



Livorno: A Crossroads in the History of Sephardic Religious Music

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I. INTRODUCTION

The geographical location of Italy at the focal point of the Mediterranean cultures is reflected in the music traditions of its Jewish communities. Throughout the centuries, several musical traditions developed among Italian Jews: the "Italiano" rite (centered in Rome), the "Tedesco" (German, i.e. Ashkenazic) tradition in the North and, from the early 16th century, several Sephardic traditions of different geographical origin (Greece, Turkey, North Africa and, later on, Western Europe) *1 The vitality of these distinctive traditions declined steadily from the late 19th century, and even more sharply after World War II. The influence of Italian art music, particularly noticeable from the 19th century on, was also a significant factor in the shaping of their present state. Surviving synagogue music from Italy thus shows traces of the interaction between different traditions. *2 Detailed studies of selected traditions should, therefore, precede any comprehensive study of Italian synagogue music. *3

I shall focus here on the synagogue music from Livorno (Leghorn) from the 18th century onwards. I would like to stress in particular the role played by this community as a cultural crossroads, that is, as a location where the carriers of different Sephardic traditions from the Eastern and Western Mediterranean encountered and enriched each other. In the 18th century the community of Livorno inherited the leadership of the Sephardic Jews in Italy from the community of Venice, as Bonfil (1992) has already stressed. This statement is true also in respect to synagogue music. In the introduction to the collection of Sephardic liturgical music from Italy by the Jewish violinist, composer, and scholar from Livorno, Federico Consolo (Jehiel Nahmani Sefardi, 1841--1906; see Di Mauro), the compiler states:

Rituale ebraico spagnuolo della Comunit~i israelitica di Livorno, sentito dalla viva voce del primo cantore di quel Tempio, signor [Moise] Ventufa [1845-1920]... Fu preferito il rituale di Livorno, perche si pub dire che la tradizione musicale del rito giudaico spagnuolo si sia qui conservata meglio che altrove (Consolo, 1892: 3).

Melodies from the Italian-Sephardic synagogue tradition as practiced in Livorno were transmitted to other Sephardic communities in Italy and around the Mediterranean in the early 20th century. Bucharest, Alexandria (Egypt), Marseilles (France), Tunis (Tunisia), Tripoli (Libya), Rhodes (which was under Italian rule between the world wars) and Gibraltar are all communities where Livornese-trained cantors served and introduced melodies from their musical heritage. *4 The choral tradition from Livorno spread to other cities in Italy, particularly to Florence, superseding the old Italian rite. *5 The Livornese influence in the shaping of 20th-century Sephardic liturgical music in other locations inside and outside Italy, an issue treated here only briefly, certainly merits a detailed study.6

II. RESEARCH ON ITALIAN SYNAGOGUE MUSIC

Thorough research of the musical traditions of the Italian Jews is still a desideratum. Substantial contributions in this

field were made by the late Dr. Leo Levi (see Levi, 1957; 1961; 1972). Levi focused on a wide overview of the subject based on his pioneering ethnographic effort carried out in Italy in the 1950s under the auspices of the Centro Nazionale di Studi di Musica Popolare in Rome (Levi, 1961). His collection of recordings is still to be found in different copies--- in Rome at the Archivi di Etnomusicologia of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, at the Discoteca di Stato and at the Centro Bibliografico of the UCEI (Union of Jewish Communities in Italy); additional copies are located at the National Sound Archives of the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem, and at the library of the Italian Synagogue in Jerusalem (on Levi and his work see Spagnolo, 1998).

Another scholar who contributed significantly to the historical study of music among Jews in Italy is Israel Adler. Adler based his research on written sources, focusing on the incorporation of Western art music into Italian synagogues in the 17th and 18th centuries (see Adler, 1966, especially vol. 1, pp. 114-116 on Livorno; 1967). Later bibliographical research by Adler has brought to light new notated documentation of Sephardic synagogue music from Livorno (Adler, 1989, nos. 015, 144).

In addition to Leo Levi and Israel Adler, Isaac Levy, who included many transcriptions from Italian cantors residing in Israel in his anthology of Sephardic hazzanut (1964-80), should be mentioned. Elio Piattelli (1992) has published a comprehensive collection of melodies from the Sephardic synagogue in Florence. Few other endeavors to research the musical traditions of the Jews from Italy were carried out in Israel (Fiderer-Abramovicz, 1987) and Italy (Torrefranca, 1996).

