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THE SOUND OF PERSEVERANCE: COMBATTING ANTI-SEMITISM WITH
NARRATIVES IN MUSIC

ANNETTE NAGLE
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Reviewed and approved* by the following:

Steven C. Andrews
Instructor of History
Thesis Supervisor

Laura R. Rotunno
Associate Professor of English
Honors Adviser

* Signatures are on file in the Schreyer Honors College.

ABSTRACT

As each year passes since the world was introduced to the atrocities of the Holocaust, humanity feels as if each year is an effective barrier to falling prey to hatred and attempting to destroy a peoples based on cultural identity. Time is not an effective barrier, however, and in this thesis the idea of reapplying Richard Wagner's controversial ideas that music and art is a transformative force in the world can be a more effective and unconventional barrier towards resurfacing genocidal hatred. Even though Wagner was using his ideas as an argument against the Jewish people, I believe his idea that art is transformative was correct, and an essential component of humanity is contained in a peoples' culture. Therefore, in order to combat resurfacing anti-Semitism towards Jews in Europe in the 21st century, we must expose the world to the stories of life, death and perseverance contained in the musical activities of the Jewish peoples persecuted during the time of the Third Reich by discovering their stories and playing their music. The research contained in this thesis aims to contribute ideas between what music has been to Jews and non-Jews in recent Europe, how it has defined the Jewish people and how this form of culture can combat hatred.

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Chapter 1

Anti-Semitism in Today's World

Do we see anti-Semitism today as a continuing problem, or one that was left behind in the destruction of the Third Reich? Only one thousand Jews live in the county I call home in Pennsylvania. I can count the number of times on one hand the amount of times genocide is mentioned in even the most in-depth conversations in which the human condition is in question. Anti-Semitism is not on the minds of the general population in which I live, which causes me to wonder what the climate of discussion truly is among most Americans in regards to anti-Semitism. What does the average American think when Israel is assailed with criticism towards Palestinians? What does the average American think when a news report glosses over anti-Semitic slurs written on walls or sidewalks in college towns? Do they think this is normal? Do they not think this is alarming?

Unfortunately, in my own experience, I think that most Americans do not believe anti-Semitic demonstrations or feeling strange towards Jews to be alarming or unusual. I have even met various students on college campuses who find it strange that Hebrew is offered as a legitimate foreign language course on campuses. Individuals that are from my own age group cannot find any implicit anti-Semitism present in their thoughts to assume that every Jew has money, or easy access to monetary funds while the average Christian struggles to earn a living.

However, I must be careful to note that these unconscious inclinations to feel a certain strangeness towards Jews and Judaism are not inherently harmful. Basic sociology tells us that humans are programmed to feel curious or uneasy about those who are different from

themselves. However, I believe this uncomfortable feeling towards Jews in the West has begun to take a harmful turn in the Western culture. This shift has been seen before and needs to be carefully examined.

The Jews in Europe Today: Are They Safe?

Jewish families are fleeing European countries, fearing for their safety. Jewish businesses and cemeteries are being looted and destroyed. These responses to hatred seem like they belong in pages of a textbook recalling the persecution of the Third Reich, but these accounts of hatred are in our newspapers and websites, reminding us that this hatred has not yet ceased to exist.

I find it alarming that with very little effort in my research, I was able to find various examples of anti-Semitic demonstrations that took place around the world within the past month of me writing this sentence:

- "Kosher Copenhagen deli targeted in anti-Semitic attack: Vandals smash window, scrawl 'Jewish pigs' on wall; police say they will give 'extra focus' to incident." (Copenhagen, Denmark: April 2015).¹
- "Mob launches anti-Semitic attack on Stamford Hill synagogue: Six arrested after group of more than 20 men and women launch attack on north London synagogue as they shout 'kill the Jews'." (London, UK: March 2015).²
- "Argentina charges 4 men in anti-Semitic attack on Israeli tourists in Patagonia." (Argentina: March 2015).³

¹ "Kosher Copenhagen deli targeted in anti-Semitic attack," *The Times of Israel*, last modified April 9, 2015, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/kosher-copenhagen-deli-targeted-in-anti-semitic-attack/>.

² "Watch: Mob launches anti-Semitic attack on Stamford Hill synagogue," *The Telegraph*, last modified March 22, 2015, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/kosher-copenhagen-deli-targeted-in-anti-semitic-attack/>.

- "Jewish cemetery vandalized in Hungary: Unknown assailants desecrated some 15 to 20 graves in Gyongyos." (Gyongyos, Hungary: March 2015).⁴
- "Brussels Jewish kindergarten can't find insurance: Insurance company claims it's 'too big of a risk' to cover Jewish educational institute amid a recent wave of anti-Semitic terror attacks in Europe." (Brussels: April 2015).⁵
- "A new exodus? The reality of being Jewish in Europe today: After a wave of antisemitic attacks across Europe, many Jews are wondering what the future holds." (April 2015).⁶

My grandmother told me she had a well-known Jewish last name while she lived in Cincinnati, Ohio (Ostheimer); and as a child in the 1930's, her father told her to never tell her classmates she was Jewish for fear that she would be harmed for it, and he would be unable to protect her. When she told me this story, I believed at the time, that these days were long past us. As over a decade has passed, I am saddened to realize that I too have to be careful about the implications of revealing that I have Jewish connections, particularly while I was visiting Vienna in December 2013. These days saturated with hatred towards the Jews have not passed us: we are in the midst of them.

With the alarming amount of anti-Semitic demonstrations taking place in Europe, I feel it necessary to find solutions to help combat these re-emerging forms of anti-Semitism in unlikely

³ "Argentina charges 4 men in anti-Semitic attack on Israeli tourists in Patagonia," *Fox News Latino*, last modified March 21, 2015, <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2015/03/21/argentina-charges-4-men-in-anti-semitic-attack-on-israeli-tourists-in-patagonia/>.

⁴ "Jewish cemetery vandalized in Hungary," *The Jerusalem Post*, last modified March 23, 2015, <http://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Jewish-cemetery-vandalized-in-Hungary-394776>.

⁵ "Brussels Jewish kindergarten can't find insurance," *Ynetnews*, last modified April 1, 2015, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4643434,00.html>.

⁶ "A new exodus? The reality of being Jewish in Europe today," *The Guardian*, last modified April 5, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/05/a-new-exodus-jewish-in-europe>.

places. I argue that music can be used to combat anti-Semitism, because in the past, it has been used to proliferate and legitimize anti-Semitic ideas. If music can be used to foster hatred, I believe it can be used to combat anti-Semitic ideas. My thesis exists to examine the stories of triumph present in the musical activities and musical compositions created by Jewish composers to resist anti-Semitic demonstrations and ideas.

Chapter 2

The Continuing Wagner Question

In the midst of a media boom of culture in pervasive forms of technology today, many outlandish and questionable displays of humanity are cautioned by religious leaders across the world; some seemingly benign artistic displays are still being censored in the world because of their supposed consequences. One of these bans in question is the ban of Richard Wagner's music in Israel. The Wagner ban continues in Israel to this day, as Holocaust survivors who were exposed to a Nazi obsession with Wagner's music are still in our midst. As a result, a question that was raised in the 19th century is still being asked to this day: how harmful is the anti-Semitism of Richard Wagner? I believe there is an error in accusing the music of Wagner as being the source of the terrifying anti-Semitism witnessed during the Third Reich. As Leon Botstein states, if we continue to ban Wagner's music, errant blame may be placed on him for the Holocaust: "By assignment of historical responsibility for the extermination of European Jewry, even symbolically, to Wagner, the ban may have the effect of falsifying history."⁷ I wish to make a distinction from Botstein, however, and I argue that a careful note should be added when examining this question of Wagner: The apprehension towards Wagner's music should be understood as being due to the morality paired with his art, *but* Wagner's anti-Semitism and political perspective *would not have been as powerful* had it not been for his art - it even made his anti-Semitism excusable in the eyes of the masses.

⁷ Leon Botstein, "German Jews and Wagner," in *Richard Wagner and His World*, ed. Thomas S. Grey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 153.

The road that leads to the current ban on Wagner in Israel and what culture means for anti-Semitism today is long and complicated. We need to examine three factors in order to understand how Wagner's music was influenced by his anti-Semitism: we must investigate his career as a composer, his political affiliations and also his thirst for revolution.

Wagner's thirst for a revolution in the hearts, minds and society of man was an all-consuming passion that later affected his art. Paul Lawrence Rose argues in his book *Wagner: Race and Revolution* that Wagner's operatic composing career was impacted by Wagner's goal of achieving a Hegelian/Marxist revolution for Germany:

"In 1848 Wagner had undergone a threefold transformation in his political, personal and artistic lives. The idea of revolution was an epiphany that shook his marriage, altered his whole conception of his art and opera, and set him on a permanent revolutionary path, which, despite its ideological and political windings between liberalism, socialism and monarchism, was always directed by an abiding anti-Semitism."⁸

As a result, due to this subtle introduction of anti-Semitism in Wagner's operas, audiences took an unexpected turn to intensified anti-Semitism when these subconscious tendencies took the stage. Wagner's musical style and political preferences were predisposed to encouraging revolution. Friedrich Nietzsche recognized Wagner's longing for revolution after Wagner had been observing the Revolution in France, in his letter titled *The Case of Wagner*: "Half his life, Wagner believed in the Revolution as much as ever a Frenchman believed in it. He searched for it in the runic writing of myth, he believed that in Siegfried he had found the typical

⁸ Paul Lawrence Rose, *Wagner: Race and Revolution* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), 49-50.

revolutionary."⁹ Nietzsche goes on to suggest that Wagner used his music to promote his disposition to revolutionary ideas. To Wagner, his music was a platform in order to spread his ideas about the world and about the revolution he wished to see in Germany.

"As a matter of fact, he repeated a single proposition all his life long: that his music did not mean mere music. But more. But infinitely more.—"*Not mere music*"—no musician would say that. To say it once more, Wagner was unable to create from a totality; he had no choice, he had to make patchwork, "motifs," gestures, formulas, doing things double and even a hundred fold—he remained an orator even as a musician—he therefore had to move his "it ways a mere means": that was his theory, that above all the only *practice* open to him. But no musician would think that way. Wagner required literature to persuade all the world to take his music seriously..."¹⁰

What Nietzsche and Rose observed in the behavior of Wagner is true — it seemed after his political views were made more clearly known, his music was used as a tool to promote his ideals and a racial divide with unimaginable consequences.

Wagner prided himself on being a writer in addition to being a composer, and one of his writings that gained a considerable amount of attention was his *Judaism in Music* essay, according to Botstein and Rose. Despite Wagner's well-known anti-Semitism, many Jews were still supportive of his work and the Viennese Jewish community was the best known patrons of opera during the time of the publication of his *Judaism in Music* essay. Botstein suggests that Wagner's ideas were becoming more powerful after the unification of Germany: "Wagner became a potent cultural force and symbol after the unification of Germany, when the success of

⁹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and The Case of Wagner*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), 163.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 177.

