

11/2012 י"ב
א. א. בוסקוביץ



CONTENTS

Alexander Uriyah Boskovich and the Quest for an Israeli National Musical Style

Jehoash Hirshberg.....2

Shemot – The last unfinished work of A. U. Boskovich

Nathan Mishori.....6

The 'Where' and the 'When' in the Dialectic Thought of Alexander Uriyah Boskovich

Herzl Shmueli.....7

Encountering the Boskovich Legacy – A Generation Later

Yehuda Yannay.....8

Alexander Uriyah Boskovich, My Teacher

Habib Hassan Touma8

Alexander Uriyah Boskovich – List of Selected Works9

Mark Kopytman – On the Way to "Cantus VI" (1995)

Julia Kreinin9

Mark Kopytman – List of Selected Works11

Calendar12

IMI Activities15

Awards and Anniversaries18

News19

IMI Presents – Concerto da camera – Composition in the Shade of its Genealogy By - Alexander Uriyah Boskovich

Igal Myrtenbaum21

In Memoriam Shabtai Petrushka

Uriel Adiv23

97/2-98/1

ALEXANDER URIYAH BOSKOVICH AND THE QUEST FOR AN ISRAELI NATIONAL MUSICAL STYLE

The period from 1931 to 1938 was marked by a major upheaval in the musical scene of the Jewish community of Palestine (Eretz-Israel). Scores of well trained and fully professional musicians as well as a sophisticated and discriminating audience arrived from Central Europe during this time and the local musical establishment became dramatically more vibrant and diversified as a result. Within less than a decade, the Palestine Orchestra (now the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra),¹ the Palestine Broadcasting Service and several professional chamber ensembles were founded. There also came into being a community of some thirty migrant composers whose promising careers in Europe had ended with the rise to power of antisemitic regimes.² Upon arrival in Palestine they not only had to go through the agony of resettlement common to all immigrants, but were immediately faced with the challenge of leading the way towards the formation of a national musical style. However, the components and features of such a style were a subject of controversy and ideological polemics.

The immigrant composers constituted a group of individuals who had not previously known each other. Their personal and professional backgrounds were extremely varied, and they recognized no single authority. Hence, no compositional school had ever been formed. Some of the composers concentrated on composition as a way of life, viewing 'national style' as an inevitable outcome of undirected professional activity that could span several generations. Erich Walter Sternberg, who had immigrated from Germany in 1931, was one of those who defended a more individual style of composition. But other composers felt obligated to take the role of ideologues whose duty was to establish the theoretical foundations of a new style through philosophical, aesthetic and ideological formulations to be followed by corresponding musical composition. Foremost among this second group was Alexander (Sandor) Uriyah Boskovich.

Born in 1907 in the Transylvanian city of Cluj (also known as Kolozsvár or Klausenberg), then part of Hungary, Boskovich grew up in an atmosphere of cultural and linguistic diversity. In addition to attending the Jewish Tarbut school, as a teenager Boskovich joined the Hashomer Hatzair movement. Interestingly, it was the movement's insistence on strict ideological discipline that eventually caused him to quit.

In 1924, Boskovich moved to Vienna for advanced piano and composition study. A year later, he returned home and enrolled at the University of Cluj, which he left after two semesters. He then went to Paris to study medicine, but almost immediately turned again to music. Sensitive and impressionable, Boskovich's three years of intensive studies in Paris were crucial in forming his future attitudes and aesthetics. The most important influences on him were his composition teachers, Paul Dukas as well as the legendary Nadia Boulanger, and the pianists Lazar Levi and Alfred Cortot.

Upon his return to Cluj, Boskovich became a coach at the fine local opera. Trained by the conductor Edmondo de Vecchi, Boskovich became himself an opera conductor. He also founded and conducted what became an excellent Jewish amateur orchestra, named after Karl Goldmark.

During the next few years, increasing antisemitism began to block Boskovich's progress in the opera house; one of his performances, for instance, was cancelled as a result of threats by fascist students. Because of personal differences with the management Boskovich also resigned his post with the Goldmark Orchestra. At about this time he joined the Jewish Student Relief Society, a group of young Jewish intellectuals – Zionists and Communists – who had united for the common goal of enhancing Jewish national self-awareness among the Transylvanian Jews. As part of his activity, Boskovich initiated a fieldwork project on the Yiddish folk songs of the Jewish communities in the Carpathian mountains. He never elaborated on the methods of his fieldwork but rather absorbed the sound and spirit of the music in context. In 1937, the group published an anthology of essays on contemporary aspects of Jewish life, titled *Kelet És Nyugat Között (Between East and West)*.³ Boskovich's contribution was "The Problem of Jewish Music", a mature reflection by an alert young musician that displayed his knowledge of the contemporary scene in general and Jewish matters in particular.

Although most members of the Jewish Relief Society shared a Zionist orientation, Boskovich had no plans to settle in Palestine, his own intention being to do further research and educational work within the Transylvanian Jewish community. Beginning in 1937, however, a combination of events led to his unexpected emigration. Boskovich had just written his first major work on Jewish themes, a suite for piano titled *CHANSONS POPULAIRES JUIVES* that consisted of arrangements of seven East-European Jewish songs.⁴ Four movements of the suite were played by his first piano teacher, Piroška Hevesi, in a recital in March 1937. Boskovich submitted an orchestrated version of the suite to the great Jewish conductor, Issay Dobrowen, who placed it on his coming programme with the newly founded Palestine

Orchestra. The orchestra invited Boskovich to attend the premiere. After the performance in February 1938 he decided to try to settle in Palestine and later would say that the suite "had saved my life".⁵ Indeed, of the thirty-odd composers who immigrated to Palestine during the 1930s, Boskovich was the only one who was brought there by a particular musical event, a fact that helped establish his position in musical society from the outset.

Boskovich's first months in Palestine coincided with the economic depression that hit the country during the first stage of the Second World War. He shared rented rooms with friends and practiced on a piano in friends' homes. One of his friends, Charles Eshkar, related that Boskovich was "absolutely detached from material matters", his lifestyle being that of a bohemian.⁶ After a short while Boskovich was appointed music teacher at an elementary school and his economic situation improved, although the job itself was ill-suited to his personality.

Boskovich and a close friend, the stage director M. Daniel, made a protracted attempt to start an opera company, and eventually mounted Jacques Offenbach's *TALES OF HOFFMANN* in 1939. The critics praised the singers and the small orchestra, but the cramped stage and general lack of funds forced the company to disperse after this, their only production.

As a composer, Boskovich flourished in the years 1940-1945, in the course of which he composed the orchestral song *THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD* (1943); *CONCERTO* for oboe and symphony orchestra (1943/44); *CONCERTO* for violin and symphony orchestra (1942); *SEMITIC SUITE* (1945/59) and its sequel *PIANO PIECES FOR THE YOUTH* (1947). His reputation as a fine composition teacher was also established at this time, and he attracted many private students. In 1944, Boskovich in collaboration with his colleagues, among them cellist Laszlo Vincze, pianist Ilona Vincze-Krausz, violinists Alice and Lorand Fenyves and the composer and violist Oedoen Partos founded the Academy of Music in Tel Aviv, where Boskovich served as teacher of theory and composition. In 1956, Boskovich accepted the position of music critic for the prestigious daily "Ha'aretz", a post he held until his death.

Between 1945 and 1959 Boskovich published no major compositions. The most significant event accounting for this silence was the composer's deep shock and grief over the murder of his parents in Auschwitz. There is also no doubt that he needed a respite to re-examine his musical style and aesthetics. He was preoccupied at the time with his family, his many teaching obligations at the Academy – which he saw as a major national mission – his duties as a critic and his work on a book on Israeli music. In 1959, he returned to intensive composition, producing the symphonic poem *SONG OF ASCENT* (1960); the cantata *DAUGHTER OF ISRAEL* (1961; based on a poem by H.N. Bialik); the *CONCERTO DA CAMERA* for violin and chamber orchestra (1962); *LAMENT* for cello and piano (1962) and the large-scale *ORNAMENTS* for flute and orchestra (1964). Boskovich's vibrant productivity was cut short by the sudden onset of lung cancer. He died in 1964, leaving behind an unfinished choral composition and a near final draft of a book titled "Art Music in Israel".

Boskovich's essay of 1937, "The Problem of Jewish Music", was his first formal grappling with an issue that was to become central in his musical life and, as such, it bears close examination. It joined a debate that went back to Richard Wagner's infamous "Judentum in der Musik" (1850), which had belittled the extent of the Jewish contribution to world music.⁷ Wagner's essay had sparked a long-standing controversy among musicologists. Among others, Heinrich Berl (a non-Jew) defined Jewish music as "any music written by a Jew", though he went on to argue that German music had and will continue to benefit from the infusion of the Eastern Jewish elements;⁸ while Gidal Salesky, a Jew, had countered Wagner in a list of numerous composers and performers of Jewish origin whose important contribution to Western music could not be denied.⁹ In each case, it was the musician's biography that counted rather than the nature and content of his music – an approach Boskovich explicitly rejected.

He defined Jewish music as "the expression of the Jewish spirit and mentality in sound." Conceding that a definition of the Jewish spirit might be difficult to reach, he argued that this itself was no reason to avoid such definition, since music by its very nature was irrational and intuitive. Boskovich also responded to Wagner's evolutionary interpretation of music:

"European music after Wagner... reached a state of barrenness. This was the ear of the epigones, of glittering but shallow virtuosity. The exhausted European music was revived by the Russians. Fresh blood of folk music penetrated the circulation of art music. The European major and minor tonalities offered new possibilities for the emotional expression of new music. The new Jewish music recognized the extraordinary significance of the folk song... but there were problems. The Jewish popular melody had to be extracted from foreign, mainly German, Ukrainian, Polish, Rumanian, Hungarian and Persian-Caucasian influence".

With this argument, Boskovich followed in the wake of Leonid Sabaneev, a contemporary composer and critic whose pioneer study in 1924 written for the Society for Jewish Folk Music (founded in St. Petersburg in 1908) had

been enthusiastically read and reviewed in all Jewish musical circles.¹⁰ Sabanev had considered the creation of a national school of art music as the third and final stage that would follow recognition of folk music and its systematic research. This last stage required recognition by what Sabanev termed the 'intelligentsia', since

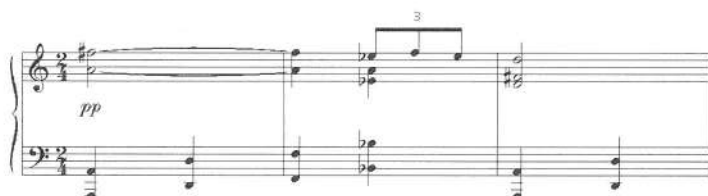
"so long as a man is wholly immersed in the atmosphere of the folk-life, he does not notice the style of his nationality or, more accurately, he is unconscious of it. To become alive to it he must get away from this state of existence, must contemplate it from the outside, as it were; only then [is he] capable of artistic transformation".¹¹

Sabanev's approach fully fitted Boskovich's own training as a musician.

