The Earliest Hebrew Speaking Institutions of Music Education; Tel-Aviv, 1910s[1]

ANAT VIKS

Abstract: Based on the archival collections of the first two Hebrew music schools in Tel-Aviv, Shulamit Conservatory and Beth-Lewiim College of Music, this article discusses their formative years between the 1910s and the 1920s. Despite significant financial difficulties, the severe impact of World War I on the Yishuv,[2] pressures to comply with the emerging national identity, and personal as well as pedagogical disagreements, both succeeded in establishing professional institutions that helped shape the conservatory model in Israel for many years to come.

Keywords: Beth-Lewiim College of Music, Shulamit Conservatory, Miriam Levite, Shulamit Rupin, Hebrew culture.

Music Schools and National Identity

On March 6, 1925, Miriam Levite (1891? – 1975)[3] celebrated the inauguration of a new building for her music school on 18 Brenner Street in Tel-Aviv. This change of location, from Allenby St. to the nearby Brenner St., marked a status change. The new building not only fulfilled the growing demands of the school but also was a declaration of its cultural-national importance. Its name was changed, from Miriam Levite's Music School to Beth Ha-Midrash Li-Negina Beth-Lewiim (Beth-Lewiim College of Music), a name that not only alluded to the institution's foundress but also to the members of the Jewish Levite tribe ["Lewiim"], who served as musicians at the old Temple in Jerusalem. A promise for municipal financial support seemed encouraging. In a speech given during the opening ceremony, Miriam Levite not only emphasized that there is no contradiction between imported models of music education and the new emerging Hebrew culture, but she also claimed that these models could materialize only in Palestine, despite some criticism:

> We began with classical music culture and we are now aspiring to achieve self-expression which is both Hebrew and human. Although this initiative did not come from this land—to be more accurate, it immigrated to this land, no doubt it will find its place only here. A certain opinion claims that at such difficult times arts are insignificant . . . Such an opinion must not be accepted. A modern person cannot give up music. It is a vital need that derives from the depth of his soul ."[4]

[1] I would like to thank Mrs. Olga Filatova, the Felicja Blumental Music Archive director, for her constant assistance in accessing and organizing research materials.

[2] The *Yishuv* is the body of Jewish residents in the Land of Israel prior to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. The term came into use in the 1880s and is still in use to denote the pre-1948 Jewish residents in the Land of Israel.

[3] Various documents, such as a birth certificate, a passport, a document on baptism, etc. suggest different birth dates. The most probable date is 1891. *Felicja Blumental Music Archive (FBMA)*, M2/3/1.

[4] "התחלנו בתרבות של מוסיקה קלאסית וחולמים אנו כיום על הבעה עצמית, אנושית-עברית. הקול הקורא לכך אמנם לא יצא מן הארץ, אפשר לומר הוא בא לארץ, אולם אין ספק שרק פה בארץ יוכל למצוא מקום קליטה. יש אמנם דעה אחת בציבור המדברת שבכלל בתקופה זו הקשה בארץ אין עוד לשים לב לאמנות... לדעה זו אין להסכים – בן אדם מודרני אינו יכול לותר על המוסיקה. זה צורך חיוני הנובע מהמקורות העמוקים של נשמתו." A draft of Levite's speech [in Hebrew] is kept in a file containing album leaves with various greetings for the inauguration event and other occasions. *FBMA* M2/3/9/1 (I).

Since their creation more than a decade earlier, the first Hebrew music schools in Tel-Aviv, Shulamit Conservatory and Beth-Lewiim College of Music, were not only expected to devote themselves to music education as a basic human need but also to prove that classical music is necessary for the development of the secular Hebrew culture within the emerging new national identity. The schools were therefore often presented as taking a crucial part in turning Eretz-Israel into a modern cultural land, a nation among nations, although criticism about the possible conflict between the practical goals and needs of the Yishuv and the elitist privilege of classical music never ceased to appear. In the process of adapting imported European models of music education institutes, their qualities gradually became an integral cultural component, similar to coeval but not entirely equivalent processes in the adaptation of other Western cultural components. During an accelerated process of development, mainly following the end of the First World War, their status in the Yishuv strengthened, though this did not necessarily mean more financial help. There was also an increasing collaboration with other cultural institutes such as the Eretz-Israeli Opera, which began its activity in 1923, and the *Ohel Theater*, founded in 1925. Connections were established with several Zionist representatives abroad and other conservatories in Europe. Tel-Aviv, envisioned by some of its founders as turning into a large metropolitan city that will serve as an economical-cultural center, was the perfect place for such an initiative.

The opinion that classical music can serve as a means to strengthen national identity was shared by many, but not all; several reviews warned against its damaging sway on the colonization process of Eretz-Israel. One of the earliest denunciations appeared even before the establishment of music schools. After visiting Palestine in 1901, the Hebrew scholar Abraham Samuel Herschberg harshly criticized the lack of agricultural handwork skills among the Jews and emphasized the difficulty to spur a revolution in the lives of people whose minds are busy with commerce and culture. He complained about the existence of ten pianos among the seventy-nine families that comprised the *Moshava* [township] of Rishon le-Zion: "Clearly, all the girls in this Moshava tend to play the piano much more than to work in the vineyard, and they are more accustomed to Salon life than to the fields." [5] Though local initiatives took place in several Moshavot, such as Rishon le-Zion, Zikhron-Ya'akov, and Petach-Tikva, they were still not official schools with an organized curriculum, experienced teachers, and specific, predefined goals.

A much later example of the possible conflict between elitist culture and pioneering enterprise appeared in Haim Arlosoroff's writings during the mid-1930s when the music schools were already more developed. Arlosoroff warned against the high standard of the new Yishuv which is unsuitable for the development of productiveness in Palestine: "Nowhere is this contrast more obvious as in our children's education, especially in cities … in all classes, including workers … the younger generation is raised for academic life, to become professional violinists and everything else in the world, simply not for work and settlement …"[6] Arlosoroff confirms then that classical music, at this stage, is everywhere, but he views this as a disadvantage.

The first Hebrew music school was established on November 1, 1910, less than six months after the name of the city was declared "Tel-Aviv" at the general council meeting on May 21. Its founder was Shulamit Rupin (1878–1912), a voice teacher from Berlin who was married to one of the leading proponents of Zionist ideology, Dr. Arthur Rupin, who served as the head of the

[5] Herschberg, Abraham Samuel, *Mishpat ha-Yishuv he-Ḥadash be-Ereẓ Yisrael*, (Jerusalem: Yad Yizhak Ben Zvi, 1979), 123, [in Hebrew]. Originally published by Piorozhnikoff, Vilnius: 1901. What Herschberg described were some of the first efforts to bring classical music into the townships [Moshavot], such as Boris Ossowetzky's "Orchestra" in Rishon le-Tzion which started its activity in 1895, where evening music lessons were also given.
[6] Arlosoroff, Haim, *Writings*, vol. 2 (Tel-Aviv: Shtibel, 1934), 56.