The developed synagogal music of Livorno was known in Germany too. In 1818, when the first attempts to introduce musical changes (choral music and the organ) in the Reform synagogue of Hamburg were carried out, the leaders of this new movement appealed to Livornese rabbis for support (Benayahu, 1987).

Despite the availability of substantial materials from oral tradition gathered by Leo Levi, Israel Adler, Isaac Levy, Elio Piatelli and others, the research of major issues in the musical culture of Italian Jewry is far from exhausted. Major exceptions are the intensive study of the life and works of the 17th-century Jewish composer Salamone Rossi, author of the unique collection of polyphonic Hebrew works Hashirim asher li-Shelomo, the major monument of Italian synagogue music prior to the 19th century (see Adler, 1967; Harráin 1987a, 1987b, 1989a, 1989b, and especially 1999; Torrefranca, 1989) and the study of the Hebrew melodies from the Venetian synagogues notated by the Christian composer Benedetto Marcello in the early 18th century (Marcello, 1724-27; see Werner, 1937 and Seroussi, forthcoming) *

III. SOURCES ON THE LIVORNESE JEWISH TRADITION

There are four major sources for the study of the Livornese tradition:

1. The oral tradition, as recorded by Leo Levi. Most of these recordings are by Rabbi Elio Toaff (b. 1916), heir of one of the most prominent Livornese Jewish families and, today, Chief Rabbi of Rome.
2. The printed collection compiled by Federico Consolo, *Libro di canti d'Israele. Antichi canti del rito degli ebrei Spagnoli* (Firenze, 1892).
3. Manuscripts of choral music from Livorno found in the Birnbaum collection of Jewish Music in the Hebrew Union College and in the Music Department of the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem. These materials date from the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century.
4. Literary sources which can be divided into:
 - a. Prayer books and song collections;
 - b. Descriptions of musical activities and mentions of musicians in periodicals and books.

An important, unpublished source for the research of the Livornese synagogue music is a series of letters written by Italian scholars to A.Z. Idelsohn, in response to his inquiries on the music of Italian Jews. From early 1933 until 1934

Idelsohn communicated with Prof. Umberto Cassuto, then at the University of Rome, Ernesto Ventufa, choir director from Livorno, and the lawyer Giuseppe Bassani from Ferrara. *7 On the basis of the data sent by Bassani in September 1934, Idelsohn published a study of the Tedesco (German) tradition in Italy (Idelsohn, 1936). However, he never released the information sent to him by Cassuto and Ventufa on the synagogue music of Livorno.

What transpires from these various sources is that the Livornese synagogue music consists of a synthesized patchwork where several Sephardic traditions merge. This synthesis symbolizes the peculiar history of this particular community: its converso, Portuguese origins; its position as a center of learning, attracting Jews from North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean; and the accelerated process of modernization that characterized most Italian Jewish communities from the second half of the 19th century on.

Thus, in the sources from Livorno we find Spanish-Portuguese traditions common to the synagogues from Amsterdam, London, and Hamburg; traditions from Morocco, Tunisia, and Salonika; and, finally, original compositions in the Baroque, Classic, and Romantic styles of Western art music and choral arrangements of traditional melodies written by professional composers who served the Livornese community. Pieces from the repertoires of synagogues in other Italian cities (Venice in particular) and from Paris are also found in Livornese sources.

IV. THE 18th CENTURY

The earliest musical scores from Jewish Livorno are connected to the kabbalist Rabbi Raphael Emmanuel Hay Ricchi (Ferrara 1688---Modena 1743). After serving as Rabbi in Florence and Trieste, he taught in Venice and was a student of kabbalah in Safed (1718-20); he settled in Livorno in 1723. During his stay there he frequently traveled abroad to the East (Constantinople, Izmir, Salonika) as well as to other Portuguese communities in Europe (Amsterdam and London). He thus had rich international experience, and probably gathered musical traditions from different sources within the Sephardic sphere.

