

# The Shofar and its Symbolism

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## Part I: The shofar's symbolism in biblical and historical sources

There is a sense of expectation in the silence before the shofar sound, followed by unease evoked by the various blasts. Part of its mystery lies in the interplay of the silence, the piercing sound, and the hum of the people praying. On its most basic level, the shofar can be seen to express what we cannot find the right words to say. The blasts are the wordless cries of the People of Israel. The shofar is the instrument that sends those cries of pain and sorrow and longing hurtling across the vast distance towards the Other. (Michael Strassfeld)<sup>1</sup>

This very poetic description of the *shofar* in its ritual performance highlights both the particularly Jewish and the universal elements of the instrument. The emotional associations and the use of the instrument as a symbol of memory and identity may find resonances with many religious faiths. Its specifically Jewish connotations are especially poignant at the start of the twenty-first century, yet the symbolism of the shofar extends far beyond the “cries of pain and sorrow,” reaching across history to its biblical origins, to evoke a plethora of associations.

As I hope to illustrate in the present article, the shofar has generated a rich nexus of metaphorical tropes, those of supernatural power, joy, freedom, victory, deliverance, national identity, moral virtue, repentance, social justice, and many other topics, some of which have remained constant while others have changed. At the heart of the matter is the appreciation of the shofar as not merely a functional instrument, as often believed, but a “musical” one, whose propensity to evoke a profound aesthetic response has led to multiple interpretations of its symbolism. Particularly in the twentieth/twenty-first centuries, composers have drawn on the shofar as a powerfully eloquent musical resource in their works. It is the purpose of this article to discuss these recent uses of the shofar and to trace the background for the evolution of the shofar's symbolism from its biblical origins up to the twenty-first century, thereby highlighting not only its ceremonial and religious, but also its musical and aesthetic qualities.

The shofar is one of the oldest biblical instruments. It predates the Temple and became fully part of Temple ritual.<sup>2</sup> It is also the only ancient biblical instrument to survive as an enduring feature of Jewish religious practice. Originally its functions were mainly military and ceremonial. Even as a purely signalling and proclamatory instrument, the system of organization of sounds, embodied in the terms *teka* (call) and *teru'ah* (alarm) is clearly a coded structure. Yet the sounds also suggest that the shofar could “accommodate itself to a variety of situations, evoking a magical or even eschatological atmosphere, or functioning

symbolically.”<sup>3</sup> This symbolic capacity, a potential for evoking ideas, is integral to a “musical” performance. However, in the literature the shofar is frequently defined as a “non-musical” instrument. Abraham Z. Idelsohn, for instance, notes that

There were ... two kinds of wind instruments, one of which was of no musical value, serving only for signalling purposes. To this class belongs the *Shofar*—ram’s horn....<sup>4</sup> It produces a few tones approximating c—g—c [i.e. fifths]. The pitch, naturally, depends on the size of the *Shofar* and on the construction



**Figure 1**

“Vestments, blowing from the shofar, reading from a scroll, etc.” Small woodcuts from plates to J. Leusden’s *Philologus Hebraeo-Mixtus* (Utrecht, 1663). From Alfred Rubens, *A Jewish Iconography*, revised edition (London: Nonpareil, 1981), B.112.

Courtesy of the Rubens family.

of its hollow. The instrument lends itself to the production of various rhythmical forms, from long notes to 1/32.... But it is impossible to produce on it any melody whatsoever. Indeed the Bible applies the term “blowing”—*tekia*, meaning long notes, and “shouting”—*terua*, meaning short notes in staccato or tremulo form, but not *nagen*—“producing musical tones.” [And later,] ... Of all musical instruments, it was the most unmusical of them, the *Shofar*, that was retained [in the transition from Temple to Synagogue].<sup>5</sup>

Idelsohn’s observation about the inability of the shofar to play a melody is misleading, as there are techniques by means of which one can achieve a wide pitch range. Regarding the term *nagen* (which shares its root with *nigun*, meaning “melody”), it is important to note that the term itself became widespread only during the Temple era; and secondly, that Talmudic sources indeed use *nagen* in relation to practising the shofar, as shall be discussed below. Indeed, there is a strong case to be made for considering the shofar a “musical instrument,” in contrast to a purely functional “signalling” instrument. Joachim Braun’s recent archaeological and iconographical study of biblical instruments gives persuasive evidence, dating from the third century, of shofars used in a melodic, musical context.<sup>6</sup> The musical character of the shofar is an essential part of its range of spiritual and moralistic symbols.<sup>7</sup>

### The Pentateuch

The earliest sources for the symbolism of the shofar are the various texts of the Old Testament. The term *shofar* first appears in the Pentateuch, yet derives, as Idelsohn has observed, from the term *sapparu*, the early Semitic, Assyrian term for mountain goat.<sup>8</sup> As several writers, including David Wulstan,<sup>9</sup> have commented, *shofar* is frequently interlinked with other terms, including *keren* (horn) and *yovel* (ram).<sup>10</sup> The former is first mentioned in the central story in Genesis of “The Binding of Isaac” (Genesis 22:13). As is often noted, the symbol of the ram’s horn, though not musical here, clearly resonates in later allusions to the instrument, with the ideas of faith and divine mercy.<sup>11</sup>

The first main biblical episode referring explicitly to the shofar as an instrument is that of the giving of the Decalogue at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19:13ff). Here the instrument is not performed by human agents and thus, in addition to its explicit signalling function, it acquires a connotation of magical and mystical properties, later developed by Cabbalistic commentators. Curiously, two different terms are used, the first referring explicitly to a ram, the second to the shofar. Moses’ instruction in v. 13, “When the ram’s horn sounds long (*bimshoch ha-yovel*), they shall come up to the mount,” contrasts with the term used when the narrative describes what happened, “The voice of a horn (*kol shofar*) was exceeding loud: and all the people that were in the camp trembled” (v. 16); and later, “And when the voice of the horn (*kol ha-shofar*) waxed louder and louder, Moses spoke ... and the Lord answered him by a voice (*be-kol*)” (v. 19).<sup>12</sup>

The use of different terms (*yovel* and *shofar*) within a narrative concerned with a central message of universal social ethics would appear to invite comment in the rabbinical sources, yet there is, surprisingly, none.<sup>13</sup> At its simplest level the language underlines a connection



**Figure 2**

“Blowing Shofar.” woodcut in text, plate to *Minhagin* (Dyhernfurth, 1692), printed by Simon Bass. From Rubens, *A Jewish Iconography*, B.117. Courtesy of the Rubens family.

between shofar and ram, and thus hints at a connection between the Sinai episode and the Binding of Isaac. This gives rise to the equation of the shofar, which has continued throughout the rabbinic tradition, with the themes of faith and divine mercy. The specific reference to a “long blast” was later developed in the mystical powers of the shofar’s long blast at Jericho, the “great shofar” of Isaiah,<sup>14</sup> and not least the *teki’ah gedola* that concludes the shofar recital in synagogue rites for the New Year and the Day of Atonement.

The supernatural connotations<sup>15</sup> here also link the shofar with natural horns in many cultures and historical eras, as recognized by Idelsohn:

To the shofar was also attributed the magic power of frightening and dispersing evil spirits and gods of the enemies who helped their people in battle. This belief was current among all primitive tribes and it was likewise accepted in Israel as many Biblical stories and phrases testify.<sup>16</sup>

Alfred Sendrey<sup>17</sup> and Curt Sachs<sup>18</sup> observe that tribes in Africa and Asia still use horns to disperse spirits, the defining quality being the clarity and loudness of sound. Similarly, Amnon Shiloah<sup>19</sup> relates the magical quality of this climactic story to discussions in the Mishna, and even later Cabbalistic ideas. While the anthropological observation is important, what is particularly significant and distinctive here, however, is the way the shofar's magical connotation in the Sinai story is refined to connect with a divinely inspired ethical code. It is a code, moreover, that eschews magic as a principle and instead emphasizes moral behavior as a divine imperative. The same term for the shofar's sound (*kol* = "voice") is used for the "voice" of the Lord (sometimes translated as thunder) that answers Moses. The shofar becomes a link between heaven and earth, a vehicle through which to apprehend the transcendent.

The most familiar use of the shofar in contemporary Jewish ritual is its performance on the New Year, Rosh Hashanah. However, in the era of the Temple at Jerusalem, the shofar was performed at all the major festivals, notably the feast of Succoth, in the spectacular Water Libation ceremony as well as at the beginning of each month. Only the performances on the New Year, Day of Atonement, and the Jubilee Year however have their sources in the Pentateuch, where the instrument is mentioned in three separate verses:

In the seventh month on the first day of the month shall be a solemn rest unto you, a memorial proclaimed with the blast of the horns (*zichron teru'ah*) a holy convocation. (Leviticus 23:24)

Then thou shalt make proclamation with the blast of the horn (*veha' avarta shofar teru'ah*) on the tenth day of the seventh month; in the Day of Atonement shall ye make proclamation with the horn (*ta' aviru shofar*) throughout all your land. (Leviticus 25:9)

And in the seventh month on the first day of the month ye shall have a holy convocation. Ye shall do no manner of servile work. It is a day of blowing the horn (*yom teru'ah*) unto you. (Numbers 29:1)

In all three verses the term *teru'ah*, a type of alarm signal, is used, the same term used for the military trumpets (*ba-tzozerot*), while the term shofar is specified only in the second verse. It is this verse that provides the key to the codification of the notes of the shofar used much

later in Temple ritual. The phrase *zichron teru'ah* implies that here, the shofar is more than merely functional, but aesthetic, as it is a memorial, a signal to a collective memory: thus the shofar has become a symbol of national consciousness, even identity.<sup>20</sup> In addition, the shofar's sound here acquires the connotations of repentance and awe associated with the New Year and the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, which are greatly amplified in the Talmudic and later rabbinic literature.

Yet another symbolic meaning accrues to the shofar in the context of the Jubilee Year, Leviticus 25: 9-10, the fiftieth year, which took its name from the instrument (*yovel*) used to proclaim it, the term again emphasising its associations of redemption from the story of the Binding of Isaac. That symbolism is social justice and freedom, as stated in the instruction to proclaim "freedom throughout the Land,"<sup>21</sup> a meaning that was especially emphasised in the prophetic literature.

