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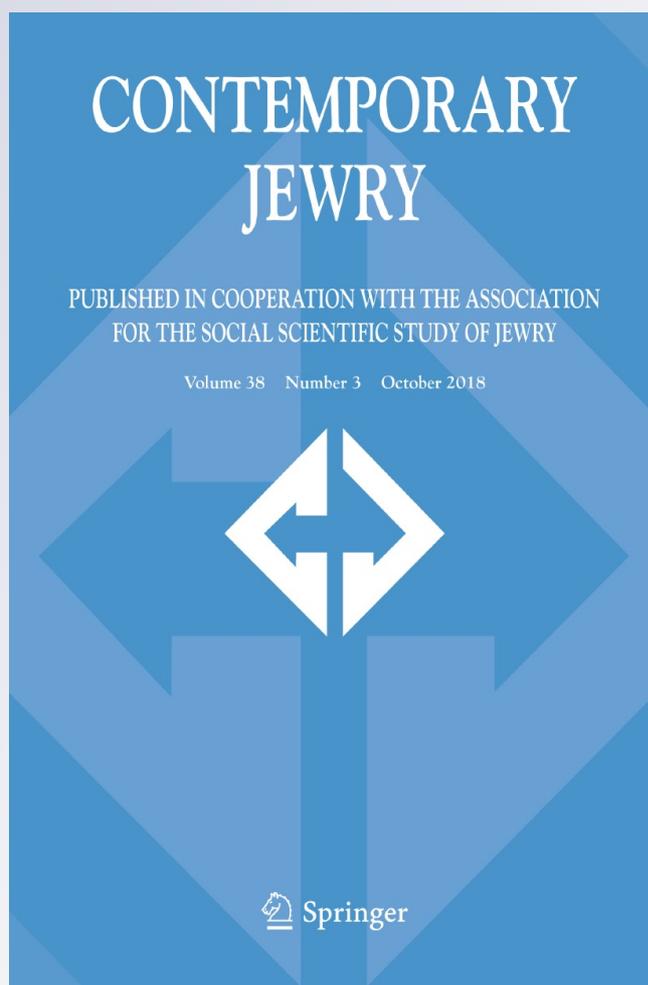
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# Singing in Hebrew or Reading in English? An Ethnographic Analysis of Music and Change Among Progressive Jews in the UK

Ruth Illman<sup>1</sup> 

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**Abstract** This article explores the role of music in contemporary processes of change within progressive Judaism in the UK. By analyzing ethnographic research material gathered among progressive Jews in London between 2014 and 2016, it illustrates a burgeoning trend in the Western world today: the wish to combine liberal theology with religious practices that are experienced as increasingly traditional, and the important role played by music and musical forms of expression in this process. Building on theoretical insights from religious studies and ethnomusicology, three research questions are put forward related to the role of music in processes of religious change concerning the perceived relationship between language and emotions, singing as a religious practice, and embodiment as a form of “doing” Jewish. The article also analyzes and discusses the views expressed in the interview material in light of the research questions arising from the literature. As a conclusion, the ethnographic analysis is summarized in a thought-provoking quotation from the interview data, aptly capturing the theoretical implications suggested by the research: “I’m convinced that reading English that you understand is no more helpful than singing Hebrew that you feel.”

**Keywords** Judaism · Jewish music · Religion and change · Hebrew · Embodiment · Emotions

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## Introduction

With the following words, Rachel<sup>1</sup> reflects on the role of music in the vibrant Jewish Reform community to which she belongs just outside London.

You want something perhaps slightly simpler. The world's a bit overwhelming at the moment, and through music...to introduce [prayer] not just through words but through music...what it would feel like to describe your feelings through music—I would do that.

In Rachel's view, young, well-educated Jews in her synagogue feel at a loss in the rapidly changing world of today, which offers a burgeoning array of options relating to lifestyle, worldview, and forms of religious practice. Many progressive<sup>2</sup> British Jews today have grown tired of the formal, rational liturgy of their communities centered on words and intellectual aspects, and are now "looking for a spiritual side." She says "a lot of people are on that search." Therefore, Rachel is actively seeking ways to meet these needs. Not a religious or musical professional herself, but a founding member of and influential voice within her community, she promotes a greater inclusion in the services of liturgical elements that are experienced by the members as "traditional" and "spiritual." By including chanting in Hebrew, exploring participatory prayer styles, and focusing on the body (communal singing, adding in small ritual gestures, etc.), "we're going to wake the sparks," she believes.

Rachel's story has been collected as part of an ethnographic research project focusing on the role of music in processes of religious change in the progressive Jewish milieu in contemporary London. It illustrates a growing trend among progressive Jews, not only in Britain but all over the Western world today: the desire to combine liberal theology with forms of practice that are felt to be more traditional (see Graham 2012; Keysar 2014). Many researchers within religious studies, Jewish studies, and musicology have drawn attention to the important role that music appears to play in this situation. Engaging with religiously significant music seems to satisfy several needs experienced as central by people across religions today by facilitating tangible forms of participation and offering ways of expressing and experiencing religion that are embodied, emotional, and creative (DeNora 2000; Turino 2008; Hackett 2012; Partridge 2014; Cohen 2016; Illman 2016; Wijnia 2016). However, most of the previous research pertaining to Jewish perspectives on this topic has focused on either North America or Israel. By highlighting European experiences, the current analysis addresses an understudied area by exploring how such a longing is expressed within the progressive Anglo-Jewish milieu today, how responses to the process of change are negotiated on an individual as well as a community level, and what role is allotted to music in this context.

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<sup>1</sup> The interviewees quoted in this article have been given aliases—common Jewish names—in order to guard their anonymity.

<sup>2</sup> "Progressive" is used as an umbrella term for Jewish groups, communities, and individuals who are engaged in forms of Jewish practice that are not Orthodox or strictly traditional. It is not used to denote a specific movement and is not intended as a value judgment.

The article opens with an introduction to the ethnographic field, Jewish Britain. Thereafter, a review of relevant literature is presented, focusing on propositions put forward in previous studies combining similar fields of interest—music, change, embodiment, and participation—with ethnography from diverse Jewish contexts (Summit 2000, 2016; Kligman 2001; Cohen 2009; Wood 2016; Borts 2014). The theoretical discussion is summarized in three research questions that are brought into dialogue with the ethnographic material, which is analyzed in the following part of the article. As a conclusion, the theoretical perspective is re-engaged and discussed in light of the indications of the ethnographic data. Lastly, a key quotation from the ethnographic material is presented as a final summary of the article's research contribution.

