STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES, PHILOSOPHY
AND HISTORY OF IDEAS 9

Wojciech Klimczyk / Agata Świerzowska (eds.)

Music and Genocide

PETER LANG
EDITION

STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES, PHILOSOPHY
AND HISTORY OF IDEAS 9

Wojciech Klimczyk / Agata Świerzowska (eds.)

Music and Genocide

At first glance, no two experiences could be further apart than genocide and music. Yet real, live culture usually goes beyond rational divisions. It is now fairly commonly known that art is not absent from the sites of mass killings. Both victims and prosecutors engage in artistic activities in prisons and camps, as well as at other places where genocides take place. What is the music of genocide? Can the experience of ultimate terror be expressed in music? How does music reflect on genocide? How do we perceive music after genocide? What is music and what is silence in a world marked by mass killings? Is post-genocidal silence really possible or appropriate? The goal of the volume is to reveal and, maybe even to some extent, resolve the most profound dilemma that was expressed by Theodor W. Adorno when he asked "whether it is even permissible for someone who accidentally escaped and by all rights ought to have been murdered, to go on living after Auschwitz." It is not for the sake of pure curiosity that the relation between music and genocide is examined. In a sense we are all survivors who accidentally escaped genocide. It might have happened to us. It may still happen.

The Editors
Wojciech Klimczyk (PhD) and Agata Świerzowska (PhD) are university lecturers at the Centre for Comparative Studies of Civilisations (CCSC) at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow (Poland). Since its foundation in 1996, the Centre for Comparative Studies of Civilizations (CCSC) has forged a distinct identity and earned a solid reputation as an interdisciplinary research and academic department unparalleled in Central Europe.

www.peterlang.com

Music and Genocide

STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES, PHILOSOPHY AND HISTORY OF IDEAS

Edited by Andrzej Rychard

VOLUME 9

PETER LANG
EDITION

Wojciech Klimczyk / Agata Świerzowska (eds.)

Music and Genocide

PETER LANG
EDITION

Bibliographic Information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available in the internet at http://dnb.d-nb.de.

This publication was financially supported by the Centre for Comparative Studies of Civilisations of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Music and genocide / Klimczyk Wojciech, Agata Świerzowska (eds.).
pages cm. – (Studies in social sciences, philosophy and history of ideas ; 9)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-3-631-66003-4 (alk. paper)
1. Music and genocide. 2. Genocide–History. I. Wojciech, Klimczyk, 1980- II. Świerzowska, Agata.
ML3916.M858 2015
781.5'9–dc23

2014039332

ISSN 2196-0151
ISBN 978-3-631-66003-4 (Print)
E-ISBN 978-3-653-05185-8 (E-Book)
DOI 10.3726/ 978-3-653-05185-8

This publication has been peer reviewed.

www.peterlang.com

Table of Contents

Wojciech Klimczyk

Foreword

Henri Bergson, a philosopher and – like Schopenhauer or Nietzsche – very sensitive to music, wrote in his last book:

> We feel, while we listen, as though we could not desire anything else but what the music suggests to us, and that that is just as we should naturally and necessarily act did we not refrain from action to listen. Let the music express joy or grief, pity or love, every moment we are what it expresses. Not only ourselves, but many others, nay, all the others, too. When music weeps, all humanity, all nature, weeps with it. In point of fact it does not introduce these feelings into us; it introduces us into them, as passers-by are forced into a street dance.[1]

Bergson believed in the power of music. He believed that music could enchant the listener to the degree that he is changed: more susceptible to emotions which, in turn, can transform him into a better person. One can see his perspective as idealistic and biased. After all, Bergson grew up in a musical home so he was from the very beginning of his life conditioned to such beliefs. Yet, the same has been experienced by countless people before and after him, not necessarily brought up to love music the way he was.

It is hard to argue that the belief in the special powers of music is one of the most widespread among people, especially in Western cultures. There is neither space nor need here to provide different explanations for this phenomenon – from physical and physiological to the spiritual. They all point in one direction – music is a human phenomenon capable of transgressing our mundane reality. It induces a specific state of mind, a state of heightened awareness. This is why Schopenhauer found in music a reflection of will in itself.[2] Music, just like all other art forms, is of an imitative quality.

> Nonetheless the point of comparison between the music and the world, the respect in which the former acts as an imitation or repetition of the latter, is very deeply hidden. In every age, people have played music without being able to give an account of it: content

1 H. Bergson, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion,* trans. A. Audra and C. Brereton, London 1935, p. 28. This edition is available at: http://archive.org/details/twosourcesofmora033499mbp (accessed: March 2014).

2 A. Schopenhauer, *The World As Will and Representation,* vol. 1, no. 52, trans. J. Norman, A. Welchman and Ch. Janaway, Cambridge–New York 2010, p. 282-295.

with an immediate understanding of music, people did without an abstract conceptualization of this immediate understanding.[3]

It is this immediacy of musical experience that particularly strikes Schopenhauer, who himself felt it deeply.[4] In the immediacy he finds grounds for his conclusion. Because music reaches straight into the heart (our own hearts as well as "the heart of things"[5]), without any rational mediation, without any sort of discursive explanation, it expresses the true essence of the world which for Schopenhauer was will – the all-encompassing, fundamental drive of being. Music "is the copy of the will itself", writes Schopenhauer.[6] In a sense, music reflects the true nature of being. It is the closest human endeavour to give one sense of direct belonging to the universe, a feeling of being totally and fully alive. This is why Schopenhauer can write, and the words echo in the *passus* that opened this foreword, that "this universality, exclusive as it is to music, together with the most exact precision gives music its high value as the panacea for all the suffering."[7] If music does not portray concrete fragments of reality, if it is not merely representational but really goes as far as the essence of being, then in music there are no divisions. To be sure, Schopenhauer does not mean here that music is homogeneous because it is comprised of almost innumerable genres.[8] What is at stake is the experience of music as such which can take on many forms. All these forms are united by an underlying, universal force that goes beyond particular problems and conflicts. Therefore music can be viewed as "the panacea for all the suffering."

Schopenhauer was a philosopher who, contrary to Bergson in most of his works, presented a rather pessimistic if not downright gloomy view of the world. Yet, they both agreed that music possessed great power and found consolation in it. It might seem questionable, even naive, from today's perspective but it was not so in their days. The belief in the conciliatory nature of music in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was something that did not spark too many debates. One can even say that in the post-romantic period it was

3 Ibidem, p. 284.

4 Schopenhauer was an amateur musician devoting considerable amount of time to playing on his flute tunes of his favourite composer – Gioachino Rossini.

5 Ibidem, p. 291.

6 Ibidem, p. 285.

7 Ibidem, p. 289.

8 One should nevertheless add that Schopenhauer had clear preferences when it came to distinguishing the styles, genres and composers that really go to the heart of things from the ones who only pretend to do so. For example, Rossini was a master of this task while Haydn sometimes failed to achieve the goal.

commonplace, at least among the educated elite. To shed some light on it we must remember that music does not exist in a void even though Schopenhauer liked to think that it would be present even if there were no reality at all. Music is a part of culture and culture is a way in which human thinking is organised. The organisation is never of a purely private character but always reflects the social character of our being. Therefore music is instrumental in creating a social self.[9] Our sentiments towards music are entangled in the web of relations that constitute our *Lebenswelt,* our most intimate ways of experiencing the world which are, at least partially, socially constructed. In this sense the consolation that music brings is a result of the emotional climate[10] of our society. One is consoled by melodies because one is surrounded by people for whom melodies are consolatory; one lives in a society that presents certain types of consolatory melodies.

The world of Schopenhauer was marked by the romantic cult of artistic genius. It was a world in which the irrational, mysterious and inexplicable were highly valued. In such a world a form of expression like music, which does not rely primarily on a discursive means of communication, was destined to be highly praised to some extent. The works of Schopenhauer are not the only proof. In fact when one reads the writings of German thinkers from the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one is struck by the presence of music in their thinking. Schlegel, Hölderlin, Novalis, Tieck – they all turned their attention to it, the latter two even making it their "key philosophical axis"[11]. Romantic composers, in turn, were saturated with romantic philosophising, although they did not necessarily acknowledge their debt to Schlegel and others.[12] We can thus

---

9 This is the point that Lawrence Kramer makes particularly clear in his analysis of nineteenth century music, see L. Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice: 1800–1900,* Berkeley, CA 1993.

10 It can be useful to empoly here a term *doxa*, which is often used by Pierre Bourideu to designate a sense of obviousness, a point at which one stops asking questions and refrains to the so-called intuition. See: P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice,* trans. R. Nice, Cambridge–New York 1977. This point is located differently in different societies. What is obvious and intuitive in Western society is not obvious for Eskimos. Therefore we are characterised by different sensitivity, different emotional structures than Eskimos. What we find beautiful and moving they might find simply inaccessible and therefore bizarre and vice versa. Music is, of course, no exception to this.

11 M.M. Hall, *Friedrich Schlegel's Romanticization of Music,* "Eighteen Century Studies" 2009, vol. 42, no. 3, s. 413.

12 See for instance J. Daverio, *19th-century Music and the German Romantic Ideology,* New York 1993.

say that music was – and let us emphasise once more that this was among the cultural elite – commonly understood to be the transporter to the truth of being, a path to Elysium, as Schiller would probably have put it.

Such a position was a sign of an essentially optimistic world-view that characterised nineteenth-century societies in Western Europe. There was still hope present in them regardless of many signs of distress. Even the grim Schopenhauer still believed in a certain striving towards the positive goal of unmasking the truth and locating oneself in its centre. Art, specifically music, was to play the most important role in this program that reflected the general, though often disguised, belief in ultimate salvation inherited from the Enlightenment. The nineteenth century was in essence a period of progress and energy. It was a time of rapid industrialisation, which came at a price, of course, but that price was still perceived as a seed of a better future.[13] It was a time of conflict and social turmoil but this still seemed resolvable. Music reflected or rather co-created this atmosphere. It would be especially insightful to look at Wagner in this context but there is no space here to do that. What we would like to stress though is the fact that the emotional climate, and associated musical culture, of the times of Schopenhauer up to early Bergson was one of hope which resulted in a strong belief in the power of music. Our times are different, though.

Let us now go back to the quotation that opened our considerations. "When music weeps, Bergson writes, all humanity, all nature weeps with it." But what about the opposite – what happens to music when all humanity, all nature weeps? This is the question that underlies this book. In contrast to the nineteenth century the next one was nothing but a time of despair. Among the many labels attached to it, one is of particular importance, not only for this volume but also for general opinion as such. The twentieth century can quite rightly be dubbed "the age of genocide."[14] Although genocidal acts have been committed since ancient

13 I'm referring here of course to Marx and his disciples.

14 See among others S. Totten and W.S. Parsons (eds.), *Century of Genocide. Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts,* New York 1997; S. Power, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide,* New York 2002; M.I. Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap. Genocide in the Twentieth Century,* Cambrige–New York 2005; B.A. Valentino, *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the 20th Century,* New York 2004; also highly debatable yet important study by J.H. Goldhagen, *Worse then War. Genocide, Eliminationism, and the Ongoing Assault on Humanity,* New York 2009 (the Polish translation of this book is entitled *The Age of Genocide*).

times[15] it is in the last century[16] that the world witnessed an unprecedented scale of mass killings. What's more, the process of elimination has been "refined", submitted to managerial processes. The Holocaust heralded a new stage of rational, almost industrial organisation of genocide.[17] Bureaucratic procedures were installed by the Nazis providing a model that haunts us till this day. As disturbing as it may sound, if there was any progress in the last century it was in genocidal efficiency.

Contemporary culture, at least to some extent, tries to reflect on the specificity of this condition. Literature, visual arts, theatre, film have all tried to live up to the challenge of operating in the world marked by genocide, not by omitting it but by acknowledging the horror and responsibility it brings. It results in works of art that shun optimism and a hopeful tone in favour of guiltily admitting to the impossibility of fully positive acts. The names of Adorno, Amery, Levi, Rothko, Kantor, Lanzmann or Wosiewicz come to mind. But what about music? All the listed art forms can refer to discursive means and therefore communicate quite clearly the intention of the artist. From those mentioned, only Rothko – by choice rather than by the nature of his medium – implicitly testifies to the trauma that Holocaust brings. All the others do so explicitly. In music[18] such clarity is not possible. Does this mean that it is incapable of attesting to the failure of humanity in the age of genocide? Are there musical artists that try to fulfil a similar role to Lanzmann or Adorno? This type of question needs to be addressed if we are to bring genocide studies one step closer to the full panorama of the experience in question.

This is precisely why one should go even further and consider the general relation between genocide and music, which means researching not only music as a *post factum* reaction to genocide but also the presence of music where it happened. At first glance, no two experiences could be further apart than genocide and music. The world of mass murder seems to be the opposite of the world of spirituality. When the machine of death is operating there is seemingly no space for the contemplation that music brings. Yet real, live culture usually goes beyond rational divisions. In the magma of history opposites meet; horror and

15 See the extensive study by B. Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur,* New Haven 2007.

16 The current century is by no means free from genocide as the case of Darfur demonstrates.

17 See Z. Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust,* Cambridge–Madon, MA 1989.

18 I mean here instrumental music, not lyrics or program notes explaining author's intentions.

exultation can go hand in hand. It is now almost commonly known that art is not absent from the sites of mass killings. Both victims and prosecutors engage in artistic activities in prisons and camps, as well as other places where genocides take place. Poems are written and paintings painted. The same applies to music and this book provides many examples.

The authors who contribute to *Music and Genocide* represent different disciplines. There are musicologists, philosophers, psychologists and cultural scholars among them. Their perspectives are diverse; they look at the connection proposed in the title from different angles. Yet there is one strong opinion that they share – if we are to understand and thus prevent genocide we need to embrace it as a total experience which requires multidimensional research. We cannot limit ourselves to historical, political and sociological inquiries. We must also try to grasp more intimate aspects of the tragedies that we seek to comprehend. The link between art and mass killings might be less visible than between genocide and politics but it exists and therefore it is our responsibility to study it. This is why the presented anthology undertakes for music a task that has been fulfilled in relation to other art forms.[19]

---

19 For analysis of the relation between genocide and literature one can see: J. Gangi, *Genocide in Contemporary Children's and Young Adult Literature: Cambodia to Darfur,* New York–London 2013; R. Peroomian, *The Armenian Genocide in Literature: Perceptions of Those Who Lived Through the Years of Calamity,* Yerevan 2013; S. DeKoven Ezrahi, *By Words Alone: The Holocaust in Literature,* Chicago 1982; R. Franklin, *A Thousand Darkness: Lies and Truth in Holocaust Fiction,* Oxford–New York 2011; A. Hungerford, *The Holocaust of Texts: Genocide, Literature, and Personification,* Chicago 2003. If one is interested in the link between genocide and visual arts one can start with A. Bangert, R.S.C. Gordon, L. Saxton (eds.), *Holocaust Intersections: Genocide and Visual Culture at the New Millennium,* Oxford 2013; Z. Amishai-Maisels, *Depiction and Interpretation: The Influence of the Holocaust on the visual arts,* Terrywon, NY 1993; B. Zelizer (ed.), *Visual Culture and the Holocaust,* London 2001; J.E. Young, *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture,* New Haven–London 2002; G. Sujo, *Legacies of Silence: The Visual Arts and Holocaust Memory,* London 2003; Among works on genocide and cinema it is worth mentioning K.M. Wilson, T.F. Crowder-Taraborrelli (eds.), *Film and Genocide,* WI– London 2012; J.J. Michalczyk, R.G. Helmick SJ (eds.), *Through a Lens Darkly: Films of Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing, and Atrocities,* New York–Oxford 2013; J.-M. Frodon (ed.), *Cinema and the Shoah: An Art Confronts the Tragedy of the Twentieth Century,* Albany, NY 2010; A. Kerner, *Film and the Holocaust: New Perspectives on Dramas, Documentaries, and Experimental Films,* New York–London 2011. For an analysis that takes into account more than one art form see B. Zelizer (ed.), op. cit;

Was/is music present at the site of genocide and how? Can we talk about the soundscape of the inexplicable? What is the music of genocide, i. e. how does it shape the musical narrative, what picture does it paint on the screen of an audience's emotion? How does music reflect on genocide? Can the experience of ultimate terror be expressed in music? Can music bring a cathartic relief after the fear has passed leaving a sense of malaise for those who "accidentally escaped"? How do we perceive music after genocide? What is music and what is silence in a world marked by mass killings? Is post-genocidal silence really possible or appropriate? These and many other questions are addressed by the collection of the papers included in this volume.

In trying to find answers to these questions, the authors aim to shed new light on the discussed atrocities. It is not for the sake of pure curiosity that the relation between music and genocide is discussed. The goal is to shed more light on, and perhaps to some extent resolve the most profound dilemma that we face in the age of genocide, a dilemma so emphatically expressed by Theodor W. Adorno when he asked "whether it is even permissible for someone who accidentally escaped and by all rights ought to have been murdered, to go on living after Auschwitz."[20] In a sense we are all survivors who have accidentally escaped genocide. It might have happened to us. It may still happen. There is, therefore, no more pressing question than this.

The book is structured like a musical composition. It is divided into two parts – with an overture, interlude, and coda – in order to make the structure clear and rhythmical. The volume opens with an extensive essay by M. J. Grant, Mareike Jacobs, Rebecca Möllemann, Simone Christine Münz, and Cornelia Nuxoll investigating the roles of music in the genocidal machine of the Third Reich using the theoretical model of eight stages of genocide developed by American scholar Gregory Stanton. The model was designed to provide a yardstick for authorities with which they could judge whether certain acts might snowball towards a tragic end. Grant and others use it to show how music was present at different stages of the Nazi plan to unify the German nation by purifying it of undesired elements. The reader follows the development of genocidal policies while being shown that music played its part, or in fact many parts. The text serves as an invaluable introduction because it very clearly explains the basic notions used

---

M. Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust,* New York–Chichester 2012.

20 T.W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics,* trans. Dennis Redmond, "Part III. Models. Meditations on Metaphysics", available at: http://members.efn.org/~dredmond/nd5.PDF (accessed: March 2014), paragraph 1.

in genocide studies relying on an extensive research of the literature in this field which is listed in a very useful bibliography.

Part one of the book is titled *Testimonies*. It deals with the many ways in which music was present at the site of a particular genocide, as well as with responses that genocide has sparked in folk and popular music. Arman Goharinasab and Azadeh Latifkar reflect on how the 1881 genocidal massacre of Turkmen people by the troops of Imperial Russia in the village of Geok Tepe influenced the musical culture of the Muslim nomadic tribes in central Asia. We learn of this nation whose collective memory, in the absence of written history, relies first and foremost on songs and melodies. For Turkmen, it is in music that the most important events – and the 1881 massacre is such an event – are remembered and passed from generation to generation to build a collective identity. Melancholic instrumental and vocal muğams performed by traditional musicians called bagşys have served as a meeting ground for the Turkmen community. It is through them that their social bond has been built as well as their collective grief expressed. Therefore, music can be perceived as a crucial narration for the survival of Turkmen tradition and people.

Katarzyna Naliwajek-Mazurek changes the perspective and investigates the different roles played by music directly at the site of particular genocide, in this case in Nazi-occupied Poland. The reader is introduced to how both perpetrators and victims engaged in musical activities in prisons, ghettos, and concentration or death camps. The picture painted is a very disquieting one, also due to the personal and alarming style of writing. Naliwajek-Mazurek conducted numerous interviews with genocide survivors. In the process she grew close to them, which results in an attempt to be more than a scholar – to be a witness. Through such an approach, we are transported into the heart of darkness where we observe a cruel paradox. Playing music can be a survival method. The victims sing and play in order to fight dehumanisation. Yet, at the same time, music can be used as a means of control and humiliation. The same musical composition can bring hope or torture depending on who is using it and for what purpose. We cannot therefore simply say that music as such is a panacea for all the suffering. It can as well be the suffering that one is doomed to.

Joanna Posłuszna and Łukasz Posłuszny explore this mechanism further by focusing on the soundscape of one of the concentration camps in Poland – Majdanek in Lublin. Their contribution is entirely based on the testimonies of people who were present on site, which makes it especially disturbing and telling. The documentary style of the essay immerses the reader in the soundscape of mass killing. The reader comes to realise that certain sounds accompanied specific events; they had real consequences. Prisoners learned to recognise the sounds

as an exclusive code that consisted of signals and information but in fact the prisoner also co-created the code. Therefore, the soundscape of the site of genocide appears to be a complex and ambiguous structure. The authors believe that by reconstructing and analysing the soundscape of the camps we come closer to understanding or rather feeling and emotionally responding to the damage inflicted on the victims. The article proves that it is indeed a very promising direction for genocide studies.

Part one concludes with a contribution from Kirsten Dyck who presents the results of her research into White Power Music. This still too rarely discussed subject demands investigation as recent events related to it, like the shooting at the Sikh temple in Wisconsin, show. We continue to observe acts of violence committed by people devoted to this seemingly marginal musical culture. Dyck tries to put these actions into context by showing how saturated with murderous rhetoric and sentiments White Power Music is. She presents a brief but very telling history of the phenomenon and discusses the message it tries to convey. Even though the White Power movement seems to be only an obscure and late reminiscence of the horrors of the past, a marginal enterprise based on a set of beliefs that are outrageous but impossible to realise in a global, multi-cultural society, its members become more and more determined to emphasise their presence and therefore find new supporters. Music serves as a perfect vehicle in this quest. It continues to spread racist and genocidal propaganda making the threat of the killing happening again more real than we are prepare to admit.

In the interlude Leszek Sosnowski ponders on the problem that is essential for the whole volume, but specifically for the second part which his text precedes, namely: "can such an experience as genocide be expressed artistically?" In order to answer this question the author juxtaposes two philosophical terms, which seem to be very useful in analysing the relation of any art to genocide – the Husserlian notion of *Lebenswelt* and the opposing term *Todeswelt* coined by American Jewish philosopher Edith Wyschogrod and developed by Polish philosopher Jan Woleński. Sosnowski argues that the world of genocide should be perceived in terms of *Todeswelt* as a "code of death without an alphabet of life". What does it mean? Among others, it signals the need to develop an appropriate kind of language for dealing with genocide, one that introduces careful speech fully aware of its inadequacy yet striving not to let the experience pass into nothingness. The authors in the second part of the book entitled *Tributes* reflect on the same problem in relation to music.

Ralph Buchenhorst considers Arnold Schönberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw* and the reaction it provoked in Adorno, because their debate focuses on the wider issue of the (im)possibility of representing genocide in arts. Schönberg's

cantata is a fictional representation of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and portrays a group of Jewish people resisting the Nazi captors by singing *Shema Yisroel,* the Jewish profession of faith. The story is told by a survivor whom Schönberg made the narrator of his composition. Yet the goal is not purely documentary because the composer used the cantata as a means of his personal artistic expression. *Survivor* was not only meant to be a commemoration. It was also a progressive statement in the musical debates of the day. This double character of the piece can be puzzling if not contradictory. On one hand we have collective sentiments, on the other highly modernist individualism. Buchenhorst quotes Schönberg himself who said: "We should never forget this, even if such things have not been done in the manner which I describe in the *Survivor*. This does not matter. The main thing is that I saw it in my imagination." How can one reconcile the two: collective history and personal imagination? Schönberg seemed to believe that artistic genius could find a way. Adorno was far more sceptical, condemning the cantata as conciliatory, what Buchenhorst reconstructs. Yet, Schönberg and Adorno agreed that whenever one tries to address the issue of Holocaust in art one better be fully aware of one's responsibility. It means being equally uncompromising about the content and the form. There are no easy solutions when it comes to representing Shoah, and genocide in general, in the arts. This is why Buchenhorst argues for the alliance of music and philosophy concluding his essay with an important statement: "Neither music nor dialectical thinking on their own could possibly grasp the horror of the extermination camps, but together both might be able to give us an idea of a universally valid solidarity against it ever being repeated."

The challenge Adorno and Schönberg discussed is similar to that which Hanns Eisler, once a student of Schönberg, encountered when asked by Alain Resnais to compose music for his seminal Auschwitz documentary *Nuit et brouillard.* In his article, Matt Lawson gives a careful insight into the problems Eisler's score raises. His research is particularly interesting because it fills the gap in film musicology which has not so far investigated Holocaust films. Starting with *Nuit et brouillard* seems to be a logical first step also because of the composer's person. Eisler was well-known for his leftist sympathies. Before the war he wrote revolutionary songs collaborating with Bertolt Brecht. After the war, he co-authored the book *Composing for Films* with Adorno to which Lawson refers on numerous occasions. In this book Eisler very strongly stood for a non-literal approach to film music. He felt that music should never be anecdotal but always progressive and self-conscious. One can thus say that he was both socially sensitive and demanding when it came to the form of musical expression. But how does it translate to his work on *Night and Fog*? Lawson argues that the translation is not as smooth

as one might expect. However hard Eisler tries to be sensitive to the subject he cannot escape the issue of appropriateness of his efforts. The subject matter does not let him get away with easy solutions. Literal and non-literal approaches alike can be subject to substantial critique as in Lawson's. It does not necessarily prove that Eisler was not up to the task but rather that the task is not possible to fulfil.

Joanna Posłuszna in her contribution takes a closer look at the debates surrounding Krzysztof Penderecki's efforts to address the tragedies of the twentieth century in his compositions. In many ways these debates are similar to the one that Schönberg provoked, especially when one takes a closer look at *Death Brigade* from 1963 which was based on a diary of Leon Weliczker, a Jewish prisoner of death camp near Lviv who was forced to work in a task force that was to cover the traces of mass killings by German troops. When the composition premièred, Penderecki was heavily criticised for aesthetising the tragedy. The critique was so heavy that Penderecki decided to withdraw the composition from his repertoire. Posłuszna very carefully reconstructs these debates showing their universal dimension. Although later works discussed in the article – *Dies Irae* and *Kadisz* – were not condemned so totally, the doubts were not completely removed. At present, the critics might not see Penderecki's work as improper aestheticisation. Posłuszna demonstrates that his subtle strategies go beyond naturalism in search of the form that is appropriate – uncompromising and refined at the same time. Yet the question remains: does the artist have a right to use actual suffering as a material for creative manipulation? What kind of music can still be composed after genocide? And how?

The main body of the volume concludes with my contribution that serves as a coda. I shall undertake the challenge of entering into a dialogue with Adorno. My main concern is to understand his famous dictum that after Auschwitz all poetry or, indeed, all art is barbaric. I try to shed some light on that dictum, presenting it not as a call to silence but as a call to self-consciousness. My point is that genocide operates as a machine for the production of silence as I try to demonstrate by taking a look at the recollections of the survivors of the Rwandan genocide published by Jean Hatzfeld and at the still virtually unknown testimony of Rachela Olewski who played in the Auschwitz Women Orchestra under Alma Rosé and survived the genocide. What particularly strikes a reader in these testimonies is the dialectics of the oppressive sounds and even more oppressing silence remembered by the victims. In this context, silence following the genocide can be perceived as its continuation, a victory of the perpetrators. Music, thus, must not be silenced but the question as to how it is to be performed and composed remains. I believe that the key to the answer lies in our attention to memory. We must always remember that music as it was before the genocide is

not possible and carry this impossibility with us whenever we sit down to play, sing or write new tunes.

In the afterword, Lawrence Kramer approaches the theme of this volume from yet another perspective – that of active composer who happens to be a musicologist and philosopher at the same time. He offers not only his essay as the afterword but also his music introducing *A Short History (of the 20th Century)*, a piece that he wrote for solo voice and percussion. While discussing it, Kramer enters into dialogue with Derrida and Celan, who were both deeply concerned with the impossibility of proper testimony to the horrors of genocide. Kramer shares their concern yet, just like them, tries not to submit to the oppressing silence. To that end he investigates – in the text but most of all in his composition – the relation between the pliancy of music and the rigidity of names. The short history of which the title speaks is a history of the century's genocide conveyed through the naming of its sites. The names are the lyrics of the piece. In musicalising the names, Kramer looks for a kind of gesture that could possibly do both – commemorate the victims and steer clear of false promise of consolation. This is also the gesture for which the volume as a whole strives.

It must be stressed that the presented volume is far from being exhaustive or adequately diverse in discussing the subject. Many more peoples have been marked by the tragedy of genocide than are mentioned here. There are unfortunately many more stories still to be told. If the book was to be exhaustive, it should be really global in scale. Yet such a task seems to be impossible to carry out in a single collection. Therefore what the authors strive to do is to broaden an important field of investigation, to point in certain methodological directions hoping with humility that others will follow. The main focus is on Holocaust, and this raises the problem of singularity and provokes an important question: why not call this book *Holocaust and Music*. It can only be answered by a close reading of the volume as a whole. It is true that most texts deal with *Shoah*. It is also true that Holocaust cannot be compared to any other tragedy. But so cannot be other genocides. Each one is singular and in this singularity they all meet. In every victim of inhuman killing humanity dies, so whenever we try to commemorate a victim, we commemorate them all, in a sense. A volume like this will never be adequate. It is doomed to fail but precisely as such it is vital.

The belief in the power of music held by Schopenhauer and Bergson has been weakened if not extinguished in the age of genocide. We are much more suspicious of its role in the society because we as civilisation saw music being used to torture and oppress people at innumerable sites of genocide. Music is no longer innocent if it ever was. Yet, the burden of blame that it carries

should not simply be dumped by surrendering to silence. Even though the latter can be overwhelming, even though it might be perceived as the only appropriate reaction, human voices must not be subdued. This anthology presents various ways to resist. One can only hope that in the future more research will be made in this subject, so that the music of memory will keep on playing into eternity.

Bibliography

Adorno T.W., *Negative Dialectics*, trans. D. Redmond, "Part III. Models. Meditations on Metaphysics", available at: http://members.efn.org/~dredmond/nd5.PDF (accessed: March 2014).

Amishai-Maisels Z., *Depiction and Interpretation: The Influence of the Holocaust on the Visual Arts*, Terrywon, NY 1993.

Bangert A., R.S.C. Gordon, L. Saxton (eds.), *Holocaust Intersections: Genocide and Visual Culture at the New Millennium*, Oxford 2013.

Bauman Z., *Modernity and the Holocaust*, Cambridge–Madon, MA 1989.

Bergson H., *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, trans. A. Audra and C. Brereton, London 1935, available at: http://archive.org/details/twosourcesofmora033499mbp (accessed: March 2014).

Bourdieu P., *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. R. Nice, Cambridge–New York 1977.

Daverio J., *19th-century Music and the German Romantic Ideology*, New York 1993.

DeKoven Ezrahi S., *By Words Alone: The Holocaust in Literature*, Chicago 1982.

Franklin R., *A Thousand Darkness: Lies and Truth in Holocaust Fiction*, Oxford–New York 2011.

Frodon J.-M. (ed.), *Cinema and the Shoah: An Art Confronts the Tragedy of the Twentieth Century*, Albany, NY 2010.

Gangi J., *Genocide in Contemporary Children's and Young Adult Literature: Cambodia to Darfur*, New York–London 2013.

Goldhagen J.H., *Worse then War. Genocide, Eliminationism, and the Ongoing Assault on Humanity*, New York 2009.

Hall M.M., *Friedrich Schlegel's Romanticization of Music*, "Eighteen Century Studies" 2009, vol. 42, no. 3, s. 413-429.

Hirsch M., *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust*, New York–Chichester 2012.

Hungerford A., *The Holocaust of Texts: Genocide, Literature, and Personification*, Chicago 2003.

Kiernan B., *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur*, New Haven 2007.

Kerner A., *Film and the Holocaust: New Perspectives on Dramas, Documentaries, and Experimental Films*, New York–London 2011.

Kramer L., *Music as Cultural Practice: 1800-1900*, Berkeley, CA 1993.

Michalczyk J.J., R.G. Helmick SJ (eds.), *Through a Lens Darkly: Films of Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing, and Atrocities*, New York–Oxford 2013.

Midlarsky M.I., *The Killing Trap. Genocide in the Twentieth Century*, Cambrige–New York 2005.

Peroomian R., *The Armenian Genocide in Literature: Perceptions of Those Who Lived Through the Years of Calamity*, Yerevan 2013.

Power S., *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*, New York 2002.

Schopenhauer A., *The World As Will and Representation*, trans. J. Norman, A. Welchman and Ch. Janaway, Cambridge–New York 2010.

Sujo G., *Legacies of Silence: The Visual Arts and Holocaust Memory*, London 2003.

Totten S. and W.S. Parsons (eds.), *Century of Genocide. Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts*, New York 1997.

Valentino B.A., *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the 20th Century*, New York 2004.

Wilson K.M., T.F. Crowder-Taraborrelli (eds.), *Film and Genocide*, WI–London 2012.

Young J.E., *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*, New Haven–London 2002.

Zelizer B. (ed.), *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, London 2001.

OUVERTURE

M. J. Grant, Mareike Jacobs, Rebecca Möllemann, Simone Christine Münz, and Cornelia Nuxoll

Music, the "Third Reich", and "The 8 Stages of Genocide"

Introduction

In recent years, a hugely significant body of research has investigated various ways in which music was used to promote National Socialist (NS) ideology, to justify the systematic exclusion and persecution of people viewed as "undesirable" or enemies of the state, to prepare and promote war, and ultimately, to commit genocide – a term first coined in this context. Musicologists and historians alike have looked in detail at the role of musical institutions at local, national and international level, at music in the mass media, music in schools and youth organisations, musical aspects of National Socialist events and celebrations, and at music in concentration camps and in the ghettos.

The purpose of this essay is to explore some of the implications of this literature for genocide studies, and conversely to look at how insights from genocide studies could inform our interpretation of musical activities and practices under National Socialism. To do this, we shall employ what Gregory Stanton presented in 1996 as the conceptual framework of how genocides are prepared, organised, and committed. Titled "The 8 Stages of Genocide", and originally written as a briefing paper for the US State Department, Stanton's model posits that a number of distinct but overlapping stages can be identified in most genocides which, therefore, may be used to develop an early warning model enabling timely action and intervention.[1] Stanton elaborated his model with particular reference to the Holocaust and to the 1994 Rwandan genocide. In this article, we will consider the extent to which Stanton's "8 Stages" are reflected in musical life under

1 The paper by G. Stanton, "The 8 Stages of Genocide" can be found at http://www.genocidewatch.org/aboutgenocide/8stagesofgenocide.html (accessed: March 2014). An extensive Power Point presentation created by Stanton to further illustrate the model can be found via the same link. Recently, and since work on this essay was substantially completed, Stanton has refined the model with two further stages. The newer version can be found at http://genocidewatch.net/genocide-2/8-stages-of-genocide/ (accessed November 2014). Comments on differences between the two versions are inserted as appropriate below.

National Socialism. We will begin with a very brief overview of Stanton's model and then proceed to map different aspects of music and musical life under German National Socialism from 1933-1945 onto a slightly adapted version of the "8 Stages" model.

Our source material for this article is not original research but a sizeable portion of the extensive literature now available in English and German on music under the National Socialist regime.[2] We do not claim to be familiar with all of the research on this topic, and our review focuses mainly on the situation in Germany and in Austria after the *Anschluss*, rather than on the territories occupied from 1939 onwards: it should be noted here, therefore, that the situation of musical life and NS policy on music differed from territory to territory, as a comparison of case studies on France and Poland makes abundantly clear.[3] Moreover, the simplifications and, in some cases, generalisations undertaken in this essay run counter to the spirit of much work on music and cultural life generally in this period, work which points to the need for careful differentiation and interpretation, and which flags up many apparent contradictions between policy and practice, and between what people said and what they did. In this sense we are already confronted with an obvious parallel to the course taken by genocide studies, as it has increasingly problematised limitations on several levels in some theories of how genocides occur; we shall discuss this in slightly more detail in the next section. Recognising this fact, the preliminary biography of German and English-language research on musical life under National Socialism that we attach to this essay, and which includes information on literature not explicitly discussed here, is intended to promote further interdisciplinary work on this topic.

Stanton's "The 8 Stages of Genocide" in the context of genocide studies

Though it has since been applied retrospectively to other instances of mass murder, the term "genocide" was originally introduced by the Polish jurist Ralph

2 Unless otherwise stated and with the exception of standard English terms for institutions and organisations, all translations of quotations from German sources are our own.

3 See e.g. K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *Music and its Emotional Aspects during the Nazi Occupation of Poland*, [in:] S. Zalfen, S.O. Müller (eds.), *Besatzungsmacht Musik. Zur Musik- und Emotionsgeschichte im Zeitalter der Weltkriege (1914–1949)*, Bielefeld 2012, p. 207-224; K. Le Bail, *Music on the Airwaves in Occupied France*, [in:] M.J. Grant, F.J. Stone-Davis (eds.), *The Soundtrack of Conflict, The Role of Music in Radio Broadcasting in Wartime and Conflict Situations*, Hildesheim–Zürich–New York 2013, p. 45-57.

Lemkin in 1944 in direct response to contemporary events in Europe.[4] Lemkin would become one of the most active proponents of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1948 – one day before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – and which came into effect in January 1951.[5] Genocide is defined in the Convention as

> any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:
>
> (a) Killing members of the group;
> (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
> (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
> (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
> (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.[6]

Since Lemkin introduced the term, and particularly in recent years, the field of genocide studies has grown significantly and a number of theories have attempted to explore and explain the structural, behavioural, political, and cultural factors that can culminate in genocide.[7] Despite and, in some cases, because of its normative claims, this growing body of literature has paid significant attention to the question of defining genocide, including the limitations of the definition given above. The divergence of opinions on what actually constitutes

---

4 First outlined in a chapter of the book *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* (1944), in 1945 Lemkin published a separate article on the topic: R. Lemkin, *Genocide: A Modern Crime*, "Free World" 1945, vol. 4, p. 39-43, available at: http://www.preventgenocide.org/lemkin/freeworld1945.htm (accessed: March 2014).

5 For a wider discussion of the background to the Convention and Lemkin's role, see J. Cooper, *Ralph Lemkin and the Struggle for the Genocide Convention*, London 2008.

6 For the full convention text see http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CrimeOfGenocide.aspx (accessed: March 2014).

7 Useful critical summaries are given in M.S. Hiebert, *Theorizing Destruction: Reflections on the State of Comparative Genocide Theory*, "Genocide Studies and Prevention" 2008, vol. 3, p. 309-339; S. Straus, *Second-Generation Comparative Research on Genocide*, "World Politics" 2007, vol. 59/3, p. 476-501. H. Fein, *Accounting for Genocide: National Responses and Jewish Victimization during the Holocaust*, Chicago 1979 is an excellent and detailed earlier study, which for this reason cannot take into account work on more recent genocides and developments in international criminal justice relating to genocide since then.

genocide has created problems for comparative genocide studies, as Helen Fein[8] (among others) has pointed out. There have been extensive discussions relating to whether so-called politicide – the mass murder of political opponents – should be regarded as a form of genocide, and whether or not the mass murders that took place under the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia can rightly be termed genocide. Further controversy surrounds the question of what has been termed "cultural genocide": a draft of the Genocide Convention extended the definition of genocide to include measures to prevent groups as defined above from being able to use their own language or fulfil or observe other markers of their culture; the removal of this passage from the Convention has come in for severe criticism in the intervening period, not least by campaigners for the rights of indigenous communities in the Americas and Australia. We will return to this issue at the end of this article.

Just as, legal definitions aside, there is no one clear statement of what does and does not constitute genocide, there is also no one theory of how and why genocides happen. Different theorists of genocide attribute different levels of intention and causality to the process: some see genocides as genuinely planned, whereas others see them as arising from the dynamics of particular crisis situations. One important strand of research emphasises that genocide must be understood as "a process, not an event," and such theories often suggest that this process passes through several identifiable stages.[9] Stanton's "8 Stages" model is perhaps the most succinct, but thus by no means the first or the only attempt to construct a model of how genocides happen; nor is his the only model to suggest that when genocides do happen, they tend to follow a pattern which, in turn, can be used to build a model of genocide and – by extension – of genocide prevention. In his commentary on the model, which is summarised in Figure 1 (the discussion below will provide some further examples of each stage), Stanton underlines that the individual stages leading to genocide are for the most part not unique to it. Indeed, taken on their own, many of the decisions made by politicians and other actors, especially in the early stages, may not seem particularly harmful. Nevertheless, these stages are essential in preparing the ground culturally, mentally, and logistically for what occurs thereafter.

There are obvious limitations to this model. Stanton presents a convincing case for the almost programmatic way in which the genocides he analyses

8 H. Fein, *Genocide: A Sociological Perspective*, "Current Sociology" 1990, vol. 38/1, p. 1-126.

9 S.P. Rosenberg, *Genocide Is a Process, not an Event*, "Genocide Studies and Prevention" 2012, vol. 7/1, p. 16-23.

proceed, but one which for this reason downplays the dynamics inherent in the process. While his model is an extremely useful summary of some of the most important findings of comparative genocide research, some of these findings have been called into question; in particular, several scholars have pointed to a need for more research exploring why genocide occurs in some contexts but not in others which are politically, socially, and culturally very similar to each other.[10] Seen in the context of the many other studies and theories of genocide, Stanton's "8 Stages" model can seem overly deterministic and schematic. This feature of the model is partly due to the purpose it originally served: it is a diagnostic model formulated as a briefing paper for US policy-makers in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide (and after appeals by Stanton and others in the immediate run-up to the genocide had been ignored[11]). This explains both the model's pragmatically driven, stage-by-stage structure and the fact that each stage in the original model is explicitly linked to suggests for intervention.

Given the level of debate on the subject of what actually constitutes genocide and how it happens, why have we chosen to concentrate on Stanton's model? The decision is a practical one. Firstly, because it is so schematic, "The 8 Stages of Genocide" offers a useful structure for conceptualising and theorising the roles that music and musical life played under National Socialism. Secondly, since the role of music in policy and in practice also altered over time, Stanton's roughly chronological model again offers a useful point of comparison. In using this model, our main aim is to stimulate further work at the crossroads between musicology and genocide studies by pointing out how an understanding of musical practices and policies can contribute to this debate on the processes of genocide, and likewise how a knowledge of different theoretical approaches to genocide can assist us in analysing the functions and roles of musical practices in such contexts.

---

10 This was noted by H. Fein, *Genocide: A sociological perspective*, "Current Sociology" 1990, vol. 38/1, p. 1-126, and reiterated in S. Straus, *Second-Generation…*, op. cit. Fein herself conducted an in-depth analysis of the significant differences between different countries (including occupied countries) in the "Third Reich" as regards the fates of local Jews and others. Her conclusions include pointing to the importance of open resistance to the persecution of particular sections of society as voiced by opinion-makers including the church; see H. Fein, *Accounting for Genocide: National Responses and Jewish Victimization during the Holocaust*, Chicago 1979. This is by no means irrelevant given the public role of many musicians, as will become clear later.

11 G. Stanton, *Could the Rwandan Genocide Have Been Prevented?* 2002, available at: http://www.genocidewatch.org/couldrwandangenocide.html (accessed: March 2014).

Figure 1: Stanton's "The 8 Stages of Genocide" in summary (after Stanton 1996, Stanton 2007).

Stanton's "The 8 Stages of Genocide" in summary (after Stanton 1996, Stanton 2007)

Stage 1: Classification

According to Stanton, the first stage of genocide is the characterization of people as belonging to distinct social groups along the lines of nationality, ethnicity, "race" or religion. This is "a primary method of dividing society and creating a power struggle between groups". Stanton points out that this is a feature of most societies.

Stage 2: Symbolization

Here, the categories already established in Stage 1 become more formalized, for example by including a note on ethnic background into passports and identity documents. This, argues Stanton, is crucial not least because it facilitates the extermination of a group at a later stage, as was the case in Rwanda in 1994.[12]

Stage 3: Dehumanization

This stage involves gradually dehumanizing a particular social group. Making particular people appear sub-human is, Stanton argues, an important step in overcoming the normal human revulsion of murder. Stanton's examples of dehumanization include the use of the term "cockroaches" to describe Tutsi in Rwanda, and publication material from the NS regime which portrays Jews, Africans and others as essentially different, less human, and less humane, than Aryans.

Stage 4: Organization

The 4th stage of genocide in Stanton's model stresses that genocides do not happen by accident: since genocide is a group crime, it necessitates some level of planning – this may include the stockpiling of weapons, and strategic planning.

Stage 5: Polarization

Stage 5 builds on the classification and separation of groups already prepared in Stages 1 and 2, but introduces a new and extremist element. In the case of the Third Reich, this stage in operation can be clearly seen in the November pogroms of 1938. Another important element of this stage is the silencing of dissenting opinions by arresting or killing moderates.

12 In the "10 Stages" version of the model, Stanton introduces a separate stage of "Discrimination" after "Symbolization" and before "Dehumanization".

Stage 6: Preparation
All of the previous stages can be regarded as essential preparation for a crime the size and scale of genocide: the title Stanton gives to this particular stage refers to the final preparations necessary for the actual killing. These include ensuring that victims are easily identifiable, either by forcing them to wear symbols that mark them out, by adding their names to lists of people to be killed, or because they are gathered together in one place to facilitate their systematic murder.[13]

Stage 7: Extermination
Stanton describes the first six stages of genocide as preparatory: these are the stages when intervention strategies can still prevent genocide from occurring. Stage 7 marks the stage when the killing takes place. Stanton chose the term "extermination" to underline that those perpetrating the killing view their actions less as murder and more akin to eliminating a threat or a pest.

Stage 8: Denial
According to Stanton, genocide is always followed by denial. This denial may take the form of suggesting the deaths were due to war, were overestimated, or did not take place at all. Denial involves attacking those who tell the truth, and can also involve blaming the victims.

Music and the "8 Stages of Genocide"

Stanton's model was derived from analysis of a whole number of political, social, and cultural factors in the cases referenced. Predictably, it is difficult to simply superimpose this model directly onto the specific field of musical life. Nevertheless, the attempt does produce some surprising findings regarding the roles played by musical activities and practices in the broadest sense under the National Socialist regime. In order to make this clearer, in this section we will group Stanton's eight stages into four main groups: Stages 1/2/3, Stages 4/5/6, Stage 7, and Stage 8. The logic behind this should become apparent in the following

13 In the "10 Stages" version, Stanton introduces a separate stage of "Persecution" after "Preparation". "Preparation" is then limited to such things as logistical preparations and armaments, while the drawing up of lists and marking people out is included under "Persecution", which includes atrocities such as extrajudicial killings and torture. Stanton also includes such measures as forced sterilization and withholding of access to food, water and other essential resources here. This extension of the model is important not least for specifically integrating measures that are genocidal but do not take the form of mass murder.

discussion, where we will refer to some of the many aspects of musical life and music policy which reflect some of the distinctive stages of genocide as Stanton presents them.

A. Stages 1, 2, 3 (Classification, Symbolisation, Dehumanisation)

Stages 1, 2, and 3 in Stanton's model broadly relate to the central issue of identity construction and ideology in a more general sense: all are concerned with consolidating an idea of some people as different, with making it easier to identify them as such, and ultimately with excluding some people from the existing social contract. Stanton himself links these three stages when he writes that "Classification and symbolization are fundamental operations in all cultures. They become steps of genocide only when combined with dehumanization."[14] Here we might expect to find many connections with music and musical practice, given that modern musicology generally accepts the importance of music in the construction and consolidation of identity, including national identity.[15] Indeed, there are many direct and indirect correlations between NS policy generally and the specific sphere of musical life. With regard to Stage 1, we could point to attempts to classify the music of particular peoples along the same pseudo-scientific, racial terms used in biological and medical theories of race and race classification. In this endeavour, musicologists were able to build on existing (if highly questionable) research into musical typology which had posited both geographical and physiological explanations for particular musical styles and predilections.[16] In

14 G. Stanton, *8 Stages…*, op. cit. (paragraph "Dehumanization").

15 This has been the subject of a wide range of studies in recent years. For some of this literature as it relates specifically to Europe from the eighteenth century onwards, see for example B.A. Föllmi, N. Grosch, M. Schneider (eds.), *Music and the Construction of National Identity in the 19th Century*, Actes du Colloque International "Musique et Identité Nationale" (Strasbourg, Université Marc Bloch, 18-19 Octobre 2007), Sammlung musikwissenschaftlicher Abhandlungen 98, Baden-Baden 2010; H. White, M. Murphy (eds.), *Musical Constructions of Nationalism*, Cork 2001; B. Curtis, *Music Makes the Nation: Nationalist Composers and Nation Building in Nineteenth-century Europe*, Amherst, NY 2008. Specifically on Germany, see C. Applegate, P. Potter (eds.), *Music and German National Identity*, Chicago 2002; M. Noa, *Volkstümlichkeit und Nationbilding: Zum Einfluss der Musik auf den Einigungsprozess der deutschen Nation im 19. Jahrhundert*, Münster 2013.

16 As for example in the works of Gustav Becking, whose theories on body movement and rhythm were expressed in terms linking certain characteristics to certain regions. See also B. Sponheuer, *The National Socialist Discussion on the "German Quality" in Music*, [in:] A. Riethmüller, M.H. Kater (eds.), *Music and Nazism. Art*

the 1930s, this took on a more specifically racialist character. There were several attempts to isolate "Jewish" attributes in music, with many musicologists, including some leading figures, at least paying lip service to these theories. However, it proved even more difficult to build a substantial theory of racial characteristics in music than it had been to establish definitive physiological categories.[17] In practice, the only effective way to classify music as "German" or "Jewish" was to gather under this heading all music created by composers and musicians who corresponded to the legal categories as defined in the race laws of this period.

Such obvious similarities between Nazi racial theories and policy in the general and specifically musical cases would be of only passing significance were they not interwoven with broader and more fundamental ideas about the supremacy of German music – particularly German art music, which in this discourse is inextricably linked to the idea of a basic musicality in German peoples that finds its primary expression in folk music. In celebrating both strands, the National Socialists were merely echoing what was, by that point, an accepted if highly constructed wisdom among composers, musicologists, and musicians, including those who had no sympathies with National Socialism and who would suffer persecution under the regime.[18] In fact, we could argue that the status held by music in German culture and identity, and by German art music internationally, is of prime importance for understanding the central role music

---

under Tyranny, 1933–1945, Laaber 2003, p. 32-42. E. Levi, *Anti-Semitic Discourse in German Writing on Music*, [in:] J. Brown (ed.), *Western Music and Race*, Cambridge 2007, p. 168-181, discusses the specific influence of Wagner's antisemitism on German thinkers in the early twentieth century; several other essays in J. Brown (ed.), *Western music and race*, Cambridge 2007, demonstrate how widespread such tendencies were.

17 For an in-depth overview of musicology in the "Third Reich", see P.M. Potter, *The Nazi "Seizure" of the Berlin Philharmonic, or the Decline of a Bourgeois Musical Institution*, [in:] G.R. Cuomo (ed.), *National Socialist Cultural Policy*, New York 1995, p. 39-66 and for further individual studies and commentaries see also I. von Foerster, Ch. Hust, Ch.-H. Mahling (eds.), *Musikforschung-Faschismus-Nationalsozialismus*, Mainz 2001. Specifically on the divide between theory and practice in attempts to classify what is "German" music see also M. Walter, *Hitler in der Oper: deutsches Musikleben 1919–1945*, Stuttgart–Weimar 2000, p. 213-262.

18 Schoenberg himself, despite his dedication to the tradition of German composition, would become the central character in the conspiracy theory pursued by the National Socialist regime: not only was he considered the inventor of atonal and twelve-tone music, which the regime (and most audiences) officially deplored, but he was also Jewish.

played in National Socialist ideology and policy. There is also nothing implicitly new about the political dimensions this took: contested ideas about musical supremacy had already characterised music criticism in both France and Germany in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[19]

Nonetheless, musicological research and practice post-1933 has placed a much sharper focus on the supposed roots of this supremacy in German folksong or *Volkslied*. To outsiders, the very idea of folksong seems worlds away from the highly developed forms of German art music, but in fact the categories of "folksong" and "art music" had always enjoyed a close and reciprocal relationship in German musical aesthetics.[20] In the 1930s, folksong – as an idea and in practice – became a central element of NS policy, both in terms of musicological research dedicated to it and by becoming a central element of what the journalist Carola Stern once termed the "singing dictatorship".[21] A proven knowledge of German folksongs was an entrance requirement for at least some music education institutions, and singing and accompanying folksongs also became an important part of the curriculum.[22]

This elevation of folksong was only possible in terms of a particular type of folksong research, which regarded "true" folksong as the pure, unsullied

19 See e.g. J. Fulcher, *French Cultural Politics and Music from the Dreyfus Affair to the First World War*, New York 1999 for the French perspective; the German perspective is expressed perhaps most vehemently (or even rabidly) in some writings by Heinrich Schenker; see especially H. Schenker, *Rameau or Beethoven? Creeping Paralysis or Spiritual Potency in Music?* [*Rameau oder Beethoven? Erstarrung oder geistiges Leben in der Musik?*], trans. I. Bent, [in:] W. Drabkin (ed.), *The Masterwork in Music*, vol. 3, Cambridge 1997 (first published 1930). See also M.F. Bertola, *Defining A European "New Order" through Music: Ancient Music in Italian Radio Broadcasting during the Fascist Period*, [in:] M.J. Grant and F. Stone-Davis (eds.), *The Soundtrack of Conflict, The Role of Music in Radio Broadcasting in Wartime and Conflict Situations*, Hildesheim–Zürich–New York 2013, p. 27-43 for a discussion of similar issues relating to Fascism in Italy.

20 See here especially M. Gelbart, *The Idea of "Folk Music" and "Art Music". Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner*, Cambridge 2007.

21 Quoted here from Gottfried Niedhart, *Sangeslust und Singediktatur im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland*, [in:] G. Niedhart, G. Broderick (eds.), *Lieder in Politik und Alltag des Nationalsozialismus*, Frankfurt–New York 1999, p. 5.

22 This has been discussed in studies of music education in Austria after the Anschluss, H. Brenner, *Musik als Waffe? Theorie und Praxis der politischen Musikverwendung, dargestellt am Beispiel der Steiermark 1938-1945*, Graz 1992; Ch. Wolf, *Musikerziehung unterm Hakenkreuz: die Rolle der Musik am Beispiel der Oberschulen im Gau Tirol-Vorarlberg*, Anif–Salzburg 1998, p. 34ff.

expression of an equally unsullied race – as such, this idealised *Volkslied* became the perfect musical expression of National Socialist ideals in general. This development is inextricably linked to a more general discourse on origins, nation and culture which emerged in the eighteenth century and which, as Maureen Hiebert has discussed, has been explored in the studies of the ideological origins of genocide by both Eric D. Weitz and Ben Kiernan.[23] Weitz relates the development of a specifically racialised view of nation and culture back to Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Johann Gottfried von Herder's writings on the primordial origins of language and other markers of national culture; Herder is specifically important to our concerns for his influence on the development of the concept of *Volkslied* in Germany. Even more interesting is Kiernan's suggestion, as summarised by Hiebert, that "many genocidal regimes conceptualise the peasantry as the most 'authentic' members of the political community, while cosmopolitan urban areas and their populations are considered to be 'contaminated with foreign and decadent elements'."[24] Here too there is a direct line leading back to folksong research both in Germany and also, not insignificantly, to the resurgence of interest in English folksong research in the later nineteenth century.[25]

Elsewhere in her survey, Hiebert points out that dehumanisation, which constitutes Stage 3 in Stanton's model, is common among theories of genocide, though she also argues that this by itself is not sufficient to explain why genocides happen, and that it is the perception of the group in question as posing a real and imminent threat which is crucial. In the case of music, both elements are reflected in a discourse closely related to concerns regarding the preservation

---

23 M.S. Hiebert, *Theorizing Destruction: Reflections on the State of Comparative Genocide Theory*, "Genocide Studies and Prevention" 2008, vol. 3; E.D. Weitz, *A Century of Genocide. Utopias of Race and Nation*, Princeton 2003; B. Kiernan, *Twentieth Century Genocides: Underlying Ideological Themes from Armenia to East Timor*, [in:] R. Gellately, B. Kiernan (eds.), *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective*, Cambridge 2003.

24 M.S. Hiebert, op. cit., p. 327, integrating quotations from B. Kiernan, *Twentieth Century Genocides: Underlying Ideological Themes from Armenia to East Timor*, [in:] R. Gellately, B. Kiernan (eds.), *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective*, Cambridge 2003.

25 See here e.g. D. Harker, *Fakesong: The Manufacture of British Folksong 1700 to the Present Day*, Maidenhead 1985; G. Boyes, *The Imagined Village: Culture, Ideology and the English Folk Revival*, Manchester 1993. As discussed later, apparently self-contradictory attitudes to "gypsy" music in National Socialist ideology can also be traced to the same type of discourse: see B. Currid, *A National Acoustics: Music and Mass Publicity in Weimar and Nazi Germany*, Minneapolis–London 2006, p. 171-215.

of "great" German music. National Socialist policy reflected widespread fears amongst musicians from the early twentieth century onwards regarding various strands in modernism (particularly "atonal" and twelve-tone music, but also the *Neue Sachlichkeit* of Paul Hindemith and others) as well as newer forms of popular music, most notably jazz. Even before they came to power, the National Socialists attempted to capitalise on this by founding the *Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur* (Militant League for German Culture) in the late 1920s, under the leadership of Alfred Rosenberg.[26] This was, in Michael Kater's words, a "political lobby" aimed at halting a decline in German culture and music caused – in the view of the *Kampfbund* – by Jewish and Bolshevist influences. After the NSDAP came to power,[27] this widespread fear regarding the fate of German culture – coupled with the difficulty that both musicians and musicologists faced in trying to make a living in an economically precarious period – made it relatively easy for the NS regime to reach out to musicians. Pamela Potter has argued, for instance, that for the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, then in financial dire straits, the intervention of the NS regime into what had previously been a private corporation actually helped guarantee the survival of the Orchestra, which in the previous years had tried repeatedly to gain subventions or even status as a national institution.[28] Figures of the stature of the composer Richard Strauss took on important positions in the new ministries and institutions. Strauss was the head of the *Reichsmusikkammer* (Reich Chamber of Music) from 1933-1935; in the words of Shirli Gilbert, the *Reichsmusikkammer* "aimed to centralize and regulate musical life as well as to purge the musical scene of Jews, foreigners, and political leftists."[29] The *Reichsmusikkammer* was a subchamber of the *Reichskulturkammer* (Reich Chamber of Culture), itself set up through the *Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Progaganda* (Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda; hereafter *Reichspropagandaministerium*), headed by Josef Goebbels,

---

26 A.E. Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, and Economics in Nazi Germany: The Reich Chambers of Music, Theater, and the Visual Arts*, Chapel Hill–London 1993, p. 20-31; M.H. Kater, *The Twisted Muse: Musicians and their Music in the Third Reich*, New York–Oxford 1997, p. 14-22. Steinweis gives 1928 as the date of its founding, while Kater points to 1929. According to Kater there was persistent disagreement between Rosenberg/the Kampfbund and actual NS policy. M.H. Kater, *The Twisted Muse…*, op. cit., p. 14ff.

27 *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, the official full name of the German Nazi Party.

28 P.M. Potter, *The Nazi "Seizure" of the Berlin Philharmonic…*, op. cit., p. 39-66.

29 S. Gilbert, *Music in the Holocaust: Confronting Life in the Nazi Ghettos and Camps*, Oxford 2005, p. 437.

through the *Reichskulturkammergesetz* of September 1933.[30] Everyone involved in the creation, reproduction, intellectual or technical processing, dissemination, preservation, and sale of cultural goods had to become a member of the respective chamber. Clause §10 of the ordinance of the *Reichskulturkammer* allowed the exclusion of artists if they were deemed not to have the necessary ability for their profession. This clause was extensively used to exclude Jews, Roma and Sinti, and other unwanted groups from the chambers, an exclusion which meant those affected could no longer work in their chosen profession.[31]

When the *Reichsministerium* chose to dedicate a special exhibition to what they called *Entartete Musik* – "degenerate music" – in 1938, they advertised it with a poster which neatly sums up the position of the NSDAP on the threats to German musical culture and which shows how these threats became conflated.[32] The poster is modelled on that for Ernst Krenek's *Jonny spielt auf*, a jazz-inspired music theatre piece, which was extremely successful when premiered in 1927. In the *Entartete Musik* version, the features of the black jazz saxophonist from the original poster are exaggerated, not least through the addition of an earring clearly intended to indicate not a modern, urban musician but his supposedly "primitive" or "barbarian" roots. Also, and somewhat incongruously, the rosette worn by the musician in the original poster is now overlaid with a depiction of the Star of David, which would become the basis for the yellow badge that Jews were forced to wear in occupied Poland from September 1939, and in the rest of the Reich from September 1941. In Stanton's model, symbolisation of people as belonging to some clearly defined and opposing groups comes at Stage 2 (Symbolisation) and can also play a significant role at Stage 6 (Preparation, discussed below). The poster specifically links musical discourse to this practice of symbolisation and shows how the stage of dehumanisation, including in the form of caricature as here, lays the ideological groundwork for these later stages.