Thus even within the Pentateuch, the range of symbolic tropes that the shofar projects in its different functions is wide and distinguishes its aesthetic from its purely signalling purpose. As military signal it connotes national physical survival and strength. As a ritual and ceremonial instrument it serves to proclaim seasonal festivals and memorials, to highlight their themes of national identity, communal repentance, and redemption.<sup>22</sup> The story of Sinai highlights divine power and mercy, Israel's covenant, and its ethical code; the Jubilee highlights themes of freedom, and social justice.

### **Shofar and military psychology: Joshua and Gideon**

An extension of the symbolic connotations is suggested in the famous stories from the books of Joshua and Judges. At the climax of "The Battle of Jericho" (Joshua 6:5), "when they make a long blast (*bimshoch be-keren ha-yovel*), and when ye hear the sound of the horn (*kol ha-shofar*), all the people shall shout with a great shout (*teru'ah gedola*)." As in the earlier Sinai narrative, here the term *kol* is applied to the shofar. Wulstan observes that in this instance, terms for human and instrumental sounds are reversed: *kol* is applied to the shofar, and *teru'ah* to the people's shout. Yet Wulstan does not comment on the fascinating textual resonance with the Sinai narrative, not only in the use of *kol*, but also of *bimshoch ha-yovel*, the "long blast." The connection highlights a similar connotation of supernatural power and divine presence, implied in addition to the signalling and military functions. Yet there is something new as well: psychological effects to frighten the enemy, the people's cry adding to the shofar's sound. That new use of strategically deployed fear-inducing sound is even more crucial to the story of Gideon (Judges 7:16-22). Gideon provides each of his small band of three hundred soldiers with a shofar, giving the impression of a much larger army, since usually one shofar blower (the contemporary buglers) would be attached to a whole cohort or division. The sound of three hundred shofars, and torches in the middle of the night, were both deceptive and highly effective.<sup>23</sup> Thus to the military symbolism of rallying call, a signal to advance, was added that of harbinger of doom and destruction, a weapon of fear to disperse the enemy, and victory for Israel.

### Prophetic Symbolism and the Psalms

The psychological insights of Joshua and Gideon were taken further by the prophetic literature in which the shofar is used to evoke the themes of divine judgement, warnings against impending destruction, and the hope of future redemption. The shofar's metaphorical tropes here reflect a sophisticated metamorphosis of the earlier military functions of signalling assembly, alarm, and attack, to apply to the "inner enemy," an expression of individual and social conscience, or to a more generalized threat from "enemies of Israel." A few examples may illustrate: The call to individual responsibility and social conscience is evoked in Ezekiel's image of the watchman's duty to blow the shofar to warn of danger, and Israel's duty to respond to that call (Ezekiel 33). Isaiah used the symbolism of warning in the context of individual activism to create an ethical society, as in Isaiah 58:1: "Lift up thy voice like a horn and declare unto My people their transgression" (Isaiah 58:1). The prophets extend the theme of social freedom embodied in the Jubilee Year to spiritual freedom. Their imagery again draws on the military (see, for example, Judges 3:27, Nehemiah 4:12-19), yet is now allied with the idea of divine protection, destruction of enemies, and political and spiritual victory. For instance, Zechariah alludes to the shofar as an instrument of war, but one that guarantees deliverance from an oppressing power—in this case, Greece: "The Lord God will blow the horn (*be-shofar ye-taka*) and will go with whirlwinds of the south" (Zechariah 9:14). Similarly, for Amos: "Moab shall die with tumult, with shouting and with the sound of the horn (*teru'ah ve-kol shofar*)" (Amos 2:2). Freedom for Israel represents the chance to unite in the worship of one God, a paradigm envisioned by Isaiah, in which the shofar signals the people to gather from their dispersal to the "holy mountain": "the great horn shall be blown (*ye-taka be-shofar gadol*)" (Isaiah 27:13). A contrasting symbolism is the awe-inspiring horn of judgement in the memorable verse:



**Figure 3**

"Messiah." Plates to *Birchat Hamazon with Haggada* by S. Bass (Dyhernfurth, 1704).  
From Rubens, *A Jewish Iconography*, B.74. Courtesy of the Rubens family.

“Blow ye the horn in Zion (*tiku shofar*), and sound an alarm on My holy mountain; Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord cometh” (Joel 2:1).<sup>24</sup> The powerful image of the “Trumpet of the Day of Judgement,” a symbolism assigned to the horn and to brass instruments in general throughout Western art music, thus clearly derives from the prophetic imagery of the shofar.

While moods of joy and gladness, in the literature from the Pentateuch to the Prophets, are often associated with the trumpets (*ha-tzozerot*), as Wulstan observes, that role is largely taken over by the shofar later on. Certainly, approaching the Temple era, the shofar appears in contexts of celebratory musical making, as shown by one of the best-known and frequently portrayed episodes, David dancing before the Ark of the Covenant:



**Figure 4**

“Blowing shofar.” Woodcut to *Minhagim* (Amsterdam, 1707). From Rubens, *A Jewish Iconography*, B.118. Courtesy of the Rubens family.

Thus all Israel brought up the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord with shouting, and with sound of the horn (*be-teru'ah u-kol shofar*) and with trumpets and with cymbals, sounding aloud with psalteries and harps. (Chronicles I, 15:28)

The Psalms are equally full of joyful imagery, as attested by the famous fourth verse— often inscribed on the shofar itself—of Psalm 81, “Blow the horn at the new moon, at the full moon for our feast day, for it is a statute for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob.” An even more triumphant mood is evoked in Psalm 47:6, while Psalm 150 represents a celebratory climax to the Psalter. Here the shofar takes its place among a host of musical instruments, though curiously omitting trumpets: “Praise Him with the sound of the shofar (*be-teka shofar*).”



**Figure 5**

“Blowing shofar.” Woodcut to *Minhagim* (Amsterdam, 1707). From Rubens, *A Jewish Iconography*, B.121. Courtesy of the Rubens family.

This survey of Old Testament sources highlights the range of symbols associated with the instrument. As Braun observes, “this is an instrument with deep roots in the world of the Old Testament, and its presence and use in so many contexts—both cultic and secular—profoundly affected its symbolic significance in Jewish spiritual history.”<sup>25</sup> The extent to which the shofar in the Psalms is a medium for expression of moods also highlights its musicality, placing it alongside the more conventional musical instruments, such as strings, winds, and percussion. Moreover, the context in which the Psalms were performed, the Temple in Jerusalem, evinces even more evidence, through the texts of the Mishna and Talmud, of those musical qualities.

### The Shofar in the Temple and the Mishna

The shofar was one of the groups of privileged instruments in regular use, by the Levites, within the elaborate, sophisticated musical life of the two Temples in Jerusalem—the First Temple, which lasted till 586 B.C.E., and the Second Temple (530 B.C.E.–70 C.E.), with its slight change in instrumental resources. Its use is documented in the Mishna, a biblical commentary and codification of tradition that dates approximately from the second century B.C.E. till the second century C.E., and in the Talmudic commentaries of the next two centuries. It was a period that saw the codification of the synagogue liturgy that replaced the Temple rite, in particular the recital of prayers known as the *Amidah* (Eighteen Blessings), and similarly contains the first specification for the ritual blowing of the shofar within that liturgy. It is in the Mishna that the specific note patterns of shofar performance were first codified, and from which the modern practice of blowing a hundred notes on the shofar in synagogue on the New Year evolved, all of which has its origins in the source text of the Pentateuch. The idea of blowing a note derives from the verse quoted above from Leviticus 25:9: “You shall cause the shofar’s *Teru’ah* to pass (*veha-avarta shofar teru’ah*).” For this reason the shofar call consisted of three notes, the *teru’ah*—a wavering or staccato note, the “alarm” signal—placed, and thus “passing,” between two *teki’ah* notes (from *tek’a*, to blow), sustained blasts.

The three-note sequence, *teki’ah - teru’ah - teki’ah*, was standard for most of the ceremonial occasions. These included, in addition to ritual blowing on the New Year and Jubilee as documented in the Pentateuch, the three Pilgrimage Festivals: Passover, Pentecost (*Shavuot*), and Tabernacles (*Succoth*). The most intricate performance was during the Water Libation and Willow Branch processions at the conclusion of Tabernacles, described in the Mishna.<sup>26</sup> Though the instruments are not specified, only their notes, there is a tradition that trumpets predominated, but both Sendrey and Shiloah argue that the shofars also participated, taking over from the trumpets in the Second Temple period; in the sources the ambiguity remains.<sup>27</sup>

During the feast of Tabernacles (*Succoth*), in which the silver trumpets participated, the willow procession featured the three-note set for each circuit round the altar. The Water Libation ceremony included a host of musical instruments played by the Levites, and two trumpeters and/or shofar blowers who would blow the three-note sequence at several points during the procession down the fifteen steps of the Temple. The three-note sequence was

blown every day for the morning and evening offerings and the opening of the Temple Gates, so that, as the Mishna observes, there were never less than twenty-one and never more than forty-eight notes sounded each day. In addition, a further six sets were blown to announce the Sabbath.

There were many more functional uses of the shofar during this period. It was blown as a time-keeping signal, to mark the onset of the Sabbath and festivals, to announce fast days, at times of regional and national disasters. While these uses are discussed in the Mishna, by far the most extensive discussion is found in the chapter on Rosh Hashanah, New Year, within the Tractate *Mo'ed*, "Festive Seasons."<sup>28</sup> In its detailed discussion pertaining to aspects of the construction and use of the shofar, the Mishna here articulates for the first time some of the symbols implied, and mentioned above, in the earlier texts, and introduces several new resonances and meanings.