### **The Ethnographic Field: Judaism in the UK**

European Jewry has tended to attract less scholarly attention than the far more numerous and more vocal Jewish communities in North America and Israel. The European context is, however, set apart from its counterparts in the East and West by historical, demographic, political, and cultural factors, and can thus be approached as a meaningful and interesting analytical entity (Pinto 2008, 33–34). The religious landscape within which European Jews find themselves also differs from that of their fellow Jews on other continents, giving special contours to their ways of forming Jewish identities. Clive Lawton argues that the European model for “how to be a Jew” strikes a middle path between the individualized North American and nationalized Israeli ones by opting for a distinct framework of “community.” For the Jews of Europe, the main space for being Jewish is found at the in-between level of the community, defined in this context as a form of middle ground between the family and the political state (Lawton 2008, 41–42). Nevertheless, it is hardly possible to define one single way of being Jewish in Europe and, in fact, diversity can be argued to constitute the chief defining characteristic of European Judaism today (Pinto 2008, 28). Almost without exception, Jews form miniscule minorities in Europe, and hence the commitment to Jewish community is embedded in an everyday life that is often entirely non-Jewish. “At the heart of most European Jews’ daily Jewish life lies equivocation, ambiguity, and compromise—not, let me stress, necessarily negative attributes,” Lawton concludes (2008, 54).

In this article, the UK is singled out of the European framework as an especially interesting case to study in relation to the research questions relating to music, religion, and change. Recent research stresses that increasing mobility, migration, and urbanization influence the way ethnic and religious identities are negotiated and perceived in the UK today. Hence, the practices attracting contemporary Britons, regardless of religious and ethnic background, often combine old traditions with new influences from a plethora of spiritual, cultural, and secular sources (Martin and Catto 2012, 384–385). Secularization seems to be the strongest trend, however, and the sociologist of religion Linda Woodhead recently argued that “no religion” has in fact become the “new normal” in Britain (Woodhead 2016). Against this background, British Jewry constitutes a distinct and interesting case to study.

Today, the UK is home to the second-largest Jewish population in Europe, estimated at between two hundred and ninety thousand and three hundred and seventy thousand (in 2015) depending on the demographic approach adopted.<sup>3</sup> The denominational field is vibrant and varied, offering a broad institutional network. According to the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR), 54.7% of British Jews are officially affiliated members of the United Synagogue,<sup>4</sup> while 19.4% are members of The Movement for Reform Judaism, and 10.9% are members of synagogues labeled “strictly Orthodox” (not affiliated with the United Synagogue). In addition, 8.7% are reported to be members of Liberal Judaism and 2.7% are members of a Masorti<sup>5</sup> synagogue. When asked to self-identify rather than state official institutional affiliation, however, British Jews describe themselves in rather different terms. JPR found that a quarter of Anglo-Jewry describe themselves as “traditional,” another quarter as “secular/cultural,” 16% as Orthodox/Haredi, and 18% as Reform/Progressive. Thus, not all Jews holding formal membership in an Orthodox synagogue identify as “Orthodox” when asked to describe their Jewish identity (Graham et al. 2014).

### Turning to Tradition, Turning Within—Music and Religious Change

The theoretical argument put forward in this article is threefold, building on recent research in religious studies, Jewish studies, and musicology. A key argument arising from the literature is that music often functions as an instigator of contemporary religious change, expressed in an increasing emphasis on self-determination and fluidity in relation to religious orientation. All over the Western world, institutional religions and traditional forms of religion seem to be “experiencing a significant decline in power, popularity, and prestige,” Christopher Partridge (2014, 6) argues. However, the interest in religiosity, existential dimensions of human life, and “the possibility of an enchanted world” is far from diminishing (ibid., 179). Hence, secularism is challenged by novel, multi-layered outlooks often denoted as “post-secular,” “post-rationalist,” or “post-Enlightenment.” Central features of these approaches are an emphasis on pluralism, the permeable line between the religious and the secular, connectivity, and change (Illman 2017). Also commodification and consumption as well as popular cultural resources and digital communication strongly influence contemporary religious landscapes in the West (Gilman 2006, 12–13; Kapchan 2013, 136). Many researchers attach importance to the growing privatization of the religious field, outlining a “reflexive turn” or a “sacralization of subjectivities” in the Western

<sup>3</sup> The first number refers to the so-called “core” population, including persons who self-identify as Jews (religious as well as secular), have Jewish parents, or are converts. The second number measures the “enlarged” Jewish population, which also includes persons of Jewish heritage who have adopted another religion and non-Jewish household members such as spouses and children. The terms are demographic, not normative or *halachic* (Institute for Jewish Policy Research website).

<sup>4</sup> A union of synagogues representing the country’s central Orthodox movement (United Synagogue website).

<sup>5</sup> In the UK, the Conservative movement is called the Masorti movement (Masorti Judaism website).

world (Keysar 2014, 160–161; Partridge 2014, 179–180). The focus on radical religious individualism and “self-authority” is, however, also paralleled by an emphasis on the importance of community and shared visions as well as social, ethnic, gendered, and economic restraints that together form the context in which religious choices are made and spiritual positions defined (Illman 2016, 2017).

A second argument arising from the literature concerns the growing importance attached to emotions and embodiment as aspects of the religious engagement. Music often plays a pivotal part in this development. Consequently, within the study of religion and music, a “turn within” is highlighted, where growing attention is given to bodily experiences, sensations, and states of consciousness (Wijnia 2016, 43). “Almost uniquely, music has the capacity to move, to guide the imagination, to create spaces within which meaning is constructed,” Partridge (2014, 1) claims in a similar vein. Therefore, he proposes, “an appreciation of non-cognitive dimensions of agency” is vital for understanding the relationship between music and religion (ibid., 37).

Also, the ethnomusicologists Tia DeNora and Thomas Turino emphasize that the power of music to influence the body goes far beyond merely conveying meanings in a non-verbal way or aligning bodies to melodies. Music can influence how people “compose their bodies, how they conduct themselves, how they experience the passage of time, how they feel [...] about themselves, about others, and about the situation” (DeNora 2000, 17). Music offers patterns, parameters, and meanings to which bodies can connect in a concrete way, providing materials to be used in the ongoing project of building one’s identity and orientating oneself in the physical, social, and existential landscape (Turino 2008, 12–13). Music is not a natural force that accomplishes things on its own, however—it is rather a potential source of power, a resource for embodied agency. Hence, the relationship between bodies and music taps into an “existential level of the human being where body, consciousness and feeling intertwine” (DeNora 2000, 77). Music is a physical medium that tangibly engages the body: the aural experience of music cannot be separated from the tactile or emotional domains. Hence, music can facilitate a comprehensive orientation toward the physical and social environment that includes more than cognitive dimensions and a sense of “fitting in” or being attuned to the environment, its social patterns, and material texture (DeNora 2000, 84–85).

