

STELLA-KONTSERT REKORD
Virtuoz-klarn'etist, ispolnitel rumyn-
ske-vostochnykh melodii (Virtuoso
clarinetist, performer of Romanian -
Oriental melodies)

August 1912⁶⁵
13785- "Plach Rumynskikh Yevreyev"
13811- "Bolgarskii Zhok"

13810- "Moldavanskii Ang'e"
13815- "Tatarskaya Khaitarma"

13791- "Zhok fantazii"
13812- "Fon der Khupe"

13794- "Bolgarskii romans"
13789- "Rumynskaya lyubov"

13787- "Idu byegu molitssya"
13778- "Vernulsya iz molitvy"

13814- "Dus toirele"
13791- "Zhok fantazii"⁶⁶

13790- "Chalsi"
13813- "Rebe far di lokshen"
13792- "Bolgarski narodnii tan'ets"
13793- "Simkhos toire"

EXTRAPHON
P. Gegner, Kiev
Izv'estnii ispolnit'el rumynskikh i
vostochn. piesen na klarn'et s
akkompanim. tsimbal (well-known
performer of Romanian and Oriental
tunes on clarinet with tsimbl accom-
paniment)
February 1913⁶⁷
22363- "Rumynskii romans i tan'ets"
22364- "Frantzeverd'e". Rumynskii rom. i
"Ves'elaya"

22365- "Doina"
22366- "Vospominaniye o Bukar'est'e"

22367- "Kale bezetsen". soch. P. Gegnera
22368- "Beim rebens tish"

June 1913⁶⁸
22.369- "Doina bessarabskaya"
22.370- "Frantzeverd'e"

22.371- "Armyanskii Khaiterma"
22.372- "Tatarskii prizyvnik"

JANUS-REKORD
Solo na klarn'et s orkestrom. Isp.
izviestnii Virtuoz G. Tsypin (Solo
clarinet with orchestra, performed
by the well-known virtuoso G.
Tsypin)

October 1913⁶⁹
10082: 5665- "Krakovyak"
5675- "Kamarinskaya"

10084: 5663- "Chaban"
5666- "Zhok bolgarskii"

10085: 5667- "Gora golya"
5668- "Gop lyalya"

FAVORITE
"Russian-Jewish Orchestra" [credit-
ed to "Russisch-Judische Orchester"
on American reissues (Columbia)]

At least some of these ("Srulik,"
"Amerika," "Odessa Mama," "Nakhes fun
Kinder," "Kishinyevskaya," and others)
were released before April 1913.⁷⁰ The
matrix numbers indicate three sessions.
The original recordings were apparently
made in Hannover, Germany between
1909 and 1911 (see note 29), and may not
always be of the same ensemble.

1-72079, mx 2371-b "Rumanischer Tanz"
(= Columbia E6100)
1-72080, mx 2372-b "Bulgarischer Tanz"
(= Columbia E6100)

72083, mx 2383-b "Konstantinopolisch"
("Konstantinopel" on Russian release)
(= Columbia E6024)

1-72084, mx 2384-b "Das Odessauer
Chusidl" (= Columbia E6024)

1-73031, mx 9543-o "Odessa mama"
(= Columbia E6026)

1-73032, mx 9544-o "Diere Geld"
(= Columbia E6026)⁷¹

1-73038, mx 9561-o "Novobratche -
Chusen kale mazeltov"
(= Columbia E6027)

1-73039, mx 9562-o "Kishinyevskaya"
(= Columbia 6027)

1-73068, mx ? "Veselaya Truba," iz
'Mizerere'
1-73069, mx? "Vstryacha Gostei," iz
'Mizerere'

1-73072, mx 11831-o "Hochzeit Tanz, aus
'Miserere' (von Juschkewitsch)
(= Columbia E6025)
1-72152, mx 11832-o "Tusch," aus
'Miserere' (von Juschkewitsch)
(= Columbia E6025)

1-72155, mx 11835-o "Lustige Nacht"
(= Columbia E6101)
1-73073, mx 11836-o "Gesänge auf Zions
Gebürge (= Columbia E6101)

Other titles are "Srulik," "Amerika,"
"Nakhes fun kinder," and probably more
(data not available).