Palestine Office of the Zionist Organization in Jaffa. Rupin, who was an influential official, also served as a member of the school's supervising committee together with the chair, mayor Meir Dizengoff, his close acquaintances Yaakov and Sarah Tahon, and other Zionist leaders: Elyahu Berligne, Yaakov Shertok, and Bezalel Yaffe, and thus played a significant part in the school's success. A Jerusalem branch was opened a year later, but it encountered great financial difficulties, mainly due to Jerusalem's more religious and poorer population. Following a recommendation by the violinist Henry Marteau, Shulamit Rupin invited Moshe Hopenko (1880–1949) to teach at the school.[7] After the founder's sudden early death in 1912, The Jaffa Music School was re-named "Shulamit," and Hopenko became its sole director.

In 1914 a second school was opened privately by Miriam Levite, then a pianist and a teacher at Shulamit. After teaching there for three years Levite left due to several personal and pedagogical disagreements with Hopenko. The director was Levite herself until the end of 1926 when the pianist and music educator Prof. David Schor (1867–1942), who immigrated to Palestine in 1925, joined the school. Miriam Levite's husband, the educator Yehuda Ron-Polani (1891–1983), who became an eminent pioneering figure in the Yishuv's educational ideology and school system, also participated in assisting the school during the 1920s as a general secretary. Despite the geographical proximity of the schools and their shared musical-cultural goals, they remained hostile to each other most of the time, an adversity that started with Levite's enraged disengagement from Shulamit School based on her feeling of discrimination regarding financial support and public recognition. The enmity between the two schools escalated further after Hopenko rejected Levite's suggested initiatives for cooperation.

Music schools as well-established, organized institutions progressed gradually alongside the growth of Tel-Aviv from a small neighborhood to a modern city. Beginning with several teachers and just a few students, who made little progress in limited areas of study, they endured enormous difficulties with an almost complete forced closure during the First World War, including a vast deportation of the Jewish population of Jaffa and Tel-Aviv, implemented on Passover eve of 1917, leaving, from its 40,000 inhabitants, only 8,000. A positive breakthrough, however, was achieved during the 1920s, widening the array of musical activities alongside the recovery of the New Yishuv and the immigration of key characters: Prof. David Schor, the musicologist Menashe Rabinowitz (Ravina; 1899–1968), and the composer Yoel Engel (1867–1927). Within the common view of Tel- Aviv as an artificial city created with a well-defined purpose to serve as a modern center, the model of European musical education was artificially implanted in it to initiate a Hebrew center of classical music.[8] It is not my intention to describe in full the chronology of the schools, already described in earlier research, especially regarding Shulamit Conservatory, but rather to examine their progress in their first two decades as an implementation of the Zionist contemporaneous ideas, while focusing on the founders and teachers

[7] Moshe Hopenko studied in St. Petersburg, Berlin, and Switzerland before immigrating to Palestine. He was active not only as a violin teacher and director, but also ran a music shop and worked constantly to bring European musicians to perform in Palestine. Hopenko's arrival was depicted as an almost transcendental event by the painter-writer Nahum Gutman: "The First Concert," in *'Ir Ketanah Va'anashim Bah Me'at* ["A little city and a few people within"—the title is based on Ecclesiastes 9:14] (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved and Dvir, 1959), 39-41. This particular chapter, and the drawings of the event—is reproduced in https://benyehuda.org/read/30636 (accessed October 13, 2022).

[8] For a detailed discussion of Tel-Aviv's image see: "Tel-Aviv: Character, Image, Representation," in: Ya'acov Shavit and Gideon Biger, *Ha-Historia shel Tel-Aviv: mi-Shkhunot le-'Ir (1909–1936)* [The History of Tel-Aviv, Vol. 1: from neighborhoods to a city (1909-1936)], (Tel-Aviv: Ramot, 2001), 17–51 [in Hebrew].

who molded the principles of music education in Palestine which, to a large extent, are still implemented today.[9]

The Pioneer Ladies of Music Education in Tel-Aviv

Both Rupin and Levite were initially performers, but whereas the former gave up her singing career due to family pressure, devoting herself to teaching while still in Berlin, the latter began as a successful virtuoso pianist and continued to perform in Palestine alongside her teaching career. At a much older age, Levite also began to compose, though it was not her main endeavor. Among her compositions are a collection of published songs (1961) and several unpublished vocal works.[10]

Shulamit Rupin's biography was described in detail by her husband, Arthur, and by her friend Sarah Tahon.[11] When Rupin met his cousin Selma Lewek in the autumn of 1899, she had already been a singing teacher in Berlin. She came there from Romberg to obtain higher education. He portrays her as being lively and initiative. Immediately after their marriage in 1908, the couple traveled through Italy and Alexandria to settle in Jaffa. With the help of Yaakov Tahon (1880-1950), who later became Rupin's deputy director at the Palestine Office, and his wife Sarah, the Rupins found an apartment close to the Sarona neighborhood in the house of a German farmer. Severe medical problems following the birth of her first daughter Ruth in Berlin (1909) led to her prolonged stay there and she returned to Palestine only in 1910. Shulamit was not involved in any Zionist activity before her arrival, but her marriage and her subsequent arrival to Eretz-Israel, combined with her exuberant character, led to the pioneering educational activity. A few months after her return, she obtained financial support from the Jewish industrial philanthrope from Kyiv, Dr. Rabinersohn, and opened the music school in Jaffa.

Several eulogies published in Hebrew journals after Shulamit's death testify to the enormous admiration for her courageous act and the contribution she made to the national effort. Two main components are stressed: the national territorial paradigm and the Hebrew language as a leading language. "She loved the singing and playing and felt how crucial these are to the spiritual development of Humans; she acted with a purpose to plant the singing and playing among our people who are returning to the Forefathers' land," praised the author in *HaZvi* newspaper. He continued to discuss her national link to the Hebrew language: "Though Shulamit was raised with Hebrew as a sacred language, she understood how disrespectful it is to continue to speak a foreign language here." She quickly learned Hebrew, and "this deed should be inscribed in the chronicles of our resurrection." [12] This conviction reflects the process in which the Hebrew language gradually turned from one language among many, in a diglossic society, to the primary language in most social groups.[13] The efforts to learn Hebrew thus not only reflect her new identity but also

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[9] See for example Jehoash Hirshberg, *Music in the Jewish Community of Palestine* 1880-*1948: A Social History*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 39–41; Tzipora Shchori-Rubin, "Beit ha-Sefer li-Negina Shulamit: Reshit ha-Ḫinuḳkh ha-Musicali", Dor *le-Dor* 35 (2010): 97–148 [in Hebrew].

[10] Levite's main unpublished large-scale work is *Song of Songs – A Contemporary Ballad* (1956) for symphony orchestra, choir, and soloists, to words by Alexander Penn. *FBMA*, M2/4/2/4.

