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## Yehiel Goyzman (Alter Chudnover, 1849–1913): A Klezmer Violinist in Transition from Folk Music to Classical Style Performance

### Klezmer As An Individual: A Problem Of Lost Biographies

Klezmer music was an integral part of Jewish life in Eastern Europe since the late 16th century and particularly flourished in the 19th – the beginning of the 20th century. Thanks to the pioneering work of the Jewish folklorists of the first half of the 20th century and later generations of scholars and musicians, history preserved for us numerous musical examples of the art of klezmer.

Collecting and researching materials about klezmers themselves, social status of their profession, conditions of their work, role of music in the wedding ritual constituted a different and difficult task. The first scholars of Jewish music in Pale of Settlement of the Russian Empires, such as Joel Engel (1868–1927) and Zinovii Kiselgof (1878–1939), left important observations on klezmers and their music, which can be found in their ethnographical expeditions' journals and reports.<sup>1</sup> Musicologist Ivan Lipaev (1865–1942) and writer Lev Levanda (1835–1888) provided even more specific<sup>2</sup> informa-

tion about klezmers and ethnographical description of Jewish wedding ceremony in their publications.<sup>3</sup> The first scholar to conduct detailed research on Jewish folk musicians was a prominent musicologist and folklorist Moisei Beregovsky (1892–1961), who worked at the Institute (Cabinet) for Jewish culture of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in Kiev from 1929 to 1949. He thought, however, that available ethnographic and memoir literature contained only fragmentary data about individual klezmers. In the introduction to his “Jewish Instrumental Folk Music” (volume 3 of his five volumes “Anthology of Jewish Folk Music”) Beregovsky stated: “Not only do we know little about the average musicians, but we also do not even know much about those highly gifted, outstanding folk artists, who, in significant numbers, stood out of the main body of klezmerim.”<sup>4</sup>

Our knowledge about exceptionally gifted old klezmer violinists is often based on the legends that circulated among their family members, students and local population. This was the case with the legendary Jewish violinists Stempenyu and Pedotser. When Beregovsky went to Berdichev to inter-

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1 Joel Engel and Zinovii Kiselgof took part in the ethnographical expeditions into the Kiev and Volhynia provinces of the Pale of Settlement of the Russian Empire in 1912 and in 1913 respectively. The expeditions were organized by Russian Jewish ethnographer and writer S. An-sky (Shloyme Zanvil Rappoport, 1863–1920) under auspices of the Jewish Historical and Ethnographical Society in St. Petersburg.

2 Levanda, Lev. Starinnye evreiskie svadebnye obychai [Old Jewish wedding customs], article published in Pe-

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rezhitoe [„Bygones”], volume 3, St. Petersburg 1911, pp. 103–135.

3 Lipaev, Ivan. Evreiskie orkestry [Jewish orchestras], article published in: Russkaia Muzykalnaia Gazeta [Russian Music Newspaper, Moscow], 1904, no. 4 (columns 101–103), 5 (columns 133–136), 6–7 (columns 169–172), 8 (columns 205–207.)

4 Slobin, Mark; Rothstein, Robert; Alpert, Michael, eds. Jewish Instrumental Folk Music: The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski. Syracuse, N.Y., 2001.



Fig. 1: Yehiel Goyzman (Alter Chudnover, 1849–1913)

view Stempenyu's relatives, he was unable to get reliable biographical information from them since all members of Stempenyu's family (mainly his grandchildren) mostly recounted Sholem Aleichem's novel about Stempenyu.

In order to separate real facts from legends and obtain more specific details on klezmer profession, Beregovsky developed a practical questionnaire on klezmers, which constituted a part of his brochure "Yidishe Instrumentale folks-muzik."<sup>5</sup> However, biographical and professional information that he was able to collect from different klezmers frequently

<sup>5</sup> Beregovskii, Moisei. Yidishe instrumentale folks-muzik. Kiev, 1937.

overlapped. Beregovsky acknowledged:

*"If we take biographies of 10 klezmers, seven out of ten will be almost alike."*<sup>6</sup>

Beregovsky later decided to refrain (unfortunately!) from his initial idea to publish collected bios of the klezmers, and simply referred to particular names when comparing particular details of their professional activities or repertoire. Only one violinist, Abraham Joshua Makonovetsky (born 1872, date of death is unknown), submitted a comprehensive memoir that later constituted a separate chapter ("A klezmer personality of the last quarter of the nineteenth century) in Beregovsky's "Jewish Instrumental Folk Music."<sup>7</sup>

When Beregovsky commenced his research on klezmer music in 1927–1928, he found himself in a difficult situation. The Jewish wedding became a rarity and klezmer capellas no longer existed. Though individual klezmers were still available for interviewing, most of them were already engaged in professional orchestras.

