A tool of remembrance: the shofar in modern music, literature and art
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Part II

Dialogues between Traditional Religious Texts and Modern Music, Literature and Art: A Classification
Part II offers a classification of the 70 works of art, determined by Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of dialogue and by ideas from T.S. Eliot’s essay “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” discussed in Chapter 1.1.

To recapitulate, the artist’s point of departure in the first category, “The Present is directed by the Past,” is a traditional religious text, in most cases a Bible verse or an element from the Rosh Ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur prayer books: a prayer, the system of 100 shofar blasts, the shofar blasts themselves or the shofar timbre. In this category, the modern work of art, the Present, is determined by the traditional text, the Past.

In the second category, “The Present is indirectly directed by the Past,” the artist is inspired by another work of art, which itself belongs to the Past, or for its part was inspired by traditional religious texts from the Past. The work of art may be an adaptation of another work of art, such as the elaboration of a song in an instrumental composition or the adaptation of a play in an opera.

In the third category, “The Past is altered by the Present,” the artist’s point of departure is what Bakhtin calls his “own question,” an idea or problem that occupies his mind; in his work of art, he confronts this own question with a traditional religious text, which deals with a similar problem and in one way or another provides interesting material for comparison. The artist may enter into a dialogue with traditional religious texts from his own point of view on tradition or modernization; he may dedicate himself to a tradition that is dear to him, set his face against a petrified tradition or propagate the modernization of shofar tradition. Many “own questions” (Bakhtin) of artists concern the Shoah, or the horrors of war or terrorism. Other important questions originate from religious confrontations within Judaism, of Judaism and other religions, or of religiosity and secularity. Finally, traditional shofar texts play a role in the work of artists who are concerned about a better world. As a result of the artist’s perception in the Present, the traditional religious text from the Past will never be read the same way. Some works of art fit into more than one category and a section of a work may belong in a different category from the entire work.
1. The Present is directed by the Past

The Bible: Verses with a Shofar

Exodus 19 (the theophany)
  4.23. Thomas Mann, novella *The Tables of the Law* (1943)
Joshua 6 (the battle of Jericho)
  4.18. Felix Nussbaum, painting *Entombment (Organ-Grinders)* (1933)

Psalm 81 (praise of God)
Psalm 150 (praise of God)
  4.33. Ben Shahn, painting *Third Allegory* (1955)
First Chronicles 13 (David brings the Ark to Jerusalem)
  4.33. Ben Shahn, painting *Third Allegory* (1955)

The Bible: Verses without a Shofar

Genesis 22 (Abraham’s sacrifice)
Exodus 20 (the prohibition of images)
Exodus 32 (the golden calf)
Leviticus 5 (animal sacrifices)
  4.53. Eliyahu Sidi, painting *From Tractate Rosh Ha-Shanah* (1994)
Deuteronomy 17 (the ideal king)
First Kings 1-11 (Solomon’s kingship)
Second Kings 2 (Elijah’s ascension)
Isaiah 52 (the deliverance of Jerusalem)
  4.34. Marc Chagall, etching *The Deliverance of Jerusalem* (1956)
Ezekiel 10, Joel 2, Jonah 2, Job 28 (the four elements, the four directions of the wind)
Jonah 2 (Jonah’s prayer)
Psalm 92 (praise of God)
  4.5. Edward Elgar, oratorio *The Apostles* (1903)
Psalm 114 (the exodus from Egypt)
  4.7. Ernest Bloch, cantata *Psalm 114* (1912)
Ecclesiastes 1-2 (scepticism)
New Testament: Luke 6 (Jesus’ prayer on the mountain, sunrise)
  4.5. Edward Elgar, oratorio *The Apostles* (1903)