The codification of Temple practice, which the Mishna presents, includes detailed instructions as to the construction of the shofar. Whether or not the original term referred to the horn of a mountain goat, the shofar is interpreted as an animal horn of any description, including goat, antelope, or ibex. For religious purposes, however, the symbolism determines whether some animals are preferred, for instance the ram, while others are prohibited, such as the cow. Since the shofar is supposed to encourage a spirit of repentance, the symbolism of the ram (a sign of Abraham's faith in the "Binding of Isaac") is deemed more appropriate than that of the cow (a reminder of the Golden Calf, Israel's great fall from favor and faith). Thus the Mishna here introduces the idea of the shofar as "advocate" for the people, which is further developed in sixteenth-century Cabbalistic thought, as an instrument with spiritual powers. Secondly, the shofar is "kosher" (literally, "fit" to be used) as long as it is more than four thumb-breadths in length, not painted, and has no holes bored into it. It may be carved or encased, however. The idea that the shofar should not have any work done to it, nor repairs if split, highlights the symbolism surrounding its quality of being "natural" and not subject to change over time.<sup>29</sup>

More symbolic associations are underlined in the Mishnaic discussion about the central religious obligation of New Year, derived from the Pentateuch, namely, *li-shmoah shofar*, to hear the shofar's sound. An intriguing discussion concerns whether "the shofar was blown in a cistern or in a cellar or in a large jar." The conclusion is that "if he heard the sound of the shofar he has fulfilled his obligation, but if only an uncertain noise he has not fulfilled the obligation." In its allusion to amplification, the passage raises an intriguing issue concerning the "validity" (in a twenty-first-century context) of a webcast, broadcast, or recorded shofar, and whether the notion of sound quality would be a factor. It is clear, however, that the original context hints at a prohibition of superstitious practice as illuminated by the anthropological perspective of Curt Sachs.<sup>30</sup> Sachs highlights how the prohibition alludes to superstitious practices in neighboring cultures prevalent at the time, the blowing of trumpet- and horn-like instruments into various objects for magical rituals, some of which are still pervasive. Sachs cites the examples of the African Loango tribe, who dip trumpets into barrels; the New Hebrideans, who use a hollow tree trunk, or halfcoconut, and water; and northwestern Brazilians and Singhalese, who use pots. He intriguingly

interprets these practices of dipping a trumpet into a cavity as “the combination of the male and the female principle . . . a forgotten fertilization charm.”<sup>31</sup> Thus the Mishna conveys an awareness of magical connotation and a desire to distinguish the shofar’s use for the specific, moralistic symbolism of the New Year.

A similar moral emphasis colors the discussion of a second unusual case: Has the obligation to hear the shofar been fulfilled, the *Mishna* asks, if one merely walks by a synagogue and happens to hear the sound emanating from within? The answer given is that, if a person hears the shofar but just passes on, the obligation has not been fulfilled. But if a person hears the sound, and turns their heart toward heaven, then it is fulfilled. The answer highlights the necessity of linking moral action with intention, with the shofar used as a resource for the individual’s spiritual and moral improvement. All of these discussions, interestingly, form the text for a choral work by a leading Israeli composer, Yehezkel Braun, aptly entitled *Festive Horns*.

### The hundred notes for the New Year, their symbolism and origin

The contemporary practice to intone a hundred notes on Rosh Hashanah, the New Year, has its roots in the Mishnaic and Talmudic literature, as does the practice of blowing a short set of ten notes each day during the preparatory month of Ellul. It is fascinating to trace the evolution of the hundred notes from the single term *teru’ah*. The Mishna defines the religious act of “blowing the shofar” as a threefold repetition of the three-note set, *teki’ah - teru’ah - teki’ah*, which was used in Temple rite.<sup>32</sup> On the New Year, the shofar was blown during an interpolation into the daily *Amidah* prayer, at three points corresponding with three major blessings built from ten scriptural verses. They proclaim, in turn, the sovereignty of God (*Malchuyot*, “Kingship”), the remembrance of the faith of the forefathers (*Zichronot*, “Memorials,” from the same term as the *zichron teru’ah* mentioned in Leviticus 23), and the hope of messianic redemption, announced by the shofar (*shofarot*, “shofars”). The total blown was thus twenty-seven notes.

Although the term *teki’ah* (call) was clearly interpreted as a single sustained sound, the meaning of *teru’ah* was open to speculation. Though understood as a type of alarm signal, it was not clear whether it was a rapid wavering or staccato note or three short detached blasts. A ruling of the Talmudic Rabbi Abbahu (ca. 274-320 C.E.) decided in favor of using both to avoid any error. Thus the term *shevarim* (meaning “broken”), referring to three short detached notes, was introduced while *teru’ah* was interpreted as a short series of nine (or more) staccato attacks. Wulstan has argued persuasively that initially these terms were reversed.<sup>33</sup> The sequence blown was thus not only the three-note pattern *teki’ah - teru’ah - teki’ah*, but also its alternative, *teki’ah - shevarim - teki’ah*, and, to avoid all possible doubt, a third possibility, *teki’ah - shevarim - teru’ah - teki’ah*. A single note, *teru’ah*, had thus now expanded from a three-note sequence to a ten-note sequence. Blown three times, the twenty-seven notes of the *Amidah* were now augmented to thirty.

This group of thirty was then doubled as a result of historical events. Initially the shofar was blown only in the Morning Service (*Shacharit*), in accordance with the general principle of fulfilling a religious obligation at the earliest possible opportunity. However, due to an

incident during the Roman occupation, whereby the Romans believed the shofar was a rallying call to rebellion and subsequently massacred the Jewish community, the shofar blowing was moved to the Additional Service (*Musaf*), later in the proceedings, to avoid confusion. Subsequently it was returned to its location in the Morning Service, but retained in the Additional Service as a reminder of the historical events.<sup>34</sup> Thus the group of thirty notes had doubled to sixty. It is not clear when and why the addition of forty notes occurred, though the practice of blowing a hundred notes was clearly an early one, as it has an allegorical source in a Talmudic discussion about the meaning of *teru'ah*. The *Targum*—a translation into the vernacular, Aramaic language during the Babylonian exile—translates *teru'ah* as *yebaba*, weeping. The seldom-used term *yebaba* occurs most significantly in relation to the biblical story of Yael and Sisera. The Midrash, an anecdotal commentary in the Talmud, notes, somewhat ironically, that the mother of Sisera, the enemy commander, wept (*yebaba*) 101 tears over her son (into whose temples Yael had cast a tent-<sup>36</sup>pin).

Traditions vary as to the performance of the additional forty notes. Some communities (such as the Sephardi and some Hassidic groups) perform two sets of thirty notes in the Additional Service, both during the “silent” (individually recited) *Amidah* and during the cantor’s repetition. In this case ten more notes are performed at the conclusion of the service. Alternatively, some communities refrain from blowing during the “silent” *Amidah*, and thus the concluding set consists of a sequence of forty notes.

A hundred notes represent a substantial musical performance, and the grouping of notes and their relative rhythmic values (spelled out in the *Mishna*) also suggests that the ritual recital had early on acquired a complex compositional form and content. Indeed, the prayer that precedes the ritual shofar blowing on the New Year in contemporary liturgy refers to the blowing as a *seder*, or “recital.”<sup>35</sup> Moreover the musical character of the shofar is further borne out by the instructions and discussions of a training process suggesting skill and perhaps artistry in the Mishna:<sup>36</sup> it encourages children and women to learn. As the Talmud observes, “On religious occasions the shofar was blown only by priests and Levites, in secular events sometimes also on fast days, by laymen, children, and in the case of emergencies, even by women.”<sup>37</sup> There was thus no gender barrier. The shofar had become a symbol of social equality and unity, like music itself. And its musicality is further attested by terminology in a discussion, in the Babylonian Talmud,<sup>38</sup> concerning the question as to whether a person has fulfilled the command to “hear the shofar,” when playing purely for musical pleasure or practicing. The answer, “If one blew the shofar simply to make music, he has performed his religious duty,” make uses of the terms *nagen*, which denotes musical performance, and *shir*, “a song.”<sup>39</sup>

#### **Early medieval (ninth-fourteenth century) and Cabbalistic (fifteenth-seventeenth century) periods**

It is clear from the earliest extant depictions of the shofar, from the third century onwards, that it was recognized, like other symbols such as the Menorah, as a national and religious emblem.<sup>40</sup> Its importance is seen in that both during the Babylonian Exile and the Second Temple period, the instrument had important social functions, derived from its biblical origins. It was blown, for instance, when a new head of the community was elected, as a

timekeeper to announce the Sabbath, and particularly at a time of regional or national calamity. In that sense it could act as a signal of danger, extending the notion of military signalling in the biblical period. It was also used for important Beth Din (religious court) rulings such as an excommunication. Already by the third century and later the range of connotations was wide. The iconographical evidence persuades Braun that “the shofar was not merely a simple symbol of restricted meaning. It did not symbolize merely the idea of atonement or immortality as based on Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac ... nor did it symbolize merely a certain version of messianism.... And it certainly was not merely a ‘decorative convention’... It was a holistic national-ethical symbol of identification appearing contemporaneously in various national and cultic artistic forms.”<sup>41</sup>

The primary function that survived in the Diaspora was the ritual blowing for the New Year (Rosh Hashanah). It was here that the symbolism of the shofar was codified and again extended, notably in the famous explanations by Sa’adya Gaon (ca. 892-942) in the tenth century and Maimonides (1135-1204) in the twelfth century. Sa’adya Gaon expands upon the notion of *Zichron*, the Memorial, with a range of symbols rooted in events of Jewish history that cover identity, repentance, observance, and faith:

- i. Trumpet of Coronation. Rosh Hashanah acknowledges the Lord as King
- ii. Ten days, to stir conscience
- iii. Reminder of Sinai, of Destiny of Israel
- iv. Reminder of Prophets’ morality and redemption
- v. Reminder of Destruction of the Temple and call to renew freedom
- vi. Reminder of Akedah (The Binding of Isaac)
- vii. Reminder of Humility before God
- viii. Reminder of Day of Judgement
- ix. Anticipates proclamation of freedom, return to Holy Land, deliverance, redemption
- x. End of World order, acknowledgement of one King

Maimonides’ interpretation builds more directly on prophetic imagery in his encapsulation of the message of the shofar performance, which is clearly expressed in the moralistic idiom of its time:

Awake from your slumbers, ye who have fallen asleep in life and reflect on your deeds. Remember your Creator. Be not of those who miss reality in the pursuit of shadows, and waste their years in seeking after vain things which neither profit nor save. Look well to your souls and improve your character. Forsake each of you his evil ways and thoughts.<sup>42</sup>

Here the symbolism of the prophetic era is revitalized, amplified, made explicit—the moral aspect uppermost, yet with hints of the magical, otherworldly element.

