

## CHAPTER 14

### LODZ GHETTO

#### 14.1 Geographical location and genesis

Lodz is situated in Poland, about 100 kilometers to the southwest of Warsaw. Before the war started in 1939, Lodz had a Jewish population of over 200 000, which amounted to a third of the total population. After the occupation of Poland by Germany in 1939, six working camps were erected in the Lodz area. Many of the Jewish women, children and elderly people from different areas of Poland were deported to surrounding ghettos, for example Lublin and Warsaw.

After the founding of the Lodz Ghetto in May 1940, Jews were deported to Lodz from different camps and ghettos, as well as from areas of Europe where Jews were still residing. Lodz was one of the first ghettos to be opened in Poland (Hilberg 1985:221). It was closed off by barbed wire and board fence (Tushnet 1972:x). Many industries were opened in the ghetto, for example textile manufacturers, furniture shops, clothing and shoe factories. These products were then sold in exchange for food (Tushnet 1972:21). Lodz was also renamed by the German authorities to Litzmannstadt (Adelson 1989:xvii).

The total population of the ghetto reached 230 000 to 250 000 inmates (Flam 1992:11). By the end of 1944 it was one of the few ghettos still in operation. During 1944 the main feeding areas for the Lodz ghetto were concentration camps - for example, a total of about 100 000 Jews were deported from the Auschwitz concentration camp to the Lodz ghetto. The ghetto was finally closed during August 1944.

## 14.2 Initial musical activities

Lodz had a very rich cultural life as can be seen from the information available. The Jews had to provide their own police force, post office and administration departments (Tushnet 1972:16).

A Jewish Cultural Society was established in October 1940 to meet the need for a controlling body for cultural activities. Rumkowski, chairman of the Judenrat, took direct control of these in deciding what was in the interests of all (Tushnet 1972:40). The tasks of the Judenrat were to start a library and a folk university, as well as to undertake the organisation of musical activities and a drama circle. A symphony orchestra was formed and choruses were organised, largely due to the renewal of activities by the pre-war *Hazomir Society* (cultural organisation). (Trunk 1977:224.) The more traditional entertainers of pre-war days, like wedding entertainers and cantors, nearly disappeared in the ghetto (Flam 1992:17).

Several youth groups also came into existence during the early years of the ghetto (Tushnet 1972:18). A periodical called *Litsmanshtetische Geto-Tsaytung* started appearing before the end of 1941 (Friedman 1954:289).

Two of the leading musicians in the Lodz Ghetto were Bronislawa Rotsztat and Teodor Ryder. The former was a violin soloist in the Lodz Symphony Orchestra and the concert master of the Lodz Philharmonic Orchestra before the war. She regularly performed at private gatherings such as soup kitchens and at the House of Culture which was established in 1941. Teodor Ryder was a pianist and conductor. Before the war he performed with the Warsaw Opera. In Lodz he was appointed as conductor of the Lodz Symphony Orchestra and was one of the founding members of the House of Culture. (Dobroszycki 1984:11.)

On 18 January 1941 Bronislawa Rotsztat, accompanied by Teodor

Ryder, performed a concerto by Wieniawski to a full house. She achieved great success in the ghetto (Dobroszycki 1984:11). A week later Teodor Ryder accompanied the tenor Nikodem Sztajman in a recital at one of the soup kitchens in the ghetto. He sang arias from operas by Puccini, Verdi, Meyerbeer and Leoncavallo. (Dobroszycki 1984:16.)

Different groups, like the *Bundists*, *Zionists* and the *Communists*, used choruses and dramas as a front for their political activities (Tushnet 1972:40). With the influx of Western Jews from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Luxembourg the different cultural groups, choruses, theatres and symphony orchestras eagerly awaited the arrival of possible new members (Tushnet 1972:38).

When the activities of these groups became too bold, Rumkowski decided to open the "House of Culture" in March 1941. Through this organisation sports clubs were also encouraged to open (Tushnet 1972:40-41).

### **14.3 Musical activities under the House of Culture**

During the following nine months about 60 musicians, singers and actors together with 10 painters registered with the House of Culture. Streetsingers also performed on a regular basis. (Trunk 1977:225.)

Musical activities here can be divided into five types: the professional stage, the amateur stage, youth performances, domestic entertainment and street entertainment (Flam 1992:18).

#### **14.3.1 The professional stage**

The professional stage entertainment can further be divided into concerts and theatrical entertainment.

On March 1, 1941 the House of Culture was inaugurated. This was one of the departments of the Judenrat, and their most important function was the organisation of a variety of cultural events. Symphony concerts with participating soloists together with revues presented by the theatre studio *Avangard* were two of the kinds of entertainment that were offered by the House of Culture. *Avangard*, also spelled *Avantgarde*, was created by an adolescent called Moishe Pulaver. They permanently employed 18 actors, 7 dancers and a choir. (Flam 1992:20.)

One of the musical comedies produced here was *Libe zukt a dire* (Love is looking for an apartment) by Jerzy Jurandat. This show was a great favourite with the audiences. (Friedman 1954:71.)

No restrictions were placed on the repertoire of orchestras or any other performing groups, and these musicians were allowed to perform works by so-called Aryan (see Glossary) composers. An average of about ten concerts were given per month. At least 13 concerts were held during March 1941.

The orchestras mostly consisted of string instruments. One of the symphony orchestras regularly performed works by Beethoven. The full houses at these concerts most definitely testify to the inmates' need for uplifting classical music (Adelson 1989:294).

Two Yiddish theatres came into existence, namely *Ararat* and *Azazel* (Satan). In addition to these two theatres the House of Culture had another hall with 400 seats, which was well equipped with professional stage gear and lighting. Two other cultural organisations also made use of this hall. They were the *Lodz Choral Society Hazomir* and the *Revue Theatre* (Flam 1992:19). The first of these organisations specialised in the singing of national Hebrew songs (Flam 1992:18).

The audiences were usually factory workers from the ghettos, but concerts were also performed for the authorities. A few concerts were held at soup kitchens. It seems that two orchestras were

used in the ghetto. One of them was called the *Hazomir* orchestra while the name of the other is not known. Two conductors were used for concerts, namely Dawid Bajgelman and Teodor Ryder with the latter as the senior conductor. Minia Ber, a singer, gave some recitals with the orchestra, but Nikodem Sztajman was a more popular singer in the ghetto. Bronislawa Rotsztat, the violinist, continued giving recitals, with or without an orchestra. The repertoire of the orchestras and soloists was mainly classical, but Jewish music was also performed to a lesser extent.

Rudolf Bandler, an inmate of the ghetto, sang arias from Italian operas as well as ballads by Loewe and lieder by Schubert (Adelson 1989:294-295).

October and November 1941 marked the arrival of large numbers of new inmates at the ghetto. With their arrival the ghetto acquired many talented performers, both pianists and singers (Dobroszycki 1984:83). The new arrivals were registered with the House of Culture. Special concerts were organised to give some of the newcomers a chance to display their talents. Leopold Birkenfeld was one of the new arrivals from Vienna. He was an acclaimed pianist and, amongst others, gave performances of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* and the *Rhapsody no 2* by Liszt (Dobroszycki 1984:93).

The House of Culture performed its 100th concert on 31 December 1941. Teodor Ryder accompanied Bronislawa Rotsztat in the performance of works by Bach, Glazunov and Mozart. During 1941 the House of Culture was further responsible for the presentation of 85 revue performances.

Until August 1942 concerts were held at regular intervals, about one per week, mostly on Wednesday evenings. During September and October no concerts were performed. This could possibly be due to the fact that just about at that time the House of Culture ceased to exist as an independent department. As a result the musicians had to seek employment in workshops or other

departments. They could now perform only during leisure hours. (Dobroszycki 1984:286.)

On 7 November 1942 the concerts resumed with a symphony concert conducted by Dawid Bajgelman. Some of his own compositions, including a few concerto fantasies and variations on popular Jewish themes were performed. Bronislawa Rotsztat participated as a soloist in this concert. A week later a few of Bajgelman's works were again performed. It was decided to start giving concerts at regular intervals once more. These concerts were usually on Saturdays and it was mostly the elite who were able to attend. An average of four concerts per month were held during 1942. (Dobroszycki 1984:286.)

#### **14.3.2 The Amateur stage**

Amateur stage entertainment denotes that which was provided at the work place for example. Workers created shows for their co-workers, especially revues. It also included concerts held at soup kitchens by professional entertainers such as Bronislawa Rotsztat. After 1942 the workplace or workshops became the main stage for cultural life. The largest revue show to be held in Lodz was that given in the paper factory, with a cast of 70. Rumkowski, the chairman of the Judenrat, decreed in 1943 that these shows should be stopped, but he was ignored in this, as artistic activities in the workshops continued. (Flam 1992:25-26.)

Office parties were another form of the Amateur Stage entertainment to be cultivated in the ghetto (Flam 1992:27).

#### **14.3.3 Youth entertainment**

The Judenrat placed a heavy emphasis on the entertainment for the youth. The first step taken by them was the opening of schools, of which they had 45, with a total of 10 000 pupils enrolled.

Separate religious schools also existed (Dawidowicz 1975:254).

A school health system was organised, as well as orphan asylums and technical schools (Tushnet 1972:34). The schools department organised the performance of vocal and instrumental music for school children (Dobroszycki 1984:36). Many lullabies were also written for the children (Aaron 1990:120).

During June 1941 the idea of opening a music school was raised. Some of the distinguished musicians would be asked to present lectures at the school. Unfortunately this idea was never realised due to the disintegration of the school system in 1942.

Children were encouraged to perform in, and produced shows. An example of such a show is one named *A Summer Holiday*. It included singing, recitation, dances and jokes. Children were also involved in many dramatic societies that gave regular performances on Friday afternoons, on Jewish holidays and other special occasions (Flam 1992:22).

#### **14.3.4 Domestic entertainment**

Domestic entertainment came into being as a result of a decree by the Judenrat, according to which no Jewish holidays were to be celebrated. The inmates then decided to celebrate these days at home by getting together and singing around their table. A certain Lucille Eichengreen recalled knowing about two chamber music concerts being held in private homes (Flam 1992:27).

#### **14.3.5 Street entertainment**

Entertainment provided by street artists was probably the favourite with audiences. These artists included musicians and jugglers who performed in public gardens, backyards and mostly on street corners (Flam 1992:23).

A literary newspaper in the ghetto, *Min Hametsar*, collected several of the street songs sung during its existence (Flam 1992:25). Many hit songs from before the war were used as basis for songs composed here. Others were composed in the ghetto in the style of Yiddish theatre or folk songs (Flam 1992:5). Songs were forced to be topical of everyday life, so as to attract attention (Flam 1992:53).

As mentioned previously, many lullabies were sung. Irony was a figure of speech often resorted to. One of these lullabies, *Close Your Precious Eyes*, was composed by Isaiah Spiegel after the death of his daughter (Aaron 1990:120). Here are the words to this song (Aaron 1990:121-122):

*Refrain:*

*Close your precious eyes,  
Birds are flying nigh,  
And circle all around  
A flutter above your crib.  
A bundle ready in hand,  
The house by fire rent.  
We are off, my child,  
To seek good luck.*

*God has shut our world so bright  
And everywhere is dark, dark night  
And waits for us right here  
With horror and with fear  
We are both standing there  
In this dreadful, dreadful hour,  
Not knowing where the road will lead.*

*Refrain:*

*Close....*

*Naked, of everything bereft  
Chased, our homes we left,*

*In the pitch of night  
Pursued into the field,  
And storm, hail, and wind,  
My child, escorted us  
To the fathomless void.*

*Refrain:  
Close....*

This lullaby, as well as others were sung by Dov Beygelson. Many of the songs, however, were banned by Rumkowski, the Chairman of the Judenrat, because they openly addressed the Jewish tragedy. In spite of this ban, songs were still sung. They were as much an offering of consolation, even if parodic and bitter, and a form of lamentation as an expression of resistance (Aaron 1990:124-125).

Another song, composed by Emanuel Hirshberg, and sung here was the following one which tells of the hard labour that had to be done (Rubin 1963:431-432):

*Finster, nas un vintn kalte  
Shlepn vegn noch der tsol,  
Mener shver, shoy n shvache, alte  
O, vu nemt men kraft? O vu?*

*Bruder! shlep un shtup dem vogn  
Gants geduldik! Chotsh s'iz shver.  
Gornisht kuk im oyf dem mogn,  
Oysgehungert un gants ler.*

*Geyt geshpant un shlept dem vogn,  
Krechtst nisht, shrayt nisht, zingt a lid.  
Veyst, az sof kol sof vet togn,  
Gliklich vet noch zayn der yid.*

English translation:

Dark, wet, and cold winds  
 We pull our quota of wagons,  
 Tired men, weak and old,  
 O, where can we find strength? O where?

Brother! Pull and push the wagon  
 Patiently! Though it be hard.  
 Pay no attention to your stomach,  
 Which is empty and starved.

Walk in harness and pull the wagon,  
 Don't moan or cry but sing a song.  
 Know, that in the end the dawn will come,  
 And the Jew will yet be happy again.