Jews integrating and assimilating into German society and culture became increasingly palpable and visible."¹¹ Wagner additionally expanded upon the destruction that results from the assimilation of the Jews into German society (Which necessitated the need for revolution):

"For on one point I am certain: As the influence which the Jews have obtained over our intellectual life, and such as it is manifested in the diversion and deterioration of our highest and most cultivated tendencies, is not a mere, let us say, psychological chance, it must be acknowledged as undeniable and decisive."¹²

One would think that after these remarks that the Jews of Vienna would boycott, or at least avoid performances of works by Wagner. However, Botstein argues that the Jews of Vienna continued to accept Wagner knowing his anti-Semitic position. The reason for this, according to Botstein, is that the Jews were eager to join the cultural identity of "Germanness," and most believed that Wagner's attacks were towards the musicians Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer.¹³ Other reasons for why Jews accepted Wagner despite his anti-Semitic beliefs will be examined later.

Wagner's Views on Jews, Politics and Revolution

Presently, I wish to examine the reaction to Richard Wagner's writings on Jews, music, politics and revolution. Daniel Spitzer, a satirist active at the time of premiers of Wagner's operas, was an outspoken critic (albeit an inactive Jew at best) was one of the outspoken Jews who took notice of the undercurrent of anti-Semitic sentiments present in code even in his

¹¹ Leon Botstein, "German Jews and Wagner," in *Richard Wagner and His World*, ed. Thomas S. Grey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 152.

¹² Wagner, Richard. "Judaism in Music." *The Musical World* 47, no. 28 (Jul 10, 1869): 487, accessed March 26, 2015. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/7634502?accountid=13158>.

¹³ Leon Botstein, "German Jews and Wagner," in *Richard Wagner and His World*, ed. Thomas S. Grey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 153.

operatic works.¹⁴ It is important to examine how Wagner integrated his anti-Semitic sentiments within his opera; some scholars argue they are subtle, but Wagner intended for this to be the case. Even if the anti-Semitic elements are intentionally subtle, the fact remains these anti-Semitic elements are present, regardless.

Wagner's art was still wildly influential, however. Despite the Jews of Vienna beginning to notice these sentiments present beyond the written word of Wagner and entering the stage of his operas, they still continued to support his work out of a desire to be among the German elite and partake in the illustrious culture of Germany represented by Wagner. Botstein argues that by the 1870's, the Jews were aware of this fact but still consumed his art voraciously: "By the 1870's three facts seemed clear: Wagner was an outspoken anti-Semite, his art was inextricably bound up with a new German self-definition, and German Jews were among the most enthusiastic consumers of Wagner's work."¹⁵

Wagner's anti-Semitism was made clear in his public writings, his personal correspondence and in his art. In his writings, his anti-Semitic sentiments were distinct and easy to identify in his artistic treatises and political musings in *Art and Revolution*, *Artwork of the Future* and *Judaism in Music*. These works were written by Wagner from 1849-50, and outlined clear anti-Semitic sentiments long before *Parsifal* and its anti-Semitic agenda hit the stage for the Jewish patrons to see with their own eyes. In Richard Wagner's *Prose Works*, he makes explicitly clear who the enemy and exploiter of the German is:

"In this singular phenomenon, this invasion of the German nature by an utterly alien element, there is more than meets the eye. Here, however, we will only notice that

¹⁴Leon Botstein, "German Jews and Wagner," in *Richard Wagner and His World*, ed. Thomas S. Grey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 155.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 156.

other nature in so far as its conjunction with us obliges us to become quite clear as to what we have to understand by the 'German' nature which it exploits.—It everywhere appears to be the duty of the Jew, to shew the nations of modern Europe where haply there may be a profit they have overlooked, or not made use of."¹⁶

Wagner goes on to characterize the German as being a wealth of pure genius and creative activity that is seen as an innocent victim of manipulative nature of the Jew:

"Adorable and beautiful is that foible of the German's which forbade his coining into personal profit the inwardness and purity of his feelings and beholdings, particularly in his public and political life: that a prof here, as well, was left unused, could be cognizable to none but a mind which misunderstood the very essence of the German nature. The German Princes supplied the misunderstanding, the Jews exploited it."¹⁷

Wagner's argument to the Jews is simple: You are not a German, and you are against the nature of all that is German by taking advantage of it. He goes on to explain the structure of the German blood, and the genius that remains in the blood of the Germans through Bach, Mozart and Schiller - and how the Jews lay in wait to take advantage of this pure genius, using the German leadership to take power and control over the German people to confuse them of their destiny to greatness:

"...that misunderstanding was most advantageous to the [Jewish] speculator who stood outside, seeking nothing but his personal profit. This time, if he played his game well,

¹⁶ Richard Wagner, *Richard Wagner's Prose Works*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1859), 158.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 159.

that speculator had only to swing himself into the midst of the German Folk and State, to exploit and, in the end, not merely govern it, but downright make it his own property."¹⁸

Wagner had been saying many terrible things by this point: Wagner argues that the Jews are cultural hijackers of the Germans and they are efficient manipulators, but I have not witnessed an outright call for eradication of the Jewish race. The potential exacerbation of racial tensions are surely present, therefore this does not minimize the harmfulness of his writings. As Botstein stated before, however, it seems in recent cases that the ban in Israel and his inextricable link with the Nazi era utilization of his music can have the potential of rewriting history. However, I still wish to examine more issues raised by Wagner in his writings and in his artistic works that can explain why the Israelis are turning to the ban to ease their historical suffering.

The Israeli ban of Wagner's music correctly identifies that Wagner's anti-Semitic stance was the origin of revolutionary hatred and destruction that later followed. A seed of hatred can be seen in the anti-Semitic characterizations present in Wagner's operatic works. Wagner intentionally turned to presenting his political views in his art because he believed revolution could be achieved through art. According to Rose, Wagner was strongly influenced by Greek aesthetic philosophy and speculated about art being a catalyst for the German people and revolution:

"Christianity must be freed of this Jewish influence of utility, domination, and egoism, and renovated by Greek ideals of beauty and enjoyment. This religiously inspired 'art of the future' means a return to the true racial spirit of the German *Volk*, *for the spirit of the*

¹⁸ Richard Wagner, *Richard Wagner's Prose Works*, trans. William Ashton Elli (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1859), 165.

Volk is the source of all art. Wagner's concept of *Volk* is thus not merely a racial concept, but a revolutionary one. [Emphasis added.]¹⁹

Since Wagner clearly expressed ideas on how art *should* be, according to the German ideal, it should not be a surprise that Wagner's ideals would begin to creep onto the stage; that is, if you examine his works with this idea implicitly in mind. Rose argues that Wagner systematically and carefully presented his anti-Semitic ideas with noticeable subtlety:

"For Wagner, there were good artistic reasons for not putting characters with Jewish names on stage. Wagner's strategy as an artist and racist was to conceive the operas as dreamlike experiences for his audiences: no concrete practical matters — such as the contemporary Jewish Question — might be intruded into them in a realistic fashion. Instead, revolutionary and anti-Jewish themes were imprinted in these works on a subliminal level that would be understood by spectators."²⁰

¹⁹ Paul Lawrence Rose, *German/Jewish Question: Revolutionary Antisemitism from Kant to Wagner* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 362.

²⁰ Paul Lawrence Rose, *Wagner: Race and Revolution* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), 69.

Chapter 3

Anti-Semitism on the Operatic Stage

The ultimate goal of Wagner's artistic work was to not further a political agenda, but to have his audiences be swept up in a transcendent experience that would transform their hearts and minds. Therefore, this is why Rose's previously quoted argument is essential to understanding why Wagner's anti-Semitic references are masked, but noticeable. An example of Wagner's masked anti-Semitism is in his operatic work *Parsifal*, so I now find it necessary to examine perspectives on the anti-Semitism that resides in *Parsifal* and the way in which this anti-Semitism may still resound in contemporary audiences without an explicit characterization of Jews. *Parsifal* is the last outstanding work by Wagner, and if I am completely honest and in the nature of full disclosure, I cannot deny the haunting and visceral beauty of this opera (however, Wagner preferred to call the opera "*ein Bühnenweihfestspiel*," a Festival Play for the Consecration of the Stage).

However, the beauty and majesty of this work may contain explicit manifestations of Wagner's anti-Semitic attitudes in a way he wished that art would function: to promote revolution and influence the *Volk*. Some scholars argue that the anti-Semitic undertones in Wagner's work are implicit and not explicit; or they are simply manifestations of the cultural norm to shun Judaism, as if this in some way excuses Wagner's racist undertones that may be present in the opera. The appearance of implicit anti-Semitic characterizations of Jewish-typed characters was intended by Wagner, as opposed to overt anti-Semitic characterizations.

Hektor K. T. Yan provides an enlightening perspective on how *Parsifal* exhibits anti-Semitic undertones. He suggests that one has to be saturated in cultural cues of subliminal anti-Semitism in order to recognize the references. Yan makes the sad assertion that anti-Semitism was mainstream, and that it made Wagner's implicit anti-Semitic characterizations easy to recognize:

"For, if anti-Semitism is indeed a widespread phenomenon at some point of human history, it does not always call for the conscious decision of individuals to sustain and reinforce it — the fact that certain anti-Semite ideas or images are considered to be commonsensical or readily understandable is precisely what gives them currency."²¹

One of these implicit anti-Semitic elements is present in the characterization of Klingsor in *Parsifal*. Yan argues that Klingsor serves as a metaphor for the Jew that Wagner described as trying to mimic the culture in the land from which they live (such as Germany), but no matter what extreme measures are adopted, they will never be accepted as being part of that culture because of their Jewish heritage. Yan asserts that the audiences of this time period would have understood the extreme measure of castration, which is taken by Klingsor. The act of castration was a metaphor for the identity transformation that Jews attempt to achieve but are never capable of achieving: "Like Klingsor, Wagner believes that there are certain characteristics pertaining to the Jews that are ineradicable: the forced attempt to deny such an original nature of the Jew, foresees Wagner, would only lead to further heartlessness."²² Wagner's ideas presented in

²¹ Hektor K. T. Yan, "The Jewish Question Revisited: Anti-Semitism and 'Race' in Wagner's *Parsifal*," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 43, no. 2 (Dec 2012): 348, accessed March 27, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23342826>.

²² *Ibid.*, 349.

Judaism in Music confirm that Klingsor could easily be interpreted as the Jew that fails to assimilate because he will never cease to be a Jew, no matter what the Jew does.

Yan claims that there are other aspects latent in the characterization of Klingsor that make the references to Jews and Wagner's characterization of Jews clear when they are examined together. Yan additionally argues that Klingsor include his potential "contamination," akin to the worry of Jews contaminating the German culture. As if these characterizations weren't enough, Yan also argues that Klingsor's uncontrollable lust being tamed by castration (but still never conquered), and Klingsor's constant seeking to undermine the holy Knights who serve Christ is another characterization of Wagner's anti-Semitic views.