Two musical testimonies from Ricchi may provide some general information as to his musical background and the variety of sources available to him. Firstly, there are two melodies, by Ricchi, set to two piyyutim (liturgical poems) for the circumcision ceremony, notated at his request by the renowned Jewish composer from Amsterdam, Abraham Caceres, and published in Ricchi's commentary on the Mishnah Hon 'Ashir (Amsterdam, 1730/1; see Adler, 1989, vol. 2: 883). Secondly, there is a collection of texts intended for musical performance during the Jewish festivals (Purim, Passover, and Shavu'ot), at the inauguration of the synagogue in Livorno in 1743, on the introduction of the Torah scrolls and on the renewal of the tevah (the Ark of the synagogue). These texts, arranged in the form of short cantatas like the ones known to us from the Portuguese Jewish community in Amsterdam, are included in Ricchi's *Parpera'ot le-Hokhma*, printed together with his final book *Adereth Eliyahu* (Livorno, 1742). The titles of these texts leave no doubt as to their intended musical performance: "Recitativa [sic]---Arietta." Moreover, two of them bear the explicit title *al pi ha-musiqā*, i.e., "accord to [composed or instrumental] music" (Gorali, 1966:18).

From Ricchi's evidence we can see that Hebrew art music in the Baroque style, probably with instrumental accompaniment, was customary among the Jews in Livorno (as it was in Amsterdam) as early as the 1740s. On the other hand, the notations in *Hon 'Ashir* unveil his acquaintance with melodies of Ottoman Sephardic origin. The tune that Ricchi adapted to his piyyut for the rite of circumcision, *'Ad yom holin*, is a variant of the melody for *Lekha dodi* that was still sung by the Turkish Jews in Vienna in the late 19th century (see Example 1). The florid melody in flexible rhythm to which the second circumcision song, *Mah tov hu u-ma na'irn*, is set also shows evident signs of its eastern Mediterranean pedigree. We may cautiously assume that such eastern Sephardic melodies known to Ricchi were heard in Livorno too.

Special occasions in the Livornese community in the late 18th century, such as the reopening of the refurbished main synagogue of Livorno in the year 1789, were marked by musical performances. The booklet *Qol Rinnah* (1789) includes "una poesia e due piyyutim da cantarsi con la musica di due inni gib in uso nella liturgia della community" (Adler, 1966, vol. I: 114; Toaff, 1955:32). An 18th-century manuscript from the library of the community in Livorno written by Samuel Nissim Rachah and described in detail by Adler (1966, vol. I:115) includes many Hebrew sacred songs with titles such as: *Aria*, *Aria di Musica*, *Recitativo [sic]*, etc.

Art music was also performed at 18th-century Jewish weddings in Livorno. At the wedding of Jacob and Anne Aghib, music composed especially for this occasion by Maestro Horacion Mci, organist of the Cathedral of Livorno, was

performed. At the same wedding, the Livornese Pietro Nardini, chief musician at the Court of Florence and one of the most distinguished Italian violinists of the 18th century, played a Sonata and the bride sang an aria "as an amateur" (Aghib Levi d'Ancona, 1987: 200).

V. THE 19th CENTURY

The propensity to incorporate Western art music into the synagogue further increased at the beginning of the 19th century. The tenure of composer Michele Bolaffi (1768-1842) as musical director can be considered a turning point in the development of choral and instrumental music in the Great Synagogue of Livorno. Bolaffi was a figure of international stature, having served in England, Germany, and France (Adler, 1966, vol. I: 125-28; 1972; Schirmann, 1964). Many of his synagogue compositions are preserved in two related manuscripts, dated 1821 and 1826 respectively, copied by the tenor Aron Croccolo, hazzan of the Livornese synagogue: JNUL, 80 Mus. 20 and HUC, Birnbaum coll. Mus. Add. 11. Both sources are titled *Verseti posti in musica dal Prof[feso]re Sig[no]re M. Bolaffi. Dedicati al Sig[no]r A. Croccolo* (Adler, 1989, nos. 015, 144). Bolaffi's compositions were performed in other Italian synagogues during the 19th century (Adler, 1966, vol. I: 126-27). Apart from Bolaffi, two other composers associated with the Livornese synagogue are mentioned in these early manuscripts: "Sige. Maestro Galeltl" and "Sig. Maestro Ranieri Checchi."

Another important and very prolific synagogue composer from Livorno was David Garzia. According to Eruesto Ventufa, Garzia was a contemporary of Bolaffi who achieved a similar prominence among the Livornese Jews. Many of his compositions are to be found in the music manuscripts from Livorno (see below).