[11] Arthur Rupin, "Lezeḫer Ra'ayati Shulamit (Selma)," in *Three Decades of Palestine* (Jerusalem: Am-Oved, 1968), 2, 200–215 [in Hebrew]; Tahon, Sarah, "Hesped mi-Palestina," in Hacohn Shula, *Dr. Ruth Rupin Peled (Pechthold)* (Ramat-Gan: publisher not identified, 2000), 17–18. According to Tahon, Shulamit developed a unique voice training method and was a popular and loved teacher.

[12] *HaZvi*, (17 Oct. 1912). Shulamit Rupin's obituary is the front-page item. It is unsigned but was most probably written by its editor, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, who was the driving force behind the revival of the Hebrew language.

[13] For a thorough discussion of the role of the Hebrew language in Jewish nationality see Raphael Nir, "Ma'amada shel ha-Lashon ha-'Ivrit be-Tahalikh ha-Tḫiya ha-Leumit," in *The History of the Jewish Community in Eretz-Israel*

furnished her institution with a unique halo. The author also claims that the combination between Shulamit's Jewishness and the self-discipline acquired by her German cultural background helped create this positive outcome. Another article portrays Shulamit's character as a devoted teacher who even on her deathbed asked her husband to congratulate the students on the new school year. In her greetings, she defined the importance of music studies not only to give "perfection that elevates the mind and spirit for the rest of their lives," but also because they contribute to planting the superior art of music within the Hebrew life in Eretz-Israel.[14]

Miriam Reznikov-Levite was born in Polatsk, Vitebsk region, Belarus. From an early age she excelled in piano playing, and her Jewish parents, Naftali and Esther, decided to move to Moscow to allow her further advance in her music studies. For that, they had to convert to Christianity. In this process, they became Anna and Nikolai, and Miriam became "Maria Matveeva."[15] This name appears on some of her early exercises in counterpoint and composition at the Moscow Music School, where she was a student between the ages of 7 and 17. She focused on piano but also took music history, pedagogy, theory, and composition. She graduated with a prestigious gold medal and a free artist diploma, and after visiting Prof. David Schor's Beethoven's musical institute she started teaching there at the early age of 15, even before her graduation.

Her life began to change dramatically following a request sent to Prof. Schor by the Jerusalem public committee, led by Hemda Ben-Yehuda,[16] to send a musician who will be able to contribute to the development of the musical culture in Palestine. Miriam, therefore, arrived in Jerusalem in 1909, performed in several concerts, and gave piano lessons. Influenced by the sounds in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*, the poetic verses she had been reading in the Russian translation of the *Song of Songs*, and Palestine's exotic landscapes, she clung to an oriental musical image. Nevertheless, surrounded by what she described in her writings as the "primitivity" of the environment, she found it extremely difficult to stay and decided to return to Russia, where she continued to teach and perform. Soon, however, she decided to (re)immigrate to Palestine, this time for good, in 1911. This time she was encouraged by the existence of the Shulamit music school. Still, the main influence on her (and her family's) decision to immigrate was Dr. Chaim Zhitlowky's writings, advocating the need for an autonomous settlement of Jews, where the qualities developed in the Diaspora could flourish.[17]

Reviews of Levite's concerts in Palestine during her first visit and after her immigration are filled with dramatic imagery that almost reaches a transcendental level: "Her eyes … all her face expresses her excitement … and when her fingers started to move on the keyboard everyone thought: This is magic!"[18] A review of her concert in Gymnasia Herzlia states that "She gave half

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*since 1882, Part One: The Construction of Hebrew Culture in Eretz-Israe*l, ed. Shavit, Zohar (Jerusalem: The Bialik Institute, 1998), 31-39, [in Hebrew].

[14] Moshe Hopenko, "Shulamit Rupin Z"L," [obituary for Shulamit Rupin] *HaPo'el Hatza'ir* (22 Oct. 1912: 15–16),

[15] Miriam Levite wrote a short draft of her autobiography; several other documents also testify to the process of conversion, her studies, etc. [in Hebrew and Russian], *FBMA*, M2/1/1.

[16] Hemda Ben-Yehuda (1873–1951) was a journalist and author. In 1892, after the death of her sister, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda's wife, she became his second wife.

[17] Chaim Zhitlowsky (1865–1943), a leading socialist Jewish philosopher and writer, believed that assimilation would improve the position of the Jews in the Diaspora until the 1881 pogroms changed his views and he began to support Diaspora Nationalism. Later, after the 1903 Kishinev pogrom, he became a territorialist, aspiring to establish a separate Jewish land, although Palestine was not the only option he saw. Levite's interpretation of Zhitlowksk'y views focused on the need for land in order to develop a Jewish national art. More on Zhitlowsky see in Jerucham Tolkes, "Chaim Zhitlowsky," *Encyclopedia Judaica*, second edition, Vol. 21 (524–525).

[18] *HaḤerut* (10 Sep. 1909).

her soul … It seemed as if we moved to another world, a fantasy world."[19] The poet and author Yeshurun Keshet (Ya'acov Kaplovich) described her in his memoir as having "poetry in her playing" and compared her to the celebrated Russian author, Turgenev.[20] Thus, Levite was known in pre-state Israel first as a pianist, and only then as a pedagogue.