Interestingly, our earliest recorded notation for shofar blowing dates from this period, in the tenth-century prayer book of Sa'adya Gaon and the thirteenth-century Codex Adler,<sup>43</sup> again showing the pattern of calls that has become familiar, and reinforcing the notion that the shofar is indeed a “musical” instrument. For the sixteenth-century Cabbalists the form of the note patterns as well as the instrument itself were crucial to its mystical powers. The emphasis was on the shofar's appeal to the heavenly, rather than the human, sphere; it was a key to unlock the heavenly gates. Amnon Shiloah's masterly commentary of Cabbalistic music theory shows how the *Zohar* and related texts display a concern with details of construction that highlights the almost magical powers of the instrument. The shofar has the power “to change the nature of celestial judgement from punishment to clemency.”<sup>44</sup> In accordance with the Cabbalistic theory of lower and higher worlds, “the sound of the shofar awakens the sound of the celestial shofar . . . to bring about *tikkun* (the restoration of harmony) in the world.”<sup>45</sup> The effectiveness of the shofar's plea is a result of the blower's *kavanah* or spiritual intention and intensity, which is conditional on an understanding of the secret meanings of the three calls. Here the *Zohar* brings to bear various scriptural verses to show that the *teki'ah* is a symbol of the *Galut*, the Diaspora, the unredeemed world. The *shevarim* signifies the approach to redemption and the *teru'ah* the “jubilant arrival” at redemption.

There is a wealth of accompanying allegory based on textual allusions and *gematria*, numerological symbolism, beyond the scope of this study. However, one particular explanation may serve to illustrate how Cabbalistic thought expanded the range of symbols. Shiloah explains that

*Teru'ah*—likened to action—symbolizes both the chaining of the forces of evil and liberation from the chains; the people of Israel will be freed as slaves and freed of their chains when the shofar of the final Redemption blows.<sup>46</sup>

One could thus emphasize here the “magical” or supernatural aspects of the instrument as vestiges of an ancient past, perhaps even running counter to the original Talmudic injunctions about blowing it into a pit. The symbolism takes on a new, mystical quality, quite distinct from traditions of rabbinical Judaism, in its poetic-allegorical tone. The style and topic have proved attractive also to contemporary composers, as portrayed for instance in a recent work, *The Dybbuk*, by the American-based Israeli composer Sulamit Ran (see Appendix).

One may conclude that the symbolism of the shofar in the post-biblical era has increased in scope and depth. The range of expression and symbolism has been greatly extended to include mundane elements such as chronological time-keeping, and more imaginative, structured performance in celebratory festivals, as well as warnings of disaster. Among the plethora of associations, a hierarchy emerges that emphasizes the theme of moral improvement, which underpins many of the related themes of warning, repentance, and redemption. Moreover, shofar performance is increasingly recognized as a musical act, requiring form and content, necessitating training and practice.

## Part II –The symbolism of the shofar in music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries

Remarkably little has been published on the use of the shofar in art music, but from the beginning of the twentieth century—and particularly in its second half—the instrument has begun to feature in major works from a variety of styles. With the events of tragedy and triumph that characterized Jewish experience in the first half of the twentieth century, the shofar, with its rich symbolism, has offered composers a powerful vehicle through which to express their profound musical responses. At the same time the shofar has retained its ceremonial and communal function in the modern state of Israel, for instance in the installation of a new president and on Holocaust and military memorials. In using the shofar as a symbol in their art works, composers have drawn on the ancient symbols mentioned: national identity, national calamity and redemption, prophecy. Yet these have been elaborated and deepened to relate to more contemporary events and ideas.<sup>47</sup> The integration of the shofar within an art-music context, notably by Israeli composers as well as composers from the USA, Canada, and the United Kingdom, has introduced new perspectives and new possibilities. The symbolism of the shofar has become attuned to the aesthetics of modernism and post-modernism, a confrontation and reconciliation of regional and global tendencies, of folk and art, of individual and community.

In all these styles the issue of musical meaning is illuminated by a focus on a central issue: namely the extent to which the shofar, and its evocation through sonority, traditional music, or symbolism, is integrated into musical structure. In all the examples discussed here, it may be seen that the shofar's expressive meaning derives from the range of symbols explored in the previous sections. It is this nexus of symbols that forms the basis for the shofar's use in twentieth- and twenty-first-century art music, where the shofar sound and symbolism is either evoked in its original form, or transformed.

### Elgar

The earliest use of the shofar in a major work appears to be Elgar's *The Apostles*, completed in 1903,<sup>48</sup> in the Dawn Scene that follows the Prologue.<sup>49</sup> *The Apostles* was the first part of a triptych left unfinished; the second part, *The Kingdom*, completed in 1906, was to have been followed by a third part called *The Last Judgement*, *The Saints*, or *The Fulfilment*. Elgar's dramatic interest in the New Testament story focused on the individual character of Peter, Mary Magdalene, and Judas; and his music, influenced by Wagner's *Parsifal* and *The Ring* from a visit to Bayreuth in 1902, features some of his richest chromatic textures and most colorful orchestration. In the Dawn scene there are two statements of the complete sequence of traditional calls, *teki'ah*, *shevarim*, and *teru'ah*, precisely notated in clear rhythmic patterns (see rehearsal nos. 26 and 34-35). The shofar is here used to depict a scene, and what is remarkable is the length to which Elgar goes to ensure a degree of realism.

On one level Elgar's use of the shofar is not strictly "authentic" in several ways, yet on a different level there is clearly a desire for realism. Elgar's shofar call, the *teki'ah*, is a rising major sixth—*eb*<sup>1</sup> to *c*<sup>2</sup>. While the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*<sup>50</sup> describes

the *teki'ah* interval as a rising fifth, contemporaneous sources Elgar consulted may have used the sixth. Indeed, the exact intervals vary according to different traditions, and since each individual shofar varies in pitch and interval produced, according to the length and the width of the bore. Elgar's interpretation of the *teru'ah*, based on his contemporary sources, again follows an outdated convention of three groups of four sixteenth notes, rather than nine notes, divided into three groups of three notes, which is the traditional requirement mentioned in the Mishna. Other works at the time make similar use the shofar, such as George MacFarren's oratorio *St. John the Baptist* (1873). Elgar draws on what he terms an "ancient Hebrew melody" for the setting of the Morning Psalm (Psalm 132) (rehearsal nos. 28-32). In a prefatory note to the score, Elgar observes that he retained some of the "appropriate" harmony used in his source edition.<sup>51</sup> Yet the rather stolid nineteenth-century harmony was clearly distant from the modal implications of the melody, and served Elgar primarily as a vehicle for drama. Centered on an F-minor/C-minor tonality, it represents the darker aspect, the relative minor, of the A $\flat$  major of the two sections that surround it, which are also far more chromatic. The effect is a stylistic dislocation of the "ancient Hebrew melody" from the remainder of the action, which reinforces the apparent tendency to depict the Jews as simple and earthbound in contrast to the higher inspiration of the Apostles.

In contrast to the "ancient Hebrew melody," however, the shofar is used ambivalently: it is a symbol both of the Jews and of Christian prophecy. This ambivalence is evident in the variety of harmonizations assigned to the simple rising-sixth motif, and the way it is integrated into the orchestral texture as a *leitmotif*, harmonized in various ways and developed motivically, evidence of Wagner's influence on Elgar.<sup>52</sup> Certainly what is clear is the emphasis on development of the shofar motifs within the symphonic fabric of the work, a priority in view of Elgar's avowed intention to use the shofar motif in *The Last Judgement*.

Elgar's symbolic use of the shofar is clear: it evokes Old Testament ceremonial/ritual functions, to depict the rising dawn; and extends prophetic symbolism to the New Testament imagery of Messianic redemption. As mentioned previously, these symbols are part of the nexus of meanings ascribed to the shofar from its original sources in the Pentateuch. Yet the shofar motif is also transformed and re-contextualized, and thus acquires a new, anachronistic symbolism. First, the purely monodic character of the shofar is colored by harmony. Second, the shofar is used as a contemporary sign of something exotic and "foreign" to the texture, set into relief by conventional orchestration. Third, the calls are transformed timbrally and melodically to become integrated. Fourth, alongside the iconic meaning, the shofar motif functions as a purely musical motif, which connects the solo sections in A $\flat$  to the chorus in F minor/C minor. Although Elgar's orchestration calls for shofar, the composer's prefatory notes state that a straight trumpet may be used and this is how it is usually done, though brass experts would be ideally suited to elicit the musical qualities of the shofar in this work.

### Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Bloch, Bernstein

The Italian-Jewish composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco shows a different kind of structural integration of the shofar calls—rather than the instrument itself—in a small-scale piano work also imbued with symbolic meanings, composed some twenty years after Elgar's *Apostles*. Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Le danze del Re David* (op. 37, 1925), subtitled *Hebrew Rhapsody on Traditional Themes*, features a repeated-note motif with the remarkable and unusual expression mark *squillante—quasi shofar*.<sup>53</sup> The Italian musicologist Guido Maggiorini Gatti (1892-1973) has observed<sup>54</sup> that the piece, one of three characteristic suites (one Viennese, one Italian, and one Jewish), displays “brilliant pianistic writing.” Certainly at one level the motif is purely coloristic, like the repeated-note guitar effects of composers of the Spanish school, such as Albeniz and Granados, and indeed after 1932 Castelnuovo-Tedesco was to become a foremost composer for the guitar in the USA. Yet the *quasi-shofar* motif has a deeper symbolic association as well as its important structural function of unifying the seven disparate sections of the piece. The motif is a potent Jewish symbol: it is mimetic, the falling arpeggios connoting the shofar's swooping note, the repeated notes suggesting the *teru'ah*. Interpreted programmatically, the motif and its marking implies a more specific allusion to King David's dance before the Ark (described in Chronicles I, 15:28), combining the Biblical symbolism of joy and praise. This is again reflected in a more personal, Jewish symbolism. The piece was dedicated to the memory of the composer's maternal grandfather, who had composed a book of prayer melodies. Castelnuovo-Tedesco had discovered these in 1924, around the time he rediscovered his Jewish roots. He was to use the melodies much later in a set of six organ preludes (*Prayers of My Grandfather*), but this piano suite was his first overtly Jewish composition in an oeuvre that contains numerous Jewish works, including Biblical cantatas and settings of the Sabbath Service. Yet if Castelnuovo-Tedesco's work is overtly Jewish, it avoids any attempt at “authenticity,” but rather aims to evoke some characteristic effects, like Liszt's Hungarian or Spanish rhapsodies, exploiting a vocabulary of coloristic and impressionistic gesture. Even so, the shofar symbol works at a dramatic level, adding the imagery of splendor, and power to characterize the subject, King David.