While Boskovich supported Abraham Zvi Idelsohn's search for the origins of Jewish music in the traditional and pristine Jewish folk song he also called for organizing a Transylvanian Jewish Music Society that would coordinate a large-scale project of research and publication of European Jewish folk songs, education of choral conductors and performances by Jewish choruses and orchestras. He advocated substitutes for polyphony, citing works of Bartók and Kodály as models, and noted with approval the musicological conference held in Cairo in 1932. Concluding his essay, Boskovich appended his own arrangement of the Hassidic song "Yismah Moshe", which he had heard on his field expedition.



The close link between Boskovich's theoretical formulations and their musical realization was expressed in CHANSONS POPULAIRES JUIVES (1936). Boskovich recounted that while he had come across the actual songs during his field expeditions, he had used the same notation as had Fritz Mordecai Kaufman in his 1920 collection of Jewish folk songs.¹² In CHANSONS POPULAIRES JUIVES, the East European Jewish melodies are preserved unchanged in the arrangement but are enriched and coloured with elaborate harmony and orchestration, as in the first song, in which the "Ahava Raba" *steiger* (cantorial mode) with its typical augmented second is supported by a Bartók-like harmony of superposed fourths rather than by romantic harmony in the minor key.



The first reaction to CHANSONS POPULAIRES JUIVES indicated that Boskovich had touched a sensitive nerve in his treatment of Diaspora songs. Critic David Rosolio maintained that

"the composer has attempted to unite two contrasting poles. On the one hand, simple Jewish folk songs, powerful in their expression and emotion, clear in their musical structure, and very typical of the spiritual life of the Diaspora Jews [...] and, on the other, orchestral instrumentation that has no emotional affinity to the songs. The superimposing of instrumentation for the sake of mere colour, with no organic connection to the musical content of the subjects, is analogous to the grafting of an apple to a plum – failure is inevitable."¹³

However, according to Moshe Bronzaft (Gorali), "Boskovich's way was that of the modern composers Bartók and Milhaud (...) – to preserve the form and shape of the folk song and to provide it with a harmonic orchestral structure and background."¹⁴ In his next orchestral piece, FOUR IMPRESSIONS, Boskovich appeared to take an additional step away from the Diaspora toward the emerging Jewish culture in Palestine. Local critics were struck by the differences between FOUR IMPRESSIONS and CHANSONS POPULAIRES JUIVES; as noted by Menashe Rabinowitz (Ravina): "There is no Diaspora-like tearful tune [in FOUR IMPRESSIONS]. Everything is new."¹⁵

During the years 1941 to 1946, Boskovich crystallized his new worldview and expressed it quite fully in his article "Problems of National Music in Israel", which was only published in 1953.¹⁶ Boskovich's point of departure was romantic aesthetics that viewed music as an autonomous system whose affects could not be translated into the verbal medium. Boskovich stressed the point that music does not describe actual objects but rather represents the human impressions derived from them. He rejected the

simplistic, naive and rather vague local view of Israeli music as a direct expression of Mediterranean climate and scenery, while at the same time challenging the concept of music as a universal language. Indeed, Boskovich explicitly rejected the German view that art is free from time and place. Every great art, he believed, had its roots in a clearly defined small community, and only later could it affect larger communities and societies. Boskovich illustrated this point with a comparison between Northern Europe and the Mediterranean region: in the north, he argued, the cold and misty environment leads to seclusion and melancholy – a situation that encourages the use of imagination. But under the blue skies and hot sun of the Mediterranean, things are more clearly delineated and thus people are more grounded in reality.

Boskovich made a further distinction between what he termed 'static' landscape, the visual scenery of each country and region, and a 'dynamic' landscape, the combination of sounds within each language and its rhetoric. Having arrived from Europe, Boskovich was engulfed not only by the scorching Mediterranean sun and the sand dunes of Tel Aviv, but even more by the excited vocal gestures of Arabic and Sephardic Hebrew. Such landscape, he believed, must be taken into account. He rejected the transplantation of Western romantic orientalism and exoticism that found its expression in certain works written in Palestine, such as Jacob Weinberg's opera THE PIONEERS (1924), in which the central aria of the heroine, Leah, betrays the influence of Rimsky-Korsakov's THE GOLDEN COCKEREL (composed 1909):



or Verdina Shlonsky's early song cycle, IMAGES PALESTINIENNES (1931), the first song of which is an exotic evocation of the Bedouin's call in the desert:



For Boskovich, every artist carried within him a deeply rooted national heritage. Two shepherds, one Arab, the other Jewish, may play their flutes on adjacent hills in the Galilee, but their reactions to their surroundings would be different because of their different backgrounds. Similarly, music created in one period would be a total anachronism if written at another time. Boskovich also rejected the notion that great artists are far ahead of their time. In his first essay, he noted that individual artists functioned within "the intellectual orbit of some great community."

Thus, according to Boskovich, Israeli music could be written only by composers actually living in Israel. Composers living abroad could compose Jewish but not Israeli music, whereas Israeli composers could compose music that was both Israeli and Jewish.

Boskovich applied his evolutionary approach of time and place not only to long range processes but also to developments within the short history of music in Palestine and the new State of Israel. One case in point was his attitude towards the hora. When Boskovich came to Palestine the hora was established as a hallmark of local style, characterized by the romantic image of a Dorian mode, a square 2/4 metre, a symmetrical structure of short phrases and constant syncopation.¹⁷ In his writings of the early 1950s, Boskovich ridiculed the hora, arguing that

"[its popularity] has dissipated. The 'asthmatic' rhythm has undergone far reaching changes as a result of the psychological changes that naturally occurred after the tension of the heroic period and with the return to normalization. It is only natural that the hora is in the process of adaptation to the realities of Israeli society. If it used to be a mark of identity for a composer to write his hora, one should no longer be encouraged to do so. The composer should rather look for new ways that would free him from the trauma of the hora and allow for ways of rhythmic-collective expression that would suit the dialectic 'time', which has changed radically".¹⁸

In the article, Boskovich clearly maintained an attitude that Israeli composers should be 'encouraged' – even guided – in their musical style.

In Boskovich's view, Israeli music would find its symbolism in the sound and melos of the Middle East. This view was in contrast to the prevailing attitude of western educated critics, who commonly equated Middle Eastern musical elements with primitivism and folk music. Boskovich, however, applauded the rhythmic flexibility, melodic richness, virtuosity and direct expression of Middle Eastern music, which he contrasted with the 'artificiality' of European music. In terms of the emerging Israeli style, Boskovich recommended the avoidance of vertical harmony – the most

Western of the musical elements – in favour of melody and rhythm as elaborated through linear polyphonic techniques. These could range from Middle Eastern heterophony to polyphony in the manner of Bartók, Stravinsky or Hindemith, depending on the specific musical composition. Finally, Boskovich subscribed to Sabaneev's model, according to which a scholarly project of systematic collection and accurate transcription of Middle Eastern melodies would function as an obligatory initial stage in the formation of a national style. The melodies would then be disseminated through group singing, folk concerts, and choral gatherings rather than through their arrangement for piano accompaniment, and 'alien' dimensions which should be avoided.

A continuous line of thought leads from Boskovich's early Cluj essay up to his comprehensive essay written in 1953. His was a combination of romantic aesthetics and evolutionary historicism with an extremely antiromantic conception of the role of the composer. Boskovich used his critic's pen as a powerful tool for spreading his ideology, evoking constant polemics in his frequent reviews. Yet, his writings were a double-edged sword. While they were primarily directed at the local intellectual readers who were destined to form a motivated and discriminating audience, they were also a means of verbally grounding his music, which he meant to serve as the collective expression of the Israeli people.

In his self-imposed role as the spiritual spokesman of a newly formed society, Boskovich constantly reviewed and scrutinized each of his own works. The severity of his self-appraisal became evident with the completion of his CONCERTO for violin (1942), which won first prize in the prestigious Huberman Contest.¹⁹ The CONCERTO was acclaimed both by the audience and by critics. Boskovich still decided to withdraw the piece from future performances.²⁰

To outside observers such as his students and colleagues, Boskovich appeared to be a highly emotional and ultrasensitive artist capable of changing his views and directions overnight. Such an impression was misleading. The principal facets of Boskovich's ideology remained stable throughout his career – particularly those concerning his concept of place and time – and he was always at pains to furnish ideological and theoretical justification for each of his creative endeavours. A salient example was his attitude toward the piano, the most European of musical instruments, which in Palestine (and later Israel) continued to be the principal instrument both for music education and performance. In his 1953 essay, Boskovich defines the piano as the most domestic of all European phenomena. He therefore recommended the substitution of Arabic instruments such as the *ūd* and the *rebab*.

Yet Boskovich himself had continued to compose for the piano. In 1944, for example, the dancer Yardena Cohen had commissioned a series of piano arrangements for her dances – which, ironically, were meant to be danced barefoot in Bedouin attire, accompanied by Arabic music. Cohen had first hired three Iraqi Jews who played the *ūd*, *darbouka* (Arabic drum), and flute. After a short period of uneasy cooperation, she concluded that she could not form any personal communication with them.²¹ She then turned to Boskovich, who felt the need to formulate a theoretical justification for the use of the piano in Israeli music. He later wrote that,

"the Jewish psyche uses the piano as a percussion instrument for rhythmic motoric expression. The musical independence of the piano may have been an added psychological-social factor, if one bears in mind that the Jewish virtuosi came from Eastern Europe, where the regimes were, as a rule, anti-Jewish. It would be only natural that with the renewal of Jewish creativity in the homeland the piano would play a central role in the instrumental music of Israeli composers. The rhythmic potential of the piano also fits the dynamic period of building the homeland".

The reasoning may have been tenuous, but it provided Boskovich with another argument in accord with his dialectics of time and place: while the place called for a visionary Eastern Pastoral performed on Arabic instruments, the dynamic era of nation building was best expressed by the rhythmic percussive qualities of the piano.

Boskovich's first encounter with Middle Eastern music came shortly after his arrival in Palestine. In 1939, the singer Bracha Zefira approached a number of local composers – all of whom were recent immigrants – and asked them to provide her with arrangements for the ethnic songs of Yemenite, Bukharan, Sephardic and Persian origin that she had been performing. Most of the composers she approached, notably Paul Ben-Haim,²² willingly composed arrangements. Boskovich, however, decided to compose only original songs with piano or orchestral accompaniment.²³ While there may have been personal reasons for his so doing, his main motivation was most likely ideological. In his view, writing arrangements was to be a temporary phase in the absorption of Middle Eastern idioms into the new national style, and Zefira herself had already accomplished this.

Boskovich's intensive creativity during the years 1939 to 1946 was marked by his efforts to internalize the most fundamental elements of composition of Arabic music. His archive, for example, contains a manuscript

of many pages of transcription of melodic figures of *maqam bayat*,²⁴ (the *maqam* being the scale and melodic framework for improvisation in Arabic music). Boskovich believed in retaining those elements of Western music that complied with principles of Arabic music while rejecting purely European devices such as the fugue. A concrete expression of his ideology is the second movement of the CONCERTO for oboe, which uses the improvisatory technique of the slow section of the *taqsim*, the most important form of Arabic music. The oboe was selected because it is similar in sound to the Mediterranean *zurna*. As it would do in a traditional *taqsim*, the oboe gradually develops the range of the *maqam* with a strong attraction back to the basic note G, all of which create a powerful tension throughout the movement. The oboe slowly climbs to the upper octave and then covers the lower fourth, while the orchestra maintains a recurrent ostinato figure of three notes:



While Boskovich emphasized melodic and rhythmic factors, he restricted the role of harmony. There is no modulation throughout the movement, and hence the harmony is static. At the same time, Boskovich retained the Western concept of a closed form by using a melodic and registral recapitulation toward the end of the movement.

