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THE HASIDIC CONTEXT OF NATURE AND MUSIC  
IN DENISE LEVERTOV'S *RELEARNING THE ALPHABET*

**Abstract.** This article presents an interpretation of the book of poetry *Relearning the Alphabet*, written by Denise Levertov in 1970, with references to the Hasidic tradition of perceiving nature and music. My interpretation focuses on the poet's use of stories and symbols taken from the tradition of her ancestors and the way in which she employs them in her poems in order to emphasize the uniqueness of the world. Eclecticism is mentioned as it also contributes to Levertov's spiritual development. The main thesis of my article is that the source of the poet's sensitivity to the environment and music is derived from her Hasidic heritage.

**Key words:** Levertov; Buber; Hasidism; mysticism; music; nature.

INTRODUCTION

The article will focus on *Relearning the Alphabet* (1970), the book of poetry in which Denise Levertov concentrates on the matters of her times: the Vietnam War, death, pointless suffering. The author of this collection exploits the ideas of Hasidic mysticism and the visions of nature and music, which bring joy to the world beset with cruelties of the war. As a matter of fact, both music and nature enabled Levertov to find strength and will for existence and allowed her to regain peace of mind. What meets the eye in Levertov's poetic output is the clash between being spiritual and yet doubtful. The poet did not belong to any religious congregation and for most of her life she had described herself as an agnostic. However, her reverence for the natural world remained with her till the end of her life proving that the respect towards nature was an obvious act of being a cognizant person. The evidence

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for it is given by the author herself when she says that “the religious sense – pantheism – the impulse to kneel – seems to me basic human reality” (qtd. in Wagner 41). Thus, the target of my study is to show that in spite of Levertov’s having been agnostic, the poet included Hasidic motifs in her work to emphasize the uniqueness and sanctity of the world. Symbols of trees or birds serve as stimuli not only for her creativity but also for spiritual growth. Moreover, the article is to show that the poetess pays heed to tradition. Consequently, the choice of subjects in *Relearning the Alphabet*, i.e. nature, joy, and music, proves to have a strong Hasidic influence. As a poet, Levertov appreciates rhythm and music, she often refers to her ancestors and their tradition of dancing and singing even in the moments of grief and misery.

For the sake of this article Martin Buber’s *Tales of the Hasidim* will be quoted with special regard to Hasidic stories and symbols. This particular book is of special importance for the poet, as it is full of legends, myths and mystical figures of zaddiks. Moreover, it contains numerous hints how to be grateful for life and cherish all God’s creation. Therefore, the book will be used in this article as an indispensable source of examples of Hasidic mysticism.

Denise Levertov was the author of more than 20 books of poetry. Born and brought up in England, she was often described as “neo-Romantic,” especially after the publication of her first book of poetry *The Double Image* (1946). Throughout her life the poetess tried to coin her own style full of music, exploration and harmony. Levertov perceived a poet as a special person with a mission. The author stated in her artistic credo: “I believe poets are instruments on which the power of poetry plays” (qtd. in Greene 35). It was that power that guided her throughout all her creative life and gave her the sense of profound mystery. Her roots and heritage play an essential role in the choice of her themes. Her ancestors were famous mystics of both religions—Christian and Jewish. Her mother was a descendant of Angel Jones of Mold, who was “the tailor, teacher and preacher [...] whose shop doubled as a kind of literary and intellectual salon in the 1870s” (Levertov, *Light up* 238). The poet’s father was an Anglican priest and a translator of *the Zohar*, tied to Rav Schneur Zalman, the founder of Habad, which was one of the most active Hasidic groups. Moreover, according to Diana Greene it is essential that “her father gave her a mystical sensibility derived from his Hasidic heritage and Levertov’s sense of awe and wonder had its source in his religious fervor” (Greene 94). The poet’s father was an avid activist of rekindling two major religions, Judaism and Christianity. He made an effort to help the flood of Jewish refugees in the 1940s, and he tried to implement the sensitivity to hu-

man suffering in his daughters. That is why Denise Levertov took part in many anti-war protests and also strongly supported ecological organizations. She is perceived as a committed fighter for people's rights. As a fierce opponent of the Vietnam War, she took part in many demonstrations, and even went to Vietnam to help the victims of the bombings. Her straightforward language and blunt remarks are strong and striking. In "Biafra" she says: "Now we look sluggishly at photos of children dying in Biafra: dully accumulate overdue statistics: Massacre of the Ibos: Do nothing: The poisoning called 'getting used to' has taken place: we are *the deads*" (Levertov, *Relearning* 17). Her protest was based on the conviction that all people should be free. She claims: "I have a medical problem that can be cured only by freedom" (17). It is important to notice that in this particular book of poetry, which is mainly devoted to the Vietnam War, the author tries to emphasize not only people's need for freedom but also for oblivion and escape from reality. The disconsolate tone of her poems stays in contrast with the constant search of beauty and delight. The poetess finds them only in meditation over nature.