All of these examples lead up to the ultimate point that Klingsor is never able to obtain his full purity unlike the other knights, no matter what he does; akin to the Jews attempting to enter society, as Wagner had once addressed in his *Judaism in Music* prose. Yan argues that this is what these examples represent in Klingsor: "Interpreted this way, Klingsor is seen as inherently different: some pre-existing qualities, no matter what they are, precludes Klingsor from dealing successfully with a condition both he and the grail community consider problematic."²³ This is also a problem that the Jews then later struggled within the Third Reich: their assimilation would never be attainable because of their pre-existing Jewishness. Yan later argues that this interpretation is more difficult to immediately recognize in contemporary

²³ Hektor K. T. Yan, "The Jewish Question Revisited: Anti-Semitism and 'Race' in Wagner's *Parsifal*," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 43, no. 2 (Dec 2012): 353, accessed March 27, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23342826>.

performances, as they take a minimalist approach and try to perform with universal themes of "good" and "evil."²⁴

Ultimately, however, Yan argues that even if noticing anti-Semitism in Wagner's works is implicit, the characterization of Klingsor is ultimately consistent with Wagner's *Judaism in Music* writing: "Put simply, while Wagner's characterization of characters such as Kundry or Klingsor is consistent with his positions in *Judaism in Music*, it also involves naturalization."²⁵ I interpret this argument to mean that Wagner was attempting to expose us to the idea of naturalizing us *to* an idea through his art: that it was natural to hate the alien — to hate the *other*.

In addition to the implicit anti-Semitism present in *Parsifal*, there are additional anti-Semitic ideas present in another operatic work by Wagner: *Der Ring des Nibelung*. In the *Ring*, Wagner had more than likely intended to implicitly include implicit anti-Semitic ideas, and he thought that Jews exemplified capitalist ideals and were singularly concerned with money. This concern with money would eventually lead to the ruin of art and all higher forms of artistic ideals, according to Wagner. Manifestations of Wagner's anti-Semitic position on this subject would also find their way into his operas as well. Rose examines Wagner's position in his research and confirms that Wagner accused Jews of destroying art with money lust:

"The Jews are seen as the negation of the true artistic spirit and the representatives of bourgeois values. Judaism is the embodiment of the bourgeois money egoist spirit. As

²⁴ Hektor K. T. Yan, "The Jewish Question Revisited: Anti-Semitism and 'Race' in Wagner's *Parsifal*," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 43, no. 2 (Dec 2012): 353, accessed March 27, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23342826>.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 358.

Wagner later confessed to Liszt: 'I felt a long repressed hatred for this Jewish money world, and this hatred is as necessary to my nature as gall is to blood.'²⁶

Berthold Hoeckner argues that the *Ring* manifested Wagner's ideas concerning this "Jewish money world" by presenting an aspect of the plot in an anti-Semitic dimension: "There is indeed one (and fairly well-known) instance that entitles us to interpret one of the *Ring*'s characters and an important dimension of its plot in anti-Semitic terms, *because Wagner did so himself*. [Emphasis added.]"²⁷ Hoeckner argues that Wagner identified that money was becoming an enormous problem in Europe since the Jews had been recently emancipated, and the *Ring* exemplified Alberich as a characterization of the Jews guarding the treasures away from the world, much like the Jews were in the present day at the time: "Wagner reads the ring of the *Ring* in unmistakably anti-Semitic terms: as a perfect picture of an economy controlled by big capital, for which he, fully in line with nineteenth-century anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, blamed the Jews."²⁸ Hoeckner supports this argument by stating that Alberich's actions support what Wagner argued about the Jews controlling capital: "Alberich's theft of the Rhinegold and his forging of the ring fits the description of the stereotype of the assimilated Western stock-exchange Jew..."²⁹ Alberich is depicted as a disgusting, subhuman creature in the *Ring*; an *untermensch*, even.³⁰ Hoeckner argues that Wagner further associates Alberich with disgusting qualities with a C minor Leitmotif: with his disgusting appearance and his obviously minor Leitmotif, Wagner leaves no question unanswered that we are not to identify with Alberich and his "*untermensch*"

²⁶ Paul Lawrence Rose, *German/Jewish Question: Revolutionary Antisemitism from Kant to Wagner* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 364.

²⁷ Berthold Hoeckner, "Wagner and the origin of evil," *The Opera Quarterly* 23, no. 2-3 (2008): 165, accessed April 3, 2015. <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/opq/summary/v023/23.2-3.hoeckner.html>.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 166.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

(subhuman) qualities - which is later a tactic used by the Nazi propaganda machine to create an "otherness" feeling between the "superior" Germans and the "subhuman" Jews.

As previously mentioned, I believe that this "otherness" idea has re-entered the contemporary racial and political dialogue in the world because the alienation of Israelis has caused a recent resurgence of anti-Semitism, therefore identifying Jews as the other is still a typical default of today. Even if Wagner's depictions would not be as effective today with modern performance practice, this does not excuse the numerous other ways in which Wagner's revolutionary message was highly influential on the top leaders in the Third Reich. A well-known inspiration is evident in the young Adolf Hitler, who was readily influenced by Wagner largely because of the message contained in his artistic works. He was captivated by Wagner's art, and was then influenced by the gems of revolution that glimmered within the works by Wagner.

Chapter 4 Wagner's Subsequent Influence

Hitler and Wagner

Even if Wagner's depictions would not be as effective today with modern performance practice, this does not excuse the numerous other ways in which Wagner's revolutionary message was highly influential on the top leaders in the Third Reich. A well-known inspiration is evident in the young Adolf Hitler, who was readily influenced by Wagner largely because of the message contained in his artistic works. He was captivated by Wagner's art, and then he was influenced by the gems of revolution that glimmered within the works by Wagner.

According to J. Sydney Jones, Hitler comes from a generation of young, intelligent revolutionaries who were inspired by the art and the writings of Wagner. Those who were inspired did not discriminate on the basis of his anti-Semitism, and in some cases, had even tried to abandon their Jewish roots because of Wagner and his prose. Jones notes two Jews that were influenced by Wagner along with Hitler: Gustav Mahler and, believe it or not: Theodor Herzl.³¹ Which brings a curious implication: How can such a revolutionary man inspire Hitler, who later called for the destruction of the Jews and Herzl, the founder of Zionism and championed a homeland of the Jews, with his art?

First, we must examine Hitler's strong influence from Wagner's art. I feel it necessary to state that I do not want my position to be exploited that I am arguing a direct blame towards Richard Wagner and his ideas as being responsible for the Holocaust as I explain an aspect of influence that Wagner had on Hitler. In my research, I cannot objectively find that Wagner is

³¹ J. Sydney Jones, *Hitler in Vienna, 1907-1913* (New York: Stein and Day Publishers, 1983), 114.

directly responsible for proposing a "Final Solution." Wagner's ideas are simply on par with the anti-Semitic atmosphere of Europe in the dawn of the Holocaust. I prefer to examine the Wagner issue from the perspective of New Historical Criticism and recognize that Wagner is simply one aspect of many that influenced the leaders of the Third Reich to take such drastic measures to employ the Final Solution. With that said: it cannot be denied that Hitler identified with the struggle of Wagner, greatly admired his art and identified with and found much use in his anti-Semitic prose.

Many writers have made Hitler's direct inspiration from the art of Wagner a topic of discussion. Sydney makes note of Hitler's artistic identification with Wagner's operas in *Hitler in Vienna, 1907-1913*. Sydney provides insight into how influential Wagner was to Hitler as an artistic preference, and as an influence to Hitler's life:

"During all this time, Hitler held true to his old love of music and Wagner. They were synonymous for Hitler. He always held the image of Wagner before him: Wagner the revolutionary; Wagner the struggling, misunderstood artist; Wagner the acclaimed master of his day, winning against all obstacles. This image still sustained Hitler, though his own path seemed daily to be diverging from that of the artist."³²

Sydney argues that Hitler would regularly listen to Wagner's operas to gain inspiration for his own revolutionary endeavors. He would listen to *Tannhäuser* and *Flienge Holländer* and would bring along his "cronies" (as Sydney affectionately refers to them) to hear these melodies as well.³³ Does not every musician dream of such a feat? That an aspiring revolutionary leader would draw from the art of a once-rejected composer to fill the young revolutionary with

³² J. Sydney Jones, *Hitler in Vienna, 1907-1913* (New York: Stein and Day Publishers, 1983), 180.

³³ *Ibid.*

inspiration? I can only imagine how the tide of the earth would have turned in a more enlightened way if Wagner had espoused ideas that promoted brotherhood and integrations between peoples rather than destruction. However, this was not the case, and so the art of Wagner had gripped Hitler in such a way that it introduced him to a revolutionary hatred.

Hitler's pattern of introducing his "cronies" and later his people to the music of Wagner continued into the rise of the Third Reich. I cannot assign a large amount of blame to Wagner's anti-Semitism as being massively responsible for the bloodshed of the Holocaust, because I also examine the destruction of the Holocaust from a spiritual perspective. Many occult practices were incorporated into ceremonies held by members of the Third Reich, and within these occult practices, Wagner's music was quite often a centerpiece to lead to further inspiration. Occult practices are also to blame for the shocking turn to destruction that the German people chose at the rise of the Third Reich.

Wagner's music would often be cited as inspiration and a centerpiece at these occultist demonstrations in meetings before the instatement of the Third Reich and during the time of the Third Reich. Before Hitler came to power, individuals who would later be influential in Nazi government were involved in the *Germanenorden* lodge and would hold ceremonies dedicated to 'Aryan-Germanic religious revivals.' Race, of course, was a main topic of discussion at the meetings held by this group. According to Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, Wagner's music was a cultural centerpiece at these revivals: "The ceremony and ritual of the *Germanenorden* demonstrate its strange synthesis of racist, masonic, and Wagnerian inspiration."³⁴ During their meetings, various mystic symbols would be used along with a small chorus singing the Pilgrim's

³⁴ Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and Their Influence on Nazi ideology* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 129.

Chorus from *Tannhäuser*. Paul Roland argues that Wagner embodied the German ideal that the Third Reich strove for in his operas which was also present in the occult roots of Nazism. This is why his art was so essential to their cause: "Richard Wagner's works became compulsory listening in the Third Reich because they were based on Germanic myths which encapsulated 'true German virtues.'"³⁵

Wagner's artistic expressions were an essential part of the Third Reich while Hitler was obsessed with his art. Wagner's works, which exemplify the German ideal, only had to stamp out the enemy of the *Volk* in order to obtain the ideal image propagated by Wagner. Wagner also made the enemy perfectly clear in his writings, and yet his supposed defined enemy of the German people even still, embraced Wagner himself. Was Wagner's art so powerful that the founder of modern Zionism even found inspiration in his musical expression?

Herzl, Jews and Wagner

Another man who was influenced by Wagner but is vastly different was Theodor Herzl. How could he be another progeny of the art of Wagner? Adolf Hitler found inspiration in the music of Richard Wagner, and yet, so did Theodor Herzl - the founder of modern Zionism. The fact that Herzl was also inspired by Wagner is simply astonishing to me, and as a result, I had to spend some time examining the fact that Jews of the late 19th century and beyond still held admiration for Richard Wagner, despite his public opinion against Jews and Jewish art. Jews still admiring Wagner despite his anti-Semitism is a notion I can understand, but the founder of

³⁵ Paul Roland, *Nazis and the Occult: The Dark Forces Unleashed by the Third Reich* (Edison: Chartwell Books, 2009), 33.

modern Zionism admiring Wagner is particularly intriguing to me. How would Herzl feel about Wagner concerts being banned in Israel?