The most sincere and consistent realization of Boskovich's ideology at this time was the SEMITIC SUITE, a short and highly communicative work that was the fruit of a great deal of effort (several versions were written and discarded over a period of at least three years). The suite's second movement, a series of variations on a theme, was virtually identical to an earlier piece Boskovich had written for Yardena Cohen's choreography:



The direct Arabic model for this movement was noted at a field work interview (1976) with the great Iraqi-Jewish musician, Ezra Aharon. Upon listening to the movement, Ezra Aharon readily picked up his *ūd* and improvised on the same melodic figures:



The other movements, however, he defined as "Israeli, not Arabic" music.

Boskovich's most radical experiment in the suite, however, is the second toccata, which becomes here a monophonic dance with incidental heterophony, in which all instruments play the same basic melody with individual elaborations.²⁵



In his programme notes for the suite, Boskovich defined it as

*"...an expression of the dialectics of time and place in the spiritual collective theme of the history of our people. As a projection of the non-musical elements, the suite emerges as an allegedly extroverted folk music, but in reality it is based on imaginary folklore because it contains no melodic or rhythmic quotes."*²⁶

The first orchestral version of the SEMITIC SUITE betrayed attempts at breaking away from the Western sound even more than the original piano version. The score calls for the use of the cimbalom²⁷ as an emulation of the Arab *kanun* and for the use of the non-Western microintervals of 1/4 tones in the trumpet parts. But Boskovich later discarded those somewhat artificial attempts and limited himself to the emulation of Middle Eastern sound by means of European instruments.

Despite the deliberate folk-like and communicative nature of the music, the work evoked extreme reaction. Ravina pointed out the difficulty of determining the tonic of the first movement, which is based on a recurring pattern of four pitches in different permutations rather than on a single

prevailing centre and Rosolio, the German educated veteran critic of "Ha'aretz", wrote:

"Boskovich distinctly and clearly aims at the creation of a new musical style, which is markedly 'Eastern'. Dispensing with any Western harmonic and melodic factor, he creates tunes that fit the world of oriental, Arabic music. The harmonic and formal process also follows this music. Boskovich realized that it would be impossible to proceed in this country with music based on the principles of the West: the scenery, the way of life, the environment, all require a change and a different basic conception. But it appears to me that Boskovich's method jumps too far. The most important problem is how to achieve a fusion of the two styles. [...] Boskovich writes in purely Eastern style, and the Western element disappears from his music."²⁸

Rosolio, it should be noted, was an intelligent and open-minded critic at a time when the standards of music criticism in the daily press were generally high. Typically, compositions in a purely Western style were chastised for lack of Jewish or Middle Eastern content. However, critics expressed reservations about any extreme turn to Middle Eastern devices. Rosolio and others were simply not ready to accept the most radical elements of the SEMITIC SUITE, particularly its rejection of the harmonic parameter.

Another basic feature of Boskovich's music was its near avoidance of direct quotes of folk material, the only exceptions being his early arrangement of *EL YINEH HAGALIL* and a quote of Sara Levi-Tanai's song *KOL DODI* in *SUITE FOR THE YOUTH*. Ideology must also serve as an explanation to Boskovich's limited interest in composing songs in folk style. It is noteworthy that, in a period in which the idiom of national folk songs was idolized, Boskovich rarely mentioned folk and popular idioms as leading the way to the new Israeli style. His ideology called for the formation of a style that would represent the deepest spiritual layers of the Jewish people in their land rather than a naive, folksy popular style.

As noted, a period of great creativity dating from Boskovich's arrival in Eretz Israel in 1938 came to virtual halt in 1945. Boskovich's renewal of intensive compositional activity in 1959 was at first retrospective in nature. The orchestral *SONG OF ASCENT* elaborated and repeated melodic and rhythmic elements from his early compositions, whereas the cantata *DAUGHTER OF ISRAEL* was dominated by the nostalgia of Bialik's poem and by rich tonal harmony. Then a sudden stylistic transformation occurred, one which may be understood against the background of the musical scene in Israel at the time.

Following the war years, which were largely a period of seclusion for the Jewish community in Palestine, Israeli composers during the 1950s were subjected to the powerful avant-garde ideology of the post-Webern composers – particularly that of the Darmstadt group, which developed total serialism and claimed for it a central role in future musical composition. One of the group, Pierre Boulez, went so far as to claim that "anyone who has not felt... the necessity of the 12-tone language is superfluous".²⁹ Boskovich's response was discriminating and slow. On the one hand, his basic premise concerning time imposed on him a constant awareness of changes in the music world; on the other hand, his insistence on the centrality of place prevented him from wholesale borrowing of outside influences. It was only in 1960 that he determined the aspects common to Middle Eastern music and to European serialism. Serialism allowed him to overcome the pressures for tonal directionality while relieving him of the traditional types of folk-like dance and pastoral that no longer corresponded to the complex social reality of Israel. At that time, Boskovich expressed the belief that his earlier, "Mediterranean" style had come to a dead end.³⁰ Serialism represented a systematic, inexpressive form of music that fitted with his own non-romantic, collective and non-individualistic principles. His last compositions were an experiment in the serialization of the rhythmic qualities of biblical Hebrew – the intonation of which was an important aspect of his early ideology. Boskovich's sudden illness and premature death at the age of 57 prevented the development of his new style, in which he completed only three compositions, the *CONCERTO DA CAMERA*, *LAMENT* and *ORNAMENTS*.

Boskovich himself viewed his composing as a constant search for the ideal and collective Israeli national style. On the surface, his musical output might appear to be an erratic meandering from style to style; but interpreted on the basis of his ideology, it reveals itself as a consistent response to changing conditions. Boskovich's fundamental mistake was his belief in the possibility of achieving a unified, synthetic Israeli style as a result of a collective effort by Israeli composers who would follow his model.³¹ What emerged instead, in Palestine and later in Israel, was a musical society that interacted both with Middle Eastern and Western influences in a pluralistic coexistence of styles and techniques.

While Boskovich's ideology had never been translated into the basis of the unified style, it did form the solid foundation for a concept of Israeli music that was both more sophisticated than folk music and collective enough to relieve Israeli music in the 1940s and 1950s from extreme individualism, on the one hand, and reliance on folkloristic primitivism, on the other. Boskovich never led a 'school' of composers yet as a leading teacher of theory and

composition and as influential music critic, Boskovich maintained a powerful influence on his students and readers. The concept of Mediterranean music that he coined became commonplace in the Israeli musical scene, as evidenced, for example, in Menachem Avidom's *MEDITERRANEAN SINFONETTA* (1952) and Ben-Haim's *CONCERTO* for piano (1949; originally titled the *MEDITERRANEAN CONCERTO*).³² Moreover, while he was not alone in his approach, Boskovich provided the most consistent and established theoretical rationale for advancing the cause of a visionary national style.

Indeed, a listeners' survey in the late 1970s showed that a group of Israeli listeners of different ages and from different countries of origin retained a clear conception of what constituted 'Israeli' music.³³ Responding to twenty excerpts of Israeli / non-Israeli music of the 1930s-1950s, more than 90% identified the second movement of Boskovich's *CONCERTO* for oboe as 'Israeli'. While a Platonic ideal of Israeli music may not exist, there do appear to be musical patterns that help define any given piece as Israeli. Boskovich's ideology and style provided even those who opposed him with a point of reference – known to this day as 'Mediterranean music' – a name that still serves to identify at least some of the music written in Israel.

1. See Jehoash Hirschberg, "Israel Philharmonic Orchestra", in *Symphony Orchestras of the World*, ed. Robert Graven (New York: 1987), 200-207.
2. Many of the immigrants were refugees from Nazi Germany. For a detailed sociological study of their migration to Palestine, see Philip V. Bohman, *The Land Where Two Streams Flow: Music in the German-Jewish Community in Israel* (Urbana: 1989).
3. *Kelet Es Nyugat Között* (Cluj: 1937). The pamphlet, which had a very limited publication, was funded by a sympathizer from the United States. Only two copies have been found so far in Israel.
4. Boskovich's first major piece, completed in 1936, was the *Cantique d'été*, which revealed the strong influence of Claude Debussy. A scheduled radio broadcast of this work never took place. *Chansons populaires juives* became known in Hebrew as *Sharsheret Hazahav* (The Golden Chain).
5. From the lecture given in Tel Aviv in December 1943 to a group of Jewish immigrants from Hungary. See the manuscript of the lecture, Boskovich Archive, National Library, Jerusalem.
6. Interview with Charles Eshkar, Tel Aviv, June 1977.
7. Wagner's attack was first published under the pseudonym Richard Freigedank in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 33 (1850) and then as a separate booklet in 1869. The article was translated into English by William Ashton Ellis and published in *Richard Wagner: Prose Works* (London: 1895-1899), vol.3, 79; an easily available edition is found in *Wagner on Music and Drama*, ed. A. Goldman and Evert Sprinchorn (New York: 1964), 51.
8. Heinrich Berl, *Das Judentum in der Musik* (Stuttgart: 1926).
9. Gdal Saleski, "Famous Musicians of a Wandering Race: Biographical Sketches of Outstanding Figures of Jewish Origin in the Musical World" (New York: 1927). In the second edition of the book (1947), Saleski substituted "Jewish origin" for "wandering race". In the book itself, he used rather broad if not absurd criteria in defining Jewishness.
10. An English translation of Sabaneev's article, "The Jewish National School in Music", was published by S.W. Pring in *The Musical Quarterly* 15 (1929), 448-468.
11. *Ibid.*, 452.
12. Fritz Mordecai Kaufmann, *Die schönsten Lieder des Ostjuden* (Berlin: 1920).
13. David Rosolio, *Ha'aretz*, 18 March 1938.
14. Moshe (Bronzaf) Gorali, *Davar* daily, 8 April 1938.
15. Menashe (Rabinowitz) Ravina, *Davar*, 29 December 1938. Ravina was the head music critic for this daily newspaper from the time of its founding in 1925 until his death in 1968.
16. Alexander Boskovich, "Ba'ayot hamusika hale'umit beyisrael", *Orlogin* 9, (1953), 28-93. Avraham Shlonsky was the editor of this periodical.
17. Although the Palestinian hora has been linked to the Rumanian *hora lunga*, a clear connection has never been established and may never have existed.
18. Alexander Boskovich, "Art Music in Israel", in H. Shmueli (ed.), *Alexander U. Boskovich*.
19. The competition – held only once – was in honour of the Palestine Orchestra's founder, violinist Bronislaw Huberman, who had suffered severe injuries in a plane crash. Winners in the contest had their works performed by the orchestra. Second prize was awarded to Paul Ben-Haim for his *IN MEMORIAM*.
20. Boskovich never completed the revision of the concerto, but the second movement was published as a PSALM for violin and piano (Tel Aviv: 1987). According to his widow, Boskovich considered his *CONCERTO DA CAMERA* as a substitute.
21. Yardena Cohen, "Betof uvenahol" (Tel Aviv: 1963), 31.
22. Jehoash Hirschberg, *Paul Ben-Haim: His Life and Works* (Jerusalem: 1990), ch. 9.
23. The four songs are *ADONAI RO'I* ("The Lord is My Shepherd"), issued in Zefira's recordings, *TEFLAH* ("Prayer", based on A. Hameiri's poem) and a pair of drinking songs, *SHENEI HITULIM* ("Two Mockeries"), based on poems by Shlomo Alharizi.
24. The *maqam* is in some ways parallel to the Indian raga. Listeners are expected to be knowledgeable about the *maqam*'s melodic character, expressing their admiration of the performance by applause and conventional exclamations at defined spots.
25. In heterophony, each instrument elaborates the basic melody in accordance with its own idiomatic nature, such that ornamentations and deviations in time occur. Heterophony is prevalent in non-European music, especially the Gamelan music of Indonesia.
26. Boskovich's use of Yardena Cohen's dance in the suite was not a direct quote but rather an adaption of a basic *maqam* figure.
27. Boskovich's model was most likely Zoltán Kodály's *HÁRY JÁNOS*, with its extensive cimbalom part.
28. David Rosolio, *Ha'aretz*, 1 March 1946.
29. Pierre Boulez, quoted in Leonard Meyer, *Music, the Arts, and Ideas* (Chicago: 1967), 171.
30. Boskovich expressed these views to a close friend, the composer, percussionist and conductor Joel Thome, who was himself dedicated to avant-garde composing. Recorded statement of Thome to author, April 1986.
31. Such a belief derived from the erroneous premises of the evolutionary historiography of music, which were propagated by avant-garde groups in Europe and the United States. The fallacy of their arguments was exposed by Meyer in his "Music, the Arts, and Ideas". Meyer coined the term 'stasis' to refer to the constant state of nondirectional pluralistic and dynamic activity during which new tactics and strategies emerge, rather than actual revolutions and innovations.
32. Hirschberg, *Paul Ben-Haim*, 232.
33. Jehoash Hirschberg, "The 'Israeli' in Israeli Music: The Audience Responds", *Israel Studies in Musicology* 1 (1978), 159-171.