The *Entartete Musik* exhibition is, in name alone, only the most obvious example of an ideology which contrasts the healthy, strong German tradition of music with the "unhealthy" music of some modern composers and newer genres, particularly jazz. German music is seen to be intrinsically superior to all other music: consequently, in the National Socialist version of the argument, it must

30 See here also B. Sponheuer, *Nationalsozialismus*, [in:] L. Finscher (ed.), *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2. neubearbeitete Ausgabe, Kassel 1997, p. 25-43.

31 A.E. Steinweis, op. cit., p. 33ff.

32 For more on this exhibition see especially A. Dümling, P. Girth (eds.), *Entartete Musik. Dokumentation und Kommentar zur Düsseldorfer Ausstellung von 1938*, Düsseldorf 1993.

be "cleansed" of the influence of Jews, Africans and African Americans, amongst others. It is worth stressing, however, that music and music policy in the "Third Reich" was effective not so much because of what it was "against" as what it was "for". The *Entartete Musik* exhibition, for example, was accompanied by a programme of concerts and speeches focusing on the great German tradition; competitions were used to stimulate composers to write new works in the service of the new society, particularly in the fields of opera (both folk opera and national opera) and song.[33] Moreover, NS discourse and policy sometimes diverged considerably from practice. In the case of Arnold Schoenberg, it was relatively easy to construct a damning narrative around a (Jewish) composer who even now is generally regarded as difficult, and whose major theoretical contribution – the twelve-tone system of composition – is still regarded with suspicion by some. In the case of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, however, the party hardliners had a real problem on their hands. Though the statue of Mendelssohn, which stood proudly in front of the *Gewandhaus* in Leipzig, was removed in 1936, it proved more difficult and in the end counterproductive to ensure that Mendelssohn's name stayed off concert programmes as well. In the later years of the NS regime there were several attempts to find an alternative to perhaps his most popular composition, the incidental music to Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but none could usurp Mendelssohn's version in popularity. Several contemporary writers chose to defend the continued playing of Mendelssohn's music by referring to Richard Wagner's comments, in his infamous essay on Jewish music, to the effect that Mendelssohn was a good example of how composers of Jewish descent could "transcend" this and become great German composers.[34]

There were anomalies in the attitudes taken to other supposedly "degenerate" forms of music as well, particularly swing and jazz. The prohibition of broadcasting and listening to jazz music in October 1935 was due to its supposedly devilish

33 F.K. Prieberg, *Musik im NS-Staat*, Frankfurt am Main 1982, p. 107-143; A. Dümling, P. Girth (eds.), op. cit.

34 See F.K. Prieberg, op. cit., p. 144-164, particularly on attempts to replace Mendelssohn's music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Prieberg is adamant that "anyone in this period who was involved in creating a score music for Shakespeare's drama contributed consciously and actively (*willentlich*) to the elimination of the 'Jew' Mendelssohn"; F.K. Prieberg, op. cit., p. 147. Kater cites examples that show how Mendelssohn was also subjected to anti-Semitic abuse in music criticism: conductor Leopold Reichwein, for example, wrote in the *Völkische Beobachter* (edited by Rosenberg) that Jewish composers like Mendelssohn chiefly entered the music business in order to make money out of it – a typical anti-semitic cliché. M.H. Kater, *The Twisted Muse…*, op. cit., p. 29-30.

sound, which was said to appeal to the basest animal instincts – another clear example of Stage 3 (Dehumanisation) at work.[35] However, it was unpopular legislation even among NS officials. When the prohibition of jazz proved impossible to enforce or police (not least because policemen themselves did not always have the necessary musical knowledge to identify jazz or swing music), Goebbels himself suggested founding a German Swing Orchestra in 1942.[36]

Such exceptions to the general rule – and there were many – reflect not only a significant divide between theory/ideology and practice, but in the case of music programming a pragmatic response to the most pressing current concerns, such as the necessity of keeping people motivated in wartime (we shall return to this subject below). But if censorship of certain styles and genres was a good deal more fraught with difficulties than often presumed, the more simplistic but devastating tactic of first, marking off and then excluding people classed as Jews from musical life, was easier to achieve. From a very early point in the NS regime, Jewish musicians living and working in Germany were confined to activities within the context of the *Jüdischer Kulturbund* where, in turn, only music by Jewish composers was to be played before an exclusively Jewish audience.[37] The *Jüdischer Kulturbund* can be understood as a means of facilitating the exclusion of Jewish musicians from mainstream musical life under the guise of allowing them to play and be party to the music that was appropriate to "their" racial characteristics; making all Jewish musicians work under the auspices of the *Kulturbund* was however in the first instance a means of control.[38] The division of German musical life in this way was preceded by defamatory statements issued by NS officials claiming that Jewish musicians were stealing jobs from German musicians. The NSDAP also argued that "non-German" works were putting off "German audiences".[39] Operas, oratorios, and other works on Old Testament

35 W. Burkhardt, *Musik der Stunde Null*, Hamburg 1985, quoted here from Ch. Wolf, op. cit., p. 212. For an extended study of jazz under National Socialism, see also M.H. Kater, *Different Drummers: Jazz in the Culture of Nazi Germany*, Oxford–New Haven 2003.

36 Ch. Wolf, op. cit., p. 212-220. Wolf also notes that the ban on jazz was temporarily suspended for the Olympic Games in 1936.

37 A.E Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, and Economics in Nazi Germany*: *The Reich Chambers of Music, Theater, and the Visual Arts*, Chapel Hill–London 1993, p. 120ff. This chamber was finally dissolved in 1941 with the beginning of transportation to the concentration camps. In the "10 Stages" version of Stanton's model, such customary and legal measures to exclude certain people now come under the stage "Discrimination", the introduction of which remedies some of the difficulties we faced in applying the original model.

38 M.H. Kater, *The Twisted Muse…*, op. cit., p. 99.

39 A. E. Steinweis, op. cit., p. 27.

subjects – Handel's are a case in point – presented a different kind of problem, and the libretti and subject matter of these were often quietly changed to remove any possible positive representation of Jews or Jewish history and culture; the same was true of other works of music theatre with central or positively represented Jewish characters, as with the case of Léhar's 1902 opera *Der Rastelbinder.*[40]

There are clearer correspondences to Stage 2 as well, such as the publication, in 1940, of the *Lexikon der Juden in der Musik,* which is little more than an alphabetical list of Jewish composers past and present that made it easy to identify Jewish musicians. Symbolisation can also be seen at work in film music in this period. It could be and was used to denote or characterise members of excluded social groups and political opponents, and to underline polarisations such as "good" and "evil". Studies of the film music of Herbert Windt, for example, have pointed to the use of "oriental"-style melodies to denote Jews, and the complex musical messages embedded in the use of Jewish-, pseudo-Jewish and German-connoted music in anti-Semitic films have been analysed in recent studies as well.[41] The situation is more complicated when we turn to another persecuted group, namely the Roma. Continued and often positive referencing of "gypsy" music in this period stands in direct contrast to the treatment and ultimately mass murder of Roma under National Socialism, though as Brian Currid has argued, there is an inner logic relating to the notion that "pure" gypsies represented a type of folk ideal; Nazi propaganda, meanwhile, often justified attacks on Roma by claiming that most Roma were in fact of mixed race. In other words, the surprisingly positive attitude to "gypsy" music sometimes seen under National Socialism is nonetheless still the product of the type of *Blut und Boden* racialisation which also resulted in genocide.[42]

---

40 U. Petersen, *An Acrobat in the Circus Dome. Rudolf Wey's 1944 Edition of Léhar's Operetta "Der Rastelbinder"*, paper presented during the conference *Music, Oppression and Resistance*, Amsterdam 2-3.03.2012, unpublished.

41 R. Volker, *"Von oben sehr erwünscht": die Filmmusik Herbert Windts im NS-Propagandafilm*, Trier 2003; B. Nguyen, *Mit Musik geht alles besser: Strategien psychischer Einflussnahme über die Musik in den propagandistischen Unterhaltungsfilme des Dritten Reichs und Hollywood*, Marburg 2010; R. HaCohen, *The Music Libel Against the Jews*, New Haven 2011, especially Chapter 7.

42 B. Currid, op. cit., p. 171-215. For a discussion of attitudes to Roma and music in this period see also the discussion of Bartók's attitude to "gypsy" music in K. Trumpener, *Béla Bartók and the Rise of Comparative Ethnomusicology: Nationalism, Race Purity, and the Legacy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire*, [in:] R. M. Radano, P. V. Bohlman (eds.), *Music and the Racial Imagination*. Chicago 2000, pp.403-444. Bartók is often praised for quite openly criticising the type of exclusionist and purist attitudes

To summarise, Stanton's stages of classification, symbolisation and dehumanisation can be seen at work at various levels in discourse on German music in particular, but also in the impact of more general policies aimed to gradually exclude Jews and others from public and cultural life. The National Socialists exploited a longer and by no means exclusively German strand in music research which idealised "true" folk music as it sprang from a people untainted by commerce and the influence of other, less worthy traditions; they also capitalised on music-historical traditions which placed German art music at the pinnacle of all traditions, as well as on fears that this tradition was in danger of decline. The consequences were far-reaching. By appealing both to artists in Germany and to the world at large as cultured custodians of Germany's art music heritage, a musical veil could be drawn over the true nature and intent of National Socialism. Historians differ on the actual complicity of figures such as Strauss and the conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler who, however briefly, occupied leading positions within cultural and political institutions during the Third Reich.[43] There can be no doubt that their participation was a public relations coup for the National Socialist government; the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, too, became another cog in the NS propaganda machine when it became the official orchestra of the Reich, and as such appeared not only at major NS events but continued to have an international profile as well.[44]

With recourse to widely accepted representations of folk music as the wellsprings of musical life in particular regions, the National Socialists also had an ideological basis for the promotion of communal singing, particularly amongst children and young people; we will discuss this in more detail in the next section.

---

to the idea of national music that were a cornerstone of NS ideology. However, as Trumpener argues, while celebrating the richness of musical cultures that migration and cultural transfer produced, Bartók was deeply suspicious both of Roma and Jewish musical culture. Trumpener argues that this suspicion is related to the fact that neither group could claim a long-standing historical relationship to a particular land, a connection generally emphasised in ideas about folk music from the eighteenth century onwards.

43 See especially M.H. Kater, *The Twisted Muse…*, op. cit. and on Strauss also the relevant chapter in M.H. Kater, *Composers of the Nazi Era: Eight Portraits*, Oxford–New Haven 2000. Musicologists, too, profited immensely from institutional support through the NS regime, particularly when their research was in a suitable area such as research into the origins of German folksong, or into a racial typology of musical styles.

44 See M. Aster, *Das Reichsorchester. Die Berliner Philharmoniker und der Nationalsozialismus*, Munich 2007; P.M. Potter, *The Nazi "Seizure" of the Berlin Philharmonic…*, op. cit., p. 39-66.

In the context of the current stages, it is worth pointing out that although there are examples of National Socialist song texts which stoked fear of particular social groups in ways that can easily be understood as contributing to processes of dehumanisation, this does not seem to be the most important function of song under the NS regime. What NS song lyrics demonstrate, on balance, is that dehumanisation functioned most effectively when it reduced enemies to the status of a hurdle to be overcome in order to reach a brighter future. It is this bright future, the positive values associated with the struggle, and the certainty of victory, that actually suffuse the songs of this period. In other words, as well as stressing the inhumanity of the opposing group, promoting certainty of the rightness of the cause and the certainty of victory were equally important elements in preparing for the atrocities to come.

B. Stages 4, 5, 6 (Organisation, Polarisation, Preparation)

The next three stages in Stanton's model deal primarily with logistical and organisational issues. On the face of it, music would seem destined to play a lesser role in at least two of these stages, namely Stage 4 (Organisation) and Stage 6 (Preparation) – with the possible exception that the establishment of institutions such as the Reich ministries discussed previously can easily be viewed as part of the stage of organisation, since they made it possible to begin disaggregating German society into racially-defined groups and ultimately to exclude some of these from participation in political, social, and cultural life. However, as we shall argue here, the process of organisation and preparation – in Stanton's model, the latter is primarily concerned with strategic and logistical ways to facilitate mass murder – is also mirrored in the great emphasis laid on certain musical practices.

It is difficult to assess the exact impact of music in constituting social structures, relations and modes of behaviour, but there can be no doubt that the National Socialists believed in the importance of music for achieving these aims. One of the first indications of the role attributed to music is its sheer omnipresence in so many aspects of daily life under National Socialism. This is most striking with regard to its role in youth organisations and in schools. Again, there is a precedent for this in pre-war pedagogy and particularly in the wave of youth organisations that emerged in Germany in the early twentieth century, and which often afforded music an even more fundamental role than comparable organisations in other countries. However, the extent to which singing and other forms of music-making were integrated into the lives of children post-1933 went much further. To understand the logic behind this, it is necessary to reflect not only on how effective music can be in promoting ideology, and on music's connection

– discussed in the previous section – to a wider discourse on German origins and German supremacy in music. We also need to consider the links between music, discipline and physical and mental drill that ultimately derive from military traditions, and which in this case were also applied with a military goal in mind: to prepare boys and girls for the lives they were expected to live, and in the case of the boys the deaths they were expected to die, in the imminent struggle for Germany. For this reason, we suggest that the use of music in educational and youth contexts in particular can be understood – among other things – as a strategy of organisation in the sense of Stanton's Stage 4. Although it could be argued that, if anything, this relates more to general mobilisation for war than to genocide specifically, the distinction is in some ways irrelevant since from the NS point of view, the Jews and Bolsheviks were seen as the real enemy.[45] This is actually quite typical of strategies for justifying and then denying genocide.

The concerted and multifunctional uses of song are one of the most distinctive and striking aspects of musical practice under National Socialism and thus deserving of the special attention the topic has received in a number of recent studies.[46] That songs and singing can play an important and sometimes even crucial role in different types of social organisation and ritual life, including in social and political movements, was well-known and in Germany well-researched even before the NSDAP emerged as a political force. The Nazis drew on this research, on the experiences of the German youth movement (in which music often played a defining role), and on the success of songs as a motivator of group solidarity in the context of the workers' movement (from which, regardless of their opposite political position, NS propagandists were happy to borrow a few tunes). Alfred Roth[47] – developing ideas already explored by Alexander von Bormann[48] – has suggested that what he calls NS mass songs can be roughly divided into several categories, and that these reflect the particular historical stage and

45 See here particularly Browning Ch.R., *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, New York 1992.

46 Studies focused on songs and singing include A. Roth, *Das nationalsozialistische Massenlied: Untersuchungen zur Genese, Ideologie und Funktion*, Würzburg 1993; G. Niedhart, G. Broderick (eds.), op. cit.; E. Frommann, *Die Lieder der NS-Zeit: Untersuchungen zur nationalsozialistischen Liedpropaganda von den Anfängen bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Köln 1999; R. Klopffleisch, *Lieder der Hitlerjugend: eine psychologische Studie an ausgewählten Beispielen*, Frankfurt am Main 1995.

47 A. Roth, op. cit.

48 A. von Bormann, *Das nationalsozialistische Gemeinschaftslied*, [in:] H. Denkler, K. Prümm (eds.), *Die deutsche Literatur im dritten Reich,* Stuttgart 1976, p. 256-280.

needs of the National Socialist movement at any given time. Thus, songs used in the early history of the movement, from the 1920s to the *Machtergreifung* (seizure of power), feature a large number of soldiers' songs (the immediate target audience was, after all, veterans of World War I) but also many songs celebrating acts of violence and revenge; this is particularly the case with SA songs which emerged from 1926 and which were often modelled directly on songs used by the Nazi's arch-enemies, the communists. Roth suggests that this emphasis on struggle changed in 1933: songs and songbooks produced after this point were necessarily directed at a different and wider audience; songs about struggle thus gave way to songs celebrating the new era, and songs introduced in the context of the elaborate system of festivals with which the National Socialists attempted to weaken the hold of the Christian church. He notes, however, that songs advocating hatred continued to be used in the context of the SS, and – by extension – the *Hitler Jugend* (Hitler Youth; hereafter also HJ).[49]

It may in fact be the case that songs aimed at children (including very young children) were generally more brutal than songs aimed at adults. The childrens' songs discussed by Wendelin Müller-Blattau and Ulrich Günther[50] are marked not by their description of the enemy, but by lyrics focusing on an unquestioning acceptance of following the flag and the struggle wheresoever it may lead; they often introduce as a matter of course the idea that those singing the song may well die in the struggle. Such lyrics are couched in songs which in every other musical aspect are perfect "children's songs" – easy to remember and with light, attractive melodies, songs written by some of the leading German songwriters of their generation. We should be wary of reading too much into the ferocity and brutality of some of these lyrics, at least to the extent of viewing these as products of National Socialism itself: in many ways, the content of these songs marks a continuation from aspects of the culture of childhood already prevalent in the Wilhelmine period.[51] Other aspects of the use of music in schools are likewise not unique to the "Third Reich", such as the integration of national anthems into daily school routine, though here again the way this was applied under National Socialism was particularly rigorous. After the *Anschluss* of Austria,[52] school pu-

49 "By extension", given the close organisational connections between the SS and the HJ.

50 In: G. Niedhart, G. Broderick (eds.), *Lieder in Politik und Alltag des Nationalsozialismus*, Frankfurt–New York 1999.

51 See e.g. D. Cáceres, *"Marsch der Bleisoldaten": instruktive Instrumentalmusik des 19. Jahrhunderts im Dienst von Kriegserziehung?* [in:] M. Schramm (ed.) *Militärmusik zwischen Nutzen und Missbrauch*, Bonn 2011.

52 In other words, the annexation and occupation of Austria by NS Germany.

pils in Austria had to know the "Deutschlandlied" and the "Horst-Wessel-Lied" by heart; ignorance of these songs, or a refusal to sing them, was taken to identify students as dissidents. Punitive exercising was introduced to discipline school pupils in Austria in the 1940s, and in this context students were forced to march and run while singing patriotic songs.[53] Young people who chose a different type of musical, visual and linguistic identity – such as the so-called "Swing Kids" – were perceived to be a real threat to the NS system. In the years from 1941-1943, *Hitler Jugend* leader Artur Axmann (aka Erich Siewert) and SS-leader Himmler went so far as to send many "Swing Kids" or "Swing Heinis" to prisons and concentration camps purely because of their chosen identity and anglophile habitus.[54]

Music was also an integral element, instrument and function of both the *Hitler Jugend* and *Bund Deutscher Mädel* (League of German Girls or BDM, the female branch of the HJ), and was a constant accompaniment to the daily life of the *Reichsarbeitsdienst* (Reich Labour Service): those who are singing cannot discuss and debate, was the theory.[55] Courses in music education were extended to include the specific task of music education in the Hitler Youth; from 1940-1943, school music lessons in Innsbruck exclusively taught soldier songs and songs from the *Hitler Jugend* repertoire.[56] From 1939 participation in these organisations was mandatory across Germany and Austria. There is evidence that the musical activities of both the *Hitler Jugend* and the *Bund Deutscher Mädel* played

53 Ch. Wolf, op. cit., p. 206.

54 Ch. Wolf, op. cit., p. 216f. This can also be read as an example of polarisation, by removing from the possibility of discourse people whose different values implicitly question the polarised view of society presented by NS propaganda.

55 As well as various essays in G. Niedhart, G. Broderick (eds.), op. cit., see especially A. Niessen, *"Die Lieder waren die eigentlichen Verführer!": Mädchen und Musik im Nationalsozialismus*, Mainz–New York 1999, p. 220ff. who draws extensively on interviews with former members of the BDM. They describe the psychological imprinting and seductive effects but also the trivialisation of political events through songs. They also make frequent reference to the uncritical reception of the songs, not least because there was a ban on speaking about them. Not dealing with the content and message of the songs accounted for an uncritical participation on the one hand and, concurrently, an emotionally charged experience of *Volksgemeinschaft* (solidarity) due to the singing of BDM songs on the other. See also M.H. Kater, *Hitler Youth*, Cambridge–Massachusetts–London 2006. The *Reichsarbeitsdienst* was a type of six-month national civil service which had to be completed between the ages of 18 and 25.

56 See Ch. Wolf, op. cit., p. 68, who quotes directly from the report of an eyewitness, and Ch. Wolf, op. cit., p. 264.

an important function in tying young people psychologically to the organisation even before this point. Whilst the songs of the *Hitler Jugend* often drew on the style of military marching music, BDM songs also confirmed gender stereotypes and were used alongside folk dance and gymnastics. Women were supposed to become housewives and mothers, and to educate their own children in the German folksong repertoire within the informal sphere of the family.[57] The song repertoire of the *Bund Deutscher Mädel* served to reiterate gender-specific role allocations at several levels. To this end, BDM songbooks contained mostly cradle songs, lullabies, dance and play songs or misty-eyed songs about nature, work and idealised, self-sacrificing female figures.[58]

From 1935-1939, the festivities of the *Reichsmusiktage* and other performance showcases brought boys and girls together to perform their role-specific song collections publicly.[59] Providing music in context of rallies and other major events marking important dates in the National Socialist calendar was one of the most important functions of both the HJ and the BDM. Next to major public holidays such as Hitler's birthday on 20 April or the commemoration of fallen NS members on 9 November,[60] there were also smaller-scale, regular ceremonies and rituals generally modelled on the form and function of church services. Thus, *Morgenfeiern* was to replace church services on Sundays, and Christian weddings, confirmation ceremonies and similar were also to be substituted by NS alternatives. For these occasions, special songs were created and arranged on behalf of the *Reichspropagandaministerium*. The end of such festivities was always marked by the national anthem. This elaborate calendar of National Socialist feast-days was introduced in an attempt to focus the collective spirit of the people on this rather than alternative utopias and visions – in particular, those offered by the Christian churches. School life as well was marked by a

57 A. Niessen, op. cit., p. 98ff., 110, 116ff.

58 A. Niessen, op. cit., p. 219. There was a general disagreement about whether it was appropriate for girls to sing marching music, lansquenet songs (*Landsknechtslieder*) or songs praising the fatherland. A former BDM member recalls that lansquenet songs were sung by girls, despite their masculine and military character, whenever they needed an upbeat accompaniment for marching.

59 A. Niessen, op. cit., p. 103-116.

60 On 9 November the song "Heute schreiten hunderttausend Fahnen" was always played and when Hitler appeared on the public scene the "Badenweiler Marsch", his favourite march, announced his coming. See K. Schmeer, *Die Regie des öffentlichen Lebens im dritten Reich*, München 1956 and K. Vondung, *Magie und Manipulation: Ideologischer Kult und politische Religion des Nationalsozialismus*, Göttingen 1971 for more examples.

preponderance of different celebrations and ceremonies, and the carefully conceived use of song, movement and other types of collective action to promote the idea of community at these events had an emotional impact on participants which often stayed with them for years thereafter.[61] Collective singing in the context of all these ceremonies permeated the life of the people with NS messages and ideology, and was designed to create a common NS tradition, which should strengthen the *Volksgemeinschaft*.[62] This was at least the theory: in practice, traditions proved harder to replace, as can be seen most clearly in the case of Christmas. Rather than even attempt to replace it, the strategy here was to emphasise those elements that were in keeping with basic tenets of NS ideology and propaganda – such as the metaphor of light coming from darkness, which formed the basis for a song by Hans Baumann, "Hohe Nacht der klaren Sterne", that outlived the NS regime.[63]

Thus, music – particularly, but not exclusively, songs and singing – was used with the express intention of forging the German people into a unified, organised, and efficient fighting machine, from the level of forming girls into obedient wives and mothers through to impressing on future soldiers an acceptance of the hero's death. For the real aim of creating a strong *Volksgemeinschaft* was not the benefits of the collective as such, but strength in the face of an enemy. Music as well as songs thus reflect an increasing mobilisation and also militarisation of society, as can also be seen in the composition of newer "military requiems" as well.[64] Taken together, it is possible to view all these developments as a strategy that in Stanton's terms can be understood as organisation (Stage 4), but in terms of human resources rather than munitions. However, given that musical life under National Socialism is often reduced to mention of military or march music (and Wagner), it is worth stressing that while many of the musical activities of the youth organisations in particular had an explicitly militaristic feel and setting, the types of music used in the contexts discussed was much more varied.

---

61 S. Spratte, *Die Schulfeier und ihre Rolle im Erziehungssystem des Dritten Reiches*, [in:] G. Niedhart, G. Broderick (eds.), op. cit., p. 133-146. He cites from one witness who admitted that for years after, he had countered bouts of depression by singing the Nazi songs that, in his childhood, had been so bound up with positive feelings.

62 K. Vondung, op. cit., p. 70ff.

63 See e.g. Perry J., *Nazifying Christmas: Political Culture and Popular Celebration in the Third Reich*, "Central European History" 2005, vol. 38, p. 572-605; Ch. Deutschbein, N. Korsten (eds.), *Heilige Nacht? Das Weihnachtsfest im Dienste der NS-Propaganda*, Cloppenburg 2007.

64 K. Schmeer, op. cit.

In Stanton's original model, the stage of Polarisation (Stage 5) represents a turning point typically marked by a move from racist ideas and talk to racist violence; in the case of National Socialism, the pogroms of November 1938 were such a moment.[65] Work remains to be done to establish whether there was an increase in songs with an obvious message of hatred at this point; we are also not aware of any studies indicating the use of music to motivate or accompany acts of violence against Jews and Jewish institutions in these pogroms.[66] It is notable, however, that the exhibition "Entartete Musik" took place in Düsseldorf only a matter of months before these pogroms, and in many ways the exhibition – discussed above in the context of strategies of dehumanisation – can also be regarded as an example of polarisation.[67] Music also served to underscore – as it were – polarised presentations of "good" German and "evil" or threatening Jewish elements in propaganda films such as *Jud Süß* (1940).[68] This period also saw decisive moves to remove Jews from cultural life entirely: from the end of 1938, they were no longer allowed to participate in cultural events, though this prohibition really only became effective in 1941, when they were clearly marked out by the *Judenstern*; as discussed previously, the de facto separation of Jewish and non-Jewish musicians had begun to occur at a much earlier stage, from the setting up of the *Reichsmusikkammer* onwards.

Another key element in polarisation is ensuring that moderates are silenced – by any means necessary. One very significant feature of communications and propaganda strategy under National Socialism is worthy of discussion here: the use of radio. Developments in radio broadcasting from 1933-1945, including in the type of music to be broadcast, reflect the increasing necessity of closely

---

65 In the "10 Stages" version, the pogroms would now more likely occur at the new stage of "Persecution", as would e.g. the forced removal of property. Acts of physical violence do occur at the "Polarisation" stage of the new model, but are focused on killing moderates, and leaders.

66 This certainly seems very likely. We do know that street violence against Jews and other concerted attacks by the *Sturmabteilung* in the later years of the Weimar Republic often included the singing of taunting songs. See C. Birdsall, *Nazi Soundscapes, Sound, Technology and Urban Space in Germany, 1933–1945*, Amsterdam 2012, p. 40.

67 It is worth restressing here that the stages in Stanton's model are not merely consecutive and that one stage does not end when another begins. The discursive process of dehumanisation sets the groundwork for polarisation and ultimately for extermination, but as such is integral to these stages as well.

68 B. Nguyen, op. cit., p. 198-229. See also the discussion of film music and symbolisation (Stage 2), above.

controlling the information received by the public at large and of inhibiting the spread of any but official news reports. Radio played a significant role in promoting NS ideology, but could only do so if, firstly, people had radios; secondly, if they listened to the "correct" radio broadcasts; and thirdly, if they did not listen to other broadcasts which painted a contradictory picture. The introduction and rapid spread of the so-called *Volksempfänger* radio devices in 1934 – which can also be seen as a further element of Stage 4, Organisation – fulfilled the first of these tasks by making this new mass media available to all but the poorest households. Nonetheless, even members of these households could be reached through the practice of radio listening in factories and other places of work.[69] In such public contexts, listening to the radio was not optional as it was the goal of radio transmissions to unite the population, to strengthen the *Volksgemeinschaft*, and to create a sense of oneness between the *Führer* and the *Volk*.[70] At home, however, it certainly was optional, so that an attractive programme of music was necessary in order to ensure people stayed tuned in.[71] In fact, so important was this function of music in radio communications that it led to one of many splits between the more official ideological position as regards the educational power of "great" German music, and the need to pander to the tastes of the public to keep them tuned in to the right broadcasts. Since from September 1939 it was illegal to listen to foreign radio stations – those who did so risked imprisonment or even the death sentence – the authorities could be at least partly sure that their audience would not receive mixed messages.[72] However, this by itself

69 B. Currid, op. cit., p. 19ff.

70 This also necessitated the exclusion from this listening community of others: from 1939 Jews were not allowed to own radios. C. Birdsall, op. cit., p. 110, who refers here to M.P. Hensle, *Rundfunkverbrechen: Das Hören von "Feindsendern" im Nationalsozialismus*, Berlin 2003. The exclusion of Jews from participation in culture in this period also extended to bans on them visiting theatres and cinemas.

71 H.-J. Koch, *Das Wunschkonzert im NS-Rundfunk. Unterhaltungsmusik und Propaganda im Rundfunk des Dritten Reichs*, Graz 2006, p. 12ff quotes Hitler: "Radio will serve the community what is good for them: music neverending. Anything as long as they don't learn how to think". In 1934, Eugen Hadamovsky, *Reichssendeleiter* and vice-president of the *Reichsrundfunkkammer*, was reported as saying that "No reasonable person can harbour any doubt that the basis of radio is musical light entertainment. The music has to relax the listener – and get the listener to listen at all". Quoted in H.-J. Koch, op. cit., p. 14.

72 The *Volksempfänger* were set to long- and medium wave and therefore could not generally receive broadcasts from other countries, which transmitted on short-wave, except at night; H.-J. Krug, *Radio*, Konstanz 2010, p. 18. Until September 1939 listening

was not sufficient. Though classed as "degenerate", such was the popularity of swing and jazz that despite the harsh sanctions attached to tuning in to foreign radio stations, many people were tempted to do so simply in order to hear the music. Thus, it became necessary to create supposedly "German" (or "Germanised" versions) of jazz and swing for radio broadcasting, if the entire system of propaganda through radio was not to collapse.[73] After the outbreak of war, and as the war's impact on people's lives became more extreme, it became even more important to use radio as a means of light relief and distraction from the difficulties of everyday life and to mask the realities of what was happening.[74] The music programming thus did not itself become more "polarised", but in many ways in fact more mainstream, and to this extent even less obviously influenced by ideological concerns. Paradigmatic for this approach was the request programme known as the *Wunschkonzert*, which had the added function of linking those at home to soldiers on the front.

Propaganda of a different type marks another aspect of musical practice that became increasingly important after the invasion of Poland and the onset of ghettoisation and deportation. In Stanton's original model, such is the Stage of Preparation (Stage 6), which amongst other things can include the gathering of people in one place to facilitate their mass execution (in the newer version of the model, this is assigned to the new stage of "Persecution"). Here again, music had a role to play. From the very first concentration camps, whose inmates were primarily political prisoners, music was used in an attempt to delude people as to the nature and function of the camps. Concerts were given for those living nearby, and songs had to be sung when the "*Arbeitskommandos*" marched to their workplaces. Those prisoners involved in singing and musical performance were supposed to lead the neighbours to believe that they were in good spirits.[75] This became even more important when the camps and ghettos became, in effect, holding areas for mass

---

to foreign radio transmissions was undesirable but not forbidden. With the beginning of the war legislation was introduced outlining "emergency" measures with regard to radio listening. H.-J. Koch, op. cit., p. 31ff.

73 An example of this is the renaming of songs to make them sound more German. Thus, the "Tiger Rag" became "Schwarzer Panther" ("Black Panther", *sic*) and the "Big noise at Winneteka" became "Großer Lärm vom Ku'damm" ("Big noise on Kuhdamm", a reference to a central street in Berlin). H.-J. Koch, op. cit., p. 49.

74 H.-J. Koch, op. cit., p. 45ff.

75 J. Brauer, *Musik im Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen*, Berlin 2009, 94; see also G. Knapp, *"Befohlene Musik": Musik und Musikmissbrauch im Frauenlager von*

murder. Music and cultural life generally were actively encouraged in ghettoes and camps such as Theresienstadt (Terezín), and were used to try and persuade the outside world (for example, visitors from the International Red Cross) of an essentially "happy" and rewarding life there with full respect for the principles of humanitarian law. Such efforts included a propaganda film featuring music by Pavel Haas and others, made in 1944 but never released. Along with Haas, Victor Ullmann is probably the most famous composer to have been imprisoned in Theresienstadt; he died in Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1944. The jazz band "Ghetto Swingers" founded by Czech clarinettist Bedrich Weiss in Theresienstadt camp and lead by German pianist Martin Roman was also forced to contribute musically to the concealment and deception of NS crimes in Theresienstadt. Most of the band members were killed only a couple of days after their performance for this film.[76]

Music had been used to organise daily life in work camps and also in concentration camps from the very early years of the "Third Reich". It was meant to discipline the prisoners and to ritualise life in the camps, with camp orchestras playing or prisoners themselves singing while they marched to their workplace; music was an integral part of the muster and of exercising.[77] The impact of these practices in the case of the concentration camps was however very different from its use in other institutions such as schools, as we shall discuss in the next section. There are also sometimes significant differences in policy and practice over the twelve-year period that the NSDAP was in power. From 1942, for example, forced labourers in the work camp Sachsenhausen had to work in the armaments industry. In this context music was used to push the prisoners to work harder. To this end, concessions were also made to the prisoners, with new camp orchestras being founded or existing orchestras receiving more support. The aim of such cultural activities, including concerts, was to build up the stamina and spirit of the working prisoners and prevent unrest.[78] It has been suggested that this use of music in the concentration camps was the result of an instruction from the very

Auschwitz-Birkenau, "Acta Musicologica" 1996, vol. 68, p. 149-166; S. Gilbert, op. cit., p. 439.

76 Ch. Wolf, op. cit., p. 219f; see also S. Gilbert, op. cit., p. 439.

77 J. Brauer, op. cit., p. 11, 93ff.

78 G. Fackler, *Lied und Gesang im KZ*, "Lied und populäre Kultur/Song and popular culture" 2001, vol. 46, p. 153. We could see this as related to Stage 4, which in Stanton's original model includes stockpiling of armaments; by the same token, however, these were directed to the war effort rather than specifically to the policy of genocide, to the extent that the one can be separated from the other.

top ranks of government.[79] However, the use of music apparently to improve the well-being of prisoners must be held in balance with the fact that, far from being merely ancillary to the German war effort and the ongoing genocide, musical activities and practices were also implicated in the act of killing as well, as the next section will explore.

C. Stage 7, Extermination[80]

If the presence of orchestras, chamber ensembles, cabaret, music theatre, and working composers in the ghettoes is surprising, the integration of music into the day-to-day workings of the concentration camps seems an even more horrific conjunction. The music played when prisoners arrived, when escaped prisoners were recaptured, and at executions, ritualised and dramatised the killing and may have served to distance those directly involved from the actual nature of what they were doing.[81] There is certainly strong evidence that music and other forms of leisure and entertainment were specifically employed to relieve the psychological burden borne by those soldiers and reserve police officers charged with carrying out mass murder outside of the camps: an order issued by Colonel Montua of the Police Regiment Centre on the eve of some of the first mass shootings stressed that "The impressions of the day are to be blotted out through the holding of social events in the evenings"; this could include performances by special entertainment units who, in one reported case, begged to be allowed to participate in the massacre timetabled for the next day.[82] The use of music to

79 It is generally supposed that the camp orchestras were set up in response to a command to this effect issued in August 1942. Milan Kuna suggested that Heinrich Müller, head of the Fourth Division of the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Reich Security Main Office)*, issued this command to the commanders of the camps at that point. The document itself has however never been found. See M. Kuna, *Musik an der Grenze des Lebens. Musikerinnen und Musiker aus böhmischen Ländern nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern und Gefängnissen*, Frankfurt am Main 1993, p. 42f.

80 In the "10 Stages" model, "Persecution" is added as an additional stage alongside "Extermination", and would also cover much of what we discuss in this section.

81 Speculating that marching music was very probably used during and not only before executions, Knapp suggests that this music "could have had the function of creating the void (*Leere*) in the heads of the SS that Prieberg speaks of, of lowering the moral threshold of inhibition so far that brutality could take over". G. Knapp, op. cit., p. 155.

82 Ch. R., Browning Ch.R., *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, New York 1992, p. 13-14; p. 112-113. Browning also refers to the case of the entertainment unit in Ch.R. Browning, *An American Historian's Perspective*, "German Studies Review" 35/2 (May 2012), p. 310-318.

humiliate and degrade prisoners underlines Stanton's point that the term "extermination" reflects the mindset already present by this stage. Musical mockery of the prisoners may in some cases have been a way of reinforcing the earlier stages of dehumanisation and also polarisation (the latter, since such practices implicitly give expression to the imbalance of power involved).[83] In other cases, the practices would seem to be as much the product of a sadistic mindset than anything else.[84]

The use of music to structure daily life up to and including accompanying executions was reported both in the early concentration camps and also in the death camps.[85] Again, this can be seen as an extension of traditional military practices,[86] but with one crucial difference: both in the context of these practices and in other sadistic treatment dreamt up by those in charge, music was also used to cause harm to prisoners systematically on both a mental and a physical level. One account of purposeful and deadly musical violence against Jews in Sachsenhausen relates how around a dozen Jews were locked in a small, hermetically sealed broom closet. One of them, an opera singer, was forced to sing a popular aria. Most of those in the closet suffocated.[87] Such practices appear to have become more prevalent and vicious as time went on. In the period 1939-1942 in particular, violence against Jewish prisoners increased noticeably in

---

83 There are several reported instances of songs being used to make fun of Jews and also political opponents. Some examples include forcing Jews to sing a song with the lyrics "Ich bin ein Jude, kennt ihr meine Nase") ("I'm a Jew, you know my nose"; G. Fackler, *Lied und Gesang im KZ…*, op. cit., p. 145). The violinist Ota Sattler from Prague was forced to play "Hot a Jid a Weibele" ("There was a Jew, he had a wife") while his wife and three sons marched past him to the gas chamber; G. Fackler, *Des Lagers Stimme: Musik im KZ – Alltag und Häftlingskultur in den Konzentrationslagern 1933 bis 1936*, Dissertation: Albert – Ludwigs – University Freiburg, 1997. The lawyer Hans Litten, and the anti-Fascist writers Carl von Ossietzky and Erich Mühsam were forced to sing the "Horst-Wessel-Lied" en route to the Sonnenburg concentration camp (I. Litten, *Eine Mutter kämpft gegen Hitler*, Frankfurt am Main 1984, p. 21, cited by G. Fackler, *Lied und Gesang im KZ…*, op. cit., p. 143).

84 See here also K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *Music and Torture in Sites of Nazi Persecution and Execution in Occupied Poland 1939–1945*, "the world of music (new series)" 2013, "Music and Torture|Music and Punishment", vol. 2, no. 1, p. 31-50.

85 See here especially G. Fackler, *Lied und Gesang im KZ…*, op. cit.,, S. Gilbert, op. cit., J. Brauer, op. cit.

86 See here also M.J. Grant, *Pathways to Music Torture,* "Transpositions: Musiques et Sciences Sociales", special issue *Music and Armed Conflict since 1945*, 2014 available at http://transposition.revues.org/494 (accessed: January 2015).

87 J. Brauer, op. cit., p. 297.

Sachsenhausen, becoming more ritualistic and also more malicious. In her study of music in Sachsenhausen, Brauer calls this "a portent of the Final Solution".[88]

Survivors of the camps frequently report being forced to sing songs perfectly on command: those who could not were often immediately executed.[89] The common practice of prisoners being forced to sing on the mustering ground (*Appellplatz*) for hours on end, and during labour or while marching to and from labour sites, was an extreme method of physical violence under the circumstances: it is no exaggeration to say that in some cases, prisoners were killed by music. Singing was used both as an additional way to sort out the weak and the ill, and as an insidious form of psychological torture – for in order to sing the songs perfectly, it was necessary to practice the songs even in brief periods of respite. In her study of Sachsenhausen, Brauer notes that for German Jewish inmates, the use of songs that they had known and loved since childhood, now used against them by a regime which utterly denied and attempted to destroy their place in German society, was particularly harrowing.[90]

As mentioned previously, music was frequently used by the warders to dehumanise or, at least, humiliate prisoners, with Jewish musicians as the most frequent victims.[91] Jews were also forced to sing songs of mockery about Jews: their cultural identity was being systematically erased.[92] Here as well, physical violence and music were combined, the inmates being forced to sing while they were doing hard work or while standing outside in the cold over the course of several hours.[93] Brauer quotes Aleksander Kulisiewicz, a former prisoner of Sachsenhausen, who used the term "musical sadism" to explain this tactic.[94] The selected songs often had banal lyrics or texts like "*Der Mensch lebt nur einmal*

88 J. Brauer, op. cit., p. 312.

89 G. Fackler, *Lied und Gesang im KZ…*, op. cit., p. 149-150.

90 J. Brauer, op. cit., p. 303ff.

91 See especially K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *Music and Torture in Sites…*, op. cit., and her contribution to the present volume.

92 J. Brauer, op. cit., p. 303.

93 See J. Brauer, op. cit., especially p. 99ff, 241ff, 298ff, 303ff.

94 In 1979, Kulisiewicz recorded many of the songs prisoners in concentration camps had composed during their captivity. Among these were mourning songs, lullabies and other songs that were often based on popular melodies with new lyrics but there was also an attempt to compose an international concentration camp hymn which based its first three verses on the famous "Die Moorsoldaten" written by Rudi Goguel in 1933. The extensive booklet accompanying Kulisiewicz's "Songs from the Depths of Hell" comprises lyrics and background data on the genesis and context of many of the inmates' songs. It also attests to the role of music as a means of coping with and

und dann nicht mehr" ("Man lives only once, and then no more"), and thus in his words constituted a "painful contrast to reality" of life in the camps.[95] The intense emotional situations triggered by this meeting of relatively trivial songs with the harshest physical violence constituted a direct assault on the human dignity of the prisoners.[96] Brauer uses the term "musical violence" to describe this aspect of music in the camps, for two reasons: firstly, given the harsh circumstances of the camps and the poor physical condition of the prisoners, forced singing constituted actual physical violence; secondly, the songs chosen – generally simple folksongs – had the effect of increasing the despair felt by the prisoners.[97]

Music thus not only accompanied the extermination: it also contributed directly to the inmates' suffering and death. Conversely, for some very few inmates who happened to be musicians, being chosen to play music provided a way to escape or at least delay this fate. Music could also be a coping strategy for both musicians and non-musicians. For example, the German communists imprisoned in Sachsenhausen drew upon their experience of the tradition of singing in the workers' movement and organised song recitals and evenings of singing to maintain and raise their collective spirits. Jehovah's Witnesses found strength in their shared beliefs, and thereby were able to cope with the musical violence inflicted on them by the warders, helping them to divert the intended effect of the enforced singing and instead to gain strength from it.[98]

These examples demonstrate the ambivalent power of music. For some prisoners it was a way to help cope with the harsh living conditions, the brutality and the uncertainty. At the same time, music was used against them – as a symbol of the might of the SS, and as an instrument of torture.[99] The role of music for the perpetrators – the manner in which it may have psychologically facilitated, relativised and ritualised the killing – is a further point that needs consideration here. While on the one hand many of the musical practices used in the concentration camps had correlates in other institutional contexts, the manner in which these were interpreted, and the prevalence of reports of openly sadistic practices involving music in the later years in particular, underline the need for more work

addressing camp reality. See http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner_notes/folkways/FW37700.pdf (accessed: March 2014).

95 See J. Brauer, op. cit., p. 99.

96 Ibidem.

97 J. Brauer, op. cit., p. 99.

98 Ibidem, p. 331-342.

99 Ibidem, op. cit.

to be done to complement the few existing studies on music's role in facilitating acts of extreme brutality and violence.

D. Stage 8, Denial

"*Wo Menschen singen, da lass dich ruhig nieder / Böse Menschen haben keine Lieder*" ("Wherever people sing, there you can safely settle; bad people have no songs"). This citation from the work of Johann Gottfried Seume, which almost has the status of a proverb in Germany, is perhaps the ideal way to begin discussing just how easily Stage 8 of Stanton's model can be applied to musical culture. While there are certainly enough people who bear witness to how music helped propagate, organise, and carry out the genocide and other atrocities, there are also many who are still unwilling to accept that music and musical activity had a role to play.[100] Despite the number of studies which clearly point to negative, and not only positive, uses and impacts of music under National Socialism, there is also continuing sensitivity to suggestions regarding the involvement and complicity of musicologists, critics, musicians and composers in acts that contributed to genocide. It is also worth noting that the research that has been the foundation of this article has for the most part been conducted only in the last twenty years or so.

Why should this be the case? Part of the problem may be a tendency in discussions about music to emphasise its supposed "humanity", and to lend it an elevated position as the art to which others aspire – a transcendent status far beyond the muddied world of human action and failure. This type of position is dangerous for at least two reasons. Firstly, such a perception of music as essentially positive is one of the preconditions for its ability to mask the sheer inhumanity of the systematic discrimination, marginalisation, persecution, and finally extermination of millions of people. From classical music to cabaret, music was used to lend a veneer of normality to what were anything but normal circumstances. Secondly, music is a human act, a product of humanity itself and, indeed, one of the distinguishing features of humankind as a species. When people resist the fact of music's role in genocide, they are also resisting a basic fact about this and other crimes against humanity: that such crimes are, after all, also committed by human beings.

---

100 A striking example of this is K. Lettner, *Musik zwischen Leben und Tod: Musik im Konzentrationslager Mauthausen und seinen Nebenlagern 1939–1956,* "Österreichische Heimatblätter" 2000, vol. 54/1-2, p. 55-72, who in his discussion of the Mauthausen camp clings to the idea that music was always a source of hope and resistance in the camps even while he presents material that in some cases suggests the exact opposite.

As in other areas of public life, musicologists who contributed in lesser but also greater measure to the pursuit of NS ideals in music research nevertheless often achieved positions of considerable power after the war.[101] It took several years for German musicological institutions to begin to address the issue of musicologists' complicity in the crimes of the NS state – the process is still ongoing.[102] Musicians and composers working during the period of the NS regime, including such major figures as Wilhelm Furtwängler, Richard Strauss, and the musicians of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, vehemently denied any real involvement with the regime, or insisted that their actions had little if any impact on what happened. Many claimed they were apolitical and that they were, after all, "only musicians".[103]

In his study of six professional musicians and composers during the National Socialist dictatorship, Michael Kater warns that there were rarely "black" or "white" moral decisions and actions in this period, but rather, "gray people against a landscape of gray".[104] Perhaps of greater contemporary concern, however, is the manner in which both music and attitudes to music that should have been problematised following this period continued to be used thereafter. Several songs created specifically for NS festivities and purposes are still in use today. A case in point is the previously mentioned "Hohe Nacht der klaren Sterne", written by Hans Baumann, the most prolific of NS songwriters who, in the postwar period, forged a new career for himself as a writer of children's books.[105] For

101 See especially P.M. Potter, *Most German of the Arts: Musicology and Society from the Weimar Republic to the End of Hitler's Reich*, New Haven 1998, chapter 8.

102 Writing in the early 1990s, Eckhard John noted that "German musicology did not want to remember anything: it suppressed the selection measures it had generated, such as the *Lexikon der Juden in der Musik*, and prolonged the death (or exiling) of victims of the NS into the period after 1945 as well through the widespread continued practice of elimination of their names and their works from musical discourse. Music research in Germany proved itself incapable of mourning." E. John, *Musik und Konzentrationslager. Eine Annäherung*, "Archiv für Musikwissenschaft" 1991, vol. 48, p. 34.

103 M. Aster, op. cit. See also the excerpts from eyewitness interviews filmed in the context of the film *Das Reichsorchester* (dir. Enrique Sánchez Lansch, 2007) and included in the press material for the film, available at: www.salzgeber.de/presse/pressehefte/reichsorchester_ph.pdf (accessed: March 2014).

104 M.H. Kater, *The Twisted Muse…*, p. 6. In a later book, he takes issue with his own previous statement in this regard. M.H. Kater, *Composers of the Nazi Era…*, p. 265.

105 See especially A. Biedermann, *Hans Baumann im Banne der HJ. Gruppenlied unterm Hakenkreuz*, Karlsruhe 1997; H. Schreckenberg, *Der Hitler-Barde Hans Baumann und sein Wirken vor 1945: ein katholisches Janusgericht*, Berlin 2009.

people unaware of the song's origins, its continued use may seem unproblematic. Its recent use as the backdrop to a Christmas video promoting the anti-Islamic movement Pro Deutschland can, in our opinion, hardly be a coincidence however, and points to the ways in which National Socialist rhetoric – sometimes seemingly harmless when divorced from its original context – may still be in force in political movements not only in Germany.[106]

A further case in point is the recent debacle in German musicology concerning accusations made by the historian Boris von Haken against Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht, widely considered one of the most important German musicologists of the second half of the twentieth century. According to von Haken's research, as a young soldier Eggebrecht would have at the very least been present during mass executions in Crimea in the year 1941. Eggebrecht, who died in 1999, was consistently silent on his wartime past; von Haken's allegations, on the other hand, have become the subject of a heated debate in German musicology.[107] This debate has tended to overlook another aspect of von Haken's critique, namely, his closing remarks drawing attention to problematic aspects of Eggebrecht's 1991 book *Musik im Abendland*. To call Eggebrecht's comparison of European art music (rational and intellectual) with other traditions (which are "magical" and "instinctive" [*naturwüchsig*][108] a National Socialist discourse would be pushing a

106 The video concerned was embedded in the website of the Berlin chapter of Pro Deutschland.

107 Von Haken's book is still not in print, see however: B. von Haken, *Dokumentation eines Vortrags, gehalten von Boris von Haken am 17. September 2009 bei der Jahrestagung der Gesellschaft für Musikforschung in Tübingen. Holocaust und Musikwissenschaft: Zur Biographie von Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht*, "Archiv für Musikwissenschaft" 2010, vol. 67(2), p. 146-153, which is the text of the paper which triggered the debate. See also: A.C. Schreffler, *The Case of Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht: The Moral Dilemma of a Tainted Past*, "German Studies Review" 2012, vol. 35/2, p. 290-298 for an overview of the debate. The chief defence of Eggebrecht has come from Friedrich Geiger and Claudia Maurer Zenck; see: F. Geiger, *Quellenkritische Anmerkungen zum 'Fall Eggebrecht'*, 2010, available on-line at: http://www.fbkultur.uni-hamburg.de/de/hm/forschung/geiger_eggebrecht.pdf (accessed: March 2014); C. Maurer Zenck, *Eggebrechts Militärzeit auf dem Krim*, 2010, available at: http://www.fbkultur.uni-hamburg.de/de/hm/forschung/zenck_eggebrecht.pdf (accessed: March 2014). On problems in Geiger and Maurer Zenck's arguments, see especially Ch.R. Browning, *An American Historian's Perspective*…, op. cit.

108 H.H. Eggebrecht, *Musik im Abendland: Prozesse und Stationen vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, Munich 1991, p. 36-37. See also B. von Haken, *How Do We Know What We know About Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht?*, "German Studies Review" 2012,

point; that such derogatory references to the music of most of the world's peoples could pass unnoticed and indeed be celebrated half a century after the liberation of Auschwitz, should, however, give us all pause for thought.

Summary and Conclusions

The benefits of looking at musical discourse and musical practice in tandem with a model such as Stanton's are not only that it provides new perspectives on the rhetoric of hatred and genocide, and on what motivates people to participate in direct or in supposedly ancillary ways in genocidal acts. Our metastudy has not led to perfect correspondences with Stanton's model, which is perhaps not surprising. It did, however, throw up a few interesting points for further consideration, two of which we want to focus on in conclusion.

The first of these relates to the issue of "cultural genocide". Stanton's model is predicated on a definition of genocide that is close to that presented in the Genocide Convention. While one of the benefits of his model is that he views genocide as a process and therefore does not limit genocide to the phase of mass murder itself, it is also clear that it is the physical/biological mode of genocide that underpins the "8 Stages". As discussed above, musical activities and practices played an important role in this process of physical extermination. At the same time, however, it is worth considering whether concerted attempts to remove, in particular, all traces of Jewish influence from musical works and musical performance can be understood not just as a precursor to extermination but as in itself a genocidal act.

As it is generally understood, the term "cultural genocide" would not necessarily be the most appropriate one to use in this context. "Cultural genocide" is often used in discussions specifically of the rights of minority groups – including indigenous peoples in the Americas and Australasia – and draws attention to forced assimilation and not only intentional physical destruction of a group. As used in an article that appeared in a draft version of the Genocide Convention but which was deleted before the Convention was adopted, "cultural genocide" refers specifically to attempts to prevent the use of language by the group in question, both orally and in print, and to destroy or prevent the use of institutions such as schools and places of worship but also museums and historical monuments among others.[109] In light of the way cultural genocide has been

---

vol. 35/2, who quotes from a slightly earlier and no less problematic passage of this chapter.

109 J. Morsink, *Cultural Genocide, the Universal Declaration, and Minority Rights*, "Human Rights Quarterly" 1999, vol. 21, no. 4, p. 1009-1060.

discussed, it is perhaps misleading to attach this term to a discussion of attempts to remove any references to Jewish culture and cultural contributions made by people of Jewish origin in the specific case in hand: instead, in many ways we are dealing with a process of forced de-assimilation, of creating differences between groups where, previously, none existed.[110] The cases we are referring to here are not merely attempts to suppress and eventually annihilate a separate culture – as we have seen, despite attempts to distinguish between (for example) Jewish and German stylistic traits in music, such distinctions proved hard to establish – but instead an act of trying to remove the existence and legacy of people of a certain heritage from cultural memory. Is this in itself an act of genocide? In the terms of the Genocide Convention, no; even in the terms of the deleted article on cultural genocide we could suggest that attempts to "deassimilate" people from cultural life by banning their participation and removing references to them in works of art, are flagrant examples of discrimination (and censorship) that can be seen as preliminary to genocide, but not genocide as such. If we look at the issue from the point of view of cultural memory, however, things look slightly different. In *The Holocaust By Bullets*, his memoir on his pioneering research into mass executions by shooting in Ukraine from 1941, Patrick Desbois argues that until the fates of these millions of individuals executed is recognised, their deaths and graves marked, and their stories told, the Nazis' endeavour to simply remove all trace of their ever having existed will have succeeded. Writing these people back into history does not undo the physical genocide: it does however give them back a place in cultural memory. Seen from this perspective, many of the attempts made by the National Socialists to remove certain groups of people, and references to them and/or their heritage, from musical life can be understood not merely as preparatory to genocide but as themselves constitutive of genocide.

The second point that requires further exploration relates to the values and emotions conveyed by musical activities and practices as these relate to the in- rather than the out-group. When he deals with ideological dimensions of genocide, Stanton focuses on processes of exclusion and dehumanisation, that is to say, processes marked by increasingly negative characterizations of certain groups.

110 We should stress again that here we are specifically talking about the attempts to remove Jewish musicians and their music from the common culture. Countless explicit examples of cultural genocide as it is normally understood occurred in the case of the Holocaust as well. More work also needs to be done looking at the case of other persecuted groups, particularly the Roma, whose situation in society was often very different to begin with.

Our survey of musical practices under National Socialism has demonstrated that here, on the other hand, a maxim seemed to operate which – paraphrasing a popular American song from 1944 – we could term "accentuate the positive to eliminate the negative".[111] Discourse and propaganda on the inhumanity of members of the groups persecuted by the Nazis and others seem to take second place in musical practice to positive images, recollections and repertoires which help confirm individuals' sense of themselves, their culture, their history, their society, and their place in it. This is as true of the classical tradition as it is of the use of popular music and music in youth organisations and in schools.

Recent publications in the field of genocide studies point to a need to integrate perspectives from studies of political violence and the anthropology and sociology of war and conflict (e.g. see Straus 2007). Much the same could be said about music and genocide: only when we attain a better understanding of how music may facilitate acts of extreme violence and brutality will we be able to move forward in our understanding of music and genocide. In addition, we also need to consolidate research into connection between music and racism, and music and hate crime. Studying the music of genocidal movements is often illuminating because it demonstrates that genocidal propaganda is not necessarily as extreme in tone as we might expect. Moreover, as Kirsten Dyck points out in her own contribution to this volume, racist discourses and practices are so structurally embedded in modern society that it often takes an expression of explicitly genocidal intent for us to even regard a communication as racist at all.

In this survey we have merely scratched the surface of the literature existing on music and National Socialism and, as stated at the beginning, several key issues have remained largely untouched. In part this is because of the tendencies within the secondary literature itself – for example, there is extensive literature relating to the persecution of Jewish composers and musicians, but relatively little on other minorities – but also because of the sheer number of publications on this topic now available. As such, at the present time this literature still offers a quite uniquely detailed picture of the complex and often apparently contradictory roles of music in the service of genocidal ideologies and practices. Such research presents a new and significant angle through which to approach the study of genocide – as the survey above, and this book as a whole, aim to show.

111 The lyrics to this song, originally made popular by Bing Crosby, were written by Johnny Mercer, and the music by Harold Arlen.

Bibliography

Applegate C., P. Potter (eds.), *Music and German National Identity*, Chicago 2002.

Aster M., *Das Reichsorchester. Die Berliner Philharmoniker und der Nationalsozialismus*, Munich 2007.

Baade Ch.L., *Victory through Harmony: The BBC and Popular Music in World War II*, Oxford–New York 2012.

Baird J.W., *From Berlin to Neubabelsberg: Nazi Film Propaganda and Hitler Youth Quex*, "Journal of Contemporary History", 1983, p. 495-515.

Bergmeier H., J.P. Rainer E. Lotz, *Hitler's Airwaves: The inside Story of Nazi Radio Broadcasting and Propaganda Swing*, New Haven 1997.

Bernard B., S. Kames, H.-U. Wagner, R. von Zahn, *Medien und Musikjournalistik in Köln um 1933: drei Schlaglichter auf eine Usurpation*, Kassel 2005.

Bertola M.F., *Defining A European "New Order" through Music: Ancient Music in Italian Radio Broadcasting during the Fascist Period*, [in:] M. J. Grant and F.J. Stone-Davis (eds.), *The Soundtrack of Conflict, The Role of Music in Radio Broadcasting in Wartime and Conflict Situations*, Hildesheim–Zürich–New York 2013, p. 27-43.

Biedermann A., *Hans Baumann im Banne der HJ. Gruppenlied unterm Hakenkreuz*, Karlsruhe 1997.

Birdsall C., *Nazi Soundscapes, Sound, Technology and Urban Space in Germany, 1933-1945*, Amsterdam 2012.

Bormann von A., *Das nationalsozialistische Gemeinschaftslied,* [in:] H. Denkler, K. Prümm (eds.)*, Die deutsche Literatur im dritten Reich,* Stuttgart 1976, p. 256-280.

Boyes G., *The Imagined Village: Culture, Ideology and the English Folk Revival*, Manchester 1993.

Brauer J., *Musik im Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen*, Berlin 2009.

Brenner H., *Musik als Waffe? Theorie und Praxis der politischen Musikverwendung, dargestellt am Beispiel der Steiermark 1938-1945*, Graz 1992.

Brown J. (ed.), *Western Music and Race*, Cambridge 2007.

Browning Ch.R., *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, New York 1992.

Browning Ch.R., *An American Historian's Perspective*, "German Studies Review" 2012, no 35/2, p. 310-318.

Burkhardt W., *Musik der Stunde Null*, Hamburg 1985.

Cáceres D., *"Marsch der Bleisoldaten": instruktive Instrumentalmusik des 19, Jahrhunderts im Dienst von Kriegserziehung?* [in:] M. Schramm (ed.) *Militärmusik zwischen Nutzen und Missbrauch*, Bonn 2011.

Chretien J.-P. (ed.), *Rwanda: Les médias du génocide*, Paris 1995.

Cooper J., *Ralph Lemkin and the Struggle for the Genocide Convention*, London 2008.

Currid B., *A National Acoustics: Music and Mass Publicity in Weimar and Nazi Germany*, Minneapolis–London 2006.

Curtis B., *Music Makes the Nation: Nationalist Composers and Nation Building in Nineteenth-century Europe,* Amherst, NY 2008.

Dahm A., *Der Topos der Juden: Studien zur Geschichte des Antisemitismus im deutschsprachigen Musikschrifttum*, Göttingen 2007.

Desbois P., *The Holocaust By Bullets: A Priest's Journey to Uncover the Truth Behind the Murder of 1.5 Million Jews*, Trans. C. Spencer, New York 2008.

Deutschbein Ch., N. Korsten (eds.), *Heilige Nacht? Das Weihnachtsfest im Dienste der NS-Propaganda*, Cloppenburg 2007.