ODEON
Wind Band under the direction of
Stupel' (mainly)
By 1914⁷²

10801a- Ki-sa, ki-sa-sa
10801b- Pasha

10802a- Khaya Shmaya, iz op.
"Shir Gashirim"
10802b- Man kon kayn khokhom zayn, iz
op. "Shir Gashirim"

10803a Vostochnii Tan'ets of Ar'enshteyn
10803b Dem rebens nigun. Interpr. by
a wind band under the direction of
Olevski

10806a- Kheyshek, iz op. "Di amerikanerin"
10806b- Damen, iz op. "Di amerikanerin"
10810a- Bar-mitsvo. Marsh iz op.
"Pintele Yud".

10810b- Beys-Dovid. Marsh. Interpr. by
a band under the direction of Olevski

10812a- Sore-Sheyndel
 10812b- "Idel mit dem fidel." Interpr. by
 a band under the direction of Olevski

ODEON
Wind Band under the direction of A.
Olevski (mainly)
 By 1914⁷³

10804a- Mlavo-malko
 10804b- Nokh Gavdolo. Interpr. by
 a band under the direction of Stupel'

10805a- Bolgarka
 10805b- Zhena

10807a- Aeroplan
 10807b- Lopin, no derzhi fason

10808a- Mkhutonim, veselyei!
 10808b- Auf beyde fiselakh

10809a- Kharbin
 10809b- Chikago

10811a- Dos Pintele Yud
 10811b- Oy, men tor nit, iz op. "Shir
 Gashirim", interpr. by a band under
 the direction of Stupel'

10813a- Berele XX vyeke
 10813b- Du zolst nit geren di mamen

10814a- Di tnoyim
 10814b- Shmarovoznik

Appendix

As mentioned earlier, the word "Bucharest" appears on the labels of many if not all of Belf's Sirena releases. Early European labels frequently associate the name of a town or city with the artist, though it is not always clear whether this refers to a home town, base of operations, or place of recording. Normally it seems to be the place with which the artist is identified rather than the place of recording. However, there is some doubt among researchers (e.g., M. Schwartz, K. Bjorling, M. Alpert, and others) as to whether the Belf orchestra really had any connection with Bucharest.

Certainly one cannot reject Bucharest out of hand. Klezmer researcher Joshua Horowitz presents ample evidence of a flourishing klezmer tradition in that city (see his notes to the new Budowitz CD), and the Belfs could have been part of it. However, there is reason to suspect that "Bucharest" may just be a marketing ploy, as if a "Romanian" orchestra, wherever they are really from, "ought" to be from Bucharest.

First of all, the Belf orchestra does not sound particularly "Romanian" (i.e., Romanian-Jewish). While they recorded a number of examples of the slow to moderate tempo Romanian 3/8 dance-form "zhok," those I have heard (Bessarabskii Zhok and Bolgarski Zhok) are not played in the typically Romanian lilting style, in striking contrast to, e.g., the Jewish violinist Abe Schwartz, who definitely was from Romania, and does play the zhok (also called "hora") with the distinctive "lilt" (cf. Folklyric 9034). Besides zhoks, among the 29 Belf sides I have heard, probably no more than five tunes could be described as at all of the Romanian-Jewish type (for an explanation of which, see Feldman 1994): "Freilekh Bruder" (a sort of hongá), "Zait Lustig" (a tune later recorded by Abe Schwartz's orchestra as "Kishenever Bulgar"), and two more with as yet unidentified titles, the first being the same as "Hotza Mama," a tune later made famous by the great comic singer Pesakhke Burshteyn, the other known in Yiddish as "Nokh a Bissel" and in Russian as "Zhil na Svete Khayim." In addition, the tune called "Khotinskaya" does sound as if it might have come from the Bukovina. Yet none of these are played in a particularly "Romanian" style. A striking comparison can be made with the contemporaneous band of trumpeter Abe Elenkrig, whose recordings

have a real "Romanian" character in both repertoire and style, despite the fact that Elenkrig himself came from Zolotanosha, a *shtetl* near Kiev (Ukraine).⁷⁴ The tune "Nokh a Bissel," one of those from Elenkrig's 1913 session, offers the opportunity for a direct stylistic comparison.

In billing itself as Romanian and recording some pieces — and not very many — from the then "modern" Romanian repertoire, the Belf orchestra may have been not unlike some American dance bands which used the word "jazz" in their names or tune titles but did not play in the true jazz style.