From a theoretical point of view it is thus important to acknowledge that music “meshes with emotion, with thought, with action,” forming and defining “core values, beliefs, and understandings about who we are, how we relate to others, what the world is like, and how we fit into it” (Partridge 2014, 37–38). It resonates with different levels of existential and social life, brought together in unique personal worldviews and attitudes toward religious practice. This “turn within” has also been highlighted in relation to contemporary Jewish contexts. Boaz Huss notes that many Jews today identify with the embodied feminine and sensual images found in mystical language, preferring it to the intellectual grand narratives of traditional Judaism (Huss 2007, 118). For them, the quest for a religious identity that feels genuine and meaningful amounts to a search for religious experiences and practices that “feel real,” Chava Weissler claims in a similar vein: “[They] seek meaning through the body. Embodiment is the key to achieving the influx of spirit, which can

come through singing, chanting, dancing, and other sorts of ritual movement” (Weissler 2011, 74). As noted above, emotional engagement is often associated with particular physical and embodied forms and practices in the religious landscape (DeNora 2000, 105). In a similar vein, research on diverse Jewish liturgies has pointed to the relevance of the affective associations they carry: the musical elements are intimately tied to emotions, and emotions, on their part, are central to the human capacity of meaning-making (Summit 2000, 102–104; Kligman 2001, 452–453).

A third theoretical perspective concerns the “turn to tradition”: an innovative and embodied engagement with musical religious expressions, increasingly unbound by traditional institutional divisions, that adds to the flexibility and fluidity of contemporary Jewish identities. This overarching “post-denominational” trend has been discussed both globally and in relation to Anglo-Jewry more specifically, where such lines of thought seem to have a wide resonance today (Pinto 2008, 30–31; Kahn-Harris and Gidley 2010, 102; Borts 2014, 289–290). When attention is turned toward the subjective rather than the boundaries of historical religious institutions, the previously incommensurable ways of “being” and “doing” Jewish appear in a new light. As new generations of Jews explore the musical heritage of their tradition, Ruth Ellen Gruber (2002, 186) argues, they feel free to “emphatically reject metaphoric overtones and claim fulfillment simply in the music itself.” Hence, it is possible to leave behind the theological and doctrinal “baggage” of practices originating in Jewish milieus far removed, in time and ideology, from the contexts where they are currently explored, using the tradition as a source of inspiration but not something to be bound by (Illman 2016, 302–303): “Tradition gets a vote but not a veto,” Jeffrey Summit (2000, 112) concludes, echoing a phrase minted by Mordecai Kaplan.<sup>6</sup>

Summit, in his ethnographic research on music and identity (2000) as well as Torah cantillation (2016) in contemporary American Jewish communities, argues that the growing interest in musical ways of approaching Jewish liturgies and scriptures “embodies and reconceptualizes these Jews’ understanding of historical religious practice and contemporary spiritual experience” (Summit 2016, 5). His research shows how music can become a platform on which a deep and meaningful relationship with the past can be built in which the Jewish heritage and historical traditions are experienced as relevant and reliable. It also highlights a longing for emotional experiences, participation, and embodied practice (Summit 2000, 16–17, 147). In a Jewish setting, Mark Kligman contends, traditional musical elements that are reframed and recreated in new fashions can function as ways to “empower the congregation and community to redefine worship through music, [offering] not a new musical repertoire, but a new sonic space” where Jewish sounds and identities are reframed (Kligman 2015, 8–9).

As a conclusion of this theoretical overview, three main arguments can be formulated. Firstly, as a consequence of the increased emphasis on religious self-determination—the “reflexive turn”—new ways of positioning oneself within the

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<sup>6</sup> “We should accept the past as no more authoritative than the present. It should have the right to vote but not the right to veto” (Kaplan 1958, 28).

Jewish landscape seem to arise, transcending traditional institutional divisions. Secondly, as a feature of the “turn within,” emotions and embodiment appear as increasingly relevant aspects of the religious engagement. Thirdly, musical elements experienced as traditionally Jewish are explored and incorporated in progressive Jewish settings as an aspect of the “turn to tradition.” Building on these claims, three research questions can be formulated and brought into dialogue with the ethnography:

- Q1. Is the “reflexive turn” emphasizing emotions and embodiment visible in the interview material and does it promote music as a complement or an alternative to rationally focused, text-centered practices?
- Q2. What kinds of musical practices are explored and how are practices experienced as traditional combined with a liberal theological stance as an aspect of the “turn within”?
- Q3. Is the “turn to tradition” also mirrored in the interviewees’ choices of language, English or Hebrew, as the preferred language of prayer and practice?

### **Ethnographic Material and Methodology**

The second part of this article is dedicated to an analysis of the ethnographic data. During several occasions between July 2014 and June 2016, in-depth interviews were conducted with persons linked to Leo Baeck College (LBC), where rabbis for the Reform and Liberal movements in the UK, and Europe more widely, are trained. To introduce these organizations briefly, The Movement for Reform Judaism dates back to the mid-19th century and is today the second-largest Jewish religious group in the UK. It is part of the World Union for Progressive Judaism and formally affiliated with the American Union for Reform Judaism, maintains 42 synagogues, and is the major supporter of LBC. In comparison, Liberal Judaism, which dates back to the early 20th century, is smaller and more radical in theology and practice. Founded in 1956 by the Reform movement, LBC has been jointly sponsored by the two movements since 1964 (Kahn-Harris and Gidley 2010, 2–3; LBC website; The Movement for Reform Judaism website; Liberal Judaism website).

For this research project, 21 interviews were carried out with approximately 30 persons (some interviewed two or three times; others interviewed in groups). Thus, the research material is qualitative in nature and its collection has been guided by the attempt to understand the points of view of the informants (Davidsson Bremborg 2011, 311). The interviewees (men and women born between 1941 and 1990) all harbored a special interest in music and song, liturgical renewal, and Jewish religiosity, with special emphasis on developing liberal and egalitarian ways of living Jewish lives.<sup>7</sup> Despite the connection to LBC, the institutional affiliation of the interviewees was diverse, ranging from Liberal to Orthodox and “post-denominational”—a self-identification that can be understood in relation to the

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<sup>7</sup> For details, see the “Appendix”.

multicultural microcosm of Jewish London, where numerous religious and spiritual practices and ideas are readily available—a vibrant culture emphasizing individual agency and freedom of choice in matters of religion (Kahn-Harris and Gidley 2010, 2–4; Graham 2012, 97–98). The interviewees were all permanent residents of the UK, but among them were persons with roots in Germany, France, Romania, Russia, Israel, and the US.