Prof. Jehoash Hirschberg is a professor at the Department of Musicology, Hebrew University, Jerusalem. He is the author of "Music in the Jewish Community of Palestine 1880-1948, A Social History" (Oxford University Press).

This is an abridged version of the article that appeared in "Studies in Contemporary Jewry", Vol.9, "Modern Jews and Their Musical Agendas", Ed. Ezra Mendelsohn, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, and is reprinted with the editor's kind permission.

SHEMOT

The last unfinished work of A.U. Boskovich

Hoping to leave the hospital and return home in the last months of his life (July-Nov 1964) Boskovich informed his wife: "Everything is ready, I shall complete the writing within a fortnight." He was referring to a work he had been writing on a text from Genesis 36. There remain 46 pages of the part-score and 11 pages with text, all in manuscript. Other pages attached to the score show a dodecaphonic row in 4 different forms, each with 12 tone transpositions: original, retrograde, inversion and retrograde of inversion.

The final decision with regard to pitch-classes, of which the manuscript specifies only the relative register, as well as a possible widening of the orchestration (which includes two pianos and percussion instruments) were probably the questions Boskovich hoped to resolve on his return from hospital. His arrangement of the text relied rhythmically and tonally on the biblical cantillation in it. The polyphonic, vocal and instrumental arrangements are clearly indicated in the score.

The content of Genesis 36, traces the genealogical record of Esau, Jacob's brother, who departed from the land of Canaan with his three wives and their children. The chapter contains 43 verses and lists the names of his wives, sons and his other descendants as well as naming various places. 86 different names join the list of 206 names. The recurrent names in the list are: "Esau" (25 times); "Edom" (11 times); "Anah" (9 Times) "Eliphaz" and "Aholibamah" (each appears 7 times) and the name "Zibeon" which appears 6 times.

Boskovich's work consists of five movements ending with a coda, named "Maftir" by Boskovich himself. The orchestration and the allocation of the text to the different voices endows each movement with a different character. In the first, a male choir composed of two tenors and two bass voices (Esau and his sons) is accompanied, rather thinly, by the two pianos and percussion.

The second opens with the women's choir (Esau's wives and his daughters-in-law); two sopranos and two altos. The voices of Esau's descendants are heard sung by the choir: soprano, alto, tenor and bass. Here the accompaniment is rather thin.

In the third, 3 solo voices appear: soprano, alto and tenor, as well as 3 voices from the choir: alto, tenor and bass. Later in the movement, the three soloists appear accompanied by the full choir. The increased presence of the instruments and the total number of voices (7), contribute to the creation of a climax in so far as the amplitude is concerned just where the 'dukes' (alufim) are mentioned. The orchestration of the fourth movement includes the four parts of the choir in addition to the instruments which accentuate the subject of the movement: the 'Kings'.

The fifth, like the third, uses seven singers and instruments. The coda, on the other hand, opens with instrumental music but eventually integrates the voices with partial accompaniment which expands, and towards the end of the movement it supports a single alto voice who sings: "Esau is Edom" (Esau the father of the Edomites).

The stylistic principles can be identified at the very beginning of the work. Heterophony full of rhythmic variations enriches and illuminates the text. The first word "ve'ele" is sung by the second tenor, in a rhythm based on its biblical accentuation. The second word "toldot" is sung by three voices (1st and 2nd tenors and bass) in three different pitches incorporating two different rhythms which accentuate the word and give it the status of a main subject. The words "Esau is Edom" are sung in high voices and in two different rhythms in heterophony. The description of the size and character of the country and its people is explored in the way the word Edom is sung in ascending pitches and in declaiming the syllable "dom".

The descending tones in the word "Esau" (Fig. A) and the ascending tones in the word "Edom" (Fig. B) illuminate the ties that Boskovich established throughout his oeuvre, between the natural melody of the Hebrew word and its expression by means of pitches. In the 2nd verse: "Esau took his daughters of Canaan" (Fig. C - written kanaan in score) we see an additional example of that attitude. The word "Canaan" represents the reverse of the word "Edom" (which is sung in an ascending melodic line).

Fig. A and Fig. B show musical notation for the words 'Esau' and 'Edom' respectively. Fig. A features a descending melodic line for the word 'Esau' across staves for Tenor 1 (T1), Tenor 2 (T2), Bass 1 (B1), Bass 2 (B2), Piano 1 (P.1), Piano 2 (P.2), and Percussion (perc.). Fig. B features an ascending melodic line for the word 'Edom' across the same staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Fig. C shows musical notation for the word 'Canaan'. It features a complex arrangement of notes and rests across staves for Tenor 1 (T1), Tenor 2 (T2), Bass 1 (B1), Bass 2 (B2), Piano 1 (P.1), Piano 2 (P.2), and Percussion (perc.). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

The names of Esau's wives were: Anah, Basemath and Aholibamah. The latter differs from the other two because she bore Esau three sons and also because her name is longer (5 syllables). Boskovich rather liked the sound of the name, repeated it at the end of the 2nd verse and built on it a chord of five tones.

Fig. D shows musical notation for the word 'Basemath'. It features a complex arrangement of notes and rests across staves for Tenor 1 (T1), Tenor 2 (T2), Bass 1 (B1), Bass 2 (B2), Piano 1 (P.1), Piano 2 (P.2), and Percussion (perc.). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

The 3rd verse makes it clear that Basemath is the sister of Nebajoth. In the piece her name is repeated parallel to the words "sister of Nebajoth". The name of Aholibamah reappears in verse 14 which also gives the name of her father and her three children. Now her name is sung in five ornamented voices supported by percussion.

The magnitude of the sphere of influence of the dukes is expressed by the wide diapason and considerable duration - their names are frequently repeated in the low intermediate and high registers. At the opening of the third movement, verse 15, we find a convincing example: "...the sons of Eliphaz the first born son of Esau; Duke Teman, Duke Omar; Duke Zepho, Duke Kenaz". Here the two pianos occupy the entire diapason.

The concluding sentence "these are the sons of Seir the Horite who inhabited the land" is declaimed in four voices in equal pitch and thus describes a homogenous, unified group of people. Here percussion instruments accentuate the word "Edom".

The sentence "And Bela died, and Jacob the son of Zerach of Bozrah reigned in his stead" is sung heterophonically. This heterophony endows the sentence with an air of authenticity, as if it was chanted by a crowd. It can be assumed that the sounds coming from the piano and the xylophone in verses 33 and 34, symbolize the dead being raised to heaven. The names of other kings who died and of those who were crowned after them are described by Boskovich with the help of four voices from the choir in a chord and by three voices of the soloists.

Side by side with the awareness of the 'where' and the 'when' of the musical work, an awareness which inevitably assumes personal and national significance, there is a strong feeling that there is yet another aspect to his works. The deep penetration of the meaning, sound and rhythm of the Hebrew language was of ultimate importance to Boskovich. He noted the biblical verses in Latin transcription in the score together with the corresponding cantillation signs.

Insofar as the style of the work and the manner of its elaboration are concerned, it is a combination of the dodecaphonic serial technique with added specific Israeli ingredients, such as might be found in the cantata DAUGHTER OF ISRAEL (1961), CONCERTO DA CAMERA (1962) and ORNAMENTS (1964). The role of the instruments in the work is mainly rhetorical i.e. it establishes the chapters' openings and endings and stresses the meaning of words referring to either a place or quantity.

It is sad that Boskovich has not managed to complete the work, yet I feel sure that what has been left us can serve as an inspiration for young composers, in particular where the reciprocal relations of music and language are concerned. Let us hope that a talented composer will undertake to complete it and that we may have the privilege to hear it performed.

Nathan Mishori is a music critic, a lecturer at the Rubin Academy of Music, Tel Aviv University and member of the Board of Directors of the Israel Music Institute.

THE 'WHERE' AND 'WHEN' IN THE DIALECTIC THOUGHT OF ALEXANDER URIYAH BOSKOVICH

The title of this article is not accidental insofar as this was a favourite and oft used phrase of Boskovich's. The essence of these words was his guiding light along the entire path of his creativity. To illuminate its essence, I shall attempt to tackle here a number of problems, which in Boskovich's view were created by Israeli music as well as the manner in which he related to these problems and the solutions he suggested for them. I do not think I shall be far wrong if I say that of all the composers active in Israel and for whom the essence, character and quality of Israeli music was of importance, it was mostly Boskovich who expressed in writing his preoccupation with the subject. I propose to base my article on the comprehensive book Boskovich had written and which, much to my regret, has remained unpublished. The title of his book is: "The Problem of Original Israeli Music" and I shall also refer to a number of his articles which had appeared in various journals.