The choral repertoire of Livorno was limited to works by local composers. The influence of French synagogue music is apparent in the inclusion of works by the liturgical composers Samuel Naumbourg (1817-80) and Emile Jonas (1927-1905) in the Livornese collections. Also present in the Livornese repertoire is a work found in the choral repertoire of the Portuguese synagogue in Bayonne, 'Ezrekha el mi-qodesh, attributed to rabbi "Cologna," which is based on the tune of "Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser," the hymn of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, set to the melody by Joseph Haydn (Adler, 1989, vol. 1: 8). The development of the choral elements in the music of the services during this period was reflected in the architecture of Livorno's Great Synagogue. In the years 1846-48, when the tevah was reconstructed and enlarged, a special area was reserved for the choir (Toaff, 1955: 35).

The Birnbaum Collection of Jewish Music at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati includes three extensive music manuscripts that testify to this growing wealth of choral music at the Great Synagogue of Livorno during the second half of the 19th century. These music collections are arranged according to the liturgical cycle.

The most voluminous collection is Mus. Add. 6, entitled *Musica Sacra di Livorno ridotta da Moise Ventura* (chief cantor of Livorno, 1845-1920). It contains three volumes (I-III), with compositions by Michele Bolaffi, Castelnuovo, *8 Jonas, Penso and Pontecorboli (who is mentioned as conductor of the choir in Livorno around 1888, and later on in the same capacity in Marseilles). The collection also includes pieces "di Venezia."

Mus. Add. 7: *Shabbat. Musica sacra ridotta in chiave di Violino da Ernesto Ventufa*. This collection is based on Mus. Add. 6 and includes compositions by Bolaffi, Garzia, Nufies Franco, Castelnuovo, Jonas, Penso, Pontecorboli and also "di Venezia."

Mus. Add. 8: *Shirim le-y[amim] n[ora'im] u-le-y[om] t[ov]* Canti Sacri per i Giorni Penitenziali e Festivi raccolti da Ernesto Ventura. This collection contains works by Bolaffi, Garzia, J.F.F. Halevy, Naumbourg, Penso, and "di Parigi." Some compositions in this manuscript have the title *musica antica*. This term refers to music from the traditional Sephardic liturgical repertoire. Indeed, the melodies of these compositions appear in Consolo's collection.

The growing role of choral music at all the public events held in the Livorno synagogue is extensively documented in musical collections and in news items appearing in *Il Vessillo Israelitico* (hereafter VI). Apart from the normative liturgy, choral music with instrumental accompaniment was performed at weddings, funerals, anniversaries of the foundation of communal institutions, and also events related to the Jewish schools. At weddings the chief cantor presided, dressed in festive garments. He was accompanied by a choir of 12 youngsters and an harmonium (VI, vol. 46 [1898]: 65). The funeral services of Fortunata Milul, for example, were presided over by the chief cantor Moise

Ventura accompanied by the choir conducted by his son, Ernesto Ventura, who sang the composition Zaddic attā (VI, vol. 45 [1897]: 98). On the occasion of a party on behalf of the Società di Soccorso agli Asfittici, cantor Moise Ventufa officiated. He sang Psalm 61 and the blessing for the well-being of the King and the People of Italy with organ accompaniment. As a contemporary testimony recalls: "This ... party left a lasting impression on the public, who attends each year to enjoy the sublime music of the immortal Maestro Garzia" (VI, vol. 36 [1888]: 195). At the inauguration of the 1888 school year, a choir conducted by maestro Luigi Pratesi sang with harmonium accompaniment played by Salomone Laide, conductor of the choir at the Tempio Maggiore (VI, vol. 36 [1888]: 348). An unfinished musical composition for voice and piano by E. Bolaffi was also intended for such an occasion. The piece, entitled *Canti per Marcie e Preghiere Poste in Musica da Emanuel Bolaffi ed offerte Alle Onoratissime Signore Ispettrici delle Pie Scuole Israelitiche*, is to be found at JNUL, Music Department, Ms. 80. Mus. 21.

Purim celebrations at the synagogue were particularly grandiose. Unlike the traditional folk songs that were sung during the festive meal at private homes (see below), the services at the synagogue were occasions for elaborate musical performances. An account from 1888 states:

The Società coral deserves special praise because it sings without salary The solemn minh. a service on the day of Purim was a great success. Never in the past were so many people seen at the Synagogue ... The Pizmonim were sung this year to music by the immortal Maestro Garzia accompanied by harmonium. The youngsters Veroli and Ventufa formed with the others an ensemble of voices for the pleasure of the large and cultured public. Once the prayer ended, the choir director Giuseppe Pontecorboli was praised and the members of the community presented him with a smoking kit. [VI, vol. 36 [1888]: 104, my translation -- E.S.]