Concerning methodology, this research is ethnographically driven and thus strives to offer an in-depth account of individual interpretations rather than outlining organizational strategies or historical developments (Davidsson Bremborg 2011, 312; Gregg and Scholefield 2015, 5). It seeks to explore the idea of change as an ethnographically compelling narrative rather than a statistically valid or demographically traceable societal process, showing how the informants make sense of their contemporary engagement with religious music and how apprehensions of tradition tie into these conversations. Consequently, in this study the question of what qualifies as “traditional Jewish music” is answered with reference to the ethnographic accounts, including various practices of singing, praying, and chanting that are perceived as religiously significant—as parts of the service or in unofficial contexts, participatory or led by religious or musical professionals. Whether or not the ritual elements and musical practices are in fact traditional, or rather perceived as such through a nostalgic lens of emotional engagement, or whether the process of change is “new” or not, is of lesser importance for this particular research question.<sup>8</sup>

While the ethnographic data relate to a variety of institutional affiliations, the common denominator is the connection to LBC, which, as mentioned above, is an educational institution run by the Reform and Liberal movements in Britain. Therefore, a brief description of the recent developments within these two movements in relation to music adds valuable information to the analysis. The British Reform movement as a whole has been involved in an active process of renewal since the turn of the millennium, spurring changes in policies on leadership, organizational structures, and practice (Kahn-Harris and Gidley 2010, 100–101). In her study of current musical practices among Reform Jews in the UK, Barbara Borts contends that substantial changes have also occurred in the patterns of worship within the movement over recent decades. The overarching organizational renewal—prompted by concerns of diminishing attendance and lack of spiritual significance—has included the introduction of a new *siddur* in 2008, reintroducing a more traditional liturgical order. This has led to music playing an increasingly prominent part in synagogue life (Borts 2014, 41–43). “There has been a demonstrable increase in attention to music in the realm of Anglo-Reform,” Borts

<sup>8</sup> According to Edwin Seroussi et al. (2001), the term “Jewish music” is currently applied to a wide range of research objects, including, for example, the traditional music of all Jewish communities, past and present, liturgical and non-liturgical music as well as contemporary music, folk music, popular music, and art music related to Jewish groups, cultures, and persons in various ways. The scholarly (and popular) vision of a grand narrative of Jewish music builds on the legacy of the classic work by Abraham Z. Idelsohn, originally published in 1929 under the title *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development* [for a more recent edition, see Idelsohn (1992)]. For a discussion of Idelsohn’s influence on the Reform movement, see Cohen (2010). Reflexive approaches to defining “Jewish music” in practice and in research are also discussed, for example, by Bohlman (2008), Cohen (2010), Kligman (2015).

contends. Prayers are chanted “with a different attitude than in previous years,” and alternative services including guitars and music written by contemporary North American Jewish composers are introduced, but so too are prayer modes and melodies found in Jewish history. In Borts’ research, the musical panoply of the communities under study was generally rich, oscillating between “desires for return to ‘tradition’ and modern musical tastes consonant with genres of music popular in secular culture” (ibid., 27–28).

In comparison, Liberal Judaism has undergone a similar, although less remarkable, renewal (Kahn-Harris and Gidley 2010, 102; Graham 2012, 89, 98). In the early years of the movement, the radical purism of the founding father, Claude Montefiore, resulted in strictly lucid services with a minimum of ritual elements (Langton 2004, 26). However, already in the post-war years and especially since the 1970s, this minimalist approach has been replaced by a renewed “turn to tradition,” including a search for more tangible liturgical expressions, such as embodied rituals and musical religious expressions, and links to the Jewish heritage. Consequently, the new *siddur* introduced in 1995 included far greater numbers of Hebrew prayers and traditional melodies (Rigal and Rosenberg 2004). Today Liberal Judaism describes itself as a “dynamic and developing, [...] questing and questioning, authentic and modern form of Judaism,” rooted in tradition and history but also encouraging its members to embark on personal journeys to explore new ways of living Jewish lives in the contemporary world. Music is described as “a key part of the *ruach* [spirit] of Liberal Judaism” that enhances prayer, community, and religious experiences. “Developing exciting new practices” in music is stated as an explicit aim: “It is in its use and distribution of music that Liberal Judaism is being most ambitious in its building towards a future shared tradition” (Liberal Judaism website). These patterns of institutional development form the background against which the viewpoints of the interviewees can be understood.<sup>9</sup>

## Q1 “Lots of People are on that Search”

Turning to the ethnographic material, the first question to be addressed concerns perceptions of religion and change: Is the “reflexive turn” emphasizing emotions and embodiment visible in the interview material as a search for new religious identities transcending traditional institutional divisions?

The interviewees affirm the development of a renewed interest in tradition, liturgy, and personal reflexivity within their Jewish contexts and find this to be a characteristic of progressive Judaism in the UK today as a whole. For example, Rachel repeatedly describes modern times as turbulent and full of uncertainty. “You know, the world’s changed so much now,” she reflects. People feel at a loss and alone in the fast, fickle, and fluctuating world of contemporary media-dominated and market-driven societies, she believes; hence, they search for something more

<sup>9</sup> Borts (2014) offers a comprehensive presentation of the British Reform movement and especially its musical history. For similar discussions on music and change within the Reform community in the US, see Summit 2000, 52–54, 63; Cohen 2009. Liberal Judaism in the UK, including the development of the liturgy and musical practices, is discussed in Langton (2004), Rigal and Rosenberg (2004).

steadfast, profound, and meaningful—within themselves as well as in their religious communities.

The changes on the macro-level are also recognized and affirmed within the microcosm of personal narratives, which show a remarkably colorful palette of Jewish experiences being combined in a “post-denominational” spirit. The younger interviewees especially talk of varied attachments, although their institutional affiliations may not have changed since childhood. Yael, for example, grew up in a Reform community and is today a recently ordained rabbi in the same movement but has broadened her Jewish experiences by spending “many years in Orthodox communities, [doing] quite a bit of Jewish Renewal” and being influenced by neo-Hasidic and trans-denominational circles during her studies: “I took that very much into my practice as a rabbi,” she says. Others speak of excursions to contemporary spiritualities and practices such as yoga, reiki, Sufism, and Buddhist meditation, and some have converted from Christianity. Micah’s personal journey has taken him from an Orthodox Jewish upbringing via several years in a Chabad-Lubavitch yeshiva in Israel to his current position as a Liberal rabbi with close ties to alternative minyanim and LGBTIQ communities. He acknowledges that his personal development runs parallel to the reflexive turn identified in the literature: “I’m doing it; I’m part of this trend to bring back these little rituals because they’re fun, because they give you something else to do rather than just reading; it’s physical and so forth.” Concerning traditional institutional divisions he says: “I know I’m one of those who certainly blows those boundaries because I’ve crossed them myself, and even without intending to I know I blow boundaries.”

