Ostbahnhof Berlin:

Jewish Music Students of East European Origin at the Berlin Music Conservatory

(*Hochschule*[1] *für Musik)*, 1918-1933.

By Adam J. Sacks[2] © 2017

The year after his death, Kafka's last companion strutted through the doors of the Berlin Music Conservatory for the inaugural auditions of its newly formed acting school. Kafka had met Dora the summer before his untimely passing at a Jewish people's home centered in the East European Jewish *Scheunenviertel* district of Berlin. While working to prepare Jewish youth for emigration to the *Yishuv*, Dora may have been drawn to the stage by Kafka's well-known embrace of Yiddish theater.[3] Born in Poland (Pabianice) and raised Chassidic, Dora apparently chose for her audition nothing less than Gretchen's verses from Goethe's *Faust Part One* for the eminent directors.[4] She was rejected; the negative verdict dispensed with the personal pronoun: "doesn't speak German." ("*spricht nicht deutsch").* Undaunted, she returned for another round. Her preparations reveal an ambition to raise Yiddish to high art theater as the judges noted her material was "prepared firmly on Yiddish texts."[5] The gatekeeper she faced down was Leopold Jessner, a Socialist of Jewish origins who pioneered Expressionism in Berlin, and tragically, ended his life as

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[1] *Hochschule* is the German term for any institution of higher learning of a specific applied field (as distinct from a university). For the sake of translation I employ the more familiar English-language term, conservatory.

2 I would like to acknowledge at the outset the tremendous aide, attention and time provided by Dr. Dietmar Schenk and Antje Kalcher of the University Archive of the University of the Arts, Berlin, as well as Franziska Stoff, Marek Schwandt, Inken Petersen, Dr. Susanna McFadden and Shira Klapper.

[3] Stiftung Juedisches Museum and Osteuropa Institute, Freie Universitât. *Berlin Transit.* Wallstein Verlag, 2012, 82.

[3] Dietmar Schenk. *Die Hochschule für Musik zu Berlin.* Franz Steiner Verlag, 2004, 198

[4] Ibid

[5] Ibid.

a refugee in obscurity in Los Angeles in 1934. While Kafka may have had an avant-garde vision of hybridity, even in post-WWI Social Democratically governed "Red Prussia", German language allegiance remained the decisive portal through which artistic subjectivity was to proceed.

Theater, unlike music, privileges certain normative aesthetic ideals and affective gestures and linguistic references oriented to majority populations. Activity in the theater more often than not presupposes linguistic mastery. Indeed, for Kafka, language, and therefore theater, is "land", while music is the "ocean,"[6] – vast, if not borderless, implying a doorway to the absolute, even the universal, especially for socially mobile European Jews longing for a path out of the margins.[7] Thus, music was a medium for mobility, nobility and even the transcendence of origins and the strictures of fixed identity. Dora was denied a student position. However, in this essay, I will portray and analyze the numerous Jewish musicians of Eastern Europe, instrumentalists and composers, who far from being turned away from the *Hochschule für Musik* of the Weimar Republic, found encouragement and advancement. While Jews traditionally made up around 30% of music students at the Conservatory the dramatic influx of students from Eastern Europe between the years of 1918 until 1933 increased this proportion even more. Of the consistent 20-30% of East European born-students throughout the period, the overwhelming majority of these are readily identifiable as Jewish.[89] A select few, such as Wladislaw Szpilman (Warsaw), Jascha

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[6] Leon Botstein, "The Cultural Politics of Language and Music," in *Janacek and his World*, Michael Beckerman, Ed. Princeton University Press, 2001, 27.

[7] Leon Botstein et al, Eds. *Quasi una Fantasia*, Wolke, 2003, 51. Though often a pragmatic choice, complex layers of religious orientation to post-Enlightenment philosophy further overdetermined the great modern Jewish surge toward the musical arts in so many European countries.

[8] This is a notoriously complex and problematic issue, the specifics of which in this context will be attended to later in this discussion. Suffice it to say, layers of intermarriage, name alteration and even conversion further complicate this picture. For the purposes of analysis I have chosen to focus upon those cases upon which there can be little argument. A primary historical factor however that unites both the Central and the

Horenstein (Kiev), Joseph Rosenstock (Krakow) or Karol Rathaus (Tarnopol), went on to find the doorway to international notoriety, or at least the makings thereof at one point or another in their lives. In this historical portrait of the composition students as well as the instrumentalists of East European Jewish origin, issues both existential and stylistic are paramount, as are issues of identity, as all had to face complexities of Jewish self-awareness and subjectivity in the face of a contested and transforming German musical space in Berlin. Indeed, unlike Paris, Berlin was far less multiethnic making Jews markedly more conspicuous.[10] From the Director down to the first year instrumentalist student, all were challenged by the creeping shadow of radical anti-Semitic reaction. The wider historical backdrop constituted was what may have been the bloodiest peacetime years in modern German History. The first four years after WWI brought with them runaway inflation, putsch attempts from the right and the left, as well as almost 400 political assassinations.[11] The personal and familial journeys of these students were part of a larger post-World War I East European migration pattern emerging out of newly formed nation-states, contested national loyalties and new regimes of borders and citizenship. This complex nexus coalesced in debates over musical modernism and cultural policy as supported and inaugurated by the new Social Democratic government in Berlin.

East European contexts is that the line of Jewishness, as the color line for much of American history, provided the dominant measure of inclusion and otherness. For generations before the advent of "race science," Jewishness was thought of as a characteristic that could not be gotten rid of. Jewishness in this historical context is a decisive biographical detail. Peripheral or even suppressive treatment of this fact may reinforce the idea of Jewishness as stigma. This continues an historical process of judgment, in a reverse form, which once condemned Jews based on identity, now they can be celebrated on condition that their Jewishness is erased. See Jascha Nemtsov. *Doppelt Vertrieben.* Harrassowitz Verlag, 2003.

[9] This was in no sense without tradition. In the year 1912, of 4,300 foreign students in the German Reich, 45% of them were Jewish from the Russian Empire. Karl Schlögel and Karl-Konrad Tschäpe, Eds. *Der Russische Revolution und das Schiksal der russischen Juden,* Matthias & Seitz Berlin, 2014, 67. (Das russisch-jüdische berlin)

[10] *Berlin Transit,* 87.

[11] Christopher Hailey. *Franz Schrecker: 1878-1934.* Cambridge University Press, 1993, 138.

World War I had broken the German Empire but also the boundaries that had held Berlin culturally restrained by an Imperial conservative aristocratic ruling class. Outside observers such as the Polish Jewish piano virtuoso Artur Rubinstein had referred to pre-war Berlin as "konservatopolis."[12] Dr. Kurt Singer, a lecturer and in-house doctor, who aside from the piano virtuoso Leonid Kreutzer may have been the most important mediator for East European Jewish students at the conservatory was similarly critical. Declaring the old, pre-war Conservatory "ossified" and a "bulwark against progress" he once wrote that it truly counted as an honor to be expelled from that institution.[13] Almost overnight, following the end of the war, the conservatory emerged as part of not only one of the most exciting transformations in recent European history but also as what several historians agree to have been, the greatest music conservatory on earth at the time.[14] The figurehead of this transfer of musical energy to Berlin was the composer Franz Schreker who declared Berlin "100 times better than Vienna."[15] Kafka himself said that Berlin hangs over Prague like the heavens over the earth.[16] Not to be underestimated was the greater cultural tension that prevailed in Prague and the comparative absence of the newly virulent forms of modern political anti-Semitism by then already firmly entrenched in Vienna.[17] Describing Austria after the First World War, Artur Schnabel described "a crippled being which could neither die nor live."[18]

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[12] *Berlin Transit* 56.
[13] Dr. Kurt Singer, "*Die neue Hochschule für Musik in Berlin," Die Musikwelt,* February, 1921.
[14] Leon Botstein, Christopher Hailey and Dietmar Schenk all reach this conclusion separately in their accounts.
[15] *Quasi una Fantasia,* 153
[16] *Berlin Transit, 82.*
[17] *Quasi una Fantasia*, 154.
[18] Schnabel, 24.