Dubach K. (ed.), *Richard Rosenberg: Sein Leben – Sein Werk*, Karlsruhe 2009.

Dümling A., P. Girth (eds.), *Entartete Musik. Dokumentation und Kommentar zur Düsseldorfer Ausstellung von 1938*, Düsseldorf 1993.

Eggebrecht H.H., *Musik im Abendland: Prozesse und Stationen vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, Munich 1991.

Evans J., *Die Rezeption der Musik Igor Strawinskys in Hitlerdeutschland*, "Archiv für Musikwissenschaft" 1998, vol. 55, p. 91-109.

Fackler G., *Des Lagers Stimme: Musik im KZ – Alltag und Häftlingskultur in den Konzentrationslagern 1933 bis 1936*, Dissertation: Albert – Ludwigs – University Freiburg, 1997.

Fackler G., *Lied und Gesang im KZ*, "Lied und populäre Kultur/Song and popular culture" 2001, vol. 46, p. 141-198.

Fein H., *Accounting for Genocide: National Responses and Jewish Victimization during the Holocaust*, Chicago 1979.

Fein H., *Genocide: A Sociological Perspective*, "Current Sociology" 1990, vol. 38/1, p. 1-126.

Friedrich R., *Fahnen brennen im Wind: Jugend und ihre Lieder im Nationalsozialismus*, Schnellbach 2002.

Foerster von I., Ch. Hust, Ch.-H. Mahling (eds.), *Musikforschung-Faschismus-Nationalsozialismus*, Mainz 2001.

Föllmi B.A., N. Grosch, M. Schneider (eds.), *Music and the Construction of National Identity in the 19th Century*, Actes du Colloque International "Musique et Identité Nationale" (Strasbourg, Université Marc Bloch, 18-19 Octobre 2007), Baden-Baden 2010.

Frommann E., *Die Lieder der NS-Zeit: Untersuchungen zur nationalsozialistischen Liedpropaganda von den Anfängen bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Köln 1999.

Fulcher J., *French Cultural Politics and Music from the Dreyfus Affair to the First World War*, New York 1999.

Furtwängler E., G. Birkner (eds.), *Wilhelm Furtwängler: Aufzeichnungen 1924–1954*, Mainz 2009.

Geiger F., *Die "Goebbels-Liste" vom 1, September 1935: eine Quelle zur Komponistenverfolgung im NS-Staat*, "Archiv für Musikwissenschaft" 2002, vol. 59, p. 104-112.

Geiger F., *Musik in zwei Diktaturen: Verfolgung von Komponisten unter Hitler und Stalin*, Kassel 2004.

Geiger F., *Quellenkritische Anmerkungen zum 'Fall Eggebrecht'*, 2010, available at: http://www.fbkultur.uni-hamburg.de/de/hm/forschung/geiger_eggebrecht.pdf (accessed: March 2014).

Gelbart M., *The Idea of "Folk Music" and "Art Music". Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner*, Cambridge 2007.

Gilbert S., *Music in the Holocaust: Confronting Life in the Nazi Ghettos and Camps*, Oxford 2005.

Grant M.J., *Musik im Dienst des Massenmordes*, [in:] M. Bröcker (ed.), *Musik und Gewalt. Berichte aus dem Nationalkomitee Deutschland im International Council for Traditional Music XIX.* Münster 2010, p. 259-258.

Grant M.J., *Pathways to Music Torture*, "Transpositions: Musiques et Sciences Sociales", special issue *Music and Armed Conflict since 1945*, available at http://transposition.revues.org/494 (accessed January 2015).

Grant M.J. at al., *Music and Conflict: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, "Interdisciplinary Science Reviews" 2010, vol. 35/2, p. 183-198.

HaCohen R., *The Music Libel Against the Jews*, New Haven 2011.

Haken von B., *Dokumentation eines Vortrags, gehalten von Boris von Haken am 17. September 2009 bei der Jahrestagung der Gesellschaft für Musikforschung in Tübingen. Holocaust und Musikwissenschaft: Zur Biographie von Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht*, "Archiv für Musikwissenschaft" 2010, vol. 67(2), p. 146-153.

Haken von B., *How Do We Know What We Know About Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht?*, "German Studies Review" 2012, vol. 35/2, p. 299-309.

Harker D., *Fakesong: The Manufacture of British Folksong 1700 to the Present Day*, Maidenhead 1985.

Heer H., J. Kesting, P. Schmidt, *Verstummte Stimmen: Die Vertreibung der Juden aus der Oper 1933 bis 1945; der Kampf um das Württembergische Landestheater Stuttgart – Eine Ausstellung*, Berlin 2011.

Heister. H. -W., H. -G. Klein (eds.), *Musik und Musikpolitik im faschistischen Deutschland*, Frankfurt am Main 1991.

Heister H. -W., C. Maurer-Zenck, P. Petersen (eds.), *Musik im Exil. Folgen des Nazismus für die internationale Musikkultur*, Frankfurt am Main 1997.

Heister H. -W. (ed.), *Entartete Musik 1938 – Weimar und die Ambivalenz: ein Projekt der Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt Weimar zum Kulturstadtjahr 1999*, Saarbrücken 2001.

Hensle M.P., *Rundfunkverbrechen: Das Hören von "Feindsendern" im Nationalsozialismus*, Berlin 2003.

Heßler H.-J., *Das Lied im Nationalsozialismus: Eine Analyse von drei exemplarisch ausgewählten Liedern unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Liedtexte und deren Struktur*, Duisburg 2001.

Hiebert M.S., *Theorizing Destruction: Reflections on the State of Comparative Genocide Theory*, "Genocide Studies and Prevention" 2008, vol. 3, p. 309-339.

Hirsch L.E., *A Jewish Orchestra in Nazi Germany. Musical Politics and the Berlin Jewish Culture League*, Ann Arbor 2011.

John E., *Musik und Konzentrationslager. Eine Annäherung*, "Archiv für Musikwissenschaft" 1991, vol. 48, p. 1-36.

Kater M.H., *Composers of the Nazi Era: Eight Portraits*, Oxford–New Haven 2000.

Kater M.H., *Different Drummers: Jazz in the Culture of Nazi Germany*, Oxford–New Haven 2003.

Kater M.H., *Hitler Youth*, Cambridge–Massachusetts–London 2006.

Kater M.H., *The Twisted Muse: Musicians and their Music in the Third Reich*, New York–Oxford 1997.

Kater M.H., A. Riethmüller, *Music and Nazism: Art under Tyranny, 1933-1945*, Laaber 2004.

Kiernan B., *Twentieth Century Genocides: Underlying Ideological Themes from Armenia to East Timor*, [in:] R. Gellately, B. Kiernan (eds.), *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective*, Cambridge 2003.

Kirste A.A., *Forschung und Lehre im Dienste der Propaganda des Nationalsozialismus: Der Musikwissenschaftler Johann Wolfgang Schottländer als Beispiel innerer Emigration*, Herzogenrath–Maastricht.

Klopffleisch R., *Lieder der Hitlerjugend: eine psychologische Studie an ausgewählten Beispielen*, Frankfurt am Main 1995.

Knapp G., *"Befohlene Musik": Musik und Musikmissbrauch im Frauenlager von Auschwitz-Birkenau*, "Acta Musicologica" 1996, vol. 68, p. 149-166.

Koch H.-J., *Das Wunschkonzert im NS-Rundfunk. Unterhaltungsmusik und Propaganda im Rundfunk des Dritten Reichs,* Graz 2006.

Kreuzer G., *Verdi and the Germans. From Unification to the Third Reich*, Cambridge 2010.

Krug H.-J., *Radio*, Konstanz 2010.

Kulisiewicz A., *Songs from the Depths of Hell. Folkways Records FS 37700*, New York 1979, available at: http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner_notes/folkways/FW37700.pdf (accessed: March 2014).

Kuna M., *Musik an der Grenze des Lebens. Musikerinnen und Musiker aus böhmischen Ländern nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern und Gefängnissen*, Frankfurt am Main 1993.

Laks S., A. Knapp (eds.), *Musik in Auschwitz*, Düsseldorf 1998.

Le Bail K., *Music on the Airwaves in Occupied France*, [in:] M.J. Grant, F. Stone-Davis (eds.), *The Soundtrack of Conflict, The Role of Music in Radio Broadcasting in Wartime and Conflict Situations*, Hildesheim–Zürich–New York 2013, p. 45-57.

Lehmann M., *Der Dreißigjährige Krieg im Musiktheater während der NS-Zeit*, Neumünster 2004.

Lemkin R., *Genocide: A Modern Crime.* [in:] "Free World" 1945, vol. 4, p. 39-43, available at: http://www.preventgenocide.org/lemkin/freeworld1945.htm (accessed: March 2014).

Lettner K. *Musik zwischen Leben und Tod: Musik im Konzentrationslager Mauthausen und seinen Nebenlagern 1939–1956,* "Österreichische Heimatblätter" 2000, vol. 54/1-2, p. 55-72.

Levi E., *Anti-Semitic Discourse in German Writing on Music*, [in:] J. Brown (ed.), *Western Music and Race*, Cambridge 2007.p. 168-181.

Levi E., *Mozart and the Nazis: How the Third Reich Abused a Cultural Icon*, New Haven–London 2011.

Linardos P., *Musikleben in Athen 1941–1944: Der Einfluss der deutschen und italienischen Besatzung*, Wien 1987.

Litten I., *Eine Mutter kämpft gegen Hitler*, Frankfurt am Main 1984.

Lücke M., *Vom rechten Thon der Orgeln und anderen Instrumenten: Festschrift Christian Ahrens zum 60*, Geburtstag 2003, p. 288-304.

Maurer Zenck C., *Eggebrechts Militärzeit auf dem Krim*, 2010, available at: http://www.fbkultur.uni-hamburg.de/de/hm/forschung/zenck_eggebrecht.pdf (accessed: March 2014).

Micheels P., *Das niederländische Musikleben während der Zeit der deutschen Besetzung (1940–1945). Musikforschung – Faschismus – Nationalsozialismus*, Referate der Tagung Schloß Engers, Mainz 2001, p. 113-120.

Mojzysz Z., *Der helle Schein: Lieder als Instrument der Machtausübung am Beispiel der Werke des HJ-Komponisten und Dichters Hans Baumann*, [in:] H.-W. Heister (ed.), *Entartete Musik 1938 – Weimar und die Ambivalenz: ein Projekt der Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt Weimar zum Kulturstadtjahr 1999*, Saarbrücken 2001.

Morsink J., *Cultural Genocide, the Universal Declaration, and Minority Rights*, "Human Rights Quarterly" 1999, vol. 21, no. 4, p. 1009-1060.

Naliwajek-Mazurek K., *Music and its Emotional Aspects during the Nazi Occupation of Poland*, [in:] S. Zalfen, S.O. Müller (eds.), *Besatzungsmacht Musik. Zur Musik- und Emotionsgeschichte im Zeitalter der Weltkriege (1914–1949)*, Bielefeld 2012, transcript, p. 207-224.

Naliwajek-Mazurek K., *Music and Torture in Sites of Nazi Persecution and Execution in Occupied Poland 1939–1945*, "the world of music (new series)" 2013, "Music and Torture|Music and Punishment", vol. 2, no. 1, p. 31-50.

Nguyen B., *Mit Musik geht alles besser: Strategien psychischer Einflussnahme über die Musik in den propagandistischen Unterhaltungsfilme des Dritten Reichs und Hollywood*, Marburg 2010.

Niedhart G., G. Broderick (eds.), *Lieder in Politik und Alltag des Nationalsozialismus*, Frankfurt–New York 1999.

Niessen A., *"Die Lieder waren die eigentlichen Verführer!": Mädchen und Musik im Nationalsozialismus*, Mainz–New York 1999.

Noa M., *Volkstümlichkeit und Nationbuilding: Zum Einfluss der Musik auf den Einigungsprozess der deutschen Nation im 19. Jahrhundert*, Münster 2013.

Obermaier W. (ed.), *Johann Strauss ent-arisiert: Die Sammlung Strauss-Meyszner-Impulse für Forschung und Interpretation*, Wien 2003.

Painter K., *Symphonic Aspirations: German Music and Politics, 1900–1945*. Cambridge–Massachusetts–London 2007.

Perry J., *Nazifying Christmas: Political Culture and Popular Celebration in the Third Reich*, "Central European History" 2005, vol. 38, p. 572-605.

Petersen U., *An Acrobat in the Circus Dome. Rudolf Wey's 1944 edition of Léhar's operetta "Der Rastelbinder"*, paper presented during the conference *Music, Oppression and Resistance*, Amsterdam 2-3.03.2012, unpublished.

Potter P.M., *Most German of the Arts: Musicology and Society from the Weimar Republic to the End of Hitler's Reich*, New Haven 1998.

Potter P.M., *The Nazi "Seizure" of the Berlin Philharmonic, or the Decline of a Bourgeois Musical Institution*, [in:] G.R. Cuomo (ed.), *National Socialist Cultural Policy*, New York 1995, p. 39-66.

Prieberg F.K., *Musik im NS-Staat*, Frankfurt am Main 1982.

Raber Ch., *Der Filmkomponist Wolfgang Zeller: propagandistische Funktionen seiner Filmmusik im Dritten Reich*, Laaber 2005.

Rauschning H., *Gespräche mit Hitler*, Zürich–New York 1940.

Riethmüller A., *Deutsche Leitkultur Musik? Zur Musikgeschichte nach dem Holocaust*, Stuttgart 2006.

Rosenberg S.P., *Genocide Is a Process, not an Event*, "Genocide Studies and Prevention" 2012, vol. 7/1, p. 16-23.

Roth A., *Das nationalsozialistische Massenlied: Untersuchungen zur Genese, Ideologie und Funktion*, Würzburg 1993.

Schaller W. (ed.), *Operette unterm Hakenkreuz: zwischen hoffähiger Kunst und "Entartung": Beiträge einer Tagung der Staatsoperette Dresden*, Berlin 2007.

Schenker H., *Rameau or Beethoven? Creeping Paralysis or Spiritual Potency in Music? [Rameau oder Beethoven? Erstarrung oder geistiges Leben in der Musik?]*, trans. I. Bent, [in:] W. Drabkin (ed.), *The Masterwork in Music*, vol. 3, Cambridge 1997, First published 1930.

Schmeer K., *Die Regie des öffentlichen Lebens im dritten Reich*, München 1956.

Schreckenberg H., *Der Hitler-Barde Hans Baumann und sein Wirken vor 1945: ein katholisches Janusgericht*, Berlin 2009.

Schreffler A.C., *The case of Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht: The moral dilemma of a tainted past*, "German Studies Review" 2012, vol. 35/2, p. 290-298.

Schuh W., *Strauss during the War Years*, "Tempo" 1945, New Series, p. 8-10.

Skaarup H., *Censorship on Music during the German occupation in Denmark*, [in:] *1st World Conference on Music and Censorship*, Copenhagen 1998, available at: http://freemuse.org/archives/1204 (accessed: March 2014).

Sponheuer B., *Nationalsozialismus*, [in:] L. Finscher (ed.), *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*,, 2. neubearbeitete Ausgabe, Kassel 1997, p. 25-43.

Sponheuer B., *The National Socialist Discussion on the "German Quality" in Music*, [in:] A. Riethmüller, M.H. Kater (eds.), *Music and Nazism. Art under Tyranny, 1933–1945*, Laaber 2003, p. 32-42.

Stanton G., *The 8 Stages of Genocide*, 1996, available at: http://www.genocidewatch.org/aboutgenocide/8stagesofgenocide.html (accessed: March 2014).

Stanton, G., *Could the Rwandan genocide have been prevented?* 2002, available at: http://www.genocidewatch.org/couldrwandangenocide.html (accessed: March 2014).

Stanton, G., *The 8 Stages of Genocide* (presentation), 2007, available at: http://www.genocidewatch.org/images/Eight_Stages_of_Genocide_and_Preventing_Genocide_by_Gregory_Stanton,_Genocide_Watch_May_2008.ppt (accessed: March 2014).

Stanton, G., _The 10 Stages of Genocide_, 2013, available at http://genocidewatch.net/genocide-2/8-stages-of-genocide/ (accessed: November 2014).

Steinweis A.E., *Art, Ideology, and Economics in Nazi Germany: The Reich Chambers of Music, Theater, and the Visual Arts*, Chapel Hill–London 1993.

Stiftung Schloss Neuhardenberg, *Das "Dritte Reich" und die Musik: Begleitbuch zur Ausstellung in der Stiftung Schloss Neuhardenberg vom 26. März – 25. Juni 2006*, Berlin 2006.

Straus S., *Second-Generation Comparative Research on Genocide*, "World Politics" 2007, vol. 59/3, p. 476-501.

Stunz H.R., *"Rehabilitation durch kulturelle Leistungen" und das "Verwischen des traurigen Weltrufs": Theater und Musik in Dachau 1945 bis 1950*, Norderstedt 2009.

Sweers B., *The Power to Influence Minds: German Folk Music during the Nazi Era and After*, [in:] A.J. Randall (ed.), *Music, Power, and Politics*, New York–London 2005, p. 65-86.

Taylor B., Wilfried van der Will, *The Nazification of Art: Art, Design, Music, Architecture and Film in the Third Reich*, Winchester–Hampshire 1990.

Thelen-Frölich A.Th., *Die Institution Konzert zwischen 1918 und 1945 am Beispiel der Stadt Düsseldorf: der Konzertsaal als Politikum*, Kassel 2000.

Trumpener K., *Béla Bartók and the Rise of Comparative Ethnomusicology: Nationalism, Race Purity, and the Legacy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire*, [in:] R. M. Radano, P. V. Bohlman (eds.), *Music and the Racial Imagination*. Chicago 2000, pp.403-444.

UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, 9 December 1948, A/RES/260, available at: http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html (accessed: March 2014).

Vogelsang K., *Filmmusik im Dritten Reich: eine Dokumentation*, Pfaffenweiler 1993.

Volker R., *"Von oben sehr erwünscht": die Filmmusik Herbert Windts im NS-Propagandafilm*, Trier 2003.

Vondung K., *Magie und Manipulation: Ideologischer Kult und politische Religion des Nationalsozialismus*, Göttingen 1971.

Vries de W., *Kunstraub im Westen 1940–1945. Alfred Rosenberg und der "Sonderstab Musik"*, Frankfurt am Main 2000.

Walter M., *Hitler in der Oper: deutsches Musikleben 1919–1945*, Stuttgart–Weimar 2000.

Weitz E.D., *A Century of Genocide. Utopias of Race and Nation*, Princeton 2003.

White H., M. Murphy (eds.), *Musical Constructions of Nationalism*, Cork 2001.

Wolf Ch., *Musikerziehung unterm Hakenkreuz: die Rolle der Musik am Beispiel der Oberschulen im Gau Tirol-Vorarlberg*, Anif–Salzburg 1998.

Wulf J., *Musik im Dritten Reich: eine Dokumentation*, Gütersloh 1963.

Young W., N.K. Young, *Music of the World War II Era. American History through Music*, Westport 2007.

Zalfen S., S.O. Müller (eds.), *Besatzungsmacht Musik. Zur Musik- und Emotionsgeschichte im Zeitalter der Weltkriege (1914–1949)*, Bielefeld 2012.

PART I – TESTIMONIES

Arman Goharinasab & Azadeh Latifkar

Geok Tepe Muğam: A Musical Narrative of Turkmen Massacre in 1881

Introduction

The central Asian steppes from the east coast of the Caspian Sea to Amu Darya have been inhabited by the Turkmens for more than one thousand years. These lands, which are now divided between Iran, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan, initially hosted traditional nomadic pastoral people (the Oghuz) in the early medieval centuries. In the 11th century, when the Oghuz embraced Islam, they were named Turkmen. They continued their nomadic lifestyle in the mostly arid lands of central Asia, depending on their portable houses (yurt), their strong horses, and stockbreeding. Almost constant conflicts arose with various governments of central Asia, Persia and later, the Russian Empire, over the grasslands.

The Turkmens' nomadic traditions were complemented by their religious (Orthodox Islam) customs. Some of their traditions, as can be noted in their music and literature, were rooted in shamanism. In Turkmen culture, as with many others, poetry, stories and music serve as a means of passing down history from one generation to the next. Bagşys (musicians who play and sing) served as Turkmen narrators, singing about Turkmen historical events and daily life throughout the years through musical compositions (aydim) at wedding ceremonies, soirees and other social events. The oppression of the Turkmen people by the Persian and Russian empires is one of the tragic themes that have affected their musical traditions, both in form and content.

The Geok Tepe catastrophe in 1881 marked the climax of a series of horrific events that the Turkmen suffered during the 19th century. The Russian empire's desire for expansion led to the occupation of vast lands situated to the south of the empire. This led to a series of attacks against the native inhabitants in order to expel them from their land. The ethnic cleansing of Circassians in the 1860s and the mass killings of the Turkmen in 1881 are among these events. Kieran describes these actions as genocidal massacres waged by the great empires in order to protect their seized territory from potentially riotous minorities.[1] The

1 B. Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: Genocide and Extermination in World History from Carthage to Darfur*, New Haven 2007, p. 13-15.

day of the Turkmen mass killing is now marked by Memorial Day (January 12th) in the Turkmenistan Republic. In Geok Tepe Village, a mosque has replaced the old fortress, honouring those who defended the Geok Tepe fortress and the motherland against the Russian army. The mass killing of about fifteen thousand Turkmen in the Geok Tepe fortress is explicitly described within different types of Turkmen oral traditions, such as poetry, instrumental music and vocal music.

In this paper we will describe some brief scenes from Turkmen history and examine the events on the battlefield. According to writers such as Robert Geraci, it was the "bloodiest stage in the conquest of central Asia".[2] This genocidal massacre was followed by the exile of the Turkmen from their motherland and this forced resettlement has never been forgotten. We shall take a look at how these narratives function within the Turkmen culture and conclude by analyzing the musical narrations of the massacre in the Geok Tepe *muğam* in terms of both form and content as well as their place within Turkmen music.

The Narratives of the Catastrophe

Turkmen culture reflects the integral relationship between the Turkmen lifestyle and their surrounding environment. As Irons[3] mentioned in his studies on the Yomuts (a Turkmen tribe), their nomadic lifestyle had a political significance which extended beyond day-to-day living. Maybe their seasonal migration was to highlight their vast traditional territory. Indeed, some had already settled during the 18th century and switched from herding to agriculture. However, herding remained more prestigious than farming. For this reason, they never bowed to any ruler from any of the neighbouring political entities. Moreover, if they formed any kind of alliance with any of their neighbours, it was for the reinforcement of political links in order to protect their territory.[4]

Socio-political Evolutions in the 19th Century

During the 18th and 19th centuries, Tsarist Russia's enthusiasm for conquering new territories, rooted in the efforts of Peter the Great, fuelled a desire to access commercial routes and the warm water ports of the Indian Ocean, thereby

2 R. Geraci, *Genocide Impulses and Fantasies in Imperial Russia*, [in:] A.D. Moses (ed.), *Empire Colony and Genocide*, New York–Oxford 2008.

3 W. Irons, *The Yomut Turkmen: A Study of Social Organization Among a Central Asian Turkic-speaking Population*, Ann Arbor 1975.

4 Ibidem.

causing vast upheaval in the political map of the region. The Russian emperor's lust for land made serious headway in the 19th century, when the Russian army occupied the Caucasus in 1850 and, consequently, the conquest of the northern lands of Iran and Afghanistan became a requisite to gain access to the warm water ports. Occupying the Turkmen lands was perceived as a primary goal as their nomadic lifestyle in that area was a threat to the stability of the southern part of the Russian empire.[5] Thus, the Russians decided to attack the Tekke Turkmens who lived in Akhal in order to subjugate them. The Russian commander Colonel Krodekev said that the Turkmens must be massacred and their land must be sacked, with any survivors surrendering, in order to establish peace and tranquillity in the Akhal.[6]

Arminius Vámbéry, a western traveller in central Asia in the 19th century, described the Tekke as the most powerful of all the Turkmen tribes and estimated their population to be about 60,000 yurts (each yurt consisted of five people on average). He also pointed to their lack of agricultural and grass land, which forced them to expand their movements throughout the southern region to fight for natural resources. Soon the Akhal became the most pressing problem for Russia in terms of conquering the southern region. Additional motivators for the Russian occupation of the Akhal were based on reports about the exploration of oil and gold mines in the lands near the Caspian Sea. The Akhal were also situated in the path of the Russian railroad. Thus, what happened during the vast conquest during the "age of imperialism" was accompanied by the mass killing of people in order to gain access to their lands and resources as well as to expand the Russian empire.[7]

The Geok Tepe Battle

In light of this situation, several battles occurred in the 1870s. Although the Tekke fought with primitive weapons, they were victorious in most of them. The final battle took place in Geok Tepe in December 1880. Geok Tepe, which means "blue hill" in the Turkmen language, was a fortress on a hill in the Akhal plain; for many years it had been the centre of the Tekke tribe. At an 1879 council meeting, the Turkmen khans (rulers) decided to resist the Russian advances and gathered all of the Akhal inhabitants into the fortress. Although this decision was not universally

5 P. Hopkirk, *The Great Game. John Murray*, London 2006, p. 115.

6 A. Sarli, *Researches on Turkmen Literature*, Gorgan 1998 [in Persian].

7 M Saray, *The Turkmens in the Age of Imperialism: A Study of the Turkmen People and Their Incorporation into the Russian Empire*, Ankara 1989.

supported among the people, after gathering 40,000 to 50,000 Turkmens, all Turkmen families joined forces to reconstruct the fortifications in order to withstand the Russian cannons, the most terrible weapons of the time. One Turkmen poet of the 19th century described the Russian army as a tiger (*agla pelangh*) that breathed fire and smoke.[8] Thus, the fight for the survival of the Tekke would be brutal.

The battle began when the Russians surrounded the Turkmen in the fortress and began digging a tunnel under the fortress wall. On January 12, 1881, the Russians broke through a wall, and the pitched battle began.

> "It was then that the real slaughter began, as the victors avenged their earlier defeat at the hand of the Turkmen. No one was spared, not even young children or the elderly. All were mercilessly cut down by Russian sabers. In all, 8000 of the fugitives are said to have perished, while a further 6500 bodies were counted inside the fortress itself. The whole country was covered with corpses," an Armenian interpreter with the army later confided to a British friend. "I myself saw babies bayoneted or slashed to pieces. Many women were ravished before being killed for three days. Skobelev had allowed his troops, many of whom were even drunk, to rape, plunder and slaughter. In justification for this afterwards, the general declared: 'I hold it as a principle that the duration of peace is in direct proportion to the level of pain you inflict upon the enemy. The harder you hit them, the longer they remain quiet.'"[9]

One Russian officer later described the scene as the army entered the fortress: "Thousands [had been] killed and the yurts and their surrounding enclosure were piled with dead bodies as they could not be buried. They (the Turkmens) had tried to wrap them in felts."[10] Approximately 15,000 Turkmens — mostly innocent civilians — were killed while the Russian army suffered only about 400 casualties. The Geok Tepe collapsed, and the remaining Turkmens escaped to Marv and Persia. Eight months later, the Persian monarchy officially recognized the Russian Empire's annexation of Khwarazm and Akhal through the Treaty of Akhal. After the newly established boundaries, the Turkmens became increasingly gloomy about their lot.

The Poets' Narratives

The battle was also described by several Turkmen poets who had witnessed the Turkmen Massacre firsthand, including Meskin Gelich, Mataji, and Dust Mohammad. According to Sarli, the Geok Tepe catastrophe was subsequently

8 A. Shadmehr, *A Survey In Turkmen Literature History*, Il Arman Press 2011 [in Persian].

9 P. Hopkirk, op. cit., p. 406.

10 A. Sarli, *Researches on Turkmen Literature*, Gorgan 1998 [in Persian].

narrated in three stages: (1) events before the battle including the strong fortress reinforced by all Turkmen families and the Turkmen warriors gearing up for war; (2) the battle itself and the destruction of the Turkmen fortress; and (3) the horrific massacre.[11] The descriptive features of these poems make them a good source for understanding this humanitarian catastrophe. Sarli highlighted the poets' realistic description of the battlefield and the atmosphere of terror and grief as well as the authentic characterizations of Turkmen warriors.[12]

Meskin Gelich (1850–1908) was the most famous poet and musician at the time of the battle. He was also known as Sari Bagşy in the Tekke village. His famous poem "Apocalypse" was inspired both by the battle and his religious viewpoint.

> Today all creatures are desolate and weeping
> The Tekke people are in tears, as are all Muslims
> The clouds, earth, and sky are crying along with the heavens too,
> Maybe it is the day of the apocalypse, the apocalypse for the believers. (…)
> O my god I repent, so protect me from this disaster
> The heaven, earth, sky, and the fortress are all mourning
> The Muslims' cries have darkened the world,
> Maybe it is the day of the apocalypse for the believers.[13]

The ruins, displacement, and massacre were comparable to one of the most tragic events in Islamic history (the battle of Karbala in 680). His poems, in which he articulated his socio-political view and his ideals for Turkmen society, became a model for Turkmen poets.

Ana Gelich Mataji, another Turkmen poet, described the battlefield in metaphors in his poem "Ir Bile". His friend Hali Bagşy — a Turkmen virtuoso musician — sang his poems at different gatherings.[14]

> O believers be aware that it was during Ramadan
> When our youth were killed,
> The Russians, unbelievers, arrived and the massacre began
> So many were martyred and joined the heavenly birds.

Meanwhile, Avaz Taghan Katibi fought in Geok Tepe and died one month after the battle. He composed the poem "For You" when he was taken to the ruins of the fortress for the last time:

---

11 Ibidem.
12 Ibidem.
13 Ibidem.
14 A. Shadmehr, op. cit.

The ruined city still stands there.
What abuses we endured for you,
The martyrs have gone while suffering remains for us…[15]

Guba Shaer composed many poems about Geok Tepe. In one such poem, he described the inside of the fortress:

The black disaster came to us,
Raising such a melee, O dear friends!
People were killed and some were lost
Corpses stood in their way, O dear friends![16]

As these examples demonstrate, the catastrophe had a profound impact on Turkmen literature. In addition to the theme of mourning, criticism of the social situation comes through clearly. Although the Geok Tepe poetry was not the first to evoke such themes, the event undoubtedly served to promote both in an unprecedented manner. Thus, the unrest of the 19th century not only changed the political structure of the Turkmen tribe, but was also the main cause for the proliferation of social criticism in Turkmen poetry and music.

The Narrators

The Turkmen enthusiasm for stories and poetry led to the development of a collection of stories, poetry, bedtime stories, lullabies, and heroic tales. A bagşy, or narrator of Turkmen poetry, delivered poetry among the ordinary people throughout Central Asia by singing the poems while playing the dutar (a two-stringed lute). The bagşys memorized the poems and passed them down to the next generation. Their role in Turkmen society served to continue the *ozan* tradition in Turkish tribes rooted in shamanism. Ozan literally means someone who talks and narrates eloquently, a poet and a storyteller who accompanies his prose with music and ritual dancing. After the 11th century, these narrators were educated in the religious schools of Marv, Bukhara, and Khiva. Among these educated men, some became mullahs (religious men) or were elected as the bek (ruler) of the tribes while others not interested in religious or political positions became poets or bagşys. This religious training also contributed to the emergence of ideological poetry related to Geok Tepe. Consequently, bagşys as a social stratum have always been respected in Turkmen society. Makhtumqoli

15 A. Sarli, op. cit.
16 Ibidem.

Faraghi indicating the importance of bagşys in one of his poems: "Thus it would be prosperous if a bagşy arose in a nation".[17]

The narrative feature of Turkmen literature is not restricted exclusively to storytelling based on historical events and daily life. The most important feature referred to the bagşys' role as narrator and sometimes historian in the absence of written documents. Vambery described a one-night performance in Turkmen Sahra:

> it is only during evening hours, particularly in the winter time, that they love to listen to fairy tales and stories; it is regarded as an enjoyment of a still higher and more elevated nature, when a bagşy (troubadour) comes forward, and to accompaniment of his Dutar sings a few songs of Koroglu, Aman Mollah or the national poet Makhtumqoli (…).[18]

The Turkmen written language began to develop in the early 18th century, but the bagşy tradition and narration still retained its importance even at the end of the century. Thus, some poets were also bagşys, such as Meskin Gelich, or had connections to a bagşy who narrated their poetry. Mataji's poetry was narrated by one of his friends Hali Bagşy, a popular Turkmen master whose songs became the main source for Mataji's poetry. In fact, Mataji's poems were collated from the performances of Hali Bagşy's son, Araz Mohammad. Durdi Bagşy was another bagşy who performed Dust Mohammad's poems. Such narration was the only way for the poems to be disseminated.[19] For instance, Makhtumqoli's (1733–1797) poems "circulated throughout central Asia orally rather than in the written form."[20] Old literature was also reinterpreted by bagşys, who aligned it with daily events. Thus, most of the Turkmen oral literature was preserved and disseminated by bagşys. Furthermore, they preserved Turkmen history through songs to the accompaniment of musical instruments such as the dutar and gidzhak (a kind of fiddle).

The Geok Tepe battle was a humanitarian catastrophe in Akhal, causing great suffering among the other tribes as news of the event passed through the Turkmen Sahara (Plain of Turkmens). Soon the songs praising the warriors turned into mournful songs describing the Geok Tepe battlefield and expressing a deep

17 A. Gelich Taghani, J. Ashrafi, *Turkmen Music: Voice of Love and Myth*, Azma 1999, no. 4, [in Persian].

18 A. Vámbéry, *Travels in Central Asia*, Amersham 1864.

19 A. Shadmehr, op. cit.

20 R. Feldman, 'Turkmen literature' in: *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Encyclopedia Britannica Ultimate reference Suite, Chicago 2010.

sense of nostalgia for their motherland, now occupied by the Russian Empire. Bagşys narrated these feelings and descriptions, adhering to the Turkmen tradition of storytelling in terms of their history, while the Turkmen listened to the bagşys' narration at weddings and other major ceremonies.

Musical Narratives

Music also plays an important role in Turkmen culture. At every ceremony and gathering, music is played, and people listen to bagşys' performances, which are accompanied by music. The greatest Turkmen music is called Muğam, which consists of 500 pieces; today, only 70 of them are performed in Turkmen music.[21] Another name for muğam is *saz*, which is defined as an instrumental piece, and *aydim*, which refers to instrumental and vocal pieces.

Turkmen muğams include three main categories: music inspired by real events in society, heroic and lyrical muğams, and descriptive muğams. In the music inspired by real events in Turkmen society, bagşys served as historians or narrators of the Turkmen history and communicated historical facts through their music in the absence of a written history. Therefore, these muğams can be found in times of war or injustice. The Geok Tepe Muğam is probably the most famous of them all. Meanwhile, heroic and lyrical muğams are composed during peacetime and include ancient stories of love and heroism. They are usually performed at everyday Turkmen events, meaning that the problem the hero of the story has to confront is usually the main problem faced by the common man and the outcome is what the bagşys and the audiences prefer to happen. Finally, descriptive muğams are mostly instrumental pieces that describe scenes from nature, such as bird flights, animal movements, plants and trees, and rivers.[22]

The main characteristics of Turkmen music are inspired by social, cultural, and historical circumstances. Historical events and the complex social circumstances arising from them led to a complexity in rhythms, despite the absence of percussion instruments, and a melancholy in spirit. Another important characteristic is the translation of images into sounds, such as the description of a playful horse with a nimble horse rider in the Atchupan Muğam, which is dedicated to the heroes of Geok Tepe by an unknown bagşy, or of a chase scene and the clashing of swords and explosions in some muğams related to battlefields.[23]

---

21 M. Massudieh, *Turkmen Music: Notation and Analysis*, Tehran 2000 [in Persian].

22 Ibidem.

23 A. Gelich Taghani, J. Ashrafi, *Turkmen Music: Voice of Love and Myth*, "Azma Journal" 1999, no. 4 [in Persian].

Turkmen Music Styles

Turkmens were divided into different tribes and families according to their different lifestyles in various geographical regions. For instance, Turkmens who lived in the lower steppes of a mountain were farmers while another group who migrated through the plains were herdsmen. Different dialects of the Turkmen language, customs, and rituals emerged in the Turkmen Sahra. This extension and distribution of Turkmen tribes resulted in different features in their music so that each region had its own rhetorical traits. Theses styles are mostly named according to the tribe: Akhal Tekke Yuli, Sarik Yuli, Damana Yuli, Yomut-Goklan Yuli, and Chaldor Yuli. Historically, Akhal has been the most important region in developing Turkmen music and bagşys. The Akhal Tekke style (named after the Tekke tribe living in Akhal) is sometimes called the muğams style, which points to the diversity and multiplicity of muğams composed there.[24]

The Geok Tepe battle was fought in the Akhal area and seems to have had its own impact on the Akhal style, as it did on Turkmen poetry, although this hypothesis requires more factual analysis and research in greater depth. Geok Tepe was the most important area in the development of the Akhal style. Musa Jorjani indicated that when a person emigrated to Geok Tepe, he had to prove that he knew the musical performances in order to gain access to land and water.[25] The Tekke tribe has a family line with the surname Bagşy, which supports this story.[26] The Tekke Turkmen and Russian conflicts were widely narrated through the Akhal music and poetry, ultimately becoming one of the main pieces in the ritual and epic Turkmen muğams known as the Geok Tepe Muğam. The Akhal style is characterized by the dominant role of the dutar, leading to instrumental pieces — whether solo or in groups — being more prevalent here than in other styles. Other characteristics include the distinctness of the voice and speech, exact diction of letters and words, contemplation in moments of silence, and open mouth posturing in the form of a scream. Most of the famous masters of Turkmen music belong to the Akhal style, including Sukur Bagşy (1831–1928), Aman Geldi Goni (1833–1879), Tachmammet Suhanguli (1865–1924), Annaberdi Aydogdi Ogli, known as Kel Bagşy (1850–1923), Sari Bagşy, Mylly Tachmuradov, and Sakhi Jabbar.[27]

---

24 M. Tekke, *Different Styles of Turkmen Music*, "Mahur Music Journal" 2002, no. 18 [in Persian].

25 M. Jorjani, *The Turkmen Ritual Music*, Tehran 2005 [in Persian].

26 A. Vámbéry, op. cit.

27 M. Tekke, op. cit.

Geok Tepe Muğam

Today, performances of the Geok Tepe Muğam are instrumental pieces. However, the ethnomusicologist Massudieh[28] and bagşy Tekke[29] believe that the instrumental muğams are the expansion of vocal muğams and *aydims*. In instrumental pieces (i.e. *saz*), the words are removed and the instrumental parts are extended. According to different narrations of the Geok Tepe Muğam, performed by Jepbar Hansahedow, Cary Tecmammedow, and Mylly Tachmuradov (the last one has been transcribed by Massudieh), each performance is a three-minute long instrumental piece consisting of three parts. The parts are divided by a summary of the introduction.

This muğam is performed in Qreq Lar cycle. The most melancholic Turkmen muğams are performed in this cycle. Rhythmic motifs transform rapidly in the rhythmic structure of the muğam, so no distinct pattern can be found. In the formal structure of the muğam, rhythmic and metric figures are developed in irregular and asymmetrical sequences. *Shalape* technique comes into play frequently in these performances. It is a technique performed by the left or right hand on the dutar, hammering both on the strings or the wooden body irregularly.[30] As previously mentioned, the translation of images into musical sounds is one of the methods bagşys used in the expansion of the muğams. In the Geok Tepe instrumental muğam, we encounter these translations through the irregular rhythmic figures and sounds (made by *shalape*). These features are the main reason why this muğam is interpreted by audiences or musicologists as the chaotic maelstrom of the battlefield.

The Geok Tepe Muğam is distinct from other Turkmen muğams in that it portrays an ethnic catastrophe, nationalism, struggle, and resistance, among other themes. However, in the category of muğams based on real events, it is the personal or daily experiences of the bagşys — such as the inspiration of a women at a gathering (*beke halan*), the bagşy's child falling ill, a complaint to a khan about a bagşy's brother in prison — which inspired the main topics of the most important and prevalent muğams in this category; although the last example is largely a social critique, it is presented as a personal event. On the contrary, in the Geok Tepe Muğam, we encounter a national event that is composed by many poets and narrated by many bagşys. Thus, it is believed that, in this instrumental muğam narrating a national event, the poetry was eliminated for political

28 M. Massudieh, op. cit.
29 M. Tekke, op. cit.
30 M. Massudieh, op. cit.

reasons (eg. the descriptions of Russians as tigers or savage enemies). The poets also emphasized resistance against Russia while praising the Turkmen heroes in the battle — themes that ran contrary to the outlook of Russia and then the Soviet Union. A considerable number of traditional Turkmen poems performed at various different ceremonies and gatherings confirm this hypothesis.

Conclusion

Wars, conflicts, and the oppression of the Turkmen people are clearly reflected in Turkmen culture, especially in their poetry and music. In the case of the Geok Tepe battle, we encounter narrative and descriptive poems in which the poet himself was an eyewitness of the battle or the aftermath, sometimes even composing poems on the ruins or the corpses of women and children. The Geok Tepe poems were performed by bagşys, the narrators of Turkmen poetry, in the form of *aydim* (accompanied by the dutar) at weddings and other important ceremonies. The narrative nature of these poems and their visceral descriptions, in the face of censorship favoured by the Russian Empire and then the Soviet Union, elevated their historical status in terms of describing the battle, although the words were subsequently removed from the muğam so that now it is performed only in an instrumental form. Furthermore, the Tekke Akhal style, which incorporated the most famous and virtuoso masters among the Turkmen bagşys, became the main method for spreading the narration of the Akhals' misery among the Turkmen people with its emotional content heavily tinged by the impact of the catastrophe.

Bibliography

Badakhshan G., *A Review on Turkmen Oral Literature*, Tehran 2000 [in Persian].

Dashli Borun Y., *Lala*, "Yaprak Journal" 2004, no. 23-26 [in Persian].

Feldman W., *Turkmen Literature*, Encyclopedia Britannica Ultimate reference Suite, Chicago 2010.

Gelich Taghani A., M. Darvishi, *Music of Turkmen Sahra*, "Ayeneh va Avaz Journal" 1997 [in Persian].

Gelich Taghani A., J. Ashrafi, *Turkmen Music: Voice of Love and Myth*, "Azma Journal" 1999, no. 4, [in Persian].

Geraci R., *Genocide Impulses and Fantasies in Imperial Russia*, [in:] A.D. Moses (ed.), *Empire Colony and Genocide*, Oxford–New York 2008.

Hopkirk P., *The Great Game*, London 2006.

Irons W., *The Yomut Turkmen: A Study of Social Organization Among a Central Asian Turkic-speaking Population*, (no. 58), Ann Arbor 1975.

Jorjani M., *The Turkmen Ritual Music*, Tehran 2005 [in Persian].

Kiernan B., *Blood and Soil: Genocide and Extermination in World History from Carthage to Darfur*, New Haven 2007.

Logashova B., *Turkmens of Iran*, Tehran 1980 [in Persian].

Massudieh M., *Turkmen Music: Notation and Analysis*, Tehran 2000 [in Persian].

Meftah E., *Turkmens: culture, Traditions and Costumes*, "Central Asia and The Caucasus Review" 1995, vol. 4, no. 11.

Moradi M., *A Review on Turkmen Music with emphasis on the social, political and cultural functions*, Tehran 1999 [in Persian].

Saray M., *The Turkmens in the Age of Imperialism: A Study of the Turkmen People and Their Incorporation into the Russian Empire*, Ankara 1989.

Sarli A.M., *Researches on Turkmen Literature*, Gorgan 1998 [in Persian].

Shadmehr A., *A Survey in Turkmen Literature History*, Il Arman Press 2011 [in Persian].

Tekke M., *Different Styles of Turkmen Music*, "Mahur Music Journal" 2002, vol. 18 [in Persian].

Vámbéry Á., *Travels in Central Asia*, Amersham 1864.

Katarzyna Naliwajek-Mazurek

The Functions of Music within the Nazi System of Genocide in Occupied Poland

Introduction. The Social, Psychological, Ethical, Historical Aspects of Music within the Nazi System of Detention and Extermination

Some of the fundamental questions raised when one attempts to define the roles of music within a genocidal context, can partly be answered by investigating the functions fulfilled by music in the multifarious Nazi system of genocide implemented from September 1939 on the territory of occupied Poland. Music was used and exploited by the Nazis in various ways in these formerly Polish territories, divided into three parts: the so-called "General Governement" (*Generalgouvernement für die besetzten polnischen Gebiete*), the Reich-annexed territories and the USSR-annexed territories.[1] It is however the omnipresence of music and the complexity of roles it played at the scene of mass-murder and maltreatment such as Nazi prisons, ghettos, concentration and death camps, which poses the most challenging questions for the researcher – just as for any human being, who can barely fathom the possibility of relation between a scene of mass killing and music – notably if we adhere to the notion of music conceived primarily as art-form with its own intrinsic or historically attributed ethical qualities.

Although in most accounts from these scenes of detention, torture and genocide, the topic of music might seem a marginal one, often not surfacing at all, hidden under the more salient description of suffering and extermination, the high importance placed on music both by prisoners and by the Nazi authorities, has drawn the attention of scholars, particularly during the recent decade, and has turned the question of the use of music in these circumstances into the subject of intense research.[2] An in-depth examination of source material,

1 See e.g. K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *The Racialization and Ghettoization of Music in the General Government* [in:] Pauline Fairclough (ed.), *Twentieth-Century Music and Politics*, Farnham 2012, p. 191-210; K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *The Use of Polish Musical Tradition in the Nazi Propaganda*, "Musicology Today" 2010, vol. 7, p. 243-259.

2 Apart from an already well-known book by S. Gilbert, *Music in the Holocaust. Confronting Life in the Nazi Ghettos and Camps*, Oxford 2005, see for example K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *Music and Torture in Nazi Sites of Persecution and Genocide in Occupied*

composed predominantly of manifold testimonies by the witnesses, helps to coax this phenomenon out of the shadows, yet a more comprehensive survey can only be achieved through the use of diversified methods exploring its social, psychological, ethical, and – last but not least – historical aspects.

The system of prisons and camps installed by the German authorities in the former Polish territories grew quickly and rapaciously during the brief five years of occupation. Already before the establishment of ghettos and extermination camps, its aim was at first to "liquidate" the Polish *Führerschicht* – that is "the leading class" in Nazi terminology. It constituted part of the euphemistically named (like so many other Nazi genocidal endeavours) *Ausserordentlische Befriedungsaktion*, directed against representatives of the intelligentsia and local authorities in cities, towns, villages – to minimise risks of resistance or the establishment of underground structures, to terrorise the inhabitants and to divest them of all outstanding and enlightened figures who could lead them against the occupiers and lend moral support such as teachers, lawyers or directors of important institutions etc. Similar actions were undertaken independently by the Soviet Union in the Eastern part of Poland, as delineated by the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, although the cleansing in this case was achieved mainly by deportations to Siberia. The necessity of these actions at the early stage of the occupation of Poland was stressed by Hitler and other Nazi leaders in their written and oral orders and speeches to their subordinates;[3] it stemmed from their conviction that such "leaders" were the driving force and bearers of national identity.

The Social Psychopathology of the Nazi Conscience and the Functions of Music within a Genocidal Context for the Perpetrators and their Victims

The crucial meaning of leadership was perfectly understood by the Nazis, and the perverted interconnection between the dominating leader and the subjugated remainder, constituted an intrinsic element of the Nazi system itself.[4] Music

---

Poland 1939-1945, "the world of music (new series). *Music and Torture|Music and Punishment*" 2013, vol. 2, no. 1, p. 31-50.

3 Cf. K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *The Use of Polish Musical Tradition in the Nazi Propaganda*, op. cit., p. 244ff.

4 The *Führerprinzip* (leadership principle) was one of main elements of the Nazi doctrine, defined as the "Nazi principle outlined in *Mein Kampf* that created an authoritarian system with power emanating from the top. When Hitler ordered something it was as if God had spoken. At each level of the hierarchy, those below owed absolute

became one of the most vital elements of this socio-psychological mechanism, nurturing them with its deep and intrinsic emotional energy. Therefore, the roles music played in the sites of detention and extermination, epitomise to a great extent the relations between the victims and their perpetrators and the processes operating within each of these groups.

The seemingly paradoxical uses of music by both groups however make it a challenging task to analyse and understand the mechanisms governing these processes. The fundamental question is the following: what were the reasons for the two groups using music, and what kind of needs did it fulfil and how?

The goal of physical and psychological abuse inflicted on the victims by the guards was 1) to gain total control over the prisoners and 2) to make them lose their identity and thus to annihilate them psychologically before exterminating them physically. To achieve these ends, the guards used terror and torture. Music was an important part of this strategy, as confirmed by numerous reports – a few selected cases will be presented here. These goals were intrinsically intertwined with the oppressors' constant need to strengthen their authoritarian roles whose psyche was thoroughly permeated by the profound narcissist urge for empowerment.[5] Music, used in its army-like, "decorative" or ceremonial aspect, was a particularly useful and powerful means of such empowerment, modelled on the Nazi mass meetings so popular in the Nazi Germany after 1933.[6] Back then merely one of the masses but now the camp commandant, from his perspective

---

allegiance to those above. In effect, all were to obey Hitler without question. The Führer controlled the state, the Party, the Hitler Youth, the economy, society, communication in the broadest sense, coercion/force/concentration camps, and the armed forces". R. Michael, K. Doerr, *Nazi-Deutsch/Nazi-German: An English Lexicon of the Language of the Third Reich*, Westport, CT 2002, p. 172.

5 "Narcissism is defined by a series of factors (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). These begin with favourable or even grandiose self-regard, including a strong sense of superiority over others, arrogance, fantasies of greatness, and a belief that oneself is unique. The German Nazis fancied themselves a 'master race' superior to all others, and they clearly regarded their dream of continental, if not world, domination to be an achievable goal. Their self-declared Third Reich signified a pretentious claim to be the successor to the Holy Roman Empire that had once dominated the civilised world." (L.S. Newman, R. Erber, *Understanding Genocide: The Social Psychology of the Holocaust*, Oxford 2002, p. 263).

6 "The Nazis made systematic use of the media. Simultaneously, Hitler was able to create a "corporate identity" for his movement, often by borrowing ideas from religion, by means of uniforms, flags, songs, torches, special music, and, of course, the swastika. Finally, he managed to organize his members and sympathisers in mass

of having made impressive progress in his social status, longed for the grandiose, for the lofty feeling of a mass festival. This was provided by music in the camps, played during roll calls. In the extermination camps, such as Treblinka, the typically sadistic sense of satisfaction achieved by domination and humiliation of others, was considerably enhanced by the sight of degraded prisoners, who would be forced to play music for the guards, or sing a "cheerful" march at their orders, the same guards, whom the prisoners knew as responsible for the murder of their children, sisters, brothers, parents and wives. For the Nazi perpetrators, the roles of music in the genocidal system, which they built mainly within the borders of the General Government, ranged from an additional means of psychological torture, debasement, manipulation and victimisation of 'their' prisoners to the use of music for their own personal enjoyment and recreation during or after genocidal acts often combined with the physical torture of the victims.[7]

Yet, as is evident by the enormous musical repertoire of camps and prisons at that time, a different or similar kind of music acted on behalf of the prisoners as a method of keeping and/or regaining their own identity by referring to the profoundly ethical, lyrical or – perhaps more superficial but nevertheless powerful – satirical aspects of music. Not surprisingly, this type of music was illegal and repressed by the Nazi authorities as a threat to their dominance. These two main aspects of music contain in fact a much more complex network of mechanisms operating within the relations between the persecuted and the perpetrators. Thus, the functions of music at the scene of genocide seem at first glance to be diametrically opposite for the oppressors and for the oppressed, just as the roles of the two groups were opposed themselves. Both aspects of the presence of music within the genocidal system – its criminal use by the Nazis as a tool for the degradation of prisoners and its ethical power for the prisoners – can be better understood, on the one hand, through the reading of direct testimonies by former camps prisoners who served as musicians in these camps and survived only because they could play music, and one the other hand, through analysis of the perpetrators' perspective.

Aestheticisation of the Nazi Ideology and Music as Metaphor

Music was widely used by the Nazis as a means of boosting the triumphalist ideology of Aryan race domination. In this arena, the role of music was – among

demonstrations. Here they came into direct contact with the leader, the symbols, the music, and so on." (L.S. Newman, R. Erber, op. cit., p. 202).

7 Cf. K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *Music and Torture in Nazi Sites*…, op. cit.

other elements – to prove the superiority of the German culture, whose identity was composed of such elements as: the German nation itself, the German race, German art, German radio, and so forth. This endless enumeration conceitedly reverberated in Nazi books, articles and speeches. The omnipresent attempts at proving this racial and cultural superiority went hand in hand with attempts to prove the inferiority of the cultures to be dominated. Thus, the pseudo-argumentation by Hitler in *Mein Kampf*[8] and by Alfred Rosenberg in *The Myth of the Twentieth Century (1930)*[9] among others, was to make the readers understand how detrimental for the German culture were the influences of inferior races (with the Jews presented as the main danger) and how the idealised German culture, already brimming with the highest artistic standards of a Beethoven stature, could regain this greatest distinction by getting rid of those who corrupted art and society. Alfred Rosenberg gave in his *Myth of the Twentieth Century* a striking metaphoric comparison of Nazi usurpations to a mystic chord: the Germanic conquest of the world is not an infinite expansion, but an enhanced forcefulness (that is, a willed act), the 'sweet sacred chord', to which Schubert ascribed omnipotence.[10]

This expression, meant as highly poetical, yet in fact highly ambiguous, characteristic of Rosenberg's style, reveals a telling component of the Nazis' forcefully aestheticised ideology: an imaginary mystic communion between their criminal *Lebensraum* project and the presupposed sacred dimension of music. The aim of this line of reasoning was to sanction their anti-Semitic and anti-democratic actions, and to give such a legitimisation of the Nazi ideology, which could satisfy both pseudo-religious and narcissist needs. The music of the great German masters, as they termed it, was the most adequate legitimisation of all thinkable policies to be undertaken. Thus the "Germanic conquest of the world" became

8 A. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Munich I 1925, II 1926.

9 A. Rosenberg, *Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Munich 1934.

10 A longer excerpt of his: "Die Musik Bachs und Beethovens ist nicht die höchste erreichbare Stufe der V e r f l ü ch t i g u n g der Seele, sondern bedeutet gerade den D u r c h b r u c h einer Seelenkraft ohnegleichen, die nicht bloß stoffliche Fesseln abstreift (das ist nur die negative Seite), sondern etwas ganz Bestimmtes ausspricht, wenn dies auch nicht immer gleich schwarz auf weiß nach Hause getragen werden kann. Die germanische Weltüberwindung ist nicht uferlose Ausweitung (was 'Verflüchtigung' wäre), sondern gesteigerte Eindringlichkeit (d. h. willenhafte Tat), der 'süße heilige Akkord', dem Schubert die Allmacht zuschrieb. Der Wille ist Seelenprägung für eine zielbewußte Energie, gehört also in die zielsetzende (finale) Betrachtungsweise, währendder Trieb mit der ursachenerforschenden (kausalen) Denkweise verbunden ist." A. Rosenberg, *op. cit.*, chapter: "Der aestethetische Wille", p. 406.

the embodiment of the Schubertian sweet sacred chord – the persecution first of their fellow citizens and later the conquered nations was aestheticised to the extreme. In the pseudo aesthetic philosophy of Rosenberg it acquired the status of a sacred ideal symbolised by music. The dream of omnipotence, characteristic of narcissist Nazi psychology, was perhaps subconsciously sought for through the Jungian and Freudian process of *Übertragung* or 'transference'.[11] The desire of power and domination was transferred onto Schubert and his supposed words on a sweet sacred chord.[12] Thus, in Rosenberg's text, Schubert almost became a porte-parole of Nazi beliefs on the necessity of the "Germanic conquest of the world", and certainly provided a proper justification. This tightly interwoven connection between the exalted Nazi power and the power of music could be considered on the surface level as a plain manipulation, typical of a totalitarian mode of thinking. However, the manifestly profound need for music, and the omnipresence of music in all important spheres of the Nazi system, even in most gruesome scenes of detention and genocide centres, makes it clear that it reflected deep psychological – perhaps we might even term them "spiritual" – needs.

The Ideological and Social Roles of Music in Camps through the Lens of Social Psychology

Music in Nazi concentration and extermination camps, which had larger or smaller musical ensembles, fits into the broader image of the Nazi totalitarian power system in general. Music and the quasi-religious aura surrounding it, an important element of Nazi mass demonstrations, constituted a sort of narcotic to which they had been accustomed and which they constantly needed.

If some concepts of Nazi vocabulary are juxtaposed – such as *marschieren*, "to march" (explained as follows: "In Nazi Party and Wehrmacht, to march on. To move in step with the future, to act in harmony with Nazi ideology, to shape the future."[13]) and *Meschuggismus* ("Cult of craziness", that is "Modern art, borrowed from the Yiddish *meschugge* (crazy). See also *entartete Kunst*."[14]) – we can

11 For the discussion and translation of *Übertragung* see N. Szajnberg, *Übertragung, metaphor, and transference in psychoanalytic psychotherapy*, "*International Journal of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy*" 1985-1986, vol. 11, p. 53-75.

12 A marginal question to ask here would be what chord exactly was meant by Rosenberg: was it the German augmented sixth chord? It is doubtful, since – among other reasons – it could hardly be defined as 'sweet'.

13 R. Michael, K. Doerr, op. cit., p. 272.

14 Ibidem, p. 275.

see that the orchestras playing and prisoners marching to and from work was a perfect fulfilment of the Nazi vision of the world. Further on, the following Nazi concepts are helpful in understanding the role of camp music and marching – *Arbeitsmaterial*, that is "Work material, available workers. Also, Jews capable of performing productive work before being killed"[15], or *Menschenmaterial* – "human material. The function of a human being is to follow the directives of the Führer and the Nazi Party, not personal goals. The Nazis would say: '*Wir sind alle Stahl und Eisen. Wir sind alle prima Material*' ('We are steel and iron. All of us are first-rate material')".[16] Even if prisoners in the camps were not *Menschen* (*Menschentum* meant for the Nazis "Humanity. German race"), but *Untermenschen* and even if the notion of the so-called *menschliche Architektur* – "human architecture" referred to the Nuremberg rallies, where "the celebrants were organised and shaped into regularised block formations"[17], still the *Untermenschliche Architektur* in the camps was a distant, distorted reflection of the rallies, where crematoriums were burning instead of the torches, and where a sense of ritual could be regained.

Inga Clendinnen pointed out that ritual conduct is based on an established script that is "the heart-made creation of whatever group it is we are trying to understand"[18] and suggested that "the rounds of disciplinary procedures so ardently enforced by the Auschwitz SS not only met cultural criteria of discipline and punishment, but were also consciously theatrical, and that these pieces of SS theatre, constructed and enacted daily, reanimated the SS sense of high purpose and invincibility, authenticated the realism of their absurd ideology, and sustained both morale and self-image in what was, indubitably but inadmissibly, psychologically a hardship post."[19]

James Waller in his well-known book of 2002 quoted the above-cited statements from Clendinnen, aiming to reconstruct the founding elements of what he termed "a culture of cruelty" and to prove the perpetrators' lack of psychopathology. He characterised a culture of cruelty by three features: professional socialisation, the binding factors of the group, and the assimilation of role and person. Professional socialisation is composed of three elements: escalating commitments, ritual conduct and repression of conscience. Of these elements "ritual conduct" is the most salient in examining the role of music at the scene

15 Ibidem, p. 70.
16 Ibidem, p. 275.
17 Ibidem.
18 I. Clendinnen, *Reading the Holocaust*, New York 1999, p. 141.
19 Ibidem, p. 142.

of genocide. The second feature, binding factors of the group consists of three elements: diffusion of responsibility, deindividuation, and conformity to peer pressure. The third feature, the assimilation of role and person, is also important while considering music's link with genocidal acts: the role of oppressor merging with the person, demands more stimuli, tightly woven together by this process of merging – and thus, it is extremely difficult to enweave the interlacing threads of personality and elements of role played. This is how Waller explains the meaning of ritual for the perpetrators:

> A significant aspect of professional socialisation into a culture of cruelty is what anthropologists have identified as ritual conduct. Ritual conduct refers to behaviours that are apparently excessive or unproductive but which nonetheless are persistent. […] Such behaviours, however theatrical they may seem to outsiders, carry significant meaning and rewards for those who perform them in a culture of cruelty. In short, they are rituals – often repeatable, choreographed experiences – enacted for the psychological benefit of the perpetrators rather than as instrumental exercises in discipline. In Nazi concentration and death camps, for instance, ritual conduct included the roll calls, camp parades, meaningless physical exercises, and the stripping and beating of victims already marked for death.[20]

Music was an important component of this ritual and thus was valued by the perpetrators as being almost indispensable for the daily functioning of concentration and death camps.