At this juncture it is worth mentioning the sense of joy and where it originally comes from. Levertov often connects serenity and wonder with the natural world. The poet can appreciate the beauty of nature, she wants to "seize" the moment, which gives her pleasure and fills her with reverence. In other words, she tries to find perfection in surrounding world. In this aspect she is particularly similar to the Hasidic mystics who appreciated the beauty of the environment, as they perceived it as a marvellous creation of God. Despite the author's doubtful attitude towards religion, she never denies her heritage. On the contrary, the poet emphasizes that: "Hasidism has given me since childhood a sense of marvels, of wonder... The Hasidim were a lot like the Franciscans, although in both movements there was a recognition in the physical world. And a sense of wonder at creation, and I think I've always felt something like that... I think that's what poems are all about" (qtd. in Hallisay "Denise Levertov's Illustrious" 262).

Nonetheless, labelling Levertov as a mystical poet is problematic regarding her agnosticism. However, the sense of mystery and belief in the holiness of nature is the sign of her attachment to her Hasidic ancestors. Although she regards herself more as a spiritual entity than a religious one, she employs two important aspects of Jewish mysticism— the love of nature and music not only in *Relearning the Alphabet* but in many other books of poetry like *Jacob's Ladder* or *O Taste and See*.

## NATURE

In her poems Levertov appreciates the simplicity of everyday life; she concentrates on “the actual” things and activities. For example, in the poem “Not to have...” she longs for the appreciation of who we really are. As the poet says it is important “not to have but to be” (*Relearning* 43). The author connects her sense of joy simply with taking care of the flowers because they bring beauty and elation into her life, she wishes to be like “the black heart of the poppy, / O to lie there as seed” (43). Although this particular connection to nature might not be perceived as mystical, the joy she experiences in the act of contemplation is close to mystical joy felt by a Hasid who believed that: “A ray of God’s essence is present and perceptible everywhere and at every moment” (Scholem 348). The poetess is straightforward in her admiration of the sanctity of nature:

The forest is holy,  
 The sacred paths are of stone.  
 A clearing.  
 The altars are shifting deposits of pineneedles,  
                   hidden waters,  
                   streets of choirwood,  
 not what the will  
 thinks to construct for its testimonies. (119)

The unique role of the environment, which soothes and purifies thoughts was also cherished by Romantic poets. Levertov, who was brought up in England, was probably aware of Wordsworth’s statement: “In nature and in language of the sense / The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse, / The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul [...]” (qtd. in *The Norton Anthology* 702). Admiration of the physical world is one of the stages which has to be fulfilled before entering the path of mysticism. According to Gershom Scholem it is essential that “in the first stage, Nature is the scene of man’s relation to God” (7). For Levertov, this notion is especially relevant because she perceives love and respect for nature as one of her most important prerogatives. Moreover, the world can make her happy even at very difficult moments in life:

Still, in the quiet there are  
 chickadees,

to make me grudgingly smile,  
and crickets curious about  
my laundry put to bleach  
on brown grass.

So I do smile.  
What else to do?  
Melancholy is boring. (52)

In this passage the poet proves that the beauty and simplicity of wildlife can raise her spirits. The poet often employs the images of moon, water, forest, trees, birds, seeds, earth in her poetic output. Levertov uses them in both straightforward and metaphorical contexts. The moon is mysterious, water is pure, forest and trees are sanctified. However, the combination of sacred images with natural and ordinary ones might come as a surprise, for example:

At the dump bullfrogs  
converse as usual.  
It's their swamp  
below the garbage tip,  
where they were masters  
long before towns had dumps, Rapid  
the crossfire of their  
utterance. (74)

Here, bullfrogs are personified as the masters of the swamp. Additionally, it is emphasized that they had dwelled there long before humans built their cities. Levertov highlights the necessity of being aware how small and dependent on nature we really are. For Hasidim all living creatures play a vital role in the world. As Martin Buber claims in *Tales of the Hasidim*, God's "tender mercies are over all His works" (245). It may be surprising but, for Levertov even a bullfrog or moth can be perceived as a special, uncommon creature. In "Souvenir d'amitié", the poet unpretentiously describes her flea bites and notices that she was given this dubious "present" by the dog: "She gave me/a share of her loneliness, her warmth, her flea" (56). However, the poet is neither disgusted nor unhappy, she accepts this fact as natural, let alone the feelings she has towards the dog, which she treats as her equal.