Much more information on personalities of the klezmers can be found in Joachim Stutschewsky's book "Ha-klezmerim: toldotem, orah-hayehem vi-yetsirothem" that was published much later, in 1959.<sup>8</sup> In this work, Stutschewsky tried to provide the best possible account on biographical details and work of klezmers collected by him from various

documentary sources and during numerous interviews that he conducted with still active or former klezmers in Israel after WWII. Stutschewsky was well aware that this important part of Jewish musical culture was in danger of decline and disappearing after the Holocaust, and his work was indeed an

<sup>6</sup> M. Beregovskii: Stenograph of Beregovskii's dissertation's defense. Moscow Conservatory, January 1944, in: E. M. Beregovskaia. Arfy na verbakh: prizvanie i sud'ba Moiseia Beregovskogo, Moscow – Jerusalem, 1994. p. 158.

<sup>7</sup> Mark Slobin, Robert Rothstein, and Michael Alpert, eds. Jewish Instrumental Folk Music: The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski. Syracuse, N.Y., 2001. pp. 32–35.

<sup>8</sup> Stutschewski, Joachim. Ha-klezmerim: toldotem, orah-hayehem vi-yetsirothem. Jerusalem, 1959.

act of rescue.

Still, an individual klezmer of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century remains an anonymous, generalized personality. A goal of my paper is at least partially to unveil this anonymity on the example of one outstanding klezmer musician Yehiel Goyzman (better known professionally as Alter Chudnover) and provide a glimpse into his musical world.

In March 1934 in Kiev, shortly after Beregovsky began to focus on his klezmer music research, he met with the sons of the klezmer violinist Yehiel Goyzman (Alter Chudnover) who themselves were former klezmers in 1900s–1910s and became professional musicians in the 1930s. They donated several Alter Chudnover’s compositions to the Archives of Ethnographic Section of the Institute for Jewish Proletarian Culture in Kiev.<sup>9</sup>

When I discovered this music in the 1994 at the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine,<sup>10</sup> I was intrigued by the coincidence of our last names (Goyzman is my maiden name). My further research proved that we are directly related, but 3 generations apart. Yehiel Goyzman (Alter Chudnover) was my great great grandfather from my father’s side, whose family came from Chudnov. Over the years I was fortunate to collect a number of important references about him in various memoirs, ethnographic literature, family sources, including photographs and his original music manuscripts. My research indeed confirmed that Alter Chudnover was an outstanding figure on Jewish music stage of Ukraine in the turn of the century. It occurred to me that the collected materials may help to reconstruct a unique portrait of a klezmer violinist of that historical period and in some ways contribute to the klezmer music studies in general.

<sup>9</sup> Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, Institute of Manuscripts, Fund 190, No. 213. From the repertoire of Alter from Chudnov. Note: „were published.” Manuscripts copied by Yehiel Goyzman and his son, Leyb Goyzman. 8 leaves. Donation dated March 13, 1934.

<sup>10</sup> I was working as a librarian and research associate at the Musical Department, and later at the Judaica Department of the Institute of Manuscripts of the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine in 1989–2001.

## Yehiel Goyzman

Yehiel Goyzman (1849–1913), or Alter (Olter) Chudnover, was born to the family of klezmer violinist Leyb Goyzman in Chudnov, Volynia province of the Russian Empire (now Zhitomir region of Ukraine) in 1849. He apparently showed his musical talent at an early age and was sent to study violin in Warsaw. He later returned to Chudnov to help his father in the musical business, playing at the weddings. He had four sons and two daughters, all musically gifted:

**Leyb**, violinist, who later became a luthier and wind instruments master  
**Yosef-Volf**, trumpeter;  
**Isaac**, violinist;  
**Lazar**, violinist;  
**Khava**, pianist and violinist;  
**Esphir**, pianist.