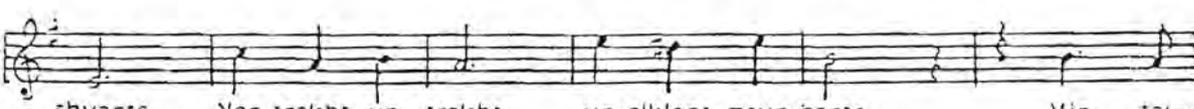
The next example is of a song composed by Dawid Bajgelman. He also composed many other songs, some of which are mentioned in Appendix B. The following is the music and the words of this song (Kalisch 1985:89-91):

Music example 4: Song composed by Dawid Bajgelman

Slow



Fin - star di nakht, vi koy - in



shvarts, Nor trakht un trakht, un s'klapt mayn harts. Mir tsi-

*ritenuto* *Tempo*



gay - ner le - bn vi key - ner! Mir lay - dn noyt, ge - nug koym oyf broyt.

Faster



Dzum, dzum, dzum, dzum, — dzum, dzum, Mir fli - en a -



rum vi di tshay - kes. Dzum, dzum, dzum, dzum,

1.  
dzum, dzum, Mir shpi - ln oyf di ba - la - lay - kes.

2.  
lay - kes. lay - kes.

Slow D.S. Fine

*Finster di nakht, vi koyln shvarts.  
Nor trakht un trakht, un s'klapt mayn harts.  
Mir tsigayner lebn vi keyner,  
Mir laydn noyt, genug koym oyf broyt.*

*Refrain:*

*Dzum, dzum, dzum...  
Mir flien arum vi di tshaykes.  
Dzum, dzum, dzum...  
Mir shpiln oyf di balalaykes.*

*Nit vu men togt, nit vu men nakht;  
A yeder zikh plogt, nor kh'trakht un trakht.  
Mir tsigayner lebn vi keyner,  
Mir laydn noyt, genug koym oyf broyt.*

*Refrain:*

English translation:

*Dark is the night, like blackest coal.  
I brood and brood, my heartbeats toll.  
We Gypsies live like no others do,  
Suffering pain and hunger too.*

*Refrain:*

*Dzum, dzum, dzum...*

Like seagulls we fly near and far.  
Dzum, dzum, dzum...  
We're strumming our gypsy guitar.

Nowhere to stay, almost no food;  
Everyone struggles, but I just brood.  
We gypsies live like no others do,  
Suffering pain, and hunger too.

Refrain:

Junkele (Jankele) Herszkowicz, a popular ghetto street "troubadour" (Dobroszycki 1984:92) composed and performed songs in the Lodz Ghetto. He wrote a song called *Rumkowski, Chaim* in 1940 and managed to earn a living for several months by performing it, by which time it had become a hit song. The song tells about three Chaim's, but the main aim was to attack Rumkowski, the chairman of the Judenrat. It went as follows (Flam 1992:37-42):

Music example 5: *Rumkowski, Chaim*



Yi - da - lakh zay - nen ge - bentshit mit kha - yim, Kha -  
yim le - oy - lam nu - ves. Kha - yim fin beys ha - kha - yim,  
— Rum-kov-ski kha-yim mit zayn groy - sn nes. — Er makht dekh  
ni - sim oy. Yey-din tug a - zoy, Ge-valt isi shra - a - yen oy, oy,  
oy. Ye-der ay - ner frey - gt — A tsvey - le shay -  
le, oy. — Zugt er kha - yim s'iz git a - zoy.



Refrain

Vayl ind - zer kha - yim. Er get indz kla - yen. Er get indz  
gro - pn. Er get indz man. Far-tsay - tus hobn di mid - ber yi - dn  
ge - ge - sn man; Hay - nt est shoy n ye - de vayb ir  
man. Rum-kov-ski , kha - yim hot git ge - trakht. Ge - ar - bet  
shve - [e]r bay tug bay nakht. Ge - makht a ge - to in a  
dye - to. In er shrayt ge - vald ar iz ge - rakht!

*Yidalkh zaynen gebentsht mit khayim,  
Khayim leoylam muves,  
Khayim fin beys ha'khayim,  
Rumkowski khayim mit zayn groysn nes.  
Er makht dekh nisim oy,  
Yeydn tug azoy,  
Gevalt tsi shrayen oy, oy, oy,  
Yeyder ayner freygt:  
A tsvayte shayle, oy,  
Zugt er khayim s'iz git azoy!*

Refrain:

*Vayl er iz indzer khayim,  
Er geht indz klayen,  
Er geht indz gropn,  
Er geht indz man.  
Fartsaytns hobn di midber yidn gegesn man,  
Haynt est shoy n yede vayb ir man.  
Rumkowski khayim hot git getrakht,  
Gearbet shver bay tug bay nakht,  
Gemakht a geto in a dyeto  
In er shraytgevald az er iz gerakht!*

Khayim vaytsman hot gezugt:  
Az er wil di yidn in palestine hobn.  
Hot zay gehaysn akern zeyen,  
Er hot zay dortn tif bagrubn;  
Ober indzer khayim'l,  
Rumkowski khayim,  
Er geht indz yeydn tug shrayim:  
Aynem a shtik broyt,  
In Tsveytn a shtik ferd,  
Me leygt bay eyem oyekh tif'n drerd.

Refrain...

Der driter khayim fin beys ha'khayim,  
Hot mit malkhe hamuves a git gesheft gemakht:  
Er zol im tsishteln maysim vus mer;  
Er zol im tsishteln bay tug bay nakht.  
Hot zekh der malekh ha'muves genimen  
Tsi der arbet shnel.  
Er makht fin yedn giber oy a tel:  
Er makht der flink,  
Er makht des git.  
Er makht di gantse geto shvakh in mid.

Refrain...

In a zimer tug,  
Geveyzn iz a tug a hayser,  
Geyt Rumkowski in der gas,  
Er zet dokh oys vi a keyser.  
A hele antsug, oy,  
In tinkele briln,  
Politsay arim bevakht.  
Iekh zug aykh guer  
Indzer keyser hot groue huer;  
Leybn zol er gantse hindert yuer!

*Refrain:*

*Runkowski Khayim der eltster yude,  
Iz ungeshtelt bay di gestapo.  
Meye yidalakh zaynen zayne bruder,  
In er farzorgt indz di papo.  
Er makht dekh nisim oy,  
Yeydn tug azoy  
Gevald tsi shrayen oy, oy, oy!  
Yeyder ayner freygt:  
A tsvayte shayle oy?  
Zugt er khaynim: s'iz git azoy!*

English translation:

Jews are seen to be blessed with life,  
Life until death,  
Life from the house of life,  
Rumkowski Chaim and his great miracle.  
He makes miracles, oy,  
So every day,  
For heaven's sake, oy, oy, oy,  
Everyone asks:  
A second question, oy?  
Chaim says: It's good this way!

*Refrain:*

Because he is our Chaim  
He gives us bran,  
He gives us barley,  
He gives us manna.  
Once upon a time Jews of the desert ate manna;  
Now each woman eats her husband.  
Rumkowski Chaim thought it through,  
Worked hard day and night,  
Made a ghetto with a diet store,  
And claims gevald that he is right!



Chaim Weizmann said:  
He wants to have the Jews in Palestine.  
He told them to plow, sow,  
He did them in there deep;  
But, our Chaim,  
Rumkowski Chaim,  
Everyday he gives us leftovers:  
One a piece of bread,  
The other a piece of horse,  
And we are also done in deep.

Refrain:

The third Chaim of the house of life,  
Made a good deal with the angel of death:  
He should provide him more and more corpses;  
He should provide them day and night.  
So, the angel of death  
Got to work right away.  
He makes a mess out of every hero:  
He does it quickly,  
He does it well.  
He makes the whole ghetto weak and tired.

Refrain:

On a summer day,  
It was a very hot day,  
Rumkowski walked in the street,  
And looked like a Royal Highness.  
He wore a light-colored suit, oy,  
And dark glasses,  
Surrounded by the police.  
I tell you  
Our Royal Highness has grey hair;  
May he live to be a hundred!

Refrain:

Rumkowski Chaim, the Eldest of the Jews,  
Is employed by the Gestapo.  
We Jews are his brothers,  
And he supplies our food.  
He makes miracles, oy,  
So every day,  
For heaven's sake, oy, oy, oy!  
Everyone asks:  
A second question, oy?  
Chaim says: It's good this way!

Herszkowicz was also responsible for the 1941 hit song, *Es geht a Yeke mit a Teke*. This ghetto hit song made fun of the newly arrived German Jews, known as Yekes. It treats their ups and downs and unfamiliarity with local customs with humour. A partnership was formed with Karol Rozencwajg in 1941. He accompanied Jankele Herszkowicz on a guitar or a zither. (Dobroszycki 1984:92.)

Another song composed and sung by Hershkowitz was *Ikh fur kayn palestine*, which is a song of hope. It deals with the inmates' wishes for a Jewish state in Palestine, after hearing rumours that it could happen (Flam 1992:78). These are the words of this song (Flam 1992:75-78):

*Refrain:*

*Ikh fur kayn palestine,  
Dortn iz a goldene medine.  
Ikh vel kishn di mezize,  
In di levune shaynt.  
Kh'vel zikh toyvln in der mikve,  
Yedn tug zingen di tikve.  
Ikh vel flantsn pomerantsn,  
S'vet zayn olerayt!  
Ikh vel veyrn dozer in der kehile,*



*Bentshn esrog in kishn di tfilim,  
In reb yoshke kalb  
Vet zayn undzer fraynt;  
Servus yidn ikh fur ahaym.*

*Di novemyeske gas, oy, oy,  
Di sokhrim zenen blat, oy, oy, oy,  
Ale zenen haynt shoy n playte;  
S'iz dokh nisht kayn shpas.  
Rubin mit der zin,  
Shmekn dort ahin,  
Goldman mit di zibn tekhter,  
Moyshe tsiker shmil.  
Rumkowski mit zayn armey,  
Viln kayn eretz yisruel arayn.  
M'vet klapn in polkn,  
A gantse tsayt,  
A gedile vet zayn, olerayt.*

*Refrain:...*

English translation:

Refrain:  
I'm going to Palestine,  
That is a golden land.  
I will kiss the mezuzah,  
And the moon will shine.  
I'll dip in the mikveh,  
Every day I'll sing "Hatikvah."  
I'll plant oranges,  
Everything will be all right!  
I'll be active in the community,  
I'll bless the etrog and kiss the tfillin,  
And Rabbi Yoshke Kalb  
Will be our friend;  
Good-bye Jews, I'm going home.

Verse:

The Nowomiejska Street, oy, oy,  
The dealers are illegal, oy, oy, oy,  
They've all run away by now;  
It's not a joke anymore.  
Rubin with his son,  
Longs to go there,  
Goldman and his seven daughters,  
Moishe Tsiker-Shmil.  
Rumkowski and his army,  
Want to enter Eretz-Yisrael too.  
We'll make noise,  
All through that time,  
We'll have a celebration, all right!

Refrain:...

#### 14.4 Decline of cultural activities

The House of Culture finally closed down in 1943. A great need was felt for some form of cultural life. Small centres for the cultivation of music sprang up. Participation was usually only possible for the elite. Either professional or amateur musicians performed for intimate groups of guests at these concerts, and the emphasis was placed on chamber music.

During the first three months of 1944 the Jewish authorities announced that musical instruments had to be registered and later surrendered. This operation was supervised by the conductor Bajgelman who had great knowledge of the value of musical instruments. The instruments were selected according to the needs of the municipal orchestra of Lodz, the mayor of Lodz and for the music school of the Hitler Youth and the Reich Chamber of Music. Dawid Bajgelman was supported by an expert and the general manager of the municipal theatre of Lodz. Bajgelman was asked for

his impressions of the different instruments, but his opinion on the value of the instruments was largely ignored. A total of 44 violins were bought for only one mark each. In all, four excellent pianos, mandolins, guitars, an accordion, zithers, lutes, flutes, clarinets, saxophones, trumpets, different percussion instruments, sixty violins, two cellos and a custom-made trombone with a total value of over 20 000 marks, were bought for only 2 400 marks. As a result of this the symphony orchestra was dismantled, the revues were discontinued and music life as a whole in Lodz Ghetto came to a standstill. (Dobroszycki 1984:471.)

#### 14.5 Conclusion

The course of World War II can easily be recognised in the life of the Lodz Ghetto. The relative normalisation, in relation to the progress of a war, of life and activities in Poland after the German occupation started in 1940 with the deportation of Jews to the different ghettos. While the Germans felt that the prospects of winning the war were good, musicians in the ghettos did not need to do manual work, as the House of Culture in the Lodz Ghetto organised the musical activities and they decided to employ full-time musicians. The total number of musicians must have been around 200, as there were two orchestras, a few soloists, as well as the revue performers.

When the war reached its turning-point in August 1942 the musicians were required to work in factories or departments of the Jewish Council. As the prospects of winning the war against the Allied Forces decreased, so did cultural activities in the Lodz Ghetto.