Archaeological Find

Stone from the Temple Mount with inscription regarding the shofar

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Mishnah
Rosh Ha-Shanah 3 (the shofar)
  4.44. Yehezkel Braun, cantata Festive Horns (1977)
  4.53. Eliyahu Sidi, painting From Tractate Rosh Ha-Shanah (1994)
  4.38. Herman Berlinski, cantata Shofar Service (1964)
Zevahim (animal sacrifices)
  4.53. Eliyahu Sidi, painting From Tractate Rosh Ha-Shanah (1994)
Kinnim (bird sacrifices)
  4.53. Eliyahu Sidi, painting From Tractate Rosh Ha-Shanah (1994)
Talmud
Yoma 28b (dawn)
  4.5. Edward Elgar, oratorio The Apostles (1903)
Prayer Books: Shofar Prayers
Rosh Ha-Shanah (Malkhuyot, Zikhronot, Shofarot)
  4.38. Herman Berlinski, cantata Shofar Service (1964)
Rosh Ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur (U-Netanneh Tokef)
Yom Kippur (Ne'ilah)
Prayer Books: Shofar Blasts: Quotation
  4.17. Else Lasker-Schüler, play Arthur Aronymus and His Ancestors (1932)
  4.10. S. Anski, play Between Two Worlds (The Dybbuk) (1919)
  4.57. Shulamit Ran, opera Between Two Worlds (1998)
  4.35. Miklós Rózsa, film music Ben-Hur (1959)
  4.5. Edward Elgar, oratorio The Apostles (1903)
  4.64. Osvaldo Golijov, composition Tekiah (2004)
  4.63. Tsippi Fleischer, orchestral composition Symphony No. 5 “Israeli-Jewish Collage” (2003)
Prayer Books: Shofar Blasts: Transformation
Prayer Books: Shofar Blasts: Transformation in Other Instruments
  4.43. Alexander Goehr, music theater piece Sonata about Jerusalem (1970)
  4.61. Jeff Hamburg, orchestral composition Tekiah (2001)
  4.44. Yehezkel Braun, cantata Festive Horns (1977)
  4.7. Ernest Bloch, cantata Psalm 114 (1912)
  4.15. Aaron Copland, piano trio Vitebsk (1929)
Prayer Books: Shofar Timbre: Imitation in Other Instruments
Prayer Books: Shofar Blasts: Onomatopoeia
   4.8. Sholem Aleykhem, short story *Mister Grinn Gotta Job* (1915)
   4.24. Yehuda Haim Perahia, poem *A Little Light* (1944)

Prayer Books: Shofar Blasts: Reference
   4.25. Avrom Sutskever, poem *Resurrection* (1945)

Prayer Books: The System of Shofar Blasts
   4.65. Avraham Loewenthal, painting *100 Sounds of the Shofar* (2005)
   4.38. Herman Berlinski, cantata *Shofar Service* (1964)

2. The Present is indirectly directed by the Past

Adaptation of Another Work
   Obadiah the Proselyte, autobiography (12th century)
   Samuel ben Yahya, chronicle (12th century)
   Recha Freier/Alexander Goehr, libretto (1970)
   4.43. Alexander Goehr, music theater piece *Sonata about Jerusalem* (1970)
   folksong *Eliyahu Ha-Navi*

   Moris Rozenfeld, poem *The Creation of Man* (1898)
   4.3. Ephraim Moses Lilien, drawing *The Creation of Man* (1902)
   4.10. S. Anski, play *Between Two Worlds (The Dybbuk)* (1919)

Inspiration from Another Work
   Sophocles, play *Antigone* (441 BCE)
   Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, play *Nathan the Wise* (1779)
   Dante, epic *The Divine Comedy* (14th century)
   4.28. Primo Levi, memoirs *If This Is a Man* (1947)
   Claudio Monteverdi, *Sonata sopra Sancta Maria* from the cantata *Vespers* (1610)
   4.43. Alexander Goehr, music theater piece *Sonata about Jerusalem* (1970)
   Gustav Schwab, poem *The Horseman and Lake Constance* (1826)
   4.10. S. Anski, play *Between Two Worlds (The Dybbuk)* (1919)
   4.15. Aaron Copland, piano trio *Vitebsk* (1929)

3. The Past is altered by the Present

Tradition and Modernization: Defense of Tradition
   4.4. Yitskhok Leybush Perets, short story *The Shofar* (1902)
   4.2. Moris Rozenfeld, poem *Sephirah* (1898)
Tradition and Modernization: Opposition to Tradition
4.52. Richard Chess, poem “With a Blast of the Ram’s Horn” (1994)
4.69. Sarah Lindsay, poem Zucchini Shofar (2008)
4.18. Felix Nussbaum, painting Entombment (Organ-Grinders) (1933)