Alter Chudnover’s sons and his nephews, children of his sister Mekhli (1861–1927, her maiden name was Goyzman, married name Grupp) played in Chudnover’s klezmer capella. A well-educated, intelligent man, an extraordinary violinist, composer and reputed teacher, Alter Chudnover was highly respected not only in the local Chudnov community, but also in the neighboring areas. To be his student was considered a great honor. He established new standards of teaching, innovative for such provincial towns as Chudnov, requiring from the students ability to read music and solid foundations of professional violin technique. Violinist Louis Grupp (1888–1983), Alter Chudnover’s nephew and Mekhli Goyzman-Grupp’s son, recalls his mother’s excitement when at the age of six he was selected to study music with his famous uncle:

*“When I came home from kheyder (school) my mother met me at the door. She was beaming, ‘Leybele, der feter Alter hut mir tsugezagt dir tsunemen tsim fidl’ [Leybl, Uncle Alter promised me to teach you to play violin]. She was proud. After all, he was Alter Goyzman.”*<sup>11</sup>

“Sure, we read music”, recalls Louis Grupp in his interview to Henry Sapoznik, researcher and pioneer

<sup>11</sup> Henry Sapoznik. *Klezmer!: Jewish Music from Old World to Our World*. New York, 1999, p. 10.



Fig. 2: Alter Chudnover's orchestra

of klezmer revival movement in the US,

*"he [Alter Goyzman] taught us. We practiced Kreutzer, Schradik [popular music methods of the day]. My uncle used to get a sheet like this with a melody and he used to orchestrate it. He had a brother in America who used to send him big music, overture selections."<sup>12</sup>*

In his memoirs, Louis Grupp also recalls that

*"he [Alter Chudnover] was an exceptional man. [...] He was a very intelligent person and a good human being. He always helped everyone. He had a nice personality and to me he looked like an angel. I adored him and loved him."<sup>13</sup>*

The Grupp family, including parents and three brothers (Louis, violin player, Jack, trumpeter, and Morris, trombone player) came to America from

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 10. „Brother in America” is a reference to Alter Chudnover's younger brother, Joseph Hausman (Goyzman), who came to the US in 1888. He also was a musician, but later he became a pharmacy owner on the Lower East Side, then on the Second Avenue, eventually moving to Brooklyn. See: Louis Grupp. *The Story of the Grupp Family* as written and memorized by Louis Grupp. January, 1978.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

Chudnov in 1907 fleeing the pogroms. It is interesting to note that Alter Chudnover's reputation in the Chudnover community in the United States was so high that it made easier for the Grupp family obtain jobs at the weddings and parties. A fascinating fact is that Louis Grupp came to the US with his uncle's violin, which remained with him through his life. As late as in 1980s Grupp played this violin for Sapoznik recalling klezmer melodies of his youth.

Circa 1905, Alter Chudnover's klezmer band comprised 11–12 players and included two gentile musicians. The band includes four violins, a double bass, a transverse flute, a clarinet, two trumpets, a trombone and a drum.

According to the Goyzman family's accounts, Alter Chudnover visited the United States circa 1902 upon invitation of his younger brother, Joseph. Alter Goyzman even managed to publish one of his compositions there (*Yidisher Karnaval* for violin and piano).<sup>14</sup> He later returned to Chudnov. The family

<sup>14</sup> The manuscript of the piece is now held at the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine in Kiev. Please see note 9 above. Beregovsky's handwritten note says that this composition was previously published: the information was probably provided by the violinist's sons. Unfortunately, I have not been able to locate a printed copy

photograph pictures elegantly dressed Yehiel Goyzman with a violin during his visit in New York. Emma Fleitman, Khava Goyzman’s daughter, in her letter to a family member Malka Portnaya, described how she remembered her grandfather:

*“The grandfather Olter [...] was very handsome, with fine manners, looked like Tchaikovsky [...].”*<sup>15</sup>

Alter Chudnover taught violin to younger generations of his family (children and grandchildren, nephews etc.), as well as to children of other musicians. They stayed in his house, where Alter’s wife Dobiia (or Dobtsi) took a good care of them. For Dobiia all these kids were a part of the family. She was a wonderful, generous hostess, well organized and neat, and distinguished woman in her own right.<sup>16</sup> As Malka Portnaya, Dobiia’s grandson’s wife recalls:

*“She [Dobtsi] was an attractive woman. She had a cosmetics store in Chudnov. There were many glass display cabinets in her store. Through the glass one could see cosmetic jars and bottles. Her customers would come to visit her from different villages surrounding Chudnov. Girls would buy facial creams. The grandma made them herself.”*<sup>17</sup>

She was a locally famous natural doctor and used to collect herbs, make remedies and

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of this composition. The manuscript from the Vernadsky Library seems to be prepared for publication, but it is not complete, since a few variations are missing.