Professional musical education was standard among the Livornese Jews in the late 19th century. The activities of several Jewish musicians are mentioned in *Il Vessillo Israelitico*: "Amelia Massiah figlia del ... maestro Marlo Massiah hazzan del Tempio Maggiore" studied with the Livornese professors Matteini and Nardi, and obtained a diploma as a pianist at the Reale Accademia de Santa Cecilia in Rome (VI, vol. 36 [1888]: 65). Other young Jewish pianists from Livorno were Virginia Levi, member of the Reale Accademia de Santa Cecilia (VI, vol. 36 [1888]: 245) and Dario Attal (vol. 45 [1897]: 345). The operatic tenor Mario Sadun was another Jewish artist from Livorno mentioned in 19th-century sources (VI, vol. 37 [1889]: 233).

Musicology was another field where Jews from Livorno excelled. This was the case with Arnaldo Bonaventura (1862-1952), a distinguished and prolific scholar at the Istituto Musicale (Reale Accademia de Musica Luigi Cherubini) in Florence. Among his works is the book *Musicisti livornesi* (VI, vol. 36 [1888]: 104; Aghib Levi d'Ancona, 1987: 198; Blom and Turner, 1980).⁹ Another Livornese Jew, Doctor Abraham Basevi (1818-85), wrote books about music (Bedarida, 1956: 145-7; Aghib Levi d'Ancona, 1987: 198).

VI. LIVORNESE INFLUENCE ON THE MUSIC OF OTHER SEPHARDIC COMMUNITIES

The influence of the synagogue music from Livorno is also evident in the mobility of cantors from this city who were employed by Jewish communities in other parts of Italy and France. Mentioned in *Il Vessillo Israelitico*, for example, are Marlo Piazza, cantor in Nice, who took the place of another Livornese, Giacomo Moreno (VI, vol. 37 [1889]: 274). Cesare Millul, "bravissimo perfetto Hazan" and disciple of cantor Moise Ventura, moved to Florence (VI, vol. 46 [1898]: 205). Some Livornese composers, such as Ernesto Ventura, composed synagogue music for other communities.

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Some compositions by Livornese cantors and composers were disseminated by Sephardic scholars who had attended yeshivot in Livorno on their return to their communities in North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean (see Abrahami-Foa, 1979; Bashan 1978; Goldberg, 1984; Simon, 1984; Yaniv, 1993). The best example of this phenomenon is the *Mizmor le-David* by Michele Bolaffi (Example 2), which is sung to this day in many Sephardic and non-Sephardic communities around the globe. The piece, whose original version appears in HUC, Birnbanm Collection, Mus. Add. 11 (no. 14) was already traditionalized at the beginning of the 20th century in Jerusalem, where Idelsohn recorded it from oral tradition (Idelsohn, 1923, no. 63). It was also printed in the synagogue music collection of the Jewish communities of the old Corntat Venaissin (province of Vaucluse) such as Avignon, Carpentras, and St. Remy (Cremieux, ca. 1885: 169-70, no. 50, for the return of the Torah Scrolls to the Ark in Festivals).

It seems that Livorno served as an intermediary for the dissemination of compositions written by Parisian composers too. An example of this phenomenon may be the composition *Ra'u vanirn* by Emile Jonas (Jonas, 1854: no. 26) which was sung in Livorno and became widely known in North Africa and Turkey (e.g., Levy, vol. 5, no. 113).