If not from Bucharest, where could the Belf orchestra have been from? Philological analysis of the titles, while not in itself sufficient to exclude eastern Romania (including Bucharest), suggests that the only other possibility would be southwestern Ukraine. All 84 known Belf titles (some of which are remakes) are written in the Cyrillic (Russian) alphabet, and the majority are in the Russian language; but some 33, or nearly 40%, are in Yiddish or Hebrew or contain at least one Yiddish or Hebrew word. As these are spelled out phonetically in Cyrillic letters, they may reflect peculiarities of pronunciation.

In most cases the pronunciations turn out to be more or less "standard Yiddish," and thus give no clue to any particular region, but a few titles do show dialect features. East-European Yiddish, as well as the Hebrew used along with it, is comprised of three main dialect groups, each of which (though some of their characteristics overlap), has certain unique sound features. The dialect features in the Belf titles, taken together, are consistent with, and only with, the so-called "tote-mome lushn," a sub-dialect of Ukrainian Yiddish spoken in Bessarabia, southern and southwestern Ukraine. Since Bucharest was, in terms of Yiddish, a dialect extension of Bessarabia, it cannot be excluded on dialect grounds. However, Congress Poland, Galicia, Slovakia, Transylvania (Maramures), White Russia, and Lithuania/Latvia would be ruled out; and probably Bukovina (northern Moldova) as well.⁷⁵

Additional evidence seems to be provided by place-names mentioned in titles. Excluding broad designations like "Bulgarian," "Moldavian," "Bessarabian," "Romanian," six actual town or city names appear among the titles we have. Skvirskaya (Yiddish, Skver), Lipovetskaya (Lipovtsa, near Bielatsirkov), Khotinskaya (Khotin, east of Chernovitz), and Mogilevskaya (Mogilyov Podolskii; Yiddish, Molev), across the Dniestr from Bessarabia. Kherson, Odessa, and Kiev, which also appear in titles, are big cities. All but Kiev are within the region of "tote-mome" Yiddish.

While titles in klezmer music are notoriously unstable and tunes were sometimes given arbitrary names for flippant or trivial reasons, this does not mean that they cannot have significance. In this case, there seems to be a pattern, precisely among the smaller towns, such that, moving from west to east, Khotin is in the Bukovina, but close to the River Dniestr which divides it from the Podolia region of Ukraine; Molev and Lipovtsa are in Podolia, while Skver is located to the north-east in Kiev province, but still close to Podolia. Two of these towns are just within cultural Romania: Khotin is in the Bukovina, while Molev, though in Ukraine, is on the border of Bessarabia. Possibly the Belfs gave these names to the tunes either because they learned them in those places or because the tunes were particular favorites there. In other words, these towns may have been within Belf's travelling range for weddings.

They were all rather small places at that time. The remaining cities were large and so well known throughout Ukraine and the whole Black Sea region that they would seem to be weaker indicators of Belf's presence there. However, Kherson and Odessa, on the Black Sea, are still in south-central Ukraine, while Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, is further north but also in the central part.

Finally, klezmer researcher Joshua Horowitz points out that some of the Belf tunes have an ABCB structure, which he says is characteristic of some tunes found among the Breslover hasidim, whose center happens to be the town of Uman — also in Podolia.

Thus, if the Belfs did not come from Bucharest, the most likely alternative would seem to be Podolia.

Reading List on the History of Klezmer Music and its Recording

There are no books in English on this subject. Indeed, the only books are:

Beregovski, Moshe. *Yevreiskaya Narodnaya Instrumental'naya Muzika* [Jewish Instrumental Folk Music, in Russian]. Moscow: Sovietski Kompozitor, 1987. Michael Alpert is presently preparing an English translation for publication.

Stutschewsky, Joachim. *Folklor Musikali shel Yehude Mizrakh-Eropah* [Musical Folklore among the Jews of Eastern Europe, in Hebrew]. Tel Aviv: Merkaz le-tarbut ule-hinukh, ha-sifriyah le-musikah, n.d.

Stutschewsky, Joachim. *Ha-Klezmorim* [in Hebrew]. Jerusalem: Byalik Institute, 1959.

The following articles are most helpful:

Adler, Israel. "À la recherche de chants perdus — La redécouverte des collections du 'Cabinet' de musique juive de Moisei I. Beregovski." In *Ndroje balendro... textes offerts à Simha Arom* (pp. 247-267). Paris: Peeters, 1995.

Beregowski, Moshe. "Yidische Instrumentalische Folksmuzik." [Jewish Instrumental Folk Music, in English]. In *Old Jewish Folkmusic: The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski*, edited and translated by Mark Slobin. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

Feldman, Walter Zev. "Bulgareasca/Bulgarish/Bulgar: The Transformation of a Klezmer Dance Genre." *Ethnomusicology* 38.1 (Winter 1994), 1-35. An important paper, with valuable bibliography.