The most successful opera composer of his day, (Schreker held the Guinness World Record of the day for the most productions of an opera which in this case was his 1920 opus *Der Schatzgräber* to prove it) Schreker, whose father was a Bohemian Jew, was invited to take over the directorship of the conservatory, by the new Social Democratic *Kulturreferent* in the Ministry of Education[19], Leo Kestenberg. This new power-broker and chief musical headhunter of the Weimar Republic was an improbably rotund and bespectacled Slovakian-born, Jewish concert pianist and Socialist activist (whose father, born in Lodz, was raised apparently exclusively in Yiddish and could not read or write until age 35).[2021] Using idealistic terms that envision music as a force for social correction that foreshadow Venezuela's *El Sistema*, the duo of Kestenberg and Schreker envisioned a fully revamped Conservatory as a kind of University of music, open to the latest innovations and technology while embedding music throughout all disciplines of study and all aspects of life.[22] The further objective of this project was a democratic renewal of a bourgeois music culture beset by the threatening deluge of a newly emergent mass culture and a tenaciously radical avant-garde.

[19] The full official name was *Ministerium für Wissienschaft, Kunst und Volksbildung* (it had previously been *Ministerium für Geistliche und Unterrichtsangelegenheiten).*

[20] This statement relies heavily on Kestenberg's own account in his memoirs. See Leo Kestenberg *Bewegte Zeiten*, Möseler Verlag, 1961.

[21] After WWII Adorno declared Schrecker as the most famous of those composers who exercised a considerable influence before the Hitler dictatorship but were then consigned to oblivion. See Theodor Adorno, *Quasi una fantasia*. Trans. Rodney Livingstone. Verso, 1998, 130. He further found it a "scarcely comprehensible fact that a famous composer should have been able to disappear in so short a time, not just from public consciousness, but that she should have been buried by oblivion as if beneath a heavy stone." Adorno, *Quasi una Fantasia,* 136.

[22] Kestenberg was an early target of German nationalists because he removed war songs from school instruction. Under direct physical threat, he ultimately left to became the Intendant of the Palestine Sympony Orchestra. Hans-Werner Heister. *"Entartete musik" 1938 – Weimar und die Ambivalenz*. Pfau, 2001. *, xxiii,* 503.

Schreker, unique perhaps amongst major composers in the modern high art tradition, trained nearly two whole generations of new composers. He saw to this in part by facilitating the transplantation of almost the entirety of his composition class of the Vienna Conservatory to Berlin. Berlin as a global cultural center was a new concept however one that was rapidly established: the Schreker students joined a veritable transplantation of almost the entirety of Vienna's cultural elite to Berlin.[23] As Vienna was the capital of a vast empire before the war, its students were composed of many Jews who, naturally, had journeyed from the far eastern reaches of Galicia and Bukovina. But it was not merely these students of East European Jewish origin that constitute the focus here, rather they were joined by an even larger migration of Jews from various districts of the Russian Empire who had migrated (in some cases with their families) after the Bolshevik Revolution. The *éminence grise* of East European Jewish historiography, Simon Dubnow, who himself had relocated to Berlin after World War I, saw in the German capitol, a transit station in the world historical shift of the Jewish center from Poland and Russia to Israel and the United States.[24] He even referred to the Berlin University founded by von Humboldt as the "most beautiful of all yeshivas."[25] There were young Jews who came from even further afield buoyed by hopes and enthusiasm. Indeed, a one Leon Klepper from Jassy, Romania, who despite being expelled from the Conservatory on disciplinary grounds, wrote of the "exceedingly beautiful

[23] It may rightly be called a "mass exodus," and included Hanns Eisler, Erich Kleiber, Fritz Lang, Lotte Lenya, Georg Pabst, Max Reinhardt, Artur Schnabel, Arnold Schoenberg, Erich Stroheim, Josef von Sternberg, Ernst Toch, Alexander Zemlinksy and Billy Wilder. See Hermann Schlösser. Die Wiener in Berlin. Wien 2011.
[24] *Berlin Transit*, 13.
[25] Karl Schlögel. *Das russische Berlin*, Hanser, 2007, 290.

times in Berlin." The interdiction that he could never return, he described as "unbearably painful" and left him "incessantly expecting to wake up from a dark dream."[2627]

The remarkable rise in the number of East Europeans at the Conservatory was also connected to the startling post-World War One political vacuum. Self-inflicted German isolation began with the rupture caused to relations with West European countries in the wake of the war. Anticipating this rupture between the German-speaking lands and West Europe, Stefan Zweig wrote a prophetic farewell "to friends in foreign land" at the start of the war[28]. British and French personnel and students, previously commonplace now deserted the Conservatory. For instance, with the onset of the "Great War," Henri Marteau from France and Wanda Landowska (naturalized French, born Polish Jewish), departed from German territory never to return.[29] The empty spaces left behind were a necessary precondition for Kestenberg and Schrecker's transformation and new demographic alignment. Room was created for the inclusion of Social Democrats, Schrecker's class from Vienna, as well as the numerous East European students (mostly Jewish) who would disproportionately flock to the interwar conservatory, a place to which they would only have had access under the Old Regime with considerably greater difficulty. A motivating context or compelling push for these students may have been the new, post-WWI Versailles or Paris system that first officially designated Jews in a variety of East European nations

[26] Letter from Leon Klepper, 15th of December 1922. *Universitätsarchiv*, 558/413
[27] Ibid. Indeed, there were also a sprinkling of Jewish students from the *Yishuv* (pre-state Israel) and the United States who neither ranked among the stellar students nor were numerous enough to warrant significant attention.
[28] The full text may be view here: http://www.asymptotejournal.com/nonfiction/stefan-zweig-to-friends-in-foreign-land/
[29] Marteau's case was slightly more complex. As the son of a German mother, he opted first to stay in Germany, then became entangled in a spy case, and ultimately fled to Sweden. France apparently never forgave his perceived disloyalty. Bryan Crimp, liner notes, "The Great Violinists," Testament 2003.

as minorities.[30] New nationalistically oriented regimes instituted quota systems against Jews in academia while also subjecting the men to mandatory military service. The new regime of citizenship and border controls added bureaucratic layers of complexity to study abroad, while for some students such study could actually set such military service at bay.[31] One of Schrecker's composition students, Norbert Gingold of Czernowitz requested documentation to secure further delay of his military induction appointment in Romania.[32] His composition classmate Jerzy Fitelberg, born in Warsaw, who would actually later win a prize for young polish composers in Paris, also requested similar documentation to submit to the Polish consulate.[33] (Fitelberg was also personally close with Karol Szymanovski, the most eminent Polish composer of the era.) Isaak Schattenstein of Vilna, who studied piano, is yet another student who expressed great concern over the documentation needed to delay reporting to the Polish military.[34] Actual cases of deportation by the Berlin police authorities were extremely seldom as were outright denial by authorities in countries of origin. A one Rachela Tennenbaum, mother of aspiring music student Faigla (Felicia) from Bendzin, in a letter to the director of the Conservatory did state that Polish authorities often look for pretexts to make difficulties.[35] The case of her daughter was particularly challenging in that her daughter, like many others as will soon be addressed, had her studies continually interrupted due to illness. It is possible that as students experienced uprootedness and the loss of older life