Before I touch upon the main subject I would like to elaborate on the word 'dialectic' of the title. Boskovich was wont to use the term in a most free and uninhibited manner, but what he actually wanted was to underline the strong bond he believed must exist (and not only in his opinion) between the expression a man gives in any field of expressivity and the place (the 'where') and the time (the 'when') in which the man lives. This bond might appear to be self understood, but this was not so in the prevailing conditions in Israel and not at the time when Boskovich dealt with it. I have had the privilege of belonging for many years among his pupils and friends as well as his peers. Boskovich was a most lively conversationalist. He enthusiastically proclaimed his ideas which he believed to be right, without letting his enthusiasm diminish the charm with which he propounded his thoughts and without detracting from his ability to listen attentively to the ideas of others. In the course of the many years of our friendship, Israeli music in its great variety was a perpetual subject of conversation, debate and deliberation. At times, however, discussions became so heated as to be near bursting point, the views widely opposed inevitably led to the eventual search for the golden middle path with one of the parties conceding that the other may, indeed, have a point. In his conversations Boskovich poured forth his great love for Israel, his feeling of obligation to its people and to all manner of expression that the people of Israel may produce. It will not be an exaggeration to say that often he felt himself responsible for these manners of expression; in particular in what concerned music, its quality, its essence, its sincerity and as such he would take up the cudgels in its defence, orally or in writing. Out of a profound conviction he was sure that he knew the right way which original Israeli music should take.

His articles and his book reflect the ideas and beliefs expressed in many different ways in his illuminating, cordial and often exciting talks. It is not surprising that Boskovich used to put in writing the result of his reflections: the written word has a finality about it – it bears witness to a completion of a process of an innovative and meditative character; a proof that a man is at peace with himself, having found the means to express his own credo. Let me add here: it does happen that the state of being at peace with oneself lasts but for certain period in the life of an artist or a philosopher. New facts, fresh spiritual ideas, social and political changes – all have the power to shatter that 'peace' and replace it with another. This other, new-found peace may differ to a degree from the old one in its essentials.

Let me present here Boskovich's first credo, the total expression of which can be found in his 'Mediterranean' compositions, a part of the body of his work he called: The National Original Israeli Section. To clarify: the credo to which I refer here is valid for the period in which he had reached it and put it down in writing, and it is against this background that we should evaluate it. There is, however, a considerable time gap since the ideas in his article and in his book matured to the present, no less than 40 years. In itself this may not seem very long but when we consider the changes in attitudes, philosophies, artistic values and the manner of their expression that took place during that time it is a whole age. The problem of Israeli Music (if indeed it still exists as a problem) troubles today's composers much less then it did at the time of Boskovich. Things were very different a generation ago. The search for identity, uniqueness, truthful expression, reflecting environment and time present, preoccupied many of the artists. It is, therefore, important to see Boskovich's writings on Israeli music as a historical documents of first importance in spite of his admission that he does not intend to be objective.

In his own words: "The subject is live music and in no way might the treatment of it by the writer be seen as objective, as it would be in a dictionary or such. Indeed, the writer, much less of an amateur in music but a total amateur as an author, publicly admits that he is subjective. Objectivity in art does not exist since art is a matter of struggle and action, of profound credos and as well as of great loves and hatreds." In the opening sentence to one of his articles Boskovich writes: "Let's speak plainly and simply of that very music that claims to spring from Israeli spiritual life". And more: "Time has come to clarify matters, in particular the objectives which original Israeli

music should try to attain." He then states: "The reality of the era of the artist and his surroundings must find expression in his artistic creation. The purpose of art is to mould a form conditioned by time and place factors. The content of such form must necessarily be subjective since its root lies in the 'where' and the 'when' of its creator." He then adds some details: "Two factors must be the foundation stones of the Jewish composer in Eretz-Israel: 1. the encounter with the soil, i.e. nature and landscape; 2. the dynamism of Zionist pioneering movement insofar as the encounter with the soil and the landscape goes. Boskovich refers to the static-geographic landscape which is Eastern and differs in every way from the European one – in its light, colour, deserts, sand dunes, blazing sun."

The dynamism of the Zionist movement includes the life style, social order and ingathering of the exiles. In addition, according to Boskovich, one must consider "the soundscape, the accents of the speech in the oriental communities; the influence of Arabic and so on." A composer living under such conditions, i.e. in the domain of the three landscapes: the static, the social-dynamic and the acoustic, when attempting to give expression of his impressions in art, must reach the conclusion that no such expression of this reality is possible with the instruments of implementation to which he was accustomed in Europe. The static landscape on the one hand and the dynamic landscape on the other, that is where Boskovich saw the axis of the new Hebrew musical creativity. These are the polarized forces which produce the necessary dramatic tension the resolution of which might lead to engendering true art. Naturally enough these statements give rise to some problems: What musical language can we use to speak to and about the new reality? Where do we find the raw materials? How is the composer to relate to his technical musical endowment which he had acquired from the great European musical cultures?

Hereunder are the answers with regard to sources of raw materials: there are four main sources Israeli music should draw upon and according to Boskovich they are:

1. Songs of oriental Jewish communities
2. Biblical cantillations
3. Israeli folk (popular) songs
4. The Hebrew language

With regard to songs of the oriental Jewish communities: "The Israeli composer must come into direct contact with oriental song which has great rhythmic elasticity. Those who do establish direct contact with oriental music will discover new and unexpected horizons such as improvisational forms of performance and variations on rhythmic melodic patterns". Boskovich also claims that: "Reason dictates that the Jewish composer perceive in oriental music an untapped wealth of musical material (as did Bartók in exploiting the folklore of many nations), which might bring tremendous vitality to music in general and possibly even give it a completely new direction." It is Boskovich's view that just as Bartók relied in much of his oeuvre on folklore, (not only Hungarian), which he succeeded to make universal, similar advantage might be derived by the Israeli composer basing his music on the melos of oriental communities. He also says: "The tremendous impact on hearing oriental music performed touches something atavistic in the collective sub-conscious of the Jewish composers. The sounds do not seem to be utterly foreign, for in spite of all historical episodes and in spite of all the overlaying stratas of European culture, the roots of the nation lie in Semitic soil." Thus, according to Boskovich something basic of the oriental, the Semitic remains in the composer though he may have come from Europe – a cultural tradition profoundly foreign to Eastern cultures. Upon encountering these sounds of the East, the first impression might be of utter strangeness but, in actual fact, they are not all foreign to him. At the same time Boskovich determines: On receiving the treasury of oriental music, we have no wish whatsoever to renounce the achievements of European musical culture and the technical accomplishments of its civilization. Such renunciation would spell certain failure. The dialectic spiral, i.e. thesis, antithesis, synthesis, can not tolerate such failure. Therefore, there is no question, of taking a stance, at one end of the polarity – European or Oriental music but of syncretism, i.e. the necessary merging in order to enable expression of the dialectic reality. It can be said that the Israeli composer groping his way towards this objective, perambulates between those two polarized axes. The problems are many, to mention just a few: finding the right way of arranging the eastern material; the problem of form; the problem of performing instruments and so on.

Boskovich sounds a warning of attempting a hasty merger, made on the basis of superficial impressions. He also cautions that many of the oriental melodies may resist all and any arrangements, which is why some arrangements are a dismal failure.

As for the instruments: it is Boskovich's opinion that the greatest danger lies in the use of the piano in attempting a merger of East and West in music, since the piano tempts one to use chords. He urges to replace the piano as an accompanying instrument with a different instrument or instruments and lists the following instruments which might be used in its stead: flute, oboe, small drums; string instruments – the violoncello and viola, but not so much the violin; all of which have equivalents among the oriental instruments: ūd, various drums, tar, naqura; string instruments such as the rebab and others.

Speaking of the choice of subjects (themes) for Israeli compositions, Boskovich maintains that it is anyway rather limited in comparison to that of the music of the West; a limitation closely linked to the 'where' and the 'when' of our reality, which is made at the expense of the individual. The individual experiences of the composer are of no interest to us unless they touch upon the characteristic expression of the community's experiences. In the merging process of East and West, Boskovich keeps well in mind the universal influences which reach us from all over the world. This is what he says: "No nation can exist in spiritual solitude, there can be no complete isolation in spiritual life nor is there need of it. However, the artist or the nation which can not achieve a balance between outside influences and the people's own power to create is doomed to have its individual character depleted and will eventually fall off the world stage."

A few words on the second source mentioned by Boskovich: biblical cantillations. "Biblical cantillations are of special importance among the fundamentals of the new Israeli musical creativity [...] The musical content of the cantillations is part of religious rites but without doubt, prior to being given the strict formal shape of liturgy, this very content has been the living secular folk music. With the re-emergence of the State of Israel, it appears perfectly logical to see in this musical material a typical secular melodic expression as well. The Israeli contemporary musical output proves that this integration has already begun."

The third source, according to Boskovich, is the Israeli song to which he ascribes the greatest importance. He is quite right in doing so since the "Mediterranean Style", at least the early one, was mostly based on and drew from the basic features of the Israeli song, i.e. from the songs of the 30s, 40s and 50s. I shall conclude with the fourth source – the Hebrew language as a source of inspiration for Israeli music, in particular where rhythm is concerned. Let me quote Boskovich: "The question of the Hebrew rhythm as a typical motoric expression of the people is particularly complex in Israel. There are many reasons for this due to the heterogeneous nature of the ingathering of the exiles. The hitherto untouched wealth of rhythms of the oriental communities is incomplete if the rhythm of the Hebrew language is not fully understood. Without basing the specific character of the Israeli rhythm solely on the rhythm of the language one must not ignore the fact that an Israeli composer finds in speech a faithful source of the Hebrew musical rhythm. The rhythmic and melodic base are the very foundation of Israeli musical creativity. Indeed, it might be said that as long as the composer is unable to feel the rhythm inherent in the prosody of the Hebrew language, he will find himself facing a closed door." And again: "The strong organic bond between the language and music of a nation, in our case becomes a problem of extraordinary importance. The Hebrew language is a musical one, in the fullest meaning of the word. It may, therefore, be natural to assume that a language as musical as that would inspire the music [...] reciprocal influences between language and music might be just what is needed. The source of Hebrew music lies in the rhythmic melodic fundamentals of the Hebrew language, but the latter needs the help of Israeli music to clarify its own character." Boskovich loved the Hebrew language most passionately and for him, Hebrew held the supreme power of expression. Thus, it was vital to learn correct enunciation, giving the phonetic signs and the gutturals their rightful importance. The moment a composer realizes the importance of all these he enters a world of which hitherto he was unaware.

What can be said within this framework is that, almost without exception, in every musical work by Boskovich we find the principles and fundamentals he propounded to elucidate in his writings.

Herzl Shmueli is Professor Emeritus of the Department of Musicology, Tel Aviv University.

Yehuda Yannay

ENCOUNTERING THE BOSKOVITCH LEGACY – A GENERATION LATER

In June 1964, we said to each other our last parting words in the garden of the Kfar Sava Hospital. Uri was talking about his unfinished work "Shemoth" with great enthusiasm. During the last couple of years, before his untimely death, he had stated repeatedly with pride that he finally hit upon a compositional language that integrated Jewish, Israeli and Mediterranean musical impulses with the musical currency of the international avant-gardism of his day.

This final meeting also symbolized the end of my apprenticeship with the great teacher. A week or so later I took off for the U.S. as the first Israeli Fulbright fellow in music to make my way to graduate school at Brandeis University.