Music in Camps as a Complex Mechanism of Control, Humiliation and Domination

The process of the physical degradation of prisoners could be further enhanced by a psychological deterioration; physical torture was then intensified by additional factors. Music was a particularly useful tool for attaining this goal. Several examples of this method can be found, which goes to confirm the intentions of the Nazis.[21]

In some cases the role of music, designed to augment the already unbearable suffering, was combined with the function of drowning out the sounds of torture during interrogations or mass-killings, the latter taking place throughout the time of the *Aktion Erntefest* – the extermination of the Jews in Majdanek, Poniatowa, Trawniki and other camps in the Lublin District on 3 November

20 J. Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing*, New York 2002, p. 207.

21 Cf. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *Music and Torture in Nazi Sites of Persecution…*, op. cit.

1943. Among Polish-Jewish musicians killed at that time to the sound of Strauss's waltzes was Paulina Braun (? –1943) – a songwriter and poet, who lived in Warsaw. Her best-known songs, sung by Diana Blumenfeld in the Warsaw ghetto, include: "Curik ahejm" (Tsurik aheym; Back Home), "Hot rachmones" (Hot rahmones; Have Mercy) and "A cholem" (A holem; A Dream). Her poetry and songs written at Majdanek were well known among prisoners. Another victim was Dawid Zajderman (? –1943), a popular operetta singer, performer of Jewish songs and actor active in the musical life of the Warsaw Ghetto.[22]

Radio music was very often played during interrogations in Gestapo prisons (among many testimonies, this is confirmed by numerous prisoners' accounts of the Pawiak prison in Warsaw). Children songs were emitted through loudspeaker systems during the deportations of Jewish children to the death camps from the Płaszów camp in Cracow exactly at the moment of the children's separation from their parents, partly to drown out the sounds of crying and despair, partly to mock the tragedy accompanying the destruction of the lives of families and children.

Music, however, was not only a narcissist-sadistic satisfaction booster for the perpetrators, but also had more practical functions, such as the control and domination of the prisoners. In the light of social psychology findings, which confirm that the perpetrators were not really insane as it had been suggested before, it seems more plausible that what on the surface level seems like a sadistic manipulation of music was rather an instrumental and conscious method of pacifying and numbing the prisoners, which makes the scope of the genocidal crime and the use of music in it even more appalling. The diagnosis of the non-psychopathological character of the perpetrators – apart from the book by James Waller – was confirmed by other researchers:

> One conclusion that can be firmly drawn from these analyses is related to the myth that the Nazis were highly disturbed and clinically deranged individuals. The current analysis clearly suggests that a majority of the Nazis were not deranged in the clinical sense and that the above described common personality characteristics, while undesirable to many, are not pathological in and of themselves and are actually frequently found in the U.S. population. Thus, as a group, the Nazis were not the hostile sadists many made them out to be. Yet, they were not a collection of random humans either.[23]

These authors quote earlier findings by E. A. Megargee:

---

22 I. Fater, *Muzyka żydowska w Polsce w okresie międzywojennym*, Warszawa 1997.

23 E.A. Zillmer et al., *The Quest for the Nazi Personality: A Psychological Investigation of Nazi War Criminals,* Hillsdale, NJ 1995, p. 181.

> Although a variety of functional and organic disturbances can lead to aggression and violent behaviour, most violence is committed by people suffering from no diagnosable impairment. Even if we exclude legal, socially condoned forms of violence such as warfare, we find criminal violence is often performed by normal people for rational motives[24].

They also quote the famous book by C. R. Browning and his conclusion "that the members of the Police Battalion did not act out of frenzy, bitterness, or frustration, but with calculation."[25]

Lifton cited former Nazi doctors in Auschwitz, which confirm that the mass killing was executed as a "normal job":

> The selections became simply 'a part of their life,' as a prisoner doctor, Jacob R. commented to me. And Dr. B., too, noted that, whatever reservations SS doctors had at first, they soon viewed selections as 'normal duty,' as 'a regular job.' Indeed within the Auschwitz context, as another survivor testified, 'to kill a man was nothing, not worth talking about': a doctor who was perfectly polite and decent most of the time 'felt no compunction about sending people into the gas'.[26]

Some of these physicians as Adolf Wahlmann were earlier "trained" as "euthanasia doctors", where they had been already accustomed not only to killing patients, but also to celebrating it with the use of music, which is confirmed by the following account:

> The ten thousandth victim at Hadamar had been celebrated as a milestone, as reported by an employee. Invited by a T4 doctor named Berner, the employees gathered that evening. Each was given a bottle of beer, and they adjourned to the basement. "There on a stretcher lay a naked male corpse with a huge hydrocephalic head. (…) I am certain that it was a real dead person and not a paper corpse. The dead person was put by the cremation personnel on a sort of trough and shoved into the cremation oven. Hereupon [the administrator] Märkle, who had made himself look like a sort of minister, held a burial sermon." Another witness reported that the celebration, which included music, degenerated further into a drunken procession through the institution grounds.[27]

According to a testimony of a former Auschwitz prisoner, quoted by Lifton,

---

24 E.A. Megargee, *Aggression and Violence*, [in:] H.E. Adams, P.B. Sutker (eds.), *Comprehensive handbook of psychopathology*, New York 1984, p. 523 quoted in: E.A. Zillmer et al., op. cit., p. 183.

25 Ch.R. Browning, *Ordinary men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the final solution in Poland*, New York 1992, p. 164 quoted in: E.A. Zillmer et al., op. cit., p. 184.

26 R.J. Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide*, New York 2000, p. 175-176.

27 Ibidem, p. 100.

"the corrupting of all human and ethical standards took place so rapidly… that one had to be very stern to prevent the somewhat stronger prisoners hastening the death of the weaker fellow prisoners." One extreme example was the behaviour of hardened criminal psychopaths who joined the SS personnel in killing people on work Kommandos, after which prisoners would be sent out to bring back the corpses to fill in the necessary 'rows of five' and obtain the proper count – sometimes taking place while the prisoner orchestra played the tune (mentioned earlier) of 'That's How We Live Every Day' (*So leben wir alle Tage*).[28]

Another prisoner described her exposure to twice-daily selections (January to May or June 1943):

The day – you got up at four o'clock, and it was pitch dark, I mean in winter (…) then roll call, and you stood, and stood, and stood (…) sometimes two hours or more in lines of five until the roll call tallied. And that – to this day I don't know – I can't figure out how it was tallied. I mean how the numbers were supposed to tally, because bunches of people died overnight, the people that were beaten to death as they didn't want to crawl out [of their bunks to come out for the selection]. I mean, I never could figure out what their mathematics were. But it had to be very precise mathematics, because sometimes if the roll call didn't tally we stood till seven or even eight o'clock! And then, as soon as you were through with the roll call, you always marched out. (…) Orchestra on the left, [playing] rousing marches. On the right, the doctor and the *Arbeitsführer* [chief of work] – and selection.[29]

However, the instrumental attitude towards music adopted and enforced by the perpetrators in the camps, is most fully confirmed by another testimony by a prisoner doctor, who, as Lifton put it:

…expressed the anguish of being manipulated by Mengele in a series of cruel deceptions. (…) An example of what she called Mengele's "diabolic" attitude was his appearing on a Jewish holiday and announcing, "This is *Tishahb'av* [the commemoration of the destruction of the First and Second Temples]," and "We will have a concert." There was a concert, then a roll call, and then an enormous selection, causing her to ask bitterly, "Why should we listen to music while we are being cremated?"

She stressed that Mengele's behaviour was carefully planned: "He must have scripted it: music; sit down; *Zählappell* [roll call]; crematorium." All this was part of his "sadistic game," she believed, because "every step Mengele [took] was a psychological basis for torture." And compared with other SS doctors, Mengele was "more sadistic, (…) more *raffiniert* ['sophisticated, tricky, sly']. He [was] more elaborate (…) because he must have known psychology."

28 Ibidem, p. 224.

29 Ibidem, p. 182.

> Sometimes the psychological sadism could be naked, as when he spoke to a Jewish woman doctor pleading unsuccessfully for the life of her elderly father, also a doctor: "Your father is seventy years old. Don't you think he has lived long enough?" Or, to a sick woman: "Have you ever been on the 'other side'? What is it like over there? You will know very soon!"[30]

This attitude towards music is further confirmed by another testimony from Auschwitz by Dr. Ella Lingens-Reiner, who played in the women's orchestra, and was haunted by the image of the women's orchestra playing concerts at the Auschwitz-Birkenau hospital while at the same time trucks filled with naked women selected for gas chambers passed by. She recollected in her book tellingly entitled *Prisoners of Fear*:

> That we went on playing and listening to music, that we never shouted to those in the trucks to jump out, run, or resist, is something I cannot understand to this day. How was it possible for us to be so calm?[31]

The act of playing was thus also for the orchestra players in a sense an automatised activity, which occupied them to the point that they would be protected from fully witnessing the terrifying conditions of the camp. The musicians of the orchestra were in fact being tortured by being forced to play for their own survival while incapable of helping fellow prisoners from being tortured and murdered. Helena Dunicz-Niwińska, who played violin in the women's orchestra in Auschwitz-Birkenau and was thus saved by Alma Rosé, a famous musician, who directed the women's orchestra in the camp, described it as follows in a filmed interview in April 2012 by the author of the article:

> When the hour of return for the work details from outside [of the camp] was approaching, we went again – carrying our stools and music-stands – to the place where we were to play and we went out also in a marching column with a drum, cymbals playing – to the place where we were to play marches.
>
> We played marches as long as the marching columns were coming back. There we could observe various horrible scenes because at the gate there were of course always guards and they used to check women who came back from the fields to see if they weren't carrying any hidden carrots, potatoes or cigarettes because they sometimes could find somewhere in the field things left there on purpose [for prisoners by local inhabitants] some food or cigarettes planted there and at such instances the guards treated these women very brutally. We had to play while they ripped out from their pockets or trousers these various plants or cigarettes and they, for instance, ordered them to eat

30 R.J. Lifton, op. cit., p. 373-374.

31 E. Lingens-Reiner, *Prisoners of Fear,* London 1948, quoted after R. Newman, K. Kirtley, *Alma Rosé: Vienna to Auschwitz*, Portland 2000, p. 269.

a carrot covered in soil or to eat whole packages of cigarettes and only then did they release the women or sometimes ordered them to kneel nearby, holding bricks in raised hands. This used to happen to the barking of dogs, and horrible shouting. And we had to play…

The author of this testimony, Helena Dunicz-Niwińska, violinist in the camp, was born in 1915 in Vienna and received her violin diploma at the Lviv conservatory. On 19 January 1943 she was arrested with her mother by the Gestapo and kept in prison in Lviv. On 1 October 1943 both were included in a transport of approximately 1000 prisoners (600 men) to Auschwitz-Birkenau. They had to stand in the wagon for three days, without drinking or eating. In the camp Helena received number 64,118, her mother Maria – 64,119 (she died two months later due to the conditions in the camp). Alma Rosé, informed that Helena Dunicz was a violinist, took her to the orchestra. She played next to the first violin, Hélène Scheps from Belgium. Evacuated on 18 January 1945 to Ravensbrück, she was liberated in the Neustadt-Glewe camp. Since that time she searched for her brother, the talented and esteemed musicologist, Jan Dunicz, arrested by the Nazis on 14 April 1944. From Pawiak prison he was sent to Gross-Rosen camp, where he received the number 2869. He sent four letters from there to his sister; the last of them arrived just before the evacuation of the camp. On 11 November 1944 he was transferred to Bunzlau, where he worked. On 10 February 1945 a sudden evacuation to the Dora camp and the death march which lasted 5-6 weeks decimated the number of prisoners from 1200 to just 420. Jan Dunicz, received there the number 119568, and died after approximately 3 days, on 3 April 1945. After his arrest all of his documents were taken by the Gestapo. His Chopin analyses as well as his other musicological texts were lost. After the war Helena worked as music editor at the Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne. She lives in Cracow[32].

However, in death camps such as in Treblinka, musical ensembles were often used as part of a deception strategy. The genocidal system had been thought out and organised by the Nazis in a way designed to minimise costs and effort and to maximise profits. That is why the plundering of the Jews was organised in subsequent stages – from dispossessing them of their houses and apartments, bank accounts, factories, shops, art collections, musicals instruments, and books up to the pillage of their last valuables and belongings, their clothing and their hair just before the moment of their death.[33]

---

32 Her biography has recently been published: M. Szewczyk (ed.), *Drogi mojego życia. Wspomnienia skrzypaczki z Birkenau,* Oświęcim 2013; English translation: 2014.

33 Cf. K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *Music and Torture in Nazi Sites of Persecution…*, op. cit.

Prisoners selected from the transport to be used as slave labour were forced to listen to music and forced to sing themselves, especially at roll call after a day of carrying and throwing corpses into large ditches, and being whipped, tortured and witnessing their fellow prisoners' executions and suicides.[34] Among these experiences, hearing the sounds of music at roll call, during the tally, only augmented the sense of degradation and guilt of these people, who were forced to participate in the extermination process. The survivors also remembered how forced singing augmented the humiliation and torture of prisoners.[35]

Entertainment versus Degradation

Music performed by prisoners was to provide entertainment for the camp personnel. Musicians were widely used to entertain the camp staff, as was in the case of Artur Gold in the Treblinka death camp where the elite of the Jewish musicians perished, including members of the Warsaw Philharmonic and other ensembles from before the war, as well as popular music composers, and performers. Artur Gold, a true star of popular music before the war, was degraded to the role of prisoner-entertainer. The empowerment of the perpetrators through forcing the musicians to play entertaining music virtually on the ashes of murdered people thus constitutes an act of sadistic domination. This is confirmed by several accounts. Abraham Krzepicki who, after his escape from Treblinka, was later murdered when fighting in the Warsaw Getto uprising in 1943 described "The Open-Air Concert at the Death Camp":

> As I stood before the door of the Treblinka "bathhouse," I made a new discovery. Earlier, it had seemed to me that I heard sounds of music. I had thought it was a radio loudspeaker which the Germans had installed in order not to be isolated, God forbid, from their Fatherland's *Kultur* out here in the sticks. I was now to learn that their concern for musical culture went even further. Under a tree, about 40 meters from the bathhouse, not far from the path on which the Jews were driven into the "bath," there was a small orchestra consisting of three Jews with yellow patches and three Jewish musicians from Stoczek (who were later joined by another, better musician from Warsaw). (…) They were probably playing the latest hits which were popular with the Germans and Ukrainians, for whom they also used to play at shindigs in the guard stations. The Jews would play while the Gentiles danced. (…) There they would stand and play all the time, the Jewish musicians, near the narrow path along which other Jews ran their last

34 J.M. Rajchman, *Ocalałem z Treblinki*, trans. B. Szwarcman-Czarnota, Warszawa 2011, p. 42.

35 S. Willenberg, *Bunt w Treblince*, Warszawa 2004, p. 76.

race, opposite the open ditches where tens of thousands of Jews lay in their last sleep. There, they stood and played. They were playing for the right to remain alive a few more weeks.[36]

Similar acts, such as the use of music in Janowska camp in Lviv to divest the prisoners of dignity in the moment directly preceding their death by making musicians play the cruelly mocking "Tango of Death", were wide-spread among the Nazi personnel. Eminent musicians were members of the camp orchestra and they all were killed there; among them the famous pianist Artur Hermelin.

Music as Self-defence, Music as a Survival Ploy against Dehumanisation

For prisoners music was hardly a weapon; it was so rare, when singing constituted an underground activity, a song of protest with patriotic, religious and political texts. However in most cases, music made by prisoners constituted a method of self-defence rather than what we could term, "music at war". It was a transgression of suffering, of death, a method of reconstructing one's identity – often related to religion or mocking the conditions of a camp or a prison. Singing, sometimes even dancing, was a measure of self-defence, most often repressed by the guards by beating.

Numerous testimonies of inmates bring evidence of such functions of music. For example, a group of women upon their arrival to Auschwitz began to sing a satirical song and dance with the intention thus described by the witness:

"Let's save ourselves. We are laughing (…) We are beginning to sing: Hey ho, ha hey / This cell is so gay…". As the witness recollected, "The German [women] functionaries are bewildered. They are staring at us like we're crazy, coming from another world. One of them laughed, quite happy about the unexpected entertainment, and she slapped me hard on my back. But the other one took care of the German order, shouting: *Du blinde Kuh! Du lustige Mistbiene! Du alte Zitron!* – she kicked Wanda, who was dancing and she hit Zosia on her back with a stick: *Ordnung muss sein*.[37]

---

36 Cf. K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *Music and Torture in Nazi Sites of Persecution…*, op. cit.

37 "Pierwsza droga prowadzi przez Saunę. (…) Wchodzimy w nową rzeczywistość (…) W życie istot bez imienia. Długie, brudne suknie więzienne pętają się do kostek. Cuchnie wstrętna poplamiona bielizna. Nie wiadomo, kto w niej umierał. (…) I nagle robi się nam wesoło. My z celi 22 trzymamy się razem. Trzeba podtrzymać tradycję. Ratujmy się. Śmiejemy się. Wanda Brühl zaczyna tańczyć czeczotkę przy akompaniamencie szczękających z zimna zębów. Próbuję jej towarzyszyć, ale gubię ogromne drewniaki. Zaczynamy śpiewać: Hej ho, hej ha / Wesoła cela ta…" A. Pawełczyńska,

Religious singing was a way of confronting imminent death, as described in Abraham Krzepicki's testimony concerning the behaviour of people transported to Treblinka:

> Different people behaved in different ways. The very young, who probably had never been pious, joined with the young Hasidim in reciting the mourners' Kaddish. There was no lack of moralists who interpreted our present misery as God's way of punishing the Jewish people for its sins. And as they preached, some people did indeed feel sinful and guilty and they began to beat their breasts and recite the *Vidduy* [the last confession before death]. Others tried to remember some prayer; they swayed and lulled their fears with a tune from the Psalms. Still others simply bawled like children.[38]

In the fifth chapter of his testimony, Abraham Krzepicki, who was one of the few people who managed to escape from this extermination camp (he later died in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising), in the section entitled "Yehudi, What Are They Going To Do With Us?" depicted the reactions of women newly transported to the camp from Warsaw:

> "Shema Yisroel, Adonai Eloheinu! O God, my one and only God!" the woman cried to a Yom Kippur melody, and stretching out her arms as if toward some sort of heaven which the Jews never look upon when they say their prayers. "God, You One and Only God, take revenge on our enemies for their crimes! We are going to die to sanctify Your name. Let our sacrifice not be in vain! Avenge our blood and the blood of our children, and let us say, Amen!" Thus, or approximately thus, did this Jewish woman cry in a loud voice, and the other women repeated after her. They took a few steps back, as one does on concluding the recitation of the Eighteen Blessings, and it so happened that the soldiers did not pay any attention to these women until they had fallen silent and had gotten lost in the rest of the crowd.

However, for the victims kept alive in extermination camps and the prisoners of concentration camps there existed a different kind of music: personal music-making, which represented some of the fundamental values of which

---

Wartości a przemoc. Zarys socjologicznej problematyki Oświęcimia, Lublin 2004, p. 200, chapter: "Wieniec z kolczastego drutu. Fragment zapisków 1945-1946".

38 A.J. Krzepicki*, Eighteen Days in Treblinka*, [in:] A. Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka. A Documentary*, New York 1979, chapter Four, part entitled *Selection*. The manuscript (in Yiddish) had been buried in the ruins of the ghetto along with other documents from the second part of the Ringelblum archives. It was recovered on December 1st, 1950 by Polish workers in Nowolipki Street. The original manuscript is now at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. It was first published in the January–June, 1956 issue of the Institute's Yiddish-language publication, *Bleter far Geshikhte* (vol. XI, no.1-2, 1956, Warsaw). Cf. K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *Music and Torture in Nazi Sites of Persecution…*, op. cit.

the prisoners were deprived. Such music was their solace, their expression of freedom, independence of spirit, and opposition to imposed rules, a method of dealing with the overwhelming suffering – such were the songs written by Pola Braun in Majdanek. It is well documented that despite constant danger, music was created, played and sung clandestinely by inmates of prisons and camps.

Analysis of the repertoire created in camps and ghettos leads to several observations, such as the characteristic transformation of the genres of popular (e.g. tango) or traditional music (e.g. lullaby). From entertaining, sometimes poetic songs or songs destined to put a child to sleep they became songs of mourning and despair, songs to accompany the children's death. Paradoxically, they were mostly created to identical melodies with changed words, sometimes in slower tempos. Among numerous examples of such profound transformations, one example could be quoted: Miriam Harel's "Jadą dzieci" (Yiddish title *Die Kinder furn*; The Children are going) written to the melody of a traditional Polish lullaby after the deportation action called "the Great Shpera", when children under the age of ten from the Lodz ghetto were transported to the mass-murder site at Kulmhof on the Ner river. The original melody's melancholic character, slow tempo and minor key are typical features of this type of music.

In the similar vein of traditional lullabies with new words, was an anonymous poem written on a piece of paper found in the clothing of a 9-year-old girl who died in the Majdanek camp.[39] Her origin is not known; she might have come from the Zamojszczyzna region, as many other girls who were prisoners at the Majdanek camp. Under the text the girl wrote: "I sang it to the melody "Na Wojtusia z popielnika iskiereczka mruga" (a traditional Polish lullaby)":

Była sobie raz Elżunia	Once upon a time, there lived little Betty
– umierała sama,	- she was dying alone,
bo jej ojciec na Majdanku,	for her father was at Majdanek
w Oświęcimiu mama…	in Auschwitz her mum.

Several other accounts, among others by Alexander Kulisiewicz, provide evidence of this role of music in the camps. This was the "true" music, which expressed the actual feelings of the prisoners. "Sad" music was forbidden by the SS-men and Nazi guards, who were reported to forbid crying or playing sorrowful music, as confirmed in many testimonies.[40]

---

39 See: K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *Music and its Emotional Aspects during the Nazi Occupation of Poland*, [in:] S. Zalfen, S.O. Müller, I. Törmer (eds.), *Besatzungsmacht Musik. Zur Musik- und Emotionsgeschichte im Zeitalter der Weltkriege (1914–1949)*, Bielefeld 2012, p. 207-224.

40 Cf. R. Newman, K. Kirtley, *op. cit*.

It is extremely difficult to answer the most haunting question arising when one tries to understand the various roles of music at the scene of genocide.[41] These answers are given by a musician who was forced to experience these functions of music: Leopold Kozłowski, survivor of the Holocaust, descendant of a prestigious Klezmer family of musicians. He at first lost his father, killed in a mass execution organised by the Wehrmacht in Przemyślany near Lviv after June 1941. After his mother was murdered at the Kurowice camp, he and his brother Dolko managed to escape with the help of Tadeusz Klimko, a Polish partisan fighter from Lviv. They joined the Jewish platoon, part of a partisan unit of the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa) under the command of Captain "Proch" (Professor Fryderyk Staub, at the Polytechnic School in Lviv before the war and at the Silesian University of Technology after the war). In 1944, they participated in the defence of the town of Hanaczów during a UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army) assault. During that time, Ukrainian nationalists from the UPA murdered Leopold's brother.[42]

Leopold Kozłowski gave the following answer to the fundamental question, concerning the Nazi camp guards' need for music in the camp, and the meaning of music for the perpetrators and for the prisoners in the camp:

> They did not treat music as music. They did not treat music as we do – they were happy that they could shoot to the sound of music.
> This was an accompaniment to their murders, to their shootings – and music was in the background.[43]

---

41 Cf. also K. Naliwajek-Mazurek, *Music and Torture in Nazi Sites of Persecution*…, op. cit.

42 After the liberation from the Nazi occupation of the Lviv area, Leopold enrolled for the People's Army of Poland, where as a soldier of the 6th Pomeranian Infantry Division he accompanied the entire campaign from Przemyśl to the Elba River. In 1945, he returned with his division to Cracow. There, he graduated from the Music Academy's Instrumental and Vocal Conducting Department. In the meantime, he had founded the professional Song and Dance Ensembles of, first, the Cracow Military Division and then that of the Warsaw Military Division. Following the anti-Semitic campaign in 1968, he was released from both the army and his post as conductor of the ensemble. At that time, he had reached the rank of colonel. As a civilian, he focused on reviving the lost tradition of Jewish klezmer music. He became an authority for klezmer musicians from all over the world as the last connection with a pre-war tradition Jewish music that was almost totally annihilated by the Nazis. He now lives in Cracow.

43 I would like to express my gratitude both to Helena Dunicz-Niwińska and Leopold Kozłowski for their incredible kindness and generosity and their agreement to let me record the interviews. My thanks also go to Łukasz Korwin who filmed them in Cracow in April 2012.

He described the roles of music for the prisoners and for the musicians themselves:

> We played for those who were alive, but also for those who were dying.
> There was such a moment when a man was dying. He was shot.
> And I was standing next to him. And he tells me: "Play for me" and I played. And he was dying. What could be played at such a moment?
> I played *Stetele Belz* or "Ostatnia niedziela" [The Last Sunday], which had another title – "The Tango of Death". Because we never knew, which Sunday would be the day of our death and we played it all the time as the main theme.

Mass Killings and the Sound of Music

Authentic music making was repressed by the camp guards because it revealed the genuine human condition, the utmost suffering inflicted on the prisoners and their despair. It seems that the human capacity to reflect, to mourn was a threat to the Nazi system, to the totalitarian "propaganda of success". Even the cruellest of acts, such as murdering of innocent victims, were to be committed with a smile. This good mood was provided by the sound of music. Thus, in the Nazi use of music in concentration and death camps in occupied Poland, we can observe an intrinsic connection between the displaced aestheticisation characteristic of Nazi beliefs, the essential components of Nazi social life and their criminal actions.

Among the various conclusions which stem from the analysis of the roles music played in the Nazi genocide system, one particularly seems worthwhile of further examination. In what way was the ethical component of music absent – in the case of military marches and a similar repertoire – when used in a genocidal context? How was it disfigured or displaced to fit into the specific "ethics" or "ethos" of Nazi genocide functionaries, also when a more ambitious, artistic repertoire was concerned? The psychological and ethical displacement of music in the Nazi "culture" still awaits a closer examination in the future.

Bibliography

Browning Ch.R., *Ordinary men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the final solution in Poland*, New York 1992.

Clendinnen I., *Reading the Holocaust*, New York 1999.

Fater I., *Muzyka żydowska w Polsce w okresie międzywojennym*, Warszawa 1997.

Gilbert S., *Music in the Holocaust. Confronting Life in the Nazi Ghettos and Camps*, Oxford 2005.

Hitler A., *Mein Kampf*, Munich I 1925, II 1926.

Krzepicki A.J., *Eighteen Days in Treblinka*, [in:] A. Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka. A Documentary*, New York 1979, p. 77-144.

Lifton R.J., *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide*, New York 2000.

Lingens-Reiner E., *Prisoners of Fear*, London 1948.

Megargee E. A., *Aggression and Violence*, [in:] H.E. Adams, P.B. Sutker (eds.), *Comprehensive handbook of psychopathology*, New York 1984, p. 523-548.

Michael R., K. Doerr, *Nazi-Deutsch/Nazi-German: An English Lexicon of the Language of the Third Reich*, Westport, CT 2002.

Naliwajek-Mazurek K., *Music and its Emotional Aspects during the Nazi Occupation of Poland*, [in:] S. Zalfen, S.O. Müller, I. Törmer (eds.), *Besatzungsmacht Musik. Zur Musik- und Emotionsgeschichte im Zeitalter der Weltkriege (1914–1949)*, Bielefeld 2012, p. 207-224.

Naliwajek-Mazurek, K., *Music and Torture in Nazi Sites of Persecution and Genocide in Occupied Poland 1939–1945*, "The World of Music (new series)" 2013, "Music and Torture|Music and Punishment", vol. 2, no. 1.

Naliwajek-Mazurek K., *The Racialization and Ghettoization of Music in the General Government* [in:] P. Fairclough (ed.), *Twentieth-Century Music and Politics*, Farnham 2012, p. 191-210.

Naliwajek-Mazurek K., *The Use of Polish Musical Tradition in the Nazi Propaganda*, "Musicology Today" 2010, vol. 7, p. 243-259.

Newman L.S., R. Erber, *Understanding Genocide: The Social Psychology of the Holocaust*, Oxford 2002.

Newman R., K. Kirtley, *Alma Rosé: Vienna to Auschwitz*, Portland 2000.

Pawełczyńska A., *Wartości a przemoc: zarys socjologicznej problematyki Oświęcimia*, Lublin 2004.

Rajchman J.M., *Ocalałem z Treblinki*, trans. B. Szwarcman-Czarnota, Warszawa 2011.

Rosenberg A., *Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts*, München 1934.

Szajnberg N., *Übertragung, metaphor, and transference in psychoanalytic psychotherapy*, "International Journal of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy" 1985-1986, vol. 11, p. 53-75.

Szewczyk M. (ed.), *Drogi mojego życia. Wspomnienia skrzypaczki z Birkenau,* Oświęcim 2013.

Waller J., *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing*, New York 2002.

Willenberg S., *Bunt w Treblince*, Warszawa 2004.

Zillmer E.A., M. Harrower, B.A. Ritzler, R.P. Archer, *The Quest for the Nazi Personality: A Psychological Investigation of Nazi War Criminals,* Hillsdale, NJ 1995.

Joanna Posłuszna
Łukasz Posłuszny

The Aural Landscape of Majdanek

We would like to open with an important question: why has music such overwhelming power over humans? It may perhaps be connected with the characteristics of our senses, since closing our eyes and turning off the sense of sight seems easy, whereas in terms of hearing we feel more defenceless. Closing our eyes serves metaphorically and literally as a refusal to participate. Yet, at the same time our ears are open day and night, whether awake or asleep. Often we hear sounds subconsciously and without our consent. Sometimes a sound erupts violently, forcing us to react. The dominant visual preference of our culture stems from Greek tradition; in the Bible, the contrary occurs: the God of Israel does not tell his people to "see" but rather to "listen". In the Jewish tradition, listening is the most important activity, elevated to the realm of the sacred.

The ear, as the most accurate and sensitive sense organ provides us with a permanent flow of information on what is happening around us, helping us to recognize and remember spaces which are sound-specific. The Majdanek concentration camp is a place with a unique set of sounds as well, as former prisoners inevitably mention in their recollections of their past.

Analysis of accounts made by concentration camp prisoners, with their powerful repetition and resonation of various sounds, appears to prove that the audio landscape of Majdanek did indeed influence prison life in a significant way. Among the vast array of sounds there are those which can be ascribed specifically to camps. Certain sounds accompanied peculiar events and had real consequences. Prisoners learned to recognize the sounds as an exclusive code which became part of the daily reality of life in the camp.

The sounds mentioned in the article belong to the prisoners' recollection of Majdanek concentration camp. Inmates recall the sounds from the perspective of people living inside the camp, and therefore thinking within this context. They cannot dissociate since their memories flow from the perspective of their personal participation. The sound environment into which they were thrown shaped their existence to reveal a further auditory level of human imprisonment.

The lack of attention previously paid to this aspect of camp life is addressed by the authors of this text. Listening to testimonies, reconstructing and analyzing the past by focusing on the aural landscape is still rare in the examination of concentration

camp history, yet this would appear to be a very promising direction to move in, as we hope to convince the reader. The article is thus intended to recollect the scales of sounds that form the aural landscape of Majdanek concentration camp. It is important not to hierarchise them, since each component occupies its own time and place in the audio map of the camp and the memory of Shoah witnesses.

Forms of Music in the Concentration Camp

Various forms of culture were of great importance for prisoners who believed it helped them in the preservation of human dignity and mental balance. Opening up to all forms of music led inmates to flow with "humanity", moving into another dimension of being. Sometimes singing served as a cathartic, cleansing function, providing the prisoners with some respite from their challenging emotional environment. Music was so powerful, that for just a short moment one might escape the dramatic conditions of prison life. These experiences were so moving that they would be remembered for a long time to come.

For prisoners of a Nazi concentration camp, which was a place of brutality and terror, singing remained one of the few available forms of self-expression. Inmates not only sang out of their spontaneous need, but also to get a slice of bread or a bowl of soup.[1] Maybe, therefore, the first place among cultural activities at Majdanek was singing. The repertoire of songs was extremely diverse. There were the songs from the time of freedom as well as those composed in the camp. Two artists have been especially fondly remembered by prisoners. The first was Malina Bielicka. Everyone recalls her rendition of Schubert's "Ave Maria". She would perform it regularly at the end of the day. She adopted the rule that if someone requested the song, she would always sing it. So, she sang both for individuals, and larger groups. She also performed for the sick to ease their pain. In April 1944, a large group of prisoners was leaving Majdanek. The train pulled into the railway siding in Lublin while the prisoners waited in the carriages. Wanting to attract attention, they began to sing:

> At first the SS men protested, but eventually allowed us to sing. We sang one song after another, and those behind the railway crossing give us furtive and surreptitious hand signals that they could see and hear us. And when Malinka Bielicka sang Ave Maria with her soft voice, the carriages pulled out and the train moved on. Malina sang on (…) and we left Lublin, while she was singing.[2]

1 K. Radziwiłł, *Wspomnienia*, p. 39, Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum na *Majdanku* (*APMM*), *Pamiętniki i relacje*, sygn. VII-21, Kazimierz Wdzięczny: 3 XI 43 r.

2 S. Perzanowska, *Gdy myśli do Majdanka wracają*, Lublin 1970, p. 156-157.

Another important figure was Pola Braun. Once some prisoners heard the sounds of a piano coming from the warehouse where goods were stocked before transferring. It was her, playing, singing, and reciting poems:

> Pola Braun's fingers ran nervously over the keyboard, and (…) It was not singing, but the desperate scream from the heart of an unhappy Jewish woman, and her tears dripped down the black and white keys, making the melody even more tearful. She sang tragic songs from the ghetto. The first of them recounted the people who sat in cellars like rats, hungry, depressed, exhausted, and are aware of their impending death. The next song, performed to the poem of Wladyslaw Szlengel, referred to a small station called Treblinka, and spoke about people, their fear and screaming before their terrible end. Pola Braun died at Majdanek. She, who so strongly felt the tragedy of her people and was a living symbol of an indomitable spirit would never again sing of the horrific and hidden genocide (…) while the wind blew her ashes about fields of Majdanek.[3]

In a male infirmary sang mostly convalescents, who had musical talent. The performances of a Greek Jew named Persival, were remembered well. The fourteen-year-old young youth had an extraordinary voice. Operetta arias and Polish, Russian and Ukrainian pieces were sung by a recovering actor from the Vilnius operetta.[4]

A few vocal groups were formed in the camp. One of them was a choir composed of several people and directed by Helena Konca. They held performances every Sunday, and sometimes on weekdays after the evening roll call. There were also groups of Jewish boys, former choristers of Warsaw Synagogue, who started giving concerts in May 1943. They presented a very extensive repertoire performed in the Polish language. Their concerts were usually held on Sunday afternoons or evenings in particular blocks. All the artists were rewarded, naturally. On the same third field, the Krematorium boys performed, the trio of Andrzej Stanisławski, Zdzisław Cynkin and Kazimierz Kołodziejski. The artistic program consisted of Polish songs sung in three acts, and was performed only in their own barracks.

In the camp one could encounter such music played by prisoners which, while providing a delightful aesthetic pleasure and welcome respite, actually encouraged the inmates to struggle on. Although performances were held mostly for inmates of the camp, sometimes the prisoners sang for those who had been

---

3 K. Tarasiewicz, *Nasze zmagania o przetrwanie*, [in:] K. Tarasiewicz (ed.), *My z Majdanka. Wspomnienia byłych więźniarek*, Lublin 1988, p. 30.

4 See Z. Murawska, *Przejawy życia kulturalnego i oświatowego*, [in:] T. Mencel (ed.), *Majdanek 1941-1944*, Lublin 1991, p. 307-322.

released.[5] Among many prisoners' testimonies concerning the singing, two groups of female performances are mentioned regularly – the beautiful singing of some Byelorussians, and the touching, though incomprehensible, songs of a Greek:

> They walk slowly, sadly without noticing anything but the beauty of the Greek land. They walk, singing their incomprehensible, delightful songs. When they pass nearby the commandos of men, the prisoners stop working because they too are carried away by the song. Unforgettable melodies of unfamiliar words.[6]

"Majdanek Radio"

Majdanek Radio began broadcasting on 13 February 1943 in the female part of the camp. The main goal of creating the radio was to provide the prisoners with the opportunity to channel their attention and thoughts towards different, yet often important topics. Everyday atrocities and pain could be relieved to some extent via the radio initiative. It was designed to be a remedy for demoralization, humiliation, apathy, and a means of discussing the poor living conditions in the camp. It had its social, cultural, intellectual and spiritual functions too, integrating and establishing bonds between various groups of prisoners and became a springboard for mutual learning, championing human faith, and restoring the inmates' subjectivity. Last but not least, it served also as a platform for communication and soon became a form of resistance.

Programs were broadcast at the end of each day from the "studio" located on the third level barrack bunk beds. The initiator of the project was Matilda (Mat) Woliniewska, and it was she who coordinated the cultural activities for the radio. She was able to encourage and convince people with various talents and skills to take part in the performances. Those prisoners gifted with extraordinary memory used to recite poems, stories and tales. This group of presenters included: Danuta Brzosko, Alina Pleszczyńska, Hanna Fularska, Wiesława Grzegorzewska, Romana Pawłowska and Stefania Błońska.

The repertoire was often random, but always interesting. One of the prisoners involved in the creation of the radio, says:

> The Sabala story written by Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer made an exceptionally strong impression on all of us. We applauded through our tears (…) In the evenings, despite great tiredness, the doctor read Pan Tadeusz to us. There were also lectures on the basics of medical science. During the long roll calls, we were dazzled by the phenomenal

5 J. Kwiatkowski, *485 dni na Majdanku*, Lublin 1988, p. 171.

6 S. Perzanowska, op. cit., p. 256.

memory of Alinka Pleszczyńska, who did not paraphrase books, but rather recited them, almost page by page. The level of discussions on acting, philosophical systems, applied arts, musical performances and so on could have out-shined debates of even the most seasoned connoisseurs.[7]

The programs took a variety of formats. In some, the prisoners were kept humorously up to date on camp life, while in the others poems and novels were read. Various topics were on the table: the desire to be helped, name-day wishes, debates. The extensive music repertoire consisted of religious, patriotic, nationalist, revolutionary, classic, light and serious songs, among which one may find also some actually composed in the camp. Whatever the circumstances, Malinka was always the person who sang. At one point a choir was set up. Helena Konca became the conductor, with Gera Formanowska, Katrzyna Frost, Kazimiera Pawłowska, and Janina Cyran as her choristers. Together with the director of the radio, the choir would prepare the musical repertoire for the broadcast, although performances were held individually.

This group of women made the decision to force themselves out of the doldrums of depression and demoralization by propagating culture.

The first experimental form, which served as a universal institution for propaganda and culture was "Majdanek Radio". 13 February 1943 saw the first broadcast in the evening, with the young voice of the announcer who compered daily morning and evening programs. A loud "cock-a-doodle-doo" was the signal for morning wake up after which the announcer would start off with a weather forecast and then move on to the events of the previous night, and finally wish a successful day without any troubles, i.e. beatings and searches, during which we would lose arduously collected possessions. The cheerful morning program was supposed to motivate prisoners for the hard day ahead and, above all, to champion the belief that not everything was lost. The slogan "Every day brings us closer to freedom!" was encouraging and staved off camp lethargy.[8]

Wiesława Grzegorzewska-Nowosławska says that the moment of the wake up was always painful but in each block it proceeded differently. In the barracks, where the radio was installed it went as follows:

Firstly, the loud and melodious crowing of a rural rooster rang out, deceptively imitated by Helena Konca, who had never overslept. After a moment Danusia Brzosko, as yet to find confidence in her voice, said, 'Hello, hello, this is Majdanek Radio, good morning, ladies.' She used to announce the date, weather conditions, demand for work in various

7 M. Grudzińska, *Obóz koncentracyjny w relacjach więźniów i świadków*, Lublin 2011, p. 87.

8 Z. Murawska, op. cit., p. 315.

work squads, news, lost items, etc. Then there would be a sentence that every day brings us closer to freedom.[9]

Significant efforts were made to evoke a cheerful mood in the mornings, to comfort inmates, and fill them with the strength not to give up. There were wishes to survive another day, and after the program, the prisoners came out for a roll call. The evening program gave news on events from the front and commented on the developments in the female and male prisoner fields. At this time, the information about items lost or found, thefts and various acts against inmates were announced.

During the evening programs, willing listeners were asked to share the gifts that they had received in parcels. Afterwards, the donations were distributed among those who needed them the most as a part of the self-help campaign. Maintaining cleanliness and order became another important topic. Announcers highlighted the importance of personal hygiene and a neat appearance, despite difficult sanitary conditions. It was a call to preserve the remnants of humanity. The programs ended with the words: "Tomorrow will be better!" and they were often followed by Schubert's aria "Ave Maria". When the radio fell silent, Hanna Mierzejewska, who was a block leader, prayed aloud.

The radio programs also served as a source of practical knowledge with advice on self-defence against the bestiality of the persecutors; they also exposed the weaknesses of concentration camp staff, and commented on their behaviour. Irony, satire, sarcasm and ridiculing the perpetrators helped to break free from the paralyzing fear and acted as an antidote. These moments of broadcasting were brave but dangerous. The attitude of the presenters, who repeated continuously about the approaching end and that they must wait for liberation, helped the others find the strength to live on.

We were given humorous announcements about fashion at Majdanek, how to comb our hair nicely in accordance with the regulations, how to wear a striped uniform with Pawiak[10] chic, [and also] how to work at a snail's pace and not get beaten, or advice was given on how best to trick the authorities. It had already virtually become the most universal political and patriotic training, and in practical terms a camp training.[11]

The radio was a huge success. Prisoners waited eagerly for transmissions, asked for concerts, and showed gratitude to those who were engaged in the project.

---

9 W. Grzegorzewska-Nowosławska, *Poczucie wspólnoty*, [in:] K. Tarasiewicz (ed.), *My z Majdanka*..., op. cit., p. 86.

10 Pawiak was a prison in Warsaw.

11 E. Piwińska, *Społeczność więźniarek*, [in:] M. Grudzińska (ed.), *Obóz koncentracyjny w relacjach więźniów i świadków*, Lublin 2011, p. 86-87.

Over time a new initiative started. "Podwieczorki przy mikrofonie" [Tea by the Microphone] were held on Sundays, after afternoon roll calls and when inmates had some free time, for then the SS men were hardly present in the field. The group of listeners consisted of the

> Pawiak block, invited inhabitants of Radom, but later half the camp gathered there, including the Russians and Byelorussians. Once they gave such a concert of choral singing, after which our choir was afraid to perform for a long time – we were so put to shame by the level of their performance.[12]

Danuta Brzosko-Mędryk also recalls the unforgettable singing of the Byelorussians during other concerts at the turn of 1943-1944.[13]

The popularity of the radio among prisoners from other blocks was constantly growing. The repertoire was ambitious and always very carefully prepared. The presenters were committed, talented, and culturally-inclined, and so their programs were brilliant and full of expression. Qualified actresses, poets and radio announcers could be found among that group.

The central figure of each concert was a professional actress, Malina Bielicka. For more important and holiday concerts, women from the whole field were invited. Due to the high risk posed by these events, these concerts were particularly demanding and had to be prepared long in advance. There was always someone on guard to raise the alarm in case of emergency. When such an incident occurred, the program was rapidly adapted and performers improvised some "light content". It would occur that when the concert ended with "Rota" or another patriotic song, the Pasiaki [striped uniform] anthem was also sung, and at the time "emotions and tears choked the choral singing among concert participants. They were good, beautiful moments that mobilized our collective fight, the conscious struggle."[14]

In May 1943, Majdanek Radio ceased to exist for several reasons. The most important was the transfer of the people involved in creating the radio to Ravensbrück, Buchenwald, and Auschwitz or to different parts of the Majdanek camp.[15] Several texts or in some cases even entire programs were later printed.[16]

---

12 W. Grzegorzewska-Nowosławska, *Poczucie wspólnoty*, [in:] K. Tarasiewicz (ed.), *My z Majdanka*..., op. cit., Lublin 1988, p. 86-87.

13 B. Siwek-Ciupak, *Więźniowie białoruscy w obozie koncentracyjnym na Majdanku*, "Zeszyty Majdanka" 2003, vol. 22, p. 214.

14 E. Piwińska, op. cit., p. 87.

15 The Radio of Planet Majdanek, available at: http://www.majdanek.eu/news.php?nid=231&lng=1 (accessed: March 2014).

16 See: S. Fornal, *Anteny nad Bystrzycą*, Lublin 1997.

Sounds

What could be heard in the camp formed a kind of sound map, which provided information about ongoing events and possible risks; therefore, prisoners had to be extremely sensitive to any sounds. The map on which their lives depended was well remembered, although at the same time especially hard to call to mind, due to lack of adequate means and language which could evoke the aural landscape they had once witnessed.[17] The authors of following text will focus on some selected events, where sounds played a fundamental role, and on those which led to such strong emotions that witnesses recall sounds and voices they cannot escape from.

One of the situations described by Stefania Perzanowska concerned a child's birth and its first cry.

> I was delivering the baby of a young, healthy-looking Jewish women. She gives birth for the first time in severe pain so she is shouting a bit. Konieczny enters, comes up to her, strokes her head and comforts her: 'Do not yell, do not worry, soon you will give a birth to a pretty child.' Indeed, in half an hour she had born a son. Konieczny picks up the child from me and shows it to the mother with the words: 'Look, what a lovely boy you have got.' And in a moment, in front of the mother, he wraps the crying baby up in some newspaper, puts it into a briefcase, mounts his bicycle and carries [the child] to the crematorium. Even today the muffled sound of the crying baby in the briefcase rings in my ears…[18]
>
> The prison infirmary a place of constant dramas. (…) Scenes of pandemonium as they collected children were already taking place, and at any moment they would come to us. (…) We watched children, who were crying, aware that something terrible was happening. We all gnashed our teeth loudly, as if suffering from a severe malaria attack. Hanka Protassowicka made us realize then that the worst was yet to come when mothers returned from the evening roll call. I remember perfectly, that during the evening the sun was extremely red. The whole block of Jewish women resonated with cries and wailing.[19]
>
> Some mothers had deluded themselves that their children would be sent to educational institutions or orphanages. Then the critical day came. Large trucks drove up to the children's barracks. Several mothers were able to get closer. They led a new group of children. Among them goes little Jurek. His big, frightened eyes notice his mother, who runs toward him sobbing uncontrollably. He moves back and clenches his fists under his chin, calling frantically 'Mom, run away, it's death, it's death, run away from here quickly!' (…) That day, during evening roll call, mothers stared in the direction of the gas chamber and the crematorium in an unimaginable state of pain, lamenting and wailing.[20]

17 Eyewitness – earwitness.

18 S. Perzanowska, op. cit., p. 44.

19 W. Grzegorzewska-Nowosławska, op. cit., p. 84.

20 K. Tarasiewicz, op. cit., p. 32.

In testimonies about Majdanek there are examples that bring to light victims' last sounds and spoken words. The prisoners assert that despite the passage of time they cannot forget the voices but still hear them, or that those voices "live" within them. It is worth mentioning at least one such scene.

One of the nurses recalls some sick boys from Vitebsk, who were put into the infirmary with swelling of the abdomen, but it was forbidden to provide them with any liquids. They were aged from 4 to 12 and died one after the other. "To this day, I can hear their voices: Sis, drink… drink…".[21]

The sounds of the power and violence

A distinctive feature of the Majdanek aural landscape was the omnipresence of victims and perpetrators' screams, and gunshots.

As one of the prisoners recalls,

> One day, also at noon, while working at the hospital, I heard some shots. I ran out and saw Blanke standing with the commander Elza Ehrich (…) – What happened? Blanke laughed, and said: 'It's all right, I bought a new gun, and wanted to test it, whether it shoots well, and those women are Jewish after all.'[22]

Gunshots from watchtowers were equally common, especially when someone went out after roll call. Prisoners taking care of sick inmates recall those moments, when women on the verge of madness, having lost contact with reality, ran out of the barracks, danced, sang, or beat themselves: "Once one of them grabbed a boy. She heard a cry and ran with him barefoot on the frost. (…) We ran after her, warning shots were fired from the tower (…) one was killed."

Prisoners associated the sounds of engines and machines with destruction, and killing. They distracted from the daily routine and were always an omen of something bad about to happen.

> We were standing behind the barrack door, watching everything through the cracks. The clink of weapons, a command and the engine whirr. Not a motorcycle or a tractor. A car. Already. A big, shiny red bus passes by. Windows covered with paper. The drone of the engine and silence. But the soldiers are waiting. The command "at ease!" is not given. The second bus, blue, emerges too fast to notice anything, but the third one is going slowly, as if it lacks strength. It shudders and chokes, slows down. (…) In uncovered windows pale, frightened faces. The hostages? No, not hostages – people sentenced to death. (…) It goes way. Distant sound of machine guns. Silence. And again. And again.

21 S. Perzanowska, op. cit., p. 44.

22 Ibidem, p. 55.

> The roar of engines: the buses return. They move slowly, though empty. Now they are in no hurry.[23]

When executions were carried out in the camp, the prisoners were required to stand in silence, with their faces turned to the gallows. These "spectacles of death" were supposed to discipline prisoners, but also be a warning to all who planned to escape.

There are many documents describing the executions. Prisoners often mention that witnessing them was an extremely painful and overwhelming experience. In the ominous silence of execution, everything seemed more vivid. Here is a sample testimony about the execution of one fugitive:

> Blanke and Ehrich stood next to the gallows, swapping pleasantries. (…) He did the job. Silence hung over the camp… And suddenly Blanke's loud laughter boomed while he showed Ehrich the way the hapless victim's legs swayed rhythmically (…) After finishing the execution, he walked away whistling (…).[24]

Running away from the camp always triggered off many different noises. The sound of sirens announced an escape from the camp, the capture of the prisoner, and the end of the alarm. During the search, dogs always barked furiously and SS men shouted. These alarms followed the following audio sequence:

> An escape, i.e. the lack of one or more prisoners, is revealed mainly during roll calls. It is announced immediately throughout the whole camp by a terrifying, long siren. (…) Dogs bark loudly (…) they stop for a moment and then rush back. Finally they disappear from our sight. We hear only the distant barking. The men's field, where the fugitive used to be, is on a permanent roll call, waiting for the siren to cancel the alarm. The SS men aren't idle – they eagerly torment prisoners standing in lines of five. More and more new orders are given: get down, get up, do sit-ups, jumping "frog", and other activities they call "sport".[25]

During these roll calls other prisoners could have heard screaming, the sounds of kicking and whipping.

> The metallic clang of iron resonates on the rail. They hit it that way in the countryside when the bees swarm, but here it means an alarm. Now the sirens: long, piercing, signalling the start of a man hunt. (…) From all sides work details run to their fields. Trudging and scraping with clogs (…) The siren is still wailing. From the gardens a squadron of soldiers accompanied by dogs yanking on their lead head towards the road. (…) The siren wails terribly. The roar of engines, dust, the stamping of clogs and yelling.[26]

---

23 D. Brzosko-Mędryk, *Niebo bez ptaków*, Warszawa 1975, p. 250.
24 S. Perzanowska, op. cit., p. 55.
25 Ibidem, p. 112.
26 D. Brzosko-Mędryk, op. cit., p. 220-221.

> We see a terribly emaciated man (…) The dogs have caught up with him, as the SS men did soon after, and led him out of the camp with screaming and beating. It was late afternoon. The blare of the siren cancelled the alarm. The general roll call came to an end. That day, women returning to the barracks were specially quiet and even more dejected than usual.[27]

One of the prisoners recalls what happens when a fugitive is caught:

> The next day, before we left for work, they led in a captured prisoner. Wrapped in barbed wire, he carries a bowl he hits with a piece of iron, beating the rhythm of his steps. His face is soiled with blood. The view is so terrible, that Ziunia faints.[28]

The sounds of beating are engraved deeply in the memory of the prisoners. Without looking at a victim but only by focusing on the sounds were they able to recognize the executioner, and also judge how painful the beating was. Punishment took place in silence, where the sounds of whips and punches were followed by screams and groans.

> There are principles and theories of beating. (…) To beat "well", one has to stand with one's legs apart, take a swing slowly but quickly withdraw the whip away from the body; one "should" use long whips and hit only with the end. So when the point of the whip doesn't reach the body but catches the table, the impact is not very painful. Sometimes prisoners have to count the whips themselves while being beaten. Usually it is hard to know how many lashes you were sentenced with. (…) Few people can resist whipping like a man, and as the beating proceeds, louder and louder moans come from the prisoner. Some howl and roar inhumanly; in general, the most self-controlled are the Poles. I admire those who bite their fingers till they bleed, but do not shout loudly. Woe betide the naive one who puts a piece of blanket under his pants. Then the sound of the hit is mute, not a loud slap, and for that some additional whips are doled out. (…) Finally comes the word weg (away)[29].

Women also recall the specific sounds of slapping the face.

> (…) Eke Ehrich runs to us. And has already – as usual slightly, almost gracefully – started slapping faces. It begins with the end of the line. She has already slapped the first ones, and is now in the middle, I feel my turn coming. I'm waiting. For the first time. I do not rebel and do not run away, I have to go through such a "baptism" as well. I just clench my fists. (…) I want to be hit already, so that moment I am afraid of passing out, I instinctively move my face forward, as if I'm asking be slapped by her hand in that leather glove. A loud laugh and the shout – *Zurück nach Lager* [back to camp].[30]

---

27 Ibidem, p. 227.
28 Ibidem.
29 J. Kwiatkowski, op. cit., p. 101.
30 D. Brzosko-Mędryk, op. cit., p. 250.

Almost all the prisoners state that after returning from Majdanek they cannot stand or tolerate shouting. They remember yelling and screaming as an inevitable aspect of each and every day and activity, which they hated and treated as a particular form of violence.

> "All the prisoners remember and know that it was taking place to the accompaniment of screaming, insults hurled, and sticks banging on the bunk." Later on we hear the question asked by the prisoner, "Is someone out there able to understand how ashamed we felt about our naked bodies, the constant fear whether they would kick us? Will one understand our hatred of screaming and yelling?"[31]

When new loads of people appeared, there was a terrible tension and the shouting of the guards mingled with the cries and different languages spoken by the newly arrived:

> New loads come regularly (…). This is accompanied by constant turmoil, confusion, the SS men's capricious beating, Ehrich raging away with her ever-present whip, and Żenia and Monika's shouting and thrashing around. Those who came, and those who went way, were completely stunned by the atmosphere of wild noise, mulled by the screams and beatings.[32]

During the "sanitary actions", the prisoners were full of fear and listened to sounds very carefully. In a sinister silence filled with tension and sometimes even stupor, they stared up at the ceiling and waited for the oppressor's plan to happen:

> They push us to the baths. The taps are turned off. Have they already started poisoning us with a new gas? Have the tractors started "performing" already? We look at the showers, as if there was a deadly gas emitted. A hiss of steam, and (…) water starts running.[33]

Interestingly, the prisoners hardly heard the sounds of nature. They mention the sun, sky, and clouds, generally what they could register with their eyes. Whenever they recognized the sound of ravens and crows, they would rather prefer not to hear it: "We are waiting for the word ab, as a regular 'get out of here', but all one can hear is just raven's cawing – the only birds here and they are looking for carrion."[34]

Operation *Erntefest* ("Harvest Festival")

One of the biggest executions in the history of the Nazi concentration camps took place on November 3, 1943 at Majdanek within the framework of so-called

31 W. Grzegorzewska-Nowosławska, op. cit., p. 86.
32 S. Perzanowska, op. cit., p. 115.
33 D. Brzosko-Mędryk, op. cit., p. 287.
34 Ibidem, p. 118-119.

operation *Erntefest* ("Harvest Festival"). That day, known as the Bloody Wednesday, became one of the most shocking events of Majdanek history.[35]

In the morning of November 3rd, Waffen SS troops, some security police from Lublin, and Police from the 22nd and 25th regiments surrounded the camp at Majdanek and started the slaughter. Victims were driven into the ditches that prisoners had dug earlier. The first victims lay on the ground, but the next groups sprawled on the bodies of those already killed. They were murdered with a shot in the back of the head, neck, or bursts of machine guns, and some of them died from the explosion of grenades thrown into ditches. To drown out the sound of gunfire, very loud dance and marching music was played from two radio cars.[36]

Many witnesses of the massacre have described this event in detail. In this section, we will present and discuss some of the testimonies.[37]

Kazimierz Wdzięczny describes this episode in following words:

> Screams and gunfire are heard from the direction of the gas chamber baths. (…) 10 o'clock. A powerful speaker, which had been installed, can now be heard and the air is filled with the notes of a waltz, as if during a holiday; the black banners of the SS flutter over the camp, bearing the signs of their nation. (…) The first shots ring out. First, the Germans open fire from machine guns, followed by the Kalmyks and the others. They whip the naked bodies with fire. It has started for good.[38]

Jerzy Kwiatkowski provides an extensive description of the event:

> Morning of 3 November. Before the roll call started, we notice that behind the barbed wire, at regular intervals machine guns were set, with their barrels aimed at the camp; next to them groups of SS men were wearing military coats and combat gear. They had apparently stood there all night. And we say to ourselves, dicke Luft, something sinister is in the air. The roll call is held as usual (…) Then the command is given: Jews are ordered to step out of each block and form a separate group. Now the SS men check whether there isn't any Jew hidden among the Aryans. (…) I can hear the drumming of my heart in my chest. Trucks driven by SS men pull up in front of an infirmary located in blocks 20, 21 and 22 (…) Cars leave and stop in front of the square where the Jews are gathered. We are standing like this for maybe an hour. Finally, the gate opens and the Jews are led out. They turn left, so towards the crematorium. (…) We look at the road running to Lublin, and at the road leading to the camp, both are teeming with people over whom hover clouds of dust. Numerous cars and military troops move towards the crematorium. In an unprecedented move, a mass of human tide flows in one direction.

---

35 T. Kranz, *Zagłada Żydów w obozie koncentracyjnym na Majdanku i rola obozu w realizacji „akcji Reinhardt"*, "Zeszyty Majdanka" 2003, vol. 21, p. 64.

36 Ibidem, p. 67.

37 Cz. Skoraczyński, *Żywe numery*, Kraków 1984, p. 90.

38 APMM, *Pamiętniki i relacje*, VII-21, Kazimierz Wdzięczny: 3 XI 43 r.

> Suddenly we hear some music, some pitiful Tango Milonga and then a waltz by Strauss. It is music from records broadcast through a loudspeaker. The sound comes from the direction of the crematory. Where has the loud-speaker come from? This has never been used before. The music keeps going incessantly. Disc after disc. A plane is making circles low over the camp; it is such a horrible drone that I cannot hear my own voice. There were short breaks between the discs and then you could hear a muffled 'ta ta ta - ta ta ta', like the shots from a handheld machine gun. (…) I hear friends calling to come back to the blocks. (…) The loudspeaker plays for the whole day and from time to time there is a series of shots from the machine gun. New columns of Jewish men and women keep moving along the road next to our field. The twilight falls, the sound of music still fill the air. The night comes, the music stops, the slaughter is over (…) I can hear his call to disperse the blocks. (…) The speaker plays throughout the day and from time to time, series of shots come from automatic weapons. Stretching way past our field there are still new columns of Jewish men and women. Dusk and the sounds of music still fill the air. (…) Come night, the music stops, the slaughter was over. (…) The flocks of crows circling above our heads on the arrival day proved to be an ominous sign.[39]

Nikołaj Pietrowich Byrgazow remembers the day as follows:

> When we woke up on November 3, 1943, I noticed, that our barracks were surrounded by soldiers protecting the camp. Music played through speakers and the echoing sounds of rifle rounds come from the direction of crematorium. From the windows you can see (…) columns [of prisoners], one after another being escorted to the crematorium. The music played incessantly. (…) We understood that the Nazis had begun the extermination of camp prisoners. Now it was our turn.[40]

After the massacre, the bodies of the victims were burnt for more than two months. At this time, the prisoners had to endure the torment caused by the suffocating stench: "Thick billows of white smoke carrying the terrible stench of burning bodies completely enveloped the whole fields. The unbearable odor took your breath away, making prisoner nauseous (…)."[41]

The account of Stefania Perzanowska recalls the place of execution and the events in the barracks where the prisoners stayed:

> Shots! By the Beautiful Blue Danube[42]. Music and the distant rattle of machine guns. Tired and stressed, yet full of expectations, we sat on benches, tables, and bunks. We waited, listening intently to the melodies and the sounds of gunfire we hadn't heard for a while. (…) Shots again. Salvos of machine guns and the music from megaphones.