“Bring[ing] back these little rituals,” as Micah formulates it, certainly emerges as a strong and positive trend across the interviews, clearly connected to a search for more embodied and emotionally engaging ways of practicing Judaism. The role of music as a platform, tool, and source of inspiration in this context is also affirmed across the interviews, bringing out the sometimes strained relationship between feeling and understanding. Emotional attachment to and engagement in the religious practices is central to many of the interviewees, who raise the concern that progressive Jewish communities, by shaping their services along Protestant Christian lines,<sup>10</sup> have de-emphasized such aspects to an extent where the prayers have lost their “soul.” In Rachel’s words, “I think Judaism is so pragmatic in a way that we probably don’t give our children and grandchildren enough of the *neshama* (soul) [...] If you talk about *ruach*, which is spirit—all of that feeling, you can’t do without music, it’s just inseparable.” Nevertheless, it would be an oversimplification to ascribe a dichotomous way of thinking to the interviewees, where the text represents the intellectual, theological content of the prayer and the melody represents the emotional experience. In fact they almost exclusively reject that idea. “I think language is a bit limited here for the experience, but at least it is not a simple division,” the Reform rabbi and scholar Dinah says, trying to explain her view of the relationship between rational and emotional aspects of the religious

<sup>10</sup> The similarities between the Jewish Reform and Liberal movements, on the one hand, and Christian Protestantism, on the other, concerning ethos, approaches to liturgy, and rationality are noted by many of the interviewees. This interesting and important dimension of the discussion falls outside the scope of this article but has been dealt with in detail, for example, by Daniel Langton (2004).

experience. The Masorti cantor Rebecca talks about a ceaseless balancing act on her part: “It’s like walking on a tightrope; there’s a constant tension between the intellect and the gut [but] they’re together; they have to be together.” The Liberal cantor Adam’s words also capture this argument aptly:

I don’t think it’s a dichotomy, an opposite. I think that rationality has its own emotional attachments. And one of the things that the musical element can do is introduce you to the emotional attachments that are present also in the rational side. It can help; the two bridge each other.

Hannah, a scholar who is active as a lay song leader in a Reform synagogue, relates the dichotomy to modern neurology and the different hemispheres of the brain: “Each hemisphere does different things and we need them to do different things, which are sometimes in conflict with each other.” Another scholar, Daniel, who attends an Orthodox synagogue but supports liberal values and cross-denominational engagements, holds that language is necessary for understanding but that a deeper form of understanding can be found “beyond” the words: “You cannot pass on a culture if it’s all in the head. There’s got to be something from the guts as well, you know, really felt.” Thus, as the scholar and Reform song leader Miriam says: “It’s a mix.” In turning to musical practices that evoke emotions and embodied engagement, rational content is not done away with but is included in a larger religious framework where words and sounds form a meaningful unity. Hence, Hannah concludes: “If you can bring together the intellectual stuff, the wisdom, and the melody, then this is when the Torah really fulfills its full potential.”

To answer the first research question, concerning the “reflexive turn” and the increased interest in musical practices that engage bodies and emotions, one can contend that the narrative described in the literature finds wide resonance in the ethnography. Creative stimulation and emotional experiences are described by many of the interviewees as key reasons why musical approaches to religious practice are appealing to them: feelings of joy, sanctity, presence, harmony, and togetherness are often mentioned. In particular, wordless singing and singing in Hebrew are described as engaging, uniting, liberating, and equalizing. Music is not regarded simply as a carrier of meaning or a technique through which religious experiences are obtained but as an integral aspect of the religious practice—its quintessence rather than a tool for elucidating other, verbalized dimensions. In the interviews, music also seems to play a vital role as mediator between intellectual and emotional aspects of the religious engagement. While the greater acknowledgement of emotional elements in prayer is generally seen as a positive development, the interviewees also stress that they see no conflict between emotionally engaging practices and intellectual, text-centered elements of liturgy. Feeling and understanding are not regarded as binary opposites but rather as mutually enhancing and enriching elements of religious life. Understanding texts and liturgies on an intellectual level facilitates a deeper relationship with the religious practice; there is no simple division, no either-or, between feeling and understanding. Consequently, even if emotions and embodiment come to the fore when musical religious practices are discussed, the interviewees underline the need to strike a balance between words and melody, the rational and the emotional, not

simply pursuing one at the expense of the other. Both the Reform and Liberal communities are said to be well on their way to developing a balanced approach in this matter.

When discussing emotions it is also important to note that the power of music to engage emotionally is the result of human agency: how individuals orient to it, interpret it, and “place it within their personal musical maps” (DeNora 2000, 61). Therefore, a critical analysis of the discourse on change and agency in the interview material reveals its links to a gendered perspective. Many of the female interviewees stress that one’s options for picking and choosing Jewish experiences are still limited by gender, social class, ethnic background, and education. As part of her teaching, Dinah often feels the need to open this debate with male students, who are “flirting with [neo-Hasidic practices] and experimenting with their own spirituality and practice in situating themselves. I often find myself saying to [them]: *You can do that because you are not female.*” To bring out such nuances, the interviews must be analyzed with an awareness of the sometimes unacknowledged restraints that condition the “reflexive turn,” and a deepened intersectional assessment of these findings would be welcome. Thus, to conclude, it seems as if the musical elements discussed by the interviewees offer them a resource by which they can “configure themselves as subjects who act and feel things in relation to music” (DeNora 2000, 107). For them, music is an active component of their religious worldview, in their negotiations of identity and relationships with Judaism at large.

## Q2 “Singing *niggunim* is seen as Spiritual”

The second research question is more practical in nature: What kinds of musical practices are explored and how are practices experienced as traditional combined with a liberal theological stance as an aspect of the “turn within”?