[30] Stevem Aschheim. *At the Edges of Liberalism*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 147.
[31] Conservatory staff seemed to enjoy a cooperative working relationship with the *Polizei-Präsidenten* of Berlin. See letter on 17th December 1923, *Universitätsarchiv,* 541/328.
[32] *Universitätsarchiv,* 541/309.
[33] *Universitätsarchiv* 534/313.
[34] *Universitätsarchiv,* 597/125.
[35] *Universitätsarchiv*, 604/191.

forms, it may have proved challenging for them to identify or accommodate to a new reality, musically, culturally or otherwise.[36]

The group of Schreker students is particularly significant for the history of Jews and music, in that some of these young composers were poised to be the first major high art composers of the 20th Century to have direct East European origins. In particular, it was Schrecker's laissez-faire, non-dogmatic style of pedagogy that proved a point of attraction. As evidenced by his correspondence with a one Alfred Freudenheim of Premsyl, the Director embraced a fatherly tone with his students inquiring with genuine concern after their family troubles.[37] This emotional immediacy is also mirrored in the musical aesthetic of Schreker and many of his students, which has been characterized by a "grandiose orchestral technology of sensuous and emotional involvement."[38] Encouraging both experimentation and eclecticism, he created a welcoming educational home for aspirational youth. Musically he offered a generous and appealing framework: a mediated, "mainstream" modernism of extended tonality rather than atonality, that fused popular elements of the emerging entertainment industry with themes and methods from the avant-garde.[39]

While the Jewish, non-German roots and the modernist reputation of Schrecker cannot have been entirely lost on some of his students, other senior affiliates to the Conservatory, such as Kestenberg and Dr. Singer may have been readily identifiable as second generation Jewish

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[36] Jochen Oltmer. *Migration und Politik in der Weimarer Republik.* Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005, 90.
[37] See Dietmar Schenk, Markus Böggemann and Rainer Cadenbach, Eds. *Franz Schrekers Schüler in Berlin.* Universität der Künste Berlin, 2005.
[38] Peter Franklin. *Late Romantic Music*, University of California Press, 193.
[39] See Christopher Hailey See, *"Schreker, die Schreker-Schule und der Mainstream der Moderne" (in: "Wohin geht der Flug? Zur Jugend". Franz Schreker und seine Schüler in Berlin*, Eds. Markus Böggemann and Dietmar Schenk. Georg Olms Verlag, 2009, 11-24

migrants. (Dr. Singer's father was a Rabbi from Slovakia, while Kestenberg's had originally been a Cantor in Poland).[40] Leonid Kreutzer, the faculty member with the greatest East European *bona fides* demonstrably attracted a great disproportion of East European Jewish students. Kreutzer even intervened directly with the police on behalf of certain students beseeching them to consider that the foreign students make the biggest sacrifices to reach their goals.[41] Beyond even the usual framework of mentoring there may even have been a kind of ersatz father figure relationship at work.[42] Pragmatically speaking, as a public institution, the fees of the Conservatory were reasonable and offered ample opportunity for additional subvention and scholarship. (There existed a much more expensive, private Jewish-run music conservatory named the "Stern Conservatory" that was largely the preserve of the native Berlin Jewish *grande bourgeoisie).*[43] While there may certainly have been a voluntary social self-segregation that existed, the strict distinction between "German" and "East European" Jew here is difficult to maintain in this period. By the twenties almost 20% of the "German" community was by this time made up of East European Jews and many Jews in East Europe, especially among the Russified bourgeoisie, no longer fit what had been considered an East European "type."[44][45]

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[40] This isn't to say that they did not see themselves as German Jews, which from the point of view of citizenship, they certainly were.

[41] *Universitätsarchiv,* 541/328.

[42] Indeed in many cases, the designation "German Jewish" and "East European" may be thought of as generational identities as much as geographic. For many east-central European Jews could contain both as options within the same family. In fact, due to their geographic and generational proximity to Poland, the Jews of Posen, out of which the modern Berlin Jewish population largely derived, were viewed as East European by the Jews of Bavaria. See Trude Maurer. *Ostjuden in Deutschland.* H. Christians Verlag, 1986, 13.

[43] Cordula Heymann-Wentzel. *Das Stern'sche Konservatorium der Musik in Berlin. Universität der Künste*, Berlin, 2014.

[44] Ezra Mendelssohn. *The Jews of East-Central Europe between the World Wars.* Indiana University Press, 1987,14.

Perhaps of all the composition students of East European origin under Schreker, Karol Rathaus may be the most exemplary. He had not only the greatest brush with genuine fame and inclusion, but also, among the composition students from East Europe, the clearest representations of both Polish and Jewish influences in equal measure in his work. Rathaus wrote Mazurkas and a *Polonaise Symphonique*, as well as piano sonatas based in part on East European Jewish traditional singing, and scores for the performance of *Uriel Acosta* by the Habimah theater troupe. (After 1933 he also often conducted his own works for the Warsaw radio and provided the soundtrack for two documentary films in service of the pre-state Israeli *Histadrut.*)[46] Unlike his Berlin classmate and fellow Jewish Galician, Max Brand (né Lemberg), Rathaus had no significant interest either in 12-tone or newfangled "machine music." Despite his putative Austro-Galician origins, Rathaus was consistently described as "Polish" by his one-time fellow national, Ernst Krenek.[47] In fact, Krenek described Rathaus as motivated by a fanatic will to overcome prejudice, aware as he was of the almost universal contempt and utter social devaluation accorded specifically to Polish Jews in the Central European context.[48] One should not underestimate the degree to which the drive to compose and create amounted to, at least, psychologically, part of the fight against and defense from anti-Semitic denigration.

Coming from a family of musicians, Rathaus spent his entire childhood in Tarnopol before he first joined Schreker's composition class in Vienna after *Gymnaisum*. In his brief autobiography

[45] In certain parts of Germany, such as Saxony, East European Jews made up almost 60% of the Jewish population by around the time of the First World War. See Jack Wertheimer. *Unwelcome Strangers. Westheimer,* Oxford University Press, 1987, 80.
[46] Carmen Otter. *Was Damals als Unglaublich Kuehnheit Erschien.* Peter Lang, 2000, 168.
[47] Ernst Krenek. *Im Atem der Zeit.* Hoffmann und Campe, 1998, 304.
[48] Ibid, 158.

he records that as a child he was quite familiar with traditional Jewish musical life.[49] While still a student in Berlin, Rathaus had his works performed by the Vienna Philharmonic Chorus and received a ten-year publication contract with *Universal Edition.*[50] By the end of the decade, he had the fortune to see a ballet and and an opera of his premiered at the Berlin State Opera under the batons of Erich Kleiber and George Szell. Though once called "one of the strongest hopes of our new music" by a prominent German music critic, Rathaus' stay in Berlin proved only one of many further stops on his musical migration before landing him in the relative obscurity of Queens College where he remained until his death.[51]

Rathaus did enjoy the support and comradely behavior of other Berlin graduates of Polish-Jewish origin. The premiere of his Second Symphony sparked controversy that so shook his confidence that he decided against a premiere of his First, delayed because of its imposing stature. It was however, former classmate Joseph Rosenstock who, in 1926 as General Music Director of the State Theater in Darmstadt, took up the baton and brought the symphony to the public. The premiere was met with boos and whistles with some of the public clearly indulging in anti-Semitic sentiments.[52] Though Rosenstock did produce a small but notable oeuvre of original works, his career as a conductor marks him as one of the outstanding Polish-Jewish students in the Berlin of his day. He is further distinguished by the fact that unlike many other East European students (Szpilman is the other major exception), Rosenstock did at first attend a music conservatory in Poland, namely, in his hometown of Krakow. His precocious career enabled an early departure