---

39 J. Kwiatkowski, op. cit., p. 263-267.

40 M. Grudzińska, op. cit., p. 174.

41 Cz. Skoraczyński, op. cit., p. 90.

42 "An der schönen blauen Donau", Op. 314, a waltz by the Austrian composer Johann Strauss II.

> Basia bursts into mournful crying. Regina echoes her. One begins the prayer for the dying. We all kneel down. Poles, Jews, Russians. We pray for those who died in agony, for those standing in the face of death, for battered men, sick women, and children who do not know hatred. Megaphones blare. Machine guns rattle. We pray for those who meet death without a word (…) For those who attacked a German in a final protest, for those weeping in dread, and who hold their head high, and those who beg on their knees for mercy; for frightened children crying, mothers holding them in their arms, helpless fathers and loving couples. (…) In the depths of the barracks I hear whispers, creaking bunks, litigations – after a while, everything falls quiet. Those who still want to fight for life hide away (…) Lively tunes blend in with Hail Marys. (…) Those who are too weak to go the Germans just pull out and throw in front of the sick room. They do not cry and do not shout; they know their sentence. Beautiful young Greek girls in white handkerchiefs leave the kitchen block. Set in rows of five, they walk at a steady pace and maybe wait for the help. Others walk too. Pola Braun – the Jewish poet. We are watching, and our hearts thump in our chests. It is surprising they don't burst.[43]

It should be underlined that most of the accounts relating to the events of November 3, 1943, contain information regarding the presence of music during the execution. They stand as a shocking testimony of the murder.

Conclusion

Reconstructing and describing the Majdanek aural landscape is somewhat problematic. We have no records that could document this area, as we only own photos or videos which are also, in this case, unfortunately silent. For this reason, we can only rely on prisoners' testimonies, and it is from their perspective that recollection of the sounds experienced in the camp may be recovered.

The fragments of selected accounts and memories, focusing on just a few dimensions of the camp's aural landscape, presented in this paper are clearly not able to complete this task in full. Former prisoners often recall only those sounds with a strong emotional association. However, there are very few descriptions concerning a broader, and more systematic approach to sounds once present in the camp. We hear mostly single notes, which sometimes coexist, sometimes create a cacophony, and sometimes turn into the essence of a narrative.

Majdanek was in many ways an unusual camp, which carried out tasks not only specific to a concentration camp but also went beyond this into other areas.[44] In order to faithfully render the sound atmosphere of the camp, we focused primarily on the sounds of everyday life, violence, and finally on music elements.

43 S. Perzanowska, op. cit., p. 297.

44 T. Kranz, op. cit.

If we listen closely enough to the narratives of witnesses, we are able to hear the Majdanek camp during the war. It is worth straining one's ear though. Today, in contrast, while standing in the area of the previous camp, we can only listen to the silence of the fields standing at the epicentre of countless grief.

Bibiliography

Brzosko-Mędryk D., *Niebo bez ptaków*, Warszawa 1975.

Fornal S., *Anteny nad Bystrzycą*, Lublin 1997.

Grudzińska M., *Obóz koncentracyjny w relacjach więźniów i świadków*, Lublin 2011.

Grzegorzewska-Nowosławska W., *Poczucie wspólnoty*, [in:]: K. Tarasiewicz (ed.), *My z Majdanka. Wspomnienia byłych więźniarek*, Lublin 1988.

Kranz T., *Eksterminacja Żydów na Majdanku i rola obozu w realizacji „akcji Reinhardt"*, "Zeszyty Majdanka" 2003, vol. 21.

Kwiatkowski J., *485 dni na Majdanku*, Lublin 1988.

Murawska Z., *Przejawy życia kulturalnego i oświatowego*, [in]: T. Mencel (ed.), *Majdanek 1941-1944*, Lublin 1991.

Perzanowska S., *Gdy myśli wracają do Majdanka*, Lublin 1970.

Piwińska E., *Społeczność więźniarek*, [in:] M. Grudzińska (ed.), *Obóz koncentracyjny w relacjach więźniów i świadków*, Lublin 2011, p. 86-87.

Radziwiłł K., *Wspomnienia*, p. 39, Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum na *Majdanku* (*APMM Pamiętniki i relacje*, sygn. VII-21, Kazimierz Wdzięczny: 3 XI 43 r.

Siwek-Ciupak B., *Więźniowie białoruscy w obozie koncentracyjnym na Majdanku*, "Zeszyty Majdanka" 2003, vol. XXII.

Skoraczyński Cz., *Żywe numery*, Kraków 1984.

Tarasiewicz K., *Nasze zmagania o przetrwanie*, [in:] K. Tarasiewicz (ed.), *My z Majdanka*, Lublin 1988.

Kirsten Dyck

White-Power Music and the Memory of the Holocaust

In 2002, the Ukrainian National Socialist Black Metal (NSBM) band Aryan Terrorism released its only album, *War,* on the U.S.-based white-power music label Resistance Records. Several songs on the album promote violent nostalgia for the Third Reich, including these lyrics from the song "In the Name of Our Aryan Blood:"[1]

> White race
> Destroy subhuman! [sic]
> Maybe it is our last chance
> We'll eradicate this sickness only by war
> (…)
> Lighten up the flames in concentration camps
> Burn impure "people"
> In the name of our Aryan blood!

These lyrics would likely shock most audiences in the West, particularly because so many of the band's countrymen suffered and died at the hands of the Nazi regime. Lyrics like these deploy racially-charged terms from the Third Reich, such as "Aryan," and celebrate the Nazi concentration camps where millions of people died. Nazism and the Holocaust have become popular tropes in entertainment media and other forms of popular culture, and as a result, almost any

1 Scholars have used many different terms to refer to the overtly racist music that emanates from neo-Nazi and white-power circles in western countries. For the purposes of this project, I have chosen to use the term "white-power music", because the idea of "power" or "empowerment" creates a clear distinction between the music of blatantly pro-racist groups and music which might inadvertently express racist goals, as could be the case with "white-supremacist music". It also encompasses non-rock'n'roll subgenres of white-power music, such as hate folk and hard bass, which do not fall under the category of "hate rock".

The word "war," the title of this Aryan Terrorism album, has significance in white-power circles beyond its obvious violent connotations. The acronym W.A.R., short for "White Aryan Resistance," is the name of a prominent U.S.-based white-power group, and this acronym appears frequently in white-power discourse.

Westerner today would be able to identify the ideology on albums such as *War* as genocidal.

Aryan Terrorism is not alone in using popular music to celebrate the history and ideology of the Third Reich. White-power music, much of which is explicitly neo-Nazi, has been a thriving underground industry since the early 1980s. This music updates old ideologies from racist regimes like the Third Reich and adapts them to address contemporary social issues, arguing that European-descended peoples are superior to others, and that they therefore have the right to use violence to claim resources from groups they consider to be less worthy. Although many Westerners today embrace nominal anti-racism and view overt neo-Nazi rhetoric as taboo, the large number of white-power musicians, record labels, online retailers, and albums currently available suggests that many Westerners—even if only in the privacy of their own homes—find elements of neo-Nazi ideology to be appealing.

This chapter examines how white-power musicians like Aryan Terrorism deal with the Third Reich and the Holocaust in the lyrics to their songs, exploring this violent ideology along with actual racist violence to argue that white-power musicians use Nazi themes not just in an abstract sense, but also because they admire the real-world violence of the Holocaust and wish to repeat it. In particular, this chapter will focus on three different rhetorical strategies that white-power musicians use when they discuss the Third Reich and the Holocaust. Firstly, it will illustrate how white-power songs that valorize the WWII-era German *Wehrmacht,* even when they avoid the topic of the Holocaust altogether, minimize the importance of the Holocaust by suggesting that audiences should care more about military campaigns, weapons technologies, and Allied atrocities against German civilians than about Holocaust victims. Secondly, it will explore active Holocaust denial in white-power songs. Thirdly, it will demonstrate that even though many white-power songs suggest that the Holocaust either never happened or does not matter, some white-power songs also celebrate the violence of the Holocaust, arguing that the Nazi genocide not only occurred but also should serve as the model for future genocide. The analysis of these themes will undergird the concluding section's discussion of actual violence associated with fans and practitioners of white-power music.

What is White-Power Music?

Before beginning this analysis, one should define what "white-power music" actually means. The term "white-power music" represents an umbrella genre that encompasses many music scenes and various types of music from across

the world, including forms as different as the hate country music that emanated from the U.S. state of Louisiana in the 1960s, the racist British oi! punk music of the 1980s, the Norwegian NSBM of the early 1990s, and the electronic hard bass music which has recently been gaining popularity among racist groups in Eastern Europe. Some of these scenes have little contact with one another, and some participants may disagree with others about key ideological tenets, as when racist pagan groups argue that white-power Christian believers are actually supporting a Jewish-descended and therefore enemy religion.[2] In other cases – for instance, when the U.S.-based Resistance Records label produced albums for Aryan Terrorism and other Eastern European white-power music groups – members of scenes in different countries maintain close business and personal links with one another.

Much variation exists within white-power music. For the purposes of this project, I define white-power music as *any music produced and distributed by individuals who are actively trying to advance a white-power agenda.* This encompasses, most importantly, music made and consumed by individuals who wish to identify themselves as pro-"white" racists, however variously they might define the term "white". White-power ideology tends to involve a belief in a Jewish world conspiracy theory, opposition to national governments and international power structures, support for strict racial segregation, and hostility toward immigrants and other visibly non-white individuals in formerly white-controlled areas.[3] Nonetheless, it is important to remember that the constellation of white-power beliefs aligns itself differently in each white-power supporter.

Burying the Holocaust in White-Power Song Lyrics

Genocide appears as a prominent theme in white-power music. Some white-power songs about the Holocaust employ crude humor about gas chambers and Auschwitz tattoos, but some songs also boast a complex rhetoric that makes powerful arguments about the veracity of the Holocaust without even mentioning the Holocaust directly. In a phenomenon I call "collective burying" – that is, the active attempt to repress collective memory – many white-power bands use their music to focus on the military and heroic aspects of the German *Wehrmacht* during WWII, relegating the Holocaust to a minor footnote in WWII history. The goal of these songs is to foster the listener's sense of the romance of the Third Reich, narrating

2 M. Gardell, *Gods of the Blood: The Pagan Revival and White Separatism.* Durham, NC 2003, p. 277.

3 See, for instance, ibidem, p. 67-136.

from the perspective of Third Reich insiders who demonstrate pride in the *Wehrmacht's* technological achievements or horror at the average German civilian's experience of wartime violence. Even though songs like these tend to sidestep the issue of the Holocaust entirely, they function as part of an ideological gestalt which aims to reshape how listeners think about WWII and the Holocaust, suggesting that the listener's focus should be on the bravery of the individual German soldier on the front lines and the prowess of Hitler's military machine rather than the racist violence that the Third Reich visited upon civilians in the territories it occupied.

The white-power music canon contains many examples of bands attempting to bury the history of the Holocaust in the military details of the *Wehrmacht.* The 1996 song "Across the Desert Sand" by the U.S. band Berserkr situates the narrator as a soldier in the African campaign of German general Erwin Rommel, celebrating the effectiveness of the Nazi forces:[4]

> Oak leaves and Iron Cross, I fight at Rommel's side
> Next to the Desert Fox great odds we will defy
> Glory and victory await the reaching hands
> Of those who follow death across the sands.

Here, the song's lyrics use specific names and military insignia to conjure a picture of the war in North Africa. Likewise, Bound for Glory's 1998 song "20 Kilometers" extols the bravery of Hitler's army with a particular richness of historical detail:

> Divisions stand at the border prepared for the eastern trek
> Operation Barbarossa is launched into full effect
> The border is crossed, the assault begins, massed in furious waves
> The spark is lit, the shelling starts, Blitzkrieg sets the stage
>
> Over the marshes and the plains
> The Panzers start to roll
> Death from above raining missiles
> The Stukas take their toll.

In this case, the lyrics address the war on the Russian front, constructing images of the campaign by mentioning historically-specific objects and ideas such as *Blitzkrieg,* Panzer tanks, and Stuka planes.

Both Berserkr's "Across the Desert Sand" and Bound for Glory's "20 Kilometers" celebrate the military exploits of the German *Wehrmacht,* with the

4 The band name "Berserkr" refers to ancient Germanic warriors called "berserkers" in Old Norse literature.

narrator of "Across the Desert Sand" even fantasizing that he himself is a soldier in Rommel's army. While some contemporary Westerners would find this level of association with the Third Reich to be impolitic, a glance through the back catalogue of the U.S.-based History Channel television station demonstrates that even "mainstream" citizens of former Allied countries are often able to separate Nazi Germany's military violence from the brutality of the Holocaust, feasting on the details of WWII-era German airplanes and military strategies as if they had nothing to do with genocide. White-power songs that focus solely on the German *Wehrmacht* while obscuring the details of Nazi brutality against civilians play into this dissociation, appealing to audiences who might find themselves enamored with WWII history and susceptible to romanticizing discourses.

Other songs in this category focus on the discomfort experienced by German soldiers on the Russian Front (Skrewdriver's "Night Trains," for example, laments the German troops who froze to death in the harsh winter attack on the city of Stalingrad). This strategy indirectly, though effectively, undercuts Holocaust victims' ability to claim that their experiences of the war years were particularly horrific. White-power musicians can claim that these songs have nothing to do with Jews, since Holocaust victims rarely appear in songs that focus on the military aspects of WWII. Many audiences will believe this; it is often difficult for uninformed listeners to piece together the complex logic that forms the basis of white-power musicians' adulation for the armies of the Third Reich. In short, it can be easy to mistake a white-power musician's fascination with machines, armies, and tactics for a politically neutral interest in WWII history.

Collective burying also manifests itself in white-power songs about the perceived injustice that Nazi Germany suffered at the hands of the Allied forces at the end of WWII. German civilians certainly suffered greatly in the last months of the war, particularly in major cities like Berlin, Hamburg, and Dresden, which bore the brunt of Allied bombing campaigns and often endured house-to-house fighting. However, many white-power songs that discuss the injustice of the Allied takeover posit Germany as an innocent victim of Allied brutality, rather than as the losing side in a war which the Germans themselves had provoked. The Czech band Buldok's 1997 song "The First of Tomorrow," for example, laments the Nazi leaders who were tried and executed at Nuremberg, as well as the "unknown soldiers" whose bodies could not be identified after the war:[5]

> Can you see the men of Nuremberg?
> Can you hear the voices of ghosts?

5 "Buldok" is Czech for "bulldog".

Can the graves of unknown soldiers sing?
Can you hear the bitter tune they bring?

Buldok attempts to remove blame from men such as Hermann Göring and Julius Streicher by focusing on the pain that individual perpetrators felt at the loss of the war and the humiliation of the Nuremberg trials. The tactic of focusing on the humanity of Third Reich perpetrators rather than on the experiences of their victims is common in white-power music, and usually serves both to soften messages of hate and violence and to erase the identities of the individual victims in the minds of listeners.

A number of white-power songs about the injustice of the Allied takeover focus on the firebombing of the German city of Dresden, as in the 1998 song "Dresden" by Berserkr:

Young and old, husband and wife, child and mother,
Frightened eyes to the skies, cling to each other
The sirens drown fearful screams from the cellars
Damn the skies, damn the bombs, damn the killers. (…)

The ashes of 300,000 fill the skies
There's nothing left, innocent people the only victims
From the wreckage, a woman screams,
"We were civilians!"

The 1993 song "Avenge Dresden" by the Canadian band RaHoWa also expresses this concept, but uses a tone of retribution rather than the one of passive victimhood that characterizes the Berserkr example:[6]

Dresden must be avenged
Brethren, we must make amends
Until justice is served, we shall not die
I hear the voice of those Germans cry:
"Avenge the destruction of Dresden…" (…)
Don't tell me lies about the Holocaust,
'Cause I've got some news for you:
Don't tell me lies about the gas chambers,
'Cause I ain't crying over no Jews.

These songs use the potentially effective tactic of pointing out actual Allied atrocities that often receive less public attention than the acts of mass murder

6 The band name RaHoWa is short for "racial holy war", a catchphrase of the racist (World) Church of the Creator religious organization to which several band members belonged.

committed by the Nazis. Elsewhere in the song "Avenge Dresden," RaHoWa even references Holocaust denier David Irving in order to support the claim that the Holocaust was a "lie". Like Berserkr's "Dresden," RaHoWa's "Avenge Dresden" posits the firebombing of Dresden as an unprovoked attack. Both songs erase Germany's blame for the war, focusing on civilian deaths to evoke sympathy and rage from audiences. Listeners who are initially unaware of the fact that the Allied forces knowingly killed hundreds of thousands of German civilians during the final weeks of WWII—although the death toll in the Dresden firebombing the night of February 13-14, 1945 was approximately 25,000, and not the 300,000 that Berserkr claims—might allow such lyrics to sway them toward the white-power cause.[7] This is particularly true because most songs in this category only mention the Holocaust and other Nazi war crimes when they specifically deny that they happened.

Denying the Holocaust in White-Power Song Lyrics

"Dresden" and "Avenge Dresden," along with other white-power songs that minimize the importance of the Holocaust, employ the rhetoric of Holocaust denial in relatively subtle ways. Examining other white-power songs, however, reveals that white-power musicians sometimes advocate Holocaust denial and historical revision much more openly. As one member of the U.S.-based white-power death metal band Before God – a side project of the premier Minnesota group Bound for Glory – told "Blood & Honour" magazine in 2002,

> I feel the holocaust is a hoax and if we can reverse the opinion held by the masses then Nazi Germany and its people would be vindicated of the lie. Apologies would have to be made as well as monetary restitution given to the so called survivors reclaimed.[8]

Berserkr demonstrates this trend too, using its song "Swindler's Wish" to expand the subtle historical revisionism apparent in its songs "Dresden" and "Across the Desert Sand" into a platform of full-blown Holocaust denial:

> You built your house of lies through bold, accusing cries
> Nature's perpetual victims, tall tales of persecution
> Some final grand solution, imaginary inflictions

7 M. Schmidt, *Der Untergang des alten Dresden in der Bombennacht vom 13/14. Februar 1945. The Destruction of Dresden in the Night of 13-14 February 1945*, Dresden 2010, p. 19.

8 *Before God*, "Blood & Honour" 2002, vol. 24.

You fucking liar!
Your people profit most
Keeping the holy-hoax alive to feed to the sheep
You stretch and twist the truth,
And those that question you are automatically evil

You fucking liar!
Choke on your lies (you fucking liar)
Six million lies (you fucking liar, choke on your lies)
Our guilt, your gain (six million lies).

"Swindler's Wish," the opening track on Berserkr's 1996 album *Crush the Weak,* portrays the Jewish community as untrustworthy, and suggests that Jews have manufactured the story of the Holocaust in order to elicit feelings of sympathy from the "sheep" – that is, from unsuspecting whites. In fact, the title of the song itself reworks the title of Steven Spielberg's 1993 Oscar-winning film about the Holocaust, *Schindler's List.* Berserkr uses this play on words to suggest that Jews are not the victims of the Holocaust, but rather its perpetrators. True to the stereotype of the avaricious Jew, the band posits Jews as "swindlers", and claims that what Jews really want is to be seen as "perpetual victims" so that they can continue to "profit" from the guilt of the white community. Through their "tall tales of persecution" and "imaginary inflictions", the Jews manage to keep innocent whites feeling guilty about the "holy-hoax," all for their own benefit – "our guilt, your gain", sings the band. Berserkr suggests that so long as Jews can perpetuate the story of the Holocaust, anyone who questions Jewish integrity is "automatically evil", giving Jews the power of social pressure to stop inquisitive whites from breaking this cycle of guilt. However, the members of Berserkr insist that they are not fooled by the "six million lies" – a commonly-echoed catch-phrase in the Holocaust denial movement, referring to the fact that most Holocaust scholars believe the government of the Third Reich to have been responsible for the deaths of approximately six million Jews.[9] In fact, Berserkr issues the ominous declaration that the Jewish community can "choke on" the purported myth of the Holocaust.

Songs like "Swindler's Wish" demonstrate that the historical revisionism and collective burying one finds elsewhere in the white-power canon stem not from a naïve misunderstanding of WWII history or an accidental over-reliance on flawed sources. In fact, Holocaust denial is a key element of the contemporary

9 J.C. Friedman, *Introduction*, [in:] J.C. Friedman (ed.), *The Routledge History of the Holocaust*, New York 2011, p. 1.

neo-Nazi platform. By arguing that the Holocaust never happened, white-power musicians attempt to undercut Holocaust victims' ability to claim moral superiority over their Nazi oppressors. This allows them to argue that Hitler and his colleagues were actually heroes rather than villains, and that the Nazis themselves and not the Holocaust survivors are really the victims of the Holocaust. While many Westerners still dismiss Holocaust denial as a crackpot theory – rightly so, since its literature is full of inconsistent, disproven, and mendacious source-work – some audiences are clearly willing to accept that one of the key events in 20th-century history never happened, succumbing to a romanticized, nostalgic vision of the Third Reich's *völkisch* nationalism.

Celebrating the Holocaust in White-Power Song Lyrics

Paradoxically, although many Third Reich songs deny that the Holocaust occurred, other songs about the Third Reich – sometimes by the same bands that advocate Holocaust denial – *do* focus on the victims of white-supremacist violence, revelling in the destruction and pain that the Holocaust caused. These songs celebrate the power that the Nazis held over their concentration camp inmates, allowing white-power listeners the vicarious pleasure of pretending that they themselves are Nazi war criminals. The 2000 song "The Gestapo Stomp" by the white-power shock-rock band Vaginal Jesus, for example, expresses glee at the idea of participating in and even re-creating the Holocaust:

> We've come for you, you fucking Jew.
> Here's your tattoo, time to fry.
>
> Into the oven, and now you're burning,
> The Jews are running from Adolf Hitler.
>
> Round up the Jews,
> A yellow star for you,
> Your head shaved too,
> The world must be purified.
>
> In a cattle car you won't go far.
> Hardee-har-har!

Similarly, RaHoWa's "Third Reich," which adapts Jerry Lee Lewis's classic 1957 rock'n'roll hit "Great Balls of Fire," expresses an eagerness to revisit the atrocities of the Holocaust, in direct contrast to the Holocaust denial that appears in the lyrics of their song "Avenge Dresden," quoted above. In fact, "Third Reich" and "Avenge Dresden" actually appear on the same RaHoWa album, 1993's *Declaration of War.* The lyrics to "Third Reich" include the lines,

You kill all the niggers and you gas all the Jews,
Kill a Gypsy and a Commie, too.

You just killed a kike.
Don't it feel right?
Goodness gracious, Third Reich!

Both "The Gestapo Stomp" and "Third Reich" use Holocaust imagery to create scenarios in which acts of unprovoked violence, mass murder, and genocide are sanctioned and even welcomed. These songs are particularly remarkable because most other types of white-power songs that deal with the Holocaust treat it as a lie constructed by the Jewish people to gain international sympathy. This type of song embraces the violence of the Holocaust. Vaginal Jesus delightedly employ images such as cattle cars, shaved heads, Auschwitz tattoos, yellow stars, and crematoria as they celebrate the idea of committing genocide against the Jewish people. RaHoWa also uses concentration camp imagery, such as gas and showers, and employs a number of vicious racial and political epithets - "nigger" and "kike," among others - to dehumanize Holocaust victims. This type of white-power song seems to be intended both to create excitement among sympathetic listeners and to frighten any others who might happen to hear them.

In a similar vein, the veteran white-power death metal band Arghoslent, which boasts members with nicknames such as "Holocausto," "Pogrom," and "Aktion T4," devotes an entire song on the 2009 album *Send Forth the Best Ye Breed,* entitled "Fodder for the Shoah," to a description of Holocaust victims as filthy vermin:[10]

Herded into ghettos, loathsome streams of insects
Cordon off the sewage, quarantine the Judah
Gestapo street-cleaner bulldoze sons of Zion

10 "Arghoslent", according to the band, is Greek for "slave of the fortress" or "denizen of the fortress". "Pogrom" is a Russian-derived term for an anti-Jewish riot. Aktion T4 was the Third Reich's code name for its eugenics-based euthanasia program, named after the address of the program headquarters at Tiergartenstraße 4 in Berlin. The program was directly responsible for the *Gnadentod*, or "mercy killing", of over 70,000 German citizens who were judged to have "incurable" conditions such as Down's syndrome and schizophrenia, and therefore be living *Lebensunwertiges Lebens*—that is, "life unworthy to be lived" (D. Dwork, R.J. van Pelt, *Holocaust: A History*. New York 2002, p. 264). "Send forth the best ye breed" is a line from Rudyard Kipling's 1899 poem "The White Man's Burden". "Shoah" is a common term for the Holocaust among Jewish communities. It derives from the Hebrew word for "catastrophe," "HaShoah", or "האושה".

Hovels and shanties, cages for the rats of David (…)
Boxcars of Semitic detritus
Gypsies and faggots ankle deep in feces (…)
Undesirables and threats to the Reich
Sodomites, felons, and usurer kikes
Fodder for the Shoah (…)
Incise and drain the societal boils
Enforce the Nuremburg laws.[11]

Here, Arghoslent celebrate the Holocaust, justifying the extermination of Jews and other "undesirables" by combining metaphors of spiritual and hereditary impurity with images of physical dirt and disease. Like much original Third Reich propaganda, "Fodder for the Shoah" conflates the filth created by Nazi-imposed living conditions with a type of dirt supposedly inherent in Jewishness, arguing that processes such as ghettoisation are necessary to contain the threat of Jewish contamination and protect the non-Jewish population. In order to maximize the social distance between the Holocaust's victims and perpetrators, Arghoslent here posit Jews – as well as other target groups like Roma, Sinti, and homosexuals – as subhuman. In fact, the song as a whole contains *nine* references to Holocaust victims as actual non-human life forms, including rats, fungi, bacteria, worms, beetles, larvae, mosquitoes, and cockroaches. The band also depicts Jews as bodily disfigurements such as "blemishes" and "boils" that supposedly pollute the normally healthy "body" of white society, and, therefore, must be "incised". Through the metaphors of plague and physical malady, Arghoslent posit Jews not only as the rodent carriers of disease, but also as the disease itself, which will slowly taint the entire white population until someone stops them.

As Grabowski demonstrates, this type of rhetoric was common in the anti-Semitic propaganda of the Third Reich, which often compared Jews to vermin and disease with campaigns like the 1941 Polish-language poster "Żydzi wszy, tyfus plamisty" and the 1943 German-language exhibition "Die jüdische Weltpest."[12] This rhetoric depicts Jews as non-human and parasitic, conflating them with organisms that most people think of as disgusting pests. It therefore works to distance audience members from any feelings of misgiving that they

11 The Nuremberg laws were a set of 1935 legislation that limited the civic freedoms of Jews in the Third Reich. D. Dwork, R.J. van Pelt, op. cit., p. 88-89.

12 J. Grabowski, *German Anti-Jewish Propaganda in the Generalgouvernement, 1939-1945: Inciting Hate through Posters, Films, and Exhibitions*, "Holocaust and Genocide Studies" 2009, vol. 23, no. 3, p. 306. "Żydzi, wszy, tyfus plamisty" is Polish for "Jews, lice, typhus," and "die jüdische Weltpest" is German for "The Jewish world plague".

might have about violence against Jews. Extending the metaphors of dirt and decay even further, Arghoslent suggest that Jews are physical garbage and sewage, the refuse of the wider population. By constructing Jews as soil and trash, as well as vermin and disease, the band argues that it is necessary to place Jews in "disposal camps" – that is, extermination camps – in order to allow the rest of society to live free and uncontaminated lives. Mixing Third Reich and medieval terminology to argue that Jews are dark-skinned "usurers" and parasites, Arghoslent portray Jews as useful only for dying, and as nothing more than clean-up work for eugenically-minded Aryan garbage collectors.

Conclusion

Nazi imagery, both visual and lyrical, clearly pervades white-power music, as the above examples demonstrate. The history that the white-power movement constructs for itself is vital for the movement's ability to justify its continued existence, and the fact that white-power musicians choose to focus so much of their energy on the Third Reich suggests that they view themselves as successors to Hitler's Nazis in both philosophy and deed. By attempting to minimize the importance of the Holocaust, suggesting that it never happened, and emphasizing the virtue of the Nazis' genocidal goals, white-power musicians are arguing not only for a new reading of Third Reich history but also for a return to the Third Reich's blatant exterminatory racism in the present. This would matter little if this were "only" music – that is, if it did not influence continued violence. However, white-power musicians are known to have committed numerous acts of ideologically-motivated violence, including several murders by Norwegian, German, and Polish musicians in the NSBM subculture in the early 1990s and aggravated assaults by prominent members of the 1980s British racist oi! scene.[13] The seriousness of these attacks demonstrates that white-power musicians do not always constrain their ideology only to their music, and that their admi-

13 M. Gardell, *Gods of the Blood: The Pagan Revival and White Separatism,* Durham, NC 2003, p. 317; J. Massa, *Unholy Alliance: The National Socialist Black Metal Underground*, [in:] D. Burghart (ed.), *Soundtracks to the White Revolution: White Supremacist Assaults on Youth Music Subcultures*, Chicago 1999, p. 52; M. Moynihan, D. Søderlind, *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, Port Townsend, WA 2003, p. 111; V. Víkernes, *A Burzum Story: Part II – Euronymous*, 2004, available at: http://www.burzum.org/eng/library/a_burzum_story02.shtml. (accessed: March 2014); S. Silver, *Blood and Honour 1987-1992*, [in:] N. Lowles, S. Silver (ed.), *White Noise: Inside the International Nazi Skinhead Scene*, London 1998, p. 22.

ration of Nazi violence is both intentional and in keeping with their views on contemporary society.

Recently, several major terrorist attacks have drawn white-power music to the attention of the mainstream public, promising to affect the future development of white-power music, at least in the U.S. and Western Europe. In November 2011, German officials uncovered a major white-power terrorist ring, which had been responsible for a number of murders in Germany that had previously seemed unconnected. Gunmen in several German cities had executed a total of nine behind-the-counter employees at *döner* shops – Turkish fast-food establishments particularly popular in Germany, with its high numbers of Turkish immigrants.[14] Especially interesting for this study is the fact that one German white-power band, Gigi und die braune Stadtmusikanten, had in 2010 produced a song called "Döner-Killer Song" on their *Adolf Hitler Lebt!* album.[15] However, German authorities have yet to demonstrate whether the band, under the leadership of singer Daniel "Gigi" Giese, had actual knowledge of the murders at the time, or whether the content of the song was simply a coincidence.[16]

In early August 2012, a shooting at a Sikh temple in the U.S. city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin left six victims and the shooter dead.[17] The perpetrator, Wade Michael Page, turned out to have been a long-time participant in the U.S. white-power music scene. Page had been the driving force behind the white-power band End Apathy, but had also been the bass player for the prominent U.S. white-power band Youngland. In addition, he had been involved with other U.S. bands such as Definite Hate and 13 Knots, and had occasionally filled in for big-name white-power bands like the U.S. groups Max Resist, Intimidation One, Aggressive

14 "Haftbefehl".

15 "Gigi und die braune Stadtmusikanten" is German for "Gigi and the Brown City Musicians". "Adolf Hitler Lebt!" is German for "Adolf Hitler Lives!" In German, "brown" is a term often used for neo-Nazis, and refers to the brown shirts of Hitler's original *Sturmabteilung* ("Storm Division", or SA) paramilitary group. Brown is also the official color of Germany's contemporary ultra-right-wing political party, Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands ("National Democratic Party of Germany") or NPD.

16 J. Barlen, *Nach 'Döner-Killer Song' – Anklage gegen 'Gigi & die braunen Stadtmusikanten*, "Endstation Rechts" 20.02.2012, available at: http://www.endstation-rechts.de/news/kategorie/straftaten/artikel/nach-doener-killer-song-anklage-gegen-gigi-die-braunen-stadtmusikanten.html (accessed: March 2014).

17 S. Yaccino, *Gunman Kills 6 at a Sikh Temple Near Milwaukee*, "New York Times" 5.08.2012, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/06/us/shooting-reported-at-temple-in-wisconsin.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (accessed: March 2014).

Force, and Blue Eyed Devils, as well as international groups such as Billy Bartlett's long-running Welsh band Celtic Warrior and the embattled German group Radikahl.[18] Page's shooting spree brought white-power music to the attention of many people in the U.S. for the first time, although watchdog groups like the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith have been tracking U.S. white-power music and musicians for at least two decades.

Fans of white-power music, like white-power musicians themselves, have committed several highly publicized acts of violence. Most spectacularly, in July 2011, the Norwegian right-wing activist Anders Behring Breivik carried out twin attacks in and around Oslo which resulted in the deaths of 77 people, most of whom were young members of a liberal Norwegian political party.[19] Just before committing his attacks, Breivik publicized a personal manifesto which praised the Swedish neo-Nazi signer Saga, writing:

> Saga is a courageous, Swedish, female nationalist-oriented musician who creates pop-music with patriotic texts. She is, as far as I know, the best and most talented patriotic musician in the English-speaking world. And for those of you, like myself, who hates [sic] "metal", Saga is one of the few sources available that offers quality patriotic pop-music with brilliant texts.[20]

Saga herself has denounced Breivik on her personal website[21] – his attacks, after all, killed many white Norwegians – but in the past, she has spoken to television crews and other interviewers about her deep personal commitment to white-power ideologies such as neo-Nazism, as well as the importance of Third Reich symbolism to her onstage persona. For instance, she spoke to a British documentary film crew in 2009 about her onstage use of the Hitler salute, minimizing its significance as a symbol of violent oppression by saying, "Raising your right arm, it's like, we all do that to, you know, you greet each other, and they greet me, and I greet them,

18 Lohr. The band name "13 Knots" is derived from the fact that there are thirteen knots in a noose. "Radikahl" is a conscious misspelling of the German words "radikal", meaning "radical", and "kahl", meaning "bald".

19 H. Pidd, *Anders Behring Breivik Spent Years Training and Plotting for Massacre*, "The Guardian" 24.08.2012, available at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/aug/24/anders-behring-breivik-profile-oslo (accessed: March 2014).

20 Breivik A. Behring (as Andrew Berwick), *2083: A European Declaration of Independence*, Self-published 2011, p. 847.

21 Saga Official Statement, Saga: The Independent Voice of Europe, 27.06.2011, available at: http://www.englisc-gateway.com/bbs/links/goto/28-saga-the-independent-voice-of-europe/ (accessed: March 2014).

so it's the victory salute. For me, it's a really honourable thing to do."[22] While she might have been genuinely outraged at the fact that many people suddenly associated her music with one of Europe's deadliest domestic terrorist attacks in recent history, she was likely naïve to have believed that none of her listeners would take the violence of her neo-Nazi lyrics and public statements literally.

One cannot assume that white-power music *caused* any of these crimes. Psychologists and neuroscientists have yet to determine exactly how music affects the human brain. Opponents of particular musical cultures, such as 1950s rock 'n' roll and 1990s heavy metal in the U.S., have long alleged that music can drive fans to commit antisocial and even violent acts. However, the relationship between music and human action is clearly complex. Each listener filters each piece of music he or she hears through the screen of his or her own life experience and pre-existing bias to determine if that music resonates with him or her as an individual. Some individuals who enjoy white-power music held white-power beliefs before becoming fans of the genre, even if the music itself draws other fans into white-power ideologies. Moreover, as social beings, humans often adjust our opinions of particular musical styles or works in response to others' preferences. Many people who hear white-power music, in fact, find it repulsive rather than attractive.

What the "Döner-Killer" murder spree in Germany, Breivik's terrorist attacks in Norway, and Page's shooting at the Sikh temple in the U.S. *do* demonstrate – even if direct causality is impossible to prove – is that white-power musicians are likely involved in contemporary terrorism at many levels and in many different geographical locations. Far from being irrelevant or outdated, white-power music scenes across the western world continue to produce perpetrators of violent crimes. The fact that these three grievous acts of mass murder with connections to white-power music came to light within a year illustrates one reason why it remains important to study how white-power musicians construct their ideas of race and nation. Understanding the ideologies that white-power musicians express through their music is clearly important to understanding why white-power musicians, white-power music fans, and other white-power believers have in recent years committed a number of violent hate crimes. Science has yet to determine exactly how music influences violent behaviour, but white-power music clearly *correlates* with ideologically-motivated violence, although unmitigated causality is unlikely. Not everyone who believes in white-power or neo-Nazi

22 M. Simkin (dir.), *Nazi Hate Rock: A Donal MacIntyre Investigation*, Demand DVD, 2009.

ideals will go on to commit acts of violence like Page's shooting, Breivik's attacks, or the "Döner-killer" spree, but the fact that many people continue to believe in the virtue of genocide even at the end of what many historians have dubbed the "century of genocide" suggests that the "century of genocide" may, in fact, precede a much longer wave of mass violence.[23]

In fact, for a purportedly "fringe" genre that mainstream Westerners tend to correlate with a handful of "nutcase" extremists living on the margins of society, white-power music has accrued a staggering death toll over only three decades. Its scope is not nearly so limited as its underground status suggests; while mainstream music shops and recording labels almost never produce or carry white-power albums, the internet has allowed specialty white-power music distributors to construct an alternate retail network that caters to fans from across the globe. In six years of researching white-power music, I have compiled a list – by no means comprehensive – of over 1000 white-power bands and musicians working in 48 countries. The last 50 years may have heralded a major change in how European-descended societies view their histories of colonialism, genocide, and racist oppression, but the prevalence of white-power music suggests that overtly racist ideology still appeals to more people than polite society would like to admit. As elderly Holocaust survivors die, it seems that the real collective memory work surrounding the Holocaust and WWII is just beginning. If we want to avoid another "century of genocide," then we need to pay attention to the rhetoric of genocidal ideologues like white-power musicians, because only by taking them seriously can we prevent them from claiming the mainstream public's collective memory of the Holocaust for themselves.

Bibliography

Arghoslent, "Fodder for the Shoah", *Send Forth the Best Ye Breed*, Drakkar Productions, 2009, [sound recording].

Aryan Terrorism, *War*, Resistance Records 2002, [sound recording].

Barlen J., *Nach 'Döner-Killer Song' – Anklage gegen 'Gigi & die braunen Stadtmusikanten*, "Endstation Rechts" 20.02.2012, available at: http://www.endstation-rechts.de/news/kategorie/straftaten/artikel/nach-doener-killer-song-anklage-gegen-gigi-die-braunen-stadtmusikanten.html (accessed: March 2014).

23 See, for example, S. Totten, W.S. Parsons (eds.), *Century of Genocide: Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts*, New York 2008.

Before God, "Blood & Honour" 2002, vol. 24.

Berserkr, "Across the Desert Sand", *The Voice of Our Ancestors*, Resistance Records 1996, [sound recording].

Berserkr, "Dresden", *Crush the Weak*, Resistance Records 1996, [sound recording].

Berserkr,"Swindler's Wish", *Crush the Weak*, Resistance Records 1996, [sound recording].

Bound for Glory, "20 Kilometers", *Glory Awaits*, B.F.G. Productions 1998, [sound recording].

Breivik A. Behring (as Andrew Berwick), *2083: A European Declaration of Independence*, Self-published 2011.

Buldok, "The First of Tomorrow", *Triumf*, Gladius Records 1997, [sound recording].

Dwork D., R.J. van Pelt, *Holocaust: A History*, New York 2002.

Friedman J.C., *Introduction*, [in:] J.C. Friedman (ed.), *The Routledge History of the Holocaust*, New York 2011.

Gardell M., *Gods of the Blood: The Pagan Revival and White Separatism,* Durham, NC 2003.

Gigi und die Braune Stadtmusikanten, "Döner-Killer Song", *Adolf Hitler Lebt!*, PC Records 2010, [sound recording].

Grabowski J., *German Anti-Jewish Propaganda in the Generalgouvernement, 1939-1945: Inciting Hate through Posters, Films, and Exhibitions*, "Holocaust and Genocide Studies" 2009, vol. 23, no. 3, p. 381-412.

Haftbefehl gegen Beate Z. Erlassen, "Hamburger Abendblatt" 14.11.2011, available at: http://www.abendblatt.de/politik/deutschland/article2092181/Haftbefehl-gegen-Beate-Z-erlassen.html (accessed: March 2014).

Kipling R., *The White Man's Burden: The United States and the Philippine Islands*, "McClure's Magazine" 12.02.1899, vol. 12, no. 4, Reprinted through Fordham University, available at: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/kipling.asp (accessed: March 2014).

Lewis J.L., *Great Balls of Fire*, Sun Records 1957, [sound recording].

Lohr D., *Wade Michael Page Timeline: Key Dates to Sikh Temple Shooter Investigation*, "HuffPost Crime" 7.08.2012, available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/07/wade-michael-page-timelin_n_1749297.html (accessed: March 2014).

Massa J., *Unholy Alliance: The National Socialist Black Metal Underground*, [in:] D. Burghart (ed.), *Soundtracks to the White Revolution: White Supremacist Assaults on Youth Music Subcultures*, Chicago 1999, p. 49-64.

Moynihan M., D. Søderlind, *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, Port Townsend, WA 2003.

Pidd H., *Anders Behring Breivik Spent Years Training and Plotting for Massacre*, "The Guardian" 24.08.2012, available at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/aug/24/anders-behring-breivik-profile-oslo (accessed: March 2014).

RaHoWa, "Avenge Dresden", *Declaration of War*, Resistance Records 1993, [sound recording].

RaHoWa, "Third Reich", *Declaration of War*, Resistance Records 1993, [sound recording].

Saga Official Statement, Saga: The Independent Voice of Europe, 27.06.2011, available at: http://www.englisc-gateway.com/bbs/links/goto/28-saga-the-independent-voice-of-europe/ (accessed: March 2014).

Schmidt M., *Der Untergang des alten Dresden in der Bombennacht vom 13./14. Februar 1945. The Destruction of Dresden in the Night of 13-14 February 1945*, Dresden 2010.

Silver S., *Blood and Honour 1987–1992*, [in:] N. Lowles, S. Silver (ed.), *White Noise: Inside the International Nazi Skinhead Scene*, London 1998, p. 9-27.

Simkin M. (dir.), *Nazi Hate Rock: A Donal MacIntyre Investigation*, Demand DVD 2009 [film].

Skrewdriver, "Night Trains", *Hail Victory*, ISD Records 1994, [sound recording].

Spielberg S. (dir.), *Schindler's List*, Universal Pictures 1993, [film].

Totten S., W.S. Parsons (eds.), *Century of Genocide: Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts*, New York 2008.

Vaginal Jesus, "The Gestapo Stomp", *Affirmative Apartheid*, Tri-State Terror Records 2000, [sound recording].

Víkernes V., *A Burzum Story: Part II – Euronymous*, 2004, available at: http://www.burzum.org/eng/library/a_burzum_story02.shtml (accessed: March 2014).

Yaccino S., *Gunman Kills 6 at a Sikh Temple Near Milwaukee*, "New York Times" 5.08.2012, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/06/us/shooting-reported-at-temple-in-wisconsin.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (accessed: March 2014).

INTERLUDE

Leszek Sosnowski

The Holocaust – the Code of Death without the Alphabet of Life

Literature concerning the Holocaust, both as a phenomenon perceived globally as well as its particular components, is very extensive. This interdisciplinary topic boasts an incredible level of complexity and an abundance of deliberation concerning not only the description of the historical background but also philosophical and even aesthetic elements. The events connected with the Holocaust were portrayed in detail, with due care and attention. What does the description concern in fact? Primarily the facts: that is the names, places, numbers, and even if they are accompanied by theories, in this case they seem "voiceless". The circumstances which preceded the Holocaust are quite well recognized; also the whole process of extermination unfolded by the oppressors, the victims and the witnesses and also the persistence of various institutions and individuals in exposing the facts connected with the Holocaust are well-known. As Jan Woleński stated:

> The factual knowledge regarding the Holocaust is extensive. Presumably we know more than less about this massacre. We can always expect new evidence to be revealed, such as witness statements by both the victims as well as the oppressors, directives, council decisions, various archival materials, etc. (…) Nevertheless, our knowledge concerning the Holocaust can now be corrected or supplemented only with regards to more or less significant details, which basically will not change the whole picture. The process and logistics of the extermination constitute the object of almost complete knowledge.[1]

This comprehensive documentary material, despite its extensiveness, was encompassed in appropriate categories, and even if these categories are supplemented, it will not significantly affect this knowledge. The facts do not constitute a problem as they are mainly of a legal-criminal character and concern the oppressors and culprits as well as their victims and the witnesses. The case is similar with regards to the political and military events. These two categories of events fall under Karl Jaspers's well-known division, which was presented by the philosopher in his article from 1946 *Die Schuldbegriffe*. Jaspers discussed there the issue of the Nazis' crime in the context of guilt and responsibility. He distinguished four types of guilt: criminal, political, moral and metaphysical.

1 J. Woleński, *Todeswelt jako horyzont*, [in:] J. Diatłowicki, K. Rąb, I. Sobieraj (eds.), *Holokaust a teodycea*, Kraków 2008, p. 11-12.

It is possible – as I believe – to transform these into four types of approach towards the Holocaust, four types of its depiction. The first two are analogical to this factual knowledge and, in this sense, do not pose an issue. The remaining two types are more complex, ones that may meet with numerous reservations, whether academic or non-academic, raised by researchers dealing with the Jewish issue in the Second World War. The most significant of them is mirrored by the question: how to express the experience of the Holocaust verbally? This question is not trivial if we accept Hayden White's historical thesis that our past does not exist in isolation from its description. As a result, the past does exist as such, but is exposed through the medium of language. Only what can be expressed verbally is accessible. Only through the use of language can we ponder on the issue of responsibility and guilt. In a "simplified" approach (the quotation marks express reservations) these issues may be settled by law; however, only to a very limited extent can law express the experience of the Holocaust. The rules of law, even if they take intent into consideration, only to a limited degree refer to moral and religious principles. This scope of description and the knowledge arising from it – encompassed by Jaspers's two last categories of guilt – must be achieved via different methods accessible in this culture.

The Incomparability Thesis

Factual knowledge does not embrace the whole phenomenon as, additionally, there is also the psychological knowledge regarding those who have survived the camp and who have attempted to express their experience from this place. And here is where they come up against a serious obstacle. As Antoni Kępiński wrote, their problem – apart from the "benignity of memory", which weakens over time – lies with the fact that they do not "find a way to express their experience as it exceeds the capacity of human language". This fact is surprising, but it depicts a significant feature of the relationship between language and the world, which is well recognized by philosophy. This difficulty means that language is posed with a new challenge, a new subject which is to be described. Such a situation in itself is not unusual, as it has happened before relatively often. However, this "newness" of the Holocaust exceeds everything that language, therefore the culture, has dealt with up to that point. As stated further by Kępiński, "Despite a most accurate and evocative description of life in the concentration camps and all the suffering, it is impossible to overstep the verbal structure understood by everyone, which is not adjusted to this type of experience."[2] A straightforward conclusion arises from the

2 A. Kępiński, *Koszmar*, [in:] Z.J. Ryn (ed.), *Refleksje oświęcimskie*, Kraków 2005, p. 17.

above: never before had language, therefore culture, been faced with the necessity to build a "verbal structure" which would match such a situation. However, another interesting suggestion, known otherwise from Ludwig Wittgenstein's philosophy, arises from that: there is no such thing as private language; therefore, an individual has no possibility to describe the world with their own unique, distinct language, understood specifically by them. In psychology, naming a problem is a well-known and widely used therapeutic method. When "the most significant moments of life in the concentration camps remain the private 'property' of a certain person, impossible to communicate to other people, the situation becomes a nightmare"[3]. It is also because these moments cannot be conveyed to oneself, however paradoxical it may appear. A person with the experience of having lived in the camp is enslaved by escalating feelings and experiences from that period, and the inability to express them in proper words due to their uniqueness gives rise to a feeling of helplessness, thus intensifying the trauma.

Other researchers from Poland and abroad expressed similar ideas. Psychiatrists dealing with the subject of the camps were aware of the difficulty connected with expressing the experience of the concentration camps in the specialized language of clinical psychology. Stanisław Kłodziński's proposition directed towards the scientists from the Clinic of Psychiatry at the Medical Academy in Cracow to address the issue of the concentration camps was met with some resistance, perhaps justifiably. "A difficulty appeared – how could those who have not experienced life in the camps understand those who have been through this hell. (…) The resistance arose from the inability to embrace the phenomenon, which exceeds the boundaries of normal human affairs."[4] A similar thought was expressed by an American psychiatrist, Paul Chodoff: "a common psychopathological language is not enough to describe the experience of those people."[5]

Writers also struggled with a similar problem, which at first might seem peculiar. Zofia Nałkowska's view is quite familiar. Her *Medallions* (*Medaliony*), a literary record of the author's conversations with the prisoners and the witnesses of the camps, recognized as "an outstanding, horrifying, synthesizing evidence of the Nazi genocide", presents her opinion that the experience of prisons and the camps "cannot be put into words."[6] Taken literally, this surprising statement gives rise to a paradoxical difficulty. If something cannot be expressed with words, then what else is left? What other means of expression do we have at our disposal? We

3 Ibidem.

4 A. Kępiński, *KZ-syndrom*, [in:] Z.J. Ryn (ed.), op. cit., p. 101.

5 Idem, *Homo homini lupus est*, [in:] Z.J. Ryn (ed.), op. cit., p. 147

6 Ibidem, p. 32, vide: Z. Nałkowska, *Medaliony*, Wrocław, 2004.

need to suspend the answer at this stage to come back to it in the final section of these deliberations. Nevertheless, Kępiński's words can be used to summarize this fragment: despite "extensive literature concerning the concentration camps, a person who has not experienced the camp is not able to imagine what life was like there. Prisoners' suffering day and night exceeds the boundaries of human imagination."[7] The incapacity of imagination, which is a consequence of the incapacity of language, in this case confronts scholars with a problem to be resolved. Jan Woleński is the author of one of the most accurate solutions.

Even if the factual knowledge regarding the Holocaust is not an issue anymore, there is still the question of psychological and philosophical knowledge. In both cases it is not about establishing the reasons and the course of actions or their background, but about an individual capacity to understand, evaluate and accept the circumstances and the moral judgments which lead to killing. There have been many wars in the history of Europe, with varying levels of cruelty. However, in none of them was extermination as planned and widespread and at such a scale as in case of the Holocaust. Christopher R. Browning, an American Holocaust historian, refers to this issue:

> What distinguishes it from other genocides are two factors: first the totality and scope of intent (…); the second, the means employed – namely, the harnessing of the administrative/bureaucratic and technological capacities of a modern nation state and western scientific culture.[8]

Moral judgment, although unambiguous, is extremely difficult to verbalize, because, as it turns out, it is easier for language to deal with the commonness of evil, its everyday manifestations, its commonplaceness than with the evil of such an immense magnitude.

We cannot be surprised. It is a question of the scale of this phenomenon. A Holocaust researcher has to deal with a multi-faceted event of a military, political, social, philosophical, and religious character. Despite such a broad overall extent, each area is still somehow described, which is evidenced by texts of all types: books, articles, speeches, and reviews. The problem, however, is to express the scale of the intent and its implementation, the nature of evil on a micro and macro scale. At this point, all certainties, all rights, all values, regardless of their nature, collapse. In this dimension, a man loses his fundamental right to live, which constituted the base of European culture. Naturally, it is clear that this right has been violated many times; in this case, however, it is about something more.

---

7 A. Kępiński, *Anus mundi*, [in:] Z.J. Ryn (ed.), op. cit., p. 32.

8 C.R. Browning, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers*, Cambridge 2000, p. 32.

The uniqueness of this situation lies in the fact that it is not life but death (dying) that is the norm. It is not about the fact that a human being is mortal and therefore dies naturally at a given time and place. Purposeful killing is not normal; therefore, one nation's decision regarding the life or death, in the general sense of existence, of another nation cannot be treated as a norm. Similarly, it is not a norm to decide about the life/death of people of a particular skin colour, mentally or physically disability, of another religion or of no religion at all, etc. Therefore, it is not a norm, because it is not normal and natural that the Aryan nation took the decision to exterminate the non-Aryan people and nations, for example the Semitic or Slavic nations.

Authors who deal with the subject of the Holocaust tend to focus their attention on the inhuman living conditions of the prisoners in the concentration camps. When in common language we say that something is inhuman, we understand that we are dealing with something unique – something that lacks this element which, were there only a few discernible traces, would still denote a sense of humanity which manifests itself in certain character traits, such as: solidarity, understanding, empathy or readiness to help, or other norms of human interaction. All human reactions vanished or became rare, which is why they were of such significance. "On entering the camp, the old person, his habits, dreams, everyday worries disappeared. Human individuality was erased in a ruthless and brutal manner."[9] The first step towards depriving a prisoner of his humanity was to take away his name and surname; a prisoner would get a camp number, which meant that he was officially no longer a human being. All remaining actions and facts, including dying, were a consequence. This point is especially valid, because death – as well as, of course, dying – always has a cultural dimension. One of the significant features of concentration camp life was the "degradation of death", which meant depriving the prisoners of "this aspect of humanity. (…) Respect for death and the cult of the dead, which mirror human yearning for immortality, are a feature of each human culture."[10]

Lebenswelt – Todeswelt: the Worlds of the 20th Century

This uniqueness is well expressed by the term *Todeswelt*, however, in a peculiar sense. This term was first introduced by an American researcher, Edit

9 A. Kępiński, *Homo homini lupus est*..., op. cit., p. 150.

10 Ibidem, p. 24. This motif is present in many opinions of authors writing about the Holocaust.

Wyschogrod, as an opposite to *Lebenswelt*.[11] She understands *Todeswelt* as the world of the concentration camps, where death occurs much more often than in the normal world, the world of everyday life. However, the term of *Todeswelt* was characterized even more comprehensively by Woleński and, as such, is more useful for the description of life in the camps with its "reality of mass murder".[12]

Both these terms have distinct meanings; the world of natural life is opposed to the world of death, however not at all naturally. What is *Lebenswelt*? This term was introduced by Edmund Husserl, however, without going into its complexity,[13] it is enough to assume that it refers to the real, perceived world of everyday life, in which the whole practical life of a man occurs.[14] Therefore, *Lebenswelt* – as Woleński claims – is "in a way a sum of nature and culture in the traditional sense of these words. *Lebenswelt* constitutes the object of human thoughts and actions, which head towards it as towards an intentional object."[15] These observations are accurately complemented by Jan Patočka, who states that the natural world "is the world where people should be able to live, live together". This commonality of life is particularly worth emphasizing as it denotes a balanced relationship between mutual dependence and acceptance. These individuals – as Patočka suggests further – communicate "with the world of others by understanding and speech; they relate themselves to existence in its entirety, and thus to the whole world. Corporeality, reciprocity, and concrete spatiality, including that which is familiar and that which is unfamiliar, language – these are the whole structures of the world."[16] When there is no understanding, community is not possible – the lack of language leads to isolation and, as a consequence, to separation, which of course works both ways. Familiarity does not balance the alienation, which grows to such an extent that the only way to deal with the problem is the ultimate solution. Such an attitude is synonymous with the abandonment of life in every aspect, the abandonment of its normal, common, everyday shape and dimension. One turns toward death.

---

11 E. Wyschogrod, *Concentration Camps and the End of Life-World*, [in:] A. Rosenberg, G.E. Myers (eds.), *Echoes from the Holocaust. Philosophical Reflections on a Dark Time*, Philadelphia 1988, p. 327-340.

12 J. Woleński, *Todeswelt jako horyzont*, op. cit., p. 25, vide: J. Woleński, *Lebenswelt i uniwersalność języka naturalnego*,"Principia" 2007, vol. 47–48, p. 145-158.

13 J. Woleński's explanation in: *Todeswelt jako horyzont*, op. cit., p. 24-28; 31-34.

14 E. Husserl, *Kryzys nauk europejskich i fenomenologia transcendentalna. Wprowadzenie do filozofii transcendentalnej*, trans. S. Walczewska, Kraków 1987, p. 48-49.

15 J. Woleński, *Todeswelt jako horyzont*, op. cit., p. 26.

16 J. Patočka, *Świat naturalny a fenomenologia*, trans. J. Zychowicz, Kraków 1987, p. 155.

Woleński used the term "horizon" to indicate the characteristics of both concepts. *Lebenswelt* is the existing reality that is perceived through everyday individual experience. Such experience is "an entire horizon of each experience, both the common, practical as well as the scientific, and in this sense it is *a priori*."[17] This apriority is not of a transcendental character, but only relative and variable due to the collected, accumulated experience. Perceived in this way, *Lebenswelt* is the causative agent of culture in its broadest sense, that is science, art, language, and their intersubjective character. The contrasting concept of *Todeswelt* can be seen more clearly against this background.

Todeswelt is understood as turning towards death, however, as we already know, not in terms of its perception as a natural biological limit. Naturalness is here as much as normality, and normality to some extent regulates human responses to their time limitations. What is more, it is also not the sense of their existence, where death is a condition of an individualized life, constituting its complement, closure of existence. This constant awareness of the finiteness of existence constitutes a manifestation of the authenticity of human life. The meaning of *Todeswelt* goes beyond this understanding. Therefore, is the idea of *Todeswelt* included in *Lebenswelt* and does it constitute an element of it? If such a relationship turned up, *Todeswelt* would lose its specific meaning; it would be subordinated to the perspective in which the category of life is essential. It does not seem right as for *Todeswelt,* such a perspective is determined by the crucial category of death.

Here we are faced with a significant point of these observations, concerning the language appropriate for the perspectives of both worlds. A particularly important element of *Lebenswelt* is the language that functions within it. However, when a radically different, completely new situation appeared on the horizon of *Lebenswelt*, it turned out that the language of this world was unable to embrace and describe it. We already know that this is the common language, the language of everyday experience. It also encompasses the death of a man, of course, provided that this death is normal, natural, and constitutes an inseparable element of life. In case of the Holocaust we are dealing with a radically different situation because it is the code of death without the alphabet of life. *Lebenswelt* shapes a specific horizon of life, while *Todeswelt* forms a specific horizon of annihilation. Death is a part of culture; annihilation undermines it and its foundations.

Todeswelt does not and, by its very nature, cannot belong to the horizon of *Lebenswelt*. That which is standard in the world of life ceases to be the standard

17 J. Woleński, *Todeswelt jako horyzont*, op. cit., p. 26.

in the world of a debased death. Here we encounter the paradox of *Todeswelt*. This world is governed by strict rules that impose a precisely defined behaviour on its "residents". The paradox of this world does not lie in the fact that it is in opposition to the world of life, but above all in the fact that, as a whole, it is not accepted as natural, as normal. Hence, its "standards" are not, in fact, standards. Lack of agreement in this world is synonymous with the rejection of its "rules" and "standards". A brief history of this world is based entirely on violence and slavery.

This context illustrates, the core of the conceptualization-description of both of these worlds. The ability to express and describe a particular experience is tantamount to the ability to understand it. And conversely, to understand something is to be able to describe it. When we deal with *Lebenswelt* or a part of it the problem is not that it is impossible, but the key is to have an efficient enough, therefore good enough command of the tool which language is. *Lebenswelt* refers to the normal world and normal language. It is the common language, which by no means excludes specialist language. Therefore, natural language is both the common and the uncommon language, which here denotes the same as specialized. Habits and customs, which – naturally – do not appear suddenly and out of nowhere, are seen through these languages. They are supported by the aspect of *Lebenswelt*, which I will call tradition, in the understanding of history.[18] *Lebenswelt* aims at life, at its preservation and continuity. It has formed an array of linguistic and non-linguistic behaviors, which, first of all, allow us to describe (express) life and, secondly, positively value life itself and whatever may best serve its preservation.

The language of *Lebenswelt* cannot be useful in describing *Todeswelt*. This is without doubt and also illustrates the particular weakness of the language of the first world used in the second world. If the difference between the worlds was based solely on the fact that *Todeswelt* is artificial, then the unsuitability of the language of *Lebenswelt* would not be entirely clear because, among other things, in this world artificial languages function quite well. Władysław Wolter, in a discussion devoted to the prisoners of the concentration camps, noticed – in relation to the statement of "abnormality", "artifice" of the organization of the camps – that "the word 'abnormal', 'artificial', probably does not reflect the truth, because it was an anti-human organization. It is not enough to say: abnormal; it has to be denoted as anti-human."[19] This anti-human organization was not only

18 J. Woleński refers here to phylogenesis.

19 A. Kępiński, *Homo homini lupus est*, op. cit., s. 171.

the projection of a sick mind, but it was realized with the pedantry and solidity of a German worker. Therefore, the "normality" of the everyday life in the camps drastically exceeded all abnormalities, including also artifices, of the everyday life outside the camps.