Singing was most certainly the one factor or cultural activity that meant a lot to the inmates. Miriam Harel, one of the composers in the ghetto, said the following about songs (Flam 1992:1):

*The song was the only truth. The Nazis could take anything away from us, but they could not take singing from us. This remained our only human expression.*

The main role of music in this ghetto was upliftment and encouragement, and to build morale and hope for the future.

## CHAPTER 15

### LVOV GHETTO AND ITS LABOUR CAMP, JANOWSKA

#### 15.1 Geographical location and genesis

The city of Lvov is situated in pre-war Poland, about 170 kilometres to the south-east of Warsaw. In 1939 the Jewish population of Lvov numbered about 100 000, which was one third of the total population of Lvov. Lvov was situated in that part of Poland occupied by Russia in 1939. The Jewish population grew to about 160 000 by June 1941 when the Germans invaded Russia and the Russian-occupied areas (Friedman 1954:224).

The Lvov ghetto came into existence in October 1941 and soon became the third largest ghetto (Hilberg 1985:221). More than nine labour camps were established around the city of Lvov. One of these labour camps, Janowska, which had an active music life, was built around a factory.

Another labour camp in the vicinity of Lvov was Czwartaki. This camp will be discussed under the same heading as Janowska, as musical activities only started once the Janowska labour camp had been closed down.

#### 15.2 Musical activities in the Lvov ghetto

The Jewish inmates in the Lvov ghetto were compelled by the German authorities to conduct public cultural activities (Friedman 1980:289). Lvov was fortunate enough to have as inmates a large number of Jewish performers and singers. Some of these performers had already been famous before World War II.

In order to enhance Jewish cultural activities, the Germans organised two orchestras in the Lvov area. One functioned in the

Lvov ghetto and the other in the Janowska labour camp near the city.

The orchestra in the Lvov ghetto was used for a variety of purposes. Their most important duty was to accompany the detachments marching off to and returning from work.

Upon orders from the highest-ranking official or officer they also played dance music, marches, such as the *Radetzky March*, and works by Mozart and Beethoven. At times the musicians were forced to perform, in spite of their personal feelings, at tragic moments such as roll calls and "selections" (of inmates to be deported to concentration camps) in the ghetto and at the gate of the ghetto (Friedman 1954:289).

A newspaper in the ghetto, *Gazeta Lwowska*, published a satirical song about the Jewish musicians in the ghetto and noted the names of 40 artists performing there.

During the first 18 months since the establishment of the ghetto many inmates were either deported, killed or died of different causes. By December 1942 only 24 000 inmates were left in the ghetto. Unfortunately the losses were high among musicians and artists.

Prominent musicians who died were the conductors, Alfred Stadler, Marcell Horowitz and Jakob Münd, and the composers Leonid Striks, Maks Striks, Jozef Frenkel, Skolka, and Willem Kristel. Others were the opera singers Feller, Fiszer, Scronge and Buxbaum (Friedman 1954:293-294).

A few professors of the pre-war Lvov Conservatory of Music also perished in the ghetto, namely Leon Zak, Schatz, Jozef Herman, Edward Steinberg, Hildebrand, Breyer, Priwes and Aron Dobszyk. Instrumentalists who did not survive were the following: Leon Eber, Mark Bauer, Artur Hemelin and Pollak (Friedman 1954:293-294).

### 15.3 Musical activities in the labour camp Janowska

Janowska was one of the labour camps in the area surrounding the Lvov ghetto. It was situated around the Janowska factory. The commandant of this camp was Obersturmführer Wilhaus (Black Book 1946:246).

The Janowska labour camp was started in October 1941. During October the camp population consisted of 580 Jews and 320 non-Jewish Poles. Besides being a labour camp it was also used as a transit camp for prisoners being sent to Belzec. The maximum number of inmates at any given time was usually less than 10 000 (Friedman 1954:304). An estimated 300 000 to 400 000 people passed through the gates of this camp during its existence. A large number of these died from different causes, ranging from natural causes to execution.

An orchestra was established in the Janowska camp upon the initiative of the deputy commander SS Untersturmführer, Rotika (Friedman 1954:311). This orchestra consisted of 60 male members who were all inmates of the camp (Wells 1963:135), many of them being first rate musicians (Ainsztein 1974:209). Quite a few well-known personalities from the music world formed part of this orchestra. These included Jozef Münd, Jozef Herman, Eduard Steinberger and Schatz, who was also known as a composer.

Professor Leonid Striks was appointed conductor of this orchestra (Friedman 1954:293). In reality both Professor Striks and Jozef Münd led the orchestra, as the latter had been a famous conductor at some time, most probably before the war (Black Book 1946:308-309).

The orchestra was expected to play for the inmates on their way to work and on their way returning to the camp, as well as during roll calls. They further had to perform for their "mentor", Rotika, who was reported to be a connoisseur of music (Friedman 1954:311).

A special melody played frequently and called *Tango of Death*, was composed by order of Rotika. This melody was most probably composed by Schatz, and was played for the work brigades leaving camp in the mornings. Some of the members of the orchestra were occasionally expected to sing.

Literary activities were alive in the camp, but these had to be conducted in secret. An example of this was a secret poet session organised by the popular song-writer, Schlechter, on New Year's Eve of 1941 (Friedman 1954:312).

Copies of poems and folk-songs written in the Janowska labour camp survived the war as a result of Jewish clerks who worked in the offices at the camp and made copies of these and then hid them.

By May 1944 there remained fewer than 100 inmates at Janowska and it was decided to close the camp and deport the remaining inmates to other labour camps, ghettos or concentration camps.

One of these was a nearby labour camp called Czwartaki. The commandant, Untersturmführer Fichtner, and the commander of the Sonderkommando, Scherlack, decided to start an orchestra. He received four musicians from Janowska after its liquidation. Both the commanders and the staff of the labour camp enjoyed listening to the new band and the singers that were accompanied by the band. For the inmates these performances meant even more, as they could discuss revolt plans and mass escapes while pretending to listen to the music (Ainsztein 1974:711).

#### **15.4 Conclusion**

A substantial difference can be seen in the quality and quantity of music performed in the Lvov ghetto and the Janowska labour camp.

In the Lvov ghetto inmates were compelled to participate in cultural activities. This led to the forming of a rather large orchestra as Lvov had many inmates who were good musicians. Musical activities started to decline in the latter part of 1942, as many inmates were being deported to other camps and ghettos, while others died in the ghetto.

Music life in the Janowska labour camp operated under much stricter circumstances. The orchestra in Janowska was only used for camp parades and to play for labour groups leaving and returning to the camp, whereas the one in the Lvov ghetto was also used for entertainment.

On the other hand, these musical activities afforded the inmates the opportunity to discuss revolts and escapes, quite probably not only in the Czwartaki labour camp.

## CHAPTER 16

### TEREZIN (THERESIENSTADT) GHETTO

#### 16.1 Geographical location and genesis

Terezin is situated about 60 kilometers north of Prague and as such was in that part of Czechoslovakia which was occupied by Germany before the war. Terezin, or Theresienstadt, was originally built as a fort in the 18th century. During the 19th and 20th centuries Terezin was upgraded to a military and political prison (Chládková 1991:6).

During 1940 the fort of Terezin was turned into a Gestapo prison. In late 1941 it was transformed into a Jewish transit-concentration camp. The German authorities called Terezin "Ghetto Theresienstadt" (Chládková 1991:6).

The first transport of prisoners reached Terezin on 24 November 1941. These prisoners, as well as many of the other inmates to arrive at Terezin, came from Prague and Brno (Chládková 1991:8). Terezin was finally completed in 1942 (Green 1969:31).

A total of 30 000 to 40 000 people permanently resided in the ghetto (Chládková 1991:10). The total number of inmates to pass through the gates of Terezin was about 140 000 (Green 1969:31). The number of inmates at any particular time reached a peak at 60 000 inmates (Karas 1985:10). From 1943 onwards inmates were deported elsewhere from time to time. At first inmates were deported to Riga, Izbice, Maly, Trostinec, Sobibor, Majdanek and Treblinka, and from 1944 deportations were made to Auschwitz as well (Chládková 1991:16).

In the book, *The Artists of Terezin*, Green (1969:84) mentions gas chambers working with Zylkon B, and Lévy-Hass (1982:83) mentions hearing about gas chambers in Terezin. This is in direct

contradiction to Feig (1979:26), who sees it as a fortress town, having no resemblance to the extermination centres, and Laska (1983:229) who totally rejects the fact that gas chambers existed there.

The camp was liberated on 8 May 1945 by the Russian Army after being surrendered to the Red Cross by the German authorities on 2 May 1945.

## 16.2 The organisation of life and cultural activities

Life in Terezin was moulded according to a fixed pattern. The German government placed a guard unit of SS (see Glossary) in overall control of the ghetto. The first SS commander was Dr Siegfried Seidl (Karas 1985:8). He was followed by two commanders of the SS, A. Burger and Karl Rahm (Chládková 1991:9).

A Jewish Council of Elders was instituted in the camp for purposes of self-administration, but responsible to the SS. Their first chairman was Jakob Edelstein with Otto Zucker as his deputy (Green 1969:55; Karas 1985:8). At a later date Dr Paul Eppstein and Dr Benjamin Murrelstein respectively took over the chairmanship (Chládková 1991:9). One of their functions was the drafting and implementation of laws governing life in the ghetto. Members of the council were put in charge of individual departments like administration, economics, finances, technical as well as health and social care, labour and youth care (Chládková 1991:9-10). Unfortunately corruption was rife (Matussek 1975:18) as in many of the other ghettos.

One of the first steps taken by the Council of Elders to organise cultural activities was when they asked Hedda Grab-Kernmayer to organise these activities including education, entertainment, music and lectures. This was the predecessor to the highly organised *Freizeitgestaltung* (Administration of free time activities). When this organisation came into existence, Rabbi

Weiner was named as its first director (Karas 1985:15).

The *Freizeitgestaltung* was divided into different sections including the theatre, cabaret, opera, instrumental music, café music, recitation, library and sport. The theatrical, recitation and library sections were the largest, each being divided into smaller sub-sections. A vast variety of sport activities was allowed in Terezin. Among the favourites of these were football, volleyball, basketball, tabletennis, handball and chess (Karas 1985:16). Different concessions were granted to scientists and people taking part in cultural activities. One of the most important of these was exemption from heavy labour (Karas 1985:15).

At first cultural activities were suppressed by the SS camp authorities, but the situation quickly changed, as by mid 1942 there was considerable freedom to participate in these events (Chládková 1991:14). Concerts, lectures, the library and art shows were even regarded as an encouragement to the people (Green 1961:35). Dwork (1991:128) goes as far as stating:

*...in different periods in the history of Theresienstadt cultural and scholarly activities were not only tolerated but actually encouraged.*

One of the other institutions that existed in Terezin was an underground school for the children (Dwork 1991:125-126).

Theatrical performances took place and art was allowed. The initiators in the theatrical genre were Gustav Schorch, Vlasta Schönova, Paul Fryd and Zdenek Jelinek. Five of the well-known artists resident in the ghetto were Bedrich Fritta, Leo Hass, Otto Unger, Karel Fleischmann and Petr Klein (Chládková 1991:15).

By the summer of 1944 the SS authorities decided that Terezin had to be beautified and upgraded. This was because of an impending visit by the Red Cross. As a result of this the daily routine

improved even more.

### 16.3 The organisation of musical activities

The first musical activities were probably initiated by the second group of inmates who arrived. This group was responsible for the building of the ghetto. Karel Svenk and Rafael Schächter played a very important role in initiating musical activities in the camp (Karas 1985:11). These activities consisted of the singing of folk songs. This second group also had in its midst a number of musicians, previously inmates of Lipa (the location of this camp could not be determined). Many of these musicians brought their own instruments with them, like Karel Fröhlich who brought in his violin and viola and Kurt Maier who brought his accordion with him (Karas 1985:13).

The first document available on music life in Terezin is the programme of a variety show in the barracks on 6 December 1941. Musicians performing were Karel Fröhlich and Heinrich Taussig on the violin, Viktor Kohn on the flute and the accordion players Wolfi Lederer and Kurt Maier. Another feature at this concert was a jazz band consisting of Fritz Weiss, Hans Selig, Pavel Kohn, Fredy Mautner, Franta Goldschmidt, Tedy Berger and Wolfi Lederer (Karas 1985:13).

As new transports arrived so did a few new musicians, but musical and cultural life only started blossoming once a few pianos arrived at Terezin. In the later war years cultural activities became so popular that at a certain stage several concurrent musical and theatrical performances took place every day besides lectures, debates and sports activities (Karas 1985:43).

As mentioned previously, Hedda Grab-Kernmayer was asked by the Council of Elders to organise different cultural activities, including the music. The *Freizeitgestaltung* later took over these functions. There were several sections organising opera, vocal,

instrumental and café music. Hans Krása was a member of the *Freizeitgestaltung* and in overall control of the music section (Karas 1985:92).