Yet another example of a simple animal is found in the poem “Snail”, where the poetess describes a small creature, which strives for self-acceptance:

Burden, grace  
 artifice coiled  
 brittle on my back, integral  
 I thought to crawl  
 out of you  
 [...]
   
 but in my shell  
 my life was [...]. (77)

The teachings of Hasidim also mention the concept of self-acceptance. A man should first acknowledge and then fight with his sinful thoughts, but also he has to satisfy his daily needs, as living in isolation from his own body is impossible. In this way, Hasidism supported affirmation of life and self-approval. This exact idea of submitting to natural instincts is depicted in the above-mentioned poem. After having “yearned for the worm’s lowly freedom” the snail realizes that:

[...] when I knew it  
 I remembered  
 my eyes adept to witness  
 air and harsh light  
 and look all ways. (77)

With the help of a small figure of a snail, the poetess conveys a simple truth that it is not worth yearning for something unattainable. It is better for us to accept ourselves and appreciate even the burdens and drawbacks that we were “endowed” with. The poet emphasizes in her work that people need to be grateful for what they have, as acceptance is the key to happiness in life. The inability to fulfil desires is also present in “Adam’s Complaint”, as she writes “some people, no matter what you give them, still want the moon” (54). Moreover, the perennial problem of not realizing one’s own happiness is described by imaginative images, for example, “the marriage bed and the cradle, still empty arms” (54). On the other hand, the poem might suggest the restless spirit, which dwells inside every human being and tells him/her to seek happiness somewhere far away: “You give them land, their own earth under their feet, still they take to the roads” (54). The title suggests that

although everything is given to people: earth, water, family, home, they still complain. Levertov herself seeks for recipes for happy living. Her mission is to find harmony in life, and again *Tales of the Hasidim* are helpful with the subject: "All the contradictions with which world distresses you are only that you may discover their intrinsic significance, and all the contrary trends tormenting you within yourself, only wait to be exorcised by your word. All innate sorrow wants only to flow into the fervor of your joy" (Buber 4).

Hasidic teachings proclaimed that all living entities have God's spark in themselves. This particular notion is strictly connected with the Hasidic mysticism. Martin Buber claims that "Hasidim did make manifest the reflection of the divine, the sparks of God that glimmer in all beings and taught how to approach them, how to deal with them, how to 'lift' and redeem them, and reconnect them with the original root" (5). The poetess finds this spark in herself and meditates over it while contemplating natural beauty of the world, which brings her even closer to mystical feelings of her Hasidic ancestors. Therefore, the gift of life is precious, invaluable, and should never be misused or forgotten. *Relearning the Alphabet* reflects the poet's longing for this appreciation and the awe of creation. While describing the "burning babes" of Asia or her late friend David, she painfully faces the fact of time passing by and in the meantime she longs for peace and harmony:

Hail, little serpent of useless longing  
that may destroy me,  
that bites me with such idle  
needle teeth. (49)

Although the poet explores her roots and explicitly speaks about her emotional and intellectual attachment with her family, she is sometimes overwhelmed by her past, as she writes "learned – not for the first time – my roots in the 19th century put me out of touch" (96). In the same poem Levertov admits that the journey to the past is not always a good experience by saying "I go stumbling / (head turned) / back to my origins: / (if that's where I'm going) / to joy, my Jerusalem" (96). She tries to grasp her ancestry just to put it in order, and yet again she mentions joy as the aim of her journey. She describes the anguish and sorrow along the way and expresses uncertainty whether she will be able to reach elation. The poet looks for her inner self, she tries to find her way, justifies her own fate of a person who sees and

feels more. Her poems like “Why me?” or “Wind Song” reveal her search for self-acceptance. The author’s quest from a young English girl to the poet aware of her heritage and talents is the sign of her self-development. Linda Wagner points out that “such creation, or re-creation, implies a thorough self-knowledge, a ready awareness” of the goals the poet wanted to reach in life (65). John Felstiner also supports this idea in his article “The Hasid and the Kabbalist” (81–92).

