The Influence of Nazi Jewish Laws andthe Holocaust on Hungarian Jewish Musicians and on Musical Life in Hungary

Candidate Agnes Kory writes:

My project is the large-scale extension of my earlier research on the Holocaust and of my publications with restricted scope on the topic. I will extensively research and publish on all aspects of the influence of Hungarian Nazi laws and the Holocaust on Hungarian Jewish musicians and on musical life in Hungary.

I will include all Hungarian Jewish musicians, regardless of whether they were persecuted or murdered and whether they stayed Jewish or opted out. I will also investigate exile and emigration, whether forced or freely chosen by Hungarian Jewish musicians. Furthermore, I will explore consequences of exile and emigration not only for the musicians under focus but also for their host countries. Much has been written about exiles from Austria and Germany (as well as from other European countries) but a Hungarian presence is conspicuous by its absence in the emigre literature.

The influenceof Nazi Jewish laws as well as of the Holocaust on Jewish musicians in Europe and on European musical life has been explored in several books. For example:

Fania Fénelon, *Sursis pour l’orchestre*,1976;

**Joža Karas, *Music in Terezin 1941-1945*, 1985;**

**ed. Horst Weber,** *Musik in der Emigration*, 1994;

**Shirli Gilbert, *Music in the Holocaust*, 2005;**

**Dorothy Lamb Crawford, *A Windfall of Musicians: Hitler's émigrés and exiles in Southern California*, 2009;**

**Lily E. Hirsch, *A Jewish Orchestra in Nazi Germany*, 2010;**

**Albrecht Dümling,** *Die verschwundenen Musiker: Jüdische Flüchtlinge in Australien*, 2011; ed. Peter Petersen.

Musik im Dritten Reich und im Exil, 1996-2017.

The number of articles on the topic is also considerable. For such articles see the websites for orelfoundation.org and holocaustmusic.ort.org.

However, Hungarian Jewish musicians are conspicuous by their near absence in this extensive literature.

There is no comprehensive volume dealing with the influence of the Holocaust on Hungarian music, Hungarian musicians and Hungarian musical life.

I propose to extensively research and publish on all aspects of the influence of Hungarian Nazi laws and the Holocaust on Hungarian Jewish musicians and on musical life in Hungary. This research needs to be conducted soon, while there are still a few survivors who can testify to the exile, emigration, persecution and murder of Hungarian Jewish musicians.

In my proposed project I will include all Hungarian Jewish musicians, regardless of whether they were persecuted or murdered and, crucially, regardless whether they had open Jewish affiliation or opted out by secrecy or baptism. I will investigate exile and emigration, whether forced or freely chosen by Hungarian Jewish musicians. Furthermore, I intend to explore consequences of exile and emigration not only for the musicians under focus but also for their host countries. Much has been written about exiles from Austria and Germany (as well as from other European countries) but a Hungarian presence is conspicuous by its absence in the emigre literature. I intend to fill this gap while fully presenting the fate of Hungarian Jewish musicians as a consequence of Nazi Jewish laws and the Holocaust.

Abstract(summarising for a general audience)

The Nazi Jewish Laws and the subsequent mass murders of the Holocaust caused irreparable loss and damage to Hungarian musical life.

Many of the murdered Jewish musicians have been forgotten, along with their work. On the other hand, there were Jewish musicians who escaped from Hungary before the Holocaust and also those who – having witnessed and survived the persecution – chose emigration/exile after the Holocaust. It is also of note that the non-Jewish Béla Bartók chose emigration as opposed to living under the Hungarian Nazi regime. His departure from Hungary contributed to the irreparable loss and damage to Hungarian musical life.

We must never forget those who were murdered and we must learn from the past. I will, therefore, examine all aspects of the influence of the Hungarian Nazi Jewish laws as well as of the Holocaust on Hungarian Jewish musicians, on Hungarian musical life and on host countries where survivors emigrated prior to as well as post Holocaust. Host countries under my investigation will include England, where several Hungarian Jewish musician emigrés made a significant impact.

Research methodology

My aim is to identify and study Hungarian Jewish musicians that is their livesand fate during the first half of the 20th century. I will try to establish branches of Judaism practiced by these musicians and I will probe how their faith governed their responses to the Nazi Jewish laws. I will also examine those musicians who opted out from Jewishness by converting to Christianity and those who were forced to abandon their musical careers owing to the 1938 and 1939 Nazi Jewish laws. Exile and emigration saved lives but the psychological consequences on exiled/émigré musicians may not yet be fully known. On the other hand, host countries significantly benefitted while Hungarian musical life was greatly diminished by losing Jewish musicians.

To identify Hungarian Jewish musicians, regardless of whether they were openly Jewish or

otherwise, I will study and use the unpublished database which was compiled by Victor Karady and Peter Tibor Nagy (of the host institute of this application) for their elites08 European Research Council project (<http://elites08.uni.hu>). This database consists of the denominational affiliation of everybody who passed matriculation exams until 1918 and of diploma holders from 1918 to 1948. (I am grateful to Professors Karady and Nagy for their permission to allow me the use of their unpublished database for my forthcoming post-doc studies.) To identify Jewish and baptised Jewish musicians I will also study the database of Hungarian Jewish Encyclopaedia, published originally in 1929, but enlarged and digitised by the host institute of this application in 2006: <http://mek.oszk.hu/04000/04093/html/>

I will also study databases at the Hungarian Jewish Museum and Archives, the Institute of Musicology, the Music Academy, the Budapest Opera House, the Hungarian radio and the Hungarian press at that time (<https://adtplus.arcanum.hu/en/>)

I am planning a two-way cooperation with Yad Vashem’s Hall of Names: I will study their archives but will also provide them with relevant findings resulting from my forthcoming research. Studying databases at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Archives and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (<https://collections.ushmm.org/findingaids/RG-39.013M_01_fnd_en.pdf>) is also planned.

For further understanding of the influence of the Nazi laws and the Holocaust on Hungarian Jewish musicians, I will interview Holocaust survivors and also family members of such survivors. I will probe the impact which the Nazi Jewish laws and the Holocaust had not only on their lives but also on their Jewish faith, their art and career.

My aim is partly lexical in identifying/compiling a list of Hungarian Jewish musicians during the first half of the 20th century. However, I will also produce case studies to probe the lives and fate of those who were openly Jewish (whether religious or secular), who were baptised and who chose emigration/exile.

Duration of project: two years