Figure 4: Example of a music concert organised by the *Studio für neue Musik* (Karas 1985:58)

# Studio für neue Musik

Leitung: Viktor Ullmann

2. Konzert

Junge Autoren in Theresienstadt

1. Gideon Klein:  
Die Part. 4 Lieder für Altstimme  
u. Klavier Dichtung: Peter Klein
2. Heinz Alt:  
6 Miniaturen für Klavier
3. Siegmond Schul:  
2 Chasidische Tänze für Violine u. Cello
4. Karl Berman:  
Polka
5. Siegmond Schul:  
Diveri-Mento Ebraico für Streichquartett

Mitwirkende:

Arnon-Lind, Kling, Ledec-Quartett  
Dr. Reiner, R.-Schächter, Weisenstein

Despite the pleas of the *Freizeitgestaltung*, collective punishment in the form of a ban was placed on cultural activities from time to time. One of the occasions that would evoke such a ban would be when an inmate attempted to escape (Chládková 1991:27).

The *Freizeitgestaltung* music section had the added responsibility of acquiring musical instruments for the inmates of the ghetto, as well as sheet music and books. They also provided the opportunity for young artists to study and practise. Composers and writers could moreover produce new works (Karas 1985:18).

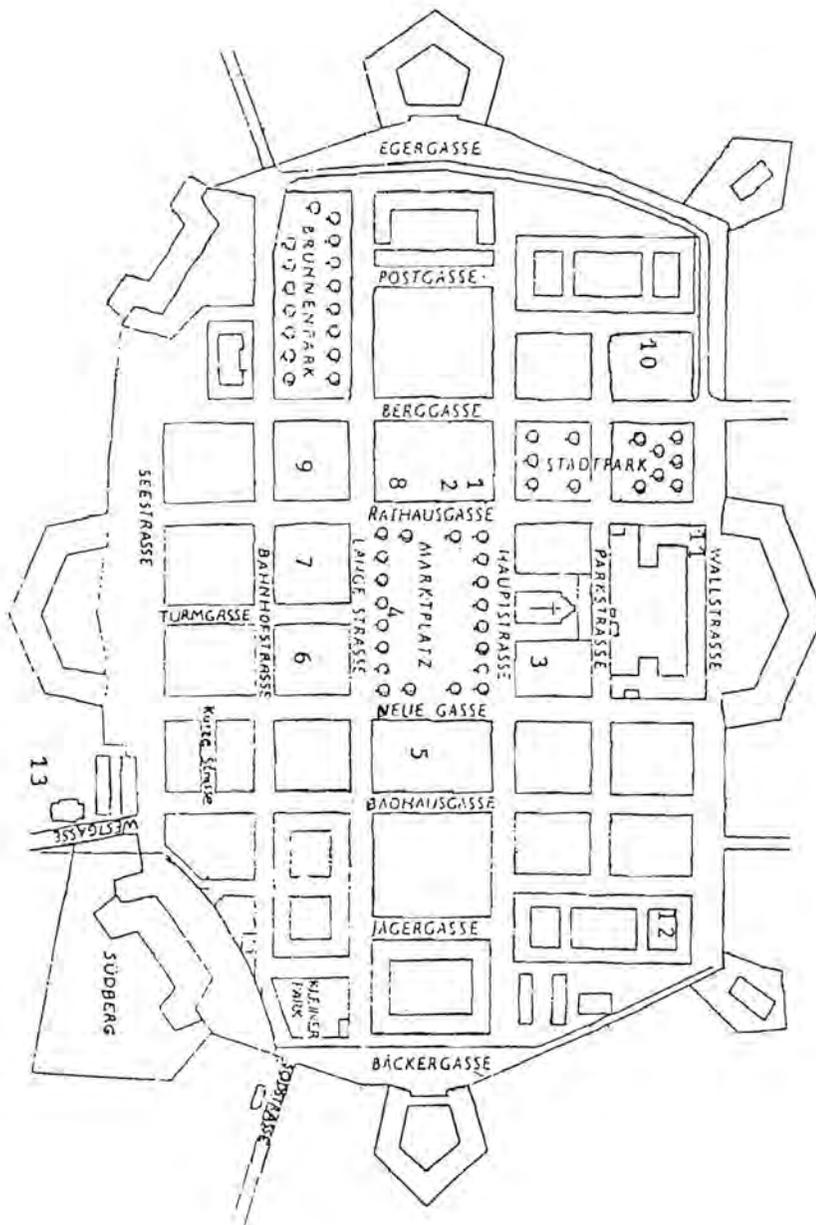
Viktor Ullmann, another musician and composer, founded and directed the *Studio für neue Musik* (Karas 1985:55). The activities of this *Studio* included music concerts, theatrical presentations, lectures on a wide range of subjects, recitation of poetry, and participation in sport (Karas 1985:61). An example of a music concert organised by this *Studio* is given on the previous page, as Figure 4.

#### **Explanation of Figure 5 (Map of the Terezin Ghetto)**

- 1 In the attic a school was started. The gymnasium was used for performances such as of the *Bartered Bride*.
- 2 Concerts and performances were held in the council chamber.
- 3 The cellar was used as a rehearsal hall.
- 4 After the improvements in 1944 this location was changed into a park and music pavillion.
- 5 A café was situated here. People could order tea and coffee while listening to an orchestra or to other performers.
- 6 Different cultural programmes and lectures were held here.
- 7 Performances of a varied nature were held here.
- 8 This was the location for many theatrical performances.
- 9 Parts of this location were used for theatrical and other cultural activities.
- 10 A hall in one of the houses was used for theatrical performances and concerts. A library was also housed in one of the buildings.

- 11 At this location public baths, showers and a swimming pool were provided for use by the inmates.
- 12 This building contained a hall used for cultural performances.
- 13 After the improvements in 1944 this location had cultural halls, a library, a synagogue and a relaxation area.

Figure 5: Map of the Terezin Ghetto (Chládkova 1991:20-21)



### 16.3.1 Pre-fall 1944 musical activities

Musical activities will be discussed under the headings pre-fall 1944 and from fall 1944 onwards, as musical activities nearly came to a standstill during the fall of 1944, when thousands of inmates were deported elsewhere. With the influx of new inmates musical activities again started increasing in number.

#### 16.3.1.1 Vocal music

The first musician involved in vocal music was Rafael Schächter. At first such vocal music only consisted of informal singing of folk songs, but this changed with the arrival of Gideon Klein who started arranging music for Schächter's choir. These arrangements included Czech, Slovak, Hebrew and Russian folk songs. Schächter's first choir was a male choir but a female choir was started later and then combined with the male choir (Karas 1985:23).

Subsequently many other choirs came into existence. Amongst these were Berman's girls' chorus and Karl Vrba's boys' choir and a male singing group of ten. The above-mentioned Vrba was also known for his arrangement of folk songs for choirs. At the same time Siegmund Subak formed the Subak Chorus, a choir which specialised in the singing of Jewish liturgical music, Yiddish folksongs and new Palestine music. Another choir similar to the Subak Chorus was called the Tempel Chor. The Durra Chorus specialised in folk songs from a wide variety of nationalities (Karas 1985:25).

Gideon Klein extended the repertoire of the choirs by composing two works for choirs. The first of these was a work for male voices based on a text of Czech folk poetry. The other was *Two Madrigals* for a five-part mixed chorus (Karas 1985:23).

Besides the adult choirs in Terezin a few children's choirs also

entertained the inmates. Rudolf Freudenfeld's children's chorus and Karel Berman's girl's chorus were two of these.

Jakob Edelstein urged teachers to keep the children busy at school. The teaching system included teaching through games and the singing of poems (Karas 1985:86-87). As part of the cultural activities at school Ella Pollack, a piano teacher and concert pianist, started a choir at school (Dwork 1991:128).

Throughout the ghetto a great deal of emphasis was laid on the singing of Jewish patriotic songs. The people did not sing Jewish songs only, but also Czech and German ones. Chassidic and liturgical songs were also sung while canons were a great favourite, especially with the children (Karas 1985:88-89).

The first fully vocal concert took place on 11 June 1942. Performing in this concert were Gerta Harpmann, Jakob Goldring, Emmy Zeckendorf, Anka Dub and Hedda Grab-Kernmayer (Karas 1985:19).

Opera also formed an integral part of the vocal music in Terezin and quite a variety of operas were performed. The opera, *The Bartered Bride*, by the Czech composer Smetana was probably the first to be performed in Terezin. It came about as a result of choirs practising choruses from this opera. Soloists became available and it was then decided to perform the work as a whole (Karas 1985:23-24). The première took place on 28 November 1942 and ran for a total of 35 performances (Green 1969:73).

Other operas rehearsed by Schächter were Smetana's *Hubicka*, with fifteen performances, and Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* and *The Magic Flute*. The only opera he actually conducted at a performance was Pergolesi's *La Serva Padrona*, in which a full accompaniment of string orchestra and continuo was used (Karas 1985:28).

Another conductor to try his hand at opera was Franz Eugen Klein.

He conducted operas such as Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Puccini's *Tosca* and Bizet's *Carmen*. With all three operas a double cast was used. Only for the opera *Carmen* the orchestra was replaced by two pianos played by Edith Steiner-Kraus and Franz Eugen Klein (Karas 1985:29). Some of the cast used for this opera were Machiel Gobets, David Grünfeld, Hedda Grab-Kernmayer, Ada Schwarz-Klein, Walter Windholz, Karel Freund, Karel Berman, Ada Hecht, Truda Borger and Hilde Aronson-Lindt. Besides the above-mentioned operas Klein also conducted a few that were of German origin (Karas 1985:25).

Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Verdi's *Aida* were conducted by Karel Fischer, who actually preferred directing oratorio. Other conductors were Karel Berman, who conducted Vilém Baldek's *V Studni* (In the well) and Wolfgang Lederer who conducted Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermaus* (Karas 1985:32).

In two of the productions children were involved, namely in Mozart's *Bastien und Bastienne* and Hans Krása's *Brundibár*. On the next page a poster advertising *Brundibár* is shown.

*Der gläserne Berg* (The Glass Mountain) was one of two operas composed in Terezin. Unfortunately it was only performed before the Council of Elders, who for reasons unknown refused to allow its performance for the rest of the inmates of Terezin. Bedrich Borges described the work as too modernistic, and probably of inferior quality (Karas 1985:36).

Viktor Ullmann's opera *Der Kaiser von Atlantis oder der Tod dankt ab* (The Emperor of Atlantis) was his major endeavour while in Terezin. Peter Kien, a painter and poet, who also resided in Terezin, wrote the libretto. It was scored for five singers and a 13-piece orchestra, including a saxophone, banjo and harpsichord (Karas 1985:35). The performance of this opera was conducted by Raphael Schächter.

No facet of the musical repertoire was left untouched. Even

oratorios and cantatas were performed. Karel Fischer conducted Haydn's *The Creation* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. Rafael Schächter himself directed Verdi's *Requiem* (Karas 1985:135).

Figure 6: Poster advertising Krasá's opera *Brundibár* (Karas 1985:92)



### 16.3.1.2 Instrumental music

The first orchestra to come into existence in Terezin was a string orchestra under the leadership of Karel Ancerl. This orchestra comprised 16 violins, 8 violas, 6 cellos and one double bass (Karas 1985:63, 65) and performed on the concert stage on Terezin Square.

Four other orchestras existed alongside many smaller ensembles for popular music. Evidently another small string orchestra was formed, possibly under direction of Lucian Horwitz. Karel Ancerl was leader of one of the other orchestras in addition to his own string orchestra (Karas 1985:68). A municipal orchestra consisting of 35 members (Dwork 1991:129) was probably directed by Peter Deutsch (Karas 1985:69). Although musical talent was abundant, many ensembles were nearly identical. It frequently happened that a brilliant instrumentalist had to perform in many of the orchestras. An example of this is Karel Fröhlich, who had to act as concertmaster in all the orchestras.

Many of the concerts in the park on Terezin Square were led by Carlo Taube. Another favourite venue for concerts was the town hall.

Chamber music was another well-represented genre as were also performances by soloists accompanied by a piano. Chamber music was one of the activities that flourished from the very outset. The first group to perform was a trio, consisting of Otto Zucker (violin), dr Erich Klapp (cello), and dr Paul Eppstein (piano). Their initial performances were held in the living quarters.

String quartets formed the larger number of ensembles found at Terezin. The first of these was the so-called Doctor's Quartet, comprising the two violin players Egon Ledec and dr Ilona Král, the viola player Viktor Kohn and dr Klapp, the cellist. They performed works by Haydn, Beethoven and Dvorák weekly (Karas 1985:37-38). At a later date Egon Ledec formed the Ledec Quartet,

with himself and Schneider as violinists and the Kohn brothers, Viktor and Paul, playing the viola and cello respectively. Julius Stwertka later replaced Schneider as violinist. During 1944 Egon Ledec again formed another quartet, this time with Adolf Kraus (violin), Viktor Kohn (viola) and Dauber (cello) (Karas 1985:38-39).