15 Letter from Emma Fleitman to Malka Portnaia (from the family archives), July 7, 1993.

16 According to the family accounts, Dobiia was Alter Chudnover’s second wife and a stepmother to all his children, for whom she cared as they were her own. She was a sister of Alter Chudnover’s late first wife.

17 Malka Portnaia. Letter to an unknown family member from February 23, 1997.



**Fig. 3: Alter Chudnover**

heal local people. She was also well known as an experienced midwife.

### **Mischa Elman and Alter Goyzman’s Personality**

One of the family legends tells how involved Alter Chudnover was in helping young “child prodigy” violinist Mischa Elman (1891–1967) and his father Saul to collect funds and recommendation letters for Mischa to continue his studies and be eventually accepted in St. Petersburg Conservatory into the studio of a famous professor Leopold Auer. Louis

Grupp also left an account about Mischa Elman in his interview to Sapoznik:

*“He [Mischa’s father, Saul] just wanted to have my uncle listen to Mischa and give his opinion of what he thought of the child. And from then on my uncle took over. Through some politics he knew some lady who was a cousin of the czar – her name was Romanov – and through her he was successful for Mischa to go to St. Petersburg [...], where Jews were not allowed. He went to the conservatory, and from then on he started.”*<sup>18</sup>

It would just remain a family lore until I found an exciting confirmation to this story in the memoirs by Misha Elman’s father that were published in New York in 1933.<sup>19</sup> Not only this unique memoir gives us a detailed account on Mischa’s meeting with Alter Goyzman circa 1902–1903, but it also provides us with a vivid portrait of this klezmer musician, a precious testimony of who he actually was as a person, how he communicated with people and how respected and esteemed he was in the community. That summer, Saul Elman made a decision to stop Mischa’s studies at the Odessa Conservatory due to some intrigues and rumors concerning Mischa’s talent and his future progress spread by the boy’s music teachers and administration of the Conservatory. The Elman family was left with no means of livelihood. Desperate in his attempts to provide Mischa with education, Saul Elman decided to arrange a concert tour for his son with a hope to find support for the boy’s talent and raise funds for Mischa’s studies. After visiting Nikolayev, Kiev and Berdichev, they arrived to Chudnov on invitation of a wealthy music student. Saul Elman recalls,

*“Here we met a locally famous orchestra leader, Alter Chudnov, who, unlike many other provincial musicians, was intensely musical, and besides possessed the subtleties of mind and the warmth of heart characteristic of true artists. [...] ‘My dear friend,’ he said to me in his quaint, endearing way, ‘your boy is not mortal. He has been sent down from Heaven by the good God.’ [...] Chudnov constituted himself as our guide, philosopher and friend. His mind became*

<sup>18</sup> Henry Sapoznik. *Klezmer!: Jewish Music from Old World to Our World*. New York, 1999, p. 25.

<sup>19</sup> Saul Elman. *Memoirs of Mischa Elman’s Father*. New York: Saul Elman, 1933.

*so saturated with Mischa that in that time he was unable to meet any friend or acquaintance without bringing the boy into his conversation.”*<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, Alter Chudnov was glad to use some of his connections with the Russian nobility, whose summer residence was in Chudnov, to organize a concert for Mischa. The boy’s performance left an enormous impression, and the Count (in Grupp’s memoir – the Countess) provided the Elmans with a large amount of money and letters to powerful friends. The outcome of the concert made Chudnov “beside himself with joy.”<sup>21</sup>

*“The milk of human kindness has not all been spilled.”*<sup>22</sup> [...] *“Alter Chudnov is one of my fragrant memories,” acknowledges Saul Elman in his old-fashioned, magnificent style, “one of the flowers in the garland of my life recollections that help to keep my faith in my fellow creatures from dying.”*<sup>23</sup>