In all sections of *Relearning the Alphabet* Levertov uses the image of birds. To be more specific, she mentions: a swan, which cannot die, chickadees, which cheer her up and owls, which hoot and:

They raise  
The roof of the dark: ferocious  
joy in the extreme silver  
the moon has floated out from itself [. . .]. (69)

For Hasidim birds play a vital role, as they are symbols of freedom, and more importantly, they are creatures that can sing, which in turn is an act of praising God. Rabbi Shneur Zalman—the Rav, mentions birds because he thinks he can understand their language. In one of the tales Zalman explains the phenomenon to his grandson while traveling in a carriage. “How fast they chatter,” he said to the child. “They have their own alphabet. All you need to do is listen and grasp well and you will understand their language” (Buber 267). Understanding the language of nature is specific to mystics from Jewish and Christian religion, both of which Levertov studied and felt connected with. The poet herself seeks for the understanding of the world, she has this craving to listen carefully and to understand:

A language  
of leaves underfoot.  
Leaves on the tree, trembling  
in speech. Poplars  
tremble and speak  
if you draw near them. (45)

The title of the book *Relearning the Alphabet* suggests the necessity of finding new ways of communication. The language of nature is simpler, and with a little effort, it can become understandable. It is the language of admiration, where there is rhythm and music. For the poet the birds’ song: “symbolizes access to the transcendent reality” (Levertov, *The Poet* 73).



What is important, in Judaism there has always been a need of finding perfection on earth, not only in heaven, which distinguishes Judaism from other religious movements. Its rules explain that the real satisfaction is: “constant, undaunted and exalted joy in the Now and Here, which can spring only from fulfilment in the present (...)” (Buber 2). As a result, these teachings proclaimed the need of living in an uninterrupted praise of the world, which Levertov cherishes in her poems and is able to lose herself in it:

Have you ever,  
in stream or sea,  
felt the silver of fish  
pass through your hand hold? not to stop it,  
block it from going onward, but feel it  
move in its wave-road?  
To make  
of song a chalice,  
of Time  
a communion wine. (101)

It is as if only the natural world brings her solace, in contrast with the reality, which evokes the feelings of hopelessness and distress. The poetess is able to be joyful only in nature's bosom, similarly to Wordsworth who admits that “my heart leaps up when I behold / a rainbow in the sky (...)” (qtd. in *The Norton Anthology* 728).

#### MUSIC

One more important aspect of the Hasidic culture is singing and dancing. To get closer to the Maker, a Hasid used ecstatic methods and enthusiasm in the act of prayer, which was called “cleaving” to the deity (dvekut). This enthusiastic attitude gave rise to the tradition of Hasidic music and dance, which sometimes brought about the state of deep trance. Rabbi Elimelekh says: “It is good if man can bring about that God sings with him” (Buber 245) and Rabbi Pinchas, who always spoke in praise of music and song, said once: “Lord of the world if I could sing I should not let you remain up above. I should harry you with my song until you came down and stayed here with us” (Buber 125). The act of singing is so powerful that it can make God happy. What is more, it may draw Him closer to people. Both dancing

and singing were like acts of prayer for Hasidim. Temple Cone also mentions that in her article about Hasidism (123–139). Music is a natural element of poems, as they often have clear rhythm or pace. However, for Levertov the most important value seems to be the harmony, which she constantly seeks in her life. The fact that the poet herself practiced and loved ballet is not without significance. Linda Wagner claims that Levertov “sees the dance as a means of total physical expression” (66). It is not surprising that in her poems the author often refers to music and dancing.

In fact, Levertov’s injury made her dancing career impossible. However, for her the ballet figures are still the form of beauty and harmony. In “Dance Memories” the poet once again emphasizes the ability of expressing oneself through dancing. The total bliss reached by physical exercise is also important:

The joy of leaping, of moving by  
leaps and bounds, of gliding  
to leap and gliding  
to leap becomes, while it lasts,  
heart pounding, breath hurting,  
the deepest, the only joy. (60)

The poem itself is full of rhythm and congruence. The usage of words like “leap” and “glide” evokes pictures of a dancing girl. Moreover, the repetitions of verbs in the poem make the reader visualize the practice of a ballet dancer. Although simple in construction, the poem is dynamic and energetic. As a result, “Levertov draws some critical terminology from painting and sculpture, but her primary interest lies in music” (Wagner 56). At this point, it is necessary to observe that dancing together with rhythm were indispensable elements of worship for a pious Hasid.

