

A HASSIDIC RITUAL DANCE: THE *mitsve tants* IN JERUSALEMITE WEDDINGS

Yaakov Mazor and Moshe Taube

INTRODUCTION

The aim of the present paper is to describe the ritual dance ("*mitsve tants*" or "*kosher tants*" in Yiddish) performed, as a norm, by several male guests (mostly relatives) and the bridegroom with the bride, as the final public event of the wedding in most Hassidic communities.¹ In our description we present

- 1 Both terms are used indiscriminately by Hassidim nowadays. There is a disagreement among scholars as to the history and significance of these terms. Some scholars do not distinguish between them (Rivkind 1962:29; Geshuri 1955: Introduction p.89), while others think they refer to two different dances. Thus, Rekhtman (1962:251) distinguishes between *mitsve tants* (literally "dance of the religious command"), i.e. the dance of relatives and parents with the bride, and *kosher tants*, which is limited to the dance of the young couple. This second term implies, according to Rekhtman, that the bride is kosher (i.e. "pure", not in her menstrual period). Rivkind (1962:46) too, quotes female informants corroborating such interpretation. Recently (1985), two female Hassidic informants used the term *treyfene khasene* ("impure" wedding) for cases in which the bride was "impure" and the *mitsve tants* was not performed. Harkavy (1928:266,312) defines *mitsve tants* as "dance with the bride and the bridegroom" and *kosher tants* as "bride's dance". Stutschewsky (1959:164, 167, 176, 215) even distinguishes between three different terms. There is, however, general agreement that *mitsve tants* is the primary term, dating (in its Hebrew form "*mehol mizwah*" at least from the fourteenth century (Rivkind 1955:29). The first occurrence of the Yiddish equivalent that we have been able to trace is from 1504 (GB, Cambridge University, Ms.Or. Add. 547 fol. 80b, quoted in Weinreich 1928:147). The term *kosher tants* is not attested before the middle of the nineteenth century (Rivkind 1960:28-30, esp. note 35, and 1962:46, 48). However, Friedhaber (1982:41) suggests, on the basis of the same sources, that the term *kosher tants* goes back to the eighteenth century. In weddings of members of the Rebbe's family in some communities, e.g. Vizhnits, Tchernobyl and others related to Tchernobyl, there is another *mitsve tants* at the *khosn mol* ("bridegroom's meal"), which takes place the night before the wedding ceremony (see also note 14). This dance is limited to the young couple (interview with a Vizhnits Hassid, April 1984. NSA Yc 2406; see also Roth 1967:203). Even (1922:208) mentions the same custom in the dynasty of Sadgora (a branch of the Rizhin dynasty). Seid (1975:13-15) claims that the *mitsve tants* takes place also before the canopy but brings no evidence.

some of the different forms of this ceremony in various Hassidic communities in Jerusalem. We also try to shed some light on the significance and function of the *mitsve tants* according to Hassidic thought. To this end we present a description of the ceremony in its totality, and focus in particular on the structural analysis of its musical and textual aspects.²

Our data come from fifty six Hassidic weddings recorded in Israel between 1966 and 1986 in twenty two communities, as well as from many interviews, some of which are recorded.³ After an initial examination of the recorded material, a twofold division appeared: weddings with *klezmerim* (instrumental band), as opposed to weddings without instrumental music. The latter are characteristic of Jerusalem, where, toward the turn of the century, the spiritual authorities of the Ashkenazi communities banned musicians from playing at local weddings.⁴ We also distinguished between weddings comprising a professional or semi-professional jester (*badkhn*)⁵ reciting or rather singing rhymed verses (*gramen*), as opposed

- 2 So far there has been no comprehensive description, let alone analysis, of the *mitsve tants* in Hassidic weddings from a musicological, ethnological, linguistic or literary point of view. References to studies containing partial descriptions, historical remarks, and certain problems of terminology may be found in some of Friedhaber's studies (1966, 1968, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1982 and especially 1984: 28-29, 61-2, 65, 68-70, 146). For the *mitsve tants* in general (also outside Hassidic communities) see the bibliography in Friedhaber 1984:174-183.
- 3 The recordings are kept at the National Sound Archives at the Jewish National University Library in Jerusalem (hereafter NSA). In 1983, when the present study was undertaken, about two thirds of the final corpus were at the NSA. These had been recorded by Andre Hajdu and Yaakov Mazor in the framework of their research project on Hassidic dance tunes. The rest of the recordings were made specifically for the present study.
- 4 On the *klezmerim* see Stutschewsky 1959, Rivkind 1960, Mazor and Seroussi 1990. Cohen-Reiss (1967:39) relates how in the 1860's Rabbi Meir Auerebach and his tribunal banned instrumental music at weddings in Jerusalem. Rabbi M.J.L. Diskin, who succeeded Rabbi Auerebach, zealously adhered to his predecessor's instructions (cf. Yadler 1967:348). Recently, however, a sort of substitute for the *klezmer* band has developed, in the form of a single musician singing and accompanying himself on percussion instruments (snare drum, bass drum and a single cymbal) which were not affected by the ban (see Mazor 1978:72; NSA Yc 167 and 168). Another recent tendency aiming at circumventing the ban consists of celebrating the wedding outside Jerusalem, sometimes barely off the outskirts of the city. These means of overcoming the ban are mentioned already in the fifteenth century by the Maharil (see Sperling 1961: 407, # 960, note).
- 5 See Zizmor 1922, Lahad 1980, Mazor and Seroussi 1990.

to weddings without a *badkhn*. Here again, the latter type is typical of the Jerusalemite weddings, which we have chosen as the subject of our study.⁶ As we shall see, the absence of *klezmorim* and a *badkhn* is not the only feature distinguishing the Jerusalemite wedding type from other Hassidic weddings in Jerusalem or elsewhere.

The Jerusalem wedding is characteristic of the common folk in certain Hassidic communities in Jerusalem, so far found in communities of Biala, Boyan, Karlin, Lelov, Rakhmestriyke, Toldot Aharon, Zanz and Zvil. The Hassidim of Lubavitch and Bratslav, though following the general pattern of the Jerusalemite wedding, do not practice the *mitsve tants*. Within the general pattern common to all Jerusalemite weddings, one may observe two main variants concerning the *mitsve tants*, one characteristic of the Toldot Aharon community (hereafter TA) and the second of all other communities. Since most recordings of this second variant in our corpus come from the Zanz and Karlin communities, they are referred to as the Zanz-Karlin variant (hereafter ZK).

Our corpus of Jerusalemite weddings includes twenty one recordings from different communities, with supplementary information from additional eleven weddings of a mixed type which, strictly speaking, do not belong to the Jerusalemite type. In all, we have recorded fifteen informants who conduct the *mitsve tants*, out of whom four may be regarded as regulars, while the rest perform it only occasionally within their families. Most of our informants, including the four regulars, belong to three Hassidic communities: Karlin, Zanz, and Toldot Aharon (on the history of these communities see Rabinowicz 1982:112 ff., 205 ff. and Steinberger 1948: 37-38). Even though the global amount of data is not as large as desired we esteem that the extant evidence is reliable, given the relative constancy manifest throughout several performances by the same informant over an important period of time, and the comparison of several performers belonging to the same community.

6 This type of wedding, without *badkhn* and *klezmorim*, is usually called "wedding according to the usage of Jerusalem", while the other type is normally referred to as "wedding according to the usage of the Diaspora". Besides these basic types, we also have evidence of weddings in which elements of both types coexist. These may appear in weddings of families of Rebbes (Hassidic leaders) who live in Jerusalem, e.g. Boyan, Lelov and Spinke. Another instance of a mixed type wedding is the usage of Tiberias which contains *klezmorim*, but not a *badkhn*. Replacing the *badkhn* in the Tiberias weddings there is, as in Jerusalem, a person who invites the dancers with a fixed formula. However, the Tiberian formula differs from the Jerusalemite (see NSA Yc 2254). The origins and diffusion of the Tiberian type require a separate study. The reasons for the absence of a *badkhn* from the Jerusalemite wedding are not clear. Hassidim usually explain this fact saying that "there is no one left who is capable of doing it". Still, there is evidence of several *badkhnim* active in Jerusalem in the past (Cohen-Reiss 1967:39).

ETHNOLOGICAL CONTEXT

The Hassidic society consists of a large number of communities. The leadership in each community is exercised by a Rebbe (called also Tsadik i.e., “righteous”, or Admor, abbreviation for “Our Master, Teacher and Rebbe”), a function which is normally passed on hereditarily. Apart from their historical affiliation to different dynasties, the communities also differ in several aspects of their spiritual and social life (see Rubinstein 1972:1391-1440). They all share, however, certain common features, one of which is especially relevant to our study: the strict observance of Jewish traditional law, particularly in the domains of chastity and family life. The cardinal importance given to purity in sexual behaviour reveals itself in the educational system, and in the practical separation of the sexes starting from a very young age. At thirteen, the age of religious maturity, this segregation is complete (at times even among family members).⁷

Sexual education in the Hassidic context emphasizes the sacrality of marriage as directed chiefly at abiding by the holy command of procreation. Thus, a young couple about to be married are introduced to each other by a matchmaker, and have but one opportunity (two or three in “liberal” families) to speak with each other before the engagement contract is signed. In some cases they are not allowed to see one another at all during the period between the engagement and the wedding (not even in the presence of the families). In other cases they may meet a few times when the families get together. Given this background, is it at all imaginable for a female (the bride) to dance in public with several males, some of them strangers?

Indeed, in order to understand the significance of the *mitsve tants*, one has to examine the place of dance in Hassidic life and thought. Dance, as other modes of musical expression, has always been considered by Hassidim as an essential factor in the worship of God (Tishbi and Dan *EH*, 17, 810; Rubinstein 1972: 1402). Beyond its power to evoke the rejoicing and enthusiasm necessary for the service of God, it has also been ascribed some mystic functions, like the power to bring about processes in the divine spheres, the *sefirôt*. The first Hassidic writer, Jacob Joseph of Polonnoye already expressed this idea in his interpretation of the Mishnaic saying on “how does one dance in front of the bride” (fol. 35b); the word “bride” in his commentary is understood as a symbol of the *šekînah*: “יבזה יוכן כיצד מרקדין לפני הכלה, ר”ל שמתמיה כיצד מרקדין בזמן הזה בגלות השכינה... “and there by you’ll understand [the Mishnaic phrase] ‘how does one dance in front of

7 See Levi 1989, ch. 7, particularly pp. 80-82; 104, 114-115, 121-122. Some informants denote the kindergarten age as the beginning of sexual education.

the bride', namely it is odd how [it is possible] to dance in this time while the *šekīnah* is in exile...because the dance [serves] to elevate the sparks and the lower degree in order to elevate it [i.e. the lower degree] to the supernal one like a holy dance").⁸

These two aspects of dance, i.e. rejoicing and mystic functions, are of particular importance in the Hassidic concept of the *mitsve tants*. First, it is an explicit religious duty to make the young couple joyful (a generally recognized Jewish principle attested as early as the fourteenth century, see Ben Asher, # 65, probably based on the custom described in the Talmud, *Berakhot* 6b and *Ketubbôt* 16b). Second, the marriage ceremony, and moreover the consummation of the marriage thereafter, are considered, in the framework of the Kabbalah, as highly propitious occasions for influencing processes in the divine world.⁹ Although only few explicit statements on this matter are found in Hassidic writings (Sperling 1961:419, # 995; Frish 1973, ch.1 # 23, ch.4 # 40, 42, 43), oral statements and hints made by several Hassidic informants from different communities refer to the sacrality ascribed to the consummation of marriage. Finally, Hassidic written sources and oral remarks make it clear that the *mitsve tants* is considered to carry a certain mystical significance.¹⁰ In any case, it is a unique occasion for attaining

8 Later Hassidic sources relate to this idea, e.g. Nahman of Bratslav, fol. 16b, 62a; Nathan of Nemirov (1956), fol. 69b, 91a-b; 1957, part 1, fol. 16b, part 2, fol. 13a-b). The view that man's deeds reflect and influence the "upper world" was taken over by Hassidism, along with many other ideas, from the mystic thinkers of the Kabbalah (see Scholem 1961:325-344; see also Tishby 1961:346-7).

9 Marriage is considered in the Kabbalah as one of man's central duties. The union of man and woman in this sacred bond symbolizes the sacred union of the celestial bride and celestial bridegroom (Scholem 1961:227, 235 and 1980:134). The bridegroom represents the divine male element (*yesôd* or *tiferet*) in the divine system of the *sefirôt*, while the bride represents the divine female element (*šekīnah*). Moreover, marriage and the human sexual union, considered as theurgical acts, have an enormous impact on both the divine cosmos and the inferior world (Tishbi 1961, vol. 2: 587-588, 609 ff., 613, 618-619; see also: Idel 1989:346-347).