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[49] Martin Schüssler "karol rathaus zum 100. Geburtstag," in musica reanimata Mitteilungsblatt, nr. 16, September 1995, 3.
[50] Boris Schwarz, "Karol Rathaus," *The Musical Quarterly. Vol. 41, No. 4 (Oct. 1955)*, 483.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Dietmar Schenk, Markus Böggemann and Rainer Cadenbach, Eds. *Franz Schrekers Schüler in Berlin.* Universität der Künste Berlin, 2005, 100.

from the Berlin Conservatory: his first appointment was as Kappelmeister in Stuttgart, then Darmstadt, Wiesbaden and Mannheim, until he replaced Artur Bodanzky as conductor of the Metropolitan Opera in New York in 1929. Rosenstock would later gain a significance in the history of the Jews in Nazi Germany as the first musical director of the *Jüdischer Kulturbund* from 1933-1936, invited as he was by fellow Conservatory colleague and *Kulturbund* founder Dr. Kurt Singer. As an early leader of this idiosyncratic and contested institution, Rosenstock would help to lay the foundations for a musical and cultural asylum for Jews beleaguered by the duress of Nazi persecutory measures.

There is one other Polish Jewish musician of the Berlin Conservatory who would transcend even historical significance and become something of a cultural symbol for the Holocaust. That is Wladislaw Szpilman, the subject of the recent Roman Polanski movie *The Pianist.*
Szpilman was born in 1911 in Sosnowiec to a father who was a member of the orchestra of the Polish theater in Kattowice. By the end of his long life- he died in 2000 in Warsaw- Szpilman had arguably come to have a greater presence in Polish rather than Jewish national identity. Like Rosenstock, he had already studied for several years at a Polish music conservatory, in Warsaw. Though only in Berlin for three brief years, from 1930-1933, he managed to study composition with Schreker and piano with Kreutzer before returning to Warsaw. Musically, Szpilman would gain fame as a Chopin interpreter, later as a composer of Polish *chansons.* Even in his now internationally-renowned time in the Warsaw ghetto (which was the subject of more than one Polish language film years before that of Polanski), Szpilman remained rather firmly ensconced in a thoroughly Polonized cultural milieu.[53]

[53] Schenk, Eds., 123.

For a final example of an East European Jewish composition student who later found an international echo, one might turn to Jascha Horenstein. Horenstein's significance derives less for his compositions-like Rosenstock, he turned towards conducting quite early on,-than for how his life story opens a window onto the boundaries and formations of cultural subjectivity. Horenstein was born in Kiev, the 13th of 16 children of an affluent paper and sugar manufacturer. Though his family migrated from Kiev first to East Prussia and then to Vienna after the revolution and pogrom wave of 1905, Horenstein came from entirely outside of even the most generous rendition of the orbit of a Germanic cultural sphere in East Europe. His interwar engagements reflect an investment and immersion in the more progressive elements of German-speaking Central Europe. Early on in his student years, he made a name for himself as a particularly suited Mahler conductor, a leader of socially conscious choirs and as an affiliate of the "November Group," composers who sought to espouse and endorse the "German revolution" of 1918.[54]

Documents relating to his application for German citizenship in 1923 shed light on Horenstein as a case that tests the limits of East European engagement in the German cultural sphere. In his request for a letter of support, Horenstein explicitly bade his teacher Schreker to emphasize that "I am intellectually and in the cultural sense a product of German culture."[55] Schreker rises to the occasion in dramatic terms, possibly verging on exaggeration: "He (Horenstein) was raised German and is to be spoken of, in his whole essence and artistic development, as a German feeling artist."[56]

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[54] Ibid, 57.
[55] See Letter on the 6th of March 1923. *Universitätsarchiv*, 547/515.
[56] Ibid.

The historical irony, at first glance, of an Austrian "half" Jew arguing for the Germanness of a Jewish musician raised in Kiev might be construed as tragic if not somewhat grotesque. One might retort this impression with the hypothesis that "German" here figures, paradoxically as a non-national or even counter-national category. Germanness functions as a kind of necessary transitional or mediation phase to the cosmopolitan. German culture, even for Jews east of the boundary of the German or Austrian state, formed a privileged vehicle of cultured universalism for the culturally aspirational.[57] This may have proved especially appealing in the light of the formation of new regimes, boundaries, and minorities as well as nationalistic agendas in newly established countries of East-Central Europe. In the borderlands of Poland/Lithuania/Belarus or Poland/Ukraine/Romania, there may not have been an obvious cultural anchor or identification point, precisely where the German as distant and aspiration ideal could best full the void. In fact, the younger generation of Jews of Eastern European origin had a host of models from the older generation who found success in the German-speaking world, for example, Anton Rubinstein, and later Bronislaw Huberman or Emmanuel Feuermann, all of whom never lost very noticeable accents from East Europe.[58]

In a wider historical context, the 19th Century nationalist discourse inside the German lands was often explicitly maximalist in that the notion that German culture or Germanness was spread in lands far beyond the borders of majority German-speaking territory. It was self-evident that Germanness spread out into the Low Countries or throughout Eastern Europe. The paradigmatic

[57] Elsewhere this has been framed as amounting to what may be termed a nationalist cosmopolitanism.See Michael P. Steinberg. *Austria as Theater and Ideology.* Cornell University Press, 2000. For the Jewish musicians in migration that are at question here, I would argue that the German functions as a means to transcend or counter the national as a category itself.

[58] Botstein, *Quasi una Fantasia*, 52.

reflection of this may be the Walhalla memorial or German "hall of fame" that was established in the first half of the 19th Century in Regensburg. Built in the style of a neo-Classical Acropolis, the inclusion of a couple of Russian Field Marshalls of German-descent, who may even have fought against Germans was not considered controversial. For the first "native-born" Jew to find a place, observers would have to wait until 1990, for the arrival of Albert Einstein.[59]

Overall, music enjoyed a special status within this Central/East European orbit. One could argue that, within this sphere, German culture offered a necessary transition portal though which one could acquire training and materials needed to speak and create for the whole world. As music was not only the subject of collective experience but also put forth the least obstacles to transnational movement among the arts, it is no surprise that it is within music that Jews established their earliest and perhaps most numerous and disproportional cultural presence in Europe.[60] As aforementioned, the era of Schreker and his students was one where for a brief moment it seemed that many Jews, especially those of East European origins appeared poised to uphold the succession of the great Austro-German symphonic and operatic tradition.

Eastern European nationalist agendas, at that time in full swing, were often directly grafted onto or charged with exclusivist religiosity. It is remarkable that of the clearly non-Jewish East Europeans at the Conservatory several were there explicitly to forge a nationalist musical idiom.[61] The German lands, with their long history of religious conflict and tension had long used music as a supra-confessional transcendent realm especially attractive to secularizing Jews. One might even

[59] See Reinhard Alings. *Monument und Nation*. Walter de Gruyter, 1996.
[60] Mendelssohn, 9.
[61] See Jascha Nemstoz, Ed. *Jüdische Kunstmusik im 20 Jahrhundert*. Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006. For non-Jewish East Europeans, the case of Vladas Jakubenas is particularly instructive as he marshaled Schreker's modernism to the cause of developing a Lithuanian musical idiom. See Schenk, Eds. 67-9.

conjecture that especially for Jews in nationally contested borderland areas without "historical" states such as Ukraine, Latvia or Belarus, the attraction to the German sphere may have been especially strong. In fact, the first state-supported Jewish schools in the Russian Empire used German-language textbooks at the outset in the second half of the 19th Century.[62] The linguistic proximity of Yiddish to German may have offered an accelerated path for many Jews of East European origin to German culture; affluent Russianized Jews may have found the adaptation to German bourgeois culture hardly a bridge too far.[6364] Thus the Jewish composition students of East European origin at the Berlin Conservatory may be framed as pursuant of an alternative musical agenda, of the modern Jews, conscious of and sensitive to national allegiances but ultimately committed to their transcendence.

