

THE SOUNDS OF ERETZ YISRAEL
IN AMERICA: 1920's-1950's

STUDENT WORKSHEET

סיפורי מוסיקה
STORIES OF MUSIC



Note: This worksheet will give you an outline and overview of the lesson, and will provide you with the materials that will help you to understand and integrate the lesson's major points. These materials include lyrics to songs that will be explored in depth, questions to consider while listening to some pieces of music, and more. This is not meant to be comprehensive, and your instructor may modify this lesson to enhance the learning experience for your particular class.

Introduction

This lesson will explore how American Jews have engaged with Israeli musical forms, from the 1920's through the 1950's. We will examine how Israeli music navigated the ongoing relationship between American Jews and Zionism and Israel.

Lesson outline

Part 1: Prelude: Our personal connection to the music of Eretz Yisrael

Part 2: Beginnings of Pre-State Music in American Jewish life

- Annotators and Publishers: A.W. Binder
- Performers: Bracha Zefira

Part 3: The American Form of Zionism

Part 4: Art Music inspired by Folk Songs of Pre-State Israel Folk: Julius Chajes and Max Helfman

Part 5: Israeli Composers Commissioned by American Jews: Marc Lavry

Part 6: Coda and Outro (Herbert Fromm's *The Pioneers*)

Part I — Prelude

Pair share

When prompted by your instructor, please pair with the person next to you, sharing with each other your responses to the following:

- ❓ Recall one (or two) experience(s) in which Israeli music was a part. (You might think broadly of life-cycle events, dance, holiday celebrations, summer camp, visits to Israel, etc.)
- ❓ What did this experience/these experiences mean to you as a person/Jew?

You will be listening to two songs from different eras: *Artza Alinu*, a pioneer song from 1928, and *El Ginat Egoz*, a dance set to lyrics from the biblical Songs of Songs from 1944.

As you listen to these selections, imagine:

- 🔍 If you were a Jew living in the United States and heard these songs at or near the time of their composition, how might each of these songs have affected you?

Part 2 — Beginnings of Pre-State Music in American Jewish Life

“Na’aleh L’artzeinu” — Hebrew transliteration and translation

(Lyrics by: Unknown)

*Na’aleh l’artzeinu b’rinah.
Na’aleh l’artzeinu b’rinah.
Yom gilah, yom rinah,
Yom k’dusha, yom m’nuchah.*

Let us go up to our land rejoicing!
Let us go up to our land rejoicing!
Joyful day! Gladsome day!
Holy day! Restful day!

“Bein N’har P’rat Uvein N’har Chidekel” — Hebrew transliteration and translation

(Music by: Nahum Nardi; Lyrics by: Chaim Nachman Bialik)

*Bein N’har P’rat Un’har Chidekel
Al ha-har mitamer dekel
Uvadekel bein ofa’av
Tishkon lah duchifat zahav.*

*Between the rivers Euphrates and Tiger
A palm tree stands tall on the hill
Between the branches of the palm tree
Lives a golden bird*

*Tzipor zahav, ufi chugi
Tz’i uvakshi li ben zugi.
Uva-asher timtsa’ihu--
Kifti oto va-havi’uhu*

*Oh golden bird, fly! Circle above!
Go and seek my spouse
And when you find him
Bind him and bring him to me*

*Ach im ein lach chut hashani
Dab’ri shalom el chatani
Ma tagidi lo? Hagidi.
Nafshi yotzeit el y’didi.*

*But if you have not the scarlet thread
Speak peace to my groom
What should you say to him?
Say my soul goes out to my beloved*

*Imri lo hagan porei-ach
Na’ul hu v’ein potei-ach
Rimon paz sham yesh bein alav
Ach ein she y’varech alav.*

*Tell him: The garden does not bloom,
It is unopened, locked.
Among the leaves there is a prized
pomegranate,
But there is no one who can bless it.*

Part 3 — The American Form of Zionism

Pair share

- 🔍 How, in your own words, would you describe “American Zionism”?

Part 4 — Art Music inspired by Pre-State of Israel Folk Songs

Pair share

So far today we have heard quite a bit of music, including:

- “*Artza Alinu*,”
- “*El Ginat Egoz*,”
- “*Na’aleh L’artzeinu*” as arranged by A.W. Binder,
- Bracha Zefira’s performance of “*Bein N’har P’rat*,”
- Bracha Zefira’s performance of “*Shir HaAvodah v’HaMamlacha*”, and,
- Julius Chajes’ “Walls of Zion”.

Please turn to the person sitting next to you and each take time to share:

- 🔍 Which of the pieces of music we have heard today speak to your conception the music of Eretz Yisrael?

“Song of Galilee” — Hebrew transliteration and translation

(Music by: Julius Chajes, based on song, “*El Yivneh HaGalil*”)

El yiv’neh hagalil. El yiv’neh hagalil.

God will build the Galilee.

Baruch yiv’neh hagalil. Baruch yiv’neh hagalil.

Blessed be the One who builds the Galilee.

El yiv’neh hagalil. El yiv’neh hagalil.

God will build the Galilee

Hag HaBikkurim, I. “El Hak’far” — Hebrew translation

(Melody from Mordecai Zeira; Lyrics by: Emanuel Harussi)

From the city, from the town, from the comfortable homes

Arise *halutz*, make haste and flee to the village.

Arise *halutz*, make haste and flee to the plowed field.

Halutz, arise and run to the moshav [cooperative settlement], to the kibbutz.

Halutz, arise and run to the village, to the plowed field,

To your mother, the land.

Don’t ask why, don’t question.

It is known to all, it’s to the land.

Land—it is called mother,

Land—plow ahead,

Land—where the hands engage in labor,

Land—it is the homeland.
Land, land, our homeland, the land.

“Laila Pele” — Hebrew translation
(Music by: Max Helfman, based upon Shalom Postolski; Lyrics by: Yitzchak Shenhar)

A thousand nights and then another night
Pay tribute to her,
To this tiny land of mine,
Yet that is not enough for her!
A thousand wonders and yet another wonder
On every mountain and on every rock!
You, my little land,
Allow me a pause.
Night of wonder, wonder of night
This is the reward—a home.

Part 5 — Israeli Composers Commissioned by American Jew

Sabbath Eve Sacred Service

(by Marc Lavry)

VI. BAR'KHU-SH'MA YISRA'EL

Greet HaShem, to whom all praise is due.
Be greeted, HaShem, be worshipped for all eternity.

Listen, Israel! HaShem is our God.
HaShem is the only God
Praised and honored be the name of God's Realm forever and ever.