## Playing at Hasidic Weddings

Alter Chudnov’s talent, outstanding musical charisma, intelligence and personal generosity gained him great respect and admiration far beyond his local community. He was equally popular inside the Jewish community and in the circle of the Russian elite. His orchestra was invited to play not only in Volhynia province and other neighboring areas, but also in Romania and Austria-Hungary. Certainly, Chudnov’s name and performance style represented a combination of special “Jewish musicality” and modern violin virtuosity. To illustrate his reputation, Chudnov was very much admired by the Hasidic community and invited to play at the richest Hassidic weddings or other important events—even though he was not a Hasid. Avrom-Moyshe Kholodenko (the famous klezmer violinist Pedotser) was considered Chudnov’s only competitor.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>24</sup> Pedotser (Avrom-Moyshe Kholodenko, (1828–1902), a phenomenal klezmer violinist, was 20 years older than Chudnov and belonged to another generation of

I was fortunate to locate two references on Chudnover's playing at the Hasidic weddings that took place in the early 1900s. One reference is found in Louis Grupp's interview to Henry Sapoznik. Grupp recalled his playing in the Chudnover orchestra at the Hassidic wedding in 1903:

*"I remember this wedding where the rebbe of Krislev was marrying [...] and they wanted my uncle. We didn't have any Hasidim [in Chudnov]. I never saw the rabbis with the big fur hats and the white stockings until I played their weddings. They already had a Jewish orchestra in their town, but they still took my uncle 'cause he had a name. The other orchestra pleaded with the rebbe not to deny them their parnose, their living. The rabbi was known as a fair man, and so in order to satisfy everybody they had to negotiate a settlement. They had both orchestras play."*<sup>25</sup>

Another magnificent Hasidic wedding where Alter Chudnover was invited to play was described in the ethnographical essay-memoir by Yehiel Ravrebe "Wedding of the Tzadik of Makarov". The wedding took place at the Makarov tzadik's residence in Baranovka, Volyn province circa 1900, where a daughter of the Makarov tzadik was to marry a son of the tzadik from Novominsk. As Ravrebe recalls:

*"This wedding was an outstanding event not only for our town, but also for the whole neighboring area: dozens of Jewish towns were getting ready for it; thousands of people were preoccupied with the wedding much in advance."*<sup>26</sup>

Numerous tzadiks and their Hasidim from Poland and Ukraine were expected to come. On the wedding day the town of Baranovka became so enormously crowded that the Makarov tzadik exclaimed addressing his adherents:

*"There will be the same joyful crowd when Messiah will come!"*<sup>27</sup>

A few days before the wedding, in special pavil-

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klezmers. Some scholars state that Pedotser was a Hasid.

25 Henry Sapoznik. *Klezmer!: Jewish Music from Old World to Our World*. New York, 1999, pp. 19–20.

26 Yehiel Ravrebe. *Svad'ba Makarovskogo tsadika* [Wedding of the tzaddik of Makarov], in: *Vestnik Evreiskogo Universiteta v Moskve*, No. 2, 1993, p. 179.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 185.

ions erected outside the tzadik's palace, benches in four rows were arranged around a huge table in a special amphitheater manner. A large loge was built for choir and orchestras on the highest tier of the amphitheater. The wedding music was expected to be of the highest quality. The famous Berdichev cantor Zeydel Rovner with his choir arrived to perform at the ceremony and their sudden appearance created sensation.

Alter Chudnover was a featured soloist engaged to play at the Khupa-feast, late at night. That was considered a great honor and a deserved tribute to his talent. Ravrebe describes a miraculous moment of Alter Chudnover's performance at the wedding:

*"Everybody knew in advance that this night Alter Chudnover will perform on the violin his composition 'Yiskoyr'. [...] After fish meal, Alter Chudnover stood out and started to turn his violin. Suddenly everything quieted down. Lights, tsadiks, Hasidim – like ghostly shadows assembled together somewhere far from people at this midnight hour – listened to this inexplicable, but sensible music, prayer, a confession of a languishing enchanter. Last accord – and the miraculous poem was over."*<sup>28</sup>

## Music

Performing and composing were two inseparable parts of Chudnover's musical personality. In fact, he was famous for his unique solo improvisations and concertos. An account about Chudnover's musical showpieces and unique manner of playing is found in Stutschewsky's book "Ha-klezmerim."<sup>29</sup> Not only Chudnover was able to win listeners' hearts with his sensitive serious playing, but he was also

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28 *Ibid.*, p. 187.