10 Actually many Hassidim refuse to comment on this matter at all. Others agree that the *mitsve tants* symbolizes "high and secret matters" or "sacred worship" but claim that they do not know the precise details of this symbolism which is revealed only to few righteous men (*zaddiqim*). As one of our informants wisely phrased it: "Those who know will not tell, and those who tell do not know" (NSA Yc 2286). Two *zaddiqim* who had the reputation of knowing the secret of the *mitsve tants* were R. Motele of Tchernobyl (1770-1837) and R. Isroel of Rizhin (1796-1850) (see Horodetsky 1944, vol. 4: 192; Landoy 1960:60; Levinsky 1960:68). Explicit reference to the mystic function of the *mitsve tants* is found only in one source (Meir 1823:287-288, a Lubavitch

spiritual exaltation during which the Tsadik can perform mystical deeds, and in the eyes of the common folk, an act of preparation for the consummation of the marriage.¹¹

Nevertheless, given the problematics of the particular situation of a female dancing in public with males, the *mitsve tants* is not fully accepted by all Hassidic communities. At least two of them (Lubavitch and Bratslav) do not practice it at all, while other communities restrict the *mitsve tants* ceremony in matters concerning the audience and the dancers.¹² When the families of the young couple

source) which describes it as a theurgical act which brings about the unification of the Celestial Bride and Groom and, as a result, that of the earthly couple. Other sources provide only hints concerning the meaning of this secret. Landoy (1960:60) quotes a *Zaddiq* saying, before the *mitsve tants*: “bride, that is *šekinah*” (cf. Midner 1966 # 660). Horodetsky (ibid.) quotes a Hassidic saying: “the dance of the *zaddiq* in front of the bride is like dancing in front of the *šekinah*”. Even (1922:207) reveals that: “the *mitsve tants* is a symbol of the unification of the Holy One, blessed be He, and His Divine Shekinah”.

It is quite puzzling that three other written references which relate to the mystical significance of dances at weddings and to the “dance of the *zaddiq* with the bride” belong to the communities of Bratslav and Lubavitch which do not practice the *mitsve tants* nowadays (see Nahman of Bratslav, 1808: fol. 53b, and Nathan of Nemirov 1956, fol. 41b, 91a-b; for Lubavitch, see JNUL Ms. 8° 3444, (dated 1828-29) p.65, # 14).

- 11 This statement is found in the rhymes of a *badkhn* (NSA Yc 2509) and in the interview mentioned above (NSA Yc 2286, see note 10). Two testimonies show the dedication of *zaddiqim* to this ritual: a) The wedding ceremony of the granddaughter of R. Moshe Leib of Sasov (1745-1807) unexpectedly took place during her menstruation period. Thus, after her purification two ceremonies were reperformed in the presence of the closest relatives: the *qiddušin* and the *mitsve tants* (Gelb 1928:12b); b) R. Menahem Mendl of Kosov (1768-1825), disciple of R. Moshe Leib of Sasov, fearing that his old age and poor health will not allow him to attend the wedding of a relative of his with R. Dovidl of Tolna (1808-1882), danced with the bride at his home many hours before the *huppah* (see Tversky 1938: 132-133, and also Lebovitch 1929, vol. 2, ch. 8, # 5 fol. 80a); Steinman 1969, vol. 3: 104). Friedhaber (1982:39) mistakenly attributes this story to Moshe Leib of Sasov.
- 12 One informant distinguished between four categories of Hassidim with regard to the *mitsve tants*: a) those who practise it because they know its symbolic significance; b) those who practise it because they acknowledge some symbolic significance, which they themselves do not know; c) those who practise it as a simple matter of tradition, without assigning any special significance to it, and d) those who know its significance but are nevertheless opposed to it. In non-Hassidic orthodox circles there has always been strong opposition to this practise. See Spitzer 1913: fol.13a-13b; Rivkind 1962:45, 47. A well-known opponent was R. Akiba Joseph Schlesinger (d. 1921), whose last will to his children was to forbid the *mitsve tants*.

do not see the matter eye to eye, there are strong feelings involved and scandals may occur.¹³

THE JERUSALEMITE WEDDING

The common Jerusalemite wedding (except those involving the Rebbe's family which present features of the Diaspora-type: a reception, a *badkhn* and sometimes even a choir) begins with the signing of the marriage contract (*ketubah*) in the presence of representatives from the two families.¹⁴ Thereupon the bride and bridegroom are prepared for the marriage ceremony. The preparation consists of the removal of any object, like a watch, jewels, money, and the untying of the bridegroom's laces. The bridegroom's forehead is smeared with ash, and he is dressed in a *kittl*, a white linen robe worn on the High Holidays.¹⁵ He is then

- 13 See also Hazan 1972:33, no.44. A Jerusalemite Hassid described a 1945 dispute between two families concerning the *mitsve tants*. The father of the bride, of the Schlesinger family (which traditionally opposed this custom, see note 12), stealthily left with his daughter just before the dance was to begin, and locked himself up at home together with the bride. Finally, after long negotiations between the families, he consented that the *mitsve tants* take place, on condition that it be held at his home in the presence of the parents only and that it consist solely of the bridegroom dancing with his bride. The same informant proudly related how many years later he himself prevented the *mitsve tants* at the wedding of his daughter, by snatching away the bride and the groom just before the dancing was to begin. In one recorded wedding (NSA Yc 1120) the grandfather of the bride compelled the family of the groom to practise the dance, though as non-Hassidim they were quite opposed to it. However, in two more recent weddings in the same family, the *mitsve tants* was not practised, because of opposition from the other family (NSA Yc 2689 and Y 5503).
- 14 The Diaspora type which is characteristic of weddings in the families of Rebbes is preceded by the following events: *forshpiel* on the Sabbath eve immediately before the wedding, *khosn mol* (groom's meal) for the members of the family, and a special meal for the poor, both taking place a day or two before the wedding; a farewell party given by the groom for his fellow-students on the wedding day (only in few communities, e.g. Gur); a reception (*kabolasponim*) for the guests and relatives just before the wedding ceremony (see Gutwirth 1970:344-5). During the reception the marriage contract is signed, special tunes are played and sung (see Mazor 1978:68-69, 74-77), and the *badkhn* recites moralizing verses.
- 15 These preparations fit well into the general idea that the wedding day is for the bride and groom as the Day of Atonement. Thus, they both fast on this day and in the afternoon service (*minhah*) they say the *widdûy* (confession). See Ganzfried 1942, ch. 146a,d, 147d; Sperling 1961:402(941), 406(951), 407(957).

led by his father and the bride's father to the *badekns* (the veiling of the bride's face), in a procession during which special *niggûnim* are sung.¹⁶ After the bride's veiling the procession moves on to the *huppah* (canopy). The bride is brought by the two mothers while the men wait under the canopy, singing.¹⁷

Following the marriage ceremony (*qiddûšin*) under the canopy, the bride and groom are secluded in a separate room (*yihûd*) to break their fast which has lasted for the whole day, while the audience sits down for the nuptial meal in two separate halls, men and women apart. During the meal, while the bride and groom rejoin the audience in the respective halls, singing and dancing by the public erupts, accompanied, and sometimes conducted by a single singer-drummer (see note 4). After the blessings which follow the meal (*birkat ham-mazôn* and *ševa' beraḳôl*), public singing and dancing ends, most of the guests leave, and the *mitsve tants* starts in presence of the families, relatives and some close friends.¹⁸

In some cases, the unmarried young men (the groom's colleagues) are explicitly invited to leave before the *mitsve tants* begins.¹⁹ The bride and the women enter the men's hall and take places on one side of it. The bride and groom are seated on two adjoining chairs in the center. The women, seated or standing, gather behind the couple, while the men, trying to avoid facing the women, are seated in a semicircle in front of the couple or elsewhere in the hall. At some weddings of the Toldot Aharon community, women are allowed to enter the men's hall only after a partition (*mekhitze*) has been erected to separate between the two sexes.

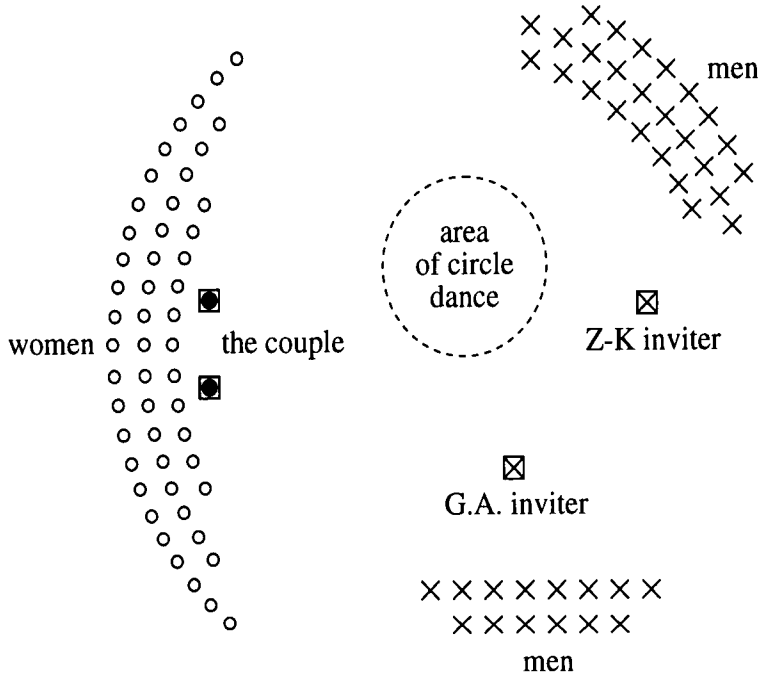
16 The term *niggûn* (pl. *niggûnim*) is used by the Hassidim to denote tunes, even of different nature, sung or played with or without text (see Mazor and Seroussi 1991).

17 In the Jerusalemite communities a special tune served in the past for the *badekns*, the procession towards the canopy and the ceremony under the canopy (see Mazor 1978:85 and Hajdu-Mazor 1988:100, no. 4). In recent years, however, some new tunes have been introduced (see for example: Mazor 1978:78 and Hajdu and Mazor 1988:99, no. 3).

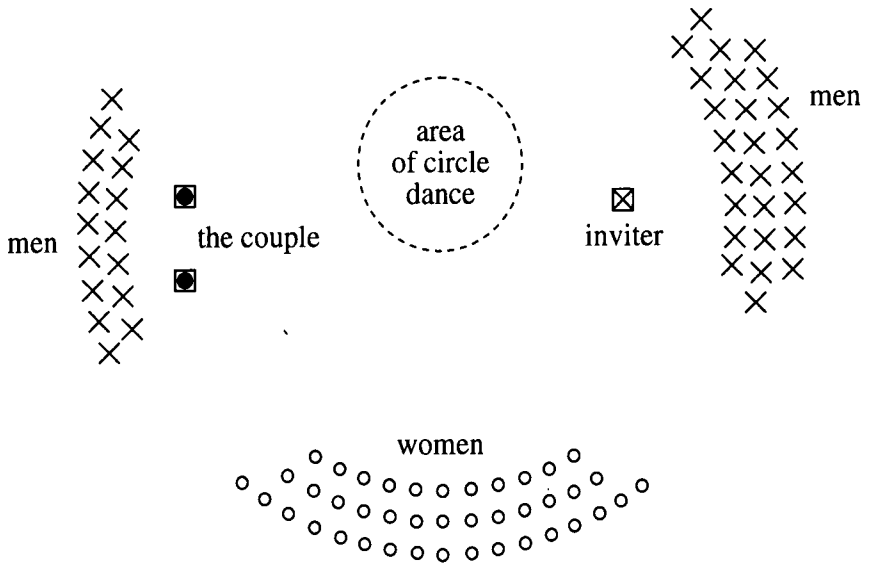
18 In the diaspora type, at the court of some dynasties, such as Vizhnits in Beney Berak and Kretchnif in Rehovot, performances of choirs may occur during the meal, while the *mitsve tants* takes place in a different building, where only a selected group of guests are allowed access.

19 See NSA, Yc 951. This seems to be a long standing tradition. Linetski's (1898:47) hero plaintively relates how, as a bachelor, he was deprived of the privilege to attend the dance ceremony.

A. A typical arrangement of the audience in a Jerusalemite *Mitsve*-dance



B. A Z-K variant arrangement in 1984



The dancing ceremony is directed by a person (hereafter “the inviter”) whose function is to invite some of the guests to dance with the bride. He does not bear the title “*badkhn*” nor does he consider himself as such because he does not recite rhymed verses, which are the trade mark of the professional jester. Besides, unlike the *badkhn*, he usually receives no remuneration for his task, and quite frequently he is simply a member of the family. Though there seems to be no specific term to designate him, his function is usually called *oysrufn*, “proclaim”, *oyfrufn*, “invite”, or simply *zogn*, “say”.²⁰ He invites each guest in his turn to dance with the bride, using a fixed formula of text and tune. The first guests to be invited are normally the grandfathers, then the fathers and finally the bridegroom. When the Rebbe is present, he is of course invited to dance first. In rare cases grand-uncles and uncles are invited too, but only if they have a high status in the community (NSA Y 3675).

Each guest invited to dance stands up in his turn and walks toward the bride, who rises to her feet. The guest takes hold of one end of a kerchief or a *gartl* (“girdle”) while the bride holds the other end, and they dance to a tune sung by the public.²¹ Actually only the guest dances, without facing the bride, sometimes with his eyes closed, using the step pattern of the common circle dance, while she — her face covered with a non-transparent veil — hardly moves at all. The bride may allow herself at times a few movements which resemble dancing, and this only with her father and bridegroom. Otherwise she might risk frowning looks and critical whispers from the audience (NSA Yc 391). In some Jerusalemite weddings, however, the bride did dance (or rather walk)

20 The three terms are not sharply defined and are used indiscriminately. “*Oyfrufn*”, literally “call up” normally signifies “to summon someone to the Torah in the synagogue”. On the Sabbath preceding the wedding, the groom is summoned to the Torah, and this occasion, connected with an extensive celebration, is called *oyfrufns*. The term may have been introduced here because of its similarity to *oysrufn*, “proclaim”, which stands for proclaiming the name of the person invited to dance with the bride.