VII. TRADITIONAL SEPHARDIC MUSIC IN THE LIVORNO REPERTOIRE

The new synagogue music by 19th-century composers such as Bolaffi and Garzia coexisted in Livorno with the traditional repertoire of Sephardic origin chanted by the cantor. The latter, however, was eroded at the expense of the former. This phenomenon was lamented, in retrospect, by cantor Ernesto Ventufa in the 1930s. In his own words:

Rabbi [Elia] Benamozegh was right and I myself am guilty [of substituting traditional with new music]. In fact one could compose magnificent pieces, by harmonizing and, in a certain manner, developing the traditional melodies and modes of our tradition. It is necessary, however, to have in mind that today the mentality is different and diverse and, let's face it, more healthy than that of old times. In the synagogues of Bolaffi, the so-called intellectuals ... had little appreciation for the traditional chants then in use. [my translation -- E.S.] *11

The traditional synagogue music from Livorno was perpetuated, as already noted, in the work of Federico Consolo (1892), which is based on the lore of cantor Moise Ventura. The perception of the professional musicians from Livorno towards the traditional repertoire is summarized in the label *musica antica* that appears in Mus. Add. 8 of the Birnbaum Collection in reference to the arrangements of traditional melodies found in the book by Consolo.

The materials notated by Consolo encompass several musical genres: biblical cantillation, recitatives of prayers and melodies of piyyutim. A general overview of this repertoire shows that the Livornese oral tradition is similar in content to the Western Sephardic one from the Portuguese synagogues in Amsterdam, London, Paris, and Hamburg. However, this repertoire also incorporates local traditions from Italy (some probably dating back to 17th- and 18th-century Venice), oral versions of art music compositions, *12 and elements from the Eastern (Salonika in particular) and Moroccan Sephardic traditions. *13

A particularly rich repertoire from the Livornese liturgy is the *pizmonim*. These are liturgical poems added to the normative prayers on holidays, usually preceding or following the Torah service. The *pizmonim* of the Livorno tradition, an old heritage from 17th-century Venice, were printed as an appendix to the prayer book *Mishmeret ha-godesh* (Pisa, 1806). Rich in particular is the repertoire of *pizmonim* for Simchat Torah. * Some of the melodies for these *pizmonim*, like *Immale az seh. oq finu* (a poem by Rabbi Israel Najara), apparently originate in the Ottoman sphere; others, like *Shalom le-ben dodí* (a poem by Salomon Ibn Gabirol) derive from the art music repertoire of the 18th century.

VIII. THE MUSIC FOR PURIM IN LIVORNO

Among Italian Jews, Purim was celebrated as a highly elaborate carnival which included musical and theatrical presentations, as splendidly investigated by Adler (1966, vol. I, index: "Purim") and Schirmann (1979: 52-63). The traditional repertoire of Purim songs from Livorno, which comprise a distinctive repertoire, was partially inherited from Venice. It increased with songs imported from the eastern Mediterranean and North African Sephardic communities. Songs from this repertoire, in Hebrew, in the Judeo-Italian dialect from Livorno, and in Judeo-Spanish, survived in oral tradition until the 20th century. As late as 1928 a musical intermezzo in which these traditional songs were incorporated was staged during Purim in Livorno (see Bedarida, 1928).

The texts of Purim songs from Livorno appeared in several publications that include indications pertaining to their musical performance. Among the earliest collections of this type is *Sova' s'machot* [after Psalm 16:11] *o sea el compendio de la Alegría estampado a gloria de... Mordekhai Yair Mellul* (Livorno: Castello, Saadon, 1782). It includes poems such as:

• *Con gran placer se~ores[Uh oh!]* (Cantar cuarto, fol. 24). A song belonging to the Judeo-Spanish genre *Coplas de Purim* (see Hassfin, 1976). This song apparently originated in Salonika or Sarajevo and was brought to Venice probably at the beginning of the 18th century, for it is included in the manual of cantor Moshe ben Michael

Hacohen from Sarajevo, who served in that city (Ms. British Library Add. 26967 [Catalogue Margoliouth, no. 938] dated in 1702, contains many later additions; see Benayahu, 1994). Through Livorno, the song spread to Gibraltar and Tetufin, where it was sung until recently with the Livornese melody (see Levy, 1973:167 for Gibraltar; Zer shel shirei 'am, no. 17 for Tetu~n) .

• *Wual-viva wual-viva* (Cantar quinto, fol. 25b). A song which combines Italian-Jewish dialect, Spanish, and a refrain in the Tunisian-Jewish Arabic dialect (Example 6).

• *Ay a mi me llamaban Hayyim ~elebi* (Canto sexto, fol. 27). A Judeo-Spanish copla with a refrain in Hebrew (Example 7). It apparently originates in the Eastern Mediterranean, or at least was perceived as being in an "Oriental" style, for its title in the printed version in the chapbook *Cantares y alavaciones ... de Purim* (Livorno: Yehuda Mellul, 1820) is *Cantiga de Purim a la Levantina*. The melody of this song was adapted in Livorno and other related communities to liturgical texts on the Sabbath preceding Purim (see Levy, vol. 8, no. 5, *Ra'u vanim et gevurato* is a version from Tangier).