The first decade: Teachers, Students, Curriculums

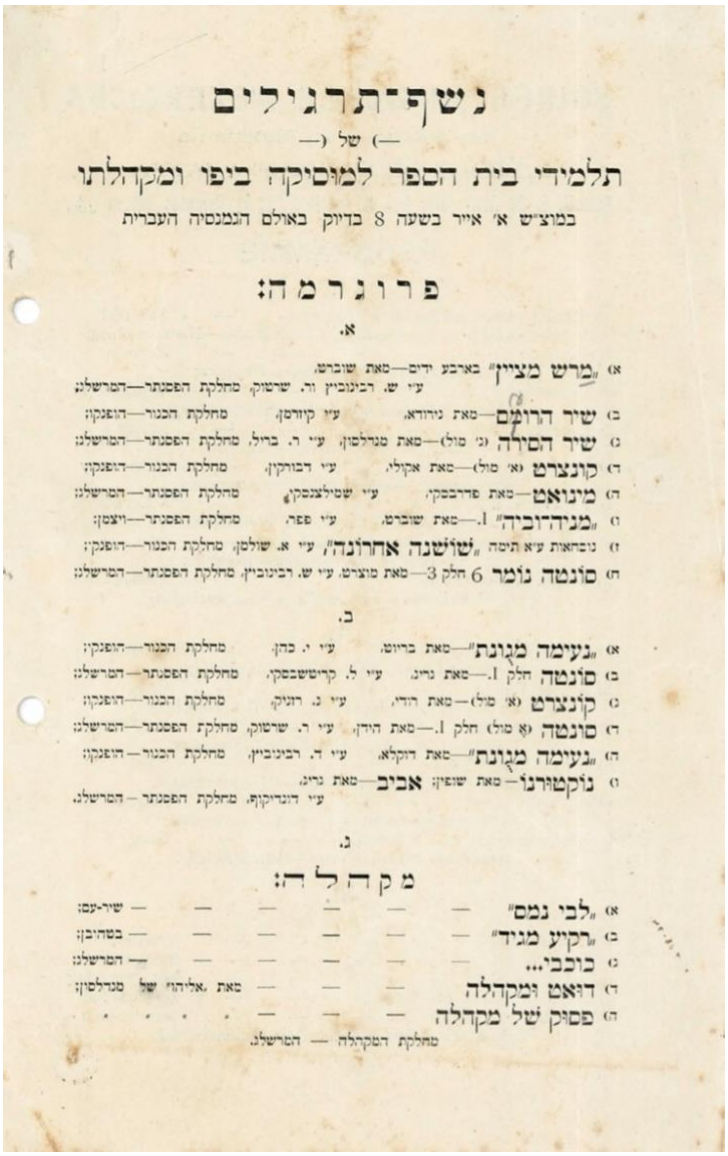
Whereas Shulamit School enjoyed official financial, (though still constantly looking for additional funding from Zionist influential personalities and organizations), Beth-Lewiim remained most of the time a private school, with no official financial support. Still, in a letter dated April 11, 1923, Levite states that she has always perceived her school as being public due to several characteristics: First, she has always been strict about the qualification of all teachers; second, the school feels obliged to support talented, needy students; third, there is a constant effort to contribute to the Hebrew, national musical life in Tel-Aviv.[21]

In the preface to the report and plan for her Jaffa school (July 1911), Rupin explained that the increase in population and the opening of Hebrew schools led to a need for gradual, formal music studies. By "Hebrew schools" she probably meant the Gymnasia Herzliya, founded in Jaffa in 1905, which was the main school at that time. She stresses the importance of her institute not only as the first Hebrew school in Palestine but also as a Hebrew education center for neighboring lands. In the report, Moshe Hopenko, who taught string instruments, also appears as a teacher for winds, though there are still no wind instrument students.[22] Marzel Hammerschlag serves as a piano teacher, a choir director, and a teacher of theory and composition, Gita-Dunie Weizmann (1887-1975), sister of the Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann, who would open her school in Haifa in 1924, teaches piano, and Rupin herself is the voice teacher. Several students were the children of some of the prominent Zionist figures of the Yishuv at that time, such as Nechama Dondikov, daughter of Avraham-Yehoshua Dondikov, one of the founders of the township of Rechovot; Yisrael and Miriam Rokach, children of Shimon Rokach, one of the founders of the neighborhood of Neve-Zedek; Moshe and Rivka Shertok-Sharet;[23] and Lina Krishevsky, the daughter of one of the most prominent pedagogues in Palestine Mordechai Ezrachi. Lina later married Moshe Hopenko and became a piano teacher herself.

The Rupin music school in Jaffa began with a well-organized curriculum according to a European model developed throughout the 19th century. This model focused not only on virtuosity but also on theoretical studies and ensemble playing, with piano studies as a dominant field. The first curriculum includes four courses for piano and violin studies, defined as elementary, intermediate, high, and academic. Singing studies include three courses, from a preparatory course for technique improvement with light arias to an academic course with operatic arias. Each course includes two levels ("Machlakot"), each of which mentions etudes alongside compositions from

[19] *HaḤerut* (1 Jul. 1914).
[20] Keshet, Yeshurun, *Kedma va-Yama: Pirkey Zichronot* [East and West: memoirs] (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 1980), 68 [in Hebrew]. Keshet (1893–1977), a poet, translator and literary critic also mentioned his meeting with Levite fifty years later. He describes her as an old, lonely poor woman, neglected and forgotten.
[21] Letter to the Zionist Women Union in South Africa, addressed to Mrs. Schlosberg, [in Hebrew], *FBMA*, M2/1/1.
[22] Report and plan of the Jaffa Music School, 1911 [in Hebrew], *FBMA* M1/1/1.
[23] Rivka Shertok-Hoz (1893-1940), pianist and piano teacher, started her studies at Shulamit but graduated at *Beth-Lewiim* as Levite's student (1916) and later began to teach there. In an unpublished interview with Shimshon Halfi and Tzvi Avni (1966) Levite mentions Shertok-Hoz as one of the best pedagogues in her school (*FBMA* M2/3/2). Rivka, and many other music students also studied at the Gymnasia Herzliya, known for its music studies led by Hanina Krichevsky.

the classical repertoire. In the highest piano course, students are required to perform "modern composers" in addition to "compositions and Sonatas" by Beethoven, Schumann, Chopin, Brahms, and Tchaikovsky, but no specific name of any modern composer is mentioned. Also, there is no specific reference to Jewish music.[24] Ensemble playing and theoretical studies appear under the title "Compositional Theory" and are obligatory. One of the first student concerts in 1911 included four-hand ensembles, piano, and violin compositions not only by classical and romantic composers but also by several contemporary composers such as Paderewski. Among the choir songs, there is one by Hammerschlag, the choir director. The effort to translate foreign titles of classical pieces reflects the importance of Hebrew as a national tool. (see Figure 1).



נשף־תרגילים

של

תלמידי בית הספר למוסיקה ביפו ומקהלתו

במוצ"ש א' אייר בשעה 8 בדיוק באולם הגמנסיה העברית

פ ר ו ג ר מ ה:

א.

א) „מרש מציון" בארבע ידים—מאת שוברט.
ע"י ש. רבינוביץ וה. שרשוק, מחלקת הפסנתר—המרשלו:
ב) שיר הרועים—מאת גירודא. ע"י קודסן, מחלקת הכנור—הופנקו:
ג) שיר הסירה (ב' מול)—מאת מנדלסון, ע"י ר. ברול, מחלקת הפסנתר—המרשלו:
ד) קונצרט (א' מול)—מאת אקולי, ע"י רבוקין, מחלקת הכנור—הופנקו:
ה) מינואט—מאת פדרבסקי, ע"י שטולצמן, מחלקת הפסנתר—המרשלו:
ו) „מנדרוביה" 1.—מאת שוברט, ע"י שפה, מחלקת הפסנתר—ויצמן:
ז) נטחאות ע"א תיטה „שושנה אחרונה", ע"י א. שולמן, מחלקת הכנור—הופנקו:
ח) סונטה 6 חלק 3—מאת מוצרט, ע"י ש. רבינוביץ, מחלקת הפסנתר—המרשלו:

ב.