21 The kerchief and *gartl* are, of course, means for preventing physical contact between the dancers of two sexes. For the daily use of the *gartl* and its function in the preparation for the service see: Wertheim (1960:73 and note 65). Some Rebbes are not content with these precautions and insist on dancing in front of the bride without any contact at all, thus clinging literally to the mishnaic saying (*Ketubbôt* 16b) “*kêzad meraqqedîn lifnê hak-kallah*” (“how does one dance in front of the bride”) and not “with” the bride. See also Stern 1975:191-192, # 131; Landoy 1960:60; Lebovitch 1929:80a; Shapiro 1922:5b, # 6. This custom is frequently discussed by pre-Hassidic authorities. See the Bet Shemuel commentary in Jacob ben Asher (late 17th century), fol. 56b.

in the following manner: she and the guest stand shoulder facing shoulder, and move forward in a path making a circle.

After a few steps, the guest drops the girdle or kerchief and is joined by the other men in the common circle dance, while the bride returns to her chair beside the groom. If the guest prolongs his dancing with the bride beyond the norm, he is drawn away by the men into their circle.²² The last in turn to dance with the bride is the groom. They hold hands and make a round or two, and then the groom is drawn back into the men's circle. The Rebbe does not dance the *mitsve tants* in this regular fashion. He stands in front of the bride with his right side turned to her and moves forward and backward in quick short steps. This type of dancing is called in Hassidic sources (Shapiro 1922:5b, # 6; Lebovitch 1929:80a) "running back and fro" רצוא ושוב. This term is loaded with mystical connotations referring to the processes in the divine *sefirôt* and to the ups and downs in man's attempt to come closer to God (Piekarcz 1985:95).

After the dance, the guests wish good luck and bid "good night" to one another, and the wedding is over.

Beside these constitutive elements of the *mitsve tants*, there are also optional ones or fixed only in one tradition, some of which are reminiscent of the Diaspora-type wedding. For example, the *mitsve tants* ceremony starts, at times, with the singing of special tunes, either by the inviter or by the audience (see below). The dancing is sometimes preceded by consultations between representatives of the families and the inviter concerning the order of the invited dancers. Between the invitation and the dance, additional events may occur. The inviter and/or the audience sing a short musical fragment on the word *shabes* (Sabbath; see Ex. 1), a reminiscence of the Diaspora-type custom to collect a payment (*shabes*



Example 1: "Shabes" (Yc 2220/23)

²² The famous *badkhn* J. Zizmor (1923, col. 875) relates how after a round or two the *badkhn* used to proclaim: "shoyn getantst", "you have already danced [enough]". See also Rivkind 1960:30 note 35 and Gotlober 1976:106. On the other hand, there is no limitation to the Rebbe's dance, and there are several stories about a Rebbe dancing for hours in ecstasy (Horodetsky 1944, vol.4:192; Levinski 1960:98; Landoy 1960:60, see Midner 1966, # 660).

gelt) for the *badkhn* and *klezmorim* from each guest invited to dance (Lieberman 1984: 426ff). The inviter and/or the audience proclaim “*er geyt, er geyt*” (“here he comes”), a reminiscence of a typical final verse used by the *badkhn* in the Diaspora-type. The guest invited to dance is offered a glass of brandy, and the toast is accompanied by humoristic remarks and congratulations from the audience. The preparation for the dance may also include changing the hat of the guest dancer and even combing his beard. The inviter and/or audience sometimes sing an introductory verse before the invitation, or before the guest begins his dance, which begins with the words “*leykakh, bronfn, ayngemakhts*” (“cake, liquor, confiture”; see Ex. 2) to a tune which is a reduced variant of the “*Misoyd khakhumim*” *niggun* (see Ex. 22a below). At some weddings, mostly of the Karlin community, a farewell song, “*Hots mir a gute nakht* (literally “have me a good night”; see Ex. 3) is sung after the *mitsve tants*. This song is not deprived of some subtle connotations. This seems to be a vestige of a repertoire of “goodnight” songs sung at the end of Jewish weddings in Eastern Europe (see Stutschewsky 1959: 176).

ley-kakh bron - fn mit 'ayn-ge-makhts [textless]

Example 2: *Leykakh, bronfn* (Y 4557/3 and 8)

♩ = 72-76
[textless]

hots mir a gi - te nakht hots mir a gi - te nakht

hots mir a gi-te hots mir a gi-te hots mir a gi - te nakht hots mir a gi-ter to-mid

rit.

Example 3: *Hots mir a gute nakht* (Y 4561/16)

THE INVITATION TO THE MITSVE TANTS

The inviter who directs the *mitsve tants* invites the guests and relatives to dance with the bride according to an established pattern of text and music (see below). In both the TA and ZK variants, the text sung by the inviter for each dancer

consists of two main parts. The first is the proclamation “*yamoyd*” (Hebrew *ya'amod* “let him stand up”) repeated several times (see Ex. 4, col. A). The second is a performative sentence, summoning the dancer (mentioned by his affinity to the bride and sometimes also by his name and title) to dance with the bride (see Ex. 4, cols. C, E, F, G).

In the ZK variant there are two additional elements, which do not, however, alter the overall structure of the invitation. First, between the proclamation “*yamoyd*” and the invitation proper (see Ex. 4, col. B) there is a series of praising utterances in honour of the guest (at times, though, with a trace of mockery) consisting of indirect attributes to which the guest is compared. For example, “in the place of pious Jews thou shalt stand up” or “in the place of venerable Jews thou shalt stand up” may be substituted by “in the place of Lithuanian [non or anti-Hassidic] Jews thou shalt *not* stand up” or “in the place of American Jews thou shalt *not* stand up”. Second, a series of praising adjectives, e.g. “a fine Jew”, “a nice Jew”, “a pious Jew”, are added before the title and the name of the invited (see Ex. 4, col. D and Ex. 6 for some examples of praisings).

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
TA	<i>yamoyd</i>	<i>yamoyd</i>	Now we shall call...		(Name) (title) (affinity)	to dance with the bride	the ritual dance
ZK	<i>yamoyd</i>	In the place of *pious venerable Jew, etc... <i>yamoyd</i>	Now we shall call...	a nice Jew, etc.	(Name) (title) (affinity)	to dance with the bride	the ritual dance

Example 4: Schematic pattern of the invitation in the TA and ZK variants

Notes to example 4: *Yamoyd* (column A) is repeated in both variants, usually seven times. This form coincides with the formula for summoning a person to the Torah reading on a special occasion in the synagogue.²³ While the ZK

23 The formula for summoning a person to the Torah reading on weekdays and Sabbaths starts with the word *ya'amod*. On *Simhat tôrah*, when the *hatan tôrah* (“bridegroom of the Torah”) is called up to the reading of the final verses of the Torah, the word *yamoyd* is repeated three times (see Yaari 1964:140).

variant has a repertoire of praises, such as “pious Jews”, “Hassidic Jew”, or the ironical or humorous attributes, such as “Lithuanian Jews” and “accountants” (column B), the TA variant repeats the word *yamoyd* another nine times while developing the musical theme of column A (see Ex. 7, phrases β , and β_1). The wording in column C may slightly differ from one performer to another, and sometimes in the performances by the same inviter (e.g. “First will be called”, “Now will be called”, “We shall call”, “We shall honour”). Unlike column B, column D does not include ironical praises in the ZK variant, and it totally lacks in the TA variant. In column E, the constant element is the affinity of the dancer to the bride, e.g. “the father of the bride”, while his name and title are optional, except for the Rebbe who is invited only by his title and never by his name. In exceptional cases greetings, blessings, or humorous remarks may appear in column E. Such remarks appear in the S/K versions, reflecting the attitude of the inviter towards the invited dancer. In TA only the Rebbe is blessed by the inviter, thus stressing his central status in the community. Finally, in column F, we only find slight variations, e.g. “to dance with the bride” or “to dance with his daughter the bride”. The groom is invited, of course, “to dance with his own bride” (see Ex. 10, line 6 for some of these phrases).

The language of the invitation is a mixture of *Loshn koydesh* (“sacred language”, i.e. Hebrew-Aramaic of the sacred scriptures in the Ashkenazi pronunciation) and Yiddish, which, in its turn, also contains a merged *Loshn koydesh* component.²⁴ In the ZK variant, elements from modern Hebrew (*Ivris*) in the Ashkenazi pronunciation may also appear in a humoristic context.²⁵

The opening and the final part of the invitation (columns A and G) are ‘pure’ *Loshn koydesh*: “*yamoyd*”, “*mitsvas rekide*”. The “functional” parts (columns C, E, F) are in “pure” Yiddish (with the normal merged Hebrew component), e.g. “*yetst geyt men oyfrufn*”, “*tsum ersht wet men oyfrufn*” (C), “*dem feter fun di kale*”, “*dem Rebn Shlite*” (E), “*er zol geyn tantsn mit di kale...*” (F). Only the “expressive” parts containing praises (columns B and D in the ZK variant) mix Yiddish and *Loshn koydesh*, and sometimes Ivris, e.g. “*bimkoym Hassidim yamoyd*” (*Loshn Koydesh*); “*bimkoym fayne yidn yamoyd*” (*Loshn koydesh*, Yiddish, *Loshn koydesh*); “*bimkoym menahaley heshboynes yamoyd*” (*Loshn koydesh*, Ivris, *Loshn koydesh*).

24 On “whole Hebrew” (*Loshn koydesh*) as determinant of Yiddish versus “merged” Hebrew as component of Yiddish, see Weinreich 1980, especially chapters 4 and 7.

25 On the attitude towards modern Hebrew in Jerusalemite ultra-orthodox population, see Poll 1980.

THE MUSIC OF THE INVITATION TO THE *MITSVE TANTS*

The parameters used in the musical analysis belong to three domains: time, pitch and performance. From the first domain we analysed the following variables: beat, rest, length of tone and the compound variables derived from them: meter, tempo and rhythmic type. From the second domain we analysed one basic variable: absolute pitch, as well as three compound variables concerning relative pitch: intervals, scale and range. In the third domain we distinguished between solo and responsorial singing. Besides these variables, we also used super-compound units belonging to more than one domain: melodic patterns based on rhythmic and melodic elements, and phrases consisting of sequences of motifs which are realizations of these patterns.

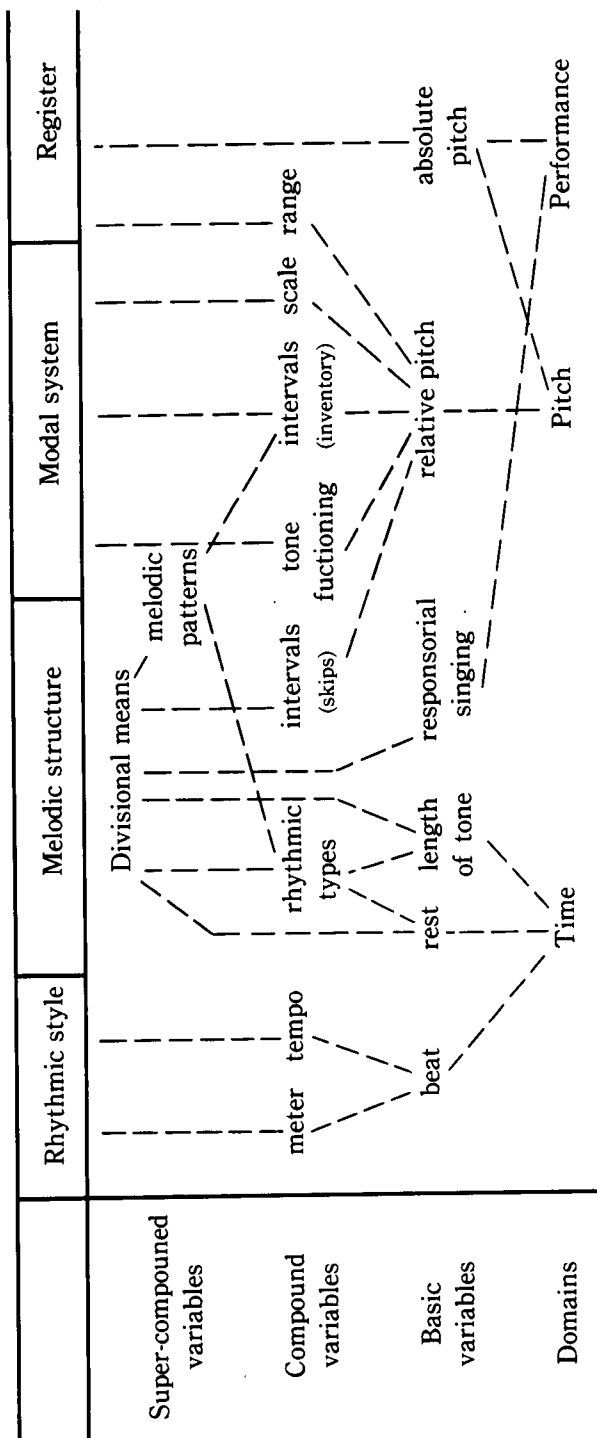
From a functional point of view, the parameters may be grouped as follows:

- a. Determination of the rhythmic nature of the music, namely beat, meter (or their absence) and tempo;
- b. Determination of divisional means, such as rest and relative duration of tone for primary division and sub-division;²⁶
- c. Determination of the modal system, such as scale, range, intervals, melodic patterns and function of tones (see Ex. 5).