Sometimes these Purim songs bear in their title the name of the melody to which they are sung. A very interesting example is the *Canto setino* [!] (fol. 27b) by Mordekhai Mellul, sung a la voz de Bendigamos a el altisimo, "to the melody of Bendigamos a el altisimo." This proves that the melody of this Sephardic song for Havdalah, which survives today only in the Portuguese tradition of New York, was known in Livorno in the second half of the 18th century and its origins may be found in an even earlier period in the eastern Mediterranean and not in 19th-century Bayonne as previously assumed.

Another important collection of Purim songs from Livorno is *Ora ve-simh, a, Quntras le-Purim* (Livorno: Castello, Saadon, 1786) by Moshe Aharon Rahamim Piazza (d. 1808; see the discussion of the note by Piazza on the ethical value of music in Adler, 1966, vol. I: 115-16). It contains the piyyut for Purim *Akh zeh ha-yom qivviti* (fol. 49b) with the following title: *Shir pashut le-shabbat Zakhor...* Lah. an "Con gran placer se~ores." This song, composed by an anonymous local rabbi, was set to the melody of the Judeo-Spanish copla printed in *Sova' s'machot* (see above). It was sung in Livorno, with that same melody, together with one of the most well known Purim songs in the Judeo-Italian dialect, *Fate onore al bel Purim*. This is an old song from the Venetian ghetto, printed for the first time in the chapbook *Shir na 'e be-hadurim lehit'aneg bo ha-ne'arim lezamer le-simchat Purim* (Mantua, 1645/5). *16 The melody of *Con gran placer se~ores /Fate onore al bel Purim /Akh zeh ha-yom qivviti* was used in Livorno to sing *Lekha dodi* on the Sabbath preceding Purim (see Ventura, 1947).

Shalmei simcha (1792) by Mordekhai Yair Mellul is a supplement to *Sova' s'machot*. It contains four songs "which arrived from the Levant." This is another testimony to the constant flux of Hebrew and Judeo-Spanish songs from Salonika and other cities in the Ottoman Empire to Livorno. One of the songs, *Historia de Purim a la morisca* is set to the melody of *Wual-viva wual-viva*.

Finally, an interesting musical composition for Purim notated by Consolo should be noted here: *Mi-arba' kanfot ha-aretz* (Consolo, 1892: no. 111), sung on the Sabbath before Purim. This cantoriai piece is a musical pastiche consisting of recitatives combined into one composition, together with two of the traditional Purim melodies mentioned above: *Ay a mi me llaman [or llamaban] Chayyim ~elebi* and *Con gran placer se~ores*. Perhaps this composition is a remnant of a lost, larger work for Purim which cantor Moise Ventura remembered orally (see Example 9). *

CONCLUSIONS

This overview of the musical sources from the Jewish community of Livorno is the basis for a further, more detailed, study of this Sephardic tradition. At this early stage we may venture some preliminary hypotheses in connection to it. Firstly, the diversity of musical traditions found in Livorno stem from the composite character of the Jewish population of this city. Secondly, the Livornese synagogues served as a crossroads where diverse Sephardic traditions met, were assimilated by visiting scholars (who attended the rabbinical academies or stayed for extended periods to supervise the printing of their scholarly works at the local Hebrew press), and were transmitted by them to other Sephardic centers in the Mediterranean basin. *17 Thirdly, Livorno was at the vanguard of the Jewish communities of Europe in the modernization process of liturgical music. An organ was used in its main synagogue already in the late 18th century. As already noted, original choral music replaced much of the traditional repertoire during the 19th century. Thus, a complex picture emerges from this research of the Livornese tradition. A challenge for future studies is to illuminate

these processes of musical change in a more detailed historical and social context.

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For an examination of the various synagogue music traditions in Italy see L. Levi (1961, 1972),

7 Idelsohn, for example, noted that the Ashkenazim in Italy had drifted away from their ancestral tradition and adopted the "rainhag Italiartl or Sepharad" (Idelsohn, 1936: 571). He further added that "the Pentateuch mode for the High Holidays [among Ashkenazim]... is evidently adopted from the Italian-Oriental (Levantine) song" (Idelsohn, 1936: 573).