א) „נעימה מגונת"—מאת בריוט, ע"י י. כהן, מחלקת הכנור—הופנקו:
ב) סונטה חלק 1.—מאת נרוג, ע"י ל. קרישבסקי, מחלקת הפסנתר—המרשלו:
ג) קונצרט (א' מול)—מאת הודי, ע"י ב. רוזוק, מחלקת הכנור—הופנקו:
ד) סונטה (ג מול) חלק 1.—מאת הודן, ע"י ר. שרשוק, מחלקת הפסנתר—המרשלו:
ה) „נעימה מגונת"—מאת דוקלא, ע"י ד. רבינוביץ, מחלקת הכנור—הופנקו:
ו) נוקטורנו—מאת שופן אביב—מאת נרוג.
ע"י הונדריקוס, מחלקת הפסנתר—המרשלו.

ג.

מ ק ה ל ה:

א) „לבי נמס" — — — — — — — שיר-עם:
ב) „רקיע מגיד" — — — — — — — בטהובן:
ג) כוכבי... — — — — — — — המרשלו:
ד) דואט ומקהלה — — — — מאת „אלידה" של מנדלסון:
ה) פסוק של מקהלה — — — —
מחלקת המקהלה — המרשלו.

Figure 1: "Neshef Targilim" (Student concert), April 29, 1911.

[24] Regarding Jewish music, it should be mentioned that Joel Engel (1868-1927), one of the proponents of Jewish music who was one of the founders of the Society for Jewish Music in Saint Petersburg in 1908, immigrated to Palestine only in 1924.

The 1913 curriculum is much more elaborated. The address changed from "Frau S. Rupin, Jaffa" to "Musickschule Shulamith, Z. H. Herrn M Hopenko" [Shulamit Music School, under the care of Mr. M. Hopenko] testifies to the move from Jaffa to the second floor of the Treibish house, a department store on the east side of Herzel Street, Achuzat Baiyt, Tel-Aviv, and the new director. Piano teachers are Mrs. F. Mochrik and Miriam Levite; piano studies include an additional preparatory course with elementary scales, studies, and pieces but also solfege as an obligatory subject. In each area of study, a detailed program appears, including lists of a repertoire of both etudes and pieces. Music theory, history, and aesthetic lessons are obligatory for various levels. Lessons are given twice a week, also by the conductor Moshe Shalit who teaches theory and is also responsible for choral singing classes. Once a week there are orchestra rehearsals, and also chamber performances led by the piano teachers in four hands and by Hopenko for chamber music. The cello, oboe, and flute are mentioned regarding tuition, but these fields are still underdeveloped. At the end of the second year, Hopenko reported to Rabinersohn that 80 students are finishing the school year, with an expectation to reach 100 students in the next year. "It is surprising to see how much progress has been achieved … The school has proved itself to be necessary and is a significant cultural factor in Palestine."[25] He also reports a plan to increase the budget and enlarge the school. Many letters were sent abroad to ask for financial support, expressing similar requests with an emphasis on the school's contribution to the cultural spirit of the younger generation. One example is the letter to Rev. Dr. Max Heller, one of the proponents of the Jewish reform movement in the United States: "Dear fellow Zionist, in our city there is an institution that has already contributed greatly to elevating the cultural spirit of the younger generation … students made such progress that we feel the need to employ more teachers and enlarge the school. Since we appreciate your interest in Jewish culture in Palestine, we are asking for support."[26] Hopenko also stresses the need to maintain a local institute for the youth who reside far from European artistic opportunities.

A significant, detailed report on Shulamit School by an outside observer was given by Mikhail Gnessin after visiting Palestine in 1914 as an official representative of the Odessa Committee. Gnessin examined the extent of the contribution of Shulamit to the national art in both of the school's branches—Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem—and stressed the need for an improvement of the financial infrastructure of the schools through scholarships.[27] A document depicting his lecture about "Hebrew Musical Life in Eretz-Israel," given at the hall of the "Hebrew Folk Melody Society" specified an argument among several listeners, raising crucial questions about the ability of the school to participate in the emerging nationalism and contribute toward the creation of original Hebrew folk songs. Most reactions tend to avoid any restrictions on the incorporation of foreign elements at the school, especially since in every typical development of a nation foreign elements are incorporated.[28]

Studies in Miriam Levite's school began after a distressing correspondence following her published criticism of Hopenko and Shulamit School until a court decision ended the dispute and Levite was no longer teaching there. In her letter, (originally written as a draft in Russian), Levite points out both personal and pedagogical issues. Offended by Hopenko's criticism, not only of her performance but also of her teaching methods, she mentions two main concerns: the centralization

[25] Letter from Hopenko to Rabinersohn, 19 Aug. 1912, [in German], *FBMA*, R1/4/3/2.
[26] Letter from Hopenko to Rev. Dr. Max Heller, Jul. 28, 1924, [in English], *FBMA*, M1/1/1
[27] The report was published in the Russian weekly *Novi Waschod* and later, in Hebrew translation, in *HaḪerut* on July 21, 1914. See Hirshberg, *Music in the Jewish Community of Palestine 1880-1948*, 44-46.
[28] Report on Genssin's lecture, [in Hebrew], *FBMA*, M1/1/1.

of Hopenko's decision-making and the problem of too little individual teaching as opposed to the demand for long orchestra rehearsals.[29]

Her new school began as a piano studio with twenty students, a number that kept increasing. However, the First World War outbreak, which caused severe economic difficulties accompanied by constant suspicion of the Ottoman authorities of Jewish residents with foreign nationalities from opponent countries, halted its progress. Levite managed to maintain the activity with 39 students for two more years when she was forced to close the school. In 1917 Levite and her parents, like most of the Jewish residents of Tel-Aviv and its surrounding townships, were deported. They left to the township of Zichron-Ya'acov, where Miriam performed at the houses of the Russian physician and Zionist leader, Dr. Hillel Yaffe, and of Raphel Kohn, the representative of the Baron Maurice de Hirsch and advisor to military and governmental Turkish officials. She later joined her husband, Yehuda Ron-Polani, who was forced to leave due to his Russian passport, and toured Bulgaria, playing several recitals in various locations between January-March 1919. Upon their return to Palestine, Beth-Lewiim reopened one year after the British Mandate was installed in Palestine.

During this period, the fate of Shulamit was slightly better. During the war, Arthur Rupin's support assisted the institution to maintain its activity, albeit in a very limited scope. In November 1915 *Hapo'el-Hatza'ir* reported that the number of students decreased: some left overseas and could not return after the war broke; some transferred to Levite's competing school, and others could not pay tuition, especially students who arrived from the Moshavot surrounding Tel-Aviv. As part of the general economic uncertainty, Rabinersohnn's financial support became unreliable and the school had to depend only on tuition fees.[30] The hopes for the school to progress and become a conservatory, were therefore halted, to be fulfilled only a decade later.