Indeed, as with so many other Jewish musicians in this context, Horenstein was transformed, perhaps unwittingly into a pioneering globalizer, continuing his career in Moscow, then with the *Palestine Orchestra* (along with Kestenberg) and finally in England. The case of Horenstein is particularly suited as I transition from an exploration of the select coterie of composition and conducting students, to the far more numerous instrumental Jewish students of East European origin at the Berlin Conservatory. Like Horenstein, many of these students found themselves in a state of transition, if not upheaval with regards to both cultural allegiance and citizenship status. An example even more bewildering than that of Horenstein's claim to Germanness is that of Benzion/Boris Lewi (later Hermann Weill) born on the 19th of November, 1895 in the small Ukrainian small town of Berenegowatoje, north of Crimea. Originally a violin

[62] Nemstov *Doppelt Vertrieben,* 18.
[63] Ibid.
64 The Russian community was generally more middle class. *Berlin Transit*, 15.

student, his record of study, which extended from 1920-1925 is marked by numerous interruptions. Ten years later, in 1935, he found himself a 1st solo cellist with a chance to become the leader of a chamber music class at the music conservatory in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Requesting a letter of recommendation, he refers to his intention "to carry German pre-classic and classical music to wider circles." With the missionary zeal of a convert, Lewi/Weill frames the German classical music canon as a kind of portable confessional a concept readily familiar to Jews. Apparently, he had already changed his name to Hermann Weill during his Berlin days, but takes special care to ensure this change would further be honored.[65] It is notable that this name change was not to secure a gentile identity to cloak Jewishness, but rather to inhabit and self-present what would have been perceived as a distinctly German-Jewish identity. Astonishingly he signs the letter off "with German greeting" an idiomatic expression normally limited to Nazified circles. Whether overcome with enthusiasm, intended with irony or responsive to a new set of demands in the new world, Benzion Lewi/Hermann Weill reflects the outer reaches of upheaveals in subjectivity and cultural allegiance.

Horenstein, like so many others, moved together with his family, evidence that these musicians belong to patters of migration beyond that merely of students going abroad for higher education. Since Jewish instrumentalists were spared overt choices between competing allegiances in their musical agendas, they formed a part of well-established patterns of Jewish social continuity and networks. Among Jews, for at least two to three generations prior to this period, it had been common for instrumentalists to seek out Jewish teachers across borders and to have in turn, those

[65] *Universitätsarchiv*, 566/239.

teachers intervene with the authorities on their behalf.[66] Such Jewish "networking" may have been the result both of psychological affinity and a response to a climate of hostility.[67]

With regards to the wider society, music was perhaps the cornerstone of bourgeois aspiration, privileged as it was by the surrounding milieu in almost every country where Jews resided in Europe. Furthermore, music offered the widest array of professional career chances among the arts, as it allowed for interpreters and virtuosi at all levels of cultural performance from high art to "low brow" entertainment. Jews especially gravitated towards instrumental performance, which offered the most rapid promise of a move away from the social margins- a pattern that may be observed today with Asian performers in both Europe and the US.[68] Similarly, such musical activity may be seen as an index of economic growth and the after–effect of the belated reach of industrialization and transportation infrastructure into formerly peripheral areas-whether Eastern Europe over a century ago or East Asia within the last quarter century.[69] Music functioned as a kind of constitutional basis for participation in civil society.

All of the aforementioned factors combined with the sense of economic precariousness of the time that accompanied the musical profession gave rise to a deep belief that the discovery of virtuosity was essential, especially at a young age.[70] The competition among these premature candidates for fame was correspondingly intense.[71] This may help to explain the prevalence of extremely young Jewish students at the music conservatory. In fact, essentially all of

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[66] Mendelssohn, 11.
[67] Ibid, 12.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Bostein, *Quasi una Fantasia*, 49.
[70] The contemporary analogue here might more logically be that of African Americans in the United States with respect to entry into professional sport leagues, see Boststein, *Quasi una Fantasia,* 52.
[71] Artur Schnabel vividly describes certain cases a generation earlier in Vienna. *My Life and Music*. Dover, 1988.

the students of unusually precocious age are readily identifiable as Jewish. There is, for instance, Ignaz Strasfogel of Warsaw, born July 17th, 1909 who began his studies in Berlin on the 1st of April 1923, just shy of his 14th birthday. Though he began his studies as an instrumentalist for piano with Leonid Kreutzer, exceptionally, he made the transition to the composition class of Schreker where he would continue to study until the summer of 1927.[72] At a similar age two years earlier another Ignaz from Warsaw, this time a one Ignaz Rothstein, came to Berlin to advance on the violin.[73] He was in turn joined in violin studies by a one David Grunschlag from Drohonicz, who began his studies at the age of 14. Not limited to just men, some of the youngest students of this whole period were actually Jewish women, such as Miriam Feigelson from Vilna who began her piano studies at the tender age of 12.[74] Ruth Krongold from Warsaw began her violin studies in 1928 at the age of 13. She was joined by an even younger Jewish female piano student, Lucie Stern from Riga, born in 1912, who began her studies, incredibly, in 1921.

Travel over such distances and borders would logically raise the question of child welfare and accompanying parental concerns. Thus the presence of such child students provides just one among other vantage points on the issue of familial migration among students at the conservatory. In the case of Miriam Feigelson, a letter of the 28th of May of 1923 records a special request that, given her age, her parents receive permission to accompany her, rather than remaining alone or with strangers.[75] In this letter the Vice-Director Schuneman refers to her as an "unusually talented

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[72] *Universitätsarchiv*, 597/184.
[73] Ignaz Rothstein was born on the 6th of August 1907, and began his studies on the 1st of April, 1921. *Universitätsarchiv* 591, 258.
[74] Feigelson was born on the 19th of May 1910, and commenced her piano studies on the first of January 1923.
[75] *Universitätsarchiv,* 534/226.

child" who has "already achieved extraordinary success."[76] We may take as evidence for the approval of this request a letter written by her father two years later (11th of July, 1925) requesting an exemption from instructional fees due to economic hardship. Her father Josef, who signs the letter with the title "Ing." denoting engineer, lists a local Berlin address, however one that attaches a "bei" or "care of" to a certain Bridnewski, indicating status as a sub-tenant.[77]

Though the startling youth of these cases certainly might attract attention, the underlying intermingling of financial, familial and immigration issues is an ever-present theme among so many of these students. The maintenance of a position at the Conservatory was the justification in some cases for the continued right of residency for an entire family. The cases of the sisters Gabrilowitsch, Anna and Maria, born in Moscow one year apart at the turn of the last century is instructive. There are numerous letters from the Conservatory verifying the student status of "foreigners" to the civil authorities. Less common is the specific mention in these letters tying the Berlin residency of the parents to the continued scholastic fortunes of the students. Described as "extraordinarily talented," the parents of these sisters are described as "unable to leave their daughters alone in Berlin." As the letters explicitly draws out, the ability of these sisters to complete their studies and sit for the state exam, for which their residency permit did not extend to include, was dependent on their parents receiving further permission to reside.[78]