Boskovich landed in Palestine at the time when national-socialist storm clouds were gathering in European skies. While his fellow emigres: musicians, artists and intellectuals longed to perpetuate the cultural milieu they were forced to leave behind, the young Boskovich quickly realized the futility of recreating a Little Weimar or a Little Paris in Tel Aviv. Step by step, he began to formulate a visionary agenda for a new way of composing based

on a balanced fusion of the rich musical resources of the regional Semitic culture with compositional principles drawn from modern European music.

My first composition lessons with Uri in the late 1950s coincided with his re-emergence as an active composer of substantial orchestral compositions, after a considerable hiatus. The sounds of New Music by avant-garde European composers began to reach interested musical audiences in Israel, mostly via radio re-broadcasts and foreign guest performances by some remarkable musicians of the day, such as the late pianist Frank Pelleg. On the way to my lessons, I used to stop at Herr Littauer's store and purchase all the freshly arrived Webern pocket-scores from this friendly man, the proprietor of the most interesting music store in Tel Aviv at that time. Uri would share these scores with me and later we would analyse the music in my lessons.

In 1962 Boskovich broke new ground in Israeli music with his CONCERTO DA CAMERA for violin and ten players. While many other composers of his generation were still coming to grips with the Viennese School, Boskovich was already in synch with progressive composers in Europe and USA on post-serial trends in composition.

During the same period, a fierce yearning attracted his attention to the spiritual founts of Hassidic lore and Hindu mysticism. His interest in Eastern cultures was an esoteric preoccupation in the Tel Aviv of the 1950s and he was the first person I met who practiced yoga in Israel. Incidentally, during my composition lessons, he also taught me how to perform the yoga headstand position.

Boskovich had no problem reconciling transcendentalism with the flux of the ever changing present. Emphasising the centrality of being Here and Now by ways of artistic expression, Boskovich claimed that all worthwhile music had to exhibit the existential awareness of its creator. This idea always suggested to me that the meaningful act of composing is a perpetual journey of musical and spiritual exploration.

With his last completed work ORNAMENTS, (1964), Boskovich reached the high point of his last period of compositional activity. The quasi-concerto for flute and four instrumental ensembles wove instrumental lines into a colourful texture. Middle Eastern melos adapted to New Music style angularity and presented in form of melodic and rhythmic layerings, suggested to the ear the rich iridescences of a piece of Yemenite embroidery.

After more than a generation, now is the time to place Boskovich's oeuvre in an international context and to evaluate its historical importance. This would require comparative analyses of his music with the work of progressive composers who created significant music away from the musical centers of Western Europe. For example, I found parallels in the development of Israeli and Latin American music and saw similar dilemmas among composers regarding the preservation of regional identity vis-à-vis international presence. Above all, there is a dire need for a set of definitive recordings of Boskovich's major works. This timely project should be underwritten by Israeli musical organizations and realized by Israeli musicians of stature at home and abroad.

For some time now and despite the unending ethnic and religious conflicts around the world, we have entered the era of cultural globalism and World Music. Forward looking composers in all genres of music are now employing musical materials originating from distant cultures. It appears now that reaching for compositional ideas beyond inherited cultural and intellectual borders helped to recover today's new music from its exhausted, circular patterns of self-reference.

Thus, from a contemporary perspective, Boskovich's unique contribution to development of Israeli music continues to gain significance with the passing of years and it has now become clear that his musical legacy is bridging across generations.

Yehuda Yannay is Professor of Composition and Music Theory and director of contemporary music activities at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

Habib Hassan Touma

ALEXANDER URIAH BOSKOVICH, MY TEACHER

In 1955 I intended to become a music teacher at the elementary schools of Nazareth, I therefore registered for and attended the courses for music at the Oranim Institute in Tiv'on where, among others, Abel Ehrlich and Dr. Herzl Shmueli were teaching. During this year of studies at Oranim, I had to write down a few etudes, which I wrote in 7/4, 10/4 or 13/4 metre. It seems to me that the etudes impressed Abel Ehrlich so much that he advised me to attend the courses of Alexander Uriah Boskovich at the Israel Academy of Music in Tel Aviv.

The Academy was located in Lilienblum Street at an elementary school which, after the small boys left for home, would become an academy. This

meant that the studies at the academy began daily around 3 p.m. When I went to register at the academy I did not know much about Boskovich besides that he was a great composer and this guided my future plans: I wanted to study musical composition so as to write good Arabic music for those who did not know that it does exist. The academy was very well structured and my courses began in the fall of 1956. I can not recall my first meeting with Boskovich, perhaps because each meeting with him was so thought provoking that each meeting and each lesson I attended was as if I was meeting with this great man for the first time. The main subject of my studies was Theory. I, together with other six or seven young men, attended the courses of Boskovich, Mordecai Seter, Shlomo Hofman, Edith-Gerson Kiwi, Oedoen Partos and others.

For me the connection with the academy was co-dependent on A. U. Boskovich. He was a European who had looked into the large repertoire of the orient and ideologically investigated the possibilities of exploiting this lore of the orient into his own and Israel's style of music. I was an Arab student who wanted to write good Arabic music through applying compositional techniques of modern western music. The relationship of the élève, myself, and the maestro Boskovich was one of mutual respect and affection. I felt that he did like me as a person and as an élève and acknowledged my musical talents. I myself felt that he was the sincere teacher who wanted to give me the best of his own knowledge. My first composition at the academy was the Oriental Rhapsody for two flutes and a darbukkah (the Arabic goblet drum). The composition touched Boskovich in such a way that he announced its premiere in the daily newspaper Ha'aretz!

The teaching of Boskovich of his student Touma at Lilienblum Street went on for six years (1956-1962). During the first four years Boskovich taught us 'academy alef, bet, gimel and dalet'. During these four years Boskovich explained to us very important compositional elements that concerned time and space in musical thinking. Of special importance were his augmented and diminished melodic cells: g-g#-d# and g-g-d, and all their variations. The two cells helped us tremendously to break down "majority" or "minority" in our compositions (études). Through the augmented or diminished cells we were asked to compose a modal cantus firmus, which could include twelve or more single tones. This technique I applied in my composition SAMA'1 for piano and oboe written in 1958. The composition was modal yet it encompassed more than twelve different tones and sounded very avant-garde. During the last two years of our studies at the academy he introduced us to the most modern composers such as Messiaen and Boulez. This has encouraged me to attend for the first time the Sommerferienkurse at Darmstadt, Germany, in 1961. Here I attended the courses of Stockhausen, Hiller, Messiaen, Boulez, Palm and others. When I came back to Boskovich's class, I became in his eyes the student destined for the avant-garde. It was an established tradition that I would discuss with Boskovich all my new compositions before I gave them to another good friend of mine, Peter Emmanuel Gradenwitz, who published them in his music publishing firm IMP. Boskovich's hints were always very helpful and constructive, especially to my Arabian Suite for piano, which I composed after I had heard his Semitic Suite.

I finished my studies at the academy in 1962. After spending one whole year in Nazareth where I did my best, but without success, to found a school of music so that I could teach and instruct new students, I applied for a scholarship to continue my studies in Germany. Only a year after my arrival in Germany I received the shocking news of my teacher's death. I have always wished that Boskovich were still alive so that we might continue the dialogue we carried on at the Academy for six years. I would have liked so much to discuss with him Arabic aesthetics and musical knowledge nowadays. Alexander Uriah Boskovich was a great composer and my best teacher.

Habib Hassan Touma is a composer and a senior teacher at the Tel Aviv University. He studied with A.U. Boskovich, among others.

ALEXANDER URIYAH BOSKOVICH

List of Selected Works

THE GOLDEN CHAIN, Suite for symphony orchestra (1937; IMI 005); version for piano (IMI 005B)
CONCERTO for violin and symphony orchestra (1942; Ms¹)
PSALM for violin and piano (1942/57; IMI 497)
CONCERTO for oboe and orchestra (1943/60; IMI 6077); piano reduction (IMI 6077B)
THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD for alto or baritone and orchestra (1943; IMI 397). Text: Psalm 23. Version for alto or baritone and string quartet (IMI 397A) version for voice and piano (1943)
MAY PEACE BE WITH YOU for voice and orchestra (1947; IMI 394). Text: Traditional
THE QUESTION for voice and orchestra (1947; IMI 395). Text: Traditional
BEHOLD THOU ART FAIR for alto and orchestra (1947; IMI 396). Text: Song of Songs. Version for alto and string quartet (IMI 396A). Version for voice and piano (1947).
CHANT IN THE BABYLONIAN JEWS STYLE for mixed choir a cappella (1947; IMI 460). Text: Book of Prayer
SONG OF DEBORAH for voice and piano (1947; IMI 464). Text: Shalom Asch
SEMITIC SUITE for symphony orchestra (1946/59; IMI 6072); version for piano (1945/59; IMI 6073); version for 2 pianos (1954; IMI 6074); version for piano 4-hands (1957; IMI 6075)
PIANO PIECES FOR THE YOUTH (1944/45; IMI 6332)

DUDU for voice and orchestra (1948; IMI 393). Text: Haim Hefer; version for voice and piano (1948)
SPARKLING DEW for voice and piano (1949; CEE²). Text: Aharon Ashman
PICCOLA SUITE for string orchestra, flute and snare drum (1954; IMI 6198)
SONG OF ASCENT for symphony orchestra (1960; IMI 6076)
DAUGHTER OF ISRAEL, Cantata for tenor, mixed choir and symphony orchestra (1961; IMI 004). Texts: H.N. Bialik; Song of Songs; Sabbath Prayers
WITH JOY AND GLADNESS, Short Pieces for Youth for 2 violins (1965; IMI 089)
CONCERTO DA CAMERA for violin and 10 instruments (1962; IMI 029)
LAMENT for violoncello and piano (1962; IMI 495); version for violin and piano (IMI 495A)
ORNAMENTS for flute and symphony orchestra (1964; IMI 6100)

Incidental music for ballet, film and theatre (1942-56; Ms), to be found in the National Library, Jerusalem.

1. Ms = Manuscript

2. CEE = Culture and Education Enterprises Ltd., Tel Aviv

Julia Kreinin

MARK KOPYTMAN – ON THE WAY TO "CANTUS VI" (1995)

Heterophony: as though there is a cosmic melody, external musical event, parts of which reach the earth and are combined

Mark Kopytman



In 1986 Mark Kopytman was awarded the Koussevitzky International Record Award for his orchestral work MEMORY, first performed and recorded by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Gary Bertini with singer Gila Bashari as soloist. The authoritative jury of the international composers' competition in Tanglewood, USA, chose MEMORY among a great number of works presented. Since then, the work and its author have gained wide international recognition.

The public and critics unanimously noted the national colour of the work – first and foremost the exotic Yemenite song in the prologue and epilogue of MEMORY. However, one of the critics expressed a more profound judgment: "At the same time Russian in the soft colours of the strings, very oriental in the vocal arabesques and the rhythms, very modern in the orchestral writing, this music perfectly integrates its various elements." (Pierre Michot, *Le Journal de Geneve*). Mark Kopytman's style is really a synthetic one; this synthesis was formed little by little and matured gradually.