Music was overwhelmingly present in Levertov’s everyday existence. Facing a divorce, relationship break-ups, her grown-up son’s leaving home, the poet often refers to the subject of solitude, and music helps her survive. In “A Dark Summer Day” the poet craves for melody:

I want some funny jazz band  
to wake me,  
tell me life’s been dreaming me.  
I want something like love, but made  
all of strings or pebbles,

oboe of torn air  
to tear me to my senses. (76)

Music not only helps the author to regain energy for life but it is also powerful enough to evoke such strong feelings as love.

On the other hand, music is not always joyful. The Hasidic tradition allows singing and dancing even at the moments of grief and sorrow, mainly to keep the negative emotions at bay. Levertov also mentions dancing in cheerless manner "jester said from the far shore (gravely, ringing his bells, a tune of sorrow. 'I dance to it?)" (*Relearning* 76). The teachings mention *nigunim*, which are melodies or tunes without words, highly inspiring and emotional, solemn or joyful, penetrating deepest religious feelings. Paradoxically, even death can be treated as an occasion for jumping and prancing. Levertov wrote in her essay "The Sense of Pilgrimage" that "[she] learned that [her] father rose from his bed shortly before his death to dance the Hasidic dance of praise" (*The Poet* 73). Later on she concludes: "we are of a line that dances in mourning and dances a joyful dance in the hour of death" (70). Death is perceived by a Hasid as something natural and therefore it should not be a sorrowful event. This tradition goes back to the Middle Ages and *The Book of Splendor*. The *Zohar* is optimistic in its message and says: "And the people of the world are wont to weep when the son [i.e., the soul] takes its leave of them. But if there be a wise man among them, he says to them, Why weep ye? Is he not the son of the King? Is it not meet that he should take leave of you to live in the palace of his father?.... If all good men knew this, they would hail with delight when it behoves them to bid adieu to the world" (Minkin 188-200).

Death brings a man closer to God's presence, it's as if people changed places for the better. And the best way to help a soul reach heaven is to dance.

One of the most interesting combinations of music, myth and nature can be found in the poem "A Tree Telling of Orpheus," where the power of music is indisputable. Although it does not directly refer to the Hasidic context, Levertov uses the image of a tree, which is a symbol of life and energy and it is also an important image in Hasidic mysticism. The poem is written from the perspective of the tree to emphasize the effect of music on a living creature. The mythological figure of Orpheus could charm inanimate things, including stones. In addition, the poem is a description of a reaction to moving rhythms. The line-breaks, stanza-spaces illustrate the rhythm and the movement of the tree:

I listened, and language  
 came into my roots  
   out of the earth,  
 into my bark  
   out of the air,  
 into the pores of my greenest shoots  
   gently as a dew  
 and there was no word he sang but I knew its meaning (*Relearning* 82)

Interestingly, the tree starts to understand the lyrics, music brings about illumination, as if the tree was “becoming man or a god” (82). The melodies played by Orpheus made the tree walk, step out of the earth:

And I  
 in terror  
   but not in doubt of  
   what I must do  
 in anguish, in haste  
   wrenched from earth root after root,  
 the soil heaving and cracking, the moss tearing asunder-  
 and behind me the others: my brothers [...] (83)

Trees are able to “see more”. Moreover, they gain experience and do not regret anything for example, they say that “what we have lived comes back to us” (83). By using the image of a walking tree the author tries to convey a message that movement means life, that sometimes we need changes in our actions and music can make them happen.