It seems that this Polish researcher reached the core of the problem with his depiction. The anti-human nature of Nazism is – in the most radical and literal sense – destructive in a total dimension. An individual at whom this ideology is aimed could be obliterated along with all his creations, as products of culture. In this regard, there is no doubt or discussion. However, it is noted rarely, if ever, that with the destruction of man and his works the category of measurement used in this culture to "measure" the phenomena occurring in it and the created works is also annihilated. This measure has two dimensions: external and internal; the first refers to the physical data: time, place, number, and the other one to the psychological data: experiences, emotions and trauma. It is well illustrated by the metaphor of Jean-François Lyotard who compares the Holocaust to an earthquake that "destroys not only lives, buildings, objects but also the instruments used to measure the earthquakes directly and indirectly."[20]

An important thought is hidden in Lyotard's words: that in the presence of such an extensive and deep damage we are voiceless in the face of the Holocaust, because language, the fundamental element of human contact with the world, was destroyed. If language is interpreted broadly, it may then turn out that it is not so much about the factual language used to describe events, but rather about the axiographic language used to describe and evaluate psychological and ethical aspects. In the second case, no tool is able to measure, evaluate, and express this new knowledge. Here we are faced with Thomas Kuhn's anti-cumulative thesis, referred to the social dimension. If we continue to follow this path, Kuhn tells us what happens when the current measure-paradigm is destroyed; a new measure-paradigm of approaching a phenomenon, a description of an event is created. This is probably what Geoffrey Hartman has in mind by stating that "after shocks are measurable, we are deep into the process of creating new instruments to record and express what happened."[21] New tools provide new measures, allowing for an adequate description of an event. As the result of a broader approach in historical, literary and philosophical aspects, an event is accurately identified and understood intellectually, which encompasses the ethical and axiological

20 J.F. Lyotard, *The Differend. Phrases in Dispute*, trans. G. van Den Abeele, Manchester 1988, p. 56.

21 G. Hartman, *The Longest Shadow*, Basingstonke 2002, p. I; quoted after: R. Eaglestone, *The Holocaust and the Postmodern*, Oxford 2004, p. 2.

dimension. Assimilation, on the basis of recognition and understanding, means normalizing the relation of the present to the past.

However, before this process can begin, art creates the first line of conflict between silence and speech, rejection and recognition. The Holocaust only to some extent is subject to typical history as a science, because it is not only about the number of victims. The second part, which escapes understanding, is particularly significant. Nora Levin depicted it precisely: "No one altogether understands how mass murder on such a scale could have happened or could have been allowed to happen."[22] The first part of the question is answered by her accurate metaphor: "The world of Auschwitz was, in truth, another planet."[23] It is a very relevant statement as it refers to an unearthly (inhuman) environment. However, in my opinion, it is the answer to the second part of this question that is particularly important for the future of Europe and the world. The accumulation of more facts will not bring us closer to this answer and the understanding of the problem. "The accumulation of more facts does not yield this understanding; indeed, comprehensibility may never be possible."[24] I want to believe that understanding is possible, even if only fragmentary. "Planet Auschwitz"[25] is an existential problem, which is manifested in the questions of good and evil, of falsehood and truth, of hate and love; these are the questions about man and the world, the closest – the world of warmth, good, love – the world of life, and the most distant – the world of cold, evil, hatred – the world of destruction. Each type of art poses such questions it in its own way by means specific to itself. It seems that some areas of art – such as literature, theatre, and film – are privileged in this respect, since the word and the image contain the power of representation. It is different in case of music, which evokes thoughts with its form and feelings with its expression.

Bibliography

Browning C.R., *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers*, Cambridge 2000.

Eaglestone R., *The Holocaust and the Postmodern*, Oxford 2004.

Hartman G., *The Longest Shadow*, Basingstonke 2002.

22 N. Levin, *The Holocaust: The Destruction of the European Jewry, 1939-1945*, New York 1968, p. XI.

23 Ibidem, p. XII.

24 Ibidem, p. XI.

25 This phrase appears in many later works; vide: R. Eaglestone, op. cit., p. 16.

Husserl E., *Kryzys nauk europejskich i fenomenologia transcendentalna. Wprowadzenie do filozofii transcendentalnej*, trans. S. Walczewska, Kraków 1987.

Kępiński A., *Homo homini lupus est*, [in:] Z.J. Ryn (ed.), *Refleksje oświęcimskie*, Kraków 2005.

Kępiński A., *Koszmar*, [in:] Z.J. Ryn (ed.), *Refleksje oświęcimskie*, Kraków 2005.

Kępiński A., *KZ-syndrom*, [in:] Z.J. Ryn (ed.), *Refleksje oświęcimskie*, Kraków 2005.

Levin N., *The Holocaust: The Destruction the European Jewry, 1939-1945*, New York 1968.

Lyotard J.F., *The Differend. Phrases in Dispute*, trans. G. van Den Abeele, Manchester 1988.

Nałkowska Z., *Medaliony*, Wrocław, 2004.

Patočka J., *Świat naturalny a fenomenologia*, trans. J. Zychowicz, Kraków 1987.

Woleński J., *Todeswelt jako horyzont*, [in:] J. Diatłowicki, K. Rąb, I. Sobieraj (eds.), *Holokaust a teodycea*, Kraków 2008.

Woleński J., *Lebenswelt i uniwersalność języka naturalnego*, "Principia" 2007, vol. 47–48.

Wyschogrod E., *Concentration Camps and the End of Life-World*, [in:] A. Rosenberg, G.E. Myers (eds.), *Echoes from the Holocaust. Philosophical Reflections on a Dark Time*, Philadelphia 1988.

PART II – TRIBUTES

Ralph Buchenhorst

"… as if the shame before the victims would be offended"[1] – Adorno's Verdict on Arnold Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw*

Introduction

In this article I shall explore the German philosopher Theodor W. Adorno's radical interpretation of Arnold Schoenberg's seminal composition *A Survivor from Warsaw*, completed in 1946. To this end, I attempt to examine Schoenberg's intention in composing a piece directly related to the memory of the Shoah as well as to highlight the purpose of Adorno's criticism of the work both within his thinking on the relation between art and genocide and his aesthetic theory in general. Thus, in what follows, I will first present some details of the composition in question, then shed some light on the relation between the musical material in the piece and Schoenberg's idea of how to represent the memory of Jewish survival, and finally I will scrutinize Adorno's approach to Schoenberg and his concepts directly related to the two questions if and how to represent the Shoah in art. In what follows, the focus of my analytical labor will be the question of whether any elements of Adorno's interpretation of art relating to genocide – developed mainly between the 1940's and the 1960's – are still relevant for us contemporaries of the 21st Century.

It is essential to remember that the issue in question is part of the wider context represented by the ongoing debate concerning the limits beyond which representations of the Shoah and other genocides should not venture. During the last decades, a multitude of investigations have been published on this issue.[2] In a

1 This quote refers directly to Schoenberg's composition *A Survivor from Warsaw* and can be found in Th. W. Adorno, *Engagement*, [in:] Th. W. Adorno, *Noten zur Literatur: Gesammelte Schriften* vol. 11, Frankfurt/Main 2003, p. 423 (my translation, R.B.). I will come back to its broader context later in this paper.

2 To name just a few: S. Friedlander (ed.), *Probing the Limits of Representation. Nazism and the "Final Solution"*, Cambridge 1992; Sh. Hornstein et al. (eds.), *Impossible Images: Contemporary Art after the Holocaust*, New York–London 2003; G. Didi-Huberman, *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz*, Chicago–London

large-scale study on the remembrance of the Shoah in times of globally entangled memory discourses, I tried to situate the argument of the inaccessibility of genocidal experiences within the context of modernity.[3] There I claim that modernity's *raison d'être* always has been the permanent challenging of mainstream forms of representation in the light of accelerated technical progress and the mushrooming of technologies of the self. Thus, questioning existing emblematic features relating to the memory of the extermination camps as trivial in the face of the real experience of survivors has also to be conceived within the wider battlefield of the quest for the recurring renewal of social and cultural modes of expression. At least the argument that searching for an appropriate expression of the pain produced by the malignant combination of backward-thinking ideology and advanced technology is subject to ongoing revision also points in the direction of the driving forces behind so many paradigmatic changes in 19th- and 20th-century art.[4] In the more specific task of scrutinizing the relation between music and genocide, the questions whether music in general is an appropriate means to express extreme suffering or which compositional method better suits this task have to be combined with an analysis of the modern compositional forces that have relentlessly deconstructed existing patterns in favor of the challenging search for the unknown. Thus, one of the mayor tasks of the present article is to show how Adorno tries to intertwine the genuine philosophical challenge of explaining unimaginable barbarism with the specific aesthetic problem of technical progress in modern classical music.

Of course, one could assume that post-World War II composers and musicians were more sensible to the delicate and highly precarious balance between aesthetic expression and the crude reality of suffering in places like Auschwitz or Treblinka. Because other than in literature and the fine arts, the history of modern classical music after 1945 does not contain many works directly related to the memory of the Shoah. The more important ones are Luigi Nono's composition for audio tape *Ricorda cosa ti hanno fatto in Auschwitz* from 1956 and Krzysztof Penderecki's *Dies Irae – Oratory in Commemoration of the Auschwitz victims*

2008; G. Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, New York 2002.

3 R. Buchenhorst, *Das Element des Nachlebens: Zur Frage der Darstellbarkeit der Shoah in Philosophie, Kulturtheorie und Kunst*, Munich 2011.

4 An intense discussion of this argument was triggered by the decision of the German government to construct a monument for the murdered European Jewry in the center of Berlin, right next to the Brandenburg Gate; the debate is documented in U. Heimrod (ed.), *Der Denkmalstreit – das Denkmal? Die Debatte um das "Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas". Eine Dokumentation*, Berlin 1999.

from 1967. More recent pieces include Steve Reich's *Different Trains* from 1988[5] and John Zorn's *Kristallnacht*, released four years later. While very few pieces are directly related to the memory of survivors, most of the works use poems or otherwise artistically pre-arranged material as a point of reference. In the latter context, the poems of Paul Celan, a Chernowitz-born Jewish author, and one of the major German-language poets of the post-World War II era, are a primary source.[6] Often, the problem of the so-called aestheticisation of the Shoah is made responsible for this state of affairs, given that music is considered self-referential, abstract and highly subjective. Under these circumstances, *A Survivor from Warsaw* can be considered a pioneering composition, meeting advanced claims for authenticity, expressivity and technical consolidation.

A Survivor from Warsaw: Material, Compositional structure, Context

For those who are not familiar with the so-called *Second Viennese School* and with the piece of music in question, I offer a short description of the work. Op. 46 is a cantata for narrator, men's chorus, and orchestra. It is a singular piece in Schoenberg's oeuvre for its unique combination of historical, religious and political aspects. *A Survivor from Warsaw* was initially inspired by the Russian dancer Corinne Chochem who wanted a composition to pay tribute to the Holocaust victims under National Socialism. While the collaboration between Chochem and Schoenberg did not come to fruition, the composer continued to develop the idea independently. When he received a letter from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation with a commission for an orchestral work, Schoenberg decided to bring his sketches into a complete form. He accomplished *A Survivor from Warsaw* in just two weeks in August of 1947, although his poor eyesight forced him to notate only a short score, relying on René Leibowitz, the most important

5 For a detailed analysis of *Different Trains* see: F. von Ammon, *Züge des Lebens, Züge des Todes: Die Darstellung des Holocaust in Steve Reichs Komposition Different Trains*, [in:] M. Martínez (ed.), *Der Holocaust und die Künste: Medialität und Authentizität von Holocaust-Darstellungen in Literatur, Film, Video, Malerei, Denkmälern, Comic und Musik*, Bielefeld 2004, p. 23-50.

6 Examples for the use of Celan's poems in music are Aribert Reimann's *Kumi Ori* from 1999 and Peter Ruzicka's *Recherche (- im Innersten)* from 2000, see M. Lehmann, *Musik über den Holocaust: Zu einem Seitenthema der deutschen Musikgeschichte nach 1945*, [in:] Villigster Forschungsforum zu Nationalsozialismus, Rassismus und Antisemitismus (ed.), *Das Unbehagen in der "dritten Generation": Reflexionen des Holocaust, Antisemitismus und Nationalsozialismus*, Münster 2004, p. 44-56.

patron of dodecaphonic music in France, to copy out the full orchestration.[7] The piece was premiered at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque in November of 1948 with an audience of 1800 demanding a repeat performance. The German premiere took place in August of 1950 at the *Darmstadt International Summer Courses for New Music*.[8] Details of this performance offer a remarkable example of how memory of the Shoah was repressed in post-war Germany, as the organizers of the courses changed the text of the narrator when quoting the SS-sergeant "In one minute I want to know how many people I have to hand over to the gas chamber" to the less incriminating version "In one minute I want to know how many I can hand over."[9]

Op. 46 is a fictional representation of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and uses musical and textual elements to depict the labor of traumatic memory. It was the composer himself who wrote the libretto, in which a Shoah survivor struggles to recall an experience from the Warsaw Ghetto. Schoenberg mentions that it is based on a report from a real survivor from the Ghetto that he had learned about. The score published by Bomart in 1949 is therefore prefaced with a declaration by the composer that refers to the narrator's text: "This text is based partly upon reports which I have received directly or indirectly."[10] To shed more light on the origin of these reports, Schoenberg's biographer, Willi Reich, refers to a "German newspaper" interview with René Leibowitz from 15 November 1949 where the story of the real survivor is quoted as follows:

> I cannot remember everything, I must have been unconscious most of the time; I remember only the grandiose moment when they all started to sing the old prayer. The day began as usual. Reveille when it still was dark – we were assembled and brutally treated. People got killed. The sergeant shouted that the dead should be counted, so that he knew how many he had to deliver to the gas chamber. The counting started slowly, irregularly. Then it began again: one, two, three, faster and faster, so that it sounded like a stampede of wild horses, and – all of a sudden – they began singing the *Shema Yisroel*.[11]

---

7 See H.H. Stuckenschmidt, *Schönberg: Leben, Umwelt, Werk*, Munich 1989, p. 441. In an interview, Schoenberg once said: "I compose and paint instinctively (…) I see the work as a whole first. Then I compose the details", J. Rodrigues, *Conversation With a Legend*, [in:] M. Armitage (ed.), *Schoenberg*, Freeport–New York 1937 [reprint 1971], p. 145, 147.

8 For more details of the early reception history of the piece see M. Strasser, *A Survivor from Warsaw as Personal Parable*, "Music & Letters" 1995, vol. 76, p. 52-63.

9 See the recording of the concert on the CD *Musik in Deutschland 1950-2000*, serie: Deutscher Musikrat, RCA Victor Europe 2000.

10 A. Schoenberg, *A Survivor from Warsaw*, Vienna–London 1979.

11 W. Reich, *Schoenberg: A Critical Biography*, London 1971, p. 222.

Comparing the text to the libretto one recognizes that Schoenberg closely follows this story. The work concludes, as indicated in the text, with the victims singing the *Shema Yisroel* (the Jewish profession of faith). Singing this prayer can be understood as a means of musical resistance against the Nazi captors. The *Shema*, drawn from the Torah, is one of the most sacred prayers in Judaism. Its first verse encapsulates the essence of Jewish belief, the idea of monotheism, and tells the believer to open his senses so as to experience the unity of God. Hence, the singing of the *Shema* within the general context of the drama of *A Survivor from Warsaw* represents a kind of reassertion of the Jewish identity in the middle of the chaos, the violence and the annihilation of the European Jewry. However, although Schoenberg sets several verses after the traditionally sung *Shema* prayer, he does not follow a traditional Jewish style of composition. In what follows, I will attempt to shed some light on the technique Schoenberg uses in his music.[12]

The musical material is organized in a dodecaphonic manner, which means that the whole composition is in fact based on one single line that makes use of all twelve tones on the chromatic scale before variations of that line occur. Thus, all 12 notes are given more or less equal importance, and the music avoids being in any particular key.[13] In this way, the work complies with one of the main conditions Schoenberg demands for compositions in general: its formal properties have to be based on a rational, self-sufficient structure and rules of organization. At the same time, the piece is profoundly characterized by the contrast between the narrator's emphatic voice (speaking English), the quotations of a Prussian sergeant (in German) – which represent the spoken part of the composition – and the choir of the Jewish inmates singing the *Shema Yisroel*. From this perspective, it could be evaluated as a composition comparable to the

12 A more detailed musicological interpretation of *A Survivor* provides M. Feezell, *The Lord Our God Is One: Form, Technique, And Spirituality*, [in:] A. Schoenberg, *A Survivor From Warsaw*, op. cit., p. 46, available at: http://www.drfeezell.com/melodrama/schoenbergasurvivorfromwarsawweb.pdf (accessed: March 2014); and I.Y. Rostovtsev, *Expression of the Eternal: Analysis of Schoenberg's "A Survivor from Warsaw" op. 46*, available at: http://berkeley.academia.edu/ilzxc/Papers/129484/Expression_of_the_Eternal_Analysis_of_Schoenbergs_A_Survivor_From_Warsaw_Op._46 (accessed: March 2014).

13 For a closer technical analysis of the composition see Ch.M. Schmidt, *Schönbergs Kantate 'Ein Überlebender aus Warschau'*, "Archiv für Musikwissenschaft" 1976, vol. 33, p. 177-179; and: S. Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years*, Oxford–New York 2011, p. 105-108.

composer's one-act opera *Erwartung* (expectation) from 1909, thus establishing an immediate connection with his early pre-dodecaphonic, expressionist phase. Every measure of the piece contrasts the dignity of the Jews and the cruelty of the Nazis. So, most importantly for what follows in our analysis is the fact that the musical material Schoenberg chooses is organized in the most advanced, independent and coherent manner, while at the same time being able to represent an expressivity quite appropriate to the exceptionalism of the subject. Hence, *A Survivor from Warsaw* is regarded as a landmark composition in post-Second World War music history. It is considered a piece fully representing the consequences of Schoenberg's paradigmatic changes from tonality via atonality to the dodecaphonic system, changes that nowadays are considered watersheds in the development of modern music. Although the development of compositional techniques after Schoenberg continued to advance, passing serial, aleatory, minimal and electronic music, dodecaphony remains a point of reference for modern composition.

Schoenberg, Music, and Politics

We all know that music – and art in general – is an autonomous system within the broader context of modern societies, i.e. that artistic expression is independent from political, social and religious claims and constraints. Schoenberg himself never tired of pointing out the self-determination and unity of art and the musical sphere.[14] Therefore, he conceives the paradigmatic change from tonality to dodecaphony as a consequence of the emancipation of the dissonance and the general idea of the progression of knowledge and technology.[15] However, Schoenberg shows with the choir in *A Survivor from Warsaw* that music can be used to express political and existential resistance. Besides, he himself was the opposite of an apolitical, esoteric artist. Already in 1938, he expressed his political opinions in the context of Jewish identity, publishing the essay *The Four-Point*

14 See A. Schoenberg, *Composition with Twelve Tones (1)*, [in:] L. Stein (ed.), *Style and Idea. Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, trans. L. Black, Berkeley 1984, p. 214-245; and A. Schoenberg, *New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea*, [in:] L. Stein (ed.), op. cit., p. 113-124.

15 Schoenberg: Composition with Twelve Tones, 116ff. For a discussion of Schoenberg's idea of compositional progress see G. Gur, *Arnold Schoenberg and the Ideology of Progress in Twentieth-Century Musical Thinking*, [in:] "Search: Journal for New Music and Culture" 2009, summer, vol. 5, available at: http://www.searchnewmusic.org/gur.pdf (accessed: March 2014).

Program for Jewry, in which he called for the creation of an independent Jewish state and unanimity in Jewry as a defense against anti-Semitic aggression.[16] Hence, it seems as if structural self-sufficiency, the idea of technological and epistemological progress, and the ambition to freely express individual imagination combined with moral implications did not necessarily conflict with each other in Schoenberg's aesthetic thinking. There is no other way to explain how Schoenberg could use a technique so sophisticated that he considered representing social and cultural progress to express a historical event commonly regarded as the utmost outcome of barbarism. Surely, *A Survivor from Warsaw* also stands for the memory of the victims while at the same time representing the sheer meaninglessness of the annihilation of a people, thus creating a kind of formal contradiction in the aesthetic portrayal of the event. It seems as if for Schoenberg the last resort and ultimate authority in creating a work of art is the artist himself with his imagination as to how to balance rational organization, moral approach and intuitive expression. His claim is to work an idea into the existing aesthetic material in such a way that general cultural and spiritual concepts are reflected and the ethical and moral standpoints of the author are truly represented. Accordingly, Schoenberg once summarized his artistic convictions in the following statement: "I myself consider the totality of a piece as the idea: the idea which its creator wanted to present."[17]

To sum up, the work *A Survivor from Warsaw* can be considered a confirmation not only of the survival of resistance in the Ghetto of Warsaw, but also of advanced aesthetic and expressive tendencies, tendencies banned as *Entartete Kunst* (degenerate art) by the cultural policy of the Nazis but surviving in the works of the exiled artists. It is this idea that makes Schoenberg highlight the intentions of the work:

> Now, what the text of the *Survivor* means to me: it means at first a warning to all Jews, never to forget what has been done to us, never to forget that even people who did not do it themselves, agreed with them and many of them found it necessary to treat us this way. We should never forget this, even if such things have not been done in the manner in which I describe in the *Survivor*. This does not matter. The main thing is that I saw it in my imagination.[18]

---

16 A. Schoenberg, *A Four-Point Program for Jewry*, [in:] "Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute" 1979, vol. III, no. 1, p. 49-67.

17 A. Schoenberg, *New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea*, op. cit., p. 122.

18 Letter from Schoenberg to Kurt List, 1 November 1948, as quoted in N. Schoenberg Nono *(ed.), Arnold Schoenberg Self-Portrait: A Collection of Articles, Program Notes, and Letters by the Composer about his own Works*, Pacific Palisades, CA 1988, p. 105.

Adorno, the Arts, and the Shoah

In what follows, I attempt to analyze the parallels and disaccords between Schoenberg and Theodor W. Adorno, one of the leading members of the so-called Frankfurt School of Critical Theory and a specialist in aesthetics and music theory. Adorno published several essays on the work of Schoenberg and his compositional technique. The most prominent is probably the first part of his book *Philosophy of New Music*: "Schoenberg and Progress".[19] In terms of style, his writing can be compared to Schoenberg's compositions: both resist naïve appropriation and exploitation by unreflective modes of thought or listening, both believe in the material's inherent drive that forces the author to apply mayor changes in his method. But Adorno's aesthetic theory claims that art – and especially music, Adorno's main reference – has to be the most radical (and that means: negative, unredeemed) representation of the experience and the effects of the Shoah. Thus, the philosopher is probably best known for his highly provocative verdict published in an essay on cultural criticism in 1951: "The critique of culture is confronted with the last stage in the dialectic of culture and barbarism: to write a poem after Auschwitz is barbaric, and that corrodes also the knowledge which expresses why it has become impossible to write poetry today."[20] With this statement, we have Adorno's idea of dialectical movement in a nutshell: although art is autonomous, cognition without concepts, it is able to express social truth. Its truth, however, is not self-conscious, it needs philosophical knowledge to lift truth to awareness. Yet, although this knowledge raises barbarism to awareness, it is itself affected by its subject. Hence, it uncovers two antagonistic movements in modern art in general and music in particular: while one movement strives after total consistency and liberty in structure to achieve an all-encompassing unity, the other results in the alienation of the subject within the objectivity of that structure. In the preface to *Philosophy of New Music*, written in 1948, Adorno emphasizes this constellation explaining his approach to Schoenberg and Stravinsky in the context of recent political and social events:

> The author has no wish to disguise the provocative features of his study. It must appear cynical after what has happened in Europe, and what continues to threaten, to lavish time and mental energy on the deciphering of esoteric questions on the technique of modern composition […] This is only music; how must a world be made in which even questions of counterpoint bear witness to irreconcilable conflicts? How fundamentally

19 Th.W. Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, Minneapolis–London 2006, p. 16.

20 Th.W. Adorno, *Cultural Criticism and Society* [in:] T.W. Adorno, *Prisms*, Cambridge, MA 1984, p. 34.

> disturbed life is today if its trembling and its rigidity are reflected even where no empirical need reaches, in a sphere that people suppose provides sanctuary from the pressures of the harrowing norm […].[21]

The foregoing shows clearly that Adorno's thinking is thoroughly dialectical, i.e. it is based on antinomy. As he demands that works of art bring together the antagonisms in the aesthetic elements it is using, so he applies this method of confronting social contradictions and extremes to his own philosophical approach. Should there be but the faintest hint of conciliatoriness in art, of glossing over these antagonisms, Adorno inerrably detects and unmasks it. Thus, in an interview in 1968, when asked about the quality of popular music referring to the horrors of Vietnam, Adorno answers:

> I believe, in fact, that attempts to bring political protest together with popular music – i.e., with entertainment music – are for the following reason doomed from the start: The entire sphere of popular music, even where it dresses itself up in modernist guise, is to such a degree inseparable from commodity, from the cross-eyed transfixion with amusement, that attempts to outfit it with a new function remain entirely superficial. And I have to say that when somebody sets himself up, and for whatever reason accompanies sentimental music by singing something or other about Vietnam being unbearable […] I find, in fact, this song unbearable, in that by taking the horrendous and making it somehow consumable, it ends up wringing something like consumption-qualities out of it.[22]

It is therefore only the most radical, in its negativity uncompromising art like the works of Franz Kafka, Samuel Beckett, and Schoenberg, that, for Adorno, live up to his expectations of social and aesthetic awareness.

Now, how does Adorno judge Schoenberg's approach to the history of European music in general and to the memory of the Shoah in particular? In the first place, and in total conformity with the composer, he conceives serious art as using the most advanced technique available to express the imagination of the artist. Therefore, in his essay *Toward an Understanding of Schoenberg* he characterizes Schoenberg's twelve-tone compositions as the attempt to synthesize "[…] two fundamental intentions, the explosively anti-conventional one and the cohesively constructive one, into one and the same method of proceeding."[23] And

---

21 Th.W. Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, op. cit. p. 4f.

22 Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xd7Fhaji8ow (accessed: March 2014).

23 Th.W. Adorno, *Toward an Understanding of Schoenberg*, [in:] Th.W. Adorno, *Essays on Music: Selected, with Introduction, Commentary, and Notes by Richard Leppert*, Berkeley 2002, p. 640.

in an essay about the Baroque, he leaves no space for misunderstanding when it comes to the function of technique in art, affirming that the place of the spirit in artistic oeuvre is their technical realization while the concept of style was suspicious to composers such as Schoenberg and philosophers likewise.[24]

These quotes clearly expose the motivating force behind Adorno's analytical work: the desire to debunk the relation between autonomous compositions and their socio-political context, which he argues is inherent to the musical material itself. Thus, if modern societies are haunted by antinomies that undermine central categories like experience, perception, and communication, these antinomies can be recognized in music too, albeit in a different form and with a different expressivity.

Verdicts in Dialectical Movement: Adorno's Interpretation of *A Survivor from Warsaw*

Now, what does this mean for a dialectical understanding of *A Survivor from Warsaw*? We will see that Adorno, although acclaiming the musical genius and the radical nature of the cantata, mercilessly condemns the work as conciliatory in the face of the Warsaw Ghetto's sheer brutality.

Most of Adorno's quotes related to Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw* follow his general verdict on the history of 20th century music and the idea of progress. If music is indirectly related to social reality, and the Shoah is the most extreme outcome of the self-destructive tendencies in modern societies, then actually only the most technically advanced and self-conscious music is able to truly represent what had happened. Accordingly, Adorno states that in *A Survivor from Warsaw*, Schoenberg

> (…) made the impossible possible, standing up to the contemporary horror in its most extreme form, the murder of the Jews, in art. This alone would be enough to earn him every right to the thanks of a generation that scorns him, not least because in his music that inexpressible thing quivers that no one any longer wants to know about. If music is to escape from the nullity that threatens it (…), then it can only hope to do so if it accomplishes what Schoenberg accomplished in the Survivor from Warsaw – if it confronts the utter negativity, the most extreme, by which the entire complexion of reality is made manifest.[25]

---

24 Th.W. Adorno, *Der missbrauchte Barock*, [in:] Th.W. Adorno, *Ohne Leitbild: Parva Aesthetica*, Frankfurt am Main 1967, p. 149 (my translation, R.B.).

25 Th.W. Adorno, *The Relationship of Philosophy and Music*, [in:] Th.W. Adorno, *Essays on Music…*, op. cit. p. 149f.

In another passage, the philosopher praises the combination of expressivity and form in the piece, comparing it to Picasso's painting *Guernica* and affirming that both were the only works of art capable of unflinchingly approaching the most extreme horror and, yet, being aesthetically compelling.[26] As we see, Adorno certainly singles out Schoenberg's composition, highlighting its consistency in uncompromisingly following the consequences of modern art, i.e. to drive the aesthetic material to its most radical form and expression. Nevertheless, if he wants to remain true to his dialectical principle, the Frankfurt based philosopher cannot content himself with this state of affairs. He has to excavate the conciliatory moment in his object of analysis. Consequently, in a later essay Adorno mercilessly condemns the transfiguration of brutality in the choir because it wrongs the experience of the victims:

> Something embarrassing joins Schoenberg's composition […] The so-called artistic representation of the sheer physical pain of those who were beaten to the ground by rifle butts contains, however remotely, the power to elicit enjoyment out of it. […] Through the aesthetic principle of stylization, and even more through the solemn prayer of the chorus, the unthinkable fate appears as if it had some meaning: it is being transfigured, something of its horror is being removed. This alone does injustice to the victims, while no art that tries to evade them could stand up to justice.[27]

One might take offence at this interpretation, because the authentic story of the survivor quoted in the libretto states that the singing of the Shema Yisroel had actually taken place in the Warsaw Ghetto, thus talk about stylization seems inappropriate. However, taken to its logical consequence, Adorno's criticism could even be applied to the chorus of the inmates who sang in the Ghetto, for they tried to sugarcoat their real circumstances. And yet, why would not it be legitimate to understand the choir as an expression of resistance and not as representing the meaninglessness of the annihilation of the European Jewry? Anyway, the pivotal question seems to be how we shall perceive and judge Adorno's interpretation of Schoenberg after more than half century since it was first conceived.

Conclusion: Considering the Context Dependency of the Shoah's Memory

I would like to propose the following answer to this question: on the one hand, Adorno's criticism of popular music and his sometimes exaggerated interpretation of new music have themselves being criticized since his death and gave way to a broad discussion of his legacy. Carl Dahlhaus, Albrecht Wellmer and Peter Bürger

26 Th.W. Adorno, *Toward an Understanding of Schoenberg*, op. cit., p. 642.
27 Th.W. Adorno, *Engagement*, p. 425f, (my translation, R.B.).

have detected flaws in Adorno's aesthetic theory, highlighting the obsolescence of certain interpretations of the European avant-garde movements in his construction of modernity.[28] Moreover, they point to the fact that today's modes of listening to music are less ideologically suspicious, enabling listeners to contextualize music styles and forms of expression within their respective traditions and social contexts. Correspondingly, the idea of the most advanced state of compositional techniques as an ineluctable reference for acceptable music, shared by Adorno and Schoenberg, has become obsolete, as the German musicologist Tobias Plebuch states:

> We have lost belief in a historically defined and definable state of musical material, at least when it comes to the 20th and 21st Century. This concept fails as a barometer for general artistic progress. The question of what material is beyond being raw acoustic phenomena will be decided in alternating contexts and by listeners whose educational differences are not defined by using the scale of "high" and "low".[29]

Yet, in order to do justice to both Schoenberg and Adorno, I propose to discuss the following considerations involving the relation between art and the memory of the Shoah. As long as the artist's imagination of the unimaginable is involved in finding its most truthful expression, we should believe in his/her ability to find a conceivable form for this imagination, provided that the artist displays a total command of the available techniques. In this case the question of the Shoah's presentability is being addressed to the wrong institution. However, when questions of the general epistemological or aesthetic conditions for the representation of the Shoah are raised, the critical discourse seems to be the adequate institution to point out the limits every single work of art has to accept. Thus, authors like Adorno make us aware of the fact that a universally valid form for total destruction has yet to be uncovered. Yet it is important to remember that aesthetic conditions and modes of musical reception today are highly complex and context-sensitive, thus precluding general conclusions with regard to the appropriateness of an oeuvre to its topic.

It is quite probable that the choir might best serve to express a solution to the problem of context dependency as well as an acceptable perception of the Shoah. While the real choir, sung and received in Warsaw, was an act of resistance in a

---

28 See P. Bürger, *Der Anti-Avantgardismus in der Ästhetik Adornos*, [in:] P. Bürger, *Das Altern der Moderne*, Frankfurt am Main 2001, p. 31-47; C. Dahlhaus, *Vom Altern einer Philosophie*, [in:] L. von Friedeburg *I* Jürgen Habermas (eds.), *Adorno-Konferenz 1983*, Frankfurt am Main 1983, p. 133ff.

29 T. Plebuch, *Musikhören nach Adorno*, [in:] "Merkur: Deutsche Zeitschrift für europäisches Denken" 2002, vol. 56, no. 8, p. 679 (my translation, R.B.).

moment of existential oppression, Schoenberg's choir is a formal expression of the memory of that resistance. And finally, how the second or third generations hear and perceive it is already charged with an overwhelming number of images, documents and narratives, so that questions about stylization and agency are inescapable. Only the synopsis of all those aspects, as a combination of experience, memory and its transformation into a multitude of aesthetic forms, is able to take account of all possibilities, realities and forms of resistance in the context of the Shoah's remembrance. Neither music nor dialectical thinking on their own could possibly grasp the horror of the extermination camps, but together they might be able to give us an idea of a universally valid solidarity against it ever being repeated.

Bibliography

Adorno Th.W., *Cultural Criticism and Society*, [in:] Th.W. Adorno, *Prisms*, Cambridge, MA 1984.

Adorno Th.W., *Der missbrauchte Barock*, [in:] Th.W. Adorno, *Ohne Leitbild: Parva Aesthetica*, Frankfurt am Main 1967.

Adorno Th. W., *Engagement*, [in:] Th.W. Adorno, *Noten zur Literatur: Gesammelte Schriften* vol. 11, Frankfurt/Main 2003

Adorno Th.W., *Philosophy of New Music*, Minneapolis–London 2006.

Adorno Th.W., *The Relationship of Philosophy and Music*, [in:] Th.W. Adorno, *Essays on Music: Selected, with Introduction, Commentary, and Notes by Richard Leppert*, Berkeley 2002.

Adorno Th.W., *Toward an Understanding of Schoenberg*, [in:] Th.W. Adorno, *Essays on Music: Selected, with Introduction, Commentary, and Notes by Richard Leppert*, Berkeley 2002.

Agamben G., *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, New York 2002.

Ammon von F., *Züge des Lebens, Züge des Todes: Die Darstellung des Holocaust in Steve Reichs Komposition Different Trains*, [in:] M. Martínez (ed.), *Der Holocaust und die Künste: Medialität und Authentizität von Holocaust-Darstellungen in Literatur, Film, Video, Malerei, Denkmälern, Comic und Musik*, Bielefeld 2004, p. 23-50.

Armitage M. (ed.), *Schoenberg*, Freeport–New York 1937, [reprint 1971].

Buchenhorst R., *Das Element des Nachlebens: Zur Frage der Darstellbarkeit der Shoah in Philosophie, Kulturtheorie und Kunst*, München 2011.

Bürger P., *Der Anti-Avantgardismus in der Ästhetik Adornos*, [in:] P. Bürger, *Das Altern der Moderne*, Frankfurt am Main 2001.

Dahlhaus C., *Vom Altern einer Philosophie*, [in:] L. von Friedeburg, Jürgen Habermas (eds.), *Adorno-Konferenz 1983*, Frankfurt am Main 1983.

Didi-Huberman G., *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz*, Chicago–London 2008.

Feezell M., *The Lord Our God Is One: Form, Technique, And Spirituality*, [in:] A. Schoenberg, *A Survivor From Warsaw*, op. cit., p. 46", available at: http://www.drfeezell.com/melodrama/schoenbergasurvivorfromwarsawweb.pdf (accessed: March 2014).

Friedlander S. (ed.), *Probing the Limits of Representation. Nazism and the "Final Solution"*, Cambridge 1992.

Gur G., *Arnold Schoenberg and the Ideology of Progress in Twentieth-Century Musical Thinking*, [in:] "Search: Journal for New Music and Culture" 2009 summer, issue 5, available at: http://www.searchnewmusic.org/gur.pdf (accessed: March 2014).

Heimrod U. (ed.), *Der Denkmalstreit – das Denkmal? Die Debatte um das "Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas". Eine Dokumentation*, Berlin 1999.

Hornstein Sh. et al. (eds.), *Impossible Images: Contemporary Art after the Holocaust*, New York–London 2003.

Lehmann M., *Musik über den Holocaust: Zu einem Seitenthema der deutschen Musikgeschichte nach 1945*, [in:] Villigster Forschungsforum zu Nationalsozialismus, Rassismus und Antisemitismus (ed.), *Das Unbehagen in der "dritten Generation": Reflexionen des Holocaust, Antisemitismus und Nationalsozialismus*, Münster 2004, p. 44-56.

Musik in Deutschland 1950-2000, Serie: Deutscher Musikrat, RCA Victor Europe 2000, [sound recording].

Plebuch T., *Musikhören nach Adorno*, "Merkur: Deutsche Zeitschrift für europäisches Denken" 2002, vol. 56, no. 8.

Reich W., *Schoenberg: A Critical Biography*, London 1971.

Rostovtsev I.Y., *Expression of the Eternal: Analysis of Schoenberg's "A Survivor from Warsaw" op. 46*, available at: https://www.academia.edu/204435/Expression_of_the_Eternal_Analysis_of_Schoenbergs_A_Survivor_From_Warsaw_Op._46 (accessed: March 2014).

Schmidt Ch.M., *Schönbergs Kantate, Ein Überlebender aus Warschau*, [in:] "Archiv für Musikwissenschaft" 1976, vol. 33.

Schoenberg A., *A Four-Point Program for Jewry*, [in:] "Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute" 1979, Vol. III, No. 1, p. 49-67.

Schoenberg A., *A Survivor from Warsaw*, Wien–London 1979.

Schoenberg A., *Composition with Twelve Tones (1)*, [in:] L. Stein (ed.), *Style and Idea. Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, trans. L. Black, Berkeley 1984.

Schoenberg A., *New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea*, [in:] L. Stein (ed.)., *Style and Idea. Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, trans. L. Black, Berkeley 1984.

Schoenberg Nono N. *(ed.), Arnold Schoenberg Self-Portrait: A Collection of Articles, Program Notes, and Letters by the Composer about his own Works*, Pacific Palisades, CA 1988.

Strasser M., *A Survivor from Warsaw as Personal Parable*, "Music & Letters" 1995, vol. LXXVI.

Stuckenschmidt H.H., *Schönberg: Leben, Umwelt, Werk*, Munich 1989.

Matt Lawson

Towards a Critical Understanding of Representational and Semantic Issues within Hanns Eisler's Score for *Nuit et Brouillard* (1955)

Nuit et Brouillard (1955) is a Holocaust documentary film by Alain Resnais. It was commissioned in May 1955 by the Comité d'Histoire de la Déportation de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale and completed in December of the same year.[1]

Joshua Hirsch establishes the film's reputation in *After Image: Film, Trauma and the Holocaust* as "one of the most highly regarded Holocaust films."[2] Annette Insdorf, in her introduction to *Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust* reinforces its effectiveness by exclaiming that "whenever I show *Night and Fog* in my courses, students are shocked and profoundly moved, for it is generally their first encounter with the palpable images of Auschwitz."[3] The film has a running time of just 32 minutes and is presented as a sequence of visual montages in colour and black-and-white, accompanied by a narration and musical soundtrack.

Holocaust survivor Jean Cayrol, a former Mauthausen concentration camp prisoner, proved invaluable to Resnais for the creation of the screenplay, ensuring that the film had a "guarantee of authenticity".[4] The screenplay was narrated by Michel Bouquet. Resnais was adamant that the film should "tell the truth" and not be "yet another monument to the dead".[5] Resnais intended the film to be accessible for all, stating in an interview that "With *Night and Fog*, it was my wish to make a film likely to reach a wide audience."[6]

A key cinematic feature of *Nuit et Brouillard* is the "interweaving of past and present" through the use of black-and-white and colour film respectively.[7] The music of Hanns Eisler and the narration combine to provide a consistent

1 R. Armes, *The Cinema of Alain Resnais*, London 1968, p. 48.
2 J. Hirsch, *After Image: Film, Trauma and the Holocaust*, Philadelphia, PA 2004, p. 41.
3 A. Insdorf, *Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust*, New York 1983, p. xvii.
4 Raskin R., *Nuit et Brouillard*, Aarhus 1987, p. 8.
5 R. Armes, op. cit., p. 49.
6 Resnais A., *Alain Resnais à la Question*, "Premier Plan" 1961, vol. 18, p. 36-89.
7 Avisar I., *Screening the Holocaust: Cinema's Images of the Unimaginable*, Bloomington 1988, p. 12.

forward-moving narrative which transcends the frequent switching from the black-and-white past to the colour "present". Whereas the sudden switching from black-and-white to colour may superficially seem to suddenly break the continuity, the combined audial contributions of the narration and Eisler's music maintain a horizontal progression throughout the film which counteracts the sudden "vertical" splicing between past and present.

It was of paramount importance to Resnais that Eisler would be the man to realise a soundtrack to his documentary. Resnais became "enormously interested" in Eisler upon hearing some of his existing film scores, and believed that having a German composer scoring *Nuit et Brouillard* would give the film a "moral guarantee" which would perhaps, in Resnais' eyes, have put the film on an international stage which might have acted as a universal warning to humanity, and not as a one-sided damnation and condemnation of the Nazi regime.[8]

Eisler's acceptance to take on the role of composer for *Nuit et Brouillard* prompted the production of a highly intriguing musical score. Music has received little academic attention in Holocaust films, as it has perhaps been perceived as being not necessarily inferior or unimportant when compared to the visuals, but lower down the receptive radar in such narratively-sensitive films. As Ewout van der Knaap argues, "the power of representation through images can be so strong that the pictures blot out the events themselves", which begs the question as to where music fits into the representational conundrum.[9] Van der Knaap stated that *Nuit et Brouillard* instigated "the process of memorialisation and representation". To clarify, van der Knaap was highlighting the fact that *Nuit et Brouillard* was the first widely-released film to tackle the Holocaust using real documentary footage and the first to include elements of memorialisation to the victims. As an extension of this, the music of Hanns Eisler, whether consciously or not, would have contributed to this "flagship film" of Holocaust representation.[10]

The music of Holocaust films is perhaps representationally different from "pure" compositions based upon the Holocaust. Examples including works such as *Different Trains* (1988) by Steve Reich, Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw* (1947) and Karel Berman's *Terezín* (1944) are purely musical responses to the

8 A.Resnais, *Für Hanns Eisler,* [in:] H. Eisler (ed.), *Sinn und Form*, Berlin 1964, p. 372.

9 E. van der Knaap, *The Construction of Memory in "Nuit et Brouillard"*, [in:] E. van der Knaap (ed.), *Uncovering the Holocaust: The International Reception of Night and Fog*, London 2006, p. 7.

10 E. van der Knaap, *Transmitting the Memory of the Holocaust*, [in:] E. van der Knaap (ed.), op. cit., p. 1

Holocaust. They are pieces of music that have no extra-musical considerations outside of a remembrance of the Holocaust for which they were written. With film music, the case is more complex due to the hierarchical construction of films. The film itself is the representational device, whereas the music is hierarchically positioned below the visual narrative, in its traditional role, generally speaking, as an accompaniment to the on-screen action. As a result, it can be argued that Holocaust film music is a secondary representational device, coming after the film as a whole. As such, it does not perhaps share the same responsibilities of representation as the film as an entity, but must nevertheless contribute to the film's representational construction. The music must not necessarily be a representation of the Holocaust itself, but rather a building block in the context of the whole film.

Similarly, we must consider whether meaning – as well as representation – is extrapolated from the film as a whole or from the individual audio-visual components therein.

Terrence Des Pres, in his essay *Holocaust Laughter?*, lays out three conditions to which, as he believes, Holocaust films are expected to conform:

> First: the Holocaust shall be represented in its totality, as a unique event or kingdom of its own, above or below or apart from history. Second: representations of the Holocaust shall be as accurate, as exacting, as unfailingly faithful as possible to the facts and circumstances of the event itself, without change or manipulation for any reason – artistic or literary reasons included. Third: the Holocaust shall be approached as a solemn, or even a sacred event, admitting of no response that obscures its enormity of dishonours its dead.[11]

Taking a musical standpoint on the three doctrines above, the latter two raise challenging questions against Eisler's score for *Nuit et Brouillard*. If we are to take the music as part of the cinematic whole, does Eisler's score portray this "accuracy, faithfulness, exactness, solemnity" and "sacredness" as stipulated by Des Pres? Of course, Des Pres' opinion is precisely that: a biased subjectivity. However, it is a subjective viewpoint which may be superficially agreeable on a wide scale. It should be noted at this juncture that the historiography of the Holocaust is a "vigorous dispute", and that Des Pres' viewpoint is by no means the only viewpoint, or indeed the predominant viewpoint, on the status of the Holocaust historiographically.[12] Our perception of the Holocaust is dependent

11 T. Des Pres, *Holocaust Laughter?*, [in:] B. Lang (ed.), *Writing and the Holocaust*, New York 1988, p. 220.

12 K. Bishoping, A. Kalmin, *Public Opinion about comparisons to the Holocaust*, "The Public Opinion Quarterly" 1999, vol. 63, no. 4, p. 485-507.

on how its history is told, and so historiographical issues directly relate to film, with *Nuit et Brouillard* being relevant to both historiographical choices made by its producers, but also as an educational tool for the general public.

Using this complex and often provocative issue of Holocaust historiography and representation as a foundation, we may look at how Hanns Eisler approached a musical representation in *Nuit et Brouillard*, focusing specifically on three themes – the introductory theme (recapitulated at the conclusion), the pastoral "Auschwitz" theme and the Nazi theme.

The introduction theme to *Nuit et Brouillard*, a cue which Eisler borrowed from his music to Bertold Brecht's staging of the Johannes Becher play *Winterschlacht* (1945), can now be approached from two separate viewpoints: representation as viewed historiographically, viz. how the music represented the Holocaust specifically, and semantics as extra-contextual meaning in the music; meaning from the music as "just" music, taking a step back from viewing it as Holocaust film music. The introductory theme to *Nuit et Brouillard* is arguably the theme which is most rich in political, compositional and ethical intrigue compared with the other musical sketches found in the film, due to the alternative uses of the music in other contexts.

Winterschlacht (Winter Battle – but also translated as Winter Slaughter on occasion) was based upon the German struggle against the Soviet Union during the Second World War.[13] It was the theme from the *Vorspiel* (prelude) which Eisler recycled as the opening theme to *Nuit et Brouillard*. However – the music actually predates *Winterschlacht* too. In 1942, Eisler wrote *Horatios Monolog*, a piece for solo voice and piano drawn from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* which uses precisely the same music.[14]

It becomes clear that this musical passage has three highly contrasting semantic contexts. The first use of the music, *Horatios Monolog*, is described by Erik Levi as being "in a direct tonal idiom which for all its harmonic simplicity betrays the hand of a sophisticated musical mind."[15] Apart from this setting of music to Shakespearean words, something attempted by many composers, there is little semantic significance in the first appearance of Eisler's theme. This simple

13 A. Dümling, *Eisler's Music for Resnais' "Night and Fog"*, "Journal of Film, Radio and Television" 1998, vol. 18, no. 4, p. 579.

14 Ibidem.

15 E. Levi, *Weill and Eisler*, "The Musical Times" 1989, vol. 130, no. 1755, p. 289. The 'sophisticated musical mind' derives from Eisler's *Kampflieder*, songs written for the workers, which superficially appear to be 'coarse' and simple, but have a sophisticated musical pedigree, drawing on Schoenberg specifically.

song setting was then reused, minus the vocal line, as the politically-charged prelude to Becher's *Winterschlacht.* This play, with a subtitle of "eine deutsche Tragödie", was not widely performed or acclaimed, and has been described by Thomas K. Brown, in reference to Bertolt Brecht's adaptation, as "wretched" due to its alleged political opportunism.[16] Little academic attention has been expended on *Winterschlacht*, and it has largely slipped into modern day oblivion.

Perhaps Eisler's recycling of the music from both previous settings reflected his personal opinion of the modest significance surrounding the context of both works; maybe he felt he could recycle without being accused of self-plagiarism due to the lack of exposure of the musical theme to a general audience. Certainly, the theme is now most widely recognised as the introduction to *Nuit et Brouillard*. As far as musicological reception and analysis is concerned, we cannot ignore the fact that the introductory musical theme to *Nuit et Brouillard* is pre-existing music. Mike Cormack explains that pre-existing music "may be chosen because of the way that music conveys meaning when taken out of its original context."[17] This may well be the case for classical or popular music, widely familiar to the audience in its previous context. However, in this case of Eisler's introductory theme, when the music lacked substantial semantic context in its previous incarnations, how do we then measure the impact of the recycling of such music in a new cinematic environment? It is perhaps a moot point if the audiences of *Nuit et Brouillard* were unfamiliar with *Horatios Monolog* or *Winterschlacht*, but we must allow for the possibility that a proportion of them had heard one or both. In a film of *Nuit et Brouillard*'s sensitivity, should the audience be subjected to recycled music as their introduction to a Holocaust documentary, or does the narrative demand or deserve originality? After all, Resnais had asked for an original score. Eisler did not only self-reference, but even duplicated the theme entirely in the same key, only stretching the originality as far as substituting piano for strings. It was not a development of pre-existing musical ideas into a new theme, but rather a decision by Eisler not to compose new music for the introduction to what would become a key film in Holocaust documentary filmography.

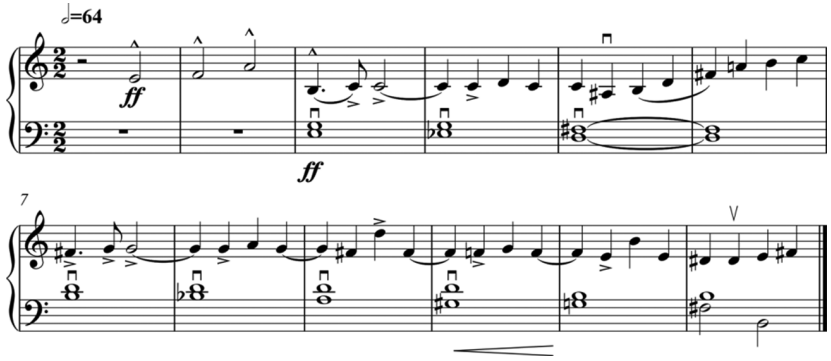
It is certainly noticeable that Eisler and Adorno do not mention using pre-existing music as a serious option in *Composing for the Films*, but by doing so

16 Th.K. Brown, *Gedenkt Unsrer mit Nachsicht: Brecht's Journal, 1938-1955*, "The German Quarterly" 1974, vol. 47, no. 2, p. 277.

17 M. Cormack, *The Pleasures of Ambiguity: Using Classical Music in Films*, [in:] P. Powrie, R. Stilwell (eds.), *Changing Tunes: The Use of Pre-existing Music in Film*, Aldershot 2006, p. 19.

here, Eisler may have opened his music up to alternative semantic interpretations by the audience. As Powrie and Stilwell state in *Changing Tunes*, "the music might also be chosen because of the way that such music conveys meaning when taken out of its original context and given the new context of a narrative film."[18] A pertinent question is then asked, namely "what difference does it make to the audience's understanding of the film?"[19]

Figure 1 – 'Introduction'



This introductory theme was later used in another cinematic context, in which Eisler has no direct input. *Die Patriotin* (1979), a West German film directed by Alexander Kluge, which includes a scene described by Caryl Flinn thus:

> We see film footage of barely identifiable war carnage through a red filter, over which is played the powerful theme for Alain Resnais' documentary on Holocaust memory and responsibility, "Nuit et Brouillard" by Hanns Eisler. Although the music helps concretise the historical context of the abstracted, manipulated images at this point, it does so from a very different perspective than it did in Resnais' film.[20]

Anton Kaes, in *From Hitler to Heimat*, further develops and argues against the use of Eisler's theme in *Die Patriotin* with the following opinion:

> Kluge uses the musical theme which functioned as a leitmotif for Resnais as an overture for his own film (but does not mention the source of the music, either in his published

18 R. Stilwell, P. Powrie, *Changing Tunes: The Use of Pre-existing Music in Film*, Aldershot 2006, p. 19.

19 Ibidem.

20 C. Flinn, *New German Cinema: Music, History and the Matter of Style*, Berkeley 2004, p. 124.

> script or in the credits). This musical quotation may hint at a consciousness that does not want to exclude Auschwitz from the patriotic *Trauerarbeit* [work of mourning]. But even those who can appreciate the subtle allusion to the leitmotif from "Night and Fog" are soon pulled back to the side of the German war victims because the music is combined with images of German soldiers at Stalingrad. The victims of the Germans at Auschwitz, Buchenwald, and many other concentration camps are not part of the picture.[21]

Acknowledging this use of Eisler's music was implemented after his death, and almost a quarter of a century after the release of *Nuit et Brouillard*, the political confusion surrounding its appropriation in film was raised by Flinn: "Kaes is right to voice objections about the way Eisler's piece is used to mourn the German military dead, given that it was initially composed to honour the dead this military produced."[22]

So whereas, according to Omer Bartov in *Murder in our Midst*, the scenes accompanied by this music in *Nuit et Brouillard* "limited themselves to the victims of the Germans", the scenes in *Die Patriotin* "devote themselves to the Germans as the victims".[23]

There are several emerging issues when we take into account the four uses of this music, ranging from *Horatios Monolog* to *Die Patriotin*. Flinn is perhaps unaware of the origins of the theme, namely *Horatios Monolog*, when she mentions its origins, but nonetheless this music conveys a mixed political, semantic and musical message. For an introductory theme that has origins elsewhere, it is noteworthy that not only did Kluge reuse this theme in a politically-charged scene, taking it on board as "the theme from 'Nuit et Brouillard'", but also that Kaes chose to label it as "the leitmotif for Resnais". In terms of Eisler's scoring technique and doctrines on film music composition, Kaes' use of the word leitmotif is heavily provocative when related to Eisler directly, this being one of his "prejudices and bad habits" disparaged in *Composing for the Films* (1947):

> Cinematic music is still patched together by means of leitmotifs. The composer can quote where he otherwise would have to invent. There is no place for it [the leitmotif] in the motion picture, which seeks to depict reality. This effective technique of the past [referring to Wagner] becomes a mere duplication, ineffective and uneconomical. At the same time…its use leads to extreme poverty of composition.[24]

---

21 A. Kaes, *From Hitler to Heimat*, Cambridge, MA 1992, p. 133.

22 C. Flinn, op. cit., p. 124.

23 O. Bartov, *Murder in our Midst: The Holocuast, Industrial Killing and Representation*, New York 1996, p. 141.

24 Th.W. Adorno, H. Eisler, *Composing for the Films*, New York 1947, p. 2.

Where Eisler sought to compositionally disassociate himself from the use of leitmotifs in his film scores, we may ask why the theme to *Nuit et Brouillard* has been referred to as leitmotif-like. If Kaes defined it as such, has it musical or semantic qualities, which lend themselves to such a categorisation, or is it a case of Kaes misusing musical terminology?

If we imagine for a moment, for the sake of balance, that we are to acknowledge the theme as a leitmotif, what is the meaning and significance that we consequently attach to it? Does it grow in musical importance by having the leitmotif tag applied? As James Buhler states in *Music and Cinema*: "The leitmotif draws attention to itself: it must be heard to perform the semiotic function attributed to it. The leitmotif says: listen to me, for I am telling you something significant."[25] The first appearance of this theme, however, is heard only beneath the introductory credits, these being a simplistic white text on a black background. Semantic meaning is practically impossible to formulate from music and production-orientated non-narrative text. The only possible meaning from an audience perspective at this point is that they are about to witness a film about the Holocaust. The audience knows they are about to see a solemn film based upon human tragedy, a memorialisation process, but the music would possibly not be at the forefront of their minds as they mentally prepare themselves for the film. The music would still perhaps be more semantically-loaded to an audience, despite their possible neutrality towards it prior to viewing, as sitting down to watch a Holocaust film may in many circumstances require a differing mind-set to that prior to viewing a Western or a Hollywood love story, for example. The significance of the music may not immediately be recognisable to the audience, if indeed there is a personal significance for them, but it is possible that they would link the mood of the music to the mood of the oncoming film. Notwithstanding, any conscious significance to the audience at any point throughout the film, they will still hear the music, even if they do not consciously "listen" to it, these being two very different receptive approaches coined as "passive" and "active perception" by Michel Chion in *Audio-Vision*.[26] Acknowledging that the music is the only forward-moving medium at this point, we must also exercise caution in assuming that it is "telling us something significant" in a declamatory manner. Neutrality runs throughout the score, an aspect of Eisler's compositional technique to be discussed at a later point, and it would be adventurous indeed to assign a greater significance to the introductory theme than simply that: an

25 J. Buhler, *Music and Cinema,* Middletown, CT, 2000, p. 43.

26 M. Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, New York 1994, p. 33.

introductory musical theme to a film. It returns only once, this time with visuals and narration, and creates a bookend feel to the film – the same musical theme opening and closing our Holocaust memorialisation process. However, the latter half of this bookend is more emotionally involving.

After half an hour of a dark documentary, we suddenly experience a familiar musical theme entering our conscience. We have come full circle, soon to be released from our harrowing memorialisation process, which until now has been accompanied by music meant perhaps not to be instantly memorable, not to be whistled along to upon leaving the viewing area, whether this is a cinema or a comfortable sofa. The musical theme which bookends the film, both beginning and ending our journey, is arguably the most "cinematic" in terms of the emotional characteristics we may expect from a "traditional" film score of the time. Strings, a sound already heavily associated with emotionally-powerful film scores by the time of *Nuit et Brouillard*'s release, combined with the temporary ceasing of the narration and still shots of skeletal victims of the Holocaust, suddenly create a collective and overwhelming sense of pathos, a feeling of dejection, or perhaps even guilt.[27]

It becomes apparent that this musical theme has a complex and varied political and contextual history, but does this in any way undermine its significance and semantic issues in *Nuit et Brouillard*? How should we, or how could we, respond to this as an audience? Would it be of significance to the audience were we to realise that the music was not an original composition, and would it cheapen the audio-visual effect to some degree? It may be argued that the historical usage and out-of-contextualisation of Eisler's music would not be an issue, due to its "non-narrative" and "non-mythifying" status, to restate Brown's labelling of it.[28] Eisler never intended the music to be a mirroring of the visuals, and it may be that this is just one of many pieces which Eisler could have recycled as the introductory theme to *Nuit et Brouillard*. By no means is this to denounce Eisler's compositional choices, but his philosophy regarding neutrality in film music, incorporating his disliking of overt musical illustration and emotional cliché, combined with the short timescale in which he had to produce a score, may point towards a swifter compositional decision than a more "traditional" composer with more time on their hands may have made.

---

27 Cinematic strings were a commonplace emotional device by the 1950s. Max Steiner's scores for *King Kong* (1933), *Gone With The Wind* (1939) and *Casablanca* (1942) employed soaring strings in their introductory themes, ensuring that strings would remain in the film audience's psyche as a film music device.

28 R.S. Brown, *Overtones and Undertones*, Berkeley, CA, 1994, p. 30-31.

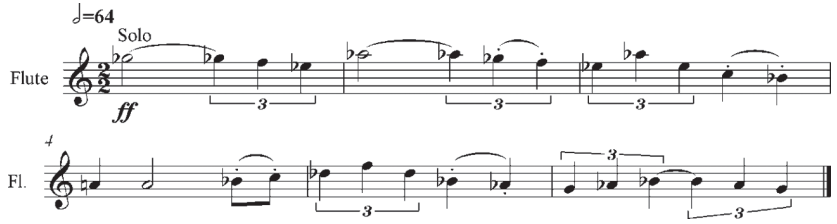
The second theme heard in the film – "Auschwitz" – presents us with anti-literalism, although not immediately, and raises the possibility that the audience perception regarding the music and the narrative may alter over a very short space of time. The use of anti-literalism, or irony, in a Holocaust film would instigate many differing opinions on appropriateness, whether in musical or in other forms. Compliance with audience expectations in terms of the music-narrative relationship is at one end of the functional scale of film music; neutrality lies somewhere in the middle, where narrative and film do not necessarily mimic each other, but neither do they contradict one another, and irony and anti-literalism lie at the opposite end, where audience expectations are most likely not to be met. Anti-literalism in music is not synonymous with irony, but offers a similarly "unexpected" passage of music when juxtaposed with the visuals. An anti-literal or ironic approach to film scoring can result in an alteration in audience perception.