Tradition and Modernization: Modern Technology

Tradition and Modernization: Modern Business
4.8. Sholem Aleykhem, short story Mister Grinn Gotta Job (1915)

The Shoah: Prelude
4.17. Else Lasker-Schüler, play Arthur Aronymus and His Ancestors (1932)

The Shoah: Pogroms
4.21. Kurt Weill, oratorio The Eternal Road (1936)

The Shoah: Violation of the Ten Commandments
4.23. Thomas Mann, novella The Tables of the Law (1943)
4.36. Herman Wald, monument Memorial to the Six Million (1959)

The Shoah: The Shofar in Concentration Camps
4.39. Abel Herzberg, autobiographical story The History of My Shofar (1965)

The Shoah: Sanctification by the Shofar
4.39. Abel Herzberg, autobiographical story The History of My Shofar (1965)

The Shoah: Strength from Belief
4.27. Arnold Schoenberg, cantata A Survivor from Warsaw (1947)
4.39. Abel Herzberg, autobiographical story The History of My Shofar (1965)

The Shoah: Depression after Liberation
4.24. Yehuda Haim Perahia, poem A Little Light (1944)
4.25. Avrom Sutskever, poem Resurrection (1945)

The Shoah: Commemoration
4.31. Paul Goodman, story A Memorial Synagogue (1949)
4.36. Herman Wald, monument Memorial to the Six Million (1959)
4.70. Manuel Herz, synagogue Meor Hagola – Beth Knesset Magenza (2010)

Violence: War
4.41. Yehuda Amichai, poem Jerusalem is a port city (1968)
4.45. Yehuda Amichai, poem The Real Hero (1983)
Violence: Terrorism

Religious Confrontations: Transgression in Judaism
4.10. S. Anski, play *Between Two Worlds (The Dybbuk)* (1919)
4.32. Amir Gilboa, poem *Rahav* (1950)
4.29. Der Nister, novel *The Family Masher* (1939-1948)

Religious Confrontations: Religiosity and Secularism in Judaism
4.25. Avrom Sutskever, poem *Resurrection* (1945)
4.11. Yoysef Tshaykov, drawing *Dawn* (1919)
4.63. Tsippi Fleischer, orchestral composition *Symphony No. 5 “Israeli-Jewish Collage”* (2003)
4.50. Alvin Curran, electro-acoustic composition *Shofar der Zeit* (1990)

Religious Confrontations: Judaism and Nature Religion
4.12. Shaul Tshernikhovski, poem *Did I come too soon . . . ?* (1919)

Religious Confrontations: Judaism and Christianity
4.17. Else Lasker-Schüler, play *Arthur Aronymus and His Ancestors* (1932)
4.5. Edward Elgar, oratorio *The Apostles* (1903)
4.35. Miklós Rózsa, film music *Ben-Hur* (1959)

Religious Confrontations: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Religious Confrontations: Secularism and Myths
4.22. Kenneth Fearing, poem *Afternoon of a Pawnbroker* (1943)

A Better World: Messianism
4.25. Avrom Sutskever, poem *Resurrection* (1945)
4.22. Kenneth Fearing, poem *Afternoon of a Pawnbroker* (1943)
4.6. Heyyim Nahman Bialik, poem *And it shall be when the days grow long...* (1908)
4.43. Alexander Goehr, music theater piece *Sonata about Jerusalem* (1970)
4.5. Edward Elgar, oratorio *The Apostles* (1903)

A Better World: Zionism
4.3. Ephraim Moses Lilien, drawing *The Creation of Man* (1902)
4.41. Yehuda Amichai, poem *Jerusalem is a port city* (1968)

A Better World: Socialism
4.1. Yitskhok Leybush Perets, short story *Bontshe Shvayg* (1894)
4.11. Yoysef Tshaykov, drawing *Dawn* (1919)

A Better World: Environmentalism
4.69. Sarah Lindsay, poem *Zucchini Shofar* (2008)
4.63. Tsippi Fleischer, orchestral composition *Symphony No. 5 “Israeli-Jewish Collage”* (2003)

A Better World: Respect
4.17. Else Lasker-Schüler, play *Arthur Aronymus and His Ancestors* (1932)
4.63. Tsippi Fleischer, orchestral composition *Symphony No. 5 “Israeli-Jewish Collage”* (2003)