The invitation tune in both communal variants shows three features which are typical of various liturgical and paraliturgical tunes (see Ex. 6). These features correspond very closely to one of the definitions of cantillation (see Bayer 1971:128 #1). The tune is mostly sung to an unmeasured rhythm, i.e. without determined beat and meter. From this feature follows also the undetermined nature of the tempo, in which accelerations and ritardandi are detectable, but hardly measurable.

26 In an unmeasured tune such as "*Yamoyd*", it is not possible to express exactly the proportion between the length of tones by conventional notation. However, relatively long tones are easily distinguished when appearing after shorter ones. We have thus contained ourselves with a gross distinction between long tones (●) and short (•) since various lengths of the long tones do not seem to have any significance, functional or other. Nevertheless in some places, mainly at the end of the tune, measured rhythm can be observed, and in these places we have used the conventional notation. Following the same principles, we marked the pauses with commas above the pentagram because we did not find any significance in the relative length of the pauses.

Example 5: The musical parameters







While the tune itself consists of several melodic patterns and rhythmic types, each of which may have several realizations (i.e. motifs), the opening and closing sections of the tune form, in both variants, a typical psalmodic structure (see Ex. 7).

The motives, determined by means of pauses and long tones, belong to five melodic patterns as follows: A (Initium and recitation tone), B (neumatic or melismatic ornament consisting of seconds and thirds), C (two tones, either identical or creating a descending second or third; conjunct combinations of two motives of this pattern into one motif was marked by C_6 and C_7 to denote a special motif with a specific function), D (ascending fourth), E (ascending-descending sequence consisting of a succession of two thirds in the ascending part, and of a second followed by a third in the descending part, see Ex. 7 and 8).

The rhythm consists of three rhythmic types which are organized according to different principles: (a) unmeasured short tone (or tones), preceded or followed by a long tone or a short tone plus a pause; (b) short measured rhythmic motives; (c) various unmeasured lengths arranged in the sequence long-short-long. All realizations of the melodic patterns A, B, D as well as many realizations of pattern C show the first type. Few realizations of patterns A and C show the second type, and some of pattern E show the third type.

At first glance, some of the realizations of B seem to be variants of certain realizations of C. E.g.:

pattern B	pattern C
	
	: variant of
	
	: variant of

The reason for grouping motives of different pitch (e.g. $b_2 + b_3$) while separating them from seemingly similar motives of the same pitch, differing only by ornament, lies in the attitude of the Hassidim to both neumatic and melismatic ornamentation, which they label *kneytsh* (literally “crease”, “fold”; see Mazor-Seroussi 1990-1). The *kneytsh* is considered the essence of the Hassidic *niggûn*, embodying the spirit and message of the music. Musical styles are characterized by Hassidim in terms of differences in *kneytsh*. Evaluation of musical performance

Example 6: Invitation tune

The image displays a musical score for an "Invitation tune" across eight staves. The notation is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into two main sections, α and β , which are further subdivided into α' and β' . The first staff is marked "T.A." and contains dynamic markings α , β , β' , and α' . The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The notation includes slurs, ties, and dynamic markings such as α , β , β' , and α' . The piece concludes with a final cadence on the eighth staff.

Example 6 (cont.)

This musical score consists of several staves of music. The top staff is a single melodic line with various ornaments and a large slur. Below it are two staves: the first is a treble clef staff with a 'Z.K.' marking and a slur, and the second is a treble clef staff with a 'trill' marking and a slur. The next two staves are also treble clef staves, each with a slur. The fifth staff is a treble clef staff with a slur and a 'trill' marking. The sixth staff is a treble clef staff with a slur and a 'trill' marking. The seventh staff is a treble clef staff with a slur and a '(1)' marking. The eighth staff is a treble clef staff with a slur and a 'trill' marking. The final staff is a treble clef staff with a slur and a 'trill' marking.

Example 7: Psalmic structure and components of the invitation tune

The musical score consists of two staves, T.A. (Tenor Alto) and Z.K. (Zangeneh/Kanone). Above the staves are several brackets and labels indicating psalmic structures: α (psalmody), β , γ , δ , ϵ , ζ , η , θ , ι , κ , λ , μ , ν , ξ , \omicron , π , ρ , σ , τ , υ , ϕ , χ , ψ , ω , and 'etc.'. The T.A. staff is divided into sections labeled 'int.+tenor 1', 'mediant', and 'Finalis'. The Z.K. staff is divided into sections labeled 'int.+tenor 2' and 'Finalis'. The notes are often grouped with letters (a, b, c, d, e, etc.) and some are enclosed in parentheses. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals.

n.b. less regular forms are in parenthesis

pattern A



pattern B



pattern C



pattern D



pattern E



*special or exceptional variants

Example 8: Melodic patterns and their realizations

is frequently determined by the performer's capability to retain in his singing all the traditional details of *kneytsh*.²⁷

The occurrence of *kneytsh* in the realizations of pattern B of the invitation tune is one of the main differences between TA and ZK variants. The *kneytsh* is much more frequent in TA than in ZK. It predominates in phrases α , β , β_1 of TA and, in certain performances, appears also in phrase α_1 , whereas in ZK it appears almost only in α (see Ex. 9).

Another salient difference between the two variants concerns the text/music relation in the middle section of the invitation tune (phrases β , β_1 in TA and γ in ZK). In the TA variant, though using mainly a series of *kneytshn*, i.e. realizations of pattern B for the repetition on the word *yamoyd* (as in α), a new musical phrase is constructed which differs from that of the first phrase (α) and is

27 See Mazor and Seroussi 1990-91. Hassidic opposition to the notation of Hassidic music stems from their scepticism about the possibility to render with fidelity all details of the *kneytsh*, without which the *niggûn* would be like a dead body without a soul.

Example 9: Invitation tune — use of realizations

phrases	α	β	β_1	α_1	
patterns	A B	D B	D B	A	C
motives	a b b ₁ (b ₂) b ₃ b ₄	d b ₅ b ₆ b ₂	d ₁ b ₆ b ₇ b ₃ b ₈	a ₁ a ₁	(b) c ₆
	a ₁ (c ₂) c		c	a ₄ (a ₁)	
phrases	α	γ	γ	α_1	
patterns	A B C/B C B/C	E C	E C	A	C
motives	a b c c b ₄	e c ₂	e c ₂	a ₃ a ₂ a ₂ ossia a ₂	c ₆
	a ₁ (c ₂) b ₁ (b ₃) c ₂	e ₁	e	(a ₁) (a ₁) (a ₁) (a ₁)	(a ₁)
	(a ₃) (c ₂)	(e ₂)	(e ₂)		
					main version secondary versions

note: motives in brackets are used only by few informants

repeated in a melodic sequence (phrases β , β_1). In the ZK variant, the middle section is based on the combination of patterns E and C, forming a totally different phrase (γ), which is repeated as many times as needed according to the number of praises dedicated to the invited. In other words, in the TA variant the expansion of the new musical phrase is caused by a melodic development (a "melocratic phrase", see Herzog 1968:28-9), as opposed to the ZK variant where the expansion of the phrase is the result of the addition of text.

The structural analysis of the invitation tune regarding segmentation points, modification within the pattern, and music-text relations reveals still more differences between the two communal variants:

1) In the TA variant, the majority of the constant segmentation points (i.e. those occurring in all invitations of a given performer) are marked by a long tone, while only few are marked also by pauses.²⁸ When both a long tone and a pause appear at segmentation points in all performances, they are used to confine the major units (i.e. phrases α , β , β_1 see Ex. 7) of the tune and are common to all informants.²⁹ The former confine all the unmeasured sub-units (i.e. almost all the realizations of patterns A-E).³⁰ In ZK the most constant segmentation points are marked by pauses sometimes preceded by a long tone, but only few are marked exclusively by a long tone.³¹ The two ways of marking segmentation are

28 The constant pauses vary, according to performer, from three to five. Three performers (example 6, lines 1-2, 3, 4) have three pauses. One has four (*ibid*, line 10). Another one (*ibid*, lines 5-9) has five pauses. The number of long tones is 12, 14 or 17. Exceptions will be treated below.

29 When serving to mark major units, the pauses appear, of course, combined with long tones. With one performer (example 6, lines 5-9) the pauses serve in phrases α and β_1 , also to separate the half clause motif (b_4 or b_5) from the preceding contour. Besides, motif a_4 , characterized by a long high tone (G) serves with 3 out of 5 TA performers as an opening motif for phrase α_1 , and thus announces the beginning of the invitation proper (example 6, lines 1-4). Two TA performers use motif a_1 (which is one of the regular opening motives of phrase α) also as an opening motif for phrase. The absence of a distinctive opening motif is, however, compensated by the use of a different closing motif (b_5) for phrase β_1 . This motif replaces motif b_4 , from which it differs by a long elaborate melisma.

30 However, two realizations of pattern C in phrases α , α_1 are marked by a measured rhythm, while others of pattern A, unmeasured, are marked only by the repetition of the motif.

31 In several cases the segmentation points of the solo singing are obscured in the recording by the tutti response.

not distinguished functionally, since both (either separately or combined) serve to confine motives. On the other hand, major units are marked by the tutti response. The number of constant segmentation points is fixed in TA, but not in ZK, where it is linked to the number of praises.

2) In TA there is very little change in the number of motives used by each performer (20 motives used by 3 performers, 17 by two others). These changes are not linked to any textual differences, which in TA are very limited. In ZK the number of motives varies much more, since it depends mostly on the number of praises sung for each invited dancer.

3) The accentuation points in the invitation tune reflect in both communities the accentuation of the text (i.e. as it occurs in natural speech). Thus, construct-state compounds are accentuated on the penultimate syllable of the second element (e.g., *yirey shumáyim*, *magidey shiyírim*, *talmidey khakhúnim*, etc.), while nominal syntagms containing adjective + noun are accentuated on the first syllable of the adjective. (e.g. *vóyle yidn*, *bóbover khsidim*, *kloyznburger khsidim*, etc.). Compounds of the Germanic type, in which the first noun determines the second (thus resembling adjective + noun syntagms) have their accent on the penultimate syllable of the first noun (e.g., *yeshíve iayt*). In prepositional syntagms only the noun governed by the preposition is accentuated, (e.g., *bimkoym khasánim*, *mit di kále*, *dem zeydn fun di kále*). In verbal phrases only the main verb is accentuated, (e.g. *mir'n oyfrifn*, *mir'n mekhábed zayn*, *er zol geyn tántsn*). However, in TA there is a stability in the number of accentuation points (5-7). The accentuation is dynamic, accompanied sometimes by a microtonic raise. (see Ex. 10)

In ZK, the number of accentuation points varies with the number of praises in the text. Here accentuation is expressed differently in the melodic parts (phrase γ) and the recitative parts (phrase α_1). In the melodic parts accentuation is expressed by the simultaneous occurrence of the first highest tone of the pattern (E) with the 'naturally' accentuated syllable (see Ex. 11).

This tone may also be marked by a dynamic increase which, however, is not always detectable, due to audience interference and to recording quality. In the recitative parts, accentuation is mostly dynamic, without change of pitch. Exceptions are treated in the next paragraph.

bim-koym kha-si - dim bim-koym ge-doy - lim bim-koym Ga-lits - ya-ner yi-dn

bim - koym kloy-zn - bur-ger kha - si-dim bim-koym tal - mi-dey kha-khu-mim

Example 11: Accentuation in melodic parts

4) There is also a difference between TA and ZK in the use of deviations from the regular structure for a specific purpose. In the TA variant exceptions consist of: (a) a change in the number of pauses and long tones resulting sometimes in a change in the number of motives (Ex. 6, line 6 vs. lines 5, 7-9); (b) a change from unmeasured to a measured rhythm appearing towards a segmentation point (see Ex. 6, line 1) (c) pitch modification within the pattern, but still remaining within the bounds of the musical mode (see Ex. 12); (d) a change in the number of accents (see Ex. 10, line 1 vs. the rest); (e) an ornamented motif (*kneytsh*) is preceded by a dynamically accentuated high-pitch, with a clear emotive function, and thus *yamoyd* becomes *i-ya-moyd* (Ex. 6, lines 7, 9). These exceptions are limited to the invitation of the Rebbe (Ex. 6, lines 1, 5, 8), and even more to that of the bridegroom (Ex. 6, lines 7, 9, 10), thus reflecting their exceptional status in the *mitsve tants*.

In ZK, we find: a) a change in the number of motives; b) pitch modification which includes also deviations from the mode, by glissandi and sounds of undeterminate pitch; c) a change in the number of accents (Ex. 6, lines 11-13). Here the exceptions are not limited to one given person. They appear in accordance to the number and nature of the titles and praises, which reflect the attitude of the performer towards the guests.