Like many outstanding Israeli composers, Kopytman was educated in Europe. He was born in 1929, in Kamenetz-Podolsk, Poland (now Ukraine) and until the 70s he lived and worked in the USSR. Kopytman has received a broad and versatile education – he was trained as a professional pianist, composer and musicologist. Simultaneously he graduated from medical school and for some years practiced medicine. From his teachers Kopytman learned and absorbed the centuries-old traditions of Polish, Czech and Russian schools of composition (1955 – M.A. under Prof. R. Simovich, Lvov Academy of Music, 1958 – Ph.D. under Prof. S. Bogatyrev, Tchaikovsky State Conservatory, Moscow). In the 50s and 60s the young composer strove to achieve a diversity of genres – he wrote string quartets and a symphony, song cycles and an opera.

Mark Kopytman's multi-faceted talent was soon recognized in the USSR. He had high professional authority as a composer, teacher and music researcher. Among his compositions of the Soviet period the most significant one was his opera CASA MARE, which won the League of USSR Composers' prize. The premiere took place in Kishinev, in 1969. The opera in concert version was broadcast by the Moscow radio and the Leningrad and Novosibirsk opera theatres included CASA MARE in their repertoire. The work revealed a new aspect of the composer in that he penetrated the peculiarities of the Moldavian folklore; his style was greatly enriched by means of new intonation and texture.

The repatriation to Israel (1972) opened to the composer new creative horizons. At first, Kopytman was startled by the pluralism of the musical life in

Lior Segal who until recently was director of the Leonard Bernstein Jerusalem International Music Competitions has replaced Ben-Ami Einav as director of the Haifa Symphony Orchestra.

A workshop on the subject **Contemporary Composer and the Ethnic Challenge** took place in August 1997 at Bar-Ilan University directed by Ms. Betty Olivero, Mr. Benjamin Yusupov and Dr. Gideon Lewensohn. The workshop dealt with various subjects, among them: translation and internalization of rhythms, heterophony, microtonality and timbre.

On May 14, 1997, a concert was held in Tel Aviv the theme of which was: **Composers write for children**. The concert took place within the framework of children's choirs workshop. Some 10 children's choirs who performed compositions by various Israeli composers participated and hosted the women's choir Na'ama and the ICO who performed works by Tzvi Avni to mark the composer's 70th birthday.

40 teachers graduated the first year of newly established College for Original Ethnic Music. The school was sponsored by the Public Council for Culture and Arts; the Supervisory Department for Music of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Department of Musicology of the Bar-Ilan University. The teachers specialized in performing on and teaching the use of traditional instruments, in particular oriental instruments.

In addition to implementing the instruction of the new subject, Bar-Ilan University and the Ministry of Education conduct a comprehensive research on the history of music of the various communities settled in Israel.

The annual conference of the Musicology Association took place on July 7, 1997 at the Tel Aviv University. Lectures by musicologists from the Tel Aviv, Bar-Ilan and Jerusalem Universities dealt mainly with two subjects: the interpretation of the biblical cantillation and the oral tradition and aspects of western musical theory. The conference was in two parts both of which were opened by a performance of the works by the composer James Simon who perished in the Holocaust, performed by singer Gila Yaron, cellist Shmuel Magen and pianist Alan Sternfeld.

Boskovich was blessed with a singular gift, not given to many. The importance of his compositions in the history of Israeli music is in no way lesser than that of his theorizing, due to his undoubted creative talents and to his great ability to expound it. Only a few succeeded to combine these two qualities which, in fact, appear incompatible. Even fewer were skillful enough not only to weave the two but to make them mirror each other. Thus, almost by accident, an angle is revealed in which the ray of light reflected in this mirror, part of an unknown geometric form is threatening to overtake it.

CONCERTO DA CAMERA, which is considered a turning point in Boskovich's body of work, evolved as a result of his peeling off the outer layers of the body, revealing veins and ligaments to those with a discerning ear. If its sounds were indeed unexpected, as it is generally thought, who was surprised by them? Was it the audience or was it, perchance, the composer himself? Did not this composition threaten to shake the very foundations on which he relied and to which he aspired in his writings and even more so, in his music? Or was it, perhaps, an unavoidable phase in the process of "balancing the outside influences and the creative powers within the self" as he puts it.

Unequivocal response to such a question is elusive, if not foolhardy. Instead, from the point of view of who was not privileged to the information at first hand, numerous answers come to mind – some may provoke further questions – and those questions, I believe, have the right to be heard.

★★★

The choice of instruments, while stemming directly from his ideology, supports ideas specific to this work. The instrumental ensemble includes the violin, alto flute, celesta, harp, harpsichord, viola, violoncello and percussion. The characteristics of the instruments and, of course the tendentious use made of them, afford a suitable substitute for instruments used in eastern music. That is not to say that Boskovich tried merely to imitate the 'eastern sound-colour'; he wanted to accentuate the 'linear character' of the ensemble, so as to create a 'collective' musical environment².

In this regard, let's remember that there is a considerable number of instruments capable of producing sounds whose envelopes share similar qualities. The sounds produced by the harp, harpsichord, celesta, percussion and strings in pizzicato are short (plucked or stroked) followed by reverberation. What this actually means is: short sound whose pitch tends to be vague in comparison to sounds resulting from drawn out tone production (also because the stroke or pluck produce an additional sound of indefinable pitch). Boskovich achieves an airy texture, light and elusive, which accentuates the violin solo part.

The cello, for instance, a potential candidate for a part in the low register, rarely plays a long bowed tone in its lower octave. Like the harpsichord and the percussion, due to the harmonics it produces, the cello tends to reverberate higher than the pitch proposed by the formal notation. On the other hand, the use of alto flute and the fact that the violin makes much use of its low register, limit the spread of the tonal mass in the work into the vicinity of the small and the first octaves. This is the range of frequencies of the human speaking voice. I shall revert to this matter later on.

The model used by Boskovich in CONCERTO DA CAMERA is that which is at the core of the Toccata by Claudio Merulo, the 16th century Venetian composer. This is a work for keyboard instrument which emphasized improvisation and contained a middle section of a contrasting character – a short ricercar. The ricercar has its roots in imitation of melodic lines, such as were used in vocal pieces. Boskovich used this model in two ways: 1) The entire work consists of three movements. The first – *Toccata*; the second – *Canto di Nissan*, a slow lyrical movement in which percussion is not used; the third – *Canto di Elul*, is dynamic in character; 2) Within the first movement itself this form was developed into a five part formation in which sections of toccata and ricercar alternate.

- 1st Toccata – First Rain
- Ricercar A
- 2nd Toccata – Winter Rain³
- Ricercar B
- 3rd Toccata – Late Spring Rain

The two ricercar sections joined (attacca) to the toccatas which follow (as is the 1st Toccata to Ricercar B), the many instructions for change of tempi throughout the work, the unstable sense of rhythm (due to the non-periodic use of durations and wide variety of registers) as well as the lightness of the acoustic body – all these reinforce the feeling that the division into sections, large and small (into movements and sections sharing a common tempo) resembles a system of dams whose task is to control the flow of energy which threatens to break out – an energy deeply embedded in the heart of the piece. The divisions as such do not intend to define domains of different functional meanings. In its essence it is far removed from dance, nor does it resemble architectural constructions. The flow coursing in its veins is well able to withstand any attempt at forced

בית מנחם ה"פ
Beit Mifal Hapais
רח' הכפר 3, תל אביב

איגוד למוסיקה קאמרית
Chamber Music Association

סבתא שבת - Saturday
7.7.1962
בשעה 8:30

ערבית מוסיקלית 4

ALEXANDER U. BOSKOVICH

KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN

WILLIAM WALTON

אלכסנדר א. בוסקוביץ
קארלהיינץ שטוקהאוזן
ויליאם וולטון

מרים פריד - כנור
אורי מפליץ, אורי שהם, יונה אטלינגר
גדעון ביידמן, גר קוכמן, שמואל יבץ
זאב שטיינברג, יעקב מנזה, יצחק בלסכרר
פראנסואז נטר, רות מנזה, אסף ברליב
דב גינזבורג, יהודה גרונוולד, יואל תאם

MIRIAM FRIED - violin
Uri Toeplitz, Uri Shoham, Yona Ettlinger
Gideon Faldman, Gad Kochman, Shmuel Yavetz
Ze'ev Steinberg, Yaakov Mense, Itzhak Blassberger
Francoise Netter, Ruth Mense, Assaf Bar-Lev
Dov Ginzburg, Yehuda Grunwald, Joel Thome

אניטה דייבס, רוני מו"ם
אורי מפליץ, אורי שהם, יונה אטלינגר
גדעון ביידמן, גר קוכמן, שמואל יבץ
זאב שטיינברג, יעקב מנזה, יצחק בלסכרר
פראנסואז נטר, רות מנזה, אסף ברליב
דב גינזבורג, יהודה גרונוולד, יואל תאם

CONDUCTOR: GARY BERTINI - גארי ברטיני

Original poster of CONCERTO DA CAMERA's first performance

IMI Presents

Igal Myrtenbaum

CONCERTO DA CAMERA – COMPOSITION IN THE SHADE OF ITS GENEALOGY *by Alexander Uriyah Boskovich*

Like a free spirit, not afraid of renewal, so the spirit of A. U. Boskovich manages to escape from pre-supposed definitions to which his well wishers tend to relegate it.

organization. In this connection there are two instances worth mentioning in which the flow, without any formal reason, stops short:

in the 5th bar before the end of the 1st Toccata following a texture characterized by irregular durations and diverse registers, the violin produces a six-tone pattern which is heard almost twice in quarters, in pizzicato played piano (p) in the area of its two lower octaves. The glockenspiel, playing a similar pattern, joins it and then the two are joined by the marimba which plays a different six-tone pattern in eighths, repeated nearly four times. These are accompanied by prolonged flageolets on the viola, the cello and the triangle (tremolo played pianissimo) for the duration of two bars. The overall impression is that of a pause for thought and reflection.

The second instance occurs at the close of the third movement:

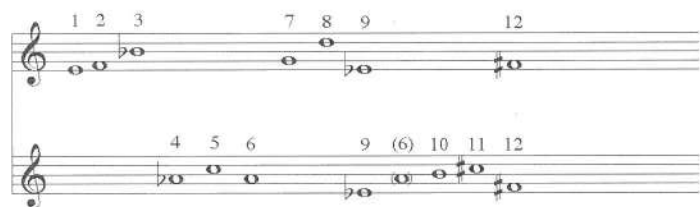
in the 7th bar before the end, a pause of a quarter stops the intensive flow in which all instruments, except the celesta, participate. Then, all the instruments play homorhythmically two accentuated eighths and continue the torrential flow, interrupted by the pause. It would seem that this slowing down (the tempo instruction reads meno mosso) is meant to allow the gathering of sufficient forces in order to deliver a final decisive blow.

According to Boskovich the work was written in serial technique. Looking through the draft of the piece it can be seen that first to be completed were the violin part and a reduction of the instrumental ensemble (noted on two staves). The first movement, for instance, is to be found in the draft in its final dimension – the exact number of bars, pitches, tempo directions and instructions for sound production (pizzicato, pizzicato with the left hand, flageolet, tremolando, dynamics and articulation). It is difficult to know if he prepared the tone series before he began to compose or whether it was formulated as he progressed. Whatever the case, it is clear that he carried the music within him, created the framework guided by his musical intuition and only later completed it to form serial fields comprising all the tones of the series.