As this was also a time of great economic uncertainty, it is no surprise that shifting fortunes of families greatly impacted upon the continuity of study. Berlin, in particular, underwent the drastic change from being exceptionally affordable for East Europeans in the immediate post-war

[76] Ibid, translation, my own.
[77] *Universitätsarchiv, 534/311.*
[78] *Universitätsarchiv, 54/311.*

years, to verging on the prohibitive in the years of currency reform and stabilization after 1923.[79] No one was spared from such instability. Numerous documents attest to the fact that even the young composers and conductors addressed earlier who had gained some renown often fell on hard times and desperate pleas. At one point, Franz Schreker attempted to secure Karol Rathaus as the personal tutor for the son of the famous cabaret composer Oscar Strauss.[8081] It is also worth noting that Rathaus' one major opera *Fremde Erde* had as its subject financial refugees.[82] If anything, Rathaus, as a recent graduate at the start of the career but beyond the age of direct parental support- had less institutional recourse and fewer available family resources to draw upon. Perhaps the most direct, if not old fashioned, form of financial support was relief from financial obligations altogether. The archival letters that reflect this pursuit are too numerous and common to recount. As in the case of Rathaus, reference is often made to the loss of the father as family bread winner or to a state of absolute destitution.[83] A riskier pursuit was undertaken by students who sought outside employment in various musical fields, with differing degrees of success and permission.[84] Shortage of funds could lead to other challenging circumstances such as the temporary rental of furnishings and even instruments in often precarious arrangements.

In addition to family support, younger instrumentalist colleagues could at times turn to outside resources where their families could not provide. As foreigners these students were

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[79] A Yiddish-language newspaper boom, for instance, deflated in the wake of currency stabilization. *Berlin Transit,* 86.

[80] Letter of Schreker on 14th of October 1927. *Universitätsarchiv*, 619/86.

[81] In an earlier letter from 26th of October 1922 from his time as a student, Rathaus reference three siblings his father is already unable to care for, as well as his own pursuit of an official "poverty certification" from Polish authorities. *Universitätsarchiv*, 591/235.

[82] Michael Haas. *Forbidden Music*. Yale University Press, 2013, 174.

[83] In one letter from Schreker in support of the young composer Alfred Freudenheim, born in Premsyl, the student is decribed as "completely without means." *Universitätsarchiv* 534/333, May 21st, 1926.

[84] Certain migrant students were actually subject to disciplinary action after various German musical unions got wind of their extracurricular activities.

excluded from almost all scholarships, as well as subvention from the academic *Hilfsbund*. In exceptional cases, such as that of the piano student Lucie Scheiner from Odessa, modest sums could be forthcoming from a support foundation internal to the Conservatory.[85] In exceptional cases there were distinctly East European sources of support, for example, in the case of Victor Babin, an additional name that could be added to the ranks of the Berlin students who went on to achieve international. Unlike many others, Babin would compose explicitly Jewish, even biblically oriented music and would later form, along with his wife, Vitya Vronsky, arguably the most celebrated piano duet team in the world (Vronsky was another Jewish child prodigy who studied, however, at the Kiev Conservatory). Babin, first studied composition with Schreker and piano with Artur Schnabel (who was originally born Aaron Schnabel in Bielitz, Galicia). His success had not yet begun during those years in Berlin. He could however call on the support of the Berlin-based *Verband der Russischen Juden* founded in 1920 and itself, supported by the New York-based Joint Distribution Committee.[86] A separate umbrella organization existed for refugee help among largely Polish Jews, which was called the *Ostjudenverband*.[87] Another piano and composition student, Ignaz Stragfogel, who studied under Kreutzer rather than Schnabel, proved worthy of a direct donation from the Polish Consul General in Berlin.[88] In a letter of the 3rd of June 1925, the Consul General makes clear his awareness of the suffering of foreign students.[89] The letter reveals that the donation for Strassfogel is from his personal funds and reflects a socially intimate relationship with Schreker. He recounts his summer plans for a "cure" in Karlsbad and regrets the

[85] This fact is attested to in a letter of the 8th of October 1930, *Universitätsarchiv* 598/108.
[86] *Universitätsarchiv*, 521/169, The award of a stipendium is reflected in a letter of the 10th of January, 1929.
[87] Maurer, 709.
[88] In a letter of the 15th of June 1925, Schreker thanks the Consul General Hirschowitz directly, *Universitätsarchiv*, 597/190.
[89] *Universitätsarchiv* 597/324. The letter is dates the 3rd of June, 1925.

lack of time to "organize a generous fundraising effort for the suffering foreign students of your academy."[90]

Amongst the faculty, it appears that it was the in-house doctor and lecturer Kurt Singer who took the greatest interest in the plight of the students. He helped to develop the so-called *Freitische* service, unique to the conservatory among institutions of higher learning in Berlin. Essentially a network of neighboring families in Charlottenburg and Wilmersdorf, they opened their doors for conservatory students during their lunch break.[9192] Strikingly, almost 60 out of approximately 200 students took advantage of the program; even more astonishing is that a collection drive was held by the faculty themselves in the form of a Christmas costume party fundraiser.[93] Singer himself organized concerts with his Doctors Chorus for the students of the *freitisch;* one particularly notable fundraising concert occurred in the context of the 1st European-wide psychiatry Congress held in 1926.[94] Other subventions made available for struggling students including free tickets at the municipal opera (where Kurt Singer served on the elected advisory council (*Beirat)* representing the Social Democrats of Charlottenburg before himself becoming *Intendant* in 1931) as well as transportation discounts.

Dr. Singer's unparalelled level of engagement on behalf of the students in question here may be due to his unique perspective as the in-house doctor of the Conservatory. This kind of

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[90] Ibid,

[91] This program is chronicled in some detail in Paula Lindberg-Salmon's semi-memoir, *Mein C'est la Vie Leben.*Das Arsensal, 1992.

[92] Not entirely surprising is the additional fact that these two Berlin districts had the highest percentage of Jewish residents, with Wilmersdorf at 13.5% and Charlottenburg at 10% and together comprising 27,000 Jewish community members. See Horst Weber, ed. *Musik in der Emigration* 1933-1945. J.B. Metzler, 1994, 71.

[93] *Universitätsarchiv*, Jahresbericht, 1927-1928, 64.

[94] In this performance he led the Doctors Chorus of Berlin which he had founded in 1913. I am currently preparing a manuscript on this ensemble for publication. See also, Schenk, *Die Hochschule*, 170.

relationship provided him with an additional level of intimacy not afforded other faculty at the institution. Certain biographical considerations with regard to Singer are also not irrelevant. His father, who died young leaving the family destitute, was an intinerant rabbi from Slovakia. In his adulthood he embraced the Social Democratic movement in a manner that may have linked him with other Conservatory affiliates, in particular Kestenberg and Julius Bab. Furthermore, his wife and mother of his three children was of migratory East-Central European background.[95]

Singer was recruited by Kestenberg in 1923 as a lecturer (*Dozent)* on the subject of the "Career Illnesses of Musicians." The establishment that same year of an *Ärtzlicheberatungstelle* (medical advisory office) provided him with an up-font platform for research and development of his theories. His research and clinical consultation with students would culminate in his landmark publication, *Berufskrankheiten der Musiker* (1927) (Career Illnesses of Musicians).[96][97] The Medical Advisory office was made possible in part by the establishment of an academic health maintenance organization, the *Akademische Krankenkasse*. This brought with it decisive changes in the access to medical care: a. impoverished students could have access to free medication, and b. students would have a doctor on hand inside their institution and thus were not immediately obliged to visit

[95] Renate Grüter, personal communication, September 2016.