The "pitch range" of the invitation tune was measured in reference to the absolute pitch of the finalis in each single invitation. Each performer, regardless of community, seems to use a very narrow pitch range, with very little variation from one invitation to another, not only within a wedding, but also from one wedding to another. The performer's range varies from a minor second to a major third. The communal range (i.e. the combination of the ranges of all performers of a given community) also shows no significant difference between TA and ZK (perfect fourth against major third). However, there is difference in register: the TA performers prefer the middle register (e-a), while ZK use a somewhat higher register (a flat-c¹).

The question about the sources of the invitation tune now arises. The detailed examination of its modal system (i.e., the components scale, range, intervals, rhythmic and melodic patterns and tone-functioning) reveals similarities to tunes used in various liturgical functions. Among these functions three have been found to have the same modal system: (1) the marriage service tune which is sung under the canopy to the betrothal benediction (*birḳōt erūsīn*) and the seven benedictions of marriage (*birḳōt nissū'in*) which are also sung after the nuptial meal grace by Hassidim and Lithuanian Jews (see Ex. 13); (2) the Eastern Ashkenazi tune of the *widdūy* ("Confession") from the Yom Kippur liturgy (Ex. 14); (3) the tune of

<p>in the opening phrase</p> <p>yamoyd etc.</p>	<p>replaces the ordinary</p>	<p>ya-moyd etc.</p>
<p>in phrase β</p> <p>ya - moyd</p>	<p>replaces the ordinary</p>	<p>ya - moyd</p>
<p>in phrase α,</p> <p>or</p>	<p>replaces the ordinary</p>	
<p>the Finalis motif in phrase α,</p>	<p>replaces the ordinary</p>	

Example 12: Pitch modification

širat hay-yam (“Song of the Sea”, Exodus, ch. 15) as chanted on *šaharit* of the Sabbath and Holidays by western Ashkenazi Jews (see Ex. 15).³²

These three tunes relate to the invitation tune as follows: a) they are built on the major hexachord ; b) the opening tone, as a rule, is identical with the final tone (C) and the third tone (E) is the recitation tone, usually serving also for the half-clause demarcation; c) all these tunes (see Ex. 16) contain realizations of patterns A and B. The invitation, the benedictions, and the confession tunes contain also realizations of pattern C. Phrase γ and a reduced variant of phrase β appear in the invitation, as well as in the benedictions and in *širat hay-yam* tunes. Phrase α appears only in the invitation and the confession tunes; d) some of the common patterns and motives of these tunes have identical functions: pattern A serves as opening pattern in the invitation, benediction and confession tunes; motif C₆ (or its variant C₇), with a syncopic or quasi-syncopic rhythm, serves as finalis in those tunes; the combination of pattern E and motif C₂ (i.e. phrase γ) serves in the tune of the wedding benedictions, as well as in our tune, for enumerating members of a series, e.g., in the last benediction: *koyl susoyn vekoyl simho, koyl huson vekoyl kalo*; in the invitation (ZK variant only): *bimkoym hasidim yamoyd, bimkoym gedoylim yamoyd*.

Furthermore, initium II with its two variants , which in the TA variant serves as the opening motif of the invitation proper (phrase α_1), resembles the motives which in the Yom Kippur confession tune fulfill a similar function, namely change of turn. In the Yom Kippur tune these motives occur on the opening syllable of the text, following a tune without text.

32 We are indebted for this information concerning the *širat hay-yam* tune, as well as for other helpful remarks, to Mr. Avigdor Herzog.

Example 13: The Seven Benedictions of Wedlock

The musical score consists of ten staves of music in a single system. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written in a simple, folk-like style. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words in a non-Latin script. The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, key signatures, and dynamic markings like 'A', 'E', and 'b'. The lyrics are as follows:

bur-rikh atu adoy-noy elohay-ni me-lekh hu-oy - lom
 boy-rey pri ha-gu - fen
 bur-rikh a - tu adoy-noy elohay-ni me-lekh hu-oy - lom
 she-ha-koyl bu-ru likh-voy-doy
 bur-rikh atu adoy-noy elohay-ni me-lekh hu-oy - lom
 boy-ray pri ha-gu - fen
 soys to-sis ve-so-goyl a-ko - ro
 oy be-ki-but-s bo-ne - yo le-soy - kho be-sim-kho
 me-sa - me-akh
 soys to - sis vesogel a-ko - ro
 be-ki-but-s bo-ney - ho le-soy - kho be -sim-kho
 me - sa - me-yakh
 bur-rikh atu adoy-noy e - lo-heyni me-lekh huoy-lom a-sher bu - ro su-soym ve-sim -kko
 gi-lu ri-nu di-tsu ve-khed-vu
 khu-son ve - ka - lu
 a - vu - ve - akh - vu ve - shu-foym ve - re - yis
 mey-ro adoy-noy elohay-ni ishuma burey ye-hi-du be-khu-tsoys yerisholoyim
 koyl su-soym ve-koyl sim-khu
 koyl khu-soym ve-kol ka-lu
 koyl mitsaloy-s hasu-nim me - khi pu-son
 in-u-rim
 mimishley
 negi - nu-som
 bur-rikh atu adoy-noy
 me-sa-me-yakh
 khu-son im ha-ka-lu

(a)

α_1 $c_1 + c$
 e-lo-key-ni ve-lo-key a-voy-sey-ni u-nu tu-voy le-fu-ne-khu te-fi-lu-sey-ni
 a a_1 b_1
 ve-yal-tis-a-ley-m mi-tkhi-nu-sey-ni sheyn u-ni a-zey fu-nim ik-shey-oy-ref
 c c c
 loy-mar le-fu-ne-khu a-doy-shem e-loy-key-ni ve-loy-key a-voy-sey-ni
 c b c
 tsa-di-kim a-nakh-ni ve-loy kho-to-nu a-vol a-nakh-ni
 b_1 α
 va-voy-sey-ni khu-tu-ni ay ay ay ay ay a-y ay a-y ay ay
 c_1 α
 u-sham-ni bu-gad-ni gu-zal-ni di-bar-nu doy-fi ay ay ay ay ay ay ay
 c_2 c_3 c_4
 a-yay ay ay ay e-vi-ni ve-hir-sho-ni zad-ni khu-mas-ni tu-fal-ni
 α b_1
 she-ker ay ay ay ay ay y ay aya-y ay a yu-ats-ni ru ki-zav-ni
 c_5 c_6 c_7 c_8 α
 lats-nu mo-rad-nu ni-ats-nu so-rar-nu o-vi-ni ay ay ay ay ay y ay ay ay ay ay
 c_9 c_{10} c_{11} c_{12}
 pu-sha-ni tsu-rar-ni ki-shi-ni oy-ref ru-sha-ni shi-khas-ni ti-av-ni to-i-ni ti-tu-ni

Example 14: Two versions of *Widd'uy* of Yom Kippur (Yc 2755/7-8); (a) *Hassidic* (Yc 2755/7-8); (b) *Lithuanian* (Yc 2754).

(b)

oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy o-sham-nu bo-god-nu go-zal-nu

di-bar-nu doy-fi oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy he-vi-nu ve-hir-sha-nu

zad-nu kho-mas-nu to-fal-nu she-ker oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy

oy oy oy yo-at-s-nu ru ki-zav-nu lats-nu mo-rad-nu

ni-at-s-nu so-rar-nu o-vi-nu po-sha-nu tso-rar-nu ki-shi-nu oy-ref

oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy oy ro-sha-nu shi-khat-nu

ti-av-nu to-i nu ti-to-nu o-nu a-zay pu-nim ve-a-to

ra-khum ve-ha-nun o-nu ke-shey oy-ref ve-a-to e-rekh a-pa-yim

o-nu me-le-e u-voin ve-ya-tu mu-le-ra-ha-min o-nu yo-mei-nu ke

tseyl oy-ver ve-a-tu hu ush-noy-se-khu loy yi-to-mu

Example 14 (cont.)

Example 15: *Širat hay-yam* (Yc 2416/8)

Az yashir...
 va-yom-ru
 a-shi- ra la-shem
 ki ga-o ga- a sus ve-rokx- vo
 ra-ma va-yam

Ozi vezimrat yah...
 ley-mor
 hu a- doy- shem
 ish mil-kha- ma a- do- shem
 she- mo

Markevot...
 yar-du vim- zo-lot
 ke-mo a- ven ye-min-kha ha-shem
 ne-da-ri ba-ko-akh ye-min-kha ha-shem
 tir-ats o- yev

Uverov...
 be-ma- yim
 a-di-rim mi kha- mo- kha
 ba-ey- lim ha- shem mi kha- mo- kha
 ne-dar ba- ko-desh

Nora tehilot...
 kol yo-she-vey khe-na
 an ti- pol a- ley- hem
 ey- ma-ta va-fa-khad big-dol ze-ro- a- kha
 yid- mu ka- a- ven

Tevitemo...
 a- do- nay ko-ne- nu ya- de
 a-me- kha ha-shem ad ya- a- vor
 am zu ka- ni- ta

Ki va sus...
 va- ta- an la- hem
 mir- yam shi- ru la- shem
 a- do- - shem yim-lokx le-o- lam va-ed
 ra-ma va- yam

Var. of b8
 Y
 a
 b, 7

Example 16: Different schemes of patterns, sections and motives in the tunes

Confession tune	$d_1 + x / a + a_1 + b + x + c + x + c + x / x + c + x, b + c + x,$ $b + x + b_3 + c + x / b + x + b_3 + c + x / b + x + b_3 + x + c + x, b + x + b_3 + x$		
Short blessings	α A (E)	x $(c + c_3)$	c_6 c_7
Long blessings	—	γ (a_4)	x c_7
Very long blessings	α_1 $A + c_7/c_3$ A (x)	$\gamma\gamma\gamma$ γ $\gamma\gamma$	a_4 β β (x)
Shirah tune	x α	γ $x\beta$	c_7 (x) c_1 c_7 x

In the invitation, this pattern occurs on the first syllable of the invitation proper (in Yiddish), following the melody sung repeatedly on the Hebrew word “*yamoyd*”.

The comparative analysis of the invitation tune in both variants reveals musical and textual elements stemming from liturgical and para-liturgical repertoires (Torah reading on *Simhat tôrah*, prayers from the Sabbath and High Holidays services, and the benediction of betrothal and marriage). The music is closely related to the textual structure and content of the invitation, and contains elements of psalmody and cantillation.

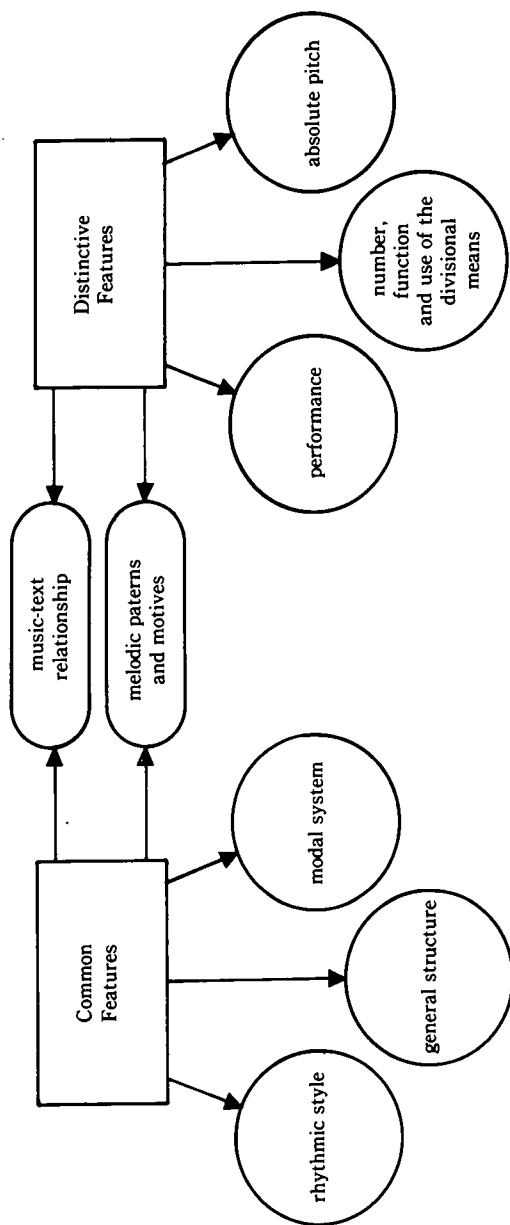
Beside these common features, we noticed a number of differences between the TA and the ZK variants of the tune: rigidity of text as opposed to text improvisation; seriousness as opposed to ironical and humoristic elements; underlining hierarchy among the invited as opposed to lack of hierarchy; melodic development independent from the text (“melocratic phrases”) as opposed to simple melodic repetition dominated by the text; solo performance as opposed to the participation of the audience (including women). Example 17 reflects, in a synthetic way, the differences and similarities between TA and ZK concerning the musical parameters mentioned above and the music-text relation.

THE DANCE *NIGGÛNÎM*: REPERTORY AND FUNCTIONS

Our examination of the dance *niggûnîm* used for the *mitsve tants* focuses on the following questions: a) whether the *mitsve tants* has a regular repertoire of dance *niggûnîm*; b) whether this repertoire or part of it is functionally linked with specific dancers; c) whether the functional link of certain dance *niggûnîm* is expressed also on the musical level; d) whether the different communities have different repertoires; e) are there stylistic differences between the tunes used in various communities; f) do differences in repertoire and style correlate with the differences between the communities already observed in the study of the invitation tune.