If this musical cue is an example of irony in film music, then what or rather where is the true meaning in this scene? Is the music portraying the meaning, with the visuals being the expressed opposition, or are the visuals the provider of meaning with the music expressing the opposite? The pastoral flute melody appears at first to correspond directly with the on-screen visuals and narration. At this point, the music is literal to the point of being clichéd, an aspect of film composition known to be a cause of vexation to Hanns Eisler. As Adorno and Eisler wrote in *Composing for Films*, "birdie sings, music sings" is an "old Hollywood gibe".[29] Is this so different to "pastoral scene, music pastoral"? After all, the first few seconds of *Nuit et Brouillard* form an overtly-literal juxtaposition of music and moving image. As the narrative monologue begins with "Even a peaceful landscape…", we hear the idyllic sound of a solo flute playing a rustic theme. It is a geographical equivalent of Mickey-Mousing, where the music literally mimics the landscape rather than actions. The real academic concerns are with the following thirty seconds or so, where the literalist approach is cut short as the camera pans inside the camp, leaving any ideas of peace, safety and comfort outside of the barbed wire fences within which we, as the audience, now find ourselves enclosed. The bucolic opening seconds of the documentary give way to a darker narrative, previously only hinted at through a timpani crotchet triplet ostinato, which is present from the start, but marked piano beneath the fortissimo flute. It can hardly be heard, perhaps intentionally so.

29 Th.W. Adorno, H. Eisler, op. cit., p. 7.

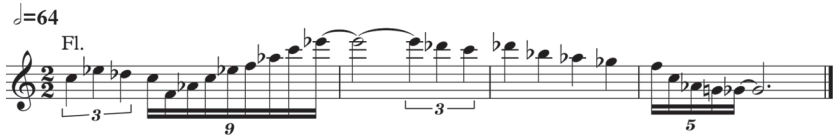
The music immediately takes on a more sinister connotation, which initiated a confusing change in perception upon my first viewing, a change in perception, which may be shared by other audiences, rather than being my own purely personal reaction. The music instils a sense of comforting that these shots will be temporary, perhaps leading to an expectation that the narrator will quickly suggest that time has moved on, and that the world is a safer place. In reality, the opposite occurs. The music continues in its seemingly frivolous role as a counterpoint to an ever-darkening narrative and visual montage.

Figure 2 – 'Auschwitz'



As the camera moves ever deeper into Auschwitz, the music becomes ever more pastoral, seemingly inviting the audience into a false sense of security but also uneasiness. At the point when it is clear that we are on the inside of the camp, and not the outside, there is a quasi-birdsong flourish which at best conveys the uneasiness which this scene is perhaps aiming to instil upon the audience, but at worst sounds totally inappropriate for the visuals on-screen at this time.

Figure 2.1 – 'Birdsong'



It is certainly worthwhile to place this scene within the context of Eisler's compositional theories as laid out in *Composing for the Films*.

In the chapter entitled "Prejudices and Bad Habits", Eisler spends some time highlighting the problems with using "unobtrusive music" in films. He was fundamentally against the use of leitmotifs, illustration (more on which shortly) and obvious references to geography and history, but he was not necessarily a campaigner for music which was there not to be heard. Indeed, he refers to

"unobtrusive music" as demoting music to a "subordinate role", something which he was adamant should not be the case in most films.[30] He does make exceptions, stating that "the question whether the spectator should be aware of the music is a matter to be decided in each case according to the dramatic requirements of the script", which offers room for negotiation from the perspective of the film composer.[31] Which stance did Eisler take when writing for *Nuit et Brouillard*? Resnais was of the opinion that the music was the most important aspect of the film, but Eisler used pre-existing music of a rather anti-literal and neutral character, which seems to contradict Resnais viewpoint.

A film attempting to approach such a sensitive subject matter must also approach ethical issues such as how to depict the perpetrators. Regardless of a Holocaust film's intended neutrality and universality, it is an historical fact that Nazi Germany was the key perpetrator in the Holocaust of the 1930s and 40s. The visual element is a matter of historical fact. There is ample archive footage available of the Nazis, and this is used by Resnais to introduce us to them, this being the first time that *Nuit et Brouillard* switches from colour to black-and-white. We are leaving the "present" (of 1955) to be taken back to the time when the "machine is going into action". The decision regarding which music to represent the Nazis may have been difficult. In "traditional" war films, including those predating *Nuit et Brouillard*, stories were approached from a "goody" and "baddy" perspective; something which has endured to this day in many mainstream releases. In films such as *Stalag 17* (1953), *Where Eagles Dare* (1968) and a less traditional war film in *Indiana Jones: Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981), the Germans are seen as "the enemy" and the music reflects this. The former applied militaristic snare motifs for the German guards in the prisoner of war camp, *Where Eagles Dare* (through composer Ron Goodwin) includes similarly militaristic snare rhythms, punctuated by dissonant brass and string interjections, when the Nazis are nearby. Finally, John Williams appropriates the Nazis with a brass-dominated theme, which arguably leaves the viewer without too much difficulty in deciphering the enemies on screen. The music alludes to their presence before they are seen.

It is the same enemy found in *Nuit et Brouillard* – Nazi Germany – but the role of the music plays a highly differing role. Whereas in the three films mentioned above, the Nazis are the enemy – none of these films would necessarily ring-fence them as pure evil, an abomination against humanity; mass murderers

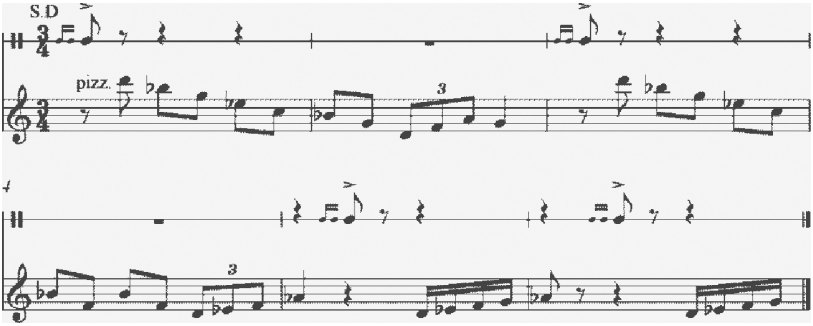
30 Th.W. Adorno, H. Eisler, op. cit., p. 6.

31 Ibidem.

and perpetrators of genocide. The subject matter perhaps does not call for intense hatred, but rather to approach the Nazis as quasi-pantomime villains. A film on the subject of the Holocaust would conceivably have to approach the role of the Nazis, and consequently the music which scores them, in a different manner. Even in *Nuit et Brouillard*, a film which the audience may perceive as being a unilateral memorial and call of hope for humanity, the Nazi Germans may still be perceived as the enemy. It would be difficult for any person to view the scenes of the emancipated corpses without subconsciously asking "why?" but also "whom?". In asking why, we are indirectly questioning the group of people who performed this genocide, and thus we may perceive the Nazi Germans as the evil within this film. It is a film which may confuse an audience. They may be willing to approach the film from a neutral perspective, to acknowledge that it is not an intentionally highly aggressive film towards the Nazis, but for the reasons stated above, it would be difficult for them not to lay blame for the visual horrors, which they are witnessing. How does the music subtract, neutralise or add to the potential audience perception of the Nazis on screen in *Nuit et Brouillard*?

The use of pizzicato strings to depict the evil faction within *Nuit et Brouillard* may initially produce a feeling of unexpectedness from the audience. The already sparse texture of the preceding score is reduced to a skeleton of plucked strings, giving a feeling of sudden emptiness.

Figure 3 – 'The Nazis'



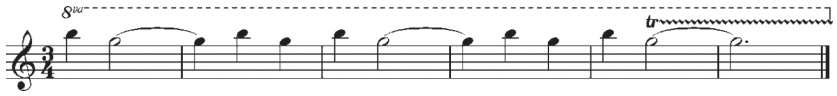
One militaristic element which can be heard is the snare line. A repeated snare drag fills the silences when the pizzicato line is silent. How may our preconceptions regarding pizzicato strings affect our perception of this scene? Pizzicato strings, even before the time of film, often created a light-hearted or playful atmosphere, often appearing in its early usage in scherzo movements. In film

usage, pizzicato was and is often used as a "mickey-mousing" effect to depict stealthy sneaking, particularly in animated cartoons and live action slapstick.

It is therefore interesting to note that the first shot we see of the Nazis is of them marching to the accompaniment of these pizzicato strings. Was Eisler making fun of them? Was he stripping them of all militaristic credibility and power by reducing their march to nothing more than a few bars of descending pizzicato strings? It is also interesting to note that this is the only scene in the film set at night. The sudden switch from colour to black-and-white, combined with the switch from day to night, creates a contradictory juxtaposition between the dark (literally and semantically) visuals of the Nazis marching and the light pizzicato strings. Hanns Eisler disliked illustration in music, so perhaps this is an example of his contrapuntal style of composing for film. It may also be another example of the anti-literalism and irony which run throughout the film.

The scene which introduces Hitler for his five second cameo in *Nuit et Brouillard* also introduces a new element to the music, the high piercing violin "melody".

Figure 4 – 'Adolf Hitler'



Hitler has been symbolised and represented by a vast stylistic musical palette on film even before 1955 when *Nuit et Brouillard* was released. Documentaries, particularly those of Nazi Germany, have often appropriated Richard Wagner to Hitler, underscoring him with the overture from *Tannhäuser* or the *Ride of the Valkyries*, whilst Disney propaganda cartoons of the time used Wagner in a mocking fashion, corrupting the famous themes from *Der Ring des Nibelungen* and other music dramas into parodies of their original selves.[32]

Eisler in *Nuit et Brouillard* decides against such mockery, in line with the seriousness of the subject matter, but instead presents us with a grating yet arguably insignificant high-pitched two-note motif for Hitler. It may certainly be difficult for an audience member, or indeed musicologist, to gain substantial semantics

32 See the 1942 Donald Duck cartoon "In der Führer's Face" for an excellent example of this. The introductory music consists of an arrangement of the overture to *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, and Hitler himself is referenced with comedic, guttural lower brass rasps.

from a four bar repetitive motif. Visually, the scene with Hitler is set in daylight, a stark and immediate contrast to the night-time marching Nazis seconds earlier. As such, perhaps Eisler was opening the music out into a higher tessiatura. The "sneaking" of the pizzicato strings, well suited perhaps to darkness, take a secondary role as the violin enters, arco, to bring Hitler to the forefront of our attention. The music has no strength in terms of orchestration, both through a lack of significant volume and density – no Wagnerian brass or orchestral potency – yet this solo violin, playing high in its tessitura, perhaps provides us with an unsettling sensation. It is a strong audio-visual counterpoint to witness one of the world's most notorious dictators against such superficially simplistic and thinly textured music. This is, of course, a twenty-first century perception – and also a personal one. As modern day film audiences who may have experience of Hollywood war films, we may expect something a little more quasi-Hollywood from the music; something a little more bombastic to represent the Nazis. When we do not receive this from Eisler, watching his film almost seventy years later, we perhaps subconsciously feel that the scene is missing something, and this something may be the fuller orchestral score that modern-day cinema audiences may have come to accept as the "norm".

Through the case study of the three chosen themes, we have discovered that Eisler's score has distinct cues, which should perhaps be approached differently. Despite the complex extra-musical historical issues surrounding the introductory theme to *Nuit et Brouillard*, it was argued that the music itself was sufficiently semantically and musically appropriate to the possible audience preconceptions of what Holocaust film music may sound like. Therefore, the audiences of the time, possibly unaware of its background as both a solo song and part of the *Winterschlacht* suite, would perhaps not have heard anything representationally amiss, and may have assumed that the theme was written specifically as the opening theme to *Nuit et Brouillard*. The recapitulation at the end of the film arguably further engrains the music into the audience's mind as "the theme" from *Nuit et Brouillard*, being present as they enter the world of Auschwitz memorialisation and as they exit thirty minutes later. The theme bookends the film in a way which encourages subconscious association between music and the visual narrative.

The pastoral theme "Auschwitz" was approached from the viewpoint of irony and its appropriateness in a Holocaust film. Semantically, the music and narrative composite may have caused some confusion or malaise among the audience. Irony, being defined as something's meaning being the opposite of that expressed, is one aspect of extra-musical significance which was taken into consideration when analysing Eisler's score. Whereas the theme began as a literalist piece of music, depicting the countryside with a pastoral flute melody, the irony

was highlighted as the camera panned inside the concentration camp barbed wire. Here, it was argued that the audience perception of both the narrative and the music might have changed. The concentration camp suddenly may have become "friendlier", that is to say less menacing than it would have been with a darker score. However, the music may have also been perceived to have become far more sinister in character, accompanying one of the darkest locations in human history. Eisler was not an advocate of ridding music of melody altogether, but in this passage of music and film, it seems that the type of melody he was keen to leave behind – one which was semantically-charged and illustrative of the geography – was included in a key place in *Nuit et Brouillard*: the beginning.

The third theme, "The Nazis", was approached from a slightly more controversial angle. It was argued that the light-heartedness of the pizzicato strings may have "de-sinisterised" the Nazi soldiers. It was, in effect, a live-action example of Mickey-Mousing; with the plucked strings and marching feet creating a juxtaposition which was almost a form of mimicry on Eisler's part. The seriousness of the visuals, showing the perpetrators of the film's subject matter, were arguably taken away to some extent by the unwillingness by Eisler to score them with something more befitting of evil. Linking this to the pastoral theme, the music could either be seen to take on a more serious, sinister role, or arguably more likely, the Nazis to be subconsciously ridiculed by the frivolous music accompanying their "machine"-like marching.

A recurring theme throughout the three themes studied is that of the appropriateness of the music for such a sensitive film. By scoring *Nuit et Brouillard* using recycled songs, bucolic pastoral melodies and quasi-scherzo pizzicato strings, the semantic construct of the film, when combined with the music, has been brought into question. *Nuit et Brouillard* is one of the most well-regarded Holocaust documentaries, praised for Resnais' unwillingness to shirk away from the more distressing archive footage. He strived for realism, one which the visuals achieve in horrifying clarity, but one which is perhaps challenged by the unceasing musical hand of Hanns Eisler. This chapter sought not to discredit Eisler's music to *Nuit et Brouillard*, but rather ask searching questions in an attempt to try and unravel this fascinating score, rich in emotional neutrality and perceived detachment towards the visuals which it accompanies.

Bibliography

Adorno Th.W., H. Eisler, *Composing for the Films*, New York 1947.

Armes R., *The Cinema of Alain Resnais*, London, 1968.

Avisar I., *Screening the Holocaust: Cinema's Images of the Unimaginable*, Bloomington 1988.

Bartov O., *Murder in our Midst: The Holocuast, Industrial Killing and Representation*, New York 1996.

Bishoping K., A. Kalmin, *Public Opinion about comparisons to the Holocaust*, "The Public Opinion Quarterly" 1999, vol. 63, no. 4.

Brown R.S., *Overtones and Undertones*, Berkeley, CA, 1994.

Brown Th.K., *Gedenkt Unsrer mit Nachsicht: Brecht's Journal, 1938-1955*, "The German Quarterly"1974, vol. 47, no. 2.

Buhler J., *Music and Cinema,* Middletown, CT, 2000.

Burch N., *An Interview with Alain Resnais*, "Film Quarterly" 1960, vol. 13, no. 3.

Chion M., *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, New York 1994

Cormack M., *The Pleasures of Ambiguity: Using Classical Music in Films*, [in:] P. Powrie, R. Stilwell (eds.), *Changing Tunes: The Use of Pre-existing Music in Film*, Aldershot 2006, p. 19-30.

Des Pres T., *Holocaust Laughter?*, [in:] B. Lang (ed.), *Writing and the Holocaust*, New York 1988.

Dümling A., *Eisler's Music for Resnais' "Night and Fog"*, "Journal of Film, Radio and Television" 1998, vol. 18, no. 4.

Flinn C., *New German Cinema: Music, History and the Matter of Style*, Berkeley 2004.

Hirsch J., *After Image: Film, Trauma and the Holocaust*, Philadelphia, PA 2004.

Insdorf A., *Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust*, New York 1983.

Kaes A., *From Hitler to Heimat*, Cambridge, MA 1992.

Levi E., *Weill and Eisler*, "The Musical Times" 1989, vol. 130, no. 1755.

Raskin R., *Nuit et Brouillard*, Aarhus 1987.

Resnais A., *Alain Resnais à la Question*, "Premier Plan" 1961, vol. 18.

Resnais A., *Für Hanns Eisler* [in:] H. Eisler (ed.), *Sinn und Form*, Berlin 1964.

Stilwell R., P. Powrie, *Changing Tunes: The Use of Pre-existing Music in Film*, Aldershot 2006.

Van der Knaap, E. (ed.), *Uncovering the Holocaust: The International Reception of Night and Fog*, London 2006.

Joanna Posłuszna

"We remember": The Trauma of the Holocaust in Krzysztof Penderecki's Work

Extreme topics concerning the Holocaust could be found in many musical works of the 20th and 21st centuries. They are characterized by a similar typology. Turning towards the victims and looking for a way to express "the inexpressible", the authors of such works give testimony to inhumane times. Analyzing such works may be difficult, shocking, sometimes moving, yet also enriching, as it allows us to experience a form of collective mourning for the millions of Holocaust victims.

Musicologists perceive Krzysztof Penderecki as an artist who is socially engaged, and one who bears testimony to the times he lives in. A work of art allows us to open ourselves to issues and experiences that would be otherwise inaccessible to us. Many works by Penderecki can be included within this framework and are worthy of our attention. Experts of contemporary music observed that despite the diagnosis that art is impossible after the Holocaust, artists such as Penderecki still approached the topic. Even from his very early compositions, Jewish issues have been present in his works.

This article presents three works by Penderecki, which are significant with regard to the difficulties that the composer has in dealing with the trauma of war. Under examination are works which had an influence on the perception and understanding of extreme issues such as the Holocaust.

I.

Death Brigade, a work making use of narration and tape, was composed by Penderecki in 1963 and commissioned by Polskie Radio (Polish Radio). The recording took place in Studio Eksperymentalne Polskiego Radia (Polish Radio Experimental Studio) in Warsaw, in cooperation with Józef Patkowski. The composition was expected to take the form of a radio opera; however, the composer opted for a musical drama, which offered the most powerful form of expression.

The text of the musical drama was prepared by Jerzy Smoter, who made use of the materials published in 1946 by Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna (Central Jewish Historical Commission). He selected the diary of Leon Weliczker, a Jewish prisoner of a death camp near Lviv, who in 1943 was forced to work in a labour detail. The group was dubbed the "death brigade" as its task was to

cover the traces of mass killings at the hands of the Nazis operating in the area. The text is a touching document of the annihilation.

The first public performance of the composition took place on 20 January 1964 in Warsaw during the concert of Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne (Polish Music Publishing House). Tadeusz Łomnicki was invited to take part in the performance as a voice actor. The narration was divided into sections and made available to the audience. Various dynamics and modes of voice articulation, such as whispering or shouting, were employed. The binding element of the composition was the sound of a heart beat. The composer relied on unconventional means of expression, and although he used wind and string instruments, the sounds were not generated naturally. Kinga Kiwała highlights the composer's reliance on the highest notes, tone clusters, usage of tones of unspecified height, of articulatory effects, treating the bows as percussion instruments, variations in volume, as well as the condensing and thinning of sounds. This all contributes to the avant-garde and sonorous character of the composition.[1] The composer made use of pauses and ponderous moments of silence. Tomaszewski wrote that "the sound accompanying the narration came from the loudspeakers, and two lamps produced two types of colour: dead blue and loud red."[2]

The testimony includes these harrowing words:

> From a distance you can see the watchtowers. We are approaching the camp fields. The prisoners are sitting there, peeling potatoes. They are made to turn around, as they cannot see us, *people from sands*. We enter a wired square through a gate which leads the prisoners to death every day. There are barracks on the square, set every three meters, in a line. Our cell is about five meters wide and six meters long. Three barred windows. We lie down in pairs on straw-filled mattresses without making any sound. We lie down in silence. Behind the wall you can hear children crying, either from thirst or hunger. They've been sitting here for three days. They've been waiting for a larger number of people, and then they could be escorted to the sands. You can hear men and women moaning in pain, as they have been beaten so hard that they can't sit, lie, or stand. In a moment I start a conversation with my inmate who stinks because he's been working with corpses. He belongs to the brigade which dug up the dead. The corpses were pulled out with bare hands, holding them by their hands or feet. Before a dead body was pulled out, it often slipped out leaving the hand clutching only the skin. All the time, you could hear from above: *langsam*. After a while: *schnell*. The addressed prisoners ran fast out of fear. They knew what would happen next: twenty five lashes of the whip.

---

1 K. Kiwała, *Brygada śmierci*, [in:] M. Tomaszewski (ed.), *Twórczość Krzysztofa Pendereckiego. Od genezy do rezonansu*, vol. 2, Kraków 2010, p. 88. All translations from Polish in this essay are mine – J.P.

2 M. Tomaszewski, *Penderecki. Bunt i wyzwolenie*, Kraków 2008, p. 205-206.

It was not their fault that the body slipped out. The corpses were relatively fresh, dead only for two weeks, from the time of the ghetto liquidation. Who knows whether two of my brothers were burnt today or not. We fall silent, looking at each other. We can hear the sound of music, played as prisoners returned to the ghetto. It is raining. I wake up. I can hear moans of pain. Once again, this bloody day! Everyone goes dizzy. Also here, in a gully, people stop their work and prepare for dinner. They are dripping with sweat. Their hands are so smeared with corpse liquid that they themselves look like the hands of the dead. Underneath a thick, grayish layer of dried pus; every now and then you can see a patch of living skin. Cans with dinner taken from the camp are unloaded from a car. They take the cans downstairs. They put them between the corpses. All the prisoners, the way they sit, come individually for dinner. When they come back, they return to their places. No one washes their hands before eating. Water is not provided…[3]

After staging the performance, Penderecki came in for a storm of criticism from the musical environment and art authorities. Zygmunt Mycielski expressed his indignation:

Performing a concert (together with the blue and red lamp) and narrating such a text to the accompaniment of acoustic effects, despite being selected by Krzysztof Penderecki (…) is a mistake. I am surprised that such a great artist as Penderecki combined a realistic documentary with acoustic effects in such a way as to make you think of it as a work of art. Art ends where true realism begins. (…) When it comes to recalling world events, it is better to read such a text without any acoustic effects, and not in front of an audience which has come for a concert. (…) One cannot add anything more to that. Lexical or – especially – artistic commentary must begin at a completely different level.[4]

After watching the performance, Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz commented that it is "a crime to show it as a work of art to the public". He expressed his outrage and confusion in an article, writing:

A horrifying text from a miraculously-saved prisoner's diary, who belonged to the brigade which burned the corpses, thousands of corpses – with a narration of dubious quality, to the accompaniment of dubious music – turned into a music drama terrifying in its barbarity and reaching beyond the powers of endurance. This thing, demonstrated to the audience, sitting in a warm room in comfortable seats, seemed to appeal to the very worst of human instincts. We saw camp videos; we know Schönberg's deep oratorio *A Survivor from Warsaw*, but those examples show how difficult it is to maintain a balance in such matters, and how easy it is to cross an invisible line between emotions and brutal barbarity. How careful you must be.[5]

3 K. Kiwała, op. cit., p. 88.
4 Z. Mycielski, *Nieporozumienie*, "Ruch Muzyczny" 1964, vol. 5.
5 J. Iwaszkiewicz, *Miara i waga*, "Twórczość" 1964, vol. 3.

Words of criticism were also directed towards Tadeusz Ochlewski, the director of Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne (Polish Music Publishing House). It was claimed that it was "a disgrace, and beneath criticism for such a text – the diary of a member of the death brigade – to be performed."[6] Ochlewski referred with understanding to the artist's intentions and pointed out that

> …an artist is a great composer and it cannot be denied by individual opinions. He reacts to the phenomena of the surrounding world in his own way. Obviously, it is permissible (keeping the right balance) to judge his works in a positive or negative light, however it is not right to classify the artist's emotions by applying the scales of measure of (…) a barbarian. Unless we assume that each emotion is its symptom.[7]

Mieczysław Tomaszewski stated that the composition enabled the composer to

> …experience the extreme and to feel that the way towards "giving testimony" does not necessary lead through texts and naturalistic sounds, and that life cannot be translated directly into a work of art; it requires mediation. Making references to cultural archetypes enables the transference of content which, when given directly, may be rejected as "barbarous". The audience did not know how to react when faced with the cruelty of an indifferent, matter-of-fact text, and accompanying sounds, exploding between the sentences with an uncontrollable fury of protest. The most striking is the narration – indifferent, burning, monophonic, polyphonic, discontinuous, enhanced by the moments of spine-chilling silence.[8]

Music critics from abroad were more reserved in their opinions; however, they recognized the musical drama and paid tribute to the young artist's bravery and his uncompromising approach to such difficult and extreme subject matters.

At that time the critics were of the opinion that the wounds caused by the Holocaust were so painful that it was only proper for artists to remain silent. They were also wondering whether such extreme experiences allowed for an aesthetic and ethic catharsis, or whether trauma could be internalized. Although Penderecki did not agree with the critical comments after the famous presentation of *Death Brigade* in 1964, and still found it difficult to come to terms with them, he had to take facts into consideration: the work had been rejected and it had not elicited the desired response. Eventually, the composer removed *Death Brigade* from his official list of works.

---

6 *"Brygada śmierci" po latach, z Krzysztofem Pendereckim i Eugeniuszem Rudnikiem rozmawia Ewa Szczecińska*, Program Koncertu w Ośrodku "Brama Grodzka – Teatr NN", 16.03.1012, p. 11-20.

7 T. Ochlewski, *Komentarz*, "Twórczość" 1964, vol. 6.

8 M. Tomaszewski, *Penderecki. Bunt i wyzwolenie*, op. cit., p. 205-206.

However, Penderecki's work, along with the scandal and discussion surrounding its appropriateness, constitute an important phenomenon, which could be discussed from the perspective of the 65 years which have passed since the end of the war. The problem lies in the fact that in many ways our memory of the war remains fresh. Post-war society, focused on healing the wounds and returning to normal life, set off a mechanism that facilitated the disremembrance of the not-so-distant past. In contrast to the vivid memory of an individual, the public sphere showed a tendency to efface the most dramatic events. "We remember" became the slogan of commemorative days.

It seems that in Penderecki's case, the artistic impulse was under the influence of individual and collective memory. Krzysztof Bilica commented on the event, after a few dozen years:

> …at the time of the premiere, less than twenty years after the war, the text of the musical drama must have been painful and shocking. Could the music, however, taken alone without any text, be of such dubious quality as was suggested by the critics, and could it evoke such impulsive and negative reactions in listeners?[9]

The musicologist wonders whether the composer had perhaps reached a dead end in his creativity. He is of the opinion that the artist, by retreating, found a now appropriate way. Nowadays, it is difficult to agree with such a negative opinion. The work should be regarded as simultaneously as a product of its times, as well as being ahead of its times. Its novelty and breakthrough value could be appreciated even today, all the more possible as the memory of those born after the war is not burdened with guilt. The responsibility that we take on ourselves is in a way voluntary.

The music integrated with the text must have caused a dissonance among listeners. They could not criticize the text, so they channelled their distaste towards the music. The work caused a tension between an ability to forget and to accept on the one hand, and the necessity to remember on the other. Bringing back memories, which had just been dimmed, was not only painful but also embarrassing, as it entailed abandoning efforts to cope with the past.

Penderecki, after years of remaining silent, in 2004 stated that he was planning to restage the work:

> Obviously it may annoy and shock. However, I have listened to this work recently, free from prejudice. I must say it is a very good piece. Yet it required some distance. Certainly

9 K. Bilica, *W labiryncie muzyki, w labiryncie życia,* [in:] M. Tomaszewski, E. Siemdaj (eds.), *Krzysztof Penderecki – muzyka ery intertekstualnej studia i interpretacje*, Kraków 2005, p. 60-61.

it is a hammer blow, but it could not be avoided. That was my intention. I think that an artist must push back the boundaries.[10]

Death Brigade was again shown to the public on 18 September 2010 in the Warsaw Philharmonic during "Warszawska Jesień" (Warsaw Autumn), 54th International Festival of Contemporary Music. Music critics regarded the decision made by Tadeusz Wielecki and his colleagues from the program committee as a bold one made possible owing to the mainstream program of "Warszawska Jesień", which focused on "artists representing an attitude of welcoming and an openness to reality", and on subjects such as "music as a comment on reality, the composer as a participant in a social debate, music promoting the cause (…), critical music, critical art, politically engaged."[11] The question was raised whether abstract and asemantic music can convey political content, whether a composer may fully participate in a social debate, and whether it is justifiable for a musical work to promote a political and social cause? Wielecki claims that there are some artists who draw on attributes of reality and avoid using metaphors, since they want to be effective and truthful. That is why they rely on documentaries, authentic materials, or material evidence.

The voices of critics, musicologists, and music journalists were more favorable this time, and showed a great deal of interest in Penderecki's work. Dorota Szwarcman, after the restaging of the work, regarded the text as horrific, shocking, and self-explanatory.

However, it is presented by the phenomenal Tadeusz Łomnicki with no pathos, no exaggeration, in a plain form. The electronic effects supplementing both the voice and the orchestra, typical of Penderecki's music of that time, are subtle and accurate, and highlight the chilling nature of the narration, yet without jarring. We do not get the impression that something is being aestheticized; quite the opposite. After the performance, the audience remained silent for a couple of minutes and then started to get up and leave, without applauding. The brigade leaves an impression of something pure and sincere.[12]

She also mentions the fact that she did not expect that a 50-year-old work would be the biggest event of the political edition of "Warszawska Jesień".

Once again we witness discussion on the validity and appropriateness of talking and writing about the Annihilation. Post-war art, according to Maria Janion,

10 M. Tomaszewski, *Rozmowy Lusławickie. Penderecki*, vol. 1, Olszanica 2005, p. 41, 145.

11 *Książka programowa 54 Międzynarodowego Festiwalu Muzyki Współczesnej "Warszawska Jesień"*, Warszawa 2011, p. 6.

12 D. Szwarcman, *To trzeba było zrobić*, "Polityka" 19.09.2011.

remains under the influence of the Holocaust: "Post-holocaust works give testimony to the struggle between speaking out and keeping silent, between an excess of language and its radical reduction. They juxtapose historical facts and fiction, ethics and aesthetics, the expressible and the inexpressible."[13]

Penderecki, in interviews during the festival, made a few comments concerning his work, its fate, and his own traumatic experiences during the war. The composer recalls that he hesitated for a long time whether he could present such a text and whether it was suitable material for a musical piece: "It is a text that cannot be read in an ordinary way. It is difficult to deal with the text; it was also difficult to write an ordinary work, such as *A Survivor from Warsaw*. He referred back to his own traumatic experience:

> I was living in Dębica. We were living close to the market square, because we had been evicted from our house. Its back windows by the kitchen overlooked the ghetto, and my brother and I, we saw it all. We saw the liquidation of the ghetto, we saw the Nazis shoot out the elderly, kill little children; such images cannot be erased from memory.[14]

The composer pointed out that what he remembered most in the context of *Death Brigade* was the audience's reaction after listening to the work. He recollects that some of the listeners approached him and complained that he had touched upon the inexpressible, and the most brutal "attacks" were initiated by Iwaszkiewicz:

> They attacked me. It was a very touchy subject at that time. The work disappeared; it was buried in the depths of the archive and actually, I must admit that I hadn't heard it since that time. I remember that almost everyone – Lutosławski, Mycielski, also all of my friends – criticized me claiming that such a topic could not be presented. And actually I put this work to the back of my mind. I expect that everyone was devastated. I remember that there was silence, and obviously, no applause, for sure. There was silence, an ominous silence. I suppose that the work may finally find its place after 50 years.[15]

Penderecki admitted in one of the interviews that he wrote *Death Brigade* while aware that hardly anyone would like it; yet, the greatest value of the work was the fact that it was a documentary. He added:

> I think that its greatest value lies in its being similar to a documentary. One needs to take into account the fact that 50 years ago it was all-fresh in people's minds; the wounds

13 M. Janion, *Bohater, spisek, śmierć. Wykłady żydowskie*, Warszawa 2009, p. 279.

14 18 IX 2011, interview with the composer, Polish Radio Program II, before the transmission of *Death Brigade* from International Festival of Contemporary Music in Warsaw.

15 Ibidem.

hadn't yet healed. Someone had to do it, someone from the generation who survived the war and others either didn't want to or couldn't, I don't know…[16]

In "Warszawska Jesień" brochure there is Penderecki's quote, who listened to the work after many years and concluded: "…In my view, it is a very good piece. Yet it requires some distance."[17]

According to Eugeniusz Rudnicki, *Death Brigade* is important in the history of auditory art and music. Rudnicki states that

> it is not romantic, nor is it a subject close enough to everyone. Art ends in the place where we approach naturalism or realism. It was then that I could burn the prisoner's bodies and make them 'sizzle' ad nauseam – Penderecki's greatness lies in the fact that we were carried away by naturalism in order not to show the blazing flames or cracking skulls. It is only a subtle, smart, delicate multiplication of the author's text. Penderecki refrained himself from the temptation to depict hell in his work. The sound remains natural, although there are modifications in space, and manipulations in dynamics. It could have had too strong an effect at that time, as people still remembered; after all, it was just a dozen or so years after the war.[18]

He is also of the opinion that it will be the next, i.e. the third generation, that will have a different approach to those events and will understand the work.

The composer claims that the contemporary generation is going to have a different approach and is going to understand that someone had to write such a work. Mieczysław Tomaszewski concludes that "it had to be this way. Penderecki as a witness to the events gave testimony, and he could have either screamed or remained silent. He chose a scream of protest, of defiance against the age of the apocalypse."[19] It was at that time that the concept of writing a new version of Schönberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw* was born. It turned out, after the first staging of *Death Brigade*, that the artistic expression of the work far exceeded the scale of the audience's emotions. The work was criticized, regarded as "a mistake", a dubious attempt to combine a realistic documentary with the acoustic setting of a work of art.

Ewa Szczecińska, an editor working for Program Drugi Polskiego Radia (Polish Radio Program 2), specializing in contemporary music is of the opinion that the composer stayed ahead of the avant-garde concepts of socially engaged artists such as Nono or Cardew, because he synthesized the art of music with

16 Ibidem.

17 *Książka programowa 54 Międzynarodowego Festiwalu Muzyki Współczesnej…*, op. cit., p. 6.

18 *"Brygada śmierci" po latach…*, op. cit., p. 11-20.

19 M. Tomaszewski, *Penderecki. Bunt i wyzwolenie*, op. cit., p. 188.

the art of sound, music with reality, and an artistic work with a documentary. *Death Brigade* was not, in her opinion, a pompous expression, as in Berg's case, but rather an example of maximally condensed simplicity and also "the first time a musical work of art had crossed traditional boundaries, stemming from a deep and a clear need to deal with the reality of what had taken place in Poland."[20] Formulating questions concerning the reception and fate of the work, she indicated that *Death Brigade* had not meet with a serious and detached debate, and that the work had become a taboo topic.

II.

Dies irae – oratorium ob memoriam in perniciei castris in Oświęcim necatorum inextinguibilem reddendam (Oratorio in undiminished memoriam of the dead from the death camp in Auschwitz) is a three-part piece, for solo voices, mixed choir, and orchestra. Completed in 1967, it was performed during the unveiling of the International Monument to the Victims of Fascism in Auschwitz Birkenau. This occasion should be viewed as decisive while interpreting the work. The symbol of the apocalypse, used by the author for the first time in the oratorio, performs the role of a symbolic title.

The subject of the sacred and the profane is present in Penderecki's works in the context of the constraint and violation of human rights. Mieczysław Tomaszewski calls Penderecki "a humanist in the profane sphere, and an ecumenist in the sacred sphere, for whom sounds are carriers of symbolic senses."[21] The presence of the Final Judgment motif in Penderecki's works could evoke medieval associations, or associations with the Baroque *danse macabre*, the tradition of musical requiem, or liturgy, often instrumental, in which a quote is supposed to evoke feelings of horror. The composer stated that passion is the suffering and dying of Christ, but also the suffering and dying of Auschwitz, a tragic experience of humankind in the middle of XX century. A crime committed on such a scale cannot be matched with anything else – this is inconceivable. The victims of death camps have become collective heroes.

Tomaszewski was the first to notice that the subjects that he chose as well as the texts which were used by Penderecki to construct the whole of his subsequent

---

20 E. Szczecińska, *Warszawska Jesień 2011*, "Dwutygodnik.com/Muzyka" 2011, vol. 66, available at: http://www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/2666-warszawska-jesien-2011.html (accessed: March 2014).

21 M. Tomaszewski, *Penderecki: wchłonąć wszystko, co zaistniało,* [in:] M. Tomaszewski (ed.), *Muzyka Krzysztofa Pendereckiego. Poetyka i recepcja*, Kraków 1996, p. 114.

multi-layered works, concerned mostly extreme situations. They tended to revolve around the boundary between life and death, good and evil, suffering and guilt, sins and redemption. They showed the presented reality with extreme clarity, for instance in the apocalyptic orgy of evil unleashed in *Dies irae*.[22]

The oratorio consists of three parts, each of them with a quote from the Bible. The quotes refer the reader to certain meanings. "Lamentatio" focuses on death and mourning, "Apocalypsis" depicts annihilation, "Apotheosis" is an attempt to overcome evil and brings the hope for an uneasy victory over death. The title may refer to the traditions of *missa pro defunctis* and constitute one of the parts of a mass for the dead. The composer constructed the text of the oratorio by juxtaposing fragments of the original ancient and biblical texts, such as *The Eumenides* by Aeschylus, *Psalms, Apocalypse*, *Apostolic Letters*, together with Paul Valéry's poetry, translated into Latin, and devoted to death camps. The choir does not speak, but screams, whispers, whistles, sings and, all of a sudden, falls silent in an expressive way. Momentarily, the sounds are not sonorous, but brutish.

Penderecki explains: "The oratorio, composed of three main parts, was designed by me to reflect life's victory over death – both in the apocalyptic perspective, as well as the purely human perspective." He adds: "The final part concludes with a fragment of Paul Valéry's poem."[23]

The central part, "Apocalypsis", is preceded by a reflective-expressive "Lamentatio", and followed by "Apotheosis", which could be interpreted as the composer's attempt to seek a point of reference and a way out of the vicious circle. The various levels of meaning, through selected words and expressions, are available for the listeners, who have the opportunity to be involved not only in the musical, but also the lexical interpretation of the subject.

The motto of "Lamentatio", "Oplotły mnie więzy śmierci" (The sorrows of death encompassed me), comes from Psalm 114. Against the background of the bass choir, to the accompaniment of cellos and double basses, a lamenting and touching soprano can be heard, broad and resonant, oscillating from the low to the high notes of its scale using short and then extremely long intervals, coloured by quarter-tone changes. The choir adds to the soloist's lament with a cluster of sounds, occasionally bringing the narration to a scream, or breaking it with the narration, if in a somewhat impersonal way, of a text about child corpses. Extremely dramatic moments arise especially when the narration is accompanied by the brass instruments.

---

22 M. Tomaszewski, *Penderecki – trudna sztuka bycia sobą*, Kraków 2004, p. 24.

23 P. Ćwikliński, *Pasja. O Krzysztofie Pendereckim*, Warszawa 1993, p. 188.

The manifestation of evil power is an attempt to stress the individual, humane reaction to inhumane events. The repeated phrases sang by the choir, via the form of their litany, ritualize the narration by lending it a prayer-like character.

In this part, the composer makes a number of references to the traditional musical symbolism related to death and suffering, by using forms of expression such as the low, slow striking of kettledrums. There is also a set of musical figures known from the Baroque tradition. Some examples are: a sighing motif (sometimes quarter tones), a contrast of registers (involving the words "dusza" [soul] and "świat" [world]), or finally a melodic figure involving the word "rozdźwięk" (dissonance). In this part, the composer focuses on the victims, their bodies which could not be identified, as what remains is only some belongings, scraps of clothing, everyday objects or hair.

"Lamentatio" presents a fragment from the Władysław Broniewski's poem "Ciała" (Bodies), in which the author cannot remember the names of the victims, which is why, in order to keep them in his memory, he mentions "The names of the youth…":

Bodies of children
From crematories
Will fly
High above history.
Bodies of boys,
Bodies of girls
In crowns of thorns
Will flock together.
Bodies of men
From field-graveyards
Will march to conquer.
Will be free.
Bodies from camps,
From murdered cities,
Bodies with halters,
Bodies with wounds,
Bodies of doom,
Bodies of wrong
Will come in hosts,
Will never rest.

Their suffering is compared to the Passion of Christ, making a reference to Louis Aragon's poem:

Even Christ did not follow such a path of doom
He never knew that racking discord
Between a human soul and an inhuman world.

The narration ends with a poem by Tadeusz Różewicz:

> In huge crates
> Dry hair-tufts billow;
> Of strangled people,
> And a small braid.
> A pigtail with a ribbon,
> Pulled in a class-room
> By naughty boys.

That is why the role of Tadeusz Różewicz's poetry, similar in meaning to Paul Celan's and Nelly Sachs's works, was of great importance here.[24] Rosenfeld writes that their poetry often fades out or comes to a stop in sorrow and on the edge of silence. The main aim of the early poems by Sachs was to help understand the "landscape of screams", i.e. make them easier to bear.

Despite the accumulated anger, the poet's scream is muffled, and hardly exhaled. Words that hang somewhere between complaint and despair die and fade into darkness. In the later volumes, Nelly Sachs's poetic voice dies down and at the same time grows in intensity, especially in the later poems, where it approaches its inescapable end in silence. However, it is a different silence than the one found in Paul Celan's poetry, indicating some deeply hidden, yet potentially powerful force beyond or above.

> The silence which could be felt in Sachs's poems, so close to Różewicz's poetry, seems to be empty and devoid of any beneficial echo. The poet dissolves into muteness, leaving no clues to as to where she has gone; we only know the ultimate end of her journey. The ultimate muteness and irreversibility, uniqueness and finiteness of life, are present in all Sachs's works.[25]

In her late poetry, what is unspeakable becomes the most important.

Różewicz's silence and Penderecki's musical silence come together and create a particular space, which could be thought of as a monument to commemorate the inexpressible crimes committed against the Jewish nation by the Nazis. This place means inexpressibility, which comes as a shock since it belongs to the silent witnesses whose absence is painfully experienced.

In the middle section, "Apocalypsis", the composer also refers to Psalm 114, "i dosięgły mnie pęta otchłani" (and the pains of hell took hold of me), thus referring to the Baroque tradition of an agitated style. The sounds of the tuba,

---

24 A.H. Rosenfeld, *Podwójna śmierć. Rozważania o literaturze holokaustu*, Warszawa 2003.

25 Ibidem, p. 157.

trombone, gong, and grand piano can be heard alongside the gripping narration rising to the occasional crescendo. The accumulation of unconventional means of sound expression, fast-paced and dramatic musical narration leading to a crescendo of siren wailing conjures up an image suggestive of the annihilation of the world. The bass recital is the carrier of the prophetic words:

> Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulations ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. [Revelations 2]

In the third part, "Apotheosis", the meaning of the text is dominated by the architectonics of the musical form, the idea to create a great musical finale. On the musical level there is the siren in glissando, the whistling of the choir and the tenor, all of which pompously and triumphantly announce victory over death, repeating the phrase "victory has defeated death" after St. Paul from the First Epistle to the Corinthians. All these techniques end up pushing the work right to the very edge of performance poetry and theatrical performance. The word "Victoria", through a twelve-tone technique, develops into a strong unison, and the finale is a kind of overcoming and opening to hope and acceptance. One can hear the words:

> Death is swallowed up in victory.
> O death, where is thy sting?
> O grave, where is thy victory? [Corinthians 15]

A triumphant ending of the piece seems somehow surprising in the context of the grandeur and tragedy of the subject. It seems that Penderecki wants to eradicate any deeply-rooted pessimism from his work. Victory over death contradicts the whole work, its intentions, which makes it even more dramatic and painful in expression. The words: "I saw a new heaven and earth" [Revelations 21] and "The wind rises!…Let us try to live!" from a poem by Paul Valéry do not provide us with easy consolation. Moreover, this wind, as we know, carried from the camps the smell of burnt bodies and, according to witnesses, the ground, in many places, moved after the executions.

"Apotheosis" provokes questions: Is life with a sense of defeat at all possible? Especially, since the apocalyptic beast turned out to be the human being.

> And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet (…) These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse by the sword that proceeded out of his mouth: and all the birds gorged on their flesh. [Revelations 19]

The texts used in the oratorio were translated into Latin, except for the fragments by Aeschylus which were used in the original version, i.e. Old Greek. The use of dead languages helped to create a distance that "took the semantic triviality away from words"[26], highlighting their universal, humanistic values. Choir structures render the meanings of words fuzzy, yet the composer worked on the program with diligence and attention, which was aimed at creating a comprehensive and thorough guide, including the full texts of the oratorio available to the listener. In *Dies irae* the listener cannot distinguish words, and to understand the text he/she needs a program as a guide to the music of the piece. The de-semantization of the text is an incredibly conscious process made by the composer himself. In the context of reflections over the indexicalization of memory, this artistic solution prevents the listeners from growing accustomed to the piece, which intensifies the inexpressible quality of the Extermination.

Penderecki's work found recognition among the critics from abroad. It is worth mentioning one of the reviews by an Italian critic, who stated that the composer did not rely on cheap effects and the images that he evoked are the descendants of the aesthetics of austere realism,

> they are rough, merciless, they hypnotize with their realism, with barbaric cruelty. He adopts the stance of a true intellectualist, who is not understood by the public, who looks with terror, as the human beast is unleashed. It is a stance similar to the one expressed in Picasso's *Guernica*. (…) it is a riveting Guernica of sounds![27]

According to the critic, the composer demands from any listener who aspires to understand the message behind the work to recall "four million prisoners from twenty three countries, who faced inhumane suffering in Auschwitz."

Frank Ankersmit writes that the remembrance discourse is an "indicating" or "indexical" discourse: it indicates the past but never tries to penetrate it. He gives an example of the works by the Dutch poet Armando, who shows the Holocaust and does not speak about the committed crimes directly, but formulates accusations against the landscape, trees and ground, the principal witnesses of the crimes committed in death camps. In his mind, they bear the same responsibility as the felons. Ankersmit suggests that describing the Holocaust is in this case more indexical and metonymic that metaphoric:

> Metonymy favors mere contiguity, respects all the unpredictable contingencies of our memories, and is, as such, the very opposite of the proud metaphorical appropriation of

26 L. Erhardt, *Spotkania z Krzysztofem Pendereckim*, Kraków 1975, p. 102.

27 C. Colombati, *Recepcja twórczości Pendereckiego we Włoszech*, [in:] M. Tomaszewski (ed.), *Muzyka Krzysztofa Pendereckiego. Poetyka i recepcja*, Kraków 1995, p. 145.

reality. Metaphor has the presentation to go right to the heart of the matter, metonymy makes us simply move on to what happens to lie next to it – and so on, ad infinitum.

Metonymy ties together a web of associations depending upon our personal experiences and a host of contingent factor, instead of forcing (past) reality within the matrices of metaphorical appropriation of reality.[28]

According to Ankersmit, an indexical essence of remembrance is expressed in a monument understood as a metonymic signpost. It is thus in opposition to the referential quality of history and its metaphoric senses: "The monument functions as an indicator: it challenges us to look into a certain direction, yet does not specify what we are going to see there. What is more, the monument, being satisfied with simple indications not only frees us but directly invites us to impose our personal feelings and associations onto this part of the past that it indicates."[29] This type of monument does not carry the burden of violence, which is typical of the traditional monuments that symbolize authority. It does not impose associations, but instead transports us closer to the place of remembrance. It does not claim to provide explanations the same way a written text does. This dimension should be called anti- or counter-monument: "The counter-monument is made to disappear underground in the course of time, so that a mere empty space, *tel olam*, so to speak, remains that now exists in our memory only. In this way the counter-monument subtly requires us to internalize its essential indexicality."[30] Such a monument does not cease to be a work of art with its own autonomy and independent horizon of self-presentation. It catches our eye and at the same time by following though anti-monument ideas, it self-destructs and turns into a signpost.

In line with this theory, music which is near to the Holocaust must fade away, must destroy itself, especially if its goal is to reach the memory of the annihilated nation. That is why we can say that Penderecki's work becomes not a monument, but rather an anti-monument.

III.

Kadisz is a piece written for soprano, tenor, narrator, male choir, and orchestra. It was written to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the liquidation of the ghetto in Łódź and it was performed in this meaningful place on 29 August 2009. The work is dedicated to: "the Abrameks family from Łódź, who wanted to live, to

28 Frank Ankersmit, *Historical Representation*, Stanford 2001, p. 178-179.

29 Ibidem, p. 179.

30 Ibidem.

the Poles who rescued the Jews" and is composed of four parts. The first three parts present Polish texts, whereas the last part contains a Hebrew text. Penderecki, when asked about the motivation behind the work, explains that he did not know much about the ghetto in Łódź: "In August 1944, in Dębica, where I lived at that time, there were Russian troops already. Yet the ghetto still existed there [in Łódź]!" and so that is why he studied documents concerning this historical period.

When interviewed, he commented:

> …writing music to the "Kaddish" I made references to prayers spoken in Eastern Galicia, in Ukraine, or even farther south, in Romania. I asked my late friend for advice. Before his death, in the middle of July, he sent me some critical comments which changed the emphasis. He sang me different tunes, which were in turn sung by his grandfather, so they must have been melodies from the middle of XIX century.[31]

The first part of "Tempo di marcia funebre", "Szła śmierć" (Death was coming), is based on texts by Abramek, who died in Auschwitz after being transferred from the ghetto. In one interview, Penderecki admitted that he was captivated by the maturity and consciousness of a teenage author of poems: "These are not poems written by a child. They speak mostly about death. They were written in a ghetto. In this hell, people grew up faster."[32] The suspense in this section increases with subsequent poems and is initiated by "Szła śmierć", which has the character of a funeral march. The next work "Smutny ze mnie pielgrzym" (A sad pilgrim I am) is loaded with pain and nostalgia, climaxing in the final piece "Odejdź. Nie oplataj mnie śmierci" (Go away. Death, don't entwine me). It is an emotional and suspenseful piece which does not accept that death is inescapable, since the boy, just like "a bird with broken wings", wishes to live.

In the second part "Grave. Leży na ziemi" (Grave, Lying on the ground), selected verses of the Lamentations of Jeremiah are presented. In the calling out of the victims "from a very deep hole", suddenly there is a request to punish the culprits. A call for justice, a call to kill the executioners and persecutors, and "not to allow them into the Heaven of the Lord!", can be heard in the tone of the lament.

The third part "Molto tranquillo. Prosimy cię…" (Molto tranquillo. Please…) has the character of a prayer, filled with trust and faith in the Lord's charity, and is based on the Book of Daniel. Words of reproach and complaint could be heard at the end of this part: "Because we were exterminated, Lord, more than other nations."

---

31 J. Słodkowski, *Rozmowa z K. Pendereckim*, "Gazeta Wyborcza" 30 VIII 2009.

32 Cyz T., *Zagłada według Krzysztofa Pendereckiego*, Program Koncertu w Ośrodku "Brama Grodzka – Teatr NN", Lublin 16.03.1012, p. 8.

In the fourth and final section, the composer makes use of the Kaddish Jatom, that is the orphan's Kaddish, which is a ritual text of a Jewish prayer said for the dead. There are no elements herein concerning death, as the orphan reciting this kaddish gives voice to his or her faith in God and admiration for God, regardless of the circumstances. The composer justifies the selection of texts in one interview:

> Each of them is of a different character. The same applies to the final element of the piece, the Kaddish. It is the most important Jewish prayer, an equivalent of the Lord's Prayer. It is said on many occasions, yet particularly when a close person dies. When the father dies, the son is obliged to sing the Kaddish Yatom, and then needs to sing it at every anniversary of the death. What is beautiful in the prayer is the fact that it does not mention death. Those praying praise the Lord. That is why it does not have to be of a mourning character.[33]

The Kaddish touched upon the deepest and most inexpressible sphere. Moreover, what was important for its author was its suitability for rituals of commemoration, and that those few who survived should not be upset by it. The aesthetic function of the piece is not of primary importance. The work, as a whole, with its closed form, takes a dramatic course, complete and rich in meanings. According to Regina Chłopicka, making references to two cultural traditions in one work, Penderecki did not erase the differences between them but rather depicted the tragic events along with a human stance in the midst of death from two different perspectives, the common denominator of which is faith in the human–God relationship. For the first time ever, the composer dared to build the dramatic tension of the work from elements of a radically different nature, bound together only by their common topic and guiding principle. Cyz, after listening to the *Kaddish* part stated that "the Annihilation remains in the ears as an echo of the heart of the remaining world,"[34] Tomaszewski commented that "what reverberates in our memory are the weeping phrases."[35]

Penderecki declared that art "aims to restore the metaphysical human space shattered by the calamities of XX century. It is the only way to salvage the human." He looks for his own way to manifest what is important for him as a human being and as an artist, even though the subjects raised are difficult and require a crossing of the boundaries.

Penderecki's music creates a specific type of interpersonal bond and manifests its attitude to the world, people, and culture. In each period of his creative activity,

---

33 J. Słodkowski, op. cit.

34 T. Cyz, op. cit., p. 8.

35 M. Tomaszewski, *Penderecki. Odzyskiwanie raju*, vol. 2, Kraków 2009, p. 322.

and regardless of the various ways sound is processed in his works, the composer is consistent in touching upon subjects which are socially significant, difficult and often extreme. His works give testimony to the approach of a humanist, manifesting the overcoming of trauma and passing through a period of mourning when faced with the events of XX century, which is expressed in the statement:

> My music, as well as my life, is uncompromising. I have always been uncompromising when it comes to personal and artistic choices. No one can make me compose a work of a given character. I have always sought to forge my own paths. I do not go down straight roads in life. Instead of choosing a well-worn path, I always choose a rough, rocky one, and then success gives me a lot of satisfaction.[36]

In his famous essay Jonathan Webber[37] wrote that the Holocaust should remain once and for all "an empty place", a place which could not be appropriated or in fact taken. We have to live in excessive pain, experiencing an irreversible loss. The tradition of mourning lasting not longer than a year or two does not apply here. This mourning never ends. As an ethical stance, it defines the universal European conscience. Poland, which was designed by Hitler to be exterminated, cannot escape from this mourning.[38]

All humanistic values, which formed the basis of our culture, were shattered to pieces. Even the judgment and punishment of the criminals cannot bring back the former order. There is guilt that cannot be redeemed, crimes that cannot be atoned for, and to which no adequate punishment can be assigned. Jacques Derrida quotes Vladimir Jankélevitch: "Forgiveness dies in death camps", and adds himself that

> "We cannot forget. We have an obligation not to forgive, on behalf of the victims. Forgiveness is impossible. It is not needed. We don't need to forgive". A reflection appears that there are "wounds which should constantly hurt, and in the life of civilizations an illness is sometimes better than health."[39]

It seems that in Penderecki's case, the creative impulse remained under a strong individual and collective obligation. Michał Bristiger, in his essay titled *Między elegią a zamilknięciem. Celan i muzyka* (Between elegy and silence. Paul Celan and music), wrote that "during the Holocaust of the Jews and Romani people, Nazism took not only their bodies and souls, funeral and coffin, but wanted to

---

36 K. Jędrzejczak, *Moja muzyka jest bezkompromisowa, podobnie jak i moje życie* [interview with Krzysztof Penderecki], "Muzyka 21" 2011, vol. 5

37 J. Webber, *The Future of Auschwitz. Some personal reflections*, Oxford 1992, p. 3.

38 M. Janion, *Bohater, spisek, śmierć*, op. cit., p. 310.

39 Derrida J., *Przebaczyć – nieprzebaczalne i nieprzedawnialne*, trans. U. Hrehorowicz, "Principia" 1999, vol. 24–25, p. 12.

annihilate the memory of them, in other words – to kill death. And it did not allow any girl to become an Antigone."[40] Krzysztof Penderecki, in his works, in his own way brings back the memory of the victims. He keeps searching for opportunities to rise to their defence, and appears to be a compassionate, courageous person and artist crossing the bounders in order to give testimony from the times of contempt. Many times the composer leads us through the world disintegrated due to the Holocaust, and tries to console us, although it is not an easy task, if at all possible. In his works, using well thought-out artistic measures, he gives testimony to the irrevocable loss. The composer, during his artistic life, has tried to express the annihilation and tested the limits of its expression. From a radical attempt in *Death Brigade*, through a musical anti-monument, which is *Dies irae*, to *Kadisz* and its "prayer", where we take the role of guardians of remembrance, bringing the exterminated and the murdered ones to the community, and guaranteeing that they will always be with us.

Bibliography

Ankersmit F., *Historical Representation*, Stanford 2001.

Bilica K., *W labiryncie muzyki, w labiryncie życia,* [in:] M. Tomaszewski, E. Siemdaj (eds.), *Krzysztof Penderecki – muzyka ery intertekstualnej studia i interpretacje*, Kraków 2005.

Bristiger M., *Między elegią a zamilknięciem. Celan i muzyka*. http://www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/1037-miedzy-elegia-a-zamilknieciem-paul-celan-i-muzyka.html

"Brygada śmierci" po latach, z Krzysztofem Pendereckim i Eugeniuszem Rudnikiem rozmawia Ewa Szczecińska, Program Koncertu w Ośrodku „Brama Grodzka – Teatr NN", 16.03.1012

Chłopicka R., K. Penderecki, *Musica sacra – musica profana*, Warszawa 2003.

Colombati C., *Recepcja twórczości Pendereckiego we Włoszech*, [in:] M. Tomaszewski (ed.), *Muzyka Krzysztofa Pendereckiego. Poetyka i recepcja*, Kraków 1995.

Cyz T., *Zagłada według Krzysztofa Pendereckiego*, Program Koncertu w Ośrodku "Brama Grodzka – Teatr NN", Lublin 16.03.1012.

Ćwikliński P., *Pasja. O Krzysztofie Pendereckim*, Warszawa 1993.

40 M. Bristiger, *Między elegią a zamilknięciem. Celan i muzyka*. http://www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/1037-miedzy-elegia-a-zamilknieciem-paul-celan-i-muzyka.html (access: 3.05.2014)

Derrida J., *Przebaczyć – nieprzebaczalne i nieprzedawnialne*, trans. U. Hrehorowicz, "Principia" 1999, vol. 24–25.

Erhardt L., *Spotkania z Krzysztofem Pendereckim*, Kraków 1975.

Iwaszkiewicz J., *Miara i waga*, "Twórczość" 1964, vol. 3.

Janion M., *Bohater, spisek, śmierć. Wykłady żydowskie*, Warszawa 2009.

Jarzębska A., *Spór o piękno muzyki. Wprowadzenie do kultury muzycznej XX wieku*, Wrocław 2010.

Jędrzejczak K., *Moja muzyka jest bezkompromisowa, podobnie jak i moje życie* [interview with Krzysztof Penderecki], "Muzyka 21" 2011, vol. 5.

Kiwała K., *Brygada śmierci*, [in:] M. Tomaszewski (ed.), *Twórczość Krzysztofa Pendereckiego. Od genezy do rezonansu*, vol. 2, Kraków 2010.

Książka programowa 54 Międzynarodowego Festiwalu Muzyki Współczesnej "Warszawska Jesień", Warszawa 2011.

Mycielski Z., *Nieporozumienie*, "Ruch Muzyczny" 1964, vol. 5.

Ochlewski T., *Komentarz*, "Twórczość" 1964, vol. 6.

Penderecki K., *Labirynt czasu. Pięć wykładów na koniec wieku*, Warszawa 1997.

Rosenfeld A.H., *Podwójna śmierć. Rozważania o literaturze holokaustu*, Warszawa 2003.

Słodkowski J., *Rozmowa z K. Pendereckim*, "Gazeta Wyborcza" 30 VIII 2009.

Szczecińska E., *Warszawska Jesień 2011*, "Dwutygodnik.com/Muzyka" 2011, vol. 66, available at: http://www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/2666-warszawska-jesien-2011.html (accessed: March 2014).

Szwarcman D., *To trzeba było zrobić*, "Polityka" 19.09.2011.

Tomaszewski M., *Penderecki: wchłonąć wszystko, co zaistniało,* [in:] M. Tomaszewski (ed.), *Muzyka Krzysztofa Pendereckiego. Poetyka i recepcja*, Kraków 1996.

Tomaszewski M., *Penderecki – trudna sztuka bycia sobą*, Kraków 2004.

Tomaszewski M., *Rozmowy Lusławickie. Penderecki*, vol. 1, Olszanica 2005.