[96] The advent of the *Akademische Krankenkasse* (a sort of Academic HMO) during the Weimar Republic did enable similar "medical advisory offices" to emerge at other institutions of higher learning. Unique in Singer's case is that he was already on the faculty in another capacity and then made the medical office a forum for his research and the application of theory. An additional point possibly worth consideration is that other forms of higher education do not necessarily have the same physiological dimension of possible stress and strain as musical activity.

[97] A committed contrarian comfortable throughout his life as an activist at the margins, one of Singer's a primary objectives in this text is to overturn conventional wisdom. In brief, Singer sought to counter three then-dominant propositions: a. specific work-related physical exertions are the primary cause of their suffering; b. the career illnesses of musicians are due to the work of their practice rather than that of their training, c. music may be applied directly as a therapeutic cure in response to such career illnesses.

an external institution.[98] This may have constituted particular relief for foreign students who could turn to a known faculty member rather than visit an impersonal or potentially intimidating visit elsewhere. Finally, the establishment of this office made Kurt Singer the overseer of all medical forms.

It was Dr. Singer whom students had to turn to potentially free them from unpleasant requirements or obligations. In certain cases, Singer even took students into his own private practice.[99] One example of the doctors' charity is Regina Kossodo born on the 22nd of July 1902 in Nikolaev, a city just north of the Black Sea in Ukraine. Having first studied violin and then voice, she received a personal recommendation from Schreker as a "very musical young woman" with "a very sympathetic soprano voice" while also being an "exceptional violinist."[100] Singer treated her and wrote prescriptions through the *Akademische Krankenkasse* as well as through his own private practice. Moreover, he counseled a break from her studies on account of nervous exhaustion.[101] Singer favored an interruption in studies for recovery rather than any targeted treatment, of which he was often critical. Another case concerns that of Alexander Goldberg who is described in a letter from his father as "physically and psychologically completely broken down."[102] Born in St. Petersburg, February 26th, 1906, his father recounts how Dr. Singer examined him and confirmed a sickness for which he again counseled a hiatus. The father pleads for approval so that he may bring his son to a Sanatorium.

[98] Schenk, *Die Hochschule,* 59.
[99] Schenk, *Die Hochschule,* 170.
[100] *Universitätsarchiv*, 559.294.
[101] *Universitätsarchiv*, 559.122.
[102] *Universitätsarchiv,* 542, 130/131.

The documentary record reflects Singer's own conviction that cases of "general nervous disturbances," were greater than the sum total of all so-called internal, or localized ailments combined.[103][104] He was sensitive to the fact that even small disturbances could expand into outright neurosis.[105] One surviving year-end record or *Jahresbericht* records *eight* cases of simple neurasthenic exhaustion *(fälle einfacher neurasthenischer Erschöpfung*) out of only 20 new patients.[106] The prevalence of nervous exhaustion may be viewed against the larger backdrop of the stresses of migration, familial upheaval even cultural fissures. More than one student had to break off studies due to illness. This was the case with Gerson Saslawasky born January 23rd, 1899. After barely one year of studies on the cello, sickness forced him from the Conservatory.[107] The mother of one Esfir Rosenbluth, writing from Riga, though her daughter had been born in Odessa, pleaded for understanding that her daughter would have to be kept back due to illness. Indicating the lack of financial challenges facing this family, the mother requests the semester fees so they may be taken care of even in her daughter's absence.[108]

Remarkably, even cases of Tuberculosis could be found amongst the students. In a letter of the 6th of November Vice-Director Schuneman reported to Professor Schnabel that one of his students, Werdina Schalansky would be removed and could soon be replaced,[109] since a nerve inflammation had advanced into full-blown TB. She would later recover in Paris and go on to

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[103] *"das gros der Beschwerden war nervöser Art."* In 1929, this amounted to 15 cases. See *Universitätsarchiv* Jahresbericht, 1929-1930, 57.
[104] *Universitätsarchiv,* Jahresbericht, 1930-1931, 58.
[105] Kurt Singer, *Berufskrankheiten der Musiker.* Hesse Verlag, 1926, 29-30.
[106] *Universitätsarchiv,* Jahresbericht 1931-1932.
[107] *Universitätsarchiv,* 596/554. He began his studies on the 1st of October 1918 and the letter in question is dated the 20th of June, 1919.
[108] *Universitätsarchiv* 591, 261.
[109] *Universitätsarchiv,* 597/440.

study with Nadia Boulanger before ultimately emigrating to pre-state Israel.[110] And in at least one recorded case, an East European Jewish migrant student died during her time at the Berlin Conservatory. A one Chava Bermann, born in Minsk on the 12th of August 1902, who studied both voice and composition under Schreker died on the 20th of December 1924.

Singer was able to claim a modicum of success in that his tenure saw a reduction in the number of students visiting the medical advisory office by more than 30% over five years. He actually believed that his lectures themselves were a part of therapeutic healing referring to explanation or "enlightenment" as an essential part of progress. Singer's claims are bolstered by the fact that under Singer's tenure not one student had to entirely break off their studies due to medical reasons, and that "recovery vacations," when resorted to, tended to be of quite brief duration.[111]

Singer's overall interventions at the Conservatory both theoretically and practically constitute by themselves an historically significant epochal expansion of the understanding of health and wellness in the context of cultural activity. Singer's writings of this era reflect a psychoanalytic orientation and a self-understanding as therapeutic healer. His stated objective was the fortification of individual confidence and the overcoming of anxiety. For it was the fear of sickness itself that most compounded the danger of any sickness, in his view.[112] In his basic

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[110] Werner Grunzweig, Ed. *Arthur Schnabel muskier musician, 1882-1951.* Wolke, 2001, 244.
[111] *Universitätsarchiv,* Jahresbericht 1928-1929, 49.
[112] Singer, *Berufskrankheiten,* 167, *"die stärkung des Selbstvertrauens das Einflößen einer neuen Kraft, aus der heraus der Kranke selbst mit Sensationen, Stimmungen und BEschwerden fertig werden kann und eine Form von Verordnungen, die auch dem Laien einleuchtet als heilkräftig, und die imstande ist, ihn von dem Bann einer Krankheitsfurcht zu befreien."*(the strengthening of self-confidence and the arrival of a new force from which the sick individual may work through with the means of sensation, atmosphere to a new order, which even a layperson may recognize as healing and which may liberate one from the fear of sickness")

understanding, the body was a landscape for the soul and, as such, the career professional's activity was also intimately bound up with health. Objecting to over-specialization, Singer never sought to localize illness or focus upon specific organs, but rather pursued the overall disposition of the individual. Naturally, this individual is also implicated in his or her specific social context.[113] To illustrate this idea, he invoked the metaphor of two people equally clothed and fed who spend the same amount of time in the same body of water, where one develops an infection and the other does not.[114]

Finally, Dr. Singer's framework of treatment and diagnosis was particularly attuned to two features that heavily impacted upon the students in question of this study: their youth and their sacrifice of a more general education. A musical career is exceptional in that talent is often discovered or emerges even before puberty.[115] As previously discussed, Jews from East Europe were particularly prone to place emphasis on the child prodigy. The receipt of improper or detrimental instructions during such a tender phase could be especially crippling for development.[116] Linked to these dramatically early beginnings of a career is the fact that musicians often lack or simply bypass a more general education, unlike almost all other professional pursuits. As a result Singer diagnosed a restlessness specific to young musicians, a feeling of being "unfinished," or even undereducated which would only grow over time.[117] For migratory students

[113] Singer, *Berufskrankheiten,* 36.
[114] Singer, *Berufskrankheiten,*35.
[115] Singer, *Berufskrankheiten,*14-15. There is a variety of recent scientific investigation that confirm this, i.e. that draws a corollary between onset of talent and its depth: http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn23078-why-musical-genius-comes-easier-to-early-starters.html.
[116] Singer, *Berufskrankheiten,*131.
[117] Singer, *Berufskrankheiten,* 83. At a later point, Singer counsels against purely physical rhythmic movement as a mode of therapy to calm this restlessness. He alludes to this trend as linked to jazz and to its

who had additionally to contend with what must have been a set of bewilderingly new cultural modes and mores, this sense of incompleteness may have been easily compounded.