The inventory of dance *niggûnîm* used in the *mitsve tants* of the ZK community shows no specificity; these *niggûnîm* are sung elsewhere throughout the wedding and on other occasions too. There are, however, two exceptions. One is the *niggun* “*Boyre oylom*” (Mazor and Hajdu 1974, no. 191; Hajdu and Mazor 1988, no. 17), which is regularly sung at the *mitsve tants* and is linked to the dance of the bridegroom with the bride. This *niggun* does not appear on other occasions. The second is “*Sameyakh tesamakh*”, a “semi-regular” dance *niggun* which appears in eight out of the fifteen ZK weddings studied here as the final *niggun* of the dance of the bridegroom (Mazor and Hajdu 1974, no. 186; Hajdu and Mazor 1988, no. 15). This *niggun* is frequently used as the final *niggun* of the wedding meal because its text derives from the Seven Benedictions.

Example 17



Eighteen dance *nigunnim* were found in the TA community. Six appear regularly in all the weddings recorded by us. The rest appear occasionally. Three belong to the TA repertory (see Mazor and Hajdu 1974, nos. 102 and 140 and Ex. 18, no.1) while the rest are pan-Hassidic.³³

From the six regular *niggûnim*, one is the same “*Boyre oylom*” (as in ZK), which in this case has no specific function and may be sung—always without words—for any guest invited to the dance. The other five (Mazor and Hajdu 1974, nos. 101, 110, 111, 112, 124) have a specific function: no. 101 serves for the Rebbe’s dance, and the rest, always sung together in a fixed order (124, 110, 111, 112), serve for the dance of the bridegroom with the bride. No. 124 is so popular that it may sporadically serve for the dance of other guests. This chain of dance *niggûnim* is regularly preceded in TA by an introductory non-dancing *niggûn*, sung to the word “*shabes*” (see Ex. 1 above). However, in the ZK community, this introductory *niggûn* appears only occasionally, and is not linked to any specific dance *niggûn* or dancer.

It is highly significant that these five *niggûnim* belong to the TA regular communal repertoire of *niggûnim* sung during the celebration of *Simhat tôrah*. Four of them (Mazor and Hajdu 1974, nos. 101, 110, 111, 112) are sung during the dancing of *haqqafôt*. No. 124 is sung to the words “*sîsû we-simhû be-simhat tôrah*” during the invitation of the Bridegroom of the Torah (*hatan tôrah*).

Another difference between TA and ZK lies in the approach to the texts of dance *niggûnim*. In ZK *niggûnim* which in other contexts are generally sung with text keep the text also in the *mitsve tants*. On the other hand, in TA we found that most of their *niggûnim* are textless. An outstanding phenomenon in TA is that even those *niggûnim* which are sung with text in all the Hassidic communities in Jerusalem (“*Boyre oylom*”, “*Ur’e bunim le-vunekho*”, “*Tsavey yeshyos yaakoyv*”) are performed without text in the *mitsve tants*.

It seems then, that from the point of view of the repertory and the function of the dance *niggûnim* in the *mitsve tants* the only feature common to both communities is the importance attributed to the dance of the bridegroom which is stressed by assigning to it a special tune or tunes. The differences found between the ZK and TA communities are the presence of a fixed repertoire of *niggûnim* in TA as opposed to a non-fixed repertoire in ZK, and the use of tunes taken from the *Simhat tôrah* festival for the bridegroom’s dance in TA.

33 See Hajdu and Mazor 1972, col. 1421-1422. Some of these pan-Hassidic tunes appear in Mazor and Hajdu 1974 (nos. 62, 104, 183, 186, 190, 215). For the rest, see example 18, nos. 2, 3, 4.

no.1 (Yc 2166/18)

Musical score for no.1 (Yc 2166/18) in 2/4 time. It consists of five staves. The first staff is in bass clef, and the remaining four are in treble clef. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The word "Fine" is written below the fourth staff.

dal ¶ al Fine

no.2 (Yc 2166/12)

Musical score for no.2 (Yc 2166/12) in 2/4 time. It consists of two staves, both in treble clef. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

no.3 (Yc 2220/19)

Musical score for no.3 (Yc 2220/19) in 2/4 time. It consists of three staves. The first staff is in bass clef, and the other two are in treble clef. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

no.4 (Yc 3691/34)

Musical score for no.4 (Yc 3691/34) in 2/4 time. It consists of two staves, both in treble clef. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The first staff has a first ending bracket labeled "1". The second staff has two first ending brackets labeled "a" and "b".

Variants in Yc 2509/22

Musical score for Variants in Yc 2509/22 in 2/4 time. It consists of one staff in treble clef. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The staff has two first ending brackets labeled "a" and "b".

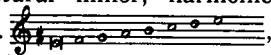
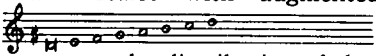
Example 18: Dance *Niggûnim*

MUSICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DANCE *NIGGŪNĪM*

The examination of the melodic and scalar structure of the dance *niggūnīm* reveals stylistic features shared by all the communities and certain differences between TA with respect to all the others.³⁴

The common forms are mono-sectional, bi-sectional (AB) and tri-sectional with repetition (ABCB).³⁵ The difference between the communities lies in the proportion in which the various forms appear in the repertory. In TA there is uniform representation of the three forms while in ZK the bi-sectional *niggūnīm* predominate (21 out of 35). The difference is accentuated if one examines the regular dance *niggūnīm* of TA. In fact four out of the six regular *niggūnīm* have a form-structure which is almost unknown in ZK. Of these one is a mono-sectional complex tune (Mazor and Hajdu 1974, no. 141), in two others the first section has a mono-sectional complex structure and the fourth tune has a tetra-sectional structure ABCD. In ZK, *niggūnīm* with exceptional forms rarely appear in the *mitsve tant*s.

The examination of the micro-structure of the sections within the tunes reveals a common feature, namely, symmetry. The overwhelming majority of the sections consist of four or eight motives. Symmetry is attained because all the motives within a *niggūn* are either one or two bars long. Another common factor is the existence of clausular structures (e.g. ab, abcd) in addition to periodic structure (abac). There is, however, a difference between TA and the other communities regarding the distribution of clausular and periodic structures. In TA clausular structures constitute 60% of the sections as opposed to 40% of periodic sections, while, in the other communities we find the opposite, 40% clausular against 60% periodic sections.

The examination of the scalar structure of the dance *niggūnīm* reveals a common repertory of scales: major, natural minor, harmonic minor and scales with augmented seconds (e.g. , and ) . Here again TA differs from all others with respect to the distribution of the various scales. In TA there is an equal distribution of three of these scales (major, minor, harmonic minor) with some 27% each, while the scales with an augmented second occur in about 19% of the

- 34 On the significance of these as parameters for defining Hassidic style, and distinguishing between various communal styles, see Mazor and Hajdu 1974: 140-143.
- 35 Besides these there are few exceptional forms among the forty four *niggūnīm* recorded in this project: two are trisectional (ABC), one is tetrasectional (ABCD), one is in the ABA form, one is in the rondo form, and one has a mono-sectional complex structure. For the classification of Hassidic *niggūnīm*, see Mazor and Hajdu 1974:139-140, 142.

tunes. In all the other communities the natural minor scale clearly predominates (40%), followed by augmented second scales (28.5%), harmonic minor (21%) and major (10.5%).

Three other variables concerning the performance of the dance *niggûnim* were examined: the range of absolute pitch, the length of the *niggûn*, and tempo. These three variables reveal further similarities and differences between the communities.

The range of absolute pitch was examined, following the same measuring system as the invitation tune, by comparing the finalis of all the *niggûnim* in each community. This examination is based on the fact that the regular range of the dance *niggûnim* in all hassidic communities is within a sixth and tenth and can not be considered as a criterion for the characterization of the particular style of each community. By collecting the absolute pitches of all the finalis in the repertory, we arrived to the characteristic range of each community which we label "total range".

The total range of all the communities is *B-c1#*.³⁶ Differences between TA and the others have been found both in the extension of the range and in its absolute position. Thus, the TA tunes occupy a relatively narrow range, a perfect fifth (*d flat-a flat*), with 78% of the range concentrated in the minor third (*e flat-g flat*). In the other communities the extension of the range is larger, and occupies the whole scale; a major seventh in Zanz (*D flat-c1*) and a major ninth in Karlin (*B-c1#*). The major part of the range, both in Zanz and Karlin spreads over a tritone, i.e. twice the range in TA: in Karlin 74% over *c# -g*, in Zanz 70% over *e flat-a*. These differences are maintained also with each wedding examined separately (see Ex. 19).

T.A.	Z.K.		
f—g ^b	d—f	f [#] —c ₁	d [#] —b
e ^b —f	e—a	f [#] —c ₁ [#]	c [#] —a
e ^b —g ^b	d—g	d—a	B—g
d—f [#]	d—b	e—c ₁	F [#] —a [#]
d ^b —g			

Example 19: Range according to each wedding

36 An exceptional case is a F# finalis, reached only once by a Karlin performer, which was not taken into consideration.

The consistency, rigidity and concentration characteristic of the TA repertory against the flexibility and diffusion in ZK is further corroborated by the examination of the relation between the absolute pitch of the invitation tune and that of the following dance tune. In TA there is a clear tendency to open the dance tune on the finalis of the invitation, while in the other communities this happens only sporadically. A special relation prevails between the invitation tune and the dance *niggûn* “*Boyre oylom*”. This *niggûn*, which is in the minor scale, frequently begins on the major third above the finalis of the *yamoyd* tune and ends on the minor third below it, thus creating a “quasi-classical” parallel major/minor relation between the “*Yamoyd*” and the dance *niggûn*. This relation is found in 90% of the TA performances while only in 40% of the ZK.

As a measuring unit for the length of the dances we have chosen the 4/4 bar which always corresponds to a double step unit of the group dances. The step pattern consists of a double step unit, i.e. two steps — one forwards and one backwards — which fall on the first and third beats, stressing the feeling of “*alla breve*” (Ex. 20), while on the second and fourth beats the dancers use other parts of their body (knees, head etc.). In other words, one bar of music in our transcription corresponds to a four-pulse unit of the dance *niggûn* and each pulse is expressed by one beat. By using the step pattern as measuring unit we have avoided the misleading criterion of measuring the real time of the dance, since time depends on the tempo of the tunes which may vary according to different circumstances.

dance tune

pulses

dance steps and body movements

st. mov. st. mov. etc.

Example 20: The dancing step pattern

The length of the dance, in all communities, has a functional importance. Thus, the dance of the bridegroom is significantly longer than the dance of any other invited guest in the same wedding, by proportions which vary from approximately 140% to 350% compared with that of the longest dance amongst all the guests. When the Rebbe is present, he dances much longer than the other guests, though less than the bridegroom. It varies from 130% to 250% more if compared with that of the longest dance amongst the guests.

Differences between the communities appear also here. In general, the TA dances are longer than those of other communities (see Ex. 21).

	ZK			TA		
	min.	max.	average	min.	max.	average
regular guest	10 bars	64 bars	25 bars	24 bars	60 bars	38 bars
bridegroom	24 bars	112 bars	58 bars	90 bars	146 bars	111 bars
Rebbe				72 bars	100 bars	85 bars

Example 21: Length

The variability of tempo is a salient feature of the *mitsve tants*. In all the Hassidic communities, the dance *niggûnim* start in a slow tempo, then accelerate, and slow down again towards the end. In most performances, the ritardando occurs in the last two bars, sometimes with a fermata on the last note. To compare between both the tempi and the accelerandi of the different dances, our main criterion was the “tempo range”, which consists of the difference between the slowest and the fastest tempo within a dance. In addition we checked the tempo range of each wedding. We measure this variability of tempo and accelerandi in terms of metronome grades. One grade being the equivalent of the distance between two marks in a mechanical metronome (e.g., MM 58-60, 69-72, 120-126 or 160-168).

There seems to be no significant difference between the communities if one considers the communal tempo range, i.e, that of the entire dances. In both TA and ZK the range globally consists of 20 grades, although within the ZK communities one finds differences (Zanz 14 grades; Karlin 20 grades). The TA range varies between MM ♩ = 96 and MM ♩ = 224 (sic!) while that of ZK MM ♩ = 72-176. However, if one examines each wedding separately, a difference between TA and ZK emerges. The tempo range of a single wedding in TA varies between 13 (MM ♩ = 104-184) and 16 (MM ♩ = 112-224) grades, while in ZK the typical tempo range (in 8 out of 13 weddings) is of 9-10 grades (such as MM ♩ = 104-152, MM ♩ = 116-176, MM ♩ = 66-144).

Considering the accelerando range of the guests, there seems to be no difference between ZK and TA. However, differences in accelerandi are noticed if one considers the dance of the bridegroom. In TA the tempo range of the bridegroom’s dance (12 to 15 grades) is always wider than in any other dance of the wedding including the Rebbe’s (2 to 10 grades).³⁷ In ZK, the tempo range of the bridegroom’s dance is wider than in the other dances only in 5 out of 13 weddings.