In my research, I find it necessary to argue that Herzl would be disappointed to know that Wagner is not welcomed in the homeland he argued for, because he loved Wagner's music immensely. In fact, many Jews that were alive in the 19th century would join Herzl in being disappointed to not hear the music of Wagner in Israel. To me, this appears to be counterintuitive, since Wagner was not quiet about his anti-Semitism, but I believe there must have been something so compelling about his art that it made those who Wagner hated even appreciate his music.

Concerning Theodor Herzl, it is widely established that Herzl was not only an admirer but a great fan of Wagner's work, and found it to even be inspirational for Zionism. Sydney mentions how young revolutionaries would be inspired by Wagner's art in his book *Hitler in Vienna*: "Wagner influenced a whole generation of Germans and Jews alike. He had been Mahler's model as a young man; Herzl's inspiration. Wagner's life had been repeated over and over by romantic youths in the late nineteenth century who rejected the middle-class ideal of safety and domestic security for artistic passion and risk."³⁶ Herzl and Mahler identified with the passion, risk and abandon, despite Wagner's anti-Semitic sentiments. They felt his art; they felt his passion, and Wagner's art was able to tangibly expose them to a higher ideal and create a thirst for revolutionary change. Notice that it was not Wagner's well-crafted arguments against the Jews and Jewish art that won their attention and made them yearn for revolution; it was Wagner's music. Scholars still struggle with the fact that Herzl was obsessed with Wagner's operas, according to James Loeffler: "What is the connection between [...] Herzl's near-perfect

³⁶ J. Sydney Jones, *Hitler in Vienna, 1907-1913* (New York: Stein and Day Publishers, 1983), 114-15.

attendance at the Wagnerian concerts during the Paris Opera season of 1895, the year in which he wrote his pamphlet? Scholars have grappled with this question ever since historian Carl Shorske first pointed out Herzl's passionate enthusiasm for *Tannhäuser* and other Wagnerian operas."³⁷

Mahler and Herzl were not the only Jews to be influenced by the music of Wagner. Many of the Viennese Jews and German Jews living during the time of the premier of Wagner's operas still fervently supported his art. According to Botstein, Wagner increased in popularity through the mid-1800's within the Jews community in addition to the German community: "Yet as Wagner's popularity grew throughout Europe (particularly in Vienna after Wagner's triumphant appearance there as a conductor in 1875), there was increasing enthusiasm for his music among Jews."³⁸ Wagner's art had been captivating and influential to these Jews to the point that they were even willing to abandon their Jewishness to become true Wagnerians. Botstein argues that this action only proved Wagner's arguments as they tried to disprove him: "It was as if Jews, by becoming ardent Wagnerians, were intent on disproving Wagner's assertion of their essential lack of artistic feeling, their incapacity to recognize and experience the aesthetic."³⁹ While Wagner was a well-established anti-Semite, a considerable amount of Jews were still patrons at his operas and great admirers of his work.

In addition to the Viennese Jews continually supporting and even reinventing their identity as a response to adoring Wagner's art, some of Wagner's closest Jewish friends offered unwavering support of the composer. Wagner himself was puzzled by their support, according to

³⁷ James Loffler, "Richard Wagner's 'Jewish Music': Antisemitism and Aesthetics in Modern Jewish Culture," *Jewish Social Studies* 15, no. 2 (2009): 23, accessed March 27, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/JSS.200915.2.2>.

³⁸ Leon Botstein, "German Jews and Wagner," in *Richard Wagner and His World*, ed. Thomas S. Grey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 157.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Rose: "Wagner several times remarked how strange it was that Jews had been among his best supporters, and he even admitted publicly that some earnest Jews had abandoned Judaism and 'even made quite serious friends with myself, for example.'"⁴⁰ I believe that a large amount of support that the Jews gave to Wagner was due to the admiration of his musical works. As mentioned before, Wagner used his art to introduce a revolution of sorts, and I argue that Jews of this time would not have offered any support of Wagner if he were simply a writer of political pamphlets. Wagner knew he needed his art to even win over the "race" he was criticizing.⁴¹

Through this journey of discovery, I have been inspired and disheartened by the artistic journey of Richard Wagner. His faulty hatred of the Jews led to a realm of destruction that was out of his control once his soul left this earth, and yet his yearning for revolution and obtaining love and togetherness among humankind could have bestowed insurmountable seeds of goodness in the minds of men who came after him. Sadly, Wagner's anti-Semitic arguments were found alongside his music, thus leading to the senseless destruction of millions of Jews during the period of the Third Reich. However, Wagner's music inspired the father of Zionism to argue for his people to reclaim and rebuild their homeland; which was needed, ironically, after the seed of Wagner's ideas nearly destroyed the Jewish people in Europe. While it is difficult to comprehend how one man's compositional career could plant the seed for such destruction, but also yield the ideas for the recreation of a nation, it is not difficult to see that art was at the cornerstone of this panacea of revolution. If it were not for Wagner, and his operas, would there have been a Hitler as history knows him to be today? Would there have been a Third Reich within the pages of our

⁴⁰ Paul Lawrence Rose, *Wagner: Race and Revolution* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), 119.

⁴¹ I am referring to "race" in Wagner's own terms; I do not consider being Jewish as a description of a racial quality. I believe to be "Jewish" this means it is a definition of cultural and religious practices of an individual or group. It is still necessary to mention this distinction today if "race" is mentioned in conjunction with Jews, as there is still a prevalent subconscious belief that Jews can be genetically identified as a race.

history books? Would Germany, Ukraine, Poland, Hungary, Latvia and countless other European nations be missing millions of Jews today? Would there, perhaps, even be an Israel? I am not afraid to say that many of these questions could be answered with "no" if Wagner were not a factor. His terrible influence is easy to see, but... If Wagner inspired countless acts of destruction, how much more human suffering can be diminished if one simply attends an opera or a music performance that inspires humankind to love and persevere, and not to hatred?

"This will be our reply to violence: to make music more intensely, more beautifully, more devotedly than ever before." -Leonard Bernstein⁴²

⁴² "Leonard Bernstein - - An Artist's Response to Violence." Last modified 2013.
http://www.leonardbernstein.com/response_to_violence.htm

Chapter 5 The Historical Significance of Jewish Music

Step into a synagogue on Saturday morning, anywhere in the world, and you will hear the hauntingly beautiful melodies of a Capella or accompanied song in Hebrew or in English, offering thanks to God, or examining the rich history and tradition that continues to define the Jewish people today. At every holiday, the history of the Jewish people is known through traditional song: for example, *Daiyenu*, sung at Passover, reminds the Jewish people of how God delivered his people from the destruction of their captors. Every aspect of Jewish tradition reminds the Jewish people of their roots and what trials their people have overcome. It is no surprise that the musical expressions that survive from Jewish musicians and composers who were persecuted during the Holocaust continue to remind the Jews of the trials they have overcome once again. Since "Jewish" music is created with a goal in mind, compositions created by Jewish composers exist to remind the Jews of the trials they have overcome and the solidarity that must remain among their people.

According to *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, music that was used for regular religious ceremonies would be categorized as "Jewish music."⁴³ To clarify: Jewish music has not been and never will be only music played or created by Jews (as Richard Wagner would try to have you believe). There are certain functions that music created for Jewish life can be called "Jewish music." *Garland Encyclopedia* explains this distinction between Jewish music and music not associated with Jewish cultural life: "Nationalism and the invention of various forms of folk music came to characterize European music in general during the 1800s, and Jewish

⁴³Timothy Rice and James Porter, Chris Goertzen and Philip V. Bohlman. "Jewish Music in Europe," *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music Volume 8: Europe*.
<http://gldn.alexanderstreet.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/View/331870>

music responded to the historical necessity of developing a music that expressed a distinctive cultural identity."⁴⁴

Jewish music would be defined as music created specifically for Jewish religious festivals, life events and confirming the identity of those adhering to the teachings of Judaism. *Garland Encyclopedia* confirms this by explaining that Jewish music is an expression of historicism, and pieces composed and performed in religious ceremonies have a connection to the remnants of music from ancient Israel, the Temple, and various states of historical flux of identity that the Jewish people endured.⁴⁵ *Garland Encyclopedia* claims that Jewish music was essential to shaping, confirming and perpetuating the identity of Jews from the 18th century to the present day:

"At every historical moment, this historicism heightens the debates about Jewish music and its role in Jewish life. In the course of European Jewish history, it resulted in constant reexamination of the relation between Jewish music as a cultural metaphor and the musical culture of the external culture, and it undergirded the need to regard the Israel of the past and present as a source for music and ideas about music."⁴⁶

Therefore, music created by devoted Jewish composers is far more important than we originally thought. This music does not exist only as an expression of pain, sorrow, joy, or triumph, but it is also an historical record meant to edify and express an important message to future generations.

⁴⁴ Timothy Rice and James Porter, Chris Goertzen and Philip V. Bohlman. "Jewish Music in Europe," *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music Volume 8: Europe*, <http://glnd.alexanderstreet.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/View/331870>.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Composers as Historians

Composers play a special role in this contribution to Jewish culture. However, I must explain that there will be special elements to examine related to composers that is different from performers that survived the Holocaust. Composers have left us a new distinctive element of understanding that must also be analyzed along with memoirs and testimonies of time spent living through the Holocaust. I believe that musical compositions produced by marginalized musicians active during the time of their persecution in the Holocaust are very unique in that music adds an impactful element upon their examination. You cannot take the words of these compositions and expect to gain a full understanding of this point in history that these composers are portraying. What separates their works from straight-forward diary works is that an essentially emotional element is added to music compositions that cannot be ignored. Just as Wagner's music revealed an additional element to his prose, the same is true for music created by Jewish composers during the Holocaust.

When one is reading a diary entry, the aural impact of the writing is not present. When you hear a musical piece, however, in conjunction with the lyrics of the songs written by the composers, you cannot separate this from the musical setting in which the lyrics exist. It brings an element of emotionality and another element that demands to be analyzed. The lyrics have recorded an element of the history that these composers endured, and the music framing the lyrics records yet another element that must be analyzed in order to be fully understood.

Jewish Music as Functioning as History

Every piece by every Jew that survives from their experience is a story unto itself. This is, in essence, truly Jewish music. Stefan Wolpe would be careful to inform us that "Jewish Music" is not confined to one certain compositional style, one mode or one key:

"As Jewish music has as many species and manners as the Jews have countries in whose cultures, languages and manners of life they are educated, we needn't expect a specific authentic type, but must look for a multiple type... These Jews are heirs and builders of all things which they are able to inherit and build upon. They are able and they do build, drawing material from their own and the cultures under whose influence they find themselves."⁴⁷

Compositions produced by Jews living in the ghettos have much more to say than the music they may have been forced to produce for the Third Reich as slave musicians, which will be explained at length at a later portion of this writing. Compositions created by Jews in the Lodz ghetto and the Terezin ghetto have authentic elements to say about the state in which these musicians live and what part of their history they wished would be preserved by creating this music.