Idelsohn, A.Z. "Badchonim and Klezmerim" = Chapt. 20 of his *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development* (435-460). New York: Schocken Books, 1967 [1929].

Slobin, Mark. "The Mythic Old World." = Chapt. 1 of his *Tenement Songs: The Popular Music of the Jewish Immigrants* (11-31). Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982.

The literature on recordings and on the development of klezmer music in America (mostly in English) is almost entirely in the form of liner notes to records, tapes and CDs:

Alpert, Michael. Notes to *Like in a Different World: Leon Schwartz, a Traditional Jewish Klezmer Violinist from Ukraine*. (1993). — Global Village C-109.

Frigyesi, Judit. "The Historical Value of the Record 'Máramaros — The Lost Jewish Music of Transylvania.'" Included with notes to *Máramaros — The Lost Jewish Music of Transylvania*. (1993). Rykodisc HNCD 1373.

Horowitz, Joshua. Notes to "Budowitz: Mother Tongue," Koch International, Munich (1996).

Klezmer Music: A Marriage of Heaven and Earth. Roslyn, New York: Ellipsis Arts, 1996. (A 63-page illustrated book with the CD Ellipsis Arts 4090.)

Rubin, Joel & Rita Ottens. Notes to *Yikhes. Frühe Klezmer-Aufnahmen von 1907-1939 aus der Sammlung von prof. Martin Schwartz*. (1992). Trikont US 0179.

Rubin, Joel. Notes to *The Epstein Brothers Orchestra: Kings of Freylakh-Land*. (1995). Wergo SM 1611-2.

Rubin, Ruth. Notes to "The Old Country." Smithsonian Folkways 03801 (1963).

Sapoznik, Henry (with additions by Walter Zev Feldman and Andrew Statman). Notes to *Klezmer Muzik 1910-1942. Recordings from the YIVO Archives*. (1981). Folkways FSS 34021. The first attempt at a synthesis. Somewhat outdated but still extremely useful.

Sapoznik, Henry. Notes to *Mysteries of the Sabbath: Classic Cantorial Recordings, 1907-1947*. (1994). Yazoo 7002-2.

Sapoznik, Henry & Dick Spottswood. Notes to *Klezmer Pioneers*. (1993). Rounder C-1089.

Sapoznik, Henry. Notes to *Dave Tarras: Yiddish-American Klezmer Music, 1925-1956*. (1992). Yazoo 7001.

Schwartz, Martin. Notes to *Klezmer Music from the Collection of Dr. Martin Schwartz*. (1984). Folklyric 9034.

Schlesinger, Michael. Notes to *Jakie Jazz 'em Up. Old-Time Klezmer Music, 1912-1926*. (1984). Global Village C-101.

Acknowledgments

This paper would have been literally impossible without the unstinting help and encouragement of Kurt Bjorling (Brave Old World and the Chicago Klezmer Ensemble) and fellow ARSC member Sarah Velez (recorded sound librarian, New York Public Library); and it is much better than it would otherwise have been thanks to the stimulating discussions and suggestions provided by Michael Alpert (Brave Old World) Dr. Zev Feldman (Princeton), Prof. Martin Schwartz (Berkeley), Joshua Horowitz (Budowitz; Graz, Austria), and Henry Sapoznik (Kapelye). I am responsible for whatever errors remain.

Jeffrey Wollock is a historian of science specializing in early theories of psychomotor action and phonetics. His recorded-sound research focuses on Yiddish-language and Eastern-European ethnic recordings. He is himself an accomplished klezmer violinist.