King David's son Solomon is the subject of another work in which a more far-reaching transformation of the shofar symbol is apparent, Bloch's *Schelomo*, a rhapsody for cello and orchestra, and one of several of Bloch's works to feature shofar motifs. The second subject of *Schelomo* highlights a distinctive leap of a fourth and repeated-note motif, introduced by woodwinds, and only later repeated by the solo cello. The theme is extensively developed throughout the texture for the main part of the central section, the incisive connotations of “alarm” of the *teru'ah* now imbued with a new expressive musical quality that evokes the prophetic idea of the transformation of swords into plowshares.

Another distant variant, which in my opinion retains the original ferocity of the *teru'ah* and also its prophetic connotations of a challenge to the conscience, occurs in the “Din Torah” central movement of Leonard Bernstein's Symphony no. 3 of 1963, subtitled “Kaddish,” dedicated to the memory of President John F. Kennedy. Here the percussion motif is stated three times; the third time it is imitated by the orchestral woodwinds, which

underlines the allusion to the shofar, an allusion immediately reinforced by the introduction of saxophone solo to double the sustained choral lines. More direct allusions to the shofar occur in Bernstein's oeuvre, both in the opera *Candide* (1956) and in the opening of *West Side Story* (1957). The overture to *Candide* begins with a salient rising fanfare motif in the brass, highly suggestive of a *teki'ah*, soon integrated and developed motivically. Though there is here no explicit traditional Jewish symbolism, the shofar's energizing gesture appears to be significant to the character of the work. A more far-reaching effect colors the opening of *West Side Story* which, as the American composer and critic Raphael Mostel has pointed out, represents, in effect, a huge orchestral *shofar* call. That this was a conscious musical reference is persuasively proved by the (little-known) fact that *West Side Story* was originally intended to be set in a Jewish neighborhood in New York and only later switched to the Puerto Rican setting in which it is known.<sup>55</sup> A younger contemporary of Bernstein, the composer, pianist, and conductor Lukas Foss, has evoked shofar sounds in the introduction to the third movement of his powerful, biblically inspired work for mezzo-soprano and orchestra, *Song of Songs* (1947). In this work, the shofar motifs presented by woodwind are combined with several other "biblical" features, such as oriental melisma, that contribute to a mood of near-Eastern, archaic grandeur.

### Alexander Goehr

One of the most striking and significant uses of shofar symbolism in recent British music occurs in the oeuvre of Alexander Goehr. Though he never uses the instrument itself, several of his works evoke the shofar's sound and prophetic symbolism, notably the *Sonata about Jerusalem*, Op. 31 (1971) and his opera *Behold the Sun* (1984). Explicit reference to the shofar's calls occurs in *Sonata about Jerusalem*, the third work in a music-theatre *Triptych* (a complete one, unlike Elgar's), also including *Naboth's Vineyard* and *Shadowplay*, which was composed for the 1971 "Testimonium" organized by Recha Freier in Jerusalem.<sup>56</sup> The *Sonata's* libretto is derived from texts by Obadiah the Proselyte and Samuel be Yahya ben al Maghribi (twelfth century), adapted by Recha Freier and the composer. It tells of the Jews of Baghdad, whose extreme persecution leads them to follow a false Messiah, Schlomo ben Dugi, who makes them believe they can fly to safety in Jerusalem. The story, originally set in Hebrew, is told through twelve sections, clearly numbered in the score,<sup>57</sup> five of which (sections 1, 4, 7, 10 and 12) are identical, chant-like choral refrains sung in Latin: "the dust will turn to darkness and the moon to blood before the terrible coming of the Lord." The conclusion of each refrain features a striking gesture that clearly evokes the shofar call, *teki'ah*. It is a fourfold rising leap, a fifth in the trumpet ( $e^2 - g^2$ ) and flattened sixth in the clarinet ( $e^2 - ab^2$ ), the dissonance adding to its penetrating effect. The ritualized refrain repetitions heighten the potency of the contrasting expressionistic and freer, post-serial music used in the dramatic sections. It is in these sections that Goehr integrates and transforms the shofar motives, rather like leitmotifs, to convey the evolving action. In the main, the shofar *teki'ah* and *teru'ah* motives, in both their original and transformed guises, are highlighted by the trumpet, but also echoed in woodwind instruments, occasionally strings, and, most notably, by the voices. The climax of section 3, "Conditions relating to

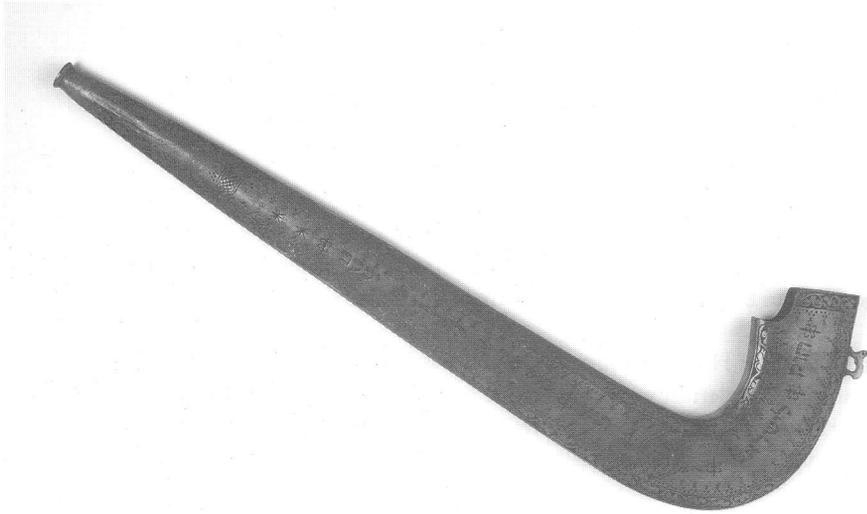
the Jews in Bagdad,” presents a rapidly tongued repeated-note motif for horn, trumpet, and bass trombone (mm. 45-50), a *teru'ah* motif, suggestive of the prophetic symbol of alarm. The *teki'ah* makes a pronounced appearance in section 5, “A crazed young boy brings news to the Jews of Bagdad of the False Messiah, Schlomo ben Dugi,” which begins with a striking rising gesture in the trumpet,  $d^1 - g^1, g\#^1 - e\#^2 - f\#^2$ . The trumpet continues with a powerful repeated note motif, marked *accelerando* (the *teru'ah*) then repeats and extends the whole sequence. Interspersing each shofar call however, is a penetrating, almost ironic *teki'ah* motif in the woodwinds—piccolo ( $c\#^3 - a^3$ ) and clarinet.

The trumpeter's gestures are then imitated in the angular leaping soprano part, the “crazed boy” (mm. 7ff), with an ingenious syllabic repetition to imitate the *teru'ah*: “Je-ru-sa-sa-sa-sa-lem” (m. 23) and “Je-ru-sa-lem-sa-lem-sa-lem” (m. 29). The *teru'ah* motif is transferred to the laughing chorus in the following section 6, “The Rejoicing of the Jews,” which (somewhat reminiscent of the Witches' Chorus in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*) sets the laughter “Ha-ha-ha-ha,” etc. to a repeated-note idea. This accelerates and is echoed in the ensemble (flute, clarinet, trumpet), followed by falling swoops that distort the earlier rising *teki'ah*. A fierce trumpet *teru'ah* intensifies the repeat of the laughing chorus, leading again to the woodwind response. Throughout section 5, therefore, the notion of a “false prophet” is conveyed in the distorted, ironic presentation of the shofar calls. Section 9 depicts the “Flight to Jerusalem,” and here again the Jews' fantasy of imminent salvation is suggested through a distortion of the shofar motifs, conveyed by the trumpet's threefold *teru'ah* variant: a falling pattern of sixteenth-note triplets followed by a rising *teki'ah* that the entire ensemble immediately develops. In the final dramatic episode, section 11, “The Disappointment of the Jews,” the strident character of the shofar evoked earlier by the trumpet is radically altered by the use of the mellower bass clarinet for a *teru'ah* motif on a low  $g\flat^3$ , and in dialogue with the bass, which concludes with a closed-mouth *teru'ah* after the line “They felt stupid and were ashamed before their neighbors.” The vividly characterized music-theatre piece thus offers a fascinating instance of prophetic shofar symbolism, that of Messianic redemption, exploited in imaginative ways through complex and compelling musical metamorphosis, attuned to the colorful, varied textures and rhythmic energy of the work.

The challenge of a false Messiah to the people's faith also forms the theme of Goehr's opera *Behold the Sun*,<sup>58</sup> which alludes to the shofar's symbolism rather than its sounds, conveyed in the use of a bass trumpet to symbolize prophecy, derived from the Lutheran translation of the biblical horn as *Posaune*. The trombone allusion invites comparison with two sections of Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*: the “Dance 'Round the Golden Calf” uses trombone and other low-brass textures, while the expressive confrontation between Moses and Aron employs a thin trombone/horn texture. But the *Posaune* idea is more explicit in *Behold the Sun*, which is based on historical events in the city of Münster in Germany during the reign of the Anabaptists under their spiritual leader, Melchior Hoffman. The medieval power struggle, as Goehr has observed,<sup>59</sup> has contemporary resonances, particularly as a critique of religious fundamentalism. The powerful music includes rich choruses and beguiling, lyrical arias for the protagonists. Goehr highlights the messianic symbolism of the

shofar in his association of the “Limping Prophet” with a bass trumpet, which the prophet carries and plays on stage in Act III, scene 1 (rehearsal number 12), “Entry of a Limping Prophet.” Yet what is particularly significant is the irony employed, even more marked than in *Sonata about Jerusalem*, with the trombone and brass motifs distorted to the point of ridicule, to characterize the Prophet as false. Apart from the motif itself, the notion of the “Trump of the Lord” is heightened by the textural context, with rising horn fanfares and penetrating falling seconds in the trumpets. A further fanfare/shofar-like idea, which grows out of the texture, occurs in a series of three rising leaps of a perfect fifth, first across the orchestra, then prominently in the trombones. Within the post-serial modernist idiom, the allusions to the shofar thus provide potent expression of prophetic symbolism that reaches into biblical sources.