I do not argue that composers were trying to argue specific points of the conditions they were living in for political gain or to further an agenda, like Wagner had done with his music. I believe that we should weigh these compositions with the same amount of curiosity and seriousness that one would also give to *The Diary of Anne Frank*. I fear that many of these compositions go overlooked because only a select few in society can read music, know how to

⁴⁷ Stefan Wolpe, "What is Jewish Music?," *Contemporary Music Review* 27, no. 2-3 (2008), 179-192, accessed December 13, 2014, <http://www.tandfonline.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/doi/abs/10.1080/07494460801951215>.

analyze it or discuss what is happening in a composition because they are not trained musicians.

This should not keep one from at least attempting to understand and listen to what these composers active during the Holocaust were recording. One does not need to be a painter in order to appreciate the work of Van Gogh as one need not to be a musician in order to at least hear what these composers recorded from their experiences during the Holocaust, and in some cases, this is the only record that remains of their lives.

One does not need to know how to read music in order to experience what composers from the Holocaust recorded in these compositions, and if more audiences were exposed to these compositions created by composers who created works during the Holocaust, they would be exposed to a tangible and accessible medium in which they can experience the effects of the Holocaust.

Chapter 6

Impact on Jewish Life and Music

"Among the spectacles to which the next century invites us is the decision on the fate of the European Jews... Every Jew has in the history of his fathers and grandfathers a mine of examples of the coldest composure and steadfastness in terrible situations... They themselves have never ceased to believe in their calling to the highest things, and the virtues of all who suffer have never ceased to adorn them." - Friedrich Nietzsche⁴⁸

There are many theories and explanations relating to causes of the Holocaust and testimonies of daily life for the average marginalized peoples that suffered because of the Holocaust. Many researchers and historians explain the methods of military resistance and how everyday life changed for the persecuted populations during the time of the Third Reich, but less is explained in most textbooks of those whose everyday lives were changed that came from the musical professions. Much is known about Jews as a whole people who suffered; but what is known about the Jewish musicians? What happened to the music that was so important to Jews in everyday life, what happened to the musicians who identified as being Jewish and how did the Nazi's *Final Solution* affect their livelihood and their art? I wished to examine these questions in my research to determine what music meant to the Jews, and how this affected Jews who were musicians and how they used music to endure their persecutions.

⁴⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Portable Nietzsche* (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), 88.

One aspect of the musical life of Jews and how it was affected by the policies of the *Final Solution* and the racial policies of the Third Reich is to understand the importance of culture and music in the everyday life of Jews. Other marginalized populations such as the Poles, the Gypsies and other suppressed groups also participated in the musical tradition and their music was also suppressed as a result, but for the purpose of organization and focus, this thesis will continue to only examine how the tradition of music produced by Jews was affected.

The Impact of life in the Ghetto on Jewish Music

As explained earlier, the Jews have a unique historical record expressed in their original music — especially music created during their time of persecution during the Holocaust. Gila Flam, author of *Singing for Survival*, explains in her book that Jewish culture is inseparable from the living of every-day life to the Jews, and this is why there is a distinctive historical record contained in the musical works created during the Holocaust. Flam explains the integral influence culture and music has on Jewish every-day life when they were forced into the ghettos and how it is essential to understand the role culture and music has played up to this point for the marginalized Jews: "Culture is inseparable from life. Thus, with the change of living conditions, the cultural context and content were changed as well."⁴⁹ When life was altered for the Jews by the enacting of certain laws forbidding various activities in the ghettos, culture began to change and changes in music took record of the changes that the Jews were enduring.

The impact on Jewish life was seen in the disappearance of Jewish culture, as most cultural acts and displays of religion were forbidden. When you take note of the varying

⁴⁹ Gila Flam, *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto, 1940-1945* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 17.

distinctive types of musicians that make up Jewish cultural life, you can begin to understand how the banning of religious displays would acutely affect the music being performed and produced:

"When Jewish holidays were forbidden to be observed in public, Jewish life-cycle ceremonies such as weddings became civil ceremonies and, with the passing of time, rare occasions; the main stage for musicians and traditional entertainers was either dissolved or altered. Thus, the traditional entertainer-musician who was prominent before the war - the *badkhn* (wedding entertainer), the *klezmer* (instrumental musician), the *khazn* (cantor, sacred singer, and the *meshoyer* (choirboy, cantor's assistant) - disappeared from the ghetto cultural life."⁵⁰

Because we know of the important function of music in daily life as Jew, this is why it was a particularly devastating blow to the Jewish populations relocated to the ghettos when they were forbidden to perform Jewish music. An activity that the Jews could perform that confirmed their identity when it was pivotally under attack was forbidden by their attackers, and this was as vital to harming the people as it would be to cause physical harm. By being forbidden to participate in the activity that affirmed their identity, Jews were further restricted and persecuted from this act. Jewish musicians, both those who played their own compositions, created music compositions and were performing artists themselves who transitioned from secular to Jewish music styles were acutely affected by the persecution of the Third Reich. Their lives and the record of their lives depended on a song, a symphony, a sonata or a choir.

Since music served as an expression of identity and history for the Jews, I believe it is important to understand what compositions created by the Jews persecuted during the time of the

⁵⁰ Gila Flam, *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto, 1940-1945* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 17.

Third Reich conveyed. These composers surely felt the need to express themselves simply for expressions sake, but having been raised in the ever-consuming mindfulness of "tradition" so prevalent in Jewish culture, surely these Jews would have realized that their compositions meant more than just expression. They knew these compositions would hopefully survive and teach the future generations the suffering they observed and to never forget and honor the memory of those who came before them.

Songs in Lodz

Gila Flam has recorded an exact case of a life being memorialized primarily in song in her work *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto*. Many songs were written, collected and sung during the time that the Jews were forced to live in the Lodz ghetto. Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski is remembered by the survivors for his leadership in the ghetto being called the "Eldest" of the Jews in the city of Lodz and he is also remembered in a song bearing his name. Flam notes he did not survive the war, but fond testimonies and his song specifically live on in his honor: "Though he did not survive the war, the recollections and song that lived after him testify to his importance."⁵¹ Rumkowski was responsible for organizing leadership in the ghetto, and in essence, he became the sole leader of the ghetto with the power to mobilize a workforce, maintain order and freely talked with German authorities about conditions in the ghetto and the fate of those living in the ghetto.⁵² Rumkowski was reportedly a very strict man and maintained order at whatever cost. Very sadly, however, Rumkowski did not initially realize that

⁵¹ Gila Flam, *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto, 1940-1945* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 30.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 32.

consequently Jews were being slaughtered at the hand of his leadership and strict tactics: "The situation changed, however, when in mid-1942 Rumkowski realized that Jews were being murdered. In deep pain Rumkowski asked the inhabitants to deliver twenty thousand of the sick, the elderly, and children..."⁵³ He continued to do as he was told by the Nazis in order to keep the slaughtering at a lower rate.

Despite his errors, the song bearing his memory speaks of Rumkowski in a positive light. Yankele Hershkowitz performed this song during the first year in the ghetto and it became very popular.⁵⁴ Hershkowitz was a ghetto troubadour and performed his art followed the characteristics of an Eastern European Yiddish folk singer, according to Flam.⁵⁵ Hershkowitz and the song became so popular that he even wrote a second song about Rumkowski. Perhaps the popularity of the song also made Rumkowski even more popular? Not surprisingly, the title of the song bore the name of the man it honored, who was called the "king of the ghetto:" "Rumkowski Chaim." The lyrics of the song recorded by Flam portray Rumkowski as being a sort of Moses figure to those living in the ghetto:

"Jews are seen to be blessed with life,
 Life until death,
 Life from the house of life,
 Rumkowski Chaim and his great miracle.
 He makes miracles, oy,
 So every day,

⁵³ Gila Flam, *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto, 1940-1945* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 33.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 36.

For heaven's sake, oy, oy, oy,

Everyone asks:

A second question, oy?

Chaim says: It's good this way!

Refrain:

Because [he is] our Chaim

He gives us bran,

He gives us barley,

He gives us manna.

Once upon a time Jews of the desert ate manna;

Now each woman eats her husband.

Rumkowski Chaim thought it through,

Worked hard day and night,

Made a ghetto with a diet (store),

And claims gevald that he is right!"⁵⁶

Additional verses in the song go on to talk about other honorable 'Chaims' and how they have helped the Jews. One might argue that his ignorance was not helpful in preserving the lives of the Jews in the Lodz ghetto, but once he realized the slaughtering was imminent and he had the power to keep as many in the ghetto as possible claiming they were all productive workers and essential to keep in the ghetto. However, his strategy was not successful any longer after

⁵⁶ Gila Flam, *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto, 1940-1945* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 41.

productivity was of no consideration to the Nazis, but he at least attempted to save his people:

"Rumkowski's strategy was almost successful. The Lodz ghetto was the last one to remain in existence in Poland."⁵⁷ There are conflicting reports about how Rumkowski died, but he did die in Auschwitz.⁵⁸ His fond memory lives on in his song, however, and understanding what music means to the Jews as a storytelling mechanism and an element of identity could suggest that history will look kindly upon Rumkowski's efforts since music smiled upon him.

According to Flam, there were additional musical "hits" in the ghetto that were remembered by survivor testimony and in the form of sheet music. Many "street songs" such as the song recalling the leadership of Rumkowski were sung in the streets of the Lodz ghetto by ghetto troubadours. According to Flam, another active troubadour was Yaakov Rotenberg. His songs mainly focused on themes of the living conditions of the ghetto and the condition of the human spirit in the midst of these conditions. One of his street songs was particularly inspirational: "*Men darf tsi kemfn*" (meaning "One Must Fight" in Yiddish). The refrain of the song speaks of a call to resistance as a reaction to their suffering in the ghetto:

"One must fight,
 Fight strong,
 So that the worker will not suffer need!
 One cannot be quiet,
 But has to break windows,

⁵⁷ Gila Flam, *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto, 1940-1945* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 34.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

That makes it easier to get a piece of bread."⁵⁹

Rotenberg said these songs of revolt were the most important to be sung in the ghetto: "Yaakov Rotenberg commented, 'The most important song in the ghetto was a song of revolt, 'Kemfn,' which means to fight.' Rotenberg sang the refrain twice during the interview, stating that the song was a 'call for fight and vengeance.'"⁶⁰ As mentioned previously, Rotenberg produced additional songs that could be given attention but for the sake of brevity only "*Men darf tsi kemfn*" was examined.

Flam also includes a category of domestic songs that recorded the everyday situations experienced by those living in the ghetto. Many of these songs are first person based in their lyrics and record the personal experiences of those forced to live in the ghetto. Flam records the testimony of Miriam Harel and includes her songs as a record of the domestic songs produced in Lodz. Flam also recorded interviews with various individuals who produced music for theater performances, lullabies, The Youth Organization and work songs. Not all of these categories will be discussed for the sake of organization and brevity, but these various categories are mentioned to affirm that music and song played a central role in the lives of those living in the ghetto.