37 In two weddings only the tempo range of the Rebbe’s dance significantly differs from the other guests: it is of 9 and 10 grades, while with the others it is from 3 to 5 grades in the first wedding and 4 to 6 in the second.

INTRODUCTORY *NIGGŪNĪM*

Besides the invitation tune and the dance *niggūnīm*, we find at the *mitsve tants* ceremony introductory *niggūnīm* of various origins, structures and functions. These *niggūnīm* are sung at the opening of the ceremony and as preparation for the dance of the bridegroom and the bride.

In the TA community the dancing ceremony always opens with a textless *niggūn* sung by the audience. This tune belongs to the ecstatic cleaving to God *niggūnīm* (*dveykes*) which serve as a means for one of the most important functions in Hassidism — achievement of communion with God (see Schleifer 1985:220-224; Mazor and Seroussi 1990-91). This *niggūn* is used by this community during the services of the High Holidays, and also serves as the opening tune for the *haqqafōt* on *Simḥat tōrah*.

The most popular inviter in the Karlin community opens alone the ceremony with the *niggūn* “*Keitsad merakdin lifney hakalo*” (“how does one dance in front of the bride”) whose melody is borrowed from the *Simḥat tōrah* dance *niggūn* “*Haaderes vехаemuno lekḥay oylumim*”. According to the opinion of this Karlin inviter, in the context of the wedding, this *niggūn* serves to introduce the audience to the proper atmosphere for the ceremony and thus to awake it to an active participation in the singing of the invitation.

Just before the invitation of the bridegroom to the *mitsve tants* two texts are sung. One is “*Misoyd khakhumim*” of the *mūsaf* and *ne’ilah* of Yom Kippur according to the eastern Ashkenazi rite, adapted for the event (see Ex. 22 and Neeman 1973:222, 258-261).

The modified parts, as the original text, are in *Loshn koydesh*. Moreover, while the TA variant conserves the structure and length of the original text, the ZK variant lack its last section (see Ex. 23, section 5). In this detail, we can furthermore observe the different approach of the communities to the significance of the *mitsve tants* ceremony. The TA community stresses symbolic meaning, while ZK inviters emphasize earthly joy, or at most, the need to praise the Lord on this happy occasion.

There are no observable communal differences in the tune of this prayer. Differences between performers are minor and seem to be of a personal nature.

The second preparatory, “*Akavyo ben Mahalalel oymēr*” (Mishnah, Avot 3:1), is performed in a typical Eastern European cantorial (*hazzanūt*) style. Its text is usually recited during funerals. The story about the origin of the tune of this prayer combines factual and legendary motives. In a certain *shtetl*, a well-know *hazzan* was afflicted by a fatal contagious disease which caused his isolation from the community. Feeling his death was near, he demanded that a grave be prepared for him, and when it was ready, he went out alone on his last

a. The T.A. version (Yc 2220/20)

Grave sempre rubato

Solo + tutti

mi-soyd kha-khu-mim i-ne-vo/holy · nim i-mi · le-med da-as me-vi-nim [textless]

Solo

ef · te-khu

+ tutti Solo

pi [yi] be-shir ir-nu · nim [textless] le-khu-ved

khu-sn vey-ka · lu ve-lish-ney ha-me-khi · tu-nim hu-el · yoy-nim

ve-takh · toy · nim

b. The Z.K. version (Y 1120/21)

Grave, in tempo

Solo + tutti

[textless]

Solo, sempre rubato tutti

mi-soyd kha-kho · mim i-ne-voy · nim [textless]

Solo

u · mi · le-med da-as me-vi-nim da-as me-vi · nim ef-tekhu pi be-shir

tutti Solo

ur · no · nim [textless] lesameyakh khusn

ka · le i-ma-khi-tu nim

Example 22: *Misoyd Khakhumim*

Original liturgical text	TA Variant	ZK Variant	
		Performer A.B.	Performer A.H.**
1. Invoking the doctrines	=	=	=
2. taught by erudite sages	=	=	=
3. I open my lips in prayer and supplication	I open my lips in song and chanting	= =*	= =
4. to plead fervently before the supreme King of Kings	in honour of groom and bride and both fathers in law	to rejoice =** = =	to praise and glorify him who dwells in his grooms (!)
5. and Lord of Lords	the upper and the lower		

* A third inviter used once the words “joy and gladness” instead of “song and chanting” (NSA Y 4559). The same informant ended once this piece with the words “groom and bride” (NSA Y 3676)

** Another informant of ZK preferred to use the TA version (NSA Y4561 and Y5415).

Example 23: “*Misoyd khakhumim*” — Origin and variants

journey. Approaching the grave (or, in other versions, standing near his grave, or even when lying in it) he sang this *niggûn* which was heard from afar by the *shtetl* inhabitants. It was brought to the Holy Land by someone who witnessed this event and it was attached, probably by the grandfather of one of our main informants, to the invitation of the groom to dance with the bride, because of its moralizing nature.

The *Loshn koydesh* text is carefully articulated, as all liturgical texts, and includes repetitions of words and phrases, as in the *hazzanût* style. The text is supplemented by commentaries in Yiddish, which serve to explicate or interpret the logical relations between its parts. The function and nature of these additions are similar to the Eastern European manner of study of the Talmud with exegetical interpolation in Yiddish. Thus, the original verses IV, V:

IV: And whither thou art going? To the place of dust, worm and maggot.

V: And before whom thou art about to give account and reckoning?

Before the King of Kings of Kings, the Holy One, blessed is He.

become in the TA variant (the Yiddish supplements are in italics and the *Loshn koydesh* ones are in small letters):

- IV: 1. And whither *and whither, and whither, and whither* thou art going?
 2. To the place of dust **alone, it would not have been too bad.**
 3. Worm, **it would still not have been too bad either.**
 4. **But it is** *to the place of dust, worm, worm, worm*
 5. **and on top of it** and maggot.
- V: 1. And before whom art thou about to give account and reckoning?
 2. Before the King **alone, it would not have been too bad.**
 3. of Kings, **it would still not have been too bad either.**
 4. **But he is** *King, King, King, King of Kings* of Kings.
 5. **and on top of it** the Holy One, blessed is He.

The variations in the exact wording of these supplements and in the repetition of words and phrases do not affect the structure or the meaning of the text, but reveal some differences between both communities: a) the word “alone” in line 2 of verses IV and V is added in the TA version, but not in ZK; b) the word “still” which appears in line 3 of verses IV and V renders “*noch*” in the TA version, but “*shoyrn*” in the ZK version; c) in line 4 of verse IV the word “worm” is repeated four times in TA, whereas in ZK we find different treatments repeating both “dust” and “worm” in different combinations; d) in line 4 of verse V, we have “but it is” in ZK instead of “but He is” in TA; e) in line 4 of verse V we have, in the TA versions, a repetition of “king” (three to five times), whereas in ZK there is a repetition either of “King of Kings” or the whole combination “King of Kings of Kings”; f) in line 5 of verse V the words “and on top of it” (*undertsit*) are added before “the Holy One” only in ZK versions.

The tune of “*Akavyo*” (Ex. 24) is of unknown origin. However its general mode and some of its motives, are reminiscent of various prayers from the Yom Kippur.³⁸ The overall structure of this tune is similar in both TA and ZK. The tune consists of four units, $\alpha \alpha_1 \beta \beta_1$ (see Ex. 25), and is made up of six patterns — A,B,C,D,E,F — with their realizations, plus three more motives, g, h and i (see Ex. 26).

38 The closest resemblance is to be found in Weisser’s tune to *Misoyd khakhumim*. See Weisser 1940:64, no.49, and also nos. 50, 58. However, motives from the *Akavyo* tune can be found in the Rosh Hashana services (see Neeman 1973, beginning of nos. 89 and 200) and motives from both *Akavyo* and *Misoyd khakhumim* are found in a recording of *selihôt* by the Rabbi of Zvil (NSA Yc 2777). This interesting relation needs further research.

Example 24: *Akavyo ben Mahalel oymer*

a. The T.A. version (Yc 2220/21)

textless

a-kav · yu oy ben ma-ha · la · lel

tutti

o · y[*o* · ho · oy] · meyr, his-ta-ke! bish-loy-shu de-vu[hu] · rim [m]

+tutti

ve · eyn a · tu bu li · dey a · ve[ey] · ru oy da me · a · yin

+tutti

bu · su i · le · on i · le · on i · le · on i · le · on a · tu [o-ho-ho] hoy ·

tutti

[ho] · lek[h] [m] hoy ve · lif · ney mi a · tu u · sid

rit. tutti

[e] ri mu in nokh der-tsi [e]ve · soy-le-yu ve · lif · ney mi

a · tu u · sid li · te · yn din vey-khesh boyn lif · ney mey-lekh a-leyn

vol tokh nokh nish-ku-she ge · veyn mal-khey volt oykh nokh nish-ku-she gi-veyn

er is dokh o-ber der mey-lekh mey-lekh mey-lekh mey-lekh mal-khey ha-me

rit.

lu · khim [a · ha-ha-ha · ha-ha a · ha-ha-ha · ha-ha] a-ku-doysht bu-rikt hi

li · te · [e] · yn din vey-khesh-boyn oy da me · ya · yin bu · su

p mi · ti-pu se · ri khu i-le [h]on i-le[y]on i · le[y]on i · le[y]on

a-tu [o ho-ho-ho o · ho · u] · oy · lek[h] bim-koym u-for a-leyn vol tokh nokh nish-

· ku - she gi-veyn ri - mu volt okh nokh nish- ku-she gi-veyn si dokh o - ber
lim-koym u - for ri - mu [e]ri - mu [e]ri - mu

b. The Z.K. version (Y 1120/20)

a-kav-yo *tutti* ben ma-ha-la-lel *tutti* oy - meyr is-ta- ke[we we weyl] bish - loy-sho *+tutti*
dey-vu - rim *tutti* veyn a-tu bu li-dey a-vey- ru [mer zu dir] da[ha]
me-ya - yin bo - so *tutti* i - le-yon a-tu oy - lekh ve-lif- ney mi [i] *tutti*
a - to [h]o - sid li - teyn din ve-khesh - boyn da[ha] me-ya-yin bo - so
mi-ti - po *rit.* se-ru-kho i - le[h]an i - le[h]an i-le[h]an a-to hoy-lekh lim-koym
u-for vol-tokh shoy'n nish-ku-she ge-veyn ri-mo vol-tokh shoy'n nish-ku-she ge-
veyn si-dokh o-ber o-for ri-mo o-for ri-mo o-for ri-mo *+tutti* in tsi der tsi
ve-soy - le - [y]d *tutti* ve - lif-ney mi[hi] a-tu [h]o-sid li-teyn din vey-khesh-
boyn *+tutti* lif-ney me-lekh *tutti* vol-tokh shoy'n nish-ku-she ge-veyn mal-khey vol-tokh-shoy'n *Solo*
nish - ku-she ge-veyn *Solo* si-dokh o-ber *tutti* me-lekh mal-khey me - lekh mal-khey ha-me-lo *Solo*
khim ha-ku-doysh *tutti* bu-rikh hi[yi]

pattern A



pattern B



pattern C



pattern D



pattern E



pattern F



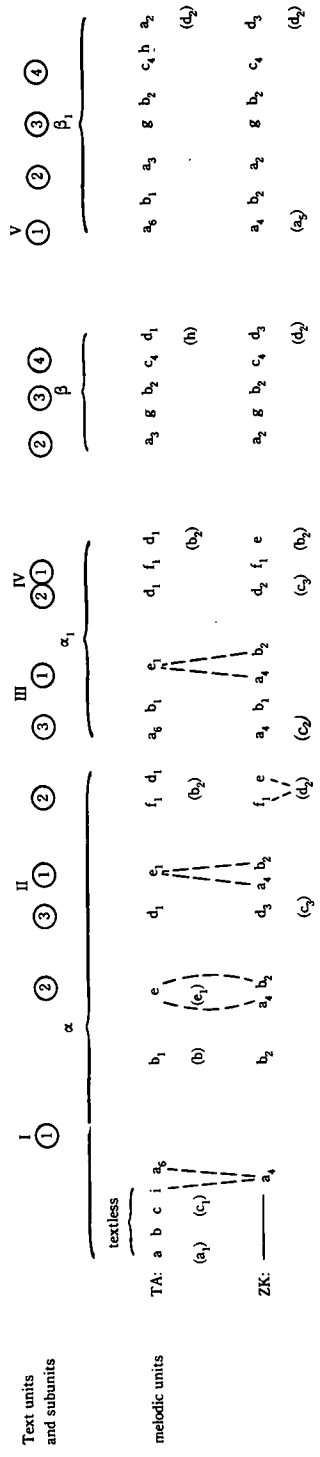
motifs

Example 25: *Akavyo* — Patterns and motives

The six patterns and motif g are common to all performers regardless of their communal affinity. Yet the frequency and function of patterns and motives differ in TA and ZK:

- 1) In the first part of the tune (mus. units α and α_1) the overall sequence of patterns is different in the two communities. The most notable difference is that in the TA version there is an additional sequence of four patterns (a, b, c, d), sung without words before the beginning of the text thus creating a unique musical phrase. However, the first word “*Akavyo*” is interpolated in the middle of the last motif, d.
- 2) Motives h and i appear only in TA.
- 3) Patterns B and C are significantly more frequent in ZK, while D and E are more common in TA.
- 4) Among the various sequences of patterns, the sequences EFD, ABCD, ABED, and EDFD are found in TA, while FB, FE, ABC, ABD, ABFE and ABFB are found in ZK. Only two sequences, AB and CD appear in both.

