

Faxtransmission to Neal Rostoff (001-818-7166211)

From Miriam Boskovich (972-3-5281097)

"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD", psalm 23 for voice and orchestra by Alexander Uriyah Boskovich, was completed in 1943. (1946 - version for voice & piano, 1954 - version for voice & string quartet).

In 1946 this work was premiered by the well-known Israeli-Yemenite singer Bracha Zfira accompanied by the Jerusalem Broadcasting Orchestra. Her beautiful oriental alto suited very much the composers conception of the tonecolour & of the interpretation of this music.

The following are quotations from the composers explanations to this psalm:

"This music is non harmonic (a-harmonic?), the polyphony is incidental, because the basic technique of this work is vocal-heterophonic.

The recurring sound of the orgalpoint on the tone C stresses the nonharmonic feature of the whole work.

The origin of the organpoint C derives from the principle of a low-humming string, which is similar to the Feauxbourdon with no harmonic function.

This work is build on a series of melodic heterophonic varations moving on the sound basis of a pedalpoint.

The short deviations from the centraltone C that appear here & there in the bassline are nothing but auxiliary notes without any harmonic meaning.

The musical material of this composition is taken from the Arabic maquam of "N'ava", which ressembbes the mixolydian mode. The bass moving from the tone C to the tone B flat can

be considered as a mixolydian seventh. (Bar 18-23, sung with the text "He makes me lie down in green pastures".

The motivic material which undergoes constant changes, is based on short combinationa inspired by the melodic patterns of bible-cantillation.

The two opening bars indicate that this Israeli song cannot be performed in an ad libitum individual vocal interpretation but goes for a very rythmic & steady tempo as a signpost of the features of a collective interpretation.

This psalm is dedicated to my father David Ben Yoseph, who on his last way in the deathcamp (Aushwitz) had on his lips (uttered?) the words of "The lord is my shepherd".

It is significant to know that this psalm is also integrated into the Jewish memorial service.

Miriam Boskovich

*Miriam Boskovich*

Dear Neal,

I hope this material will be helpful. I have not added anything about Boskovich because I understood that you have enough material about him & the "East Mediterreanian School".

30.10.94

With best wishes,

Miriam

*Miriam*

*3 pages sent.*