A more recent work by Goehr, the poetic conclusion of the oratorio *Death of Moses* (1992), reveals an even more creative and subtle approach to shofar imagery.<sup>60</sup> In “Jochebed’s Search for Her Son,” the final section of this neo-Monteverdian setting of the early medieval poem, Moses’ mother asks a series of symbolic characters whether they have seen her son—first Egypt, then the Red Sea, the Desert, Mt. Sinai, and finally the Torah. Each reply



**Figure 6**

Shofar, with inscription: “Tiku vahodesh shofar / bakeseh leyom chageynu / Ki chok le’yisrael hu / mishpat lelohey yakov.” (Psalm 81:4; “Blow ye the shofar on the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast-day. For it is a statute for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob.”) Photo Courtesy of The Jewish Museum, London.



**Figure 7**

Another view of the shofar in Figure 6.

recounts part of the Exodus narrative, and is accompanied poignantly by one of the high woodwinds, of which the alto saxophone, with its resilient, penetrating timbre, appears most suggestively to evoke the shofar, transformed in a remarkably lyrical way.

#### **Sheriff, Senator: Holocaust memorials and world music**

In contrast to modernist works concerned with the dramatic effect and irony of structural transformations, post-modern expression tends toward stylistic confrontations and discontinuities of blatant quotations and allusion. These processes may be observed in several recent works that significantly allude to, or make use of, the shofar.

Noam Sheriff's oratorio *Mechye Hametim*,<sup>61</sup> a moving large-scale Holocaust memorial piece, premiered in Amsterdam in 1987, uses a chorus of horn calls, signifying shofars, which merge into air raid sirens. From the destruction that follows, a gentle Yiddish song, all that remains, is heard in the distance. The contemporary meaning of the sirens reinforces the shattering impact of these shofar sounds: a connection is made that is unique and disturbing. The biblical symbolism remains, yet a new layer of meaning is added: the shofar/horn calls express the urgent message of the need to survive.

Several contemporary Holocaust memorial works make use of the actual sound of the shofar. In Ronald Senator's *Kaddish for Terezin*,<sup>62</sup> shofar calls are intermingled with the voices of the children of Terezin reciting their own poems, a poignant and moving effect. In *Vanished Voices*, a Holocaust memorial presentation compiled by Neil Levin,<sup>63</sup> the collage of chorus, aria, song, and narration lead through destruction to hope. At the climax a choral *Kaddish* setting by Lewandowski is brusquely interrupted by a side step in the bass strings to a pedal *F#*, over which a fanfare of shofars begins, finally fading to a single sustained *teki'ah gedola*. The stark symbolism of redemption is clear, yet it is the contemporaneity of the ritual set alongside its history that reinforces the affirmation of faith for a joyous concluding flourish.

Chamber works that explore the shofar's sounds and gestures, rather than the instrument itself, include Robert Fleisher's *Meditations* for soprano saxophone and trumpet in B $\flat$  (1988), a piece commissioned by the Ruttenberg Arts Foundation and the Graduate School of Northern Illinois University. The composer was in residence at the Mishkenot Sha'ananim Center for Visiting Artists in Jerusalem for seven weeks in the summer of 1986, an experience that formed the inspiration for the work.<sup>64</sup> The duo structure symbolizes the cultural, political, and historical conflicts in the region. As Fleisher observes in his preface, "The instruments ... ancient and modern are evoked in the trumpet—with its biblical connotations and the saxophone as ... shofar" There are several overt references to shofar sounds, the swooping glissandi at the outset of the second piece, and repeated-note gestures. Emmanuel Rubin's song *O die Schornsteine* ("O the Chimneys," 1995), a setting for voice and viola of a moving poem about the Holocaust by Nelly Sachs, evokes the shofar's sound and traditional call, heard in the viola's initial motif, which gives rise to much of the melodic material throughout. The composer has noted that the allusion was at first not deliberate and became explicit only gradually.<sup>65</sup>

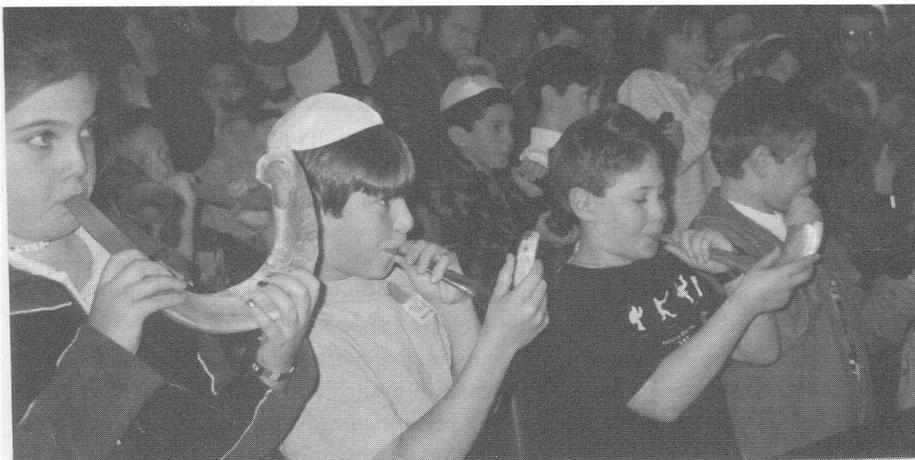
A more radical evocation and transformation of traditional shofar sounds occurs in *Crystal Psalms* by Alvin Curran, Professor of Composition at Mills College, which creates an avant-garde sonic tapestry through electro-acoustic sampling based on shofar sounds. The recording<sup>66</sup> was released as a commemoration of *Kristallnacht* in the 1980s. Curran later composed the virtuoso concerto *Shofar for Instruments and Electronic Sounds*, which he premiered as part of the WDR-Cologne Diaspora-Israel concert week in 1990. As Peter Gradenwitz noted, "he played a large shofar and some smaller models and added electronics based on chants of Yemenite Jews recorded at the Jerusalem Wailing Wall on the day of mourning for the destruction of the Holy Temple (*Tisha be-Av*)."<sup>67</sup>

Shofar as "sampled" sound also occurs in the post-modern collage fusion work, *Kaddish*, produced by the group Towering Inferno, available on a CD distributed by Island Records, and presented in live multi-media performances across Europe, including the Vienna Jewish Music Week in November 1995. The work mixes multi-ethnic musics such as Hungarian folk poems and songs, African rhythms, and cantorial and shofar music within an electro-acoustic tableau, and was widely acclaimed by the music press in the categories of modern rock and "World Music."

New music for shofar in a broader world music context also features in *Ceremonial for the Equinox*, performed by the group Tibetan Singing Bowl, led by the composer Raphael Mostel.<sup>68</sup> At the end of a rather long pageant of unusual instruments, including gongs, Mayan rain-sticks, Celtic drums, and Tibetan singing bowls, there is a section for “Ram’s horn Tocsin”—seven *shofars* with drums that resonate eerily. It was particularly effective in the cavernous Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, where it was premiered in 1995.<sup>69</sup>

### Melodic and jazz shofar

One aspect of the shofar that has to date not been widely exploited however is its capacity for melody. Contrary to common belief, it is possible to produce pitches through varying lip pressure and breath control, and experimentation with the different overtones produced by shofars of various shapes and sizes. In my own works for shofar I have attempted to exploit this quality. *Teki’ah Textures*, for massed shofars and string trio, 1984, was premiered at the London Shofar Competition (Bloomsbury Theatre, London) in 1984. It is based on the story of Jericho and employs the number seven as an important element. My more recent Trio for Shofar and Strings, performed in 1995 at the Jewish Museum in London, has a programmatic aim to evoke the various symbolisms of the instrument, and uses the solo shofar in a melodic role, with ad hoc shofar chorus. My *Israel Jubilee Fanfare* for solo and massed shofars (1998; see Figure 8) develops the traditional calls in various contrapuntal textures through seven sections (whose titles form the acrostic “shofarr”<sup>70</sup>) the penultimate of which is a rendition of the melody of *Hatikvah*, the Israeli National Anthem. It was



**Figure 8**

Malcolm Miller, *Israel Jubilee Fanfare* (1998). World’s Largest Shofar Orchestra, organized by Jewish Music Heritage Trust (now Jewish Music Institute, UK). Marble Arch Synagogue, London. Fifty-nine shofar players of all ages. Photo by the author.

premiered at St. John's Smith Square, London, in the presence of the incumbent British Minister for the Arts and the Israeli ambassador, by twelve players divided in two groups in the gallery and one (the composer) on the stage.

There is evidence of similar pioneering of the "melodic shofar." David Wayne has composed a work for orchestra and choir with shofar. It was premiered by the Brooklyn Philharmonic at Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York on 27 November 1993. Rabbi Joel Goor (Metropolitan Synagogue, New York), who has been experimenting with the shofar and plays jazz on it, performed the shofar part.<sup>71</sup> And in a similarly light vein, Jeremiah Lockwood, a woodwind player, has recorded an old blues tune *I Heard Somebody* on shofar on a CD named after his group, "The Sway Machinery,"<sup>72</sup> and incorporated shofar motives in the original song cycle *I Become A Slaughterer*.<sup>73</sup> Shofar also features on a recent CD entitled *Trombon con Sazon* (Trombone with Spice) by Demetrios Kastaris.<sup>74</sup>

### Epilogue—"Teki'ah Gedola"

The rich symbolism of the shofar is an expression of its essentially musical role, its ability to generate aesthetic experience. It has been, in that sense, an artistic instrument since its biblical beginnings, expressed first in its capacity to evoke memory, *Zichron*, on the New Year particularly, and as a celebratory instrument. Its ancient symbolism of the earthly as well as the transcendental has inspired Joachim Braun to laud it as "the musical instrument par excellence."<sup>75</sup> The range of the shofar's meanings has increased throughout its history. From Elgar's *The Apostles* through its transformations of modernism and post-modernism, there can be no doubt of the musical potency of the instrument and its sounds, which transcend any purely functional role and underline a capacity to elicit spiritual experience. It is an experience permeated at a profound level with ideas deriving from military or ceremonial usage, and which reinterpret ancient notions of national identity, destruction, loss, hope, and redemption within the communal and personal context of Jewish history. Reaching back to biblical and post-biblical sources, generations of composers have transformed the shofar's traditional meanings in new contexts, whether New Testament prophecy in Elgar's *The Apostles*, ironic treatment of false prophecy of two theatre pieces by Goehr, or a post-Holocaust vision of destruction, survival, and hope. The examples given here, varied though not comprehensive, show the balance of continuity with, and radical reinterpretation of the past. From a twenty-first-century perspective, with its dual aspect of destruction and redemption, the shofar acquires a particularly powerful symbolism seen both in the art music referred to and within the ritual recital of the contemporary synagogue, as attested by the Strassfeld quotation at the beginning of this article. As Shiloah observes, there is still the same "religious-magical awe . . . the same faith in the shofar's power to subdue the mightiest forces of nature and overcome the greatest evil."<sup>76</sup> Whether in concert hall or synagogue, the shofar retains its power to remind one of the constancy of the natural world in the context of ever changing technology. Its powerful sound resonates with the strength of the human spirit, its individual sound representing an individual being, heard and witnessed by the whole community. In contemporary music and liturgy it remains a potent symbol, like the signal of dawn over Jerusalem, to express faith in a new dawn for humanity.