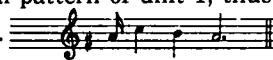
Example 26: *Akavio* — structure



5) Out of the twenty five realizations, six ($a_2, b_2, c_4, d_2, f_1, g$) are common to both communities, eleven ($a, a_1, a_3, a_6, b, b_1, c, d, d_1, e_1, f$) are found only in TA, while two others (a_4, e) are found in ZK only. The rest ($a_5, b_3, c_1, c_2, c_3, d_3$) are personal variants.

6) In TA we find much more homogeneity within the various performances with regard both to sequences and to the realizations of the various patterns. Thus, only one out of the four performers has some combinations unknown to the others (EB, GA, and AED) and lacks one of the realizations (a_3) which others use. On the other hand, each of the three ZK performers has his own combinations and realizations.

7) There is also a difference between TA and ZK regarding the functionality of the different patterns. Thus, the opening pattern A, serves also as a final pattern in TA, but not in ZK. Pattern E which appears in the middle of units α and α_1 serves in ZK as the final pattern of unit 1, thus forming a pseudo-finalis on the fourth tone of the scale.



8) Pattern C, which serves in TA (and in a single version in ZK) to “announce” the approaching finalis in units β and β_1 , serves in ZK also in other functions in units a and d (see Ex. 26).

9) The final motif of the “*Akavyo*” tune in TA reveals an upward shifting of a fourth, sixth or seventh (perhaps a failed attempt to reach a higher octave (see example 27).³⁹ No such shifting occurs in ZK, which ends on the expected tone of the tune:

Z.K.



T.A. ha · ku-doysh bu-rikk hi



ha · ku-doysh bu · rikk hi



ha · ku-doysh bu · rikk hi

Example 27: *Akavyo* — the Finalis

³⁹ A similar phenomenon of upward shifting for purposes of dramatization, is found in final sections of prayers among various Hassidic *hazzanim*.

“*Akavyo*”, as many pieces of *hazzanût*, is sung in an unmeasured rhythm. Therefore, its tempo can be analyzed only indirectly by measuring the total length of the *niggûn* in its different performances. The total duration of the tune in TA is almost twice as long as in ZK (5'10"–5'25" versus 2'35"–3"). This difference can be only partly attributed to the additional sections of the TA version. However, the main factor seems to be the length of final tones in both major and minor units and the occurrence of pauses between the units, features which are typical of the TA version.

The order of performance of these *niggûnim* differs between TA and ZK. In the TA variant “*Misoyd*” comes first and then “*Akavyo*”, while in ZK it is the opposite. In our opinion, this difference is related to the different content and function of the “*Misoyd*” text in both communities (see Ex. 23). In TA “*Misoyd*” ends by mentioning the “upper” and “lower”, which may symbolize either the celestial bride and groom as opposed to the terrestrial couple or the departed ancestors of the young couple as opposed to those alive.⁴⁰ This final phrase serves then as an introduction to the moralizing text of “*Akavyo*”, which reminds the bride and groom of their mortal nature as humans. In the ZK version the “*Misoyd*” ends on a happy note “to rejoice groom, bride and relatives” — and thus it is an appropriate introduction to the joyful invitation of the groom to dance with his bride, after the “sad” part — “*Akavyo*” — has been got over with first.

These introductory pieces have a common function, namely to prepare in one way or another the upcoming event. Thus, the opening *niggûn* in TA (originally an opening tune to the *haqqafôt*) prepares the atmosphere of solemnity which dominates the *mitsve tants* ceremony in this community. In Karlin, the opening *niggûn* “*Keytsad merakdin*” introduces the audience to a merry mood and readiness to active participation in the ceremony. “*Misoyd*” and “*Akavyo*” serve, in both communities, to “awaken the soul” of the bride and groom before their dance. Both the text and music of these pieces recall Yom Kippur, and serve as a kind of substitute for the moralizing verses of the *badkhn* in the Diaspora wedding type.

DIFFERENCES OF PERFORMANCE

One of the most salient differences between the TA and ZK variants concerns the role of the audience in the *mitsve tants* ceremony. In TA, the audience participates

40 For the possible interpolation of the words “upper” and “lower” based on the belief that the ancestors are coming to celebrate the wedding see Sperling 1961: 419, # 995, note.

only in the singing of the dance *niggûnim* and joins the inviter in singing the textless sections of the "Misoyd" *niggûn* and in humming the reponse parts of "Akavyo" (i.e. the final tones of units and sub-units). The rest is performed by the inviter alone, while the audience remains respectfully silent. Consultations of the inviter with the young couple's families concerning the order of invitations are conducted in discrete whispers.

In the ZK wedding, the audience is very active in the *mitsve tants*. A great part of the audience sings the word *yamoyd* at the end of phrase α and β , in a regular responsorial manner. At times the audience joins the inviter also in other parts of the invitation and during the singing of the introductory *niggûnim*. The audience intervenes in the invitation, corrects the inviter when necessary, and advises him on suitable praises (sometimes ironical) for the invited dancer. The audience reacts loudly to certain phrases by coughing, laughing and ululating. Furthermore, the inviter exchanges witty remarks with the audience, including women(!) and children, about the praises, the invited guests, the dance *niggûnim*, etc. Some of the men from the audience may talk with the invited dancer, exchange with him remarks and greetings, offer him a drink to cheer him up before he goes on to perform his holy duty or call "er geit, er geit!" ("here he comes!") when he approaches the bride. After the dance they may congratulate the dancer and wish him to dance at the wedding of his own children. The rest of the audience, when not involved in the ceremony, is engaged in loud chattering, without paying particular attention to the events.

CONCLUSION

The *mitsve tants* ceremony may be characterized as a sequence of acts, each one preparing or leading to the next one, eventually leading to an event which is to take place elsewhere after the ceremony, i.e. the consummation of the marriage. The structure of the ceremony as a sequence of preparatory acts seems to be an outcome of the importance attached by the Hassidim to the preparation to the performance of a religious deed (*mitsve*).⁴¹ This attitude stems from the view that every deed, albeit daily and mundane, may become an act of worship

41 A typical Hassidic saying is: the preparation for the [performing of the] *mitsve* ("commandment") is more important than the [performing of the] *mitsve* in itself. (see Israeli 1982:160). The Hassidic custom to linger for hours before prayer, well known and sometimes ironically described in anti-Hassidic literature, is assigned to a Mishnaic saying (*Berakôt* 5:1) about the pious who lingered an hour before prayer. See Wertheim 1960:88-93; Schatz 1968:133-4, 143-4, 150 and 1976:73. The preparations for prayer included also physical acts, such as purification of the body (ritual bath,

if the participants properly concentrate their thoughts and intentions on the spiritual and sacred significance of the act (see *zawa'at Ha-Ribash*, #3, #90, #93-95; Schatz-Uffenheimer 1968:16-17, 72; Tishby and Dan 1969:801, 808-809; Scholem 1975:328-329, 338-339).

Within the ceremony, the central act is the dance of the bride and groom, a direct preliminary towards their union, which reflects the union of the celestial couple. According to Hassidic thought, the dance of the Rebbe with the bride is then aimed at creating favorable conditions for the celestial Union. The special function of the Rebbe's and of the groom's dance find their expression in various aspects of the invitation as well as of the dance itself, i.e., the special repertory of *niggūnim*, their length, and the range of tempo. The dance of the other relatives with the bride is thus limited to the more earthly function of preparing the terrestrial union or at least the dance of the young couple.⁴²

The *mitsve tants* is an event which stands at the crossroads of various conflicting conceptions. First, it poses the problem of reconciling the strict rules of chastity in the domain of the relations between the sexes with the need and will to abide by a well established custom impregnated with symbolism. This may explain why both Hassidim who favour this practice and those who are opposed to it are very determined in their attitude. Second, various and indeed contradictory emotions are expressed in the event and indeed conduct it. Merriment and exultation, linked with the religious duty "to make joyful the groom and the bride", contrast with fear of the Almighty. One has to remember that this special day is considered, for both the groom and the bride, as a day of reckoning, a fact they are constantly reminded of by the entourage and which is reflected also in the preparations for the wedding, the fasting, the saying of *widdūy* ("confession"), the wearing of the *kittl*, and other customs.

excretion) and even smoking of the pipe (perhaps linked to the latter, see Piekarz 1978:345-6 and note 137; Wilensky 1970:39, note 20, and p. 54). Another custom to be mentioned in this context is the use, prior to the performing of a religious command, of the formula: "I am ready and prepared to perform the command of..., הנני מוכן ומזומן לקיים מצוות לשם ייחוד קודשא בריך הוא ושכינתיה His *Šekinah*".

42 A frequent reason given for the dancing in weddings in front of the bride or with her in the Hassidic and non-Hassidic literature alike, is that it is done so as to "endear her to her husband" (כדי לחבבה על בעלה). See the Bet Shemuel commentary in Jacob ben Asher (late 17th century), fol. 56b. See also Ms. 8° 3444 (dated 1828-29) at the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem, p.65, # 14. At least one informant used this Hebrew expression to justify the dancing of relatives with the bride.

The cohabitation of these emotions is reflected in the thematic and associative links between the *mitsve tants* and the liturgy and music of two holy days of very different nature: *Simḥat tôrah*, which expresses the spiritual joy connected with the renewal of the covenant between God and his people, and Yom Kippur, which is the universal Day of Atonement. The mystic symbolism assigned to both holy days, the Union of God and the *Šekīnah* (Yom Kippur) and the Union of God, the *Šekīnah* and his People (*Simḥat tôrah*) (see Tishbi 1961, II:511-13, 525-6), is a crucial factor in determining the contents of the *mitsve tants*. Elements referring to these holy days are present in both versions of the *mitsve tants*, but the proportions and the emphasis of these elements greatly differ between them. In the TA version there is great emphasis on elements related to the atmosphere of Yom Kippur, while in the ZK version these elements are attenuated by a pronounced atmosphere of earthly merriment. The difference in atmosphere is reflected in the text, the music, and the behaviour and participation of the audience. The total sum of these differences adds up to a joyful social event in ZK, as opposed to a solemn, austere ceremony in TA.

The solemn atmosphere of the TA *mitsve tants* is in full concordance with other peculiarities of their social and religious life which point to the uniqueness of this community within the Hassidic world. TA is in fact the only community in Jerusalem which does not bear a geographical name referring to the place of the dynasty's founding. Toldot Aharon is actually the name of their yeshiva and synagogue, which were named after Aharon Roth (Reb Arale, 1894-1947). He founded in the late 1920's a new congregation in Jerusalem, called "*Hevrat Šomerê emûnîm*", aiming at a revival of the early ideals of Hassidism, and specifically the worship of God in the manner of the R. Israel Baal Shem Tov (the Besht), the founder of the Hassidic movement (see Steinberger 1948: title-page, 37-39). This community is characterized by its tight social organization: its individuals are members of an "order" (*khevre*), with a very elaborate written book of rules which settles all matters of daily conduct down to details of dressing.⁴³ Their extremely puritan approach to all aspects of life, and particularly to the worship of God (including the traditional concept of dance as a theurgical act, Roth 1949:27a) explains the uniqueness of the *mitsve tants* in the TA version.

43 See Roth 1949, esp. fols. 9b, 13b, 14b, 18a, 38b-45a, 76b-77a. This book of rules was written for *Hevrat Šomerê emûnîm* founded by A. Roth and lead today by his son, Abraham Hayim Roth in Beney Berak. However, most of Aharon Roth's Hassidim remained in Jerusalem, under the leadership of his son-in-law, the present Rebbe of Toldot Aharon, Abraham Isaac Kahn. The book of rules serves both communities. Nevertheless, the Beney Berak community, which bears the name of *Hevrat Šomerê emûnîm* practises the *mitsve tants* in its Diaspora version.

The ZK version is closer “in spirit” to the Diaspora tradition of the *mitsve tants*, in which merriment and soberness were mingled by the *badkhn*. In our opinion, the ZK approach to the *mitsve tants* can be related to a certain “detachment” or “evasion” from the mystic and theurgical basis attributed to this act in early Hassidism. This detachment is justified by the Hassidim themselves with two arguments: first, “*yerídat had-dôrôt*” (“fall of the generations”), i.e., Hassidim nowadays are less able to fully grasp the hidden mystical deeds of the previous generations and are even reluctant to talk freely about this subject, and secondly, if there is anybody today who may have the knowlegde to understand the inner meaning of the *mitsve tants*, these are the few contemporary *rebbe*s who have exceptional spiritual stature.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- EJ² Encyclopaedia Judaica. Jerusalem 1971-1972.
EH אנציקלופדיה עברית (Encyclopedia Hebraica)
HOM A. Z. Idelsohn, *Hebräisch-orientalischer Melodienschatz...*, vols. I-X, 1914-1932. Berlin, Vienna, Jerusalem.
JNUL Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem.
NGD The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Stanley Sadie.
NSA National Sound Archives, JNUL.
Yuval Yuval — Studies of the Jewish Music Research Centre.