"Only a Yiddish song has so much power,
Especially when a fiddle plays,
It soothes a sick heart,
In pain and in happiness,
You don't part from the song,

⁵⁹ Gila Flam, *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto, 1940-1945* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 68.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

Since its taste reminds with you, the Jew." - David Beyglman "A Yiddish Song."⁶¹

Music in Terezin

Other ghettos recorded vast musical activities in the midst of their persecution. Joza Karas undertook the task of collecting testimonies, letters and music manuscripts recording the rich musical activities of the Terezin ghetto. Karas suggests that the rich musical activities in this ghetto were a testimony to the strength of the human spirit and the determination of these individuals living in the ghetto: "These private recitals were direct predecessors of a unique phenomenon, the vivid artistic and musical life in Terezin, witness to an unbelievable strength of the human spirit."⁶²

While Flam focused more on the individual song in the Lodz ghetto, it is important to examine the active and highly organized musical activities in the Terezin ghetto. The Terezin ghetto had a very strong sense of community involvement in their singing activities from before the Terezin ghetto had central organization. The strong emphasis on communal musical activities is heavily influenced by Jewish tradition, according to Lilian Weissberg: "Jewish music, and *klezmer*⁶³ music in particular, is usually performed in and for groups. It is a kind of folk music that celebrates community rather than compositions by and for individual artists, or an audience of sheep."⁶⁴

⁶¹ Gila Flam, *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto, 1940-1945* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 180.

⁶² Joza Karas, *Music in Terezin 1941 - 1945* (New York: Beaufort Books Publishers, 1985), 7.

⁶³ As quoted before by Gila Flam, *klezmer* music is instrumental music.

⁶⁴ Liliane Weissberg, "The Sound of Music: Jews and the Study of Jewish Culture in the new Europe," *Comparative Literature* 58, no. 4: 403-417 (2006), accessed December 13, 2014.
<http://complit.dukejournals.org.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/content/58/4/403>

Many music ensemble activities were organized in the Terezin ghetto. There were enough talented singers transported to the ghetto that they were able to perform operas, and a sufficient amount of instrumentalists that small orchestras were able to perform. These activities were organized through grassroots efforts and purely because of the interest of the musicians and singers.⁶⁵

A widely known community music activity event that occurred in the Terezin ghetto (which also served as a concentration camp) was the *Terezin Requiem*. There were various performances of the *Terezin Requiem*, which was Verdi's requiem conducted and organized by Rafael Schächter. One of the most poignant and defying performances took place when Adolf Eichmann visited Terezin with the Committee of the International Red Cross in 1944. Verdi's *Requiem* was forced to be organized and performed by Schächter, his musicians and his choir for Eichmann's visit. Many in the Terezin camp thought this was insane, according to Karas:

"Was it a defeatist attitude to present in front of the visitors a chant for the dead - his own condemned confreres - for the enjoyment of their oppressors? Hardly! Instead, it was Schächter's last demonstration of defiance. Under his baton, the condemned sang the *Requiem* for their condemners and their damned Third Reich!"⁶⁶

Josef Bor recorded a melodramatized (according to Karas) record of the events of the defiant *Terezin Requiem*, but the dramatization captures the silent dialogue that must have been held in the hearts of those who were performing for their oppressors: "Do you hear, you there in the dark? You have marked us as the seed of Abraham, and now we, prisoners in a Jewish camp,

⁶⁵ Joza Karas, *Music In Terezin 1941 - 1945* (New York: Beaufort Books Publishers, 1985), 15.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 141.

exult before you. You have not broken us, you will not break us!"⁶⁷ Later, according to Bor, the camp commandant had promised Schächter and the choir they would not be separated after the performance. They were kept together - and together they stayed on their transport from Terezin: "The summer drew to its close, and the time of the transports began again. The commandant had promised that Schächter's company would not be separated. The promise was kept. All together they ascended into the first wagons of the first transport."⁶⁸

Even if a Jew was not a composer during the time of the Holocaust, this did not mean they were exempt from the effects of the racial policies of the Third Reich. Identifying as Jewish did not only affect musicians who created music during this time, since those who adhered to the ideology of Nazism had a fixation on culture and blood also had an impact on Jewish musicians who worked outside of their own communities. This began to threaten the musicians and yet also in some cases, make their lives easier in a number of ways. However, let me offer some perspective of the unusual struggles that musicians face without the threat of genocide: Many musicians suffer from stage-fright. They feel terrible flights of panic, fear and anxiety from the impending worry of presenting their music for the world to hear. There are rarely any level-headed ways to talk most musicians out of this crippling fear that keeps them from performing at their best level. The only erasure of this anxiety is experience and the unpleasant experience of enduring less than spectacular performances and the temporary ridicule that stems from these subpar performances. Being a musician myself, I have gone down the pathway of irrational fear and panic of performance, and I've often found my fear to be inconsolable. I would often try to tell myself that my life does not depend on this performance; I can play a wrong note and walk

⁶⁷ Josef Bor, "The Terezin Requiem" in *Anthology of Holocaust Literature* ed. Jacob Glatstein, Israel Knox, Samuel Margoshes (Forge Village: Atheneum, 1968), 247.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 249.

away from the experience unharmed. Many musicians try to speak to themselves rationally like I tried to. It never seems to be effective in alleviating the fear, however. I cannot think of any situation where my life legitimately depended on the efficiency of my performance and my musical ability. This was not the case with musicians living during the time of the Third Reich who were part of the persecuted minority groups, however. Stage-fright had no place in the life of a musician who would have the unfortunate fate of being part of the minority groups persecuted by the Nazis.

In many cases, these persecuted groups were forced to still create music for their persecutors but this also kept these musicians alive and even improved their living conditions because of the value the Nazi ideology placed on music. These musicians could legitimately experience stage-fright and their panic ridden reactions would not simply be a cruel trick of the mind; the fear was a legitimate threat to their lives, as their lives depended on their skill as a musician. Despite this lingering threat to their existence while possessing these skills, being a musician was a valuable skill for an individual persecuted by Nazi ideology, because it meant your skills were of some value to the Third Reich - therefore, they were not as quick to exterminate persecuted group members who were musicians. Additionally, musical life still flourished despite the harrowing conditions that musicians belonging to the persecuted groups were forced to endure. For this reason, I was very interested in examining this topic because I find the lives of these musicians that endured the horrors of the Holocaust to be inspiring. Being a musician in contemporary times is difficult enough without the added stress of genocide, starvation, war and disease. Musicians active during the Holocaust had to face all of challenges and despite these odds, they continued to perform and compose - some continued producing new music and performing to the point of their last living moments.

Instrumentalists and their Insistence to Live and Create: Fania's Story

I discovered the perseverance of Jewish musicians by reading the wartime memoirs of musicians' part of these persecuted minority groups in the time of the Third Reich. Fania Fénelon recalled her experience of living through the horrors of the Holocaust and having improved living conditions because of her status as a pianist and a singer. She recorded her experiences in her memoir appropriately titled *Playing for Time*. Fénelon was a prisoner in Auschwitz during the time of the Third Reich and was "drafted" to be part of the orchestra that was being formed in the death camp at the time of her internment during January of 1944.⁶⁹ She was drafted with a handful of other women to be part of the orchestra. Before she was sent to Auschwitz, Fénelon was a Parisian cabaret singer who was also a member of the French resistance. She also came from Jewish heritage, which she recalled had sealed her fate entirely once she had been discovered as a resistance worker.⁷⁰

The other prisoners that Fénelon was being "drafted" to the orchestra with were not completely sure of what was happening to them or why the camp even wanted an orchestra when they were taken to Birkenau to be auditioned for the orchestra. Fénelon was given some extra luxuries of a damp cloth to clean her and a bit of bread simply for being one of the auditioned individuals, but her paradise was short-lived by the realization that her fate hung in the balance with the results of this audition. She was forced to sing for her captors and her life depended on her ability to sing - whilst accompanying herself on the piano:

⁶⁹ Fania Fénelon, *Playing for Time* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 10.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

"A lump of gratitude formed in my throat; I who didn't believe in anything felt an obscure desire to thank God. Then the dream lurched into reality: I was there to prove myself. In a few moments I could be rejected, sent back to where I came from."⁷¹

They looked upon her audition favorably, however, and Fénelon was given many unexpected luxuries (relatively speaking) after her admittance into the orchestra. She and the other singer that she had recommended to also join the orchestra, Clara, were given woolen dresses, warm coats, even underpants and a slip and shoes that were their specified size.⁷² Most other women who were prisoners in the concentration camps and the death camps were rarely given clothes that fit them or even shoes, let alone undergarments and shoes that were their own size. They were given beds of their own and small trinkets that the girls in the orchestra wanted could be purchased and organized in their mattresses, and they had kitchen areas and dinnertime amenities.⁷³ This is clearly a heaven on Earth compared to the horrors outside of the dormitories these musicians were now sheltered from, due to their talent. Outside of their protected dormitories, women were forced to bunk together in bunk "beds" that hardly resembled beds at all. These beds were constructed of wooden planks strung together to create a flat surface on which for prisoners to sleep. Lagerfuhrein Mandel, the chief of the camp, seemed to understand how vital it was for classically trained singers to be well rested, well fed and overall in the best physical shape possible in order to create high quality music, as she stated to the orchestra members and Polish servants serving the girls: "My little Butterfly will have warm feet. It's vital for the throat."⁷⁴

⁷¹ Fania Fénelon, *Playing for Time* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 27.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 31-32.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

The members of the orchestra may have been well-cared for, but they were not particularly enlightened on what the role their music making would be in the camp. Fénelon continued to gain respect in the camp and with the "kapo" named Alma who would be overseeing the orchestra.⁷⁵ This did not come without a price, of course. The women of the orchestra were subjected to hours of rigorous practicing in their designated practice room. Additionally, not long after their initial rehearsals, they discovered one of the purposes for the formation of their orchestra. The women of the orchestra were to perform for women entering the gates to the extermination camp of Birkenau:

"Here, in the icy air of this winter morning, in this geometrical landscape of squat, stumpy sheds with barbed wire above them, the watchtowers, without a single tree on the horizon, I became aware of the extermination camp of Birkenau, and of the farcical nature of this orchestra conducted by this elegant women, these comfortably dressed girls sitting on chairs playing to these virtual skeletons, shadows showing us faces which were faces no longer."⁷⁶

This instance of realization shows the irony that the position of these women as musicians was sustaining to them, but the women being ushered into the camp to the sounds of the orchestra had no certain hope or opportunity to sustain themselves with a talent. A slow and certain death was awaiting them, and perhaps it was for the women in the orchestra, too - but in the mean time they were well dressed, decently fed and their occupations demanded that they be given a semblance of comfort in order to produce the best music possible. Being a serious musician requires that one must be in the best shape physically - the SS must have been aware of

⁷⁵Fania Fénelon, *Playing for Time* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 40.

⁷⁶Ibid., 47.

this fact to give the orchestra members such unheard of amenities, but the other women not part of the orchestra were to be subjected to deplorable living conditions.