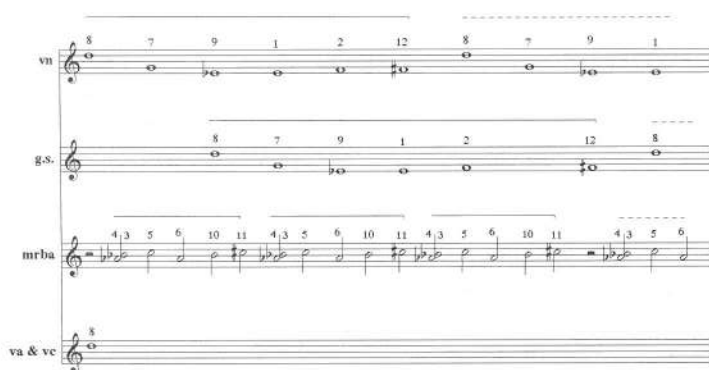
The tone series (original) used:



Example drawn from the opening of the work showing the use he made of the series. The tones which appear in the upper stave appear in the draft. Those in the lower one were added later on and completed the series:

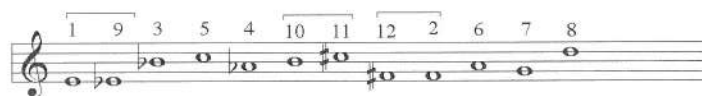


Another example of the series' usage is drawn from the 1st Toccata, bars 46-47. This is a sort of canon between the violin and the glockenspiel, accompanied by the marimba, the viola, the cello and the triangle. The sound of the glockenspiel, in this case, tends to lend colour to the violin part rather than exist as an autonomous line.



In the 1st Ricercar, Boskovich used an *inversion* of the original series without transposing it. Just as he used to do in other places, where the tempo is slow, he uses melismatic variations in which he repeats pitches and patterns (usually consisting of two tones). He also includes such tones which are not in a place indicated by their position in the series. His flexible approach to the dictates of the series established the pitches as points on a line which was not completed in accordance with their serial order. The result in this case, in particular due to repeats of two-tone patterns distanced a second from each other, is heard as a human voice in prayer or entreaty.

The inversion of the original series:



In the violin part, the following patterns appear (from their respective place in the *Inversion*): E and B (D#) – nos. 1 and 9; B and C#, 10 and 11; F# and F, 12 and 2;

(An example drawn from the violin part, beginning of 1st Ricercar)



The second movement, presents the original version of the series by the violin and its retrograde version by the other instruments. In the course of the movement the retrograde version will also be alternatively played by the violin while the instrumental ensemble uses it solely as a reference.

As can be seen from the above examples and as is derived from Boskovich's writings, the serialists will not see in him a fully fledged ally. The tone-doublings (in particular in diverse octaves and in a great number of instruments) roughly upset the balance between the tonal gravitational forces which is a basic trait of the dodecaphonic method. The fact that the draft included the violin part and the reduction of the rest, shows that the composer put off confronting the orchestration to a later stage (this might possibly be the source of the doublings). However, in two of his works composed later (only one of which was completed) it appears that the orchestration was an organic part of the process of composition⁴, which might be a sign that his approach to the matter has changed with time, in comparison to when he began his serial work and tried to concentrate his forces in limited arena. This separation of establishing pitches of the 'guiding tones' and their 'orchestration' is a deviation from the serial method.

Paraphrasing the composer himself, there will be some who will condemn and say: "wrong use is made of the method. Use of new instruments to conquer old challenges." Others will praise and claim: "Integration of the ethnic expression in a novel method requires of it to relent some of its hard and fast rules. This is the only way in which a world of new possibilities may open and enable East and West to meet on balanced basis."

The 1st Ricercar reveals Boskovich's dramatic approach to the role of the instruments. He creates a dialogue between two entities, at the beginning of which each exists individually or is, possibly, wholly disparate from the other. The first entity, carried by the violin and the harpsichord (other instruments join in at a later stage) appears in bars whose metres are 3/2, 4/2 and two bars with 7/4 metre. The 2nd is realized by the two flutes comprised in bars with 3/4 metre. Having passed about two thirds of its path, this entity changes its presentors and is realized by the celesta and the glockenspiel. The crystalline sound of the alternative instruments, so different from that of the flutes, seems to purify and refine the entity – like a spirit departing a body. At the end, the flutes return and play the final tone (long E doubled at a distance of two octaves, in frullato). It is followed by a C# which concludes the work played by the glockenspiel and violin in pizzicato.

It is no easy matter to direct one's imagination towards reaffirming some assumptions while revoking others. Whatever the case, we can assume that the tone doubling at the end of the 1st Ricercar (suggesting unification and consent in the dialogue between the entities) and the division of the second entity (the production of the concluding tone by the violin and the glockenspiel) are not accidental. The movement ends, therefore, clarifying and revealing a dialogue which has inner unity yet leaves the entities independent.

The connection between the choice of instruments and simulation of the acoustic body to human speech has already been mentioned. This is not limited to the CONCERTO DA CAMERA. Boskovich's strong tendency to communicate, including his aspiration to reach an understanding with his community on the basis of a dialectic discussion, runs throughout his writings. It is no surprise, therefore, that this found expression in his works. Usage of such directions as *quasi parlando* (the manner of performance

required from the flutes in the 1st Ricercar – the 'second entity'), use of the low register of the violin, direction to play on G string and use of damper (a way to darken the sound of the violin) as well as the inclusion of *pizzicato* in the role of parenthesis, are only a few manifestations of 'speech' presented in the piece. Another surprising facet is that after SONG OF ASCENT (a work based on a text from Psalms) and the cantata DAUGHTER OF ISRAEL (composed on a text by H.N. Bialik), his last two large-scales works, although written for instrumental ensembles are in fact based on texts. The same holds true for his last unfinished work, based on a text from the book of Genesis 3). ORNAMENTS is, according to Boskovich, a modern musical interpretation of the "Song of the Sea" (Book of Exodus) in the tradition of the Yemenite Jews, while the CONCERTO DA CAMERA is based on the "Mechase Shamayim" hymn in the tradition of the Jews of Djerba. The clearly traditional origin of the texts raises the possibility that using them was an attempt to cast an anchor in solid soil and give himself a chance to move in the direction of universal musical essence which resists any classification.

In his creative life Boskovich went through protracted process of sublimation. He revised and refined his music world through encounters with foreign cultures and new ideas. His encounter with Jewish folklore influenced his music, thoroughly steeped in European culture (he was a gifted pianist and active conductor in his youth). His contact with eastern music, was, again, a refining influence on the load he carried into his future. Then came the encounter (renewed?) with modern European music which resulted in the writing of the work under discussion. These encounters, each in its own time, equipped Boskovich with diverse abilities, some practical, others theoretical, born through creative activity on the one hand, but controlled it on the other.

It is wrong to remember him only some stages of his creative life. CONCERTO DA CAMERA is a work of a *composer*; one who is constantly changing, one who reserves for himself and for us, the listeners, the right to allow the well of creativity flow forth faster and overflow the limits set by his

ideas. Some may say his efforts to hasten the creation of an Israeli musical style were doomed to fail since such a style must come into being organically at the speed dictated by history. They may be right. And yet, the honesty and integrity which led him in his search, gave him the right to leave this world still wondering, searching and struggling.

Even if there will be some who will believe that his feet were firmly placed in Israeli reality while his head was way above in the clouds of the 'new message of serialism', diagnosing him as a split musical personality, it need not necessarily be seen as a disadvantage. This duality expressed the conflict faced by every Israeli composer of the time and in fact continues to do so until the present.

Even if his efforts failed (critics will claim), yet the courage he showed in the course of the last period of his creative work, is a gift given only to those few who have no fear to look deep, much deeper than their own 'where' and 'when'.

1. Boskovich developed further the subject in his article "Problems in Israeli Music" – Orlogin No. 9, Nov 1953.
2. Linear character – the tendency of instruments to develop an independent line. Collectivity – grouping of instruments which tend to develop an independent line (linear character), forms a musical environment in which the instruments tend to be of equal weight. (Boskovich uses both expressions in his article "Problems in Israeli Music".)
3. In the manuscript the movement is referred to as "Toccata B (Shower)" but in the commentary to his work Boskovich names it "Cold winter rain" which is far more suitable since "Shower" simply implies "rain".
4. Of his last (and unfinished) composition there remains only a draft. Boskovich drafted the complete work not including exact pitches, but only their relative register. Ascribing durations to the different parts, in addition to the pages of the tone series he intended to use, seem to imply that orchestration was to be an integral part of apportioning the durations to the pitches.

Score and parts of CONCERTO DA CAMERA (1962; IMI 029) are available at the IMI. A CD which includes a recording of the work is in preparation.

Igal Myrtenbaum is a composer and editor of IMI's publications.

In Memoriam



Uriel Adiv

SHABTAI PETRUSHKA

Born 1903 Leipzig, Germany – died 1997, Jerusalem

The composer and conductor Shabtai Petrushka was born Siegmund Leo Petrushka. He grew up in an orthodox family and even before he started school he could read and write. From his early youth Petrushka was involved with music and even served as a young cantor at the daily prayers in his school. In Leipzig he studied piano, violoncello as well as theory. He was a member of the Blau-Weiss youth organization and between 1919 and 1922 sang in the Gewandhaus choir in Leipzig under the direction of Arthur Nikisch.

In 1923 he moved to Berlin intending to study mechanical engineering at the Technical College in Charlottenburg. He financed his studies by playing with the jazz ensemble 'Sid Kay's Fellows' which he founded together with a fellow student. He gave up the idea of becoming an engineer and devoted all his energy to the ensemble which, under his baton, accompanied various theatrical performances and earned recognition in its own right when it performed in Vienna, Budapest, Frankfurt, Barcelona and Munich. In 1933, the ensemble was disbanded and Petrushka, while playing with The Orchestra of the Jewish Cultural Society composed music for various plays (among them also for the Shalom Aleichem play 'Amcha'). Using pseudonyms to disguise his being a Jew, he worked as music arranger for the Deutsche Gramophone Gesellschaft and for UFA films, Berlin.

In 1938, when he immigrated to Eretz-Israel (Palestine), Petrushka joined the Palestine Broadcasting Corp. Orchestra. From 1942 he served as conductor and arranger of the orchestra. He became active member of the Haganah in 1946. In the first decade of the independent State of Israel, Shabtai Petrushka served as Deputy director of the Music Programs Dept of Kol Israel and in 1958 was appointed Director of Music Section and held this post until his retirement. In the years 1969-1981, Petrushka was senior lecturer for orchestration and composition at the Rubin Academy of Music and Dance, Jerusalem.

His compositions were published in Germany and Israel and they are clear indication of his attachment to the treasures of the music of the Jewish communities in the Diaspora – both in the East and in the West:

5 ORIENTAL DANCES (1954); 3 HEBREW SONGS (1959); PICCOLO DIVERTIMENTO for symphonic band (1970; IMI 237) commissioned by ICF; JEWISH DANCES FROM THE CRIMEA for brass quartet (1973; IMI 376); THREE JEWISH MELODIES for two flutes and three clarinets (1972; IMI 378); 3 SEPHARDIC ROMANCES for woodwind quartet (1975; IMI 451).

Dr. Uriel Adiv is the grandson of the composer