The ensemble with "higher artistic aspirations" (Karas 1985:39) was the so-called Terezin Quartet. This ensemble had already been performing together prior to their transfer to Terezin. Karel Fröhlich, probably the best violinist in Terezin, and Heinrich "Bubbi" Taussig were the two violinists. The rest of the quartet was made up by Romuald Süßmann on the viola and Friedrich Mark on the cello. As they concentrated only on a limited number of works, the level of their performances must have been superior to many of the other ensembles. Some of the works they performed were the following quartets: C minor (op 18 no. 4) by Beethoven, B-flat Major by Brahms, D Major by Mozart, and the *Meditation on an Ancient Czech Chorale* by Josef Suk. They also made an intensive study of two works composed in Terezin, one of which was Hans Krása's *Variations* on his own theme and the other one was Gideon Klein's *Praeludium and Fugue*. (Karas 1985:39.)

Three of the members of the Terezin Quartet, Fröhlich, Süßmann and Mark, formed a piano quartet with the pianist Gideon Klein. They performed works by Beethoven and Dvorák. Gideon Klein is said to have made his name as pianist as a direct result of his performance with the quartet (Karas 1985:40).

One of the inmates of the ghetto wrote the following poem after a piano recital by Gideon Klein at Terezin (I never saw another butterfly 1965:30):

*Concert in the Old School Garret (played by Gideon Klein)*

*White fingers of the sexton sleep heavy upon us.  
Half a century*

*Since anyone as much as touched this piano.  
Let it sing again  
As it was made to yesterday.*

*Phantom hands which strike softly, on which thunder  
The forehead of this man heavy as the heaven before it rains.*

*And the springs,  
Under the weight of excitement, forgot to squeak.  
Half a century it is since anyone as much as touched this piano.*

*Our good friend, Time,*

*Sucked each figure empty like a honeybee  
Which has lived long enough  
And drunk enough honey  
So that now it can dry out in the sun somewhere.*

*Under the closed eyes, another person sits,  
Under the closed eyes, he seeks among the keys  
As among the veins through which the blood flows softly  
When you kiss them with a knife and put a song to it.*

*And this man yesterday cut all the veins,  
Opening all the organ's stops,  
Paid all the birds to sing,  
To sing  
Even though the harsh figures of the sexton sleep heavy upon us.  
Bent in his manner of death, you are like Beethoven.  
Your forehead was as heavy as the heavens before it rains.*

A number of soloists performed in Terezin. One of these was the violinist Fritz Brunner who performed every Sunday for an hour and a half over a period of 15 months. He was accompanied on the piano by Leval (Dwork 1991:130). Another violinist, Karel Fröhlich, in conjunction with Bernard Kaff as accompanist, also performed in Terezin. Some of the works they played were

Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata and César Frank's Sonata in A Major  
(Karas 1985:46).

Figure 7: Example of a programme for a chamber music concert  
(Karas 1985:42)

Kammermusik  
Abend.

FRANZ SCHUBERT:  
QUINTETT C-DUR OP.163

JOHANNES BRAHMS:  
SEXTETT G-DUR OP. 36

AUSFÜHRENDE:

I. Violine: Heinrich G. Faussig  
II. Violine: Paul Hlink  
I. Viola: Romuald Lüssmann  
II. Viola: Karel Ancerl  
Violoncelli: Friedrich Mark  
Paul Kohn

A few solo pianists used their talents to entertain the inmates. The first of these was Bernard Kaff, who succeeded in providing the inmates with a wide range of programmes. Two of his programmes consisted of music by Beethoven, one of music by Liszt and another of music by various composers, including Pavel Haas. Gideon Klein, acclaimed pianist that he was, also gave piano recitals. He participated in many of the genres available in the ghetto, like chamber music, recital accompaniments and helping with rehearsals and performances of operas and oratorios. The busiest pianist was probably Edith Steiner-Kraus. Solo concerts by singers and instrumentalists were likewise very popular (Dwork 1991:129).

#### 16.3.1.3 Lighter musical entertainment

In this musical genre four types dominated the scene. These were orchestras playing semi-classical music, jazz bands, cabarets and variety concerts.

The cafés were used as a venue of performance by many of these groups (Green 1969:89). The best-known of the jazz bands was the *Ghetto Swingers*. Initially this band was under the direction of Erich Vogel and consisted of a piano, percussion, guitar, bass, trumpet, trombone and one player for tenor saxophone and clarinet. Martin Roman later took over from Erich Vogel and enlarged the orchestra to three violins, two saxophones, three trumpets, trombone, guitar, accordion, bass and drums (Karas 1985:151-152).

Cabaret was very popular and much was done to boost this genre in Terezin. Early in 1942 Schächter and Svenk combined their talents to produce the first all-male cabaret show together with a variety show at Terezin (Karas 1985:14). The name of this show was *The Lost Food Card*, by Karel Svenk (Karas 1985:143). Female cabarets were equally popular with the inmates, especially those produced by Jana Sedova.

Another show performed there was in the form of a variety concert. This piece was aimed at strengthening the morale of the prisoners by including many optimistic and morale boosting songs. The title of the show was *Long Live Life* which in itself says a lot about the show. The poster advertising this cabaret show appears on the next page. Karel Svenk was also the producer of a cabaret called *The Last Cyclist* (Karas 1985:145). Even German cabarets were performed, as was the case in early 1944 when Obersturmführer Karl Rahm ordered Kurt Gerron to produce a German cabaret *Der Führer schenkt den Juden eine Stadt* (The Führer presents the Jews with a city). Other small shows and cabarets were directed by people like Hans Hofferer, Leo Strauss (Chládková 1991:15), Egon Thorn and Baby Morgan (Karas 1985:146).

With regard to semi-classical music, Carlo Taube was the man to promote this genre and to form an orchestra to play it (Karas 1985:149).

#### 16.3.1.4 Composers

Musicians at Terezin encountered many problems in their efforts to provide music and entertainment. One of the greatest problems experienced was the inadequate supply of sheet music, especially where chamber and piano music were concerned. Fortunately a lot of music was smuggled in (Karas 1985:41). The pianists were more fortunate in a way, in that many of the more talented pianists had already memorised a large repertoire of music during the pre-war years (Karas 1985:50).

The obvious way of solving the problem with regard to the lack of sheet music was by making use of the composers in Terezin. Fortunately quite a few composers were inmates of Terezin, such as Gideon Klein, Pavel Haas, Hans Krása, Zikmund Schul, Karel Berman, Egon Ledec, Viktor Kohn, Viktor Ullmann, Frantisek Domazlicky, Ilse Weber and Karel Reiner. A composer like Egon Ledec wrote music for the ensemble of which he was a member

(Karas 1985:127). Pavel Haas had already been a recognised composer before entering the camp (Karas 1985:76), and composed works like *Al S'fod* for men's chorus and *Study* for string quartet.

Figure 8: Poster advertising Karel Svenk's cabaret *Long Live Life* (Karas 1985:144)

# ANĚT ŽIJE ŽIVOT

Revie  
aneb - taneč kolem kostry



napsal: Karel Švenk  
režie: Karel Švenk  
hudba: Karel Švenk

výprava: Dolfi Aussenberg  
tance nastudovala: Kamila Rosenbaumová

hráči:

Beck - Bejček	Masárková
Becková Hanna	Pollaková
Bergmann	Popper
Bermann Karel	Pötschauerová
Borges	Rosenbaumová Kamila
Dr. Brammer	Siemens
Eckstein Luděk	Spitz
Eckstein Zdeněk	Schönová Vava
Glaserová	Schönová Maria
Goldschmidt	Sušický
Grábová - Kemmayerová	Steiner
Kraus Cesar	Straussová
Straus Karel	Švenk Karel
Kavan Karel	Neuschul
Schliesserová, Töpfer Otto, Zajlais.	

#### 16.3.1.5 Other pre-fall 1944 musical activities

Special concerts were organised to celebrate certain holidays. An example of such a concert is one held at Christmas time. This programme included Gounod's *Ave Maria*, Mozart's overture from *The Marriage of Figaro*, Puccini's duo from *La Bohème*, *Frère Jacques* and *Daughter of Zion* (Dwork 1991:130).

A very small private conservatory of music was started and run by Bernard Kaff. Different subjects, including music history, aesthetics and composition were taught at this conservatory. Two of the lecturers were Dr H G Adler and Dr James Simon (Karas 1985:91).

A new concert hall was opened on West street (*Westgasse*) on 30 April 1944. The concerts in this hall were very formal, so that inmates had to reserve seats for attending these (Karas 1985:67).

During June 1944 a commission of the Red Cross visited Terezin to see what the conditions were like. The Terezin orchestra gave a concert for this occasion, performing works by Mozart in the community centre, while a band also entertained the guests on Terezin Square during their visit (Green 1969:89).

Unfortunately many musicians were deported to other ghettos and concentration camps during the Fall of 1944. As a result cultural activities showed a decline, as operatic productions and performances of ensembles now proved to be out of the question. At this time male inmates were in the minority in Terezin (Karas 1985:171).

#### 16.3.2 Musical activities from Fall 1944 until the liberation of the ghetto

The number of cultural activities later normalised as new transports of inmates arrived at Terezin. Among the new arrivals

were the conductor Robert Brock and the singer Hanus Thein. As a result of the new influx of musicians, musical activities again rose to pre-fall standards (Karas 1985:172).

Orchestral activities were greatly revived through the efforts of two conductors, Leo Pappenheim and Robert Brock. Hans Feith did the same for jazz with his jazz quintet (Karas 1985:174).

When rumours of an impending visit by the Red Cross started spreading, Hanus Thein was asked to compose a children's opera. For this purpose he composed *Broucci* (Fireflies). He started composing and producing the opera in March 1945, with Robert Brock and Schönova as co-workers. Between the three of them they finished the composition in only three days. This opera contained Czech folksongs (Karas 1985:175). The première took place on 20 March 1945 in the Sokdovna hall. It was produced no fewer than 15 times.

The last concert in Terezin took place on 10 April 1945, when Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann* was performed. This was truly a first in Terezin, as works by a Jewish composer had never been allowed before (Karas 1985:177).

#### 16.4 Aftermath

Unfortunately many of the promising musicians and composers died during imprisonment in Terezin, or in other ghettos and concentration camps. Some of these were Zikmund Schul, Pavel Haas, Bernard Kaff, Hans Krása, Egon Ledec, Rafael Schächter, Carlo Taube, Viktor Ullmann and Gideon Klein.

Many others managed to survive and later became well-known. These included the singers Karel Berman, Hanus Thein, David Grünfeld, Anny Frey, Alexander Singer and Greta Hoffmeister; the conductors Karel Ancerl and Robert Brock; the composers Karel Reiner and Frantisek Domazlicky; the violinists Karel Fröhlich, Pavel Kling

and Tomas Mandl; the pianists Edith Steiner-Kraus, Alice Herz Sommer, Tella Polák, Kurt Maier, Martin Roman and Wolfgang Lederer and the harpsichord virtuoso Zuzana Ruzicková, who survived Terezin as a child. The foundations of her musicianship were actually laid in Terezin.

### 16.5 Conclusion

The role of music in Terezin can to a large extent be summed up in the following two quotations:

Viktor Ullmann, who died in Terezin, said (Bloch 1979:162):

*I have written in Theresienstadt a fair amount of new music, mainly to meet the needs and wishes of conductors, stage directors, pianists and singers, and thereby of the Recreation Administration of the Ghetto... But it must be emphasized that Theresienstadt has served to enhance, not impede, my musical activities...*

Karel Ancerl, who became chief conductor of the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra after the war, said (Green 1969:78):

*... one thing was revealed to me, that the power of music is so great that it draws every human being possessing a heart and an open mind into its realm, enabling him to bear the hardest hours of his life.*

For all the professionals, be it conductors or performing artists, the role of music was mainly to enhance their own creativity. For the inmates of the ghetto, the role was partly to encourage them during difficult times in the ghetto, where life was by no means pleasant. In a certain sense it created the illusion of normality.

The cultural activities available in Terezin ghetto were probably

more numerous than in any of the other ghettos and concentration camps. This was possibly because of the status of this ghetto as a visiting point for the Red Cross. Musical activities ranged from vocal music to opera, from solo instrumental music to orchestral music, and from classical music to popular music like cabarets, variety shows and jazz.

This large variety of musical activities surely catered for the needs of all the inmates, and as such could have encouraged them to think more positively, while providing entertainment and creating the opportunity for expressing their feelings.

## CHAPTER 17

### VILNA GHETTO

#### 17.1 Geographical location and genesis

Before World War II the city of Vilna was situated in Poland, about 300 kilometres to the north-east of Warsaw. At that time it had a Jewish population of 55 000, which was about 28% of the total population. During the period 1939 to 1941, it belonged to Russia who occupied the Eastern half of Poland. By 1941 the number of Jewish inhabitants had reached 190 000 which formed 60% of the total population (Tushnet 1972:142).

Shortly after the German invasion of Russia, Vilna was captured by the Germans who soon decided to change some of the outer suburbs of Vilna into a Jewish ghetto. At first there were two smaller ghettos, but after a few months only one remained. The first ghetto's total population was 29 000 Jews, who were skilled workers, with their families. The second ghetto, with a population of 11 000 was soon liquidated (Tushnet 1972:148-149).

The Vilna ghetto was finally closed on 23 September 1943, with the inmates being sent to Majdanek as well as to labour camps.