The conspicuously strong presence of Jews of East European origin did not go unnoticed in wider German society. In fact the Music Conservatory had long been in the sights of Nazi-affiliated cultural activists who were wont to refer to the institution as an "international Jewish music factory."[118] So when the regime change came to the Conservatory, it had been long in preparation and was carried out with devastating ruthlessness.[119] By the summer of 1933, after the institution of a numerus clausus for Jews set at 1.5%, dozens of faculty were released, as were most Jewish students, now referred to officially as "non-Aryan."[120] One Max Meller from Odessa, a piano student and perhaps the last Jewish music student of East European origin, completed out the spring semester, leaving the last day of July in 1933. A surviving postcard shows, a friend seeking out his whereabouts in the summer of 1935, unaware of the fact that he had already fled to Paris.[121] The fact that there is no record of any Jewish students of East European origin seeking to study at the Conservatory, despite an official policy that their applications would be considered on a case by case basis, speaks volumes for what the atmosphere must have been like at that time.

The shift in tone and the fragility of the experiment at the Conservatory were evident even before the Nazi seizure of power in 1933. The two to three years prior made evident a growing

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role in causing an even greater loss of sensation. If anything, he encourages more science and philosophy for musicians, 206.

[118] Heike Eftman. *Georg Schünemann 1884-1945*. Studio, 2001, 337.

[119] *Musik in der Emigration*, 86.

[120] The "Nazification" of the institution was carried out with slightly less state focus than that applied to other institutions of higher learning. See Franziska Stoff, „Die jüdischen Schüler dürfen nur an zwei ... an gewissen Tagen kommen." Ein Interview mit dem Pianisten Walter Hautzig, in: Eine Institution zwischen Repräsentation und Macht. Die Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien im Kulturleben des Nationalsozialismus, hrsg., von Juri Giannini, Maximilian Haas und Erwin Strouhal, Wien 2014 (Musikkontext, Band 7).

[121] *Universitätsarchiv*, 572, 479.

reactionary retrenchment which would reach new extremes after 1933.[122] Artur Schnabel declined to renew his contract in 1931, citing the growing nationalist atmosphere among most of his fellow faculty.[123] The nationalist-conservative takeover of the Prussian state government in the summer of 1932 had already ignited the first wave of firings, including Kurt Singer, amongst others. Franz Schreker spent much of the twenties constantly fearing attacks in the press.[124] Schreker's last opera *Der Schmied von Gent*, which premiered in October of 1932 was forced from the stage after just five performances due to brownshirt agitation.[125] Nazi suppression of the music of Schreker and his students would begin as early as 1929 with the Nazi takeover of the local government of Thuringia.[126] He himself after being ousted from the Conservatory, then the Academy of the Arts, and stripped of his pension, died from a stroke brought on by the shock in 1934. As early as 1923 there had even been what were described as "pogroms" in the city, even in the more affluent western districts.[127] Even in the observations of clearly non-Nazi voices, an undercurrent of *ressentiment* is readily detectable. Recalling the competitive examinations of the Conservatory, a one Wilhlem Kepff wrote, "I saw dark haired creatures rape the German language with bewitching grace, as fingers glided with lightning speed over the keys, while the hearts of the homely sons of Germania sunk to low C."[128] Calls in the nationalist press for a quota against foreigners were being

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122 Eric Levi. *Music in the Third Reich.* Palgrace Macmillan, 1994, 82.
123 *Musik in der Emigration*, 79.
124 Hailey, 139.
125 Peter Franklin, 206.
126 Haas, 279.
127 Schlögel, *Das Russian Revolution*, 64.
128 Wilhelm Kempff. *Unter dem Zimbelstern. Das Werden eines Musikers.* Englehornverlag, 1951. *Ich sah dunkelhaarige Geschöpfe, die mit bezaubernder Anmut die deutsche Sprache vergewaltigten, während ihre Finger mit blitzhafter Schnelle über die Tasten glitten, so dass manchem von den biederen Germanensöhnen das Herz bis zum Subkontra C hinabsank,* 206.

made loud and clear by the later 1920s.[129] Around the same time, Vice-Director Schünemann had been embroiled in a controversy over whether foreign teachers were imposing an East European violin sound over German students.[130] Centered around the Hungarian-born of Carl Flesch, the issue became explosive when his student Stefan Frenkel a Polish Jew began to teach the class in his absence.[131] At the same time, with rumors that the Jewish students made up of more than 60% of the total, Kestenberg was lobbied to conduct a census of Jews.[132]

What Ernst Krenek would recollect as the "hysterical envy of the have-nots" would become state policy and consign nearly all of the musicians discussed here first to oblivion and then to premature and violent death. Many of the students of Franz Schreker would reemerge for a brief moment into the spotlight as part of the *Entartete Musik* or "Degenerate Music" exhibition in Dusseldorf in 1937. In fact, this defamatory propaganda show dedicated an entire wing to Kestenberg and his musical politics, and indeed, he was the most important target for attack in the planning of the exhibition.[133] The Social Democratic party that had empowered Kestenberg to take wide ranging musical reforms had long been seen as the "protection party" of East European Jews.[134] In fact their official organs, were often labeled as "Galician."[135] In hindsight, the brief reappearance of this singular and largely forgotten school of composers reveals that the gap

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[129] One editorial in the *Deutscher Zeitung* of the 24th of October 1928, explicitly called for a numerus clasus: *"es ware nicht wünschenswert dass die ausländerziffer sich erhöhte und unter umständen müste durch einen numers clausus einer erhöhung sogar verbeugte werden."*(it would not be desirable that the quotient of foreigners may rise and that such a rise could be brought low through a numerus clausus.)
[130] Eftmann, 112.
[131] Haas, 308.
[132] Eftmann, 113.
[133] Peter Sarkar, Albrecht Dümmling, Eds. "der glaube an der macht der musik", musica reanaimata mitteilungsblatt, nr 79, Decmber 2012, 18.
[134] Maurer, 494.
[135] Maurer, 499.

between annihilating music and doing the same to people was perilously closer than could previously have been imagined.

The Jewish music students of East European origins found themselves unwittingly at the eye of a storm over cultural politics, identity and modernity. They should at least now enjoy a rightful place as part of the "ebullient fertility" of the Weimar era.[136] They were part of a bold project to push music to new heights of expressivity both in terms of the people exploring music and in the sounds themselves, across ever more boundaries. Like the music of Schreker, these students, by their very presence in Berlin stood for greater fluidity between cultures, enhanced possibilities for subjectivity and mobility across social and even psychological borders.

[136] The phrase comes from Henry Pachter. See his *Weimar Etudes*, Columbia University Press, 1982, 305.