29 Stutschewsky refers here to his conversation with well-known Israeli luthier Chaim Rapoport in Tel Aviv. See: Stutschewsky, Joachim. *Ha-klezmerim*. Jerusalem, 1959, p. 113. This fact is repeated in the article by Gershon Svet, „Evrei v russkoi muzyke” [„Jews in Russian Music”] published in the book *Kniga o russkom evreistve ot 1860-kh godov do revoliutsii 1917 goda* [Book on Russian Jewry: from the 1860s till revolution of 1917]. New York: Soiuz Russkikh Evreev, 1960, p. 464. Yale Stroms also quotes the deal in his *The Book of Klezmer: the History, the Music, the Folklore*. Chicago, 2002, p. 116.

an excellent actor and witty personality who loved to entertain the audience with his artistic tricks on the violin. His favorite “entertainment showpieces” were compositions “Birds” and “The Train,” where he charmingly imitated birds’ singing as well as variety of noises produced by the train gaining and reducing speed until final stop at the point of destination. It was also said that Alter Chudnover had a unique Amati violin which he cherished and played only on his solo performances (he played another violin while performing with his klezmer band.) Stutschewsky also mentions the fact of Chudnover’s popularity among local Russian nobility. He was often invited to play at the rich Russian parties. One wealthy Russian merchant notorious for his ambitions and greed was so impressed by Chudnover’s Amati violin that he began to beg the violinist to sell it. Goyzman initially refused saying that the violin was his soul, but the spoiled merchant wouldn’t stop till he would get what he wanted to. Goyzman eventually had to agree to a deal. In exchange, the Russian built him a large house in the center of Chudnov with the stone wall surrounding it.<sup>30</sup> Apparently, reference to this house is found in the family lore, summarized by Shimon Goyzman in his essay available on the internet:

*“The attic floor of his large house at the Chudnov market square, was packed with musical manuscripts that laid there unclaimed from the day of his death in 1913 till the beginning of the Nazi occupation, when his archives were most likely perished.”<sup>31</sup>*

Alter Chudnover’s musical legacy was large, but only few compositions survived in the Beregovsky archives in Kiev. They include:

1. *Yiddisher Kontsert* (published in Beregovsky’s Anthology) – complete.<sup>32</sup>
2. Variations on the Hatikvah theme: “*Oied lie*

<sup>30</sup> Stutschewsky, Joachim. „Ha-klezmerim.” Jerusalem, 1959, p. 113.

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.goyzman.narod.ru/rodoslovnaya/vtoroe.html>

<sup>32</sup> Mark Slobin, Robert Rothstein, and Michael Alpert, eds. *Jewish Instrumental Folk Music: The Collections and Writings of Moshe Beregovski*. Syracuse, N.Y., 2001, pp. 243–248

*ovdu Ticvusunu*” – complete.<sup>33</sup>

3. *Yidisher karnaval* for violin and piano (with the note that it was previously published) – incomplete.<sup>34</sup>
4. *Improvisation Tsum tish* (To the table).<sup>35</sup>
5. Three short improvisations.<sup>36</sup>

Three larger compositions are brilliant violin showpieces, often called “Yidisher kontsert” (Jewish Concerto). They are written in the form of solo introductions and variations and used a full range of modern violin technique to showcase Jewish and Ukrainian folk melodies, representing a high level of elaborated, virtuosic klezmer playing.

Yidisher kontsert by Alter Chudnover consists of two sets of variations. It opens with a long, improvisation-like introduction in B-flat minor that includes elaborated slow cantilena theme in Paganini style. Introduction is followed by a lively Ukrainian folk dance melody in 3/8 in B flat Minor and the set of 6 variations. The theme no. 2 is also a dance melody in 2/4, but with a more definite Jewish character. It consists of 16 measures and has a contrast inside itself. While the 1st part of the theme (the first 8 measures) is in clear B-flat Major, the second part is in a contrasting B-flat Minor with the Jewish fla-

<sup>33</sup> In the original manuscript, title of the composition is given in Latin script in Ashnenazy pronunciation of Hebrew: „Oied lie ovdu Ticvusunu”, which corresponds with the first line of the Zionist song „Od lo avda tikvateinu” („Our hope is not yet lost”): Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, Institute of Manuscripts, Fund 190, No. 213. This composition is listed in the inventory book of the musical manuscripts: Fund 190, no. 133–134, no. 34.

<sup>34</sup> Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, Institute of Manuscripts, Fund 190, No. 213. This composition is listed in the inventory book of the musical manuscripts: Fund 190, no. 133–134, no. 35.