#### 17.2 Background to cultural activities

In many of the East European cities that became ghettos the German authorities allowed some cultural life to develop. There were also Jewish schools, synagogues, as well as Houses of Study. The schools included several elementary and secondary schools, with up to 2 000 pupils per year attending (Dawidowicz 1975:254). It was further possible to hold lectures and concerts. Theatres were established and sport organisations for the youth were allowed. Vilna even had its own periodical, *Vilner Geto Yediyes*

(Friedman 1954:289).

The Vilna ghetto had a library which at one time had around 100 000 books.

The Jewish Camp Elder in Vilna was a man called Gens. Under his supervision literature, art and science flourished in the ghetto. A worker's house was used as a lecture-room. Children's and youth clubs were established, as well as a music school, an orchestra and a choir.

Of all of the ghettos, the Vilna ghetto was the one with the most intense cultural manifestations. People from all walks of life were involved in cultural activities.

Cultural departments of the ghetto included the following: schools, a library and reading-room, a theatre, archives, a statistics office, a museum, folklore and sports, literary competitions, a music school, and even a bookshop (Trunk 1977:219).

The theatrical department was one of the largest in this ghetto. This department was responsible for stage performances, the orchestra and the Yiddish and Hebrew choruses. The theatre comprised a Yiddish theatre, known as *Der Kleyner Shtot Zal* (Aaron 1990:12), and an experimental Hebrew theatre. The theatrical department had the added responsibility of supervising the work of the stage actors, musicians, solo-singers and the two choruses, one Yiddish and the other Hebrew. Initially there was a total of 20 actors, 30 musicians and 155 chorus-singers involved in the theatrical division.

A literary group under the direction of Z. Kalamovitch was started, which celebrated Jewish writers. They also issued two periodicals, *Ghetto News* and *People's Health*, and gave theatrical performances (Black Book 1946:446). The Vilna Publishing House was also started to encourage writers. They were given the

responsibility to publish a newspaper (Tushnet 1972:169).

Gens, the Camp Elder, gave his full support to the theatres in the ghetto. By 1942 prizes were even being awarded for the best efforts in sculpture, poetry and drama (Aaron 1990:100).

Shortly after the opening of the ghetto, a social aid committee was organised at the initiative of the Jewish *Labor Bund* Organisation. It was decided to deduct a certain percentage from the salaries of the Ghetto Council functionaries and members of the ghetto police to fund the social aid committee. Workers in the employment of Germans outside the ghettos also contributed to the social aid fund. Other funds were collected through social events, shows, concerts, gifts by individuals as well as "yort sayt" offerings in memory of perished loved ones.

The Ghetto Police also organised many cultural activities, probably with the aim of raising the morale.

### 17.3 Musical activities in Vilna ghetto

An orchestra and two choirs were formed in this ghetto. The first choir was the Vilbig Choir under the direction of A. Slieff, and the other a Hebrew choir under the direction of David Mashkin (Black Book 1946:446).

No restrictions were placed on the performance of "Aryan" composers as was the case in the Warsaw Ghetto. Music by such composers was actually performed two to three times a week. Some of the works the orchestras performed were Beethoven's *Leonore Overture no. 3* and Chopin's *Piano Concerto in E Minor* (Dawidowicz 1975:257).

Concerts were very much in demand, and there were times when the theatre was in operation every day or every second day. An average of about twenty performances were produced per month.

These included shows, choruses, symphony concerts and concerts of the music schools. During 1942 the theatres gave 120 shows with around 38 000 people attending (Trunk 1977:227).

Performances reached a peak in March 1943 with six or seven performances of impressive variety being offered every Sunday.

The orchestra specialised in the performance of symphonic music, light music and jazz. Quite a few choruses existed including a religious chorus whose first performance was in December 1942.

In June or July 1942 a music school was opened in the ghetto under the direction of two prominent Vilna conductors. A total of 95 students enrolled in the music school in August 1942. The students gave their own concerts and also participated in various other cultural engagements in the ghetto (Trunk 1977:227).

Singing formed an integral part of the cultural activities. The Jewish people used singing to "rally their spirits" (Rudashevski 1973:139).

Musical activities were of such a nature that they even allowed for a music competition to be held in early 1943 (Arad et al. 1981:449).

The music teacher, Gershteyn, was one of the best-known musicians in the ghetto. He was responsible for the direction of the school choir, where he sang with the children. His favourite song was (Rudashevski 1973:60):

*I saw Yiddish words  
Like small birds  
Like beautiful birds  
I saw Yiddish words  
Like a little dove  
cooing like a little dove.*

Because of his popularity, the ghetto inmates organised a special memorial service when Gershteyn died. The memorial service included a funeral march, after which a violinist led off with several pieces in memory of Gershteyn (Rudashevski 1973:64-5).

Another well-known musician was Lyuba Levitska (also spelled Levitski). She appeared regularly in programmes containing folk-songs of the ghetto. She also took part in Gershteyn's memorial service by singing some of Gershteyn's favourite songs. She was arrested by the camp authorities and was later shot for some unknown reason.

Avrom Slyep, a teacher of singing, director of a folk choir and conductor of Yiddish and Hebrew choruses, diligently collected classical compositions and folk-songs for his repertoire. He died during the war.

A song called *One, Two, Three*, composed in the ghetto by L. Rosenthal, became very popular. One of the inmates of the ghetto who managed to survive the war, was Dora Rubina, a very good singer who later made recordings of many of the songs that were popular in the ghetto (Rudashevski 1973).

The end of 1943 saw the start of a decline of cultural life in the ghetto. In July 1944 inmates were either deported to Stutthof or Dachau, or possibly killed as Russian troops neared Vilna.

A 11-year-old boy, Alek Volkovinsky, started composing while being an inmate of this ghetto. One of his songs, *Shilter, Shilter* (Hush, Hush), was produced at a concert, sponsored by the Judenrat, in April 1943. The lyrics were written by Schmerke Kaczerginski (Aaron 1990:125).

The words were as follows (Aaron 1990:126-129):

*Hush, hush, lets be silent,  
Graves are growing high,  
The enemy has planted them,*



Green, they reach blue sky.  
All roads are leading to Ponary,  
No road is leading back,  
and your father vanished too  
And with him our luck.  
Hush, hush, don't cry precious,  
Weep my child no more.  
The depth of our tragedy  
The enemies ignore.  
Oceans have had always shores  
And fences prisons had,  
But to our anguish  
There is no end  
There is no end.  
Spring's descended on the land,  
Fall's been ushered in for us.  
And the morning brim with flowers  
Night's enveloped us  
Stalks aglitter with fall's gold hues,  
We are full of pain,  
A Mother has been orphaned somewhere;  
Her child went to Ponary.  
Like Vilia when restrained  
And burdened flows in pain,  
Ice floes cover Lithuania.  
Moving out to sea.  
Somewhere darkness is breaking up  
Sun rays seeping through the clouds  
Rider quickly come  
Your child calls,  
Your child calls.

Hush, Hush, springs are gushing,  
Flooding our hearts,  
While the gates are not yet falling,  
We must all be mute.  
Don't rejoice, child, for your smile

*Is still forbidden us,  
Let the fiend see next spring  
In the autumn leaves.  
Let the springs flow serenely,  
While you must hush and hope...  
For with your freedom, little one,  
Your father will return.  
Sleep my child, then sleep.  
Like the liberated Vilia,  
Like the trees renewed and green,  
Freedom is bound to shine  
Upon your face  
Upon your face.*

In his book, *Music in Terezin*, Karas (1985:190) mentions an 11-year-old boy, Alex Volkoviski, winning the second prize in a musical contest in 1943 for a song called *Stile, Stile*. This most probably was the same boy mentioned previously, and it could very well be that the two songs are the same. The song, *Stile, Stile*, was incorporated into a cantata by Abraham Slep. This cantata was performed in the Vilna ghetto.

A song called the *Partisan's Hymn*, with the title *Zog nit keyn mol als du geyst dem letstn veg* (Never say you walk the final road) became very popular in this ghetto (Dawidowicz 1975:218).

Another song, written to encourage, had the following text (Dawidowicz 1975:216):

*Moshe, hold on,  
Keep hold of yourself,  
Remember we must get out.*

*Moshe, hold on; hold on, Moshe -  
It isn't very long,  
The hour will soon toll...*

#### 17.4 Conclusion

Vilna was one of the larger ghettos and inmates had a lot of freedom regarding cultural activities. Great emphasis was laid on theatrical productions, music and singing. Concerts were held at regular intervals.

Most of the audiences consisted of inmates of the ghetto, but at times the German authorities also made use of the performers at private gatherings.

Musical activities furthermore included music competitions and the composition of songs that could be sung by everybody. These songs were great favourites.

Music concerts were even greater favourites after events which adversely affected the inmates. The following example highlights the great role music played in the ghetto as an inspiration and as a way of calming emotions: After the killing of many inmates during December 1941, there was at first great opposition to a concert being held. In spite of this the concert hall was filled to capacity by people wishing to hear music and the recitation of literature (Aaron 1990:83).

## CHAPTER 18

### WARSAW GHETTO

#### 18.1 Geographical location and genesis

The Warsaw ghetto was situated in Poland in the city of Warsaw. Warsaw was part of the area occupied by the Germans at the start of World War II, in 1939. It was also in the General-Government area (see Glossary) of Poland which comprised all of Poland, with the exception of Russian-occupied Poland and upper Silesia, the Warthegau and the area around Danzig.

The pre-war Jewish population of Warsaw was about 353 000, constituting about 29% of the total population of the city. From 1939 to 1940 the German authorities of the General-Government decided to use Warsaw as an assembly area. During the last three months of 1939 40 000 Jews were deported to Warsaw from other areas in German-occupied Poland.

It was only by the latter half of 1940 that it was decided to set up a ghetto within Warsaw, and during October a wall was built around the ghetto area. The generally accepted date for the opening of the ghetto is 16 November 1940 (Lewin 1988:1). By that time the Warsaw ghetto was home to about 400 000 inmates (Black Book 1946:216). Fourteen labour camps were also opened in the Warsaw area during the early years of the war.

During the existence of the ghetto the total population varied between 410 000 and 590 000. Like elsewhere in Europe, food was relatively scarce. The inmates were allowed to handle the distribution of available foods themselves.

A revolt started in the ghetto during April 1943. This uprising ended by 16 May 1943 and shortly afterwards the ghetto was officially closed down (Berenstein 1963:61).

The following is a map of the ghetto (Topas 1990:42):

Figure 9: Map of the Warsaw Ghetto



A very interesting fact that should be noted is that Jewish suicides in Warsaw declined by 65% from 1939 to the period 1940-1942 (Friedman 1954:99).

## 18.2 The establishment and progress of cultural and musical activities

As a result of the war, unemployment among Jewish actors, musicians, painters and graphic artists reigned supreme (Trunk 1977:222). This problem was worsened by the deportation of Jews from other parts of Europe, especially those from surrounding towns and villages to the Warsaw ghetto.

Due to these circumstances the musicians reverted to entertaining in such places as coffee-houses, restaurants and bars. In order to raise the level of artistic standards, as well as to ensure the protection of the professional interests of the performers, a Central Show Commission was founded during September 1940. Through the latter permission could be requested for a public performance.

By the end of September 1940 a total of 150 musicians had actually been registered (Trunk 1977:222), and by April 1941 there already were 61 entertainment venues in the ghetto (Gutman 1982:108). The 1941 April 11 issue of the ghetto newspaper *Gazeta Zydowska* advertised a café with the name *Tira* which promised "a concert every day" (Gutman 1982:108).

There is much uncertainty about the role that the Judenrat's cultural department actually played, as one of the sources holds a different opinion from the others as to what they entailed. Tushnet's (1972:102) view is that their only function was the receiving of fees for granting permits to hold parties. Others like Shoskes (1945) and Friedman (1954) discuss the full extent of their functions:

One of the persons involved in the organisation of activities was Professor Balaban (Shoskes 1945:35). This culture department was responsible for the creation of a network of schools, a people's university and a large Jewish library as well as the organisation of lectures and reports on scientific subjects. Various entertainments of high artistic and literary standards were provided and bad literature and theatre were judged as such and condemned (Friedman 1954:111).

At one time Warsaw had 19 schools with at least 2 000 enrolled pupils (Dawidowicz 1975:254).

A Central Entertainment Committee regulated performances of music concerts and tried to raise the level of performances. One of its aims was also to lend a helping hand to actors, musicians, painters and dancers. Special care was accorded to new talent in the ghetto (Friedman 1954:124). They managed to enroll 135 actors, directors and theatrical managers; 52 artists in show business; 157 musicians and composers; 81 writers and poets; and 25 painters and sculptors (Friedman 1954:129). By 1943 nearly 500 actors, musicians, dancers and artists had been registered (Dawidowicz 1975:256).

Institutions like *YIKOR* (*Yiddische Kultur Organizatsye*) (Yiddish Cultural Organisation) and the Zionist Socialist *DROR* (Freedom) undertook a wide spectrum of literary and theatrical productions, concerts, ballets, lectures, readings of works by the authors and performances by children (Aaron 1990:95).