The 1915 report is much shorter, but still reports about concerts, though "because of the situation there were only four 'music balls,' and the concerts took place in the format of an exam … no doubt, these events were moments of illumination, of pure joy and spiritual delight at a time of such grief."[31] Later, however, when the Ottoman authorities suspected Russian citizens of supporting the Triple Entente, they were deported and the number of students decreased significantly. As a result of this difficult situation, only small-scale studies took place outside Tel-Aviv, mainly in the township of Petah-Tikva.

The 1920s: Internationalism and Nationalism

Annual reports, and numerous correspondences incorporating personal and formal requests for financial support and invitations for concerts, testify to significant progress in both schools toward professional musicianship during the 1920s. They also include information about occasional personal rivalries and disagreements regarding teaching strategies, teachers' status, and national ideology. In the aftermath of World War I, members of the Yishuv who were considered by the Ottoman administration to be its enemies, including teachers, and students of the music schools could now return to Tel-Aviv. Consequently, despite the economic deterioration, the schools gradually resumed their activity and were recruiting new teachers, many of whom were new immigrants to Palestine. Study fields were added and expanded and the number of joint initiatives with other cultural institutions, some of them newly established, increased. All these activities

[29] *HaḤerut* (16 June 1914), Draft in Russian in *FBMA* M1/1/1.
[30] *HaPo'el HaTza'ir* (27 Nov. 1914).
[31] Yearly report, 1915, [in Hebrew], *FBMA*, M1/1/1.

helped to gain further appreciation from official institutions and confirm the status of classical music as a vehicle for national aspirations.

In a review of the school's current situation in 1923, Hopenko praises its achievements in music, but likewise proudly mentions having warm, friendly connections with the former Ottoman administration, the current British officials, and the Arab population. Despite the cosmopolitan character of music studies, the review stresses the contribution to the working effort: "The school pleasures the workers and the Halutzim with performances all over the country."[32] Students arrive not only from Tel-Aviv but also from the nearest Moshavot, and there are also requests from abroad. Some students even arrived from Saloniki, Greece. New teachers include piano teacher Prof. Carl Bernhard Philipsen, Theodore Leschetizky's student, and theory teacher Joseph Milet.[33] Other teachers who joined between 1923–1924 include Joel Engel, who taught harmony, composition, and history, and the pianist Rebecca Burstein.[34]

In the middle of the 1920s, Shulamit School was officially recognized as a conservatory, a symbol of its higher status, and Levite's school changed its name to Beth-Lewiim emphasizing that, at least theoretically, it was no longer presented as a private school. These changes occurred after a dispute over an initiative to establish a separate institution which will be defined as "The Eretz-Israeli Conservatory" for advanced students from several schools. "The Promoting Committee of the Palestine Academy of Music" [35] was established in 1924 by Miriam Levite and several other prominent teachers, such as the pianist Arie Abileah (1885-1985). The initiative statute proposed: "To enhance the idea of establishing a new Eretz-Israeli Conservatory which will give higher-level education to advanced music students from different schools." The statute created great expectations by declaring that this conservatory: "…will enable the creation of the center of Hebrew music culture in Eretz-Israel."[36] The defined purpose of the conservatory, at least in its first period, was not to replace the original institutions, but rather to complete their musical education through extra teachers, concerts, and exams.

Despite extensive efforts, the initiative encountered several difficulties. First, the committee addressed Joel Engel in an attempt to convince him to become the director, but Engel preferred to act as an artistic advisor rather than deal with administrative issues. Second, old controversies between the schools resurfaced. Levite was worried that various schools might not receive equal rights, always feeling neglected and underestimated compared to Shulamit. Hopenko stated that the conductor Mordechai Golinkin, founder of the Eretz-Israeli Opera, and himself are against the whole idea which is completely unnecessary because his school already has advanced courses, an orchestra that cooperates with the opera, etc.[37] The plan was to open two branches, in Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem, but a letter from Sidney Seal, a pianist who served as head of the Jerusalem Music School to Polani, the secretary of the Initiative Committee, clarifies his stand that the idea of establishing such a conservatory, considering the current situation of the music schools, is premature.[38] In the end, this rather unrealistic idea, considering the number of students and limited

[32] Survey on the school's status, May 1923, [in Hebrew], *FBMA*, M1/1/2

[33] Joseph Milet (1889–1947) was a teacher, composer, and choir conductor who advocated Jewish liturgical music.

[34] Rebecca-Burstein Arber (1894-1993) was born in Odessa and studied in Leipzig. After three years of teaching at Shulamit School she opened her private piano studio in Tel-Aviv.

[35] The term "Academy" does not appear in any Hebrew documentation.

[36] July 23, 1924, [in Hebrew], *FBMA*, M2/1/2/1.

[37] Letter from Hopenko to the British Zionist activist, Jacob de Hass, *FBMA*, M1/5/1/1.

[38] July 23, 1925 [in Hebrew], *FBMA*, M2/1/2/1.

budgets, dissolved after a joint decision on theoretical cooperation and several basic organizational stages, and both schools continued to develop themselves separately as much as possible.

At the same time, Hopenko began broadening his international relations with European musicians, corresponding with various artists, such as the violinist Jascha Heifetz and the pianist Benno Moiseiwitsch (yet another student of Leschetizky), and occasionally bringing the performing artists to his school to give masterclasses. Such an example is Henry Marteau's visit in 1926. In an official form addressed to the Department of Education in the Palestine government, both Marteau and the pianist Bruno Eisner are mentioned as giving an advanced course in violin and piano, lecturing, and performing as soloists with the school's orchestra.[39] Marteau performed in Eden Hall on March 4, 1926. Two days earlier, advanced students performed a concert in his honor, that included Mendelssohn's violin concerto played by Hopenko's student Shlomo Bor, who later became a violinist in the Palestine Orchestra.[40] Another famous visitor who arrived at about the same time was Jascha Heifetz.

During the 1920s, Beth-Lewiim also went through a significant process of transformation. First, Prof. Schor, whom Miriam Levite had already met in Moscow, joined the staff and became responsible for the institute's public relations alongside Levite, who remained responsible for inward activities. Second, Levite's aspirations for a union of teachers, as opposed to the centralization, to which she was opposed while working at Shulamit, materialized. A membership agreement, dated June 29, 1926, declares that the first permanent Teachers Union has been established and all its members are obliged to follow school regulations.[41] In a 1928 detailed booklet, more details are given regarding the applications of the union (defined here as a "cooperative"): "A statute is a basis for all activities; all questions are being discussed by permanent teachers who are members of the cooperative and the director acts according to common decisions."[42] The Teachers Union testifies to the emphasis put not only on the study level but also on the working conditions and obligations the institution has towards the teachers and vice versa.