## APPENDIX

List of works mentioned, for and about the shofar<sup>77</sup>

- Braun, Yehezkel. *Festive Horns* for mixed choir and brass octet (Settings of the Mishna), Tel Aviv, IMI, 1977.
- Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario. *Le danze del Re David, rapsodia ebraica su temi tradizionali* (1925). Florence: A. Forlivesi & C., 1926.
- Curran, Alvin. *Crystal Psalms*. CD: New Albion NA067. Sampled shofar.
- Elgar, Edward: *The Apostles*, Op.49. Elgar Complete Edition, Series I: Choral Works, Volume 8. London: Novello, 1983
- Fleisher, Robert. *Meditations* for soprano saxophone and trumpet, MS, 1988.
- Foss, Lukas. *Song of Songs*, for mezzo-soprano and orchestra, 1947. CD: Harmonia Mundi 2001, HMU907243
- Glick, Srul Irving. *Heritage Dance Symphony* (1967). Incorporates shofar calls.
- Goehr, Alexander. *Sonata about Jerusalem*, Op. 30 (1970). London: Schott (ED 11165), 1976.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Behold the Sun (Die Wiedertaufer)*, Op. 44. London: Schott, 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Death of Moses*, Op. 53. London: Schott (ED 12427).
- Hajdu, Andre. *Teru'ath HaMelech*, for clarinet and orchestra. Tel Aviv: IMI (CD recording and score).
- Levin, Neil. *Vanished Voices*. Recording for National Sound Archive, British Library. Performance at the Barbican Centre, London as part of the 1996 B'nai B'rith Festival.
- Lockwood, Jeremiah. CD, *Sway Machinery* features shofar on blues tune *I Heard Somebody*; and shofar motives in the original song cycle *I Become A Slaughterer*.
- Miller, Malcolm. *Teki'ah Textures*, for massed shofars and string trio. Ms, 1984. Premiered Bloomsbury Theatre, London, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Trio for shofar and Strings, Ms, 1995. Premiered in 1995 at the Jewish Museum in London.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Israel Jubilee Fanfare* for solo and massed shofars. Ms, 1998. Premiered at St. John's Smith Square, London.
- Mostel, Raphael. *Music for the Equinox*, CD: Scarlet Record Infinity Series, *Nightsongs*, performed by the "Tibetan Singing Bowl" (IS 88801-2).
- Ran, Sulamit. *Between Two Worlds* (The Dybbuk), premiered 20-22 June 1997, incorporates shofars.
- Rubin, Emmanuel. *O die Schornsteine (O the Chimneys)*, viola and voice, 1995; setting of Holocaust poem by Nelly Sachs.
- Senator, Ronald. *Kaddish for Terezin*. CD: Delos International (DE 1032).
- Sheriff, Noam. *Mechyeh Hametim*. CD: Innovative Music Productions, Pickwick Group (MCD 21).
- Wayne, David. A work for orchestra and choir with shofar, 1993.
- Towering Inferno. *Kaddish*. CD: Island Records, 1995

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Michael Strassfeld, "Traditions for Rosh Ha-Shanah," in *The Jewish Holy Days* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> It is not the purpose to rehearse here the description of the shofar, its etymology and historical overview, which is available for instance in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, ed. G. Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter / New York: MacMillan, 1972), or in Jeremy Montagu's excellent article in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (London: Macmillan, 2001) and his booklet *Musical Instruments of the Bible* (Oxford: Montagu Collection of Musical Instruments, 1996). The most recent study, to which I refer throughout this article, is an exciting and innovative scholarly work by Joachim Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine: Archeological, Written and Comparative Sources*, transl. Douglas W. Scott (Grand Rapids, MI / Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans, 2002). Braun discusses many allusions to the shofar in the context of its symbolism, and supports his ideas through newly discovered iconographical evidence. Other recent articles include G.T. Clark, "On the History and Technique of the Tikiat Shofar," *Journal of Synagogue Music* 18/1 (1988): 5-8; Theodore Reik, "The Shofar," *Music Forum and Digest* 1/3 (New York, 1949): 13-16; and Joseph Miller, "The Religious Functions of the Shofar in Talmudic Times," *Jewish Forum* 12/9-12 and 13/1-8 (New York, 1929/30).

<sup>3</sup> Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine*, p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> The musical instruments listed include the two string instruments, *nevel* (large harp) and *kinnor* (slightly smaller lyre/harp), and the wind instruments, *uggav* (small pipe/flute), *halil* (large pipe), and *alamoth* (double flute, linked by Idelsohn to the Greek *Elymos*).

<sup>5</sup> Abraham Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music, Its Historical Development* (with a new introduction by Arbie Orenstein) (New York: Schocken, 1967; reprint, New York: Dover, 1992), pp. 9-10.

<sup>6</sup> "The shofars depicted on the 'imperial' mosaics represent the more sophisticated instruments on which ... melodies could probably be played." See for example, the shofar in a mosaic of a Jericho Synagogue, illustrated in Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine*, pp. 308-09

<sup>7</sup> Indeed "musical" need not be equated with melodic; and in any case shofars are capable not only of the few pitches of the fundamental and overtone but through expertise and lip pressure, a full chromatic range!

<sup>8</sup> Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> David Wulstan, "The Sounding of the Shofar," *Galpin Society Journal* 26 (1973): 29-46.

<sup>10</sup> For a complete listing of all the uses of the term shofar in the Bible (seventy-four of them), as well as in the Mishna and Talmud, see Schlomo Hofman's invaluable reference work, *Migra'e Musica* (Tel Aviv: IMI, 1974). See also Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine*, p. 26.

<sup>11</sup> Significantly, it is *yovel* that is later used for the Jubilee, and anachronistically also "retrospectively" is echoed in the name of the "father" of all instruments, Jubal, introduced at the outset of Genesis. See Edith Gerson-Kiwi, "Horn und Trompete im Alten Testament—Mythos und Wirklichkeit," *Festschrift Ernst Emsheimer*, ed. G. Hilleström (Stockholm: Nordiska Musikförlaget, 1974), pp. 57-60. The article has been reprinted with same title in *Migrations and Mutations of the Music in East and West: Selected Writings by Edith Gerson-Kiwi* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Faculty of Visual and Performing Arts, Department of Musicology, 1980), pp. 42-49. Gerson-Kiwi sees Jubal as a personification of the ram's horn. Amnon Shiloah, in *Jewish Musical Traditions* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), has a different emphasis in his provocative idea that the connection of music and "evil" (seen in the prohibition of music in some communities) derives from or is expressed in the symbolic Jubal. He is the son of Cain and master of both musical instruments and metalwork; the latter is then used for weaponry.

<sup>12</sup> The translations quoted here are those of the Jewish Publication Society of America, drawn from *The Soncino Books of the Bible*, ed. Rev. Dr. A. Cohen (London: Soncino Press, 1968).

<sup>13</sup> In the absence of other commentary, my own suggestion would be as follows: In between the instructions to Moses and the events that follow we learn that the people “trembled,” thus at some level their faith was not at the level of Abraham. *Yovel* (ram’s horn) therefore became shofar, its rallying qualities also serving to strengthen their resolve. The subtle distinction highlights psychological insight.

<sup>14</sup> As Amnon Shiloah observes (*Jewish Musical Traditions*, p.143), the Cabbalists saw Isaiah’s shofar of the End of Days (Isaiah 27:13) as the same shofar as in the story of Sinai.

<sup>15</sup> “The sound of the Shofar was so powerful that it was perceived as being supernatural” (Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine*, p. 115).

<sup>16</sup> Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> A. Sendrey, *Music in Ancient Israel* (London / New York: Vision Press, 1969).

<sup>18</sup> Curt Sachs, “The Shofar,” in *The History of Musical Instruments* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1940), pp. 110-12.

<sup>19</sup> Shiloah, *Jewish Musical Traditions*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>20</sup> One could almost compare the shofar sound with a “motif of reminiscence”—that peculiarly nineteenth-century idea that also coincides with the rise of national consciousness.

<sup>21</sup> The verse is engraved on the Liberty Bell, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

<sup>22</sup> According to Braun, from the start the shofar “was viewed as a symbol of national and ethnic identity and was capable of functioning in both sacral and secular contexts.” Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine*, p. 27.

<sup>23</sup> Fifty-nine shofars at the 1998 B’nai B’rith World Record Shofar Orchestra attempt in London were noisy enough—the sound of three hundred defies the imagination!

<sup>24</sup> The verse comes from a “Haftorah” (Reading from the Prophets) recited traditionally in synagogues on *Shabbat Shuva*, or “Sabbath of Repentance,” prior to Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

<sup>25</sup> Braun, p. 29.

<sup>26</sup> See the Mishna, Second Division: Mo’ed, Sukkah, 5. All references to the Mishna are drawn from the English version of *The Mishna*, translation and commentary by H. Danby (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1967).

<sup>27</sup> See Shiloah, *Jewish Musical Traditions*, pp. 41-42. “On religious or festive occasions it sometimes appears together with trumpets.” Sendrey, in *Music in Ancient Israel*, p. 150, explains that the preference of trumpets over shofar was the view of the “Rambam,” Moses Maimonides (1135-1204).

<sup>28</sup> See *The Mishna*; all quotations included are in Danby’s version.

<sup>29</sup> Yet according to Braun, close examination of the iconography show some use of mouthpieces and alterations that “does not always accord with the Talmudic stipulations”; see Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine*, p 306.