Conditions were far from perfect for these musicians, but they were better than what other Jews were enduring. Being in the position of being part of the orchestra carried its own set of risks, however. For example, the *kapo* Alma was rumored to have been poisoned by Frau Drexler - so the position she was placed in by coordinating the orchestra possibly placed her in danger.⁷⁷ Still, however, even during the evacuations from the death camps, the women part of the orchestra were still better equipped for the journey and given special privileges such as being at the front of the group being led away from the camp when they were evacuated by cattle car: "As always, all honour to music: we were at the head. Well-shod, well-dressed, we found walking less painful than the rest. But the others, those who followed, were they picked up when they fell?"⁷⁸

Fania Fénelon was eventually rescued by the Allied Forces after being led among the prisoner transports on April 15th, 1945. The prisoners were to be killed at 3 pm but they were liberated at 11 am by the British.⁷⁹ Fénelon was led through Bergen-Belsen, she was mere feet away from Anne Frank and she even survived contracting Typhus. When she was liberated, she sang *God Save the King* for the BBC:

"I sang, and in front of me, around me, from all corners of the camp, creeping along the sides of the shacks, stirred, rose up, grew dying shadows and skeletons taller. A great

⁷⁷ Fania Fénelon, *Playing for Time* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 208

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 236.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 255.

'Hurrah' burst forth and swept along like a breaker, carrying all before it. They had become men and women once again."⁸⁰

A Pianist Overcomes the Odds: Wladyslaw's Story

Another famous musician who is more well-known thanks to Roman Polanski's film *The Pianist* is Wladyslaw Szpilman. Roman Polanski's film was based on the autobiography of pianist Wladyslaw Szpilman also titled *The Pianist*. Szpilman managed to survive the war while hiding in Warsaw with the help of Polish friends active in resistance forces. He was not quite as lucky as Fénelon in enduring less hardship than others, however, but his relative fame was beneficial in gaining assistance from others to be hidden from occupying Nazi forces and sent to his certain death in labor camps.

The last that would be heard of Szpilman before the Polish Radio went off the air was when he played *Nocturne in C-Sharp Minor* by Frederic Chopin live, before a bomb struck the station later that day. Instead of having the same experience as Fénelon, however, Szpilman was not sent to a work camp or a death camp. He was to experience life in the Warsaw ghetto, which was terrible in its own way from the work camps, according to Szpilman. He describes his experiences in the Warsaw ghetto as being so terrible he can barely extrapolate the experiences from one another in his mind: "Today, as I look back on other, more terrible memories, my experiences of the Warsaw ghetto from November 1940 to July 1942, a period of almost two years, merge into a single image as if they had lasted only a single day."⁸¹ Another difference between Fénelon and Szpilman is that his status as a musician did not shield him from any

⁸⁰ Wladyslaw Szpilman, *The Pianist* (New York: Picador, 1999), 9.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 61.

horrible experiences more than anyone else. Szpilman desperately tried to use his connections and sell whatever he could to provide protection and food for his family members and desperately trying to obtain employment certificates to protect his family: "None of my acquaintances, even those with the very best connections, would entertain the idea of providing certificates for my whole family."⁸²

Additionally, his status as a musician did not shield him from the struggle of protecting those he loved:

"I was shattered by helplessness, and by having to watch as my richer friends easily secured their families' safety. Unkempt, unshaven, without a morsel of food inside me, I trudged around from morning to night, from one firm to another, begging people to take pity on us. After six days of this, and pulling all the strings I could, I somehow managed to scrape the certificates together."⁸³

Eventually, however, the safety of the Szpilman family was not secured eternally and they thought they had finally reached the end of their suffering together, but for an unknown reason, Szpilman was saved from his fate of being deported from the Warsaw ghetto for extermination by a policeman. The text does not indicate why he was taken out of the selection, but I believe it can be assumed that Szpilman's amount of relative fame had saved him because the policeman must have recognized him as being one of Warsaw's premier pianists. However, for whatever reason, Szpilman did not experience the same fate as his family members and other members of the ghetto when the selections were performed to deport Jews from the Warsaw

⁸² Wladyslaw Szpilman, *The Pianist* (New York: Picador, 1999), 91.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 92.

ghetto. Szpilman did not view this as a fortunate occurrence: "Who dared do such a thing? I didn't want to be parted from my family. I wanted to stay with them!"⁸⁴

After this event, Szpilman had to rely upon his friends and connections in leadership in the Warsaw ghetto to find work so that he would not be selected for extermination. His skills as a pianist were useless at this point; as Szpilman was forced to partake in manual labor to confirm the work status papers he had been issued. The men he labored with often criticized Szpilman because it was obvious he had not done heavy labor previously in his life: "'How do you mean, you used to play music on the radio, Szpilman?' he marveled. 'A musician like you - can't handle a shovel and scrape lime off a board - you must have sent them all to sleep!'"⁸⁵ His friends had his best interest at heart trying to give him these labor jobs, however, and Szpilman tried to make the best of the situation.

Eventually Szpilman was forced to go into hiding and skillfully dodged every threat to his life, between being discovered by his neighbors, investigations by the SS and certain destruction by the Germans of the flat he was hiding in. His resourcefulness, fortitude and intellect served to preserve his life successfully through his ordeals, but his talent as a musician was to unexpectedly also save his life.

While Szpilman was hiding in Warsaw, he came face to face with a German officer - the last person he would want to encounter in his position. The German officer began a conversation with Szpilman, rather than killing him on the spot and he asked Szpilman to play for him. After he played Chopin's *Nocturne in C Sharp Minor* for the German officer, Szpilman explained that he could not leave the place in which he was hiding because he was Jew. The German officer

⁸⁴ Wladyslaw Szpilman, *The Pianist* (New York: Picador, 1999), 105.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 119.

still did not harm Szpilman in any way, and he then helped Szpilman over the last couple months of the war by bringing food to him. Szpilman later learned of the whereabouts of his unexpected helper through a violinist friend who had seen the German officer in a POW camp. The officer's name was Wilm Hosenfeld, and he hoped the violinist would help Szpilman to find him and help him to be released from the camp. Szpilman never found the camp and never knew what happened to Hosenfeld, however.⁸⁶

Hosenfeld obviously did not believe in the Nazi ideology, but I find it curious that he had asked Szpilman to play for him when he did learn of his occupation. He could have easily just learned of his occupation and never asked for a note of music to be played, but perhaps hearing Szpilman play encouraged Hosenfeld to help him rather than if Szpilman had said he was a writer, or a farmer. Perhaps something about the music had moved him to help keep Szpilman alive? This is only my inference, but I believe it could be plausible.

Performers played a vital role in the historical record of the holocaust in how their careers functioned as a preservation mechanism and a tool for survival in some cases. Along with their talents and abilities being favored by the Nazis, their talent often inspired their fellow man to aid in their preservation simply because they could not bear to see such a talented individual suffer and their art be lost to the world. This can certainly be seen in these accounts recorded by Wladyslaw Szpilman and Fania Fénelon.

In my research, I examined only the beginning of many experiences recorded by musicians who had to experience the horrors of the Holocaust and how this affected their life and their art. Composers were essential in recording the experiences and continuing the tradition of historicism contained in the tradition of Jewish music. Because of the composers, these

⁸⁶ Wladyslaw Szpilman, *The Pianist* (New York: Picador, 1999), 189.

experiences are not likely to be forgotten as they are remembered in lyric and in song. The performers continued defiantly and bravely through their persecution and because of their perseverance, they left a record of history and an example to emulate when we are faced with hardship. People often ask me: "Why are you a musician?" What they are actually asking me is: "Why aren't you doing something more important?" I smile, and shrug my shoulders - because how can I explain all that I have found in my research: of the defiant catholic requiem that Jews sang in Terezin to display their judgment of the wrongdoings of their oppressors? Of the protection the lifestyle of a musician provided to those suffering persecution from the Nazi's? How the Jews create their identity and remember who they are based on the songs they sing?

Whether you were a musician who provided new music to remember the experiences of those living in the ghetto, a musician who happened to be a Jew or you were even an oppressor yourself, the artistic expression of these musicians stands as a testament to the need of the human to express themselves and to create - in whatever circumstances they may find themselves in, even if they are on the threshold of death.

"Singing had an important role in Jewish life. The Jewish people came to such a deep state of despair that only singing could help. When one sings, even when he sings a sad song, his loneliness disappears, he listens to his own voice. He and his own voice become two people. Singing is a manifestation of hope. People before their deaths do not mourn, they sing. The song is a cry, and afterwards you feel free." - Miriam Harel⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Gila Flam, *Singing for Survival: Songs of the Lodz Ghetto, 1940-1945* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 107.

Chapter 7

Songs from the Dachau Camp: Examining the Works of Leon Kaczmarek

While I was in the midst of discovering these brave stories of musicians and composers who overcame their oppressors by creating music and song, I was inspired to discover stories and compositions that were not as well-known and present these songs to the world. My search led me to the unpublished works of Leon Kaczmarek, a musician who kept notebooks of music while he was a prisoner at the Dachau concentration camp. The notebook collection was kept by Aleksander Kulisiewicz, who had also been a prisoner in a different camp, and he later donated the camp notebook selections to the United States Holocaust Museum.

Kaczmarek's collection is very interesting due to the meticulous nature in which the music was kept. The amount of music recorded includes "*Aus bekannten lieder*," which includes a record of "known music." It appears that Kaczmarek knew arias and songs from memory and transcribed them into the notebooks for performance purposes. Original compositions appear to be confined to setting poetry to music, and transcribing piano works from mazurkas, waltzes and sonatas.

The works that Kaczmarek did not write himself are astounding for the amount of music he was able to remember and transcribe. Among the archives, I found the works of Wagner, varieties of German lieder that were Nietzsche's prose work put to music, and various popular German tunes transcribed to music. Kaczmarek has over 70 voice pieces set to music in his camp notebooks, so it would be impossible to examine every piece in detail in this thesis.

One of the original compositions I noted by Kaczmarek, according to his signature on the archive, is a German Lied titled "Die Quelle," which means "The Source" in German. The piano accompaniment is set in f minor, which gives it a bittersweet quality as the lyrics describe various scenes in nature. Kaczmarek uses long, rich phrases set for a lower voice type describing beautiful scenes in nature. The reason I believe that this is set in a minor key is because the beauty in nature that was outside of Dachau had to be heartbreaking to reminisce of while in the midst of the destruction in the camp. His song describes the wish for rest that even nature in its peaceful glory exhibits when it becomes weary, but the break of twilight and the rising of the sun brings hope to the weariness and suffering of every creature.

117.

Die Quelle .
Leo Kaczmarek

mf Andante pesante

Andante pesante
mf
legato

1. Die Son - ne glüht die
2. Es wir - ken süße - re

Son - ne brennt auf he - ßen Ber - ges - sp - i - zel. Er - mot - tel wä - ch - sel der
Wä - ßer - hahn, die Nacht ver - küßt die - - bea. Die Frau - ren wird auch

So - - gel ein, im sü - ßen Bü - che - ren - sp - i - zel. Wie lech - zen dort die
mir im Sa - gen, kein Wä - ßer will mich um - ge - - bea. Son - stes, die Däm - mung

Figure 1 "Die Quelle" by Leo Kaczmarek
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Record Group 55.002M*01.