Other forms of entertainment also provided were those in park-playground complexes, of which three were opened. Czerniakow, the president of the Judenrat, considered these to be the crowning achievements of his administration and decided that the opening was to be a great occasion. The Jewish Police Orchestra, choirs, dance groups and gymnasts took part in this opening event (Eisen 1988:43).

During almost the entire existence of the ghetto there were newspapers, journals and miscellaneous volumes printed by an underground press. Examples of these are *Biuletin*, *Tsayt-Fragh*, *Proletarisher Gedank*, *Avangard*, *Der Ruf* and *Morgn Frayhayt* (Friedman 1954:114).

There were also quite a few poets, such as Katzenelson, whose works were a great inspiration for the Warsaw ghetto uprising (Aaron 1990:11). Wladyslaw Szlengel, a poet and song-writer, was one of the central figures in an underground journal, *Zywy Dziennik*, and a cabaret called *Sztuka* (Art). His songs and poems had great inspirational value and quickly spread throughout the ghetto and other surrounding labour camps (Aaron 1990:20-21).

Theatrical entertainment was also well catered for. Admission prices were kept low, so as to make it affordable to all the inmates. A large number of Jewish and half-Jewish singers and actors, who had previously been with the Polish National Opera and other theatres, now resided within the ghetto, where they at first performed in wooden barracks, half-ruined apartment buildings and vacant factories (Shoskes 1945:44).

Later many theatres were provided, like the two Yiddish theatres called *Eldorado* and *New Azazel* (New Satan), in both of which Jewish dramas were performed. In *Eldorado* light musical comedies were also staged. Aaron (1990:12) mentions three other theatres, *Femina*, *Melody Place* and *Na Pietrku* (On the floor) (Aaron 1990:12). *Femina* even had the services of a choir and a ballet group (Shoskes 1945:44). Revues and operettas were also performed here, for example *Maritza* and *The Czardazz Princess* (Friedman 1954:127).

Many other theatres came into existence. Some of these were the *New Studio Theatre*, *Teatr Kameralny* (Chamber Theatre), a marionette theatre and a children's theatre. There were also many amateur theatrical performances and the Judenrat organised a competition for a children's play in the schools (Zylberberg

1969:33-34). A number of variety shows were also held.

During November 1940 groups of young children, including a quartet, sang on the sidewalks. Choirs with their cantors became available as the synagogues were closed, and these undoubtedly contributed to the musical activities in the ghetto. Instrumental bands in which vocalists also cooperated performed on many street corners as well. Solo artists were frequently seen performing in the same venues (Katsh 1965:221).

The Central Entertainment Committee tried to organise so-called "high grade" concerts. From September 1940 to September 1941 they managed to arrange 1814 artistic shows (Dawidowicz 1975:256), among them light symphony concerts. There usually was one matinee symphony concert per week, mostly on Saturdays or Sundays (Friedman 1954:124).

The symphony orchestra in Warsaw ghetto came under the direction of Szymon Pullman, who was also responsible for a chamber orchestra. The young singer, Marysia Ajzensztat, known by her fellow inmates as the "Nightingale of the ghetto" often sang with the symphony orchestra. She also performed with several other smaller groups, such as her father's ensemble (Karas 1985:189). He, Dawid Ajzensztat, was also the director of one of the choirs, and composed many works while staying in this ghetto.

There was even a licensed street orchestra under the leadership of a "popular conductor", Adam Furmanski (Friedman 1954:125). The first music concert took place on 6 November 1940. A large variety of musical entertainment groups came into existence, such as a number of string quartets and other chamber music groups. One of the other smaller groups was directed by a clarinet player, Sztromberg.

Choirs were formed: two folk choruses, two popular song groups directed by Jacob and Joseph Gladstein, children's choirs, the choir of the Great Synagogue and a choir called *Shir* or "Song".

This choir was directed by professor J Faiwizys (Friedman 1954:125). Many other choirs and singing groups existed, but the above-mentioned were the best known.

Children were very important to the Judenrat and much was done to encourage them and to keep them busy. A children's choir, directed by Faiwizys, was reputed to be of "unusually high quality" (Karas 1985:189-190). During March 1941 the House Committee at 33 Chlodno Street arranged a concert at the orphanage of Dr Janusz Korczak (Zylberberg 1969:36). Another event in which children were involved was a performance by a children's choir of 1 000 at a synagogue (Zylberberg 1969:62). A noisemaker was also invented for the children. It consisted of two pieces of wood that made a clicking noise when hit together (Dwork 1991:190).

The Judenrat could however not provide work for all the musicians. Some found work in private entertainment venues, or in backyards as street bands. Others found work in so-called Centos institutions. The latter were responsible for a high level of aesthetic education in the ghetto schools, where high-quality shows were produced. These shows could be distinguished by their artistic, musical and choreographical features.

In the Warsaw ghetto the Jewish orchestra was prohibited to perform music by "Aryan" composers (Trunk 1977:217), which was in contrast to ghettos like Vilna. It was by an order of the *Kommissar für den jüdischen Wohnbezirk*, dated 8 April 1942, that this regulation was enforced by the German authorities. As penalty for ignoring this order, the orchestra involved was not allowed to perform for two months.

The musicians in the ghetto had to perform for the Germans as well, as was the case at Warsaw's Powiak Prison.

Occasionally other shows were also staged in the ghetto. One of these was a satire, *Everybody Equal*, which was performed in one

of the theatres in the ghetto.

As the situation in the ghetto worsened, the number of concerts increased. It is claimed that Czerniakow said the following in connection with the increase in concerts (Tushnet 1972:126):

*I am like the captain of a sinking ship who orders the band to play to calm the passengers.*

Shortly before the Ghetto Uprising of 1943, the Judenrat under Nahum Remba and Marcelli Reich organised concerts devoted to Jewish music and songs (Friedman 1954:129). This could have been to encourage and to inculcate a feeling of pride in their "Jewishness".

In the Warsaw ghetto, as was the case in most of the other ghettos, there were cafés, restaurants and nightclubs to be found. In the case of Warsaw, people from outside the ghetto came to enjoy the entertainment that was provided inside it (Friedman 1980:138).

Many artistic programmes were performed in cafés and restaurants. Leszno Street, for example, had 30 entertainment venues, such as *Sztuka* (Art), *The Quiet Corner*, *Under the Fountain* and *Esplanade* (Friedman 1954:109). There were also many restaurants including 20 in Leszno, Zelanza and Sienna Streets. Many of these cafés and restaurants offered musical programmes. Orchestras, or bands, played English songs, even though this seems incredible for a country under German occupation (Friedman 1954:110).

Many of the songs sung by the streetsingers were sung to popular melodies, and this at times led to a clash between the sentimental melodies and the highly charged ghetto poems. Poems put to song were greatly favoured by the song-writers (Aaron 1990:18). Below is an excerpt from a very popular song (Aaron 1963:98-99):



*Yo, yo, bay undz muz yeder freylech zayn,  
Farges fun morgn, du muzt nit zorgn,  
Ven dos harts lacht, lachn mir,  
Un ven dos harts veynt, lachn mir,  
Bay undz muz yeder freylech zayn.*

English translation:

*Yes, yes, among us everyone must be gay;  
Forget the morrow, you must not sorrow,  
When the heart laughs, we laugh,  
When the heart weeps, we laugh,  
Among us, everyone must be gay.*

Two-lined rhymes were also very popular in the Warsaw ghetto. The following is an example of one of these (Rubin 1963:432):

*Vos darfn mir veynen, vos darfn mir klagn,  
Mir veln noch frankn a kadish noch zogn.*

*Lomir zayn freylech un zogn zich vitsn,  
Mir veln noch hitlern shive noch zitsn.*

*Lomir zich treystn, di tsores fargesn,  
Es veln di verim noch hitlern fresn.*

*Di sonim, vos firn undz dort kayn treblinke,  
Zey veln noch vern in der erd ayngезinken.*

*Mir veln tsuzamen noch orem bay orem,  
Imirtseshem tantsn oyf daytshishe kvorim.*

English translation:

*Why should we weep, why should we mourn,  
We'll live to say the prayer of the dead for Frank.*

Let us be gay and tell jokes,  
We'll yet live to see Hitler dead.

Let us comfort one another and forget our troubles,  
The worms will yet gnaw at Hitler.

The enemies who lead us there to Treblinka  
Will yet be sinking into the earth.

Together we will yet, arm in arm,  
With the help of God, dance on the graves of the  
Germans.

Another song sung in the ghetto was *The little Smuggler*, written by Henryka Lazowert. The refrain of this song went as follows (Donat 1978:36):

*Around walls, through holes, past guards,  
Over the rubble, fences, and barbed wire,  
Hungry, determined, and bold, I sneak.*

New words were frequently sung to older tunes. An example of one of these texts written in Warsaw is (Dawidowicz 1975:218):

*Listen here, Haman you,  
Jews will live to settle scores.  
You will get your come uppance.  
Jews have lived and will endure.  
But Haman, you will go to hell.*

### 18.3 Satirical songs

The President of the Judenrat was a certain Czerniakow (Tushnet 1972:73). Taxes were raised by the Judenrat to pay for food and other utilities with a total of 54 types of taxes (Tushnet 1972:101). Although taxes were shared under the slogan "All are

equal", the Judenrat officials made their fortunes (Tushnet 1972:102). This resulted in the following happening: "Nightclubs and fancy restaurants opened, serving fine food and liquor, while the death toll from starvation mounted..." (Tushnet 1972:102). In these nightclubs and restaurants a variety of music was performed for the patrons.

Unfortunately the Jews were not united in these hard times. This was even the case in the entertainment areas. According to Gutman (1982:108) "the most abhorrent and provocative inequality was apparent in the leisure and entertainment spots - cafés, nightclubs, restaurants, buffets - where the members of the elite indulged themselves to the point of stupor." It seems that the elite was partly responsible for the shortage of food in the ghetto as they on the one hand indulged themselves "to the point of stupor", but were at the same time supposed to be responsible for the fair distribution of available food.

As a result of these circumstances many satirical songs came into existence. In these the corruption and the helplessness of the Judenrat was raised as subject (Friedman 1954:116-117). This is an example of one of these songs (Friedman 1954:117):

*A Jew has come to "Joint's" bureau  
To say he starved and ask for aid  
"I have six children, Mr. Chairman  
So help me, please," the Jew has said.*

*"Then come to-morrow, we will see,"  
The Chairman to the Jew replied.  
Believe or not, he did not come  
Because the very day he...died.*

#### 18.4 Conclusion

As the Warsaw ghetto was probably the largest ghetto, it could

be expected to harbour a lot of cultural activities. This proved to be true as there were orchestras, ensembles, singers, soloists and many other people involved in such activities. It is quite surprising on the other hand that there were certain rules under which cultural activities had to function. The Warsaw ghetto was the only one where the performance of "Aryan" music was strictly prohibited.

The streetsingers undoubtedly played a very important role in the cultural life of the ghetto, and it was in their songs that the other inmates saw hope and an urge for revenge, which they took to heart. One can come to the conclusion that the different forms of morale-building musical activities, such as concerts and songs calling for patience and revenge, ultimately paid off in the Ghetto Uprising, where all were united against the common foe.

In spite of the above it is quite apparent that the cultural activities achieved a high enough standard to become a cynosure for many music-loving people in Warsaw.

## CHAPTER 19

### OTHER GHETTOS

The ghettos mentioned in this chapter, are those about which little has been written. These ghettos were all situated in Eastern Europe, mostly Poland. The information available is remarkably similar to those of the larger ghettos.

#### 19.1 Bedzin

The Bedzin ghetto was situated in Poland, about 180 kilometres south of Lodz. In this ghetto a certain measure of cultural life was also allowed to develop. In the case of Bedzin this included lectures, music concerts and theatrical performances. Schooling was provided for both young and old, while synagogues were also allowed.

Sports activities, too, were permitted as a form of entertainment. A periodical was probably published in Bedzin, but this could not be confirmed without any doubt. (Friedman 1954:288-9).

#### 19.2 Bialystok

The Bialystok ghetto was situated in Poland, about 170 kilometres north-east of Warsaw. Very little is known about musical activities in this ghetto, with the exception of a very popular love song written by Peysakh Kaplan, and called *Rifkele di Shabesdike* (Rifkele, the Sabbath Widow) (Kalisch 1985:82). The words of this song ran as follows (Kalisch 1985:85-86):

*Rifkele di shabesdike*  
*Arbet in fabrik;*  
*Dreyt a fodem tsu a fodem,*



*Flekht tsunoyf a shtrik.  
Oy, di geto fintstere,  
Doyert azoy lang,  
Un dos harts azoy farklemt  
Tut ir azoy bang.*

*Ir getrayer Hershele  
Iz avek, nito,  
Zint fun yenem shabes on,  
Zint fun yener sho.  
Iz fartroyert Rifkele,  
Yomert tog un nakht,  
Un atsind baym redele  
Zitst zi un zi trakht.*

*Vu iz er, mayn libinker -  
Lebt er nokh khotsh vu?  
Tsi in kontsentratsye-lager  
Arbet shver on ru?  
Oy, vi finster iz im dort,  
Biter iz mir do -  
Zint fun yenem shabes on,  
Zint fun yener sho.*

English translation:

*Rifkele, the Sabbath widow  
Spins at the fact'ry wheel;  
Twists a thread around a thread,  
Turns rope around a reel.  
Oh, the darkness of the ghetto  
Lasts too long to bear,  
And the longing in her heart  
Breeds its sorrow there.*

*Her beloved Hershele  
Is gone, is no more here,*



Since that dreadful Saturday,  
That hour so filled with fear.  
Rifkele mourns her beloved,  
Cries all night and day,  
Spins at her spinning wheel  
And broods the hours away.