3 This paper continues my earlier incursion into the music of the Sephardic Jews in Italy (unpublished lecture at the Fourth International Conference of Misgav Yerushalaim, 1992).

4 The relationship between Livorno and the Great Synagogue of Alexandria is a particularly close one. David Garzia, one of the most distinguished synagogal composers from 19th-century Livorno (see below) served in Alexandria, from where he was expelled by religious zealots (Ventufa in a letter to A.Z. Idelsohn, cf. below note 7). Rabbi Moise Ventura from Livorno was rabbi in Alexandria in the 1940s. Synagogue melodies from Livorno can be found in his manual of religion printed in Alexandria (Ventura, 1947). In the same letter to Idelsohn, Ernesto Ventufa stressed that: "The traditional Sephardic music varies from city to city. Each community is convinced of the authenticity of its own [tradition]. Let's leave everyone with his own illusions, but it is a fact that all the Italian Jews from Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Tripoli, Egypt, Greece and Turkey are of Livornese origin."

5 Choral services following the pattern established in Livorno started in Florence

in the last decade of the 19th century. In 1897 *Il Vessiuo Israelitico* (Vol. 45:

171) announced from Florence: "ha cominciato a officiare il coro composto di soli ragazzi e ha fatto ottima impressione." The first choir conductor in Florence was Maestro Teofilo Toledano.

7 The letters are part of the A.Z. Idelsohn archive at JNUL, Music Department, Mus. 7, nos. 42, 114, 623, 634.

8. He is the grandfather of the renowned Italian composer Marlo Castelnuovo-Tedesco, who testifies that his grandfather wrote choral synagogal music. See Seroussi (1993).

9 Bonaventura is mentioned in a letter of Prof. Umberto Cassuto to A.Z. Idelsohn of April 3, 1933 (answering Idelsohn's request of March 10th of the same year).

10 See for example: "Un inno ebraico ... dell Rabbino Cammeo ~ stato posto a musica dal Maestro Ernesto Ventura che gi~ si g con buono successo provato nella musica sacra. L'inno ~ scritto per in 250. anniversario della fondazione del Tempio Maggiore di Modena" (VI, vol. 46 [1898]: 388).

11 From the letter of Ernesto Ventura to A.Z. Idelsohn. See above n. 7.

12 "Descendants," i.e., one-voice melodies derived from polyphonic art music compositions, may be the basis of some of the pieces defined by Consolo as no'amim (lit. "melodies"; see Consolo [1892], nos. 122-39). These are festive melodies, mostly for eves of holidays.

13 The ethnic background of the Venturas from Livorno may account for some of the musical traditions recorded by Consolo. According to the information sent by Ernesto Ventura to Idelsohn, his father Moise was bom in Livorno. He studied at the yeshivah of Rabbi Azulai and received the hasmakha as a .hazzan from Rabbis Elia Benamozegh and Israele Costa. His grandfather, Isaac Ventura, taught children who had come from Morocco at that same yeshivah. He traded precious stones with Levantine clients. In the Ventufa family there are "Levantine" traditions. His grandfather and the older brother of his father spoke Arabic and his great-grandfather dressed all'orientale. The name of the family apparently derives, in his opinion, from "Ben Tora."

14 See *Sefer Pizrnornirn Simh. at Torah* (Livorno, 1772). For Venice, see *Pizmonim le-Simh, at Torah* printed by Masliah Corinaldi (Venice, ca. 1740; at the Jewish National and University Library).

15 See H.P. Salomon, "The Strange Odyssey of 'Bendigamos'," *American Sephardi* 3/1-2 (September, 1969): 69-78.

16 Second edition, identical, Venice, ca. 1693-4.

17 One example of this transmission is the case of the Judeo-Spanish copla for the havdalah ceremony Al Dio alto con su gracia. The song is originally from Salonika

or Istanbul, where it was sung until recently. According to Atlas (1971), it was probably composed by R. Abraham Toledo (end of the 17th century-beginning of the 18th century). This song became known in Livorno and, from there, was transmitted to North Africa. It is included in Ms. 3552 of the Ben-Zvi Institute (fol. 14a), a North-African collection of religious poems from the early 20th century with the title: Piyyut she-omrim be-Livorno la.han Hamavdil bein qodesh le-h. ol.