The teachers who signed the agreement included three piano teachers: Prof. Schor, Miriam Levite, and Rivka Shertok; the violin teacher Shlomo Garter (1904–1986), a prominent figure in the school both as a teacher, conductor, and envoy for fundraising who later became a member of the Palestine Orchestra; the cello teacher Konstantin Shapiro, student of the celebrated cellist Julius Klengel, who often performed both as a soloist and as a chamber music player, and the cello teacher Shlomo Habibi, who studied in Warsaw and owned a music shop in Montefiore Street. Habibi's children, Ra'aya (piano), Lola (violin), and Moshe (cello) were all students at the school and often performed together as a trio. Theory lessons were taught by Menashe Rabinovitz who also lectured on music history and analysis together with Prof. Schor. Ensemble and orchestral playing were instructed by the string instruments teachers as well as by Rabinovitz. Basic music courses were opened, for both young children and adults. In cooperation with Beth-Lewiim, Prof. Schor also established an Institution for the Dissemination of music Among the People (Mosad Le-Hafazat Musiqa Ba'am), emphasizing the Zionist-socialist role of music teachers to spread the

[39] Report to the department of education, [in Hebrew], *FBMA* M1/4.

[40] Shlomo Bor (1909–2004) is mentioned in several documents as one of the school's best students. After graduation, he went to Prague to continue his studies and corresponded with Hopenko. One of the first players recruited by Huberman for the Palestine Orchestra, he was honored in 1987 with the lighting of one of Israel's Independence Day National Torches (*Hadashot*, 28 April, 1987:22).

[41] In several other documents this union is defined as a "cooperative".

[42] *Beth-Lewiim College of Music* booklet, [in Heberw], *FBMA*, R1/4/3/8/2. An interesting remark about the approach towards lessons for young children appears in the same booklet, "We aspire to progress our teaching methods, especially with beginners, towards active studies learning and free spirit."

knowledge of classical music in agricultural areas, farther from Tel-Aviv, with special emphasis on Jewish folk music. These courses stressed the societal role of music schools and their contribution to the emerging national identity.

The number of students in Beth-Lewiim increased gradually until it reached about a hundred, and with the arrival of new string teachers, the studies progressed even further. Both schools opened a Eurythmic section, reflecting not only the increasing popularity of free, expressive dancing in Palestine influenced by similar trends abroad, but also by the perception that movement studies are suitable for inclusion in the music schools' curriculum. A student concert at the Gymnasia Herzliya Hall combined Margalit Ornstein's Eurythmics students from Beth-Lewiim with Levite's piano students who accompanied physical exercises, and "expressive dances" to music by Chopin, Schubert, Paderewski, and others.[43] Orenstein (1888-1973), who studied with the originator of the eurhythmics system of music instruction, Émile Jacques-Dalcroze, before immigrating to Palestine, opened a class there in 1922.

Another aspect that broadened the school's scope was the connection with other cultural institutions. Rehearsals of the "Kadima" choir, the Opera orchestra, the "Ohel" Theater, as well as other groups, took place at the school's hall, and the Brandman brothers, Yisrael and Ya'acov, who brought "Kadima" to Palestine, joined the school as teachers.[44] Still, Levite and Schor emphasized that "The obligation for musical education is still not solidly established … therefore each institution is compelled to look for its benefactors."[45] Several such benefactors are mentioned in a series of correspondences between Garter and Schor, who were then on a tour of studies and fundraising in Europe, and Ron-Polani who served as the general secretary of Beth-Lewiim at that time.[46] The correspondence relates to meetings with influential Zionist humanitarians, such as those in London with Lady Melchett, wife of the zealous Zionist industrialist, 1st Baron Melchett, Sir Alfred Mond. Garter's letters from Wien, and later Garter and Schor's letters from London, express their aspiration to develop the school by establishing a students' string quartet and a wind instruments orchestra and to include more Jewish music in the concerts' repertoire. They describe their excitement toward the arrival of Sir Mond, Lord Reding, and the Jewish composer Samuel Alman to visit Palestine in 1929, but at the same time are worried by Polani's intent to leave the school and teach in the Ben Shemen Youth Village, that was founded in 1927. Eventually, their attempts to persuade him to stay and help the school at such a critical time were in vain.[47]

Requests were constantly sent to the Education Committee asking for formal recognition. In the school year of 1925-6, the school finally was granted official status, and municipal financial support was guaranteed; together with the new organizational structure and David Schor's assured settling in Palestine, the future looked promising. Though eventually, the financial support did not last long, the school continued to flourish. Student concerts, including performances of the

[43] Concert program, 20 Jun. 1923, [in Hebrew], *FBMA*, M2/1/4. The performance also included an example of Bess Mensendieck's (1864–1957) method for movement as a form of therapy.

[44] The Brandman brothers were among the founders of Kadima, a leading Zionist organization in Kamenetz-Podolsk in 1916. The Brandman's musical background at the Petrograd Conservatory led them to establish an active musical branch with an orchestra and a choir. After the occupation of the city by the Bolsheviks in 1920, many Kadima members immigrated to Palestine. For more information see: *Kamenetz Podolsk: A memorial book to a Jewish community annihilated by the Nazis in 1941*, edited by Leon S. Blatman (New York: New York Public library and National Yiddish Book Center: 2003): 36-37.

[45] Beth-Lewiim booklet, *FBMA*, R1/4/3/8/2

[46] Many concert programs testify to the lively concert scene during the second half of the 1920s, where Levite, Schor, and Garter took an active part as chamber music players, occasionally with cellist Thelma Yellin-Bentwich.

[47] Letter from Garter and Schor, November 1, 1928, [in Hebrew], *FBMA*, M2/1/3/2.

school's orchestra, teachers' recitals, and lectures were given at the school's hall. Zvi Oron-Orushkes (1888–1980), one of the first photographers in Mandatory Palestine, documented in his camera Miriam Levite, with Shlomo Garter and several other students: the Habibi sisters – Ra'aya and Lola, Hemda Nofech, (who was later known as Hemda Nofech-Mozes, one of the first women lawyers in Israel), Dvora Meizel and Sarah Wilson. The photograph was probably taken after the concert of students of advanced courses, in December 1926 (Figures 2-3). Student concerts usually incorporated classical repertoire, with occasional performances of compositions by members of the Society for Jewish Folk Music, such as Joseph Achron, Solomon Rosowsky, and Joel Engel.

Figure 2 (Left): Miriam Levite, Shlomo Garter, and several Students, 1926. Photographed by Zvi Oron-Orushkes (Aroushkes). FBMA M2/1/6.

Figure 3 (below) Beth-Lewiim, Concert Program, Gymnasia Herzlia, July 11, 1926, *FBMA* M2/1/4.

תכנית:

א. מאירבר – מרש מהאופ' "הנביא" . . . . . המנצח ה' ש. חביבי

ב. 1. סגמבטי – נניה . . . . . } תנגן לומנץ (תלמידת הג' ליות ממחלקת ההשתלמות)
2. ליסט – גונדולה (מונציאה ונאפולי, פה דיאז מזור) . }

ג. ברהמס – רפסודיה סי מינור . . . . . תנגן ח. ברנדמן (תלמידת הג' ליות ממח' ההשתלמות)

ד. ארנסקי – פנטסיה מי מינור – פסנתר בלווי תזמורת. תנגן ר. חביבי (תלמידת הג' ליות, גומרת השנה את הדרגה התיכונית של "בית הלויים")

התזמרת בנצוח הא' ש. גרטר.