Endnotes

1. A shorter version of this paper was presented on 13 October 1996 at the Klezmer Research Conference organized by Mark Slobin and Hankus Netsky and sponsored by the Department of Music, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut.
2. The Yiddish word *klezmer* (plural or *klezmerim*) means a player of a musical instrument; properly, a performer of traditional East European Jewish instrumental music; by extension, any instrumental musician, without reference to the type of music played. *Muziker* is a more genteel term than *klezmer*; *muzikant*, less. A band of such musicians is usually referred to as a *kapelle* or *kapelye*; the word *kompanye* is also used. The term "klezmer music," which has come into use in English only in the last 25 years or so, comes from the Yiddish *klezmer muzik*, apparently coined in the 1930s by the musicologist Moshe Beregovski, who according to Michael Alpert (personal communication) uses it in his Yiddish though not in his Russian writings. There does not appear to be any single generic term for this music in ordinary Yiddish. It is variously referred to as "Jewish dance music" (*yidische tants-muzik*), "wedding music" (*khasene-muzik*), *bolgar'n*, or *freylakhs-muzik* (though the dance-forms *bolgar* and *freylakhs* or merry piece represent only part of the traditional repertoire). The term "klezmer music" has by now become so widespread, however, that although it is an anachronism for the period under discussion, I felt I could not avoid using it.
3. Henry Sapoznik and Dick Spottawood, notes to "Klezmer Pioneers" (Rounder C-1089).
4. According to Sapoznik (1981), there was a flutist named Shloimke Kosch from the Kosch klezmer family in Lemberg (Russian, Lvov; Ukrainian, Lviv). We have virtually no information about the violinists, except that Steiner, who recorded at least two discs on German "Gramophon" about 1909, was also connected with the city of Lemberg on the labels; while Ahl — as recently discovered by Kurt Bjorling — was from Mościaka (a *shtetl* in Galicia, west of Lemberg, between Przemysl and Gorodok; today in Ukraine near the Polish border and spelled Montliaka).
5. Most of these were discovered by Hankus Netzky at Gratz College in Philadelphia in the late 1970s. Along with a few more, they have been compiled on cassette by Kurt Bjorling and copies are available (201 Elmwood, Evanston, IL 60202). An additional number, "Khusidl," was reissued in Prof. Martin Schwartz's collection on Folklyric 9034, and two more, "Bessarabian Hora" (original title, "Bessarabskii Zhok") and "Mayufis," are on *Klezmer Pioneers* (Rounder C-1089).
6. The designation "Grand" in Sirena-Grand seems to refer to the fact that they are 10" records; the 10" size was known in the trade as "Grand" and the 12" as "Gigant." Cf. advertisement for Pishushchi Amur in *Gramofonii Mir* No. 8 (10 June 1914), p. 15.
7. Prof. Martin Schwartz recently acquired from Hugo Stroetbaum of Utrecht, Holland two superb early examples of Ashkenazic instrumental music recorded in Turkey. The first, a trumpet *doina*, was recorded in 1908 on Odeon by the Goldberg Orchestra, better known (according to Christian Poché, notes to "Turquie: Archives de la musique turque: 1," Ocora C560081), for recordings of Turkish music. The other, a medley of *bulgars* by an anonymous "Orpheon Orchestra", evidently a different group, was released in 1912 by the Orpheon/Blumenthal Talking Machine and Record Co. The reverse sides of both records are Greek dances. From a later period, several sides of a "State Ensemble of Jewish Folk Musicians" directed by M.I. Rabinovich are known from Soviet recordings believed to have been made in the Ukraine in the late 1930s. (The klezmer band leader Rabinovich in Odessa between the world wars is very likely the same person.)
8. Though not further identified here, this is a reference (as Joel Rubin has recently confirmed) to the "Russian-Jewish Orchestra" which recorded "Odessa Mama," mentioned by Prof. Martin Schwartz in his notes to band A.4 on Folklyric 9034.
9. Joel Rubin and Rita Ottens, liner notes to Yikhes, footnote 125 (my translation from German - JW). Aside from these questions, essentially matters of orchestration which are amenable to notation, there are other vitally important elements, such as phrasing, articulation, rhythmic feeling, and *rubato*, which can be fully captured only by an audio recording.
10. To adequately explain my definition of "klezmer music" for the purposes of this discography would require a paper in itself. Let me say now only that I do not think my inclusions are problematic, with the possible exception of the non-Jewish band of Viteazul and the probably non-Jewish band of Stafesko. I have included these two, which both appeared on Sirena, mainly because they seem to have appealed to a "crossover" market. All indications are that certain kinds of Romanian music were becoming especially popular with Jewish audiences around this time (see Feldman 1994).
11. See Idelsohn 1967 [1929], 435-460.
12. For a reading list, see Appendix.
13. Cf. Slobin 1982. One such band from Vinnitsa, Ukraine was recorded by Russian ethnomusicologist Izaly Zemtsovsky. (Recording not commercially available.)
14. The instrumentation of Belf's ensemble is not entirely clear and may well have varied somewhat, but consisted at the very least of clarinet, melody violin, *secund* (chord/rhythm) violin, piano, and on some records a cello playing the bass line. They were preceded by Mihai Viteazul's trumpet *doina* and "Maneana Turceasca" (1905; see note 58); the Goldberg Orchestra's trumpet *doina* (1908; see note 17); and the "Russian-Jewish Orchestra" (1909-1911; see note 29).
15. I thank Joshua Horowitz for this information.
16. Dr. Aleksandr Tikhonov in a paper presented at the 1994 Conference of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections, New York City.
17. Sapoznik, notes to *Mysteries of the Sabbath*.
18. *Grammofonii Mir*, no. 6 (1 August 1910), no. 7 (1 September 1910), front advertising pages.
19. An advertisement in *Grammofonaya Zhizn* no.11 (5 September 1911) lists 50 Tartar titles.
20. "Sartski," a term for urban trading peoples of Central and southwestern Asia, especially the Kirghiz.
21. *Grammofonaya Zhizn* no.12 (20 September 1911), no. 13 (5 October 1911), inside front cover.
22. For a list of Sirena offices in Russia see *Grammofoniy Mir* 20 September 1913.
23. To put this in historical context, the first American "klezmer" band releases to achieve real popularity were from a set recorded in New York on 4 April 1913 (including "Fun der choope" and "Ikh Bank noch Odess") by trumpeter Abe Elenkrig and his band.
24. "Hora-Holya" in the garden (Romanian dance) and "Romanian Dance."
25. Recently, a Jew from Romania said to me, "klezmer music is essentially early-20th-century Romanian folk music". This statement, though inaccurate, has a certain justification. The Romanian component of klezmer, as Feldman (1994) shows, became more and