Tomaszewski M., *Penderecki. Bunt i wyzwolenie*, vol. 1, Kraków 2008

Tomaszewski M., *Penderecki. Odzyskiwanie raju*, vol. 2, Kraków 2009.

Webber J., *The Future of Auschwitz. Some personal reflections,* Oxford 1992.

CODA

Wojciech Klimczyk

Impossible Music? On Genocide as Silence (Rwanda, Auschwitz and Beyond)

How can we start after all is over? How can we begin after the end? Genocide is an operation which seeks the ultimate end and finds it. Therefore genocide is irrevocable, irreversible, and definite. It brings a closure after which all the efforts to restore what has been before are futile. Therefore we cannot begin. A start is impossible so we are forced to adopt a different perspective. If something is to be said or written, it has to be taken from the closure. This is neither to give affirmation nor permission. Yet, one cannot simply begin after the end and so this text does not really begin. It is already over just like the experiences it tries to embrace. If we look from a political perspective, it wallows in certain powerlessness. The text is neither a call nor a program. It is not positive in any sense. It just tries to be and fails but in this motion it expresses a stubborn if impossible hope. This hope is trapped between two endings with no beginning to attach itself to. One can see it as having been already utterly destroyed by the irreversibility of genocide. But one can also stubbornly stick to it as precisely this – hope destroyed.

This is a lesson taught to us by Theodor W. Adorno with whom this text converses. Yet the text is not a reconstruction of Adorno's *pensée*. Rather it can be viewed as an act of co-failure. Just like Adorno's writing, it meanders through a maze of trauma and severity. It is the voice of someone who should not be able to speak. Moreover, someone who has had no material relation to any act of genocide whatsoever. Someone detached but therefore no less responsible. Someone who has no right to speak yet who falls under the burden of silence.

So how can we even proceed?

Words

Let us consider words even though music is often thought to be a realm lying beyond words. Even though sound often escapes verbalisation, even though some experiences are truly inexplicable, still, let us consider words.

What is a word? There are innumerable possible answers to this question. Philosophy, philology, linguistics, sociology, and anthropology – all these disciplines have tried to provide one. In our investigation though we need to go beyond their findings. Not to reject them, because we rely on them completely

in our argument, but to weave them into a fabric of new texture. In this context we see word as a tension, a form of energy. What does this mean? If we were to be more precise we would say that what a word always brings is gravity. Words have a certain weight. They might not be material but neither are they ethereal. In every word one can find enclosed a trace of experience, like a pinch of explosive powder in a shell. Even in the most seemingly neutral words this explosiveness does not cease to be present. Why is it so? Linguistics stresses that, just like people, words or, as linguists say, signs do not exist in isolation. They are always surrounded by other words. In fact there is no "the word", but always "a word" which results in constant dialectics of words. If we take a word it becomes the word only by excluding another word. It is a complex operation, one that bears very strong consequences.

The dialectics of words works as a merciless machine. It is a constant flow in which we observe fierce struggle. It is a battle of sounds which stand for experiences. This battle can be identified as a quest for power if we agree that the latter is a question of organisation. Each word is a sound and silence at the same time. In essence the word which appears is a victory over another word. It is a lack of something else and therefore a form of silence. In this mechanism, even if we limit it to one speaker, we always encounter a form of exclusion. One can call it composition. Coherent personality as a "coherent" flow of words[1] is a somehow arbitrary organisation of sounds and experiences. It is a composition made possible only by a necessary dose of violence. This violence might be seen as merely symbolic so actually it is not real violence at all. Yet, it is the first step in the long process of the taming of the multiple. To establish a certain order, to install coherence one must disqualify certain experiences, certain sensations – silence some words in favour of others. The world becomes comprehensible and homogeneous, trustworthy yet also simplified. The chaos of the multiple gives way to an identity.

Why is this very general, if not too far-reaching, observation of any importance to us? Let us turn to Adorno for the answer. In all his works we find a striking distrust in language, a distrust based on profound distrust in reason. Adorno

1 I do not distinguish here between a word and an idea or between *signifié* and *signifiant*. Although analytically demountable, the word as tension should be perceived as happening rather than an object. As such it is not susceptible to real-time analysis. In this sense the sign, dividable into *signifié* and *signifiant*, always comes after the word as an effect of rational distortion of primordial unity. My perspective follows that of W. Benjamin's *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. J. Osborne, London–New York 2003.

provides a total critique of notional thinking which separates us from the immediacy of being. The distance that language creates has, since the dawning of civilisation, been a base for ever-growing human attempts to control reality. It is with the tools of notions and ideas that we take into possession that which surrounds us. It is with the language that we strip things of their uniqueness, turning them into commodities. It is with language that we domesticate, tame and level everything into a coherent pattern or system. The mechanisms of this control are discussed in Adorno and Horkheimer's *magnum opus, Dialectic of Enlightenment* so there is no reason to go into details here.[2] The Marxist origin of this critique is fairly obvious, yet while Marx focused on material control, for Adorno and Horkheimer its symbolic dimension is of primary importance. Symbols are tools of subordination and exploitation for instrumental reason. Language through words brings a sense of power and mankind has not been able to escape its fatal attraction. The abuse of power and the parallel abuse of reality starts with initial mythological concepts, continues as a passion for science and technique to reach its peak in the rationally planned and executed order of methodological mass killings, including the Holocaust, an ultimate consequence of Enlightenment. It is a very general, if not simplistic diagnosis but for Adorno and Horkheimer the circumstances call for a strong voice. If we are to carry on, we have to get to the core of the problem and in this core we find *ratio,* language and power melted into one explosive that set the whole world on fire. After Auschwitz we have to be very suspicious about every notion that we cling to. Words must be scrutinised; they must be put on trial.

Yet, somehow paradoxically but there is no escape from this paradox, one can do nothing but rely on words. Even though Adorno seems to dream about a world in which mediation between a subject and an object is done away with, this dream must be expressed with words. One can criticise language only in language. There is no way out of this vicious circle and Adorno in his most extensive work *Negative Dialectics* ponders on it without any conclusion, wandering alone on the paths of our civilisation's failures. This wandering which, despite all its claims is still rooted in the mechanism of *Vermittlung* (mediation)[3], seems to be the only possible answer. We can only run on the treadmill of language trying to do our best to be fully aware of the price we pay and therefore limit the damage as much as we can. In other words, we need to be constantly on the lookout for

2 See: Th.W. Adorno, M. Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment. Philosophical Fragments*, trans. E. Jephcott, Stanford, CA 2002.

3 I would like to thank Jakub Momro for turning my attention to this term, so crucial for German philosophical tradition.

any claims to a finite, ultimate truth. We need to investigate our notions so they do not turn into oppressive monsters. Our language must be careful, frail, and infinite. It must be a constant challenge to itself.

There are thus three words that must be addressed. Genocide. Silence. Music. In this text we pay close attention to them. Following Adorno's lead we do not attempt to address them in a lexical or encyclopaedic way. Our stake is not that of a proper definition because such an approach would be exclusive and this is precisely what we would like to avoid. We will not define in order to show what these words do and do not mean. Our strategy will be different. We will, according to the principle sketched above, treat the words are lively experiential fields of energy. We will caress them in their fluidity allowing for their ambiguity, their disquieting uncertainty. In other words, our question is not necessarily: what do the words mean but rather what are the relations between these words? What paths do they open? How tangled are these paths? Where can they lead us? There is a need to talk about these words because they can be seen as challenges. Through these words a certain commitment shines through. This commitment can be called, using Adorno's vocabulary, a burden of the Name. Let us allow this burden to speak.

Genocide

When using the word genocide one is often, almost always, struck by the silence that the word provokes. The room becomes quieter, voices subside, and the air becomes uncomfortably heavy. It is as if the word as such had a special power, as if the word as such was the horror, the word was the pain. Yet it is just a word. And words are there to build bridges, communities, to make us human… Can the word genocide make us human?

Jean Hatzfeld, when he went to Rwanda for the first time, was profoundly moved by the silence. It was the silence of the survivors. The silence of the Tutsi that stayed alive. He writes that after a war, the surviving civilians feel the strong urge to give testimony; when genocide is over, on the contrary, the ones who survived unexpectedly choose silence. This self-closure is disturbing for him.[4] We

4 J. Hatzfeld, *Life Laid Bare: The Survivors in Rwanda Speak*, trans. L. Coverdale, New York 2007, "Introduction". Note: I do not have access to English translations of Hatzfeld's works. This is why I cannot provide the pagination of citations. Yet to enable an English-speaking reader to identify the referenced fragments I give the names of chapters in which they can be found. The chapters usually are relatively short, making identification quite easy.

must ponder on this disturbance. What if it is caused by existential incoherence? One who has suffered is expected to cry. This expectation is created by our own fear of helplessness. After a tragedy we expect to hear voices because we want to believe that, under similar circumstances, we would find the strength to carry on. Crying means strength, it is a proof of feelings which bring about energy. Therefore, silence after genocide is unexpected and disturbing. It strips us of our confidence. It is like a fatal blow to our self-esteem. And then we can do nothing but respond with shameful mimicry.

The phrase "genocide is inexplicable" can often be heard when one tries to discuss or even raise the topic of mass killings. The famous dictum of Adorno that after Auschwitz any poetry is barbaric can be seen as an echo of this phrase. Yet what did Adorno really mean when he said these words? In *Cultural Criticism and Society,* the opening essay of *Prisms* we read: "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today. Absolute reification, which presupposed intellectual progress as one of its elements, is now preparing to absorb the mind entirely."[5] And in *Negative Dialectics* there is a passage that makes Adorno's intention even more clear:

> Perennial suffering has as much right to express itself as the martyr has to scream; this is why it may have been wrong to say that poetry could not be written after Auschwitz. What is not wrong however is the less cultural question of whether it is even permissible for someone who accidentally escaped and by all rights ought to have been murdered, to go on living after Auschwitz.[6]

Silence is thus not Adorno's ultimate goal. Rather he strives to get to the bottom of the shame that gives rise to it. The barbarism that Adorno writes about is intimately connected to absolute reification by which he understands a brutal decision to negate the idiosyncrasy of every individual being. We are again on Marxist territory as Adorno sees capitalism as the epicentre of barbarism. In a capitalist society, things and in turn also people are transformed into commodities, objects of abstract exchange. They are levelled, turned into a mass of powerless producers/consumers constantly fuelling the anonymous machine of capital. Science, technique, commerce and politics are all utilised by the latter to create

---

5 Th.W. Adorno, *Cultural Criticism and Society*, [in:] Th.W. Adorno, *Prisms*, trans. S. Weber, Sh. Weber, Cambridge, MA 1986, p. 34

6 Th.W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. D. Redmond, "Part III. Models. Meditations on Metaphysics", available at: http://members.efn.org/~dredmond/nd5.PDF (accessed: March 2014), paragraph 1.

a system of unification. In this system we are all controlled by the control we seem to have over reality. Auschwitz is identified as an outcome of this process, an ultimate regime of total, inhuman control. The shame we feel comes from the fact that even though the machine is inhuman there is no one but us to be blamed for its working. Once seduced by the vision of control we follow in the footsteps of the devil precisely because the regime of thinking has not changed. We are still blind to the consequences of the process we initiated. Were we not, the question posed by Adorno: "whether it is even permissible for someone who accidentally escaped and by all rights ought to have been murdered, to go on living after Auschwitz", would be the foremost important issue in our culture. Yet, as the analysis of cultural industry in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* shows, it is the opposite – the question is omitted. And therefore we all as survivors are constantly guilty of one cardinal sin – our language, our words, our thinking are not a form of testimony. We turn our heads seeking consolation, while we have only one responsibility, namely – to acknowledge our blame and live according to it. It may result in writing poetry or it may not. Yet if we do choose to write it, genocide has to be at the heart of it.

Silence

We see that Adorno was not opposed to addressing genocide in writing or speech. Yet this decontextualised phrase of his keeps coming back. Genocide is inexplicable we often hear so there are no words to express it, there are no sounds on a par with it, only silence. The ones who were marked by genocide and stayed alive feel an enormous guilt that paralyses their voice. The ones who were not there feel they have no right to raise their voice. Genocide seems to strip one of sounds. It steals his voice. Makes one mute. When the physical horror is over, the damage is still being done. Genocide lives on as a ghost that haunts us.

This blockade of sounds is a very unnerving phenomenon because in the case of those who did not go through genocide it is based on a promise of relief. One believes that by remaining silent one pays an ultimate homage to the victims. Silence is a proof of tact. Yet, silence helps to forget. By remaining silent one remains somehow detached. Quiet, at peace. Untouched.

Silence in this sense is a solution and solutions can be soporific. Genocide as unthinkable is also unbearable. Even a single thought of it is disturbing. Muteness helps to ease this disturbance. One has no right to use one's voice so one remains silent. But what if precisely because one has no right to use one's voice then one should use it – to let other voices be heard?

Johann Baptist Metz wrote:

> Auschwitz concerns us all. Indeed what makes Auschwitz unfathomable is not only the executioners and their assistants, not only the apotheosis of evil revealed in these, and not only the silence of God. Unfathomable, and sometimes even more disturbing, is the silence of men: the silence of all those who looked on or looked away and thereby handed over this people in its peril of death to an unutterable loneliness.[7]

Silence as a solution can also be a condemnation. It can mean turning heads away. Silent respect can be a silent threat. As Adorno put it: "because everyone knows everything, no-one is supposed to say anything, and it may then continue unchallenged, hidden by silence."[8]

If silence comes as a final solution it is possible to see it as a totalitarian figure. In silence the singular is lost. Silence is so overwhelming because it equates. Silence is a leveller and as such it is genocide's helper. In order to be effectively executed, genocide must strip its victims of their singularity. It presents them as a category, as a common denominator, as a monolithic evil. It reduces the victims to a mass, to a bare life, a life not worth living (*lebensunwerten Leben*). "Genocide is the absolute integration, which is everywhere being prepared, where human beings are made the same, polished, as the military calls it, until they are literally cancelled out, as deviations from the concept of their compete nullity. Auschwitz confirms the philosopheme of pure identity as death."[9] Therefore a singular voice is its biggest enemy. Genocide dreams of silence in which no particular, unique voice can no longer be heard.

Rachela Olewski played the mandolin in the Auschwitz women's orchestra. When her testimony was published by her family it was titled *Crying is forbidden here!*. Olewski recalls in it: "I remember how Yvette, a Greek woman, played bass. She always stood and cried. Once a Gestapo man came and said: 'We do not want crying girls in the Vorne [near the gate], so get her out, or everyone must smile. You are forbidden to cry here!'"[10] Any cry is singular, defying unification. Crying is like having a voice and every single voice breaks the totalitarian whole.

---

7 J.B. Metz, *The Emergent Church: The Future of Christianity in a Post-Bourgeois World*, New York 1981, cited fragment available at: http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/holocaust/reflections.htm (accessed: March 2014).

8 Th.W. Adorno, *Minima moralia*, trans. D. Redmond, available at: http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/adorno/1951/mm/ch03.htm (accessed: March 2014), paragraph 149.

9 Th.W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, op. cit, Part III, paragraph 1.

10 A. Olewski and J. Ritz-Olewski (eds.), *Crying is forbidden here! Rachela Olewski (Zelmanowicz): Testimony*, Ra'anana 2009, p. 36.

Nonidentity vs Totality

Does what has already been said mean that any silence should be viewed as a form of escapism? Is there no silence that speaks? Can silence never be a voice? In order to shed some light on the problem it is useful to introduce the concept of nonidentity.

Nonidentity in Adorno evades clear definitions. It can nevertheless be understood as a unique kind of experience – a state of immersion in reality, a sense of direct belonging. Such immersion, though, cannot be, according to Adorno, realised through positive acts, cannot be build up, but rather comes out of a radical rapture. Therefore we have to contrast nonidentity and totality. The latter is attributed to capitalist society and seen as a drive towards coherent, positive wholeness, an ultimate unity of things. On the contrary, the former is fuelled by a principle of negativity. In his 1931 lecture *The Actuality of Philosophy* Adorno said: "only in traces and ruins is [reason] prepared to hope that it will ever come across correct and just reality."[11] Such a perspective steers clear of any sense of Hegelian whole. It shuns positive dialectics and calls in a form of dispersal of singularities. Adorno looks for truth (not to be mistaken with authenticity) in the fragmented, he celebrates the logic of disintegration, cherishes the cacophony of individual voices.[12] The sense of belonging is the one of stars in a constellation. In this sense nonidentity is the opposite of totality, a position in strong contrast to that of Lukács, in whom young Adorno found great inspiration and who eventually became the master voice of Stalinist philosophy.[13]

What does this mean for silence? One might answer by saying that there is a kind of silence that is singular and it is a silence of an eyewitness. This is the silence that Hatzfeld writes about, the silence that General Roméo Dallaire struggles with in his autobiography[14] but most of all the silence of the victims who

11 Th.W. Adorno, *The Actuality of Philosophy*, "Telos" 1977, vol. 31, p. 120.

12 In this Adorno mirrors Walter Benjamin's strategy. See great reconstruction of Benjamin's influence on Adorno in: M. Jay, *Marxism and Totality. The Adventures of a Concept from Lukaćs to Habermas*, Berkeley 1986, p. 246-252.

13 Especially, as we have already seen, the concept of reification introduced in G. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. R. Livingstone, London 1971, was very inspiring for both Adorno and Horkheimer and echoes in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, op. cit., Most of *History and Class Consciousness...*, including the famous chapter "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat", in R. Livingstone translation is available at: http://www.marxists.org/archive/lukacs/works/history/index.htm (accessed: March 2014).

14 Lt. Gen. R. Dallaire, *Shake Hands With the Devil: The Failure of Humanity,* New York 2004.

accidentally survived. Silence that does not seek relief but increases the burden. It is not the silence that the Gestapo man from Olewski's testimony dreamed about. It is a silence that cries. It is a voice.

According to Hatzfeld, their total silence is explained by Rwandan genocide survivors as a sense of shame, sometimes guilt. Hatzfeld calls this silence as enigmatic as the one of Nazi concentration camps survivors.[15] The same silence can be found in Adorno's *Minima Moralia* as a task and one which requires great effort and renunciation: "One should be united with the suffering of human beings: the smallest step to their joys is one towards the hardening of suffering."[16] Is muteness really this kind of silence? Or maybe one must not be quiet to become worthy of such a silence?

Total silence is not a totalitarian silence. Totalitarian silence can be seen as totality that strives for complete closure and homogeneity. Adorno described capitalism, and especially cultural industry, as such a totality – a drive towards complete coherence, total clarity of the world and unlimited control. At the same time he viewed Nazism as a monstrous offspring of modern society, a peak of the Enlightenment, even though Hitler's rhetoric was heavily anti-modernistic. Adorno knew that this anti-modernism was a mere disguise. Nazi Germany could be seen as embodiment of totality, a fully modern project rooted in instrumental reason. In this project a new universality was to be created, purified of all defiant voices: a choir singing the same song, an orchestra playing the same tune. The cacophony of degenerate sounds was to be silenced. In this system silence was a punishment but even more – silence was a goal. Nazism sought ultimate harmony even though it fed on war and violence. The future was to be peaceful and as such could only be achieved by totalitarian silence. The Nazis called it *Gleichschaltung.*

One of the killers in Rwanda told Hatzfeld that the Tutsi would often die silently, without crying. The Hutu commanders claimed that it was because the victims felt guilty of being Tutsi but this man knew better. He understood that the Tutsi asked for nothing because in those fatal moments they did not believe in words any more. They did not believe in screams. Unlike horrified animals, which do not abate even though they are being stabbed to death, the Tutsi were gripped by a boundless sadness, by totalitarian silence. They felt abandoned by everything, even by what they could say.[17]

---

15 J. Hatzfeld, *Life Laid Bare: The Survivors in Rwanda Speak*, op. cit., "Introduction".

16 Th.W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, op. cit., paragraph 5.

17 J. Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*, trans. L. Coverdale, New York 2005, chapter "Words To Avoid Saying It".

This is probably the most devastating effect of genocide – the silence of totality in which there is no sound of resistance, no belief in one's own voice. Totalitarian operation makes life mute, strips it of sound, and exterminates the drive to express oneself. Victims feel abandoned by everything, even by their own voice. And it does not end when the physical killing is over. The innocence of voice is lost: "The small joys, the expressions of life, which seemed to be exempt from the responsibility of thought, not only have a moment of defiant silliness, of the cold-hearted turning of a blind eye, but immediately enter the service of their most extreme opposite."[18] One can argue that it is precisely at this moment that making this silence audible is the task of the ones who watched from afar. Only then can we hope for conciliation. But what about music?

Music

Totality brings totalitarian silence which does not necessarily exclude music. On the contrary it utilises music, subordinates it, defines it according to the principles of *Gleichschaltung*. In a sense totality is based on a certain view of music which is really a view of human being as such. Adorno and Horkheimer tried to capture this anthropology at the end of *The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception* from *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: "The most intimate reactions of human beings have been so thoroughly reified that the idea of anything specific to themselves now persists only as an utterly abstract notion: personality scarcely signifies anything more than shining white teeth and freedom from body odour and emotions."[19] If this intuition is right than any totalitarian music must have white teeth.

In what sense then is music after Auschwitz barbaric? Should one not be allowed to play any music any more? What with Rwanda survivors who sing in order to carry on with their burden?

In Hesiod's *Theogony* we find a very striking passage:

> For though a man have sorrow and grief in his newly-troubled soul and live in dread because his heart is distressed, yet, when a singer, the servant of the Mousai, chants the glorious deeds of men of old and the blessed gods who inhabit Olympus, at once he

18 Th.W. Adorno, *Minima moralia*, op. cit., paragraph 5.

19 Th.W. Adorno, M. Horkheimer, op. cit., chapter "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception", available at: http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/adorno/1944/culture-industry.htm (accessed: March 2014).

> forgets his heaviness and remembers not his sorrows at all; but the gifts of the goddesses soon turn him away from these…[20]

One could use these words as an excuse for escapism. Music can be treated as a drug that is there to ease the pain of existence. In music one finds shelter from material storms. Music covers the horrors of the world by creating alternative realities, and by bringing man closer to the gods he created. In this sense music comes from outside, but only seemingly. The singer is in theory just a mere servant of the Mousai but the latter in reality are nothing more than effigies of his efforts. In the glorious deeds of men of old, one discovers the virtues of today which music materialises. In order to do so music must be understood as an exclusive gift, a special power that only the singer possesses. The song must be more than just a singular, frail voice. It becomes an act of self-assured vision. It becomes a relief.

This is a trap that music tends to fall into again and again. The trap of arbitrary selection defining proper and degenerate sounds introduces standards for voices and disqualifies false sonic expressions. Music becomes a project of purification and refinement. It excludes and condemns. This tendency was clearly visible in the musical regulations of the Third Reich. "The nature of music lies in melody", said Joseph Goebbels at Reich Music Days in 1938. It is a very telling statement. Goebbels' musical knowledge was very limited so he was thinking in stereotypes. By melody he meant tonality, certain scales that had become "natural" for his European ear. Beethoven was melodic, Schoenberg was not. Germans were melodic, Jews were not. Germans were natural, Jews were not. Schoenberg was condemned for turning sounds of anguish and hysteria into music. For the most ardent Nazis anguish and hysteria were by definition non-musical. There was no melody in weeping. Crying was to be forbidden.

For Nazis music was a mere means to an end, a transporter to a mythical Germanic Eden. It was not bare sounds, not naked voices in themselves they were seeking but an external meaning. Music was a part of the bigger agenda, a tool among tools. Rachela Olewski very consciously summarised the Auschwitz Women's Orchestra project by saying:

> They established the orchestra not for us; they made the orchestra for themselves. Let's say, you can imagine a whole camp goes out to work. Imagine how slow they would march without the orchestra. They marched according to the tune's rhythm. What went

20 Hesiod, *Theogony*, trans. H.G. Evelyn-White, II. 75-103, available at: http://hermetic.com/texts/hesiod.html (accessed: March 2014).

there in one hour could have lasted for several hours. Do you understand? So they placed us forward, near the gate. Every morning we sat and played the march when they went out to work.[21]

The Name

It might sound bold but genocide can be seen as certain music – a specific politics of voice. It allows only two possibilities – a total sound or total silence. In *Life Laid Bare* Rwanda genocide survivors often recall that the Hutu would go everyday on a killing spree singing songs. Sometimes they would silently creep but more often they would sing loudly. Particularly striking in this context are the words of one of the killers who says that they did not choose encouraging patriotic songs that could be heard on the radio or songs that humiliated the Tutsi.[22] They did not need this kind of encouragement but simply chose traditional melodies they liked, choral marching songs. As if the work they were supposed to do was their traditional work, as if genocide was a routine. Loud music was also played in the evenings, during the feasts organised as a reward for all the "hard work" during the day. Victims, in turn, if they wanted to survive, had to remain completely silent, because their own voice might have cost them their life. They had absolutely no right to music.

If one takes a closer look through this duality, one goal shines through – a world of exclusion, of totalitarian control, of collective, homogeneous voice. This is the genocidal politics of sound – music as a means of mobilisation and control, both on a physical and emotional level. Music as the beat of the genocidal machine. And silence as the ultimate dehumanisation.

Yet music cannot be reduced to a march or a throwaway song. They are nothing but totality. In contrast, the conciliation that music creates is not limited to a particular myth. It goes beyond ideologies. In other words, it is empty by nature. The redemption it brings is not based on content, or meaning. Music is not mythological, just as it is not instrumental. Adorno captured this profoundly negative character of music when he wrote that the language of music: "is a demythologised prayer, rid of efficacious magic. It is the human attempt, doomed as ever, to name the Name, not to communicate meanings."[23]

---

21 A. Olewski and J. Ritz-Olewski (eds.), op. cit., p. 29-30.

22 J. Hatzfeld, *Machete Season…*, chapter: "How It Was Organized".

23 Th.W. Adorno, *Quasi una Fantasia. Essays on Modern Music*, trans. R. Livingstone, London–New York 2002, chapter: "Music and Language: A Fragment", available at: https://www.msu.edu/~sullivan/AdornoMusLangFrag.html, (accessed: March 2014).

These words come from *Music and Language: A Fragment* written in 1956. In this text Adorno tries to express the nonidentity that music brings. He describes it as follows:

> Music as a whole incorporates intentions not by diluting them into a still higher, more abstract intention, but by setting out to proclaim the non-intentioned at the moment when all intentions converge and are fused together. Thus music is almost the opposite of a meaningful totality, even when it seems to create one in contrast to mere sensuous existence. This is the source of the temptation it feels to abstain from all meaning from a sense of its own power, to act, in short, as if it were the direct expression of the Name.[24]

Nonidentity is the domain of the Name. At the same time nonidentity, at least according to Adorno, excludes materialisation. Yet it is a form of presence. It does not bring meaning with it, but still communicates what can be called the lack of communication. Music as a realm of nonidentity can bring us closer to the Name. Music is an empty space which excludes any definite meaning. The emptiness does not equal nothingness though. The emptiness echoes with the Name. As my philosopher friend Jakub Momro formulated it in one of our discussions: "it speaks with the silence of those who have been stripped of their names, the ones spent at the mercy of naked violence."[25] It is a dialectic of lack of meaning and full presence of the Name and only as such can it be a shelter for the victims. This is why Rwanda survivors sing songs today. This is why total music defies genocide.

In *Cratylus* Socrates at some point says: "As for the Muses and music and poetry in general, they seem to have derived their name from their eager desire (*mosthai*) to investigate and do philosophy."[26] Or in different, much older translation: "The name of the Muses and of music would seem to be derived from their making philosophical enquiries (*mosthai*)."[27] Music thus means searching. It is not about idle rest but about carrying the burden. Playing music and listening to it can be seen as taking on a weight that is eternal. There is nothing to be found, nothing waits at the end of a song or a tune. All there is is a moment, a weight of time – the impossibility of understanding the Name. This is why Adorno wrote: "Music finds the absolute immediately, but at the moment of discovery it

---

24 Ibidem.

25 The final shape of this paragraph owes more to Jakub Momro's contribution than mine and I would like to thank him again.

26 Plato, *Cratylus*, 406a, trans. C.D.C. Reeve, Indianapolis, IN 1998, p. 39.

27 Plato, *Cratylus*, 406a, trans. B. Jowett, available at: http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/cratylus.html (accessed: March 2014).

becomes obscured, just as too powerful a light dazzles the eyes, preventing them from seeing things which are perfectly visible."[28]

Each genocide has a sonic dimension. It manages sounds in a certain manner bringing totalitarian silence and totalitarian music. Genocide dreams of clarity, an utterly predictable soundscape. It strives to drown and eradicate unorthodox voices. Yet the Name in its multitude cannot be silenced. Even if all the voices are finally quiet, the Name can still be heard in the fields and rooms where blood has been shed. The Name is the constant burden.

Both silence and music after genocide are in some sense impossible. One has no right to raise one's voice but neither can one remain silent. It is a dead-end situation and precisely as such it should be accepted. Impossible silence must not be attenuated; impossible music must keep playing. Impossibility in this context means a lack of innocence and promise of relief. Impossible music does not bring a catharsis. It does not impress. It tirelessly seeks the empty space in which there is no exclusion. Even though it tries, genocide cannot colonise this space. A voice that has been silenced remains a voice. Impossible music makes this voice audible. Writing and playing music after genocide is barbaric only insofar as one believes that writing and playing music as if nothing happened is possible. If the impossibility of this task is cultivated, music might represent a singular voice, bringing one closer to the Name.

Bibliography

Adorno Th.W., *Cultural Criticism and Society*, [in:] Th. W. Adorno, *Prisms*, trans. S. Weber, Sh. Weber, Cambridge, MA 1986.

Adorno Th.W., *Minima moralia*, trans. D. Redmond, available at: http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/adorno/1951/mm/index.htm (accessed: March 2014).

Adorno Th.W., *Negative Dialectics*, trans. D. Redmond, available at: http://members.efn.org/~dredmond/ndtrans.html (accessed: March 2014).

Adorno Th.W., *Quasi una Fantasia. Essays on Modern Music*, trans. R. Livingstone, London–New York 2002.

Adorno Th.W., *The Actuality of Philosophy*, "Telos" 1977, vol. 31.

Adorno Th.W., M. Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment. Philosophical Fragments*, trans. E. Jephcott, Stanford, CA 2002.

28 Th.W. Adorno, *Quasi una Fantasia* …, op. cit., chapter "Music and Language".

Benjamin W., *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. J. Osborne, London–New York 2003.

Dallaire R. Lt. Gen., *Shake Hands With the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, New York 2004.

Hatzfeld J., *Life Laid Bare: The Survivors in Rwanda Speak*, trans. L. Coverdale, New York 2007.

Hatzfeld J., *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak*, trans. L. Coverdale, New York 2005.

Hesiod, *Theogony*, trans. H.G. Evelyn-White, available at: http://hermetic.com/texts/hesiod.html (accessed: March 2014).

Jay M., *Marxism and Totality. The Adventures of a Concept from Lukaćs to Habermas*, Berkeley 1986.

Lukács G., *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. R. Livingstone, London 1971, available at: http://www.marxists.org/archive/lukacs/works/history/index.htm (accessed: March 2014).

Metz J.B., *The Emergent Church: The Future of Christianity in a Post-Bourgeois World*, New York 1981.

Olewski A., J. Ritz-Olewski (eds.), *Crying is forbidden here! Rachela Olewski (Zelmanowicz): Testimony*, Ra'anana 2009.

Plato, *Cratylus*, trans. B. Jowett, available at: http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/cratylus.html (accessed: March 2014).

Plato, *Cratylus*, trans. C.D.C. Reeve, Indianapolis, IN 1998.

Lawrence Kramer

Afterword: Genocide, Music, and the Name

To begin, to end, by repeating a key point: The question of music and genocide is not the same as the question of music and the Holocaust, though at first it may seem otherwise. There are good reasons for that. A certain classical music, at any rate, shadowed the Nazi barbarity because of the unique place this music was felt, perhaps above all by the victims, to hold in European life, especially German life; because the Nazis systematically sought to purge music and music history from "degenerate" Jewish influence; because from the outset, with the war barely ended, music was part of Holocaust memory—literally in Arnold Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw* (1947), figuratively in Paul Celan's "Todesfuge" (1948); because such memory could even take the form of the future tense inside the concentration camps: Viktor Ullmann's *The Emperor of Atlantis* (Terezin,1943; first performed 1975).

To the extent that the Holocaust remains the paradigm of all genocide, this relationship is unavoidable and inexhaustible. The dismal genius of the Nazis was to make genocide neither an event nor even a program but a system. The system was unique, but one of its unintended consequences was to expose system as the hidden principle on which all genocides rely. Genocide never just happens. No wonder, then, that the Holocaust has already taken up more space here than my opening sentence should have allowed, and that it will take up more below. It has necessarily played a majority role in this volume. But the questions are still different. This is so not because every genocide is unique, true though that may be, but because in another sense no genocide is unique. Every genocide is all genocide.

That phrasing may call to mind Derrida's famous ethical maxim *Tout autre est tout autre*, perhaps best adapted in English (not quite translated) as "All others are all other."[1] Otherness admits no degrees; otherness is all there, wherever it is, and it is everywhere. Every other is *every* other. Precisely this principle, which for Derrida is a call to unconditional mutuality and hospitality, is what genocide, by inversion, takes as its rationale. Otherness must be extirpated; since all otherness is present in every other, every other must be exterminated.

1 J. Derrida, *The Gift of Death and Literature in Secret*, trans. D. Wills, Chicago 2008, p. 78, 82-116.

This perverse logic, if that is the word, is the paradigm to which even the Holocaust defers. The question this ill logic raises is how it wins the assent even of those who do not revel in its execution: those who comply with a shrug or a shake of the head, those who prefer to believe that the perpetrators are someone—other. In turn, the question that this volume raises, not so much by its individual studies as by the aggregate they form, is how, and why, music may become a medium in any or every genocidal system, and at the same time—we should not say "paradoxically" too quickly—serve as a medium of survival and commemoration, perhaps even of testimony.

In the remarks that follow I will consider this question from two perspectives, the pliancy of music and the rigidity of names. These are just two perspectives among others; they aim at a clarification or supplementation that I would call, roughly, ontological, but they have no special priority. Nor, for that matter, do I, despite being honoured by the invitation to write this Afterword. The subject is difficult, not only because no one should assume a pose of authority on it, as long as this authority is not rooted in testimony, but also because even rooted in testimony no position of authority on it is possible.

As Derrida, again, observed, the only authoritative witnesses to such events are the victims who can bear no witness: the dead. Their testimony is lost, and its loss is the ground where the impossible and the impermissible merge. Derrida's observation is part of an extended consideration of Paul Celan's poem "Aschenglorie" (Ashen-Glory), in particular the concluding stanza: "Niemand / zeugt für den / Zeugen" (None / witnesses for the / witness).[2] That no one *does* bear witness for the witness follows from the conviction that no one *can* and the maxim that no one *should*: "One cannot and must not replace (and thus bear witness *for*) the witness of his or her own death." Even those who witnessed the deaths of others and survived come up against an absolute limit: "Death (…) is what one cannot witness *for* the other (…) above all because one cannot witness it *for oneself*." The outer limit of testimony is dead silence. All that the poem can do is testify to the limit of testimony, the impossibility making that silence speak.

Recognising this limit, though, does not impose silence on the rest of us. Our silence, as Wojciech Klimczyk states in his contribution to this volume, is what genocide wants from us. The genocide system wants to inflect Celan's "None / witnesses for the / witness" as an order to be complicit: don't say a word. On the

2 Idem, *Sovereignties in Question: The Poetics of Paul Celan*, Th. Dutoit and O. Pasanen (eds.), New York 2005, p. 90-91.

contrary, then: The silence of the dead imposes *speech* on us. We cannot refrain from saying something. If not we, then who?

But if we, then *what*? The difficulty is figuring out how to say anything beyond the necessary work of building an archive, of recording every name and date: to figure out how to overcome the strange lethal effect of genocide on discourse, which is to turn anything said about it into a platitude.

Celan's answer to that question was, famously, to attack saying. The musicalised narrative of "Todesfuge", a close parallel to Schoenberg's technique in *Survivor*, could not stand as a model. The very idea of a model or technique, of anything subject to becoming conventional or routine, would be a betrayal. Even Celan's indelible metaphor, a Bach-like fugue for the execution of Jews forced to dig their own graves "in the sky," would dull with repetition. So Celan turned to poetry in which music and narrative, the coordinates of speech in sound and act, break. They break repeatedly, and this repetition is their speech manqué. In Celan's later lyrics this breakage is both visible and audible. Only beginning with each individual instance, it extends beyond music and narrative to encompass language itself. This poetry both breaks and shows the breakdown of language, in the person, so to speak, of German, for obvious reasons the only language in which the necessary anti-saying could be voiced.

But Celan never quite relinquished the hope that a certain verbal music could speak from amid the wreckage, and the metaphors in which he intimates this hope are musical ones:

CELLO-EINSATZ
von hinter dem Schmerz:
die Gewalten, nach Gegen-
himmeln gestaffelt,
wälzen Undeutbares vor
Einflugschneise und Einfahrt,

der
erklommene Abend
steht voll Lungengeläst,

zwei
Brandwolken Atem
graben im Buch,
das der Schläfenlärm aufschlug,

etwas wird wahr, (…)

Cello-entry
from behind the pain:

the forces, toward counter-
heavens tiered,
roll the uninterpretable before
landing strip and entryway,

the
climbed evening
stands full of lungbrush,

two
breath fire clouds
delve in the book
that the temples' noise opened,

something grows true, (…)[3]

Although the musical substance is still figurative, still only verbal music, Celan intimates that one way to speak about genocide is to invert the age-old (and long since exhausted) trope that music expresses the ineffable and to hear, at least in the idea of music, a way of saying something about genocide that resists transformation into platitude. The something that grows true in this passage does so in the ear of both the poem and the reader. The "breath fire clouds"—remembered traces of smoke from the crematoria—delve, dig, or grub in a book for something to set against the uninterpretable. But their digging is a kind of gasping and the book is a book of sounds, opened by a throbbing at the temples. The air is choked with branches from the lungs, one dimension of which is the verbal debris exhaled into the text.

The text's reading of and within itself is thus a kind of sounding out, echoed by the reader's sounding out, in the mind's ear, of the text's own uninterpretable words. The poem glosses this process self-referentially in its opening line (and title, and hence perhaps description): "CELLO-EINSATZ," cello-entry: that is, the moment in which the cello, after a silence, adds its voice to an ensemble. That voice then "sounds" in the sentence that follows once we learn that this cello-entry comes from behind the pain, wherever that is. The sentence runs until the end of the poem: one sentence, in which we can hear the word "Einsatz" resonating with the phrase "Ein Satz," which would not only mean one sentence but also one musical movement. The word may also have a more sinister resonance

3 German text from P. Celan: *Gesammelte Werke in seiben Bänden*, B. Allmann, S. Reichert (eds.), Frankfurt am Main 2000, ii, p. 76; the translation is mine. On the role of music in Celan's work, early and late, together with music on Celan's poetry, see A. Englund, *Still Songs: Music in and Around the Poetry of Paul Celan*, Aldershot 2013.

with the "Einsatz" of the SS death squads, "die Einsatzgruppen,"[4] but this echo of the uninterpretable, throbbing at the temples, only makes the cello-entry more urgent, although less certain. (Anything more certain would be false.) It is not in the content of the sentence, which remains elusive, but in its music that the poem speaks.

"Cello-Einsatz" has inspired some actual music, notably a piece for unaccompanied cello by Paul-Heinz Dittrich (1976), but there is a sense in which any such music is a mistake. (For one thing, if I were asked to compose something in response to this poem I would avoid the cello at all costs.) What Celan intimates is not the sound of some particular music, but the way that some or any music, if it comes from behind the pain, can add itself to the scene of memory and interpret the uninterpretable, and thus not embody but defeat the ineffable.

No one, it is true, witnesses for the witness, but in its infinite pliancy music—like feeling but not feeling, like utterance but not utterance, like a presence but always fleeting—just may. (But keep in mind: it may also do the opposite. It may rally the faithful to murder. It may turn a killing spree into a festival. Being infinitely pliant has its disadvantages.) To look further at this possibility, which grounds the first of my two perspectives, I will turn to another instance drawn from the Holocaust, unable—as yet; but there will be more—to resist the pull of the paradigm. But as it happens the episode I am about to describe is not at all specific to the events in Poland that it recalls. On the contrary, it admits of an extrapolation that extends into the difficult field that this volume seeks to open, that of what might be called universal genocide and its soundtrack.

In the opening segment of Claude Lanzmann's nine-hour Holocaust documentary *Shoah*, a survivor of the death camp at Chelmno sings a song. In doing so he gives the film the only kind of music its director could allow. Lanzmann had ruled out underscoring, concerned that even with the best intentions music on the soundtrack would mitigate the impact of the film's interviews with victims and perpetrators. He wanted no glib humanising of the inhuman, no false uplift of the kind that disfigures the documentary epilogue to Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List*, in which surviving Jews saved by Schindler parade by his grave wrapped in the warm halo of a pop chorale. But music is hard to banish: This one man sings; his name is Simon Srebnik; he sings a folksong. He sings it while boating on the same river where he had sung the same song as a death-camp inmate.

4 Sh. Wolosky, "Aesthetics and History in Paul Celan," available at: http://www.academia.edu/4345262/Aesthetics_and_History_in_Paul_Celan (accessed: March 2014).

As the film begins we see Simon Srebnik amid green trees and rushing water in medium long shot. He is sitting quietly in a boat being carried upriver. The camera slowly tracks his progress. He begins to sing; after a moment the boat passes behind a cluster of three tree trunks, so that we lose sight of the source of the song. When the boat emerges, it has receded far enough into the distance that we can no longer make a visual connection between the song and the singer, although we still see the man in the boat and know he is the one singing. The music floats and hovers; it lingers briefly then grows more distant and fades out under the sound of off-screen voices. In the space of about a minute, the song has been transformed from an act of memory, a fragment of testimony, to acousmatic sound—underscore after all.

This music escapes everyone's control. It escapes Simon Srebnik's because the song's becoming underscore expropriates it from him, something we can see as well as hear: the singer dwindles on the screen as the song detaches itself and fades. It escapes Lanzmann's control because in attaching itself to a scene of flowing water and pastoral woods, matched by camera movement that is lyrical in spite of itself, the song becomes beautiful and consoling, upsetting the refusal of a falsely emotive soundtrack. (As if in recoil, Lanzmann follows this shot immediately by returning the song to Srebnik, who is shown in closeup as he sings again.) And the song escapes the viewer's control because it still remains an echo of the events to which it testifies and the echo haunts the scene even as the same music's loss of testimonial force progresses. This song says too much, too much by far.

Yet it is precisely in this excess of pliancy that the music enters the logic of witnessing as described by Derrida and says something about genocide on the terms set by Celan. The music becomes a sensory piece of memory, capable, like all melody, of unlimited repetition. Equally, the music becomes an instrument of survival, not of the individual but of the community. The disembodied music floating over the river cannot be killed or corrupted. It absorbs and returns the serene, detached beauty of the scene, along with its irony—an echo of the empty field where the killing apparatus once stood—as the semantic loop of musical meaning, as I have described it elsewhere, the capacity of music to act as a universal supplement, would lead us to expect.[5]

This outcome folds back on itself at the end of the segment, which returns us to the river from the empty green spaces of the killing field. The scene is a reversal of the opening in every respect but one: the boat passes downriver and the song is different—ironically so: it is not sung in Polish, like the first song, but

5 L. Kramer, *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History*, Berkeley, CA 2002, p. 145-166.

in German, and its most prominent feature is a refrain on the word "Warum?" But the music is still acousmatic in the visual separation of song and singer, even more so than before. The closing scene is in extreme long shot, a panoramic view of a beautiful landscape in which the irony that weighs on the song is almost (but only almost, and that is the point) counterbalanced by the flow of melody.

This segment from *Shoah* identifies the three registers in which music and genocide cross, all of which are apparent in this volume: the experience of the participants, primarily the victims but also the perpetrators (Simon Srebnik survived because the Germans liked his voice); the efforts of commentary and commemoration, each of which must labor to sustain the other—commentary by restraint, commemoration by ruthless impartiality; and the lure of mystification and false ennoblement illustrated more problematically by that staged pseudo-ritual that ends *Schindler's List*.

The first of these registers is divided from the others by the loss of testimony that preoccupied Celan and Derrida, although, even here, there is some small latitude. (The recollection I allow myself below may speak to that.) The remaining two registers continually threaten to overlap; keeping them separate is a task that anyone trying to speak about genocide must undertake, and that anyone trying to do so musically must undertake doubly. These observations certainly apply to my own effort at musical speech, but before explaining it is necessary to turn to the second of my perspectives, that of the proper name.

This perspective is more speculative and more personal than the first. It stems in part from a musical composition of my own that was performed as part of the artistic program of the conference from which this volume derives. The composition, *A Short History (of the 20th Century),* is as much my Afterword to the essays collected here as the present text is. The music is for solo voice and percussion—the reason for the ensemble will appear later—but its vocal substance begins with the same purely notional music to which Celan's later poetry points: a verbal music that the real, acoustic music of the composition tries, literally, to give a voice. The verbal music is that of names. Not, as I will explain, the names of people, but the names of places. The short history of which my title speaks is a history of the century's genocide conveyed through the naming of its sites.

Names, however evocative, tend to wear out with time; the loss is perhaps most acute when the resonance of the faded name is a consequence of atrocity. The names of persons are especially vulnerable, because the mere fact that a person bears a name means that another can bear it. Names salute singularity, but the act of naming negates the very singularity it salutes. (There are rare reversals, mostly for the elect among history's monsters; another Adolph Hitler is unlikely—though one never knows.) Some compensation for this fading may come

from the speech melody that goes with a name, but only on particular occasions, rare moments when the melody absorbs the name rather than accompanies it. The melody at such moments acquires a force like that of a deictic, a linguistic "shifter" like *here* or *now*, a term whose meaning changes with every use so that it can mark the immediacy of a present instance. But this quasi-musical turn cannot bear too heavy a burden. Genocide erases names with number: one can read out the names of hundreds of victims, even thousands, but not hundreds of thousands, not millions.

Place names fare a little better, though at some cost in impersonality. The places where many have died condense the names of the lost into the name of the place. The places endure; their history is known; monuments stand there. Some of those monuments bear names—but the question is: who reads them? Damaged, even destroyed places are eventually rebuilt and daily life gets in the way of historical memory. Monuments become part of the scenery. In Berlin, children play on the grey stelae of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and have to be reprimanded by guards. No name is immune to erosion. Even fame can be a diminishment: for how many people is "Guernica" today primarily the name of a painting? So the aim of this composition is to re-intone the dark magic of certain names, some widely remembered, some not. The vocal line seeks to enunciate the musical name of each name it sings. But how is that possible, if it is possible at all? How can the melodies of the sung names become more than a shifter?

Each name must be realised uniquely, but within a consistent frame of reference that allows the names to be more than just a list. The need to make that frame audible but not obtrusive led to two decisions: one, to ground the vocal line not in motifs or melodies but in tendencies of melodic motion that appear only as a hovering feeling or consistency; and, two, to join the voice to percussion, from which there could follow a give-and-take between pitched and unpitched sounds, melodic/gestural extensions of the voice's acts of naming and visceral, rhythmic, force-oriented extensions of the names' performative force.

But no one witnesses for the witness. In his program note to *Different Trains* (1988), by common consent one of the few musical works that succeeds in speaking of genocide, Steve Reich recalls travelling by train as a child between New York and Los Angeles: "While the trips were exciting and romantic at the time [1939-42] I now look back and think that, if I had been in Europe during this period, as a Jew I would have had to ride very different trains."[6] Other than

6 Boosey and Hawkes, available at: http://www.boosey.com/cr/music/Steve-Reich-Different-Trains/2699 (accessed March 2014).

the fact that had I been born a generation earlier than I was, and in another country, mine might have been one of the names of the dead, what links me to these events beside the desire to speak of, speak to, them?

I was lucky; so was my family; no one was directly affected. And yet, growing up in the 1950s I slowly became aware of a shadow cast over many of my neighbours. I observed that some people's arms bore numbered tattoos that others took care not to look at. The issue came to a head one day when everyone on the "Jewish" side of the street (the children knew there was one, but not what it meant) woke up to find cheap leaflets inscribed with prominent Swastikas neatly placed on their doorsteps—all in a quiet neighbourhood in America where such things (it was said) did not happen. Only much later did I learn that the neighbourhood had been a hub of pro-German sentiment in the years before World War II. No one talked; perhaps no one knew. But the impulse to give any kind of testimony, at least at that place and time, did not yet exist or was actively suppressed. When I asked what the mysterious signs meant I was told not to ask. When I asked about the tattoos I was told to hold my tongue.

Finding out on my own subsequently became an act of defiance. The experience later shaped my response to Richard Strauss's *Metamorphosen*, his 1945 elegy for the physical destruction of a Germany that in moral and spiritual terms had immolated itself in 1933. Strauss, I thought, had seen much but witnessed nothing, and I wrote about this refusal of voice in *Musical Meaning*: "You could hear the absence [of acknowledgment] right there in the music, which for all its desolation was just too delicate, too nobly pathetic, too sensitive—just too damned pretty."[7] So, although I have only the most tangential of relationships to the genocide that left these scattered traces and sowed these silences, *A Short History* does form a kind of gathering up and counter-speech. The challenges that composing it would have to face would be finding a way to enunciate the names without assimilating them to a falsifying order, and finding a way to absorb listeners in the music without the false promises of consolation or elevation.

The text of *A Short History* is a list of forty-eight place names, each of which marks a scene of atrocity and mass death. The implication speaks for itself. Most of the history spans the period between World War I and what the composition takes to be the symbolic end of the century on the slightly belated date of September 11, 2001. Interspersed with the place names are a few brief quotations and a paraphrase from T. S. Eliot's 1922 poem "The Waste Land"—italicised phrases, shown in parenthesis in the text, that in retrospect take on the weight of

7 L. Kramer, op. cit., p. 284-286.

premonitions: iconic place names, the idea of the city as a utopia gone bad, and the image of falling towers. (I was of course aware of the irony that Eliot was an anti-Semite; I decided to let the irony stand.) The sequence of names is roughly chronological; some acts of naming occur out of sequence to mark historical connections or ironies.

It is important to add that this piece with the iconic acronym ASH is not a lament or a threnody. Those are genres not to be issued from a safe distance. Instead, the music is a memorial. Unlike *Different Trains*, which includes the recorded voice of Holocaust survivors and derives themes from their speech melody, *A Short History* begins from a point of absolute separation. It is a work of remembrance and a ritual of commemoration. Or, as I noted earlier, it is a work of reanimation, not of the places, far less of the persons, but of the names.

Its work is done, if it is done, by the way the music frames the relationship between the voice and the body, the latter represented by the spatial separation of the pitched and unpitched percussion I mentioned earlier. Each percussionist has charge of one type. The unpitched sounds keep us close to the fundamental but often obscured origin of music in bodily force and pulsation. They thus keep us close to the body in a piece about the endless accumulation of bodies. The pitched sounds support the countervailing movement from the body to voice—voice being the indispensable medium of naming. This movement is close to the origin of both melody and meaning. But there is no opposition here, only a necessary copresence. Unpitched sounds have their own form of voice and voice is never other than corporeal. Accordingly there is no rigid pattern in this music. There is only a continual effort to discover how each name may be framed and sung in a way that fits its unique resonance[8].

These names:
The Marne
Verdun
Passchendaele
The Somme
Gallipoli

8 A score and recording are available on my website, musicbylawrencekramer.com; the score is also available from the online library of New Music USA. One small change should be noted: the text originally had "Guadalcanal" where it now reads "Okinawa," which is easier to sing (and if anything even more appropriate). The change was made for a New York performance in 2014 and is not reflected in the recording of the Kraków premiere.

Trebizond
Der Zor
(Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
Unreal)
Nanking
Guernica
Warsaw
Coventry
Leningrad
Pearl Harbor
Bataan
Okinawa
Stalingrad
Babi Yar
(Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
Vienna London
Unreal)
Dachau
Terezin
Buchenwald
Belzec
Sobibor
Majdanek
Chelmno
Treblinka
Auschwitz
(Unreal City)
Dresden
Nuremberg
Hiroshima
Nagasaki
Pusan
Chosin
Saigon
Hué
Khe Sanh
My Lai
Phnom Penh
Srebrenica

Rwanda
Sarajevo
Darfur
(Towers upside down in air)
(Jerusalem NewYork *London* Madrid
Unreal
Unreal City)

This list, found object, prose poem, libretto—whatever you call it—is hardly objective. Its contents mingle necessity, choice, and sheer chance. It reflects my personal history, my education, and my nationality. But all that is part of the point: no two people would be likely to make identical lists. There are, sadly, just too many names to choose from.

Bibliography

Boosey and Hawkes, available at: http://www.boosey.com/cr/music/Steve-Reich-Different-Trains/2699 (accessed: March 2014).

Celan P., *Gesammelte Werke in seiben Bänden*, B. Allmann, S. Reichert (eds.), Frankfurt am Main 2000.

Derrida J., *Sovereignties in Question: The Poetics of Paul Celan*, Th. Dutoit and O. Pasanen (eds.), New York 2005.

Derrida J., *The Gift of Death and Literature in Secret*, trans. D. Wills, Chicago 2008.

Englund A., *Still Songs: Music in and Around the Poetry of Paul Celan*, Aldershot 2013.

Kramer L., *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History*, Berkeley, CA 2002.

Wolosky Sh., "Aesthetics and History in Paul Celan", available at: http://www.academia.edu/4345262/Aesthetics_and_History_in_Paul_Celan (accessed: March 2014).

Contributors

Ralph Buchenhorst is Senior Research Fellow at the Research Cluster/Graduate School "Society and Culture in Motion", Martin-Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany. Currently he holds a DAAD guest professorship at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Buchenhorst has taught at several German and international universities. From 2002 to 2006 he was a guest professor at the Department of Philosophy of the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina. Recent publications: *The Element of Afterlife: On the Limits of Representing the Shoah in Philosophy, Cultural Studies and the Arts* (Munich 2011); *Urban Observations: Walter Benjamin and the New Cities* (co-editor, Buenos Aires/Bielefeld 2007/2010); *Politics of Remembrance: Tensions in Writing and Depicting* (co-editor; Mexico-City/Buenos Aires 2007); several articles on memory discourses, aesthetics, and philosophy of art.

Kirsten Dyck earned an Honours BFA in Music (2005) and an MA in Ethnomusicology (2008) at York University in Canada, as well as a PhD in American Studies from Washington State University in the USA (2012). She was a 2011 Auschwitz Jewish Center Fellow, and through a 2011-2012 Fulbright fellowship, she conducted doctoral research with the "Music, Conflict and the State" research group at the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen in Germany. She currently teaches for the History Department at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia, USA, and will be a 2014 Cummings Foundation Fellow at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Arman Goharinasab graduated with a B.A in Persian music performance from the University of Art (Tehran) in 2009 and now (in 2014) he is a postgraduate student of ethnomusicology at the University of Tehran. His research concentrates on different aspects of Persian music in the 20th century and on Turkmen music and musicians with a special focus on the impact of sociopolitical evolutions in the past 150 years on Turkmen music and culture. He also performs traditional Persian and Turkmen music playing the dutar and geyjak.

M. J. Grant, Mareike Jacobs, Rebecca Möllemann, Simone Christine Münz and Cornelia Nuxoll have all worked in the research group "Music, Conflict and the State" which from 2008-2014 was based at the University of Göttingen. The group was set up to promote and conduct research into the use of music in

conflict situations, particularly where music is used to promote, facilitate or accompany violent responses to conflict. The group's founder-leader, the music sociologist M. J. Grant, has published extensively on music in conflict situations, in the context of torture, and on human rights implications of musical practices, as well as on the historical anthropology of songs and singing, and new and experimental composition since 1950. Mareike Jacobs studied social anthropology and musicology in Göttingen. She is currently conducting research on recordings made in prisoner of war camps in Germany during World War I as part of the the DFG-project "Valorisation and digitisation of the recordings of the Prussian Phonographic Commission 1915-1918" at the Phonogramm Archive in Berlin. Rebecca Möllemann is currently a PhD student in ethnomusicology at the University of Toronto; her thesis looks at Argentinean tango in connection with 20th century dictatorships in Argentina. Simone Christine Münz is a doctoral candidate in cultural sciences at the Leuphana University Lüneburg, Germany; in 2012 she was a visiting researcher at the Florida International University in Miami, USA. Her research focuses on the meaning and function of music in radio broadcasting from the Cuban diaspora in Miami, Florida to Cuba. Cornelia Nuxoll is a doctoral candidate in social anthropology with a special focus on ethnomusicology in sub-Saharan Africa and a postgraduate background in sustainable development cooperation. Her research examines the role and impact of music among juvenile RUF combatants involved in the Sierra Leon civil war of the 1990s.

Wojciech Klimczyk is a lecturer in the Centre for Comparative Studies of Civilizations at Jagiellonian University (Krakow). He is the author of two books: *Postmodern Eroticism* (Universitas 2008) and *Visionaries of the Body. Panorama of Contemporary Dance Theatre* (Ha!art 2010) and numerous articles published in anthologies and Polish journals. His interests encompass two main fields of research – dance theory/dance history and sexuality in popular culture. On the side he is also interested in theatre, music, film and visual arts. He is currently working on his new monograph *Virus of Mobilization. Dance and forming of modernity.* Klimczyk is also very active outside the academic world co-leading the Harakiri Farmers artistic collective which operates on the boarder of dance, theatre and performance art. With HAFA he has run over a dozen projects serving as director and dramaturge.

Lawrence Kramer is Distinguished Professor of English and Music at Fordham University (New York), the longtime editor of the journal "19th Century Music", and a prizewinning composer whose works have been performed

internationally. The most recent of his many books include *Expression and Truth: On the Music of Knowledge* and *Interpreting Music*. Among recent and forthcoming premieres are his *Cyclorama* (four songs), *Evocations* (ten etudes for piano and optional voice), and *String Quartet no. 5*.

Azadeh Latifkar graduated with an M.A in Art Studies from the University of Tehran in 2010 and since then has worked as a lecturer in the history of art and architecture continuing at the same time her research as a PhD student in the history of Islamic art at the University of Art (Tehran) in 2014. After moving to Gonbad-e Kavoos City (Turkmen Sahra in the north of Iran) she began to study the Turkmen society with particular focus on the women, their musical rituals and crafts.

Matt Lawson is a musicologist specialising in music for film and television. Having completed his undergraduate honours degree in music at Huddersfield in 2009, Matt has since gained an MA with distinction from the University of York (2012). Matt will complete a PhD at Edge Hill University in 2015, focusing on the representational issues surrounding German Holocaust film music. Matt also has an academic grounding in a wide range of musicological fields, ranging from Romanticism to the use of Richard Wagner's music in American cartoons.

Katarzyna Naliwajek-Mazurek, PhD has been member of the faculty of the Institute of Musicology at the University of Warsaw since 2007. Her research interests include the interrelationship between music and politics in the 1930s and 1940s, music aesthetics, music theory and analysis, the history of theory and Polish contemporary music. Her current research centres on music during the World War II in occupied Poland. A recipient of the Paul Sacher Foundation research scholarship (2005). Her doctoral dissertation (2009) received the Feicht Award of the Musicologists' Section of the Polish Composers' Union. For her international multi-media exhibition "Music in Nazi-occupied Poland" presented in France, Germany and Poland she was awarded the Hosenfeld/Szpilman Gedenkpreis at the Lüneburg University in 2011. She is currently on the board of the Witold Lutosławski Association and is a member of the programme committee of the International Contemporary Music Festival "Warsaw Autumn".

Joanna Posłuszna, PhD is a psychologist and assistant professor at the Institute of Psychology at Maria Sklodowska-Curie University in Lublin. She is the author of *Music Preferences and Personality, Music and its roots, Nonconformism of art in the dock,* an editor of *Psychology of art and creativity.* She is currently at work on

Music and Power. Her fields of interest include the psychology of art, psychology of music, personality, body awareness, music and politics, memory and culture.

Łukasz Posłuszny, is a PhD candidate at the sociology department of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. He received his M.A. in Philosophy (2010), Polish Literature (2011) and Sociology (2012) from Adam Mickiewicz University. He is the co-author of *Questions for Memory. Autobiographical Accounts of Concentration Camps Prisoners* (2012), and several texts concerning memory practices. He focuses on areas of memory and Holocaust studies, with a special interest in sociology of everyday, material culture and urban studies.

Leszek Sosnowski, Prof. Assist., in the Institute of Philosophy at the Jagiellonian University, His research interests include the philosophy of art, philosophy of expression and transcultural philosophy. He is the author of (among others) a monograph *Art – Rhetoric – Physiognomy. A Study on Philosophy of Expession* and *Art, History, Theory: Arthur C. Danto's worlds.*