Concerning the “turn within,” Summit notes that at a time when worshipers across religious traditions are “seeking more intimate and personal experiences with their faith traditions,” music offers an appealing strategy for many persons looking for “deeper access to core religious experiences [...] placing themselves at the center of the worship service” (Summit 2016, 1–2). While turning attention to the personal inner experience, the music discussed in the interviews is still mainly characterized by what Turino calls “participatory values.” These include social interaction as a primary goal: attention is directed to the activity of “doing” music, which is gauged not by abstract ideas of sound quality but by the level of engagement it inspires and the emotions it stimulates (Turino 2008, 28–29). For several decades now, a range of musical practices has been explored for this purpose within progressive Jewish contexts, such as a greater use of *niggunim*, (mostly) wordless melodies associated with Hasidic or neo-Hasidic practice,<sup>11</sup> and *nusach*,

<sup>11</sup> *Niggunim* are associated with the performance of repetitive melodies accompanying plain syllables or mantra-like text fragments from the Torah or the Jewish prayer books. Most characteristic are the Hasidic, wordless tunes performed to syllables such as *lay-lay-lay* or *ya-ba-bam* (Bohlman 2008, 57). However, melodies referred to and used as *niggunim* in contemporary progressive Jewish settings have their roots in many different musical sources, e.g., Israeli folk music, popular music, melodies by modern American

traditional prayer chant, in the services, as well as an increased use of Hebrew (Levine 2009; Cohen 2016, 486–487). As noted in the previous section, the introduction of liturgical forms experienced as more traditional is not, however, connected with an alteration of the liberal values characterizing these communities. Rather, individual believers and communities seek means to combine progressive ways of “being” Jewish with what is felt to be an increasingly traditional and historically informed way of “doing” Jewish (Wood 2016, 160–161; Borts 2014, 41).

The attitudes expressed in the interviews toward singing, chanting, and increasing the number of musical elements in the services follow a similar pattern. Singing or chanting scripture and prayers during a service, instead of “soberly” reading them as the progressive Jewish traditions have often opted for, is valued as a way of creating community and facilitating participation. As an example, the rabbinic student Naomi, with roots in Liberal Judaism, says that singing “has this incredible way of managing to lift your soul, and lift the community.” In addition to the inclusive and community-building aspects of music, many informants also consider it to be an effective way of connecting with human emotions, a way of combining intellectual content with emotion and experience. As shown in the previous section, singing prayers is described as emotionally engaging, anchoring them in the body in a more comprehensive way than mere reading does. Dinah illustrates this point by saying: “Human beings have more than one sense. Reading to me is like eating food without tasting it, and then music is what fully checks in your taste buds.”

In fact, the informants agree, it is often melodies rather than texts that form the core of the religious experience, and the melodies themselves are perceived as carriers of meaning, energy, and interpretation. A pertinent example of the pre-eminence held by the melody in relation to the text is the increasingly popular practice of *niggunim* referred to above (Wood 2016, 160–161). Sometimes the words get in the way, Micah says; words become like stones in a river that impede the free flow of water, that is, the divine experience and connection. Hence, he prefers “a lot of singing” in the services, “because that’s what I do and people like it.” On a personal level, singing fulfills both “an emotional need” and has “real intellectual benefits,” Micah says, because it increases his interpretive freedom:

I’ve been struggling with the language of our prayers and the theology it represents, and although I’ve sort of found my own way of dealing with it,

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Footnote 11 continued

Jewish composers (e.g., Shlomo Carlebach and Debbie Friedman), and even interreligious sources such as Sufi chants (see Ochs 2007, 17, 26; Weissler 2011, 53; Cohen 2016, 487–488). In the interviews, *niggunim* are not perceived narrowly as a historical phenomenon tied to the Hasidic heritage but rather as a broad category of wordless songs that have found their way into all sorts of Jewish communities around the world. The interest in *niggunim* began during the 1960s in the US as part of the Jewish Renewal movement (Wood 2016, 158–161). Today, the tradition is alive within many branches of Judaism as part of a larger upswing toward explorative, emotional, and embodied Jewish practices (Levine 2009, 4–5). For this context, Vanessa Ochs offers the following definition: “The *nig[gun]* is a Jewish spiritual melody often sung with universal sounds, rather than words. Initially used among Hasidim to warm up for prayer and also as a prayer in and of itself [...]” (Ochs 2007, 37). In this study, the term is used in line with this definition.

which is interpreting everything very metaphorically as I say it, it's still an effort. So singing it is much easier, just to enter into the emotion rather than dealing with it intellectually.

In a similar vein, several interviewees confess that, at times, they grow tired of being opinionated about theological doctrines and reasoning about interpretations of the tradition. Instead, they simply want to dwell in the atmosphere of prayer, as one can when singing *niggunim* without words. In the opinion of the rabbinic student Chava, who defines herself as “post-denominational” with strong connections to both Jewish Renewal and Reform, progressive Jews are often too preoccupied with words. “When you skip the words it becomes more personal,” she says, “because instead of the words that are externally imposed you have whatever is going on inside, beyond the words.” A similar view is put forward by Daniel, whose idea that singing can take you beyond language to a deeper understanding was cited above. Another emerging musical practice that is widely discussed in the ethnographic material is *nusach*, the traditional Jewish chant, which has been largely abandoned in progressive services (Summit 2016, 2). On the basis of the interviews, it seems as if chanting is coming back into synagogue life, in both Liberal and Reform communities in the UK. The rabbinic student Samuel is one of many who verify this trend, stating: “A lot of Reform shuls now have reintroduced *nusach*, which is a great way to bring the spiritual connection through the music.”

The quotations above may seem dichotomous, but when placed in their context and analyzed in relation to the broad ethnographic background from which they emerge, it is clear that the interviewees relate to emotion and understanding as intertwined aspects of the musical engagement, as proposed in the previous section. On a critical note, however, the analysis also shows reservation toward these practices: not everyone is as enthusiastic about *niggunim* and *nusach* as the majority of the interviewees. *Niggunim* are skeptically described as a “dittyfication of the liturgy” (Adam, Micah), as “lacking an intellectual inside” (Samuel), and as bordering on unhealthy ecstasy (Miriam, Rachel, Rebecca) with Evangelical overtones (David, Dinah, Esther). As Dinah somewhat scornfully puts it, “It’s a signal, semiotically: I want to be spiritual; now I will sing a *niggun*.” *Nusach*, for its part, is considered to be elitist (Liberal rabbinic student Jacob, Reform rabbinic students Deborah and Abigail), superficially constructed, and meaninglessly watered-down for progressive purposes (Daniel, Miriam).

By and large, however, the interviewees feel that the attitudes toward singing and chanting are changing toward greater inclusion and appreciation in progressive Jewish circles today. Thus, they are generally enthusiastic about promoting different kinds of practices in their communities, including an array of musical expressions spanning traditional Lewandowski tunes, Sephardi melodies, and Ladino prayers as well as prayers in American folk-music style, newly composed tunes, popular music, Sufi mantras, Buddhist chants, and much else. For the informants, then, music is perceived to function as an important platform for creativity and, like the North American Jews studied by Abigail Wood (2016, 182–183), most are eager to explore practices from diverse religious traditions, combining them in individual ways and integrating them into their own religious

practice. Despite the occasional critique, these attitudes seem to support Judah M. Cohen's observation that the explorations of musical traditions such as neo-Hasidic *niggunim* in the Reform Jewish world today satisfy a longing for "artistic spirituality" and a wish to find "an antidote to excessive rationalism" (Cohen 2016, 487). As melodies imported from historical Hasidic contexts, for example, are adapted to new, liberal, and egalitarian settings, they are experienced as engaging and meaningful because of the perceived resonance with tradition, turning them into romanticized "musical symbols of Jewish identity" (Wood 2016, 160).<sup>12</sup> The gains of singing as part of the religious engagement can also be understood as instances where music offers a framework for "bodily being," promoting the body as a "way of seeing" (DeNora 2000, 87, 99).