א. הנדל – פסקליה סול מינור. בשביל כנור וצ'לו (Passacaglia) ינגנו ל. ומ. חביבי (ממחלקת האנסמבל של ה. ש. גרטר)

ב. רחמנינוב – מסויטה סול מינור בשביל שני פסנתרים: א) דמעות ב) פעמונים ינגנו ד. מיזל וג. ספו (תלמידי הג' ליות ממחלקת ההשתלמות)

ג. 1. סקריבין – נוקטיורן בשביל היד השמאלית. רה במול מזור. } תנגן ד. מיזל (תלמידת ס. ליות הגומרת השנה את מוד ההשתלמות "בבית הלויים")
2. רחמנינוב – אלגיה. מי במול מינור. }

ד. ויוטן – פנטסיה – סול מינור. – כנור בלווי תזמורת. תנגן ל. חביבי (תלמידת ה' ש. גרטר. גומרת השנה את הדרגה התיכונית של "בית הלויים")

התזמרת בנצוח הא' ש. גרטר.

The First Hebrew Music Schools in Perspective

The establishment of Hebrew music schools in the 1910s was a visionary pioneering educational project that reflected the Western background of their founders together with their Zionist fervent need and commitment to participate in the creation of a Hebrew culture in The Land of Israel. This national project demonstrates the ideological perspective of founders, teachers, and students who arrived as new immigrants to Palestine with the Second and Third immigration waves (The Aliot, between 1904–1914 and 1918–1923, respectively). Their perspective toward the "New Yishuv," versus the "Old Yishuv," did not only signify a chronological difference but was crucial in the ideological sense. Though these definitions of "old" versus "new" are often considered too broad,[48] the perception of the Old Yishuv as poor, religious, and unproductive was a driving force for the tendency of the New Yishuv toward Cultural Nationalism in various fields, including music.

Regardless of the cosmopolitan character of classical music, which differentiates it from other verbal communication systems such as Hebrew literature, including translated foreign literature, the schools were required, often even aggressively demanded to teach the nonverbal language of music in Hebrew. Hebrew was also expected to be the language of guided concerts and lectures. Nevertheless, since many teachers, students, and the general public who attended cultural activities were new immigrants who barely knew Hebrew, this demand was not always put into practice. The centrality of focusing on Hebrew which was already highlighted a decade earlier as one of Shulamit Rupin's virtues gradually intensified during the 1920s. Years later, on July 20, 1935, Hopenko received a threatening letter from the Union for Imposing Hebrew (ha-Igud le-Hashlatat ha-Ivrit). According to the letter, Hopenko had already received several requests to allow only lectures given in Hebrew in the Jascha Heifetz Hall at the school. "The lectures themselves are considered a blessing," states the union's secretary in a flattering tone, however: "Their form—the foreign language—undermines the Zionist movement, the resurrection, and the national foundation, in which Hebrew is defined as the main factor. If all cultural demands can be supplied in foreign languages, what do we need Hebrew for?" The secretary, representing the union's committee, concluded the letter with a direct threat; According to the Union, all activities, meetings, and lectures should be given in Hebrew or else, "we will be forced to take extreme measures."[49]

Although several program notes testify to the incorporation of works by Jewish composers, the emphasis in the school's curricula and concerts is undoubtedly on Western concert music. However, important evidence for an operational activity of collecting Hebrew songs, albeit only their lyrics, appeared already in Moshe Shalit's 1911 booklet of eleven Hebrew folksongs, with texts by Mordechai Krishevsky, Haim Nachman Bialik, Simcha Ben-Zion, Israel Dushman (translated text), and Shalit himself, published while he was working at Shulamit.[50] In the Forward to the collection, Shalit surveys the history of the Society for Jewish Music in Russia and mentions Rimsky-Korsakov's famous adage, that the Hebrew folk song awaits a Jewish Glinka. He also mentions the first attempts to collect Jewish melodies by Pesach Marek and Shaul Ginzburg and urges the readers to conserve the heritage of Jewish people not only by keeping it but also by transcribing it as art music. Despite Shalit's attempt, it is clear that neither Jewish music nor Hebrew songs were the focus of studies in the early Hebrew music schools, where classical music prevailed.

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[48] On the definitions and interpretations of the terms "Old Yishuv" and "New Yishuv" see: Israel Bartal, "'Yishuv Yashan' and 'Yishuv Ḥadash'—Image and Reality," *Cathedra* 2 (1976), 3–19.
[49] Letter to Hopenko from the Union for Imposing Hebrew, [in Hebrew], *FBMA* M1/5/7.
[50] Moshe Shalit, *11 Hebrew Folksongs*, *FBMA* M1/1/1.

The enthusiasm around the early music schools as a vehicle to join the European highly educated culture, alongside the criticism of the young generation who was practicing musical instruments instead of contributing to agriculture and productivity, appeared on par with the enthusiasm of Tel-Aviv, as a modern, secular, cosmopolitan city on the one hand, and the criticism of Tel-Aviv as a noisy, capitalistic city on the other. Also, the gap between the vision of Hebrew culture in Tel-Aviv and the reality of numerous foreign signifiers, such as the performance of European music and the abundant use of foreign languages, is visible particularly in the 1920s in the musical life of the schools.

Both schools continued to develop during the 1930s, but at the same time many other new private music schools and private studios opened. In 1934 Ravina became Beth-Lewiim's director, but the institution was eventually united with several other schools and its name disappeared and thus almost forgotten. In retrospect, Levite reflected on the idea of the Teachers Union (the cooperative) and concluded that although it was a good idea, it could not solve the problems of an institution that should have received official support.[51] In contrast, Shulamit Conservatory continued its activity independently and it still exists today in Jerusalem as the Ron-Shulamit Conservatory, despite the historical difficulties of the first Jerusalem branch of the school. Its name represents the union between the original institute, Shulamit Conservatory, and the Ron Conservatory, established in 1938 by the violin teacher Yariv Krishevsky- Ezrahi (1904–2002), Hopenko's brother-in-law. The current Jerusalem branch was founded by Ofra Broshi, Yariv's daughter and Lina Hopenko's niece; thus, the connection to the school's founding members was kept. During the efforts to unite the music schools towards the end of the 1930s Hopenko once again raised objections, claiming that his school has much more to give, and as a result also much more to lose compared to other smaller schools. Despite the endless conflicts, difficulties, rivalries, and inward and outward criticisms, the music school's first formative years set the basis for the established musical education in Palestine, and at the same time made a significant contribution to the national effort of the New Yishuv.

[51] Levite's interview with Avni and Halfi; see footnote 22.