Where is my beloved Hershele -  
Does he still live somewhere?  
In a concentration camp -  
Have they sent him there?  
Dark it is there for him,  
Bitter for me here -  
Since that dreadful Sabbath,  
That hour so filled with fear.

This song tells of the uncertainty of what happened to loved ones, as inmates were frequently separated from these, sometimes never to see them again.

The following is the music to the above-mentioned song (Kalisch 1985:84-85):

**Music example 6: Rifkele di Shabesdike**

The musical score consists of three staves of music in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes.

Riv - ke - le\_\_\_ di\_\_\_ sha - bes - di - ke; Ar - bet in fa -  
brik. Dreyt a fo - dem tsu a fo - dem, Flekht tsu-noyf a  
shtrik. Oy, di ge - to fints - te - re. Doy - ert a - zoy



The only other information available is of a singer called Liza who arranged music evenings and sang Russian songs and arias from operas and operettas (Nomberg-Przytyk 1985:15).

### 19.3 Chelm

This ghetto was situated in Poland, about 220 kilometres south-east of Warsaw. One of the songs the inmates sang here was a prayer for salvation. It is also based on some of the Psalms (Dawidowicz 1975:216):

*A look from heaven and behold,  
Look down from the skies and see!  
For we have become as a derision,  
A derision among the nations.*

*Therefore we plead with You ever:  
Now help us, Guardian of Israel,  
Now take notice of our tears,  
For still do we cry aloud, "Hear O Israel".  
O, take notice, Guardian of this nation.  
Show all the people that You are our God,  
We have indeed none other, just you alone,  
Whose name is One.*

### 19.4 Czestochowa

Czestochowa ghetto was situated 100 kilometres south of Lodz, in Poland. The only information available on this ghetto is that

cultural activities were also encouraged. Sports activities, education and concerts were allowed. (Friedman 1954:288-9.)

Czestochowa was also fortunate in having restaurants, night clubs and cafés. As in the case of the Cracow ghetto people from outside the ghetto came in for the entertainment that was made available. (Friedman 1954:138.)

### 19.5 Libau

The exact location of this ghetto could not be established. However, it is almost certainly in Poland or in another area of Eastern Europe. The following song was sung by labour brigades (Dawidowicz 1975:203):

*We are the ghetto Jews  
The loneliest people on earth  
Everything we had we lost,  
We have nothing left worth.*

### 19.6 Lublin

Lublin is situated nearly 80 kilometres south-east of Warsaw. The pre-war Jewish population of this city was about 40 000 which was 35% of the total number living there.

After the occupation of Poland, the Germans used the Lublin district to set up a reservation for the Jewish people of the area, but soon afterwards this project collapsed. A ghetto replacing the project was opened in April 1941. 28 labour camps surrounded the ghetto and provided many work opportunities for the inmates.

Unfortunately very little is known about cultural activities in this ghetto, but it can be assumed that some form of instrumental

music was allowed, be it ensembles or orchestral. Choirs, too, were probably allowed to perform.

The only definite information available is the mention made of a couple bringing in a portable record player. The inmates danced to the accompaniment of music played on this record player (Gruber 1978:30). It is also known that there were no shows or night clubs in Lublin (Gruber 1978:31).

On the other hand, some Jews set up restaurants which offered black market delicacies that even drew the Polish Police to visit these restaurants (Gruber 1978:42).

### 19.7 Radom

The Radom ghetto was situated in Poland, about 50 kilometres south of Warsaw. In this ghetto the pre-war number of Jews was about 25 000, which was about equal to a quarter of the total population of the city.

This ghetto, opened in April 1941, was another example of a double ghetto which was divided into two sections.

Regrettably, very little is known about cultural activities here. One school operated in the ghetto (Dwork 1991:183). A sixteen-year-old girl, Bina Landau, sang, and later even composed a song, called *Zog Nit Keyn Mol* (Never Say), upon hearing about the Warsaw ghetto uprising during 1943 (Stehle 1988:151, 254). It was frequently sung in other ghetto, like the one at Vilna (Dawidowicz 1975:218).

### 19.8 Sosnowiec

As in the case of Bedzin, Sosnowiec was another ghetto where the development of cultural activities and other entertainment was

allowed. The fact that these activities were so similar, could be owing to their closeness to each other, with Sosnowiec only a few kilometres to the south of Bedzin.

Education was provided for both young and old and music concerts were held. The inmates' religious needs were also catered for with the opening of synagogues. A periodical was printed in the ghetto, and sports activities were greatly encouraged. (Friedman 1954:288-9.)

### **19.9 Conclusion**

In these ghettos music, as well as other cultural activities, played a very important role. It was a means of expression for many of the songwriters, whose songs were then generally sung by the other inmates.

The more organised musical activities could in a way be seen as a form of escape and an illusion of normality, whereas the songs sung in the ghettos were mostly a reflection of the way the inmates actually perceived life, whether it was the uncertainty, the hope of survival or the urge for vengeance.

## CHAPTER 20

### CONCLUSION

Any study of the events of World War II would be incomplete without reference to the music of this period. This is especially true with regard to the music played and composed in the Nazi-controlled ghettos and concentration camps where its roles were manifold and significant.

Because of the rigidity of life in the concentration camps, music was not performed as regularly as in the ghettos. In most of the former, however, music had a profound impact on the emotions and morale of the inmates.

On the negative side, music here frequently perplexed many of the inmates as it posed a bewildering contradiction: the same camp commanders and guards, who could one moment be so cruel and harsh, could soon afterwards listen with deep emotion and appreciation to the sounds of music.

*Und die Musik spielt dazu* was a popular hitsong of the thirties. In the Terezin ghetto Walter Lindenbaum wrote a bitter parody on this song portraying the lamentable conditions there and describing the role of music in these words (Eckhard 1991:5):

*Obwohl Musik hier chronisch  
leben viele disharmonisch.*

(Despite the constant playing of music, harmony is lacking in the lives of many.)

These words can be regarded as a gross understatement in view of the atrocious conditions in the concentration camps and ghettos, where the prisoners were under the constant guard of SS camp

officials and kapos, surrounded by cynical Nazi slogans such as *Arbeit macht frei* (Work brings freedom); where total strangers were crowded together in cramped quarters, haunted by fear, hunger and illness - conditions which did not promote feelings of trust and confidence, but rather brought to the surface tendencies of "each man for himself" in their bitter struggle for survival.

In these circumstances the constant blare of music over loudspeakers could for many have been a disharmony, such as is expressed in Lindenbaum's parody (John 1991:6):

*Ich liebe infernalisches  
Alle die sehr musikalisch,  
Denn Musik beglückt, berückt, entzückt  
Selbst das Herz des Bösewichts  
Doch zu Hölle wird sie schnelle  
Ist zur Stelle die Kapelle  
Und ich zitier den Shakespeare hier  
Und zwar: 'Viel Lärm um Nichts'.*

The following is a translation of the German poem:

I love infernally  
Everyone so musical  
Because music makes happy, charms, enchants  
Even the heart of an evildoer  
But music becomes hell quickly  
When the band strikes up  
And I quote Shakespeare here,  
Indeed: 'Much ado about nothing'.  
(Literally: Much noise about nothing.)

Lindenbaum's cynical view of the discordant role of music in the camps may also have had a bearing on the fact that members of orchestras were often exempted from hard labour, thus escaping from many of the physical hardships endured by their fellow

inmates. And as the musicians had to provide entertainment for the hated camp authorities and others of the camp "elite", such as the block-leaders and kapos, they may well have elicited a fair amount of chagrin from their fellow prisoners - even though many of the members of orchestras had no choice, since they played under duress.

To some of the inmates of camps - and to the musicians themselves - music might well have become a form of torment, as in some concentration camps, such as Buchenwald. SS guards forced prisoners to sing songs of a ridiculing and degrading nature (Eckhard 1991:7). Prisoners were often forced to sing while running or working. In this way the singing of 'innocent' and well-loved German folksongs became a form of sophisticated torture. Primo Levi (1961:52) remarks that this singing during heavy work sessions was the last thing about the concentrations camps that he would be able to erase from his memory.

The SS commanders also used music as accompaniment when punishment was being inflicted or inmates executed.

The Nazis furthermore employed music as a means of propaganda. It was played over loud-speakers or by the camp orchestra upon the arrival of a batch of new prisoners to create an impression of normality, temporarily assuaging fears.

Camp orchestras and ensembles were also used to impress visitors, as was the case at Terezin, where an orchestra gave a special performance during a visit by Red Cross officials. Thus music was used as a form of propaganda, making visitors believe that conditions were passable, if not excellent.

On the positive side music played an important role in the struggle for survival that must have been uppermost in the minds of most inmates. Some prisoners even survived thanks largely to their musical talents. An Italian inmate at Auschwitz reported in 1960 in Milan: "My voice saved me - Auschwitz 180 046"

(Eckhard 1991:13). Although not all camp musicians were so lucky and many of the talented ones from Terezin were later deported to die in Auschwitz during 1944, members of orchestras and ensembles on the whole had a better chance of survival than the other inmates - even though, just like their fellow prisoners, their human dignity and morale were progressively undermined by hunger, illness and constant fear, as many of them were, in fact, later sent to so-called extermination camps where they died.

Apart from music played during work and punishment sessions, and for the entertainment of the camp authorities, it also played an important role as entertainment for the inmates. This music undoubtedly served as means of escape from the realities of life in the camps. It formed part of the so-called "leisure activities". Apart from the official camp orchestras, which were formed by order of the camp commanders, many other independent music groups existed, some of which performed in secret and the time they spent together was often also utilised for encouraging each other and for planning escapes and revolts. Certain private music groups were allowed by some of the SS commanders, but this varied from camp to camp. Especially at Terezin there were numerous orchestral and vocal music groups, as a large section of the inmates were talented musicians and artists. Music, here, played a very important role in reaffirming the inmates' humanity and dignity and in establishing a trace of normality in their lives.

At the "coffee-shops" or cafés in Terezin cabarets were presented, which not only aimed at portraying the shocking events of daily life there, but also served as a means of helping the inmates to come to terms with these conditions. Interestingly, the music composed at Terezin portrays very little of the realities of camp-life, but rather seems to create a counter-world, which was extremely important for survival. During a visit to Prague in 1992 the writer's parents attended an exhibition of children's drawings from the Terezin ghetto during the years that led up to 1944, when the lives of most of these young artists

ended. They were struck by a significant feature which also had a bearing on the music composed there: the drawings reflected a make-believe world where tables were heaped with food, where fields full of flowers and wide open spaces created a sense of freedom and well-being - a counter-world that made life more bearable.

Music as a form of protest also served as an outlet to emotional frustration and hate. Singing was the most original and creative form of musical expression in the camps and ghettos. National folk songs were sometimes so cleverly incorporated in the music that SS officials often failed to detect them. Although camp songs were songs of suffering, many of them encouraged resistance and exhorted prisoners to endure and retain hope for the future. In this way the vocal music became a shield against annihilation of the human spirit and identity, and for the inmates music and songs were indeed weapons for psychical self-defense which boosted morale and enabled them to endure and survive as long as possible.

In the ghettos cultural activities, including music, likewise played a prominent role. This was possible as the Council of Elders, or Judenrat, had a greater say in the activities allowed here. As a result most of the ghettos had at least two orchestras in addition to many smaller instrumental ensembles and choirs. The variety of music performed in the ghettos was generally far greater than in the concentration camps.

Music had a tremendous influence on the morale of the inmates and in this respect performances of classical music played a major role. Recitals of well-known works seem to have had a cathartic as well as inspiring influence, since these were sometimes greeted with weeping and at other times seemed to be a supportive means of bolstering the inmates' morale.

In this respect the songs of the streetsingers greatly influenced the lives of prisoners. A considerable number of these songs

voiced protest and called for revenge, but many instilled courage and hope in seemingly hopeless situations. Songs moreover served as a form of documentation of events taking place in the ghettos. Most of all these songs - many of which were satirical - were appreciated for their entertainment value and for the relief they brought from daily tensions and hardships.

As pointed out earlier in this thesis, music was in some cases, for instance at Terezin, also used as a means of educating young inmates.

On the positive side the main role of music in the camps and ghettos can be divided into three main categories, i. e. music that entertained and brought some relief from the stark realities of camp-life, music that afforded the inmates an opportunity for protesting against the conditions under which they lived and music that had cathartic value and instilled courage and hope, thus boosting the morale of the inmates and acting as a source of psychical self-defense and -affirmation in the struggle for survival.