### Q3 "Language is Not Neutral"

The final research question to be addressed in this analysis concerns the "turn to tradition" and whether this process is also mirrored in the interviewees' choices of language, English or Hebrew, as they discuss their religious practices.

Part of the trend, discussed in the introduction to this article, whereby personal and embodied forms of worship connected to experiences and emotions rather than the intellect are sought, is to explore a greater use of Hebrew and reintroduce the traditional liturgical language into the services (Gilman 2006, 14). According to Summit, many liberal Jews today find themselves in a paradoxical situation in relation to *lashon kodesh*, the holy language. Often, they have studied Hebrew and learned to read it phonetically, and are familiar with the frequently used prayers and liturgical expressions but do not have an independent command of the language. Hence, "many feel an ownership of a language they do not fully understand while at the same time feeling inadequate and inauthentic when they are unable to translate or speak Hebrew" (Summit 2016, 125; see also Summit 2000, 66, 130). Summit's observations relate primarily to Torah cantillation, but in the current ethnography a similar ambivalence is mirrored in relation to the use of Hebrew in the services at large. Therefore, it is interesting to apply these conclusions more generally to the narratives.

In the services attended by the interviewees, the extent to which Hebrew is used varies significantly. Some are accustomed to liturgies conducted mainly in English with the addition of some Hebrew songs and prayers, while others take part in services carried out almost entirely in Hebrew. The language issue is discussed widely in the interviews, and the preferences concerning choice of language vary. Several informants stress that Hebrew, for them as British Jews, is not a vernacular used in everyday life but a language attached to a sacred context. Thus, it is set apart from the start. This invites existential and philosophical ponderings on the role of language and the status of words in Judaism at large. "Language is not neutral,"

<sup>12</sup> In fact, as Cohen (2016, 489–491) shows, the tendency among Reform Jews to draw inspiration from Hasidic musical practices, perceived as "authentic" and "spiritual" alternatives to what are felt to be overly rational and uninspiring liberal practices, has a history going back more than a century.

says David, a scholar and an active member of a Reform synagogue. The use of Hebrew is interpreted in one of two ways by the interviewees: as an affirmation of the religious meaningfulness of using the original language in prayer, or as a hesitant reservation toward the “elitism” that the increasing use of Hebrew is seen to reflect. While the informants themselves are largely well versed in biblical Hebrew, reading and chanting prayers in Hebrew without any great trouble, they admit that for other congregants the move toward greater inclusion of Hebrew is an ambivalent issue. In most progressive congregations the level of Hebrew knowledge is described as “variable at best” (David). Thus, the concern is aired that the expanded use of Hebrew will further alienate congregants, who already feel uncomfortable and distanced from Jewish liturgical life. Religion is a complicated matter, and therefore you need to know at least what the words you sing mean, states the Reform cantor Sarah as a reason for why she prefers to pray in the vernacular.

Most of the interviewees in Summit’s (2016) study regarded Hebrew comprehension as essential and were committed to learning to understand the texts and prayers they encountered in the services. Nevertheless, some also expressed contentment with *not* understanding all the nuances of the Hebrew prayers, as this released them from the troubling demand to relate to problematic passages of scripture. Thus, Summit notes, “for some of the readers the act of chanting an ancient language, in the context of public worship, has a power that transcends understanding the literal meaning of the text” (Summit 2016, 128). In comparison, among the interviewees of the current study, the stress on intellectual understanding and the need to have a literal command of Hebrew is a minority position. Rather, most of them stress the symbolic religious meaning of using a language that is so closely tied to the “soul of Judaism,” uniting the praying congregation with generations past, with Jews all over the world, and with the spiritual aspects of the ancient prayers. In these situations, it is argued, the lexical meaning of the words is secondary, as language will always fall short of describing the holy. Hence, love of the tunes and traditions can be regarded as just as valid a reason for preferring Hebrew as intellectual motives and the ideal of acquiring a literal understanding of the text. From this point of view, Hebrew enhances a sense of identity, community, and cohesion, becoming a core symbol for the connection to history (Gilman 2006, 9; Friedman 2012, 26). Another reason for preferring Hebrew, which is not linked to intellectual gains, is its perceived power to engender collective experiences. Participatory singing can obviously also be conducted in English, but, as described above, Hebrew is generally seen to enhance an in-depth sense of community in a special way, facilitating a participatory dynamism that bolsters engagement and feelings of belonging (Turino 2008, 33).

However, emphasizing the melodies and the communal experience of praying in Hebrew rather than being bound by the literal meaning of the texts should not be understood as a “distrust of language” in general. Quite the contrary: the informants point to “a love of language” in Judaism, to use David’s words, that generates a sense of mystical magnitude. Thus, these attitudes seem to reflect a broader focus on how Hebrew words, attached to melodies and tunes, create a liturgical space in which the religious experience can grow and deepen. Even if one has an excellent

command of the language, it is not necessary to think about “the words as words” when singing prayers and chanting scripture in Hebrew, Micah states. Rather than being forced to engage intellectually with the truth claims and propositions put forward in the paragraphs, one is instead free to focus on the melody and the act of singing (Friedman 2012, 52–53). Thus, in practice, Hebrew melodies and prayers can function as wordless tunes, rather like the syllables of *niggunim*. Preferring Hebrew to English is hence not necessarily tied to theological or doctrinal convictions but can also reflect an effort to facilitate experiences centering on aspects of the liturgy other than the literal and intellectual, such as community and embodiment (Summit 2000, 131–132).

An ambivalent relationship to language comes to the fore in Rachel’s reflections too. She grew up in an Orthodox community where Hebrew was the self-evident standard. Thus, she admits, “I was very shocked moving into the Reform world: it took me years and years and years, and even to this day I’m not comfortable with services that are read in English without music.” In Rachel’s words, “Hebrew comes from the heart,” and therefore singing in Hebrew is something you “feel” rather than “understand.” Furthermore, along with many other interviewees, she proposes that reading in English really does not help you to understand the words any better—it only feels “confusing.” Praying in Hebrew, on the other hand, can open up possibilities for moving “beyond language,” as Daniel says, toward a deeper understanding that is sometimes described by the interviewees as “wisdom” or “closeness to God”—transforming experiences that transcend the literal understanding of the text. In Rachel’s reflections, the choice of language and the performance of the prayers are inseparably linked to each other. Thus, she not only favors Hebrew but explicitly sung or chanted Hebrew.