- more prominent beginning around the turn of the century. However, klezmer has always had its own distinctively Jewish playing styles, and in addition to the Romanian element has what Feldman calls a "core Jewish" repertoire, as well as important derivations from other sources (particularly the 19th-century Greek urban dance tradition and Ukrainian/Hutzul folk music).
26. It is regrettable that "Turist" did not make use of this golden opportunity to mention the name of Belf's home town. Although "Bucharest" is mentioned on the labels of the Sirena releases, there is widespread consensus among researchers that this was little more than window-dressing. For more on this, see the Appendix to this article.
27. Артисты, окруженные лаской и заботой, получая хорошие гонорары совсем иначе относятся к делу, и не задумывающиеся если нужно иногда пережить неудавшийся номер 2-3 раза. По справедливости, я должен констатировать, что все дело, все бразды правления концентрируются в руках главного директора Ф.Л. Темпель, который по истине является энергичнейшим вдохновителем всех предначертаний и специалистом по откапыванию боевых номеров. Кто бы мог подумать, что бедный еврейский музыкант Бельф купил у себя на родной дом из тех средств, которыми заплатила ему фабрика? А кто откопал и законтрактовал этого Бельфа? — Темпель. А знаете ли вы, читатели, сколько продает пластинок Бельфа фабрика? Ежедневно на юг посылаются не менее 2-3 тысячи штук, а новые заказы приходят без конца.
28. В известной части населения колоссальный успех имеют чудно записанные пластинки О-ва «фаворит» главным образом оркестры, как например «Сруликъ», «Америка», «Одесса мама», «Нахесь фунь киндеръ», «Кишиневская» и др. Это по части еврейской публики, по желательности было бы иметь оркестры и для другой части населения и безусловно они имели бы громадный сбыт. I thank Michael Alpert for various improvements to my translation of these two passages.
29. Though these records were released in Russia around 1913, Schwartz has recently relayed to me the unexpected finding of Hugo Stroetbaum (Utrecht) that the matrix numbers indicate they were actually recorded between 1909 and 1911 in Hannover, Germany. This would make them the earliest known klezmer band or bands to record. If they have been given short shrift in this article it is because stylistically they are rather uninteresting (at least the examples I have heard). However their repertoire is of some interest, as is the very fact that such a watered-down version of klezmer already existed at that time.
30. Tikhonov, paper, ARSC Conference, New York City, 1994.
31. These were thought to have been destroyed, but were recently rediscovered in Kiev. See Adler (1995).
32. *Gramofonii Mir* no.7 (1 April 1911), p. 2; *Gramofonaya Zhizn* no.3 (5 April 1911), p. 12.
33. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 4 (15 February 1912), p. 6.
34. A portion of this recording was reissued on *The Complete Klezmer* (Global Village) under the title "Moldavian Hora" and, in the book of the same title (Tara Publications, 1983), incorrectly dated 1913.
35. Both reissued on the CD *Yikhes, Frühe Klezmer-Aufnahmen von 1907-1939 aus der Sammlung von Prof. Martin Schwartz* (Trikont US-0179).
36. *Gramofonii Mir* no.7 (1 April 1912), p. 9.
37. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 12 (15 July 1912), p. 11.