The accompaniment confirms the sentiment of a rebirth, and longing towards hope as the key changes to E flat major, and ends on an E flat major chord, indicating a resting place and a complete end not indicating any want or longing towards the tonic note, symbolizing needs are met when the heart gives thanks for the refreshment that eventually comes to suffering - which is what the prisoners of the camp were surely longing for every day.

I personally was inspired to see the amount of careful work that Kaczmarek invested in his musical work while being a prisoner in the Dachau camp. There are many trivial things that keep individuals from pursuing their goals in life, and I believe Kaczmarek had every reason to not continue composing and being involved in music considering the circumstances he was forced to endure. However, he continued to create music and left us with an astounding and beautiful record of art in the midst of destruction that should be shared with the world.

Chapter 8

Music as an Advocate

Throughout this examination of problems, solutions and inquiries about the nature of anti-Semitism in the world today and in years gone by, we have at least determined that music can play a vital role in ensuring that the world does not experience another Holocaust. It may seem like an unlikely source of resistance, but as I close the page on this chapter of my research, I find that music is as essential as ever to combat anti-Semitism that is returning to the world today.

Using music as an ambassador for the Jewish people can bring peace and lessen violence, and can give opportunities to those who would otherwise be drawn to terrorism, according to Edward Said and Daniel Barenboim in their orchestral projects in the Middle East. Exposing those who may be drawn to anti-Semitism to the culture of the Jewish people can open their eyes to latent unknown anti-Semitism and train them to be advocates for those being marginalized.

As a parting word, I wish to say: Let the people hear the stories of how Wagner influenced a nation with his operas and writings. Let the people hear the melodies of musicians who were impacted by the Holocaust, and let the melodies of their lives impact the hearts and minds of the people instead of letting the masses turn to hatred. Let us teach the world to create, and not destroy that which they do not understand. Let us teach the people to listen, and hear what hope can be given to them if they choose compassion.

Now I understand through my research what amazing impact music can have on a generation. I am saddened to know how much destruction the ideas and music of a composer helped to inspire, but I am hopeful knowing that if music can inspire such a strong reaction from a previously broken people, I believe that it can inspire an entire world to goodness if left in the

right hands. It is up to us now to make sure the world hears the stories of those who overcame their oppressors and survived unspeakable horrors to give us music that may teach us to persevere in the midst of evil and value acceptance over hatred. Let us change the story that tainted music wrote before us, and change the course of history by choosing use music to inspire us to acceptance rather than hatred. History has already taught us that hatred only leads us to destruction that we cannot afford to experience again, therefore we have no other choice but to choose acceptance.

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ACADEMIC VITA

Annette Nagle
207 Walnut Ave, Altoona, PA, 16601
annettemargaret.n@gmail.com

Academic Summary and Intent of Undergraduate Studies

I had chosen to pursue the Letters, Arts and Sciences degree to allow me to explore and study the Arts and the Humanities and their interrelations. Through research and comparison of selected fields within the arts and humanities, I will be able to combine creative and critical skills in studying music, art, English, history and philosophy. These fields of study are essential to the development, sustainment and analysis of how humans express themselves. An interdisciplinary approach to examining the interaction of these fields provided an understanding of how artistic expressions and forms influence and shape Western culture.

My specific goal in studying my chosen theme of Comparative Arts and Humanities is to examine the evolution of Western culture from the 18th century to the present day. Culture has transformed in the West within the last 300 years in comparison to preceding centuries following the predomination of Christendom; racial and cultural divides are being destroyed while also being fortified, leading to cultural tensions in modern and contemporary society in a period of increased globalization. This transformation has also brought with it an array of tensions in Western society, as the integration of new cultural practices to the West conflicts with pre-existing constructs provided by Judeo-Christian influence. I intended on discovering what factors have contributed to the structure of Western society as we experience its transformations today. Analyzing the evolution of Western thought and Western art within the last century can provide a richer understanding of modern to contemporary issues Western society is facing, such as gender equality, civil rights, racism, religious conflict and even poverty.

By studying history in conjunction with philosophy, I was able to understand the environment and intellectual climate in which Western culture has evolved and changed over the course of time and what most important events evidenced these changes.

Excellence was demanded of me in every aspect of my education and nothing less than excellence was accepted, as this is the tradition of understanding the Arts and the Humanities.

Educational Information

Pennsylvania State University Attendance Information

- Fall 2011 - 2012: Penn State Altoona, attended as a 2 year associates degree candidate for Letters, Arts and Sciences student.
- Fall 2012 - 2013: Penn State School of Music, University Park, attended as a Bachelor of Arts in music candidate, primary instrument piano, studied with Dr. Tim Shafer.
- Fall 2013 - Present: Returned to Penn State Altoona and was accepted as a Letters, Arts and Sciences undergraduate student. Accepted as a Schreyer Honors College student Fall 2013. Continued studying music with Dr. Bonnie Cutsforth-Huber.

Educational Achievement Information

- Dean's List candidate for each semester of study at Penn State.
- Studied Hebrew for 2 semesters with Ruth Edelstein.
- Additionally achieved 3rd semester credit proficiency in German per Letters, Arts and Sciences degree requirements.
- Penn State Altoona Majors Scholarship recipient.
- Bobbie Ann and David G. Miller Trustee Scholarship at Penn State Altoona recipient.
- Member of Alpha Lambda Delta, National Honors Society for First Year Students.
- Member of Sigma Tau Delta, National English Honors Society.
- Member of Penn State Altoona Honors Program.
- Won first place as accompanist on piano with soprano Shana Soriano Lambert performing "Die Nacht" by Johann Strauss at Penn State Altoona's 2014 *Undergraduate Creative Activities and Research Fair*.
- Liszka Award recipient for the 2014-2015 academic year, recognizing the Fall 2014 vocal jury, which reviewed jury performances of "Una Voce Poco Fa" by

Rossini, "Wenn Mein Schatz Hochzeit Macht" and "Die Zwei Blauen Augen" by Mahler and "Voi Che Sapete" by Mozart.

- Kenneth M. Kuhn Memorial Award for Music recipient for the 2014-2015 academic year, recognizing being enrolled in music classes and demonstrating outstanding academic achievement while at Penn State Altoona.

Musical Involvement during Undergraduate Education

- Performed W. A. Mozart's *Requiem* in Carnegie Hall in New York City in April 2012 as a soprano with Penn State Altoona's *Ivyside Pride* under the direction of Dr. Bonnie Cutsforth-Huber with *Manhattan Concert Productions*, directed by Maestro Paul Oakley.
- Performed Maurice Duruflé's *Requiem* in Lincoln Center in New York City in March 2014 as an alto with Penn State Altoona's *Ivyside Pride* under the direction of Dr. Bonnie Cutsforth-Huber with *Manhattan Concert Productions*, directed by Dr. Bruce Chamberlain.
- Performed Andrew G. Miller's *The Birth of Christ* in St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, Austria as an alto with *Ivyside Pride* featuring *The World Unity Orchestra* in December 2013.
- Performed as an accompanist for soubrette soprano Shana Soriano's senior recital program *Traveling Through Music* in May 2014. Selections included works by Johann Strauss, W. A. Mozart, Puccini, Bernstein and other composers.
- Served as an accompanist on piano for undergraduate singers and a singing participant in the National Association of Teachers Singing competition in November, 2014. I accompanied 12 pieces for 4 singers in various styles from German Lieder, Broadway show tunes and opera arias.
- Currently the 1st Pianist for *Carmina Burana* to be performed by Penn State Altoona's *Ivyside Pride* directed by Dr. Bonnie Cutsforth-Huber with *Ivyside Dance Ensemble* in April 2015.
- Independently studied music theory with Dr. Tim Melbinger from spring 2014 to present.

Classical Piano Undergraduate Education

- Studied classical piano with Dr. Tim Shafer of Penn State's School of Music while a student at Penn State's School of Music from September 2012 to April 2013.
 - Completed piano repertoire with Dr. Tim Shafer at University Park:

J. S. Bach: "Sinfonia No. 10 in G Major"

Frederic Chopin: "Nocturne No. 15 Op. 55 No. 1 F Minor"

Claude Debussy: "Arabesque No.1 in E Major"

Franz Josef Haydn: "Piano Sonata No. 50 in D Major Hob XVI/37" 2nd and 3rd Movements

Franz Liszt: "Consolation No. 3 in D Flat Major"

- Studied classical piano with Dr. Steven Smith of State College, Pennsylvania and former piano faculty of the School of Music at Penn State from July 2015 - present.

- Current and completed piano repertoire studied independently from University affiliation with Dr. Steven Smith:

Ludwig van Beethoven: "Piano Sonata No. 10 in G Major, Op. 14, No. 2: I. Allegro"

Johannes Brahms: from *Four Piano Pieces Op. 119*, "No. 2 Intermezzo in E Minor"

W. A. Mozart: "Piano Sonata No. 3 in B Flat Major, K. 281" 1st Movement

Sergei Prokofiev: from *Fugitive Visions, Op. 22*: "X. Ridicolosamente," "VII. Comodo"

Classical Voice Undergraduate Education

- Studied classical voice and opera with Dr. Bonnie Cutsforth-Huber from Spring 2014 - present.

- Completed and current voice repertoire as a lyric mezzo-soprano with Dr. Bonnie Cutsforth-Huber at Penn State Altoona:

Samuel Barber: "Must the winter come so soon?" from *Vanessa*

Johannes Brahms: "Wie Melodien"

Martha Hill Duncan: "The Star" from *Singing In the Northland Vol. 1*

Gabriel Faure: "Ici-bas"

Charles Gounod: "Que fais-tu, blanche tourterelle" from *Romeo et Juliet*,

"Faites-lui mes aveux" from *Faust*

W. A. Mozart: "Se a maritarmi arrivo" from *La Finta Semplice*, "Voi Che Sapete" from *Le Nozze di Figaro*

Gustav Mahler: from *Lieder Eines Fahrenden Gesellen*:

"Wenn Mein Schatz Hochzeit Macht," "Ging heut morgen über's feld,"
"Ich hab' ein glühend messer," and "Die zwei blauen augen von meinem Schatz."

Gioachino Rossini: "Una voce poco fa" from *The Barber of Seville*, "Non piu mesta" from *La Cenerentola*

Arnold Schönberg: "Sommermüd" from *Three Songs for Low Voice, Op. 48*

- Coached opera repertoire with Dr. Arlene Shrut, faculty of Juilliard in the division of Coaching and Vocal Arts.

Additional Education and Professional Notes

- Accompanist for Calvary United Methodist Church in Bellwood, Pennsylvania from September 2009 to present, performing hymns and contemporary music with piano and vocal lead for the congregation.
- Member of the committee for the African American Read-In at Penn State Altoona, February 2014 centered on the theme "Lift Every Voice," focusing on music and the African American literary experience. I presented the influence and presence of music in "Going to Meet The Man" and the African American musical experience with Anne Maucieri. The presentation also included a performance of "Lonely House" by Kurt Weill (Poetry by Langston Hughes) and the African American spiritual "Wade in the Water," which I coached and arranged the performances, and accompanied on keyboard.