One could perhaps assume that a strong command of Hebrew would be a prerequisite for feeling positive about the greater inclusion of the language in the services, but on the basis of the ethnography and in line with previous research the issue seems more complex than that. Bringing more Hebrew into the services can create a meaningful connection to tradition and an atmosphere of transcendence, but it can also alienate the participants, sometimes because they *do not* understand the Hebrew and sometimes because they *do* understand and feel unable to pray in those very words, as Hannah and Samuel, respectively, concede. Taken together, this illustrates what a deep and multi-layered cultural and religious resonance the Hebrew language has with the interviewees, including not only the verbal and grammatical aspects of the language but also “the visual graphics of the letters, the sound of the language, the power and mystery of an ancient, authentic tradition” (Summit 2016, 128). As concluded in the previous section, it seems that the melodies and the act of chanting or singing as such become the core of the religious practice at times.

## Conclusions

This article has presented an interdisciplinary discussion on the role of music in contemporary processes of religious change in the UK, focusing especially on contemporary progressive Jews in the London area. By analyzing ethnographic

research material gathered between 2014 and 2016, it has illustrated a burgeoning trend in the Western world today: the wish to combine liberal theology with religious practices that are experienced as increasingly traditional, and the important role played by music and musical forms of expression in these processes. The review of previous research related to the role of music in processes of religious change was encapsulated in three main arguments, each highlighting a “turn” with relevance for the ethnographic research field. Firstly, it has been argued, music often seems to play a pivotal role in contemporary processes of religious change, which are marked by a growing emphasis on self-determination and more open and changeable approaches to religious orientation, described in the literature as a “reflexive turn.” Secondly, within the study of religion and music, a “turn within” has been highlighted, where growing attention is given to bodily experiences, sensations, and states of consciousness. Thirdly, musical elements experienced as traditionally Jewish seem to be explored and incorporated in progressive Jewish settings as an aspect of the “turn to tradition.” These theoretical claims were summarized in three research questions that were brought into dialogue with the ethnographic material in the second part of the article:

- Q1. Is the “reflexive turn” emphasizing emotions and embodiment visible in the interview material and does it promote music as a complement or an alternative to rationally focused, text-centered practices?
- Q2. What kinds of musical practices are explored and how are practices experienced as traditional combined with a liberal theological stance as an aspect of the “turn within”?
- Q3. Is the “turn to tradition” also mirrored in the interviewees’ choices of language, English or Hebrew, as the preferred language of prayer and practice?

Concerning the “reflexive turn,” the analysis showed that a narrative of change emphasizing musical practices that engage bodies and emotions found wide resonance in the ethnography. However, it was stressed, the interviews must be approached with an awareness of gendered, ethnic, and social limits that condition the “reflexive turn,” and further intersectional analyses were envisioned. The “turn within,” for its part, was contextualized through a detailed discussion of embodied and musical rituals in general and the explorations of *niggunim* and *nusach* in particular, which were experienced as engaging and meaningful because of the perceived resonance with tradition. Lastly, the “turn to tradition” was connected to the varied positions and preferences advocated in relation to the choice between English or Hebrew as the language of prayer and liturgy—a discussion aptly captured by the title of the subsection “language is not neutral.”

Finally, as proposed in the introduction, the ethnographic analysis can be encapsulated in a single quotation from Rachel: “I’m convinced that reading English that you understand is no more helpful than singing Hebrew that you feel.” This statement is rhetorically built around three pairs of concepts, presented as opposing alternatives in Jewish liturgical practice, that run parallel to the research questions presented above: understanding and feeling (Q1), reading and singing (Q2), English and Hebrew (Q3). Tying together the threads of the discussion on the

three dialectical pairs proposed in this quotation, it is clear that no plain, black-and-white answer can be given as to which options are preferred among the informants. Even though emotions and embodiment come to the fore most prominently in the interview data, and even though all interviewees are enthusiastic singers, keen on exploring Jewish musical traditions in a respectful yet curious manner, the interviewees also emphasize the need to strike a balance between different elements in worship. Thus, texts and melodies, rational content, and emotional engagement as well as Hebrew prayers and passages in the vernacular are needed in order to create a way of “being” and “doing” Jewish that is experienced as meaningful and historically embedded and yet is also perceptive of contemporary contexts and changing religious landscapes. As such, the versatile musical practices discussed in this article connect personal dispositions with religious and cultural frameworks, becoming symbols that “resonate from the viewpoint of the present” and thus help the interviewees “to make sense of today’s world [...] as practicing Jews, as secular Jews, as consciously Jewish living individuals adding creative input, as Jews, to society as a whole” (Gruber 2002, 236).

The analysis shows that the narrative of music, religion, and change is affirmed by the interviewees; it confirms the development they currently see in their communities but also captures their personal quests to shape meaningful ways of practicing Judaism. As mentioned in the introduction, the interviewees were approached because they were known to nurture an engagement with music; alternatively, they volunteered to be interviewed because they found the theme interesting and relevant. Hence, it is not surprising that music figured so prominently in their narratives of change, but it is worth emphasizing that hesitation was also aired. Virtually all interviewees expressed reservations about bringing ecstatic elements into the services, such as *niggunim* in their more fervent, Hasidic style, or dancing. Change was welcomed when it was experienced as informed, based on respect for the Jewish heritage and the tradition of the community, but resisted when felt to be vulgar, based on passing whims and displaying indifference to people’s inner balance. Therefore, the balance between rational and emotional aspects of the religious engagement is essential to create an informed understanding of the claim that it is more helpful to sing in Hebrew than one feels than to read in English that one understands.

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## Appendix

### Interviews

Twenty-one interviews were conducted in London between July 2014 and June 2016 by the author (some persons were interviewed two or three times; some interviews were group interviews; in all, approximately 30 persons were interviewed). All interviews were recorded as mp3 files and transcribed into text

documents by the current researcher. Coding was conducted manually using both inductive and deductive strategies, employing concepts and themes arising from the theoretical framework as well as paying attention to topics of concern expressed by the interviewees.

The interviewees have been given aliases—common Jewish names—in order to guard their anonymity. In transliterating the recordings into text, only minor changes have been made to the spoken dialogue in order to make it understandable and quotable. Thus, the quotations from the interviews do not follow strict grammatical rules but are colloquial in their appearance.

Recordings and transcripts are stored at the Cultura Archive, Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland. Archive codes: IF mgt 2014/028, IF mgt 2014/032-040, and IF mgt 2016/009-019.

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