<sup>30</sup> Curt Sachs, *The History of Musical Instruments*, p. 112.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> See the Mishna, Mo’ed, 4: 9

<sup>33</sup> As Jeremy Montagu has shown (in a paper entitled “Kol ha-Shofar” at the Third London International Conference on Jewish Music, SOAS, June 2000), there are variant traditions in performance of the notes. See Malcolm Miller, “The Third London International Conference on Jewish Music (2000),” in *Musica Judaica* 15 (2000-01): 109.

<sup>34</sup> The story is in *Talmud Yerushalmi, Rosh Hashanah*, IV:8.

<sup>35</sup> The term ‘seder’ means ‘order’ and is also used traditionally for the Passover meal. The prayer recited after the blowing of the shofar during the third of the special *Amidah* blessings includes the following

phrase “Accept with mercy and favor our recital concerning the Shofar.”

<sup>36</sup> See the Mishna, Mo’ed, *Rosh Hashanah*, IV:8

<sup>37</sup> *Talmud Babli*, *Rosh Hashanah* 33a; quoted in Sendrey, *Music in Ancient Israel*, p. 346.

<sup>38</sup> The Talmudic commentaries on the Mishna developed in two main centers, Jerusalem in Palestine (*Talmud Yerushalmi*) and Babylon (*Talmud Babli*), with significant variations.

<sup>39</sup> See also Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine*, p. 308: “The musical performance of the shofar could represent a unique aesthetic experience as well, and was acknowledged as such: ‘Whoever plays a song (*Shir*) on the shofar has fulfilled his religious duty’” (*Talmud Babli*, *Rosh Hashanah*, 28: 1).

<sup>40</sup> See, Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine*, pp. 301-05. The shofar iconography is amply illustrated in Braun’s chapter on “The Shofar: Tool of Sound and Ritual, Symbol of Faith and National Identity,” in which he underlines that the earliest depictions, from the third century and after, emanate from Roman and early Byzantine Palestine. They divide into two groups: firstly, public buildings, synagogues, and tombstones; and secondly private, smaller objects, notably oil lamps (see also *ibid.*, pp. 278-81). In these depictions, “the Shofar is grouped together with other national and religious symbols, including the Menorah, and so it is clear that the Shofar has become defined as a national and religious emblem.”

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 318.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted in S.Y. Agnon, *Days of Awe* (New York: Schocken Books, 1965), pp. 65-81.

<sup>43</sup> Both examples are reproduced in Wulstan, “The Sounding of the Shofar,” and in Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine*, p. 319.

<sup>44</sup> Shiloah, *Jewish Musical Traditions*, pp. 141-42.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 141-43.

<sup>47</sup> The symbolism of the shofar in the Old Testament, according to Braun, “laid a foundation affecting the understanding of this symbolism all the way to the present.” *Ibid.*, p.10

<sup>48</sup> Composition of the early sections including the ravishing “Prologue” and “Dawn scene” was begun in 1901.

<sup>49</sup> For clarity, my analytical discussion refers to rehearsal numbers in the full score of *The Apostles*, op. 49, Elgar Complete Edition, Series I: Choral Works, vol. 8 (London: Novello, 1983).

<sup>50</sup> *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001).

<sup>51</sup> The prefatory “Note by the Composer” to the full score of Elgar’s *The Apostles* reads: “The ancient Hebrew melody (Ps. xcii) commencing on page 30 is quoted, by kind permission of the publishers, Messrs Augener & Co., from the volume edited by Ernst Pauer, whose broad and appropriate harmony is retained in a few bars.”

<sup>52</sup> The following analysis illustrates the varied harmonizations. Initially the shofar call articulates the key of Ab (rehearsal no. 25). The shofar is imitated by clarinet, thus immediately integrated into the sonority of the orchestra. A second call in Ab (rehearsal no. 26) is followed by two ambivalent Ab/F-minor harmonizations (four measures before rehearsal no. 27) and a final F-minor cadence (rehearsal no. 27). During most of the closing phrase of the Morning Psalm, the shofar is absent. In the final cadence of “He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon” (rehearsal no. 31) the *eb*<sup>1</sup> of the rising motif (one measure after rehearsal no. 31) forms part of a C-minor chord, while the *c*<sup>2</sup> (two measures after rehearsal no. 31) becomes dissonant against a passing seventh (V substitute). In the second call (third and fourth measures after rehearsal no. 31) the *eb*<sup>1</sup> again forms part both of the C-minor tonic, and the *c*<sup>2</sup>, part of an Ab/F-minor chord progression.

Having harmonized the shofar motif in various ways, the motif itself is developed: first it is disassociated from its shofar sonority and appropriated first by violins (rehearsal no. 32) and then by

the whole orchestra. It is then developed sequentially—a threefold falling stepwise sequence  $g^1 - eb^2$ ,  $f^1 - d^2$ , and  $eb^{1-2} - c^{2-3}$  (two measures after rehearsal no. 32). Then an answering motif is added, a distinctive dotted triadic motif, which transforms the original sixth motif into a longer theme (two measures after rehearsal nos. 32-33). Within the orchestral texture the dyad  $eb$  to  $g$  is highlighted at various octaves, until the return to the original pitch level is accompanied by a return to the original shofar sonority, in the second complete sequence of calls, beginning with  $eb^1$  (two measures before rehearsal no. 34). Curiously, here the *teru'ah* is assigned only two groups of four sixteenth notes, rather than three.

<sup>53</sup> See Harriette M. Rosen, *The Influence of Judaic Liturgical Music in Selected Secular Works of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco and Darius Milhaud* (Ph.D. diss., University of California, San Diego, 1991).

<sup>54</sup> See Guido Maggiorino Gatti, "Some Italian Composers of Today, I: Castelnuovo-Tedesco," *Musical Times* 42 (1921): 403-05.

<sup>55</sup> Bernstein's allusion is discussed in a radio broadcast by Raphael Mostel, whose own works for shofar are discussed below and in the Appendix.

<sup>56</sup> "Testimonium" was the title of a music festival organized by the writer Recha Freier in Jerusalem to celebrate the city's significance. The festival took place in 1968, 1971, and 1974, with major new works commissioned from foremost international composers, Israeli and Jewish composers among them, using texts from Jewish, Christian, and Arab history of the City of Jerusalem. The 1971 *Testimonium* had as its theme "The Middle Ages." For a discussion of some of the works, see Peter Gradenwitz, *The Music of Israel*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1996), pp. 399 and 402.

<sup>57</sup> My discussion refers to the measure numbers within each numbered section in the full score of Alexander Goehr's *Sonata about Jerusalem* (London: Schott, 1976).

<sup>58</sup> Alexander Goehr, *Behold the Sun*, libretto by John McGrath and the composer (London: Schott, 1985).

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Alexander Goehr, on "New Premises," presented by Stephen Games on BBC Radio Three, 14 January 1985.

<sup>60</sup> See Appendix for citation.

<sup>61</sup> See Appendix for citation.

<sup>62</sup> See Appendix for citation.

<sup>63</sup> See Appendix for citation.

<sup>64</sup> During his visit, Fleisher conducted interviews with composers in Israel, some of whom have used the shofar. These are published in his book *Twenty Israeli Composers: Voices of a Culture* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997).

<sup>65</sup> Personal conversation with the author, 1998.

<sup>66</sup> See Appendix for catalogue details.

<sup>67</sup> Gradenwitz, *The Music of Israel*, Chapter twelve, "Twentieth Century Hebrew Music," p. 299. He continues: "The composition ... was the opening work in the Diaspora-Israel concert week in which Jewish- or Hebrew-based compositions were performed by Mauricio Kagel (*Liturgiuen*), Jonathan Berger, Richard L. Teitelbaum, and the Israelis Oedoen Partos and Ben-Zion Orgad."

<sup>68</sup> The works of Raphael Mostel, a nephew of the actor Zero Mostel, include a wonderful multimedia version of *Babar the Elephant*.

<sup>69</sup> See the *HBS Newsletter* 5 (1993): 53, concerning the recording, which is on the Scarlet Records Infinity Series IS 88801-2. I am grateful to Jeff Nussbaum for this information.

<sup>70</sup> *My Israel Jubilee Fanfare* is simply structured, with seven sections, symbolic of the seven days of the week, or the seven times seven years of the Jubilee. Each section features the traditional notes, with the exception of the sixth section, devoted to the *Hatikvah*, Israel's national anthem. The subtitles to

each section highlight some concepts associated with Judaism, and also provide the occasion for an acrostic:

S-pirit, Strength, Survival -The New Year and Jubilee calls: *Teki'ah*, Shevarim/*Teru'ah*, *Teki'ah*;

H-oliness - *Teki'ah*;

O-fferings of the heart - Shevarim;

F-reedom - *Teru'ah*;

A-ction - All three calls in active counterpoint;

R-eturn - Hatikvah;

R-edemption and Rest - *Teki'ah* Gedola.

<sup>71</sup> See *HBS Newsletter* 6 (1994): 49. I am grateful to Jeff Nussbaum for this information.

<sup>72</sup> See URL [www.swaymachinery.com](http://www.swaymachinery.com) for details of the CD and the group. The Sway Machinery has a strong connection to Jewish music through the guitarist/singer Jeremiah Lockwood, who performed with and was educated by his grandfather, Cantor Jacob Konigsberg.

<sup>73</sup> Lockwood's song cycle, for alto sax, tenor sax, clarinet, voice, brass, drums, guitar, comprises seven songs and an instrumental interlude. The text is about Lockwood's great-grandfather who was a *shochet* (ritual animal slaughterer). Various shofar motives are played by the clarinet throughout the work. The work was written in 2001 and premiered by an augmented version of Sway Machinery in July 2001 at Tonic, a club in the downtown section of New York. A private tape was made of the premier performance.

<sup>74</sup> *Trombon con Sazon*, LJC Records (Latin Jazz Coalition, c/o Demetrios Kastaris (trombone, conch shell, shofar), 80-15 Cross Island Parkway, Bellrose, NY 11426. [kastaris@juno.com](mailto:kastaris@juno.com)

<sup>75</sup> Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine*, p. 11.

<sup>76</sup> Shiloah, *Jewish Musical Traditions*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>77</sup> The author is keen to augment his list of compositions which include or allude to the shofar and would be grateful for any information and suggestions by readers to add to this list. Please contact him via the *Historic Brass Society Journal*.