<sup>35</sup> Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, Institute of Manuscripts, Fund 190, No. 213. This composition is listed in the inventory book of the musical manuscripts: Fund 190, no. 133–134, no. 37.

<sup>36</sup> Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, Institute of Manuscripts, Fund 190, No. 213. This composition is listed in the inventory book of the musical manuscripts: Fund 190, no. 133–134, no. 36.



Fig. 4: Manuscript of Alter Chudnover's Variations on "Hatikva" (first page)

vored high 4th scale tone (typical for mi-sheberakh mode), which represents a distinctive klezmer intonation. It is interesting to note that only the first part of the theme becomes developed in the variations, while the second mi-sheberakh part repeats unchanged after each variation as a refrain, except for coda where it appears reinforced in double stops

and chords and returns eventually to the original B-flat Minor.

In the Yiddisher Kontsert, Goyzman uses the full arsenal of 19th century violinist—virtuoso technique: runs and arpeggios, rapid double stops, harmonics, left hand pizzicatti, complex string crossing and exploration of violin's high register. That

reveals strong influence of the legendary violinists composers such as Niccolò Paganini and Henrik Wieniawsky. Violinist Yuval Waldman brought to my attention that some melodic sources of the Goyzman's music could be found in Paganini's First and Second Violin Concertos and in Wieniawsky's Scherzo-Tarantelle, Op. 16.

The Variations on Hatikvah Theme is even a more sophisticated violin showpiece with more intense combination of different types of effective violin technique that follow each other almost non-stop. While learning the piece, Yuval Waldman noticed Chudnover's old-fashioned fingerings for left hand reflected in the manuscript which are no longer used in the violin technique of our days. This small detail constitutes an interesting glimpse into the vocabulary of professional klezmer in the turn of the century.

The usage of the melody of newly created Zionist anthem is interesting in itself. It shows that this melody was already very popular in the Zionist circles of the smaller Jewish towns of the Pale of Settlement on the edge of the centuries. This popularity of the song was most likely a result of the First Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897, when the song was used as an anthem of the Zionist movement. The variations were probably designed to be performed at the local Zionist gatherings.

On the contrary, elegant and light salon piece, variations Yidisher karnaval ("Jewish Carnival") was apparently performed at both Jewish and non-Jewish gatherings. It was most likely influenced by Niccolò Paganini's "Carnival of Venice".

A few short improvisations by Alter Chudnover from the Vernadsky Library Archives, including composition *Tsum tish* (To the table), represent beautiful "music for listening" composed to be featured solo at the special moments of the Jewish wedding, specifically between the meals.

The innovative genre of Klezmer Concerto/Variations represented by Yehiel Goyzman's musical legacy must be considered a transition from traditional klezmer to classical Jewish violin performance. This genre elaborately combines traditional Jewish melodies, performance tricks and spirit of klezmer music with the more formal structure of modern violin art. It occupies special place in Jewish instrumental mu-

sic—between traditional klezmer and new form of Jewish classical music represented by the Society of Jewish Folk Music in St. Petersburg. Still, we must note a difference between Klezmer Concertos/Variations and Jewish classical music. If Jewish classical music was mostly designed to be performed in concert halls, Klezmer Concertos/Variations continued to be played at the weddings and other social occasions of the shtetl's community life.

Along with famous Pedotser, Alter Chudnover was one of a few Jewish folk composers and klezmer violin virtuosos that contributed to this unique genre.<sup>37</sup> The more we learn about individual klezmers composers the more we can appreciate their individual creative style and the better we understand such overlooked genres of Jewish folk music as Concertos/Variations where the klezmer composers' individual contribution was the most important.

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37 Beregovsky included a few Pedotser's and Goyzman's Concertos into the Jewish Instrumental Folk Music's volume of his Anthology. Unfortunately, this part of Beregovsky's manuscript was not reproduced in the first, Soviet edition (Moscow, 1987; ed. Max Goldin). For the first time, the concertos were published in the American edition of the „Jewish Folk Music” volume in 2001 (it includes 3 works by Pedotser and one by Alter Chudnover).

The Klezmer Institute was founded in the fall of 2018 to advance the study, preservation, and performance of Ashkenazic Jewish expressive culture through research, teaching, publishing and programming. Discover more at: <https://klezmerinstitute.org>

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