38. There is a copy in the YIVO collection.
39. For some reason this record was not included in the release announcements to the trade that appeared in *Gramofonii Mir*. However it was listed by number and title in an advertisement for the Warsaw record dealer Gertzwolf which ran in the Warsaw Yiddish newspaper *Der Fraynt* every Thursday between 27 June and 15 August 1912. "Khusid" has been reissued on Folklyric 9034 from a copy in the collection of Prof. Martin Schwartz. Gertzwolf, an authorized dealer of Sirena, Stella and other labels, obviously had a big Jewish clientele. There is a photograph of him on p. 22 of *Gramofonii Mir* No. 3 1 February 1911.
40. *Gramofonii Mir* no.4 (25 February 1913), p. 11.
41. There is a copy of this record in the YIVO collection.
42. This record also was not listed in the *Gramofonii Mir* release announcements. However there is a copy of it in the Jakob Michael Collection at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.
43. *Muzykal'noye Ekho* no. 2-3 (April-May 1914), p. 35.
44. I.e. Processional (after the wedding). *Fir'n ulyashchiny* was a custom whereby on the day after the wedding the bridegroom's mother and other female relatives would invite the bride (*koly*) and her female relatives over for refreshments like spirits, pastry, and assorted jams, and the mother-in-law (*makhateyniste*) would give the bride a present such as a ring, a brush, etc., known as *sheyn-gelt*. The bride's party would be accompanied by klezmerim along the entire route.
45. *Gramofonii Mir* no.9 (5 July 1914), p. 16.
46. *Gramofonii Mir* no.8 (10 June 1914), p. 15.
47. A popular Yiddish operetta (musical comedy) of the day. An advertisement in the Warsaw Yiddish newspaper *Haynt* no. 39 (14 February 1914), p. 8 for the Kronenberg & Weinberg record shop mentions songs from *Khont'sye in Amerika* among those from "the most recent operettas" which are available on the Sphinx Grand Records label.
48. *Gramofonii Mir* no.10 (25 July 1914), p. 14.
49. *Gramofonii Mir* no.10 (25 July 1914), p. 10.
50. There is half a column on "Beilis and the Gramophone" in *Gramofonii Mir* no. 16, 26 October 1913, p. 6.
51. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 13 (10 August 1912), p. 11.
52. Possibly refers to Hermann Ehrlich (1815-1879), a German cantor who published four volumes of a magazine, *Liturgische Zeitschrift* (1852-55), in which there are "a considerable number of traditional tunes and of their different variations" (Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, pp. 294, 338).
53. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 14 (1 September 1912), p. 10.
54. This is probably not Belf, because Sirena released six sides credited to Belf's Romanian Orchestra the same month.
55. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 4 (25 February 1913), p. 10.
56. This and the following two discs seem to have been released later in the month; see *Gramofonii Mir* no. 5 (15 March 1913), p. 17.
57. From the operetta "The American Girl." Sirena had previously issued 8 sides of songs from this Yiddish musical comedy, with performances by Young, Lebedev, Berman and orchestra. See *Gramofonii Mir* no. 16 (10 October 1912), p. 7. One might guess that the piece recorded twice by Belf as "Amerikanskaya," (a tune later recorded in America by violinist Max Leibowitz under