As it was hinted above, the symbol of a tree appears in the poetry of Levertov on a regular basis. The author herself refers to it in her notes: “... it seems as if below the conscious level I have some rather persistent symbolism of trees as being, or wanting to be, or having once been, peripatetic, which in fact is alien and even somewhat repulsive to my conscious mind” (Levertov, *The Poet* 72). The respect for the power and greatness of trees goes back to the first religious beliefs of a humankind, which emphasized the presence of gods and ghosts in trees. Interestingly enough, Levertov refers to these ideas for instance by giving examples of Tolkien’s Ents, who represent animistic symbolism of a man like the Green Man, or the world-tree Yggdrasil taken from the Nordic beliefs. With the development of mythology, the idea of the huge tree evolved and created the pivotal element of the flow of the divine power connecting the supernatural world with the

world of nature (Tressider 40–41). This particular symbol is connected with the most prominent ancient religions. The Semitic tradition describes the tree of life called “Sefirot”, which probably goes back to the Sumer times or Nordic beliefs, in which Odin was nailed to a tree. Levertov does not study the idea of the tree of life in Jewish tradition in detail, but it is one of the most essential motifs of the Hasidic mysticism connecting religion and myth, both of which are important for the poet. The walking tree in “A Tree Telling of Orpheus” corresponds with manlike as well as godlike qualities. It serves as a metaphor of existence and survival. As far as symbols are concerned, the tree of life signifies both life and creation, the features given to a human being by God. That is why in “He-who-came-Forth” a tree is described in the context of a new life. Interestingly, in some traditions trees, like the pine tree or the pomegranate tree, were linked with marriage and fertility. In the Nordic mythology a man and a woman were created from trees— ash wood and elm (Lurker 245). It does not come as a surprise that Levertov describes giving birth to her son in terms of planting a tree:

Somehow nineteen years ago  
 clumsily passionate  
 I drew into me the seed  
 of a man-  
     and bore it, cast it out-  
 man-seed that grew  
         and became a person  
         whose subtle mind and quirk heart  
     though I beat him, hurt him,  
     while I fed him, loved him  
 now stand beyond me, out in the world  
         beyond my skin  
 beautiful and strange as if  
 I had given birth to a tree (66)

The author uses the words “beautiful” and “strange” because she finds it mysterious how both of them, a tree and her son came into being. Additionally, every person can be compared to a tree, and therefore become an indispensable part of nature.

## CONCLUSIONS

The impact of Denise Levertov's ancestry, which was so closely related to mysticism of both Jewish and Christian religions, clearly manifests in the themes she explores in her poems. Eclecticism ran in her family, that is why it was natural for the poetess. However, she realized that for the majority of people that combination of influences can be perceived as "rather peculiar" (*The Poet* 77). Additionally, the poet points out that in the 20th century syncretism of religions comes as no surprise. In spite of being agnostic, she considers a poet as a religious, even chosen entity whose "nature as a poet is so essentially religious that, exposed as never before to the knowledge of many faiths, many mythologies, he instinctively takes from any or all something of his sustenance" (77). In reality, at the end of her life the poet finds her own way, and her sense of quest is fulfilled. According to Joyce L. Beck, the "religious meditative element in Denise Levertov (...) has at least three sources – the Christian inheritance of her immediate background, her upbringing as a child of a Church of England clergyman; her ancestral roots in Judaism and her affinity for Hasidism; and finally the 'natural supernaturalism' of her romantic poetics" (268). One can say that Levertov was an inherently spiritual person because in the end, religion took over her life and became "explicit" as it grew to be the main preoccupation in her poetry. *Relearning the Alphabet* is full of links with the author's heritage, mainly because her Hasidic roots enabled her to cherish the world, even in the face of conflicts and wars. Symbols and stories taken from the Jewish tradition boost Levertov's creativity and make her poems more visual and accomplished.

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HASYDZKI KONTEKST NATURY I MUZYKI  
W *RELEARNING THE ALPHABET* DENISE LEVERTOV

Streszczenie

W artykule dokonano interpretacji tomu poezji Denise Levertov, *Relearning the Alphabet* (1970), posiadającego liczne odniesienia do tradycji chasydzkiej, z której wywodzi się poetka. Najistotniejszymi elementami, do których nawiązuje Levertov, są natura i muzyka, odnoszące się do tradycji jej przodków. Istotną rolę odgrywa również eklektyzm, dzięki któremu Levertov rozwija swoją duchowość. W artykule skoncentrowano się na symbolach, opowieściach oraz na mistyce chasydzkiej, w której zakorzeniony jest szacunek dla środowiska oraz uwielbienie muzyki. Główną tezą artykułu jest twierdzenie, że źródłami wrażliwości na piękno natury oraz muzykalności wierszy Levertov są chasydzkie korzenie poetki.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Levertov; Buber; chasydyzm; mistycyzm; muzyka; natura.