- the title "Yiddish Khusidl") might be from this show. However, "Amerikanskaya" is actually a variant of "Khusidl: Amerika" composed by klezmer Yosef-Leyb Bughici of Jassy (Moldavia). The reference to America is obscure.
58. I.e. Mihai Viteazul, a cornetist who also recorded "Doina si Sirba" and "Mancana Turceasca" with the Romanian band Musica Militara Reg. 6, (Favorite 65677A and B, respectively, reissued in America as Victor 65677). I include Viteazul's band here because the music is klezmer-like and relevant to the history of klezmer [cf. note 10]; nevertheless it is not true klezmer and thus, although recorded in 1905, cannot be considered the earliest known klezmer band record. The "Doina & Sirba" was also issued as Victor 69740-B with a different coupling; it has recently been reissued on "Klezmer Pioneers" (Rounder C-1089).
59. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 9 (5 July 1914), p. 16.
60. Jascha Gagner (he later changed the spelling to Gegna) was born in Ukraine about 1880. A pupil of the illustrious violin teacher Leopold Auer, Gegna taught violin for a while at the conservatory in Poltava (Ukraine). In 1914 he emigrated to America, where he taught for some time in New York as Auer's assistant, making his concert debut at Aeolian Hall on 9 March 1918. Later Gegna moved to Los Angeles, where he was associated for 12 years with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He died in Los Angeles 12 September 1944 at the age of 64, survived by two brothers, Moshe (Max) Gegna, a cellist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Naum Gegna, a violinist, and by two sons and a daughter. In addition to his Russian recordings, Gegna recorded two sides for Columbia, *Taxim* (mx. 87026) and *A Tfile fun Mendel Beilis* (mx. 87247), released as Col. E7174 in 1921. (There is a short item on "Beilis and the Gramophone" in *Gramofonii Mir* no. 16, 26 October 1913, p. 6.)
61. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 20 (20 December 1913), p. 20.
62. Transcribed by M. Erdenko. Note: the first violinist of the Kiev Conservatory String Quartet at that time was named Erdenko. This quartet also recorded on the Extraphon label. See *Gramofonii Mir* no. 4-5 (2 April 1914), p. 10.
63. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 2 (15 February 1914), p. 6.
64. Fragment from *Shulamis*, a famous Yiddish operetta by Abraham Goldfaden.
65. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 13 (10 August 1912), p. 11.
66. Note: also listed as coupled with 13812, "Fonder khupe," above.
67. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 4 (13 February 1913), p. 12.
68. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 9 (5 June 1913), p. 12.
69. *Gramofonii Mir* no. 15 (1 October 1913), p. 7; the same in no. 16 (25 October).
70. Incomplete information from an item in *Gramofonii Mir* no. 6-7 (5 April 1913, p. 18). The relevant passage is quoted above. The data for three of the couplings was kindly supplied by Henry Sapoznik. I thank Kurt Bjorling and Henry Sapoznik for data on the Columbia reissues, which give the titles in a German, rather than Russian, form.
71. I thank Prof. Martin Schwartz for the data on this disc, which is in his personal collection.
72. As listed under the category "Vostochnye Tantsy i Yevreiskiya Narodnya i Svadebniya Pyesni" (Oriental Dances and Jewish Folk and Wedding Pieces) in Odeon, *Katalog dvukhstoronnikh plastinok 25 santimetrou*, (Vilna 1914). p. 16.
73. As listed under the category "Vostochnye Tantsy i Yevreiskiya Narodnya i Svadebniya Pyesni" (Oriental Dances and Jewish Folk and Wedding Pieces) in Odeon, *Katalog dvukhstoronnikh plastinok 25 santimetrou*, (Vilna 1914). pp. 16-17.

74. Indeed he was so convincing in this style that, with a band of similar composition to his April 1913 "Jewish" session, he recorded several tunes ca. June 1916 billed as "Orchestra Romaneasca" (Romanian Orchestra). At least three sides from this session were released, all with titles in Romanian: "Sirba din New York," "Hanga" and "Ai raci ku ne draci." (This last has been reissued on "Klezmer Pioneers" [Rounder C-1089], where Sapoznik attributes it to Abe Schwartz, but I believe the band is essentially that of Abe Elenkrig. I thank Kurt Bjorling for drawing my attention to this question.)
75. For example: (1) Nuch Gavdul'e (Havdule), instead of standard nokh havdole; (2) Ikhes rather than yikhes; (3) Mayufis for Mayofis; (4) Dem rebens gavdul'e (havdule) for havdole; (5) Tsu di akufes for tsu di hakofes; (6) Surra u raboty, rather than Sore; (7) Dus khusidl oyf der shif, for dos khosidl; and most revealing of all, (8) Dy koly oyf ulyashchiny, for dy kale oyf hulyashchiny. Most of these are compatible with other southern Yiddish dialects, but (5) and especially (8) are really characteristic of "tote-mome." (I have deliberately overlooked the title "Khonts'ye in Amerika"; although this too is characteristically "tote-mome", it was already the title of a well-known Yiddish "operetta," so does not prove anything.) The eminent Yiddish philologist Dr. Mordkhe Schaechter (New York) has been kind enough to review this linguistic evidence. I thank Dr Schaechter for his assistance.