

**German and Austrian Émigré Musical Culture in the
British Internment Camps of World War II:
Composer Hans Gál, *Huyton Suite* and the Camp
Revue *What a Life!***

by

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Abstract

During the bombardment of Britain in World War II, the British government adopted a policy of mass internment of foreign nationals originating from "enemy" states (namely Germany, Austria and Italy). Using the experiences of interned composer Hans Gál and the genesis of his *Huyton Suite* trio and the camp revue *What a Life!* as a case study, this paper explores the musical culture that developed in the civilian internment camps of Huyton and Central Promenade. Though diverse, the internee population of these camps was disproportionately composed of leading German and Austrian intellectuals, such as sociologist Norbert Elias, musicologist Otto Erich Deutsch and composer Hans Gál. Classical music had typically been a prominent feature of this generation's pre-war lives, and internment culture similarly reflected this importance. At least three original musical compositions were written, as well as premiered, during this internment period: Gál's aforementioned *Huyton Suite* and *What a Life!*, and Franz Reizenstein's finale movement to his *Ballet Suite for Small Chamber Orchestra*. Despite growing interest in this internment period there still remain many areas that are under-researched. This document discusses the hitherto unexamined experiences of Gál and some of the musicians who were interned along with Gál, including flutist Walter Bergmann, cellist Fritz Ball, composer Franz Reizenstein and flutist Nicolo Draber. The genesis of both the *Huyton Suite* and the revue *What a Life!* are also discussed. Through examination of historical documents and related diaries and memoirs, this thesis offers a vivid portrayal of musical life in these camps as it existed during the summer of 1940.

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Dedicated to John, Noah and Zane

Foreword

Contemporary Concerns, Political Parallels

My personal concern regarding the contemporary practice of “indefinite detention” after 9/11 is what led to my interest in the larger historical subject of what has variously been called “detainment” or “internment”: that is, the political practice of imprisoning individuals, indefinitely, without charge or trial. Like many, I had been aware and critical of the internment of Japanese civilians during World War II. Occurring in my own lifetime, however, was the indefinite incarceration of suspect individuals in Guantanamo. This practice initially led me to investigate the larger history of the practice of internment, in an effort to better understand what was happening in my own lifetime. This is how I came to learn of the relatively forgotten internment of thousands of Germans and Austrians in Britain and the Isle of Man during World War II.¹

The circumstances, identities and political details between these groups of interned people are, of course, vastly different. However, the psychological impetus behind the *adoption of the policy* personally struck me as strikingly similar. Namely the impetus was, and remains today: fear, xenophobia, latent or overt racism, and, at least in the case of both the Japanese and the Guantanamo detainees, a powerful desire for revenge (however misplaced). In all three cases, the “classical” legal and normally accepted notion in a democratic system— that one is presumed innocent until proven guilty— had been (and remains, in the case of those persons still held in Guantanamo) essentially discarded. And for all three, the public was advised that this precept was a luxury which was no longer affordable. Over nine years later, the world is still being instructed that the ongoing “war on terror” continues to warrant the abandonment of the Geneva conventions regarding the treatment of prisoners of war. Despite election assurances to the contrary, Guantanamo remains fully operational.

In July 1940, significant public outcry and growing political opposition arose largely as a reaction to the sinking of the *Arandora Star* (a ship carrying hundreds of internees, bound for Canada). One can reasonably speculate that this World War II episode of internment (initially adopted in the spring of 1940, and already beginning to be dismantled by fall of 1940) would

¹ In the UK this episode is widely known. However, it is my strong perception that, in North America, this internment remains largely an obscure subject, even among the larger Jewish community (the majority of the German and Austrian internees were of Jewish background).

have continued far longer than it actually did in Britain, had it not been for this political shift. Likewise, it is equally probable the current detainees will likely continue to languish until the American public demands policy change.

The subject of internment is inherently controversial. Those who defend the practice often cite competing security concerns. After all, the practice is typically only utilised during times of significant instability: civil unrest (as in the case of the Irish Republicans during “the troubles” in Ireland), or war (as in, for example, the case of the Ukrainians and Japanese in Canada during World War II). There are two primary issues to consider, however, in our present day interpretation of internment. Firstly, the present conflict is one that lacks clear parameters. War was never formally declared, and the conflict is described and defined as endless. By contrast, “traditional” war has a beginning, middle and a clear end. With a conceptual “end,” one can more readily justify a suspension of civil rights as, at least, temporary and corresponding to a specific degree of threat, which can be abandoned when the threat level decreases. Alarming, this is not the case with the current day detainee policy. And secondly, on a more philosophical level, do unstable conditions, or even war, ever justify what is arguably an inherently unjust practice?

This inherent injustice stems from several factors. First, internment is a sort of collective punishment which disallows even the possibility of individual innocence. Also deeply important, in the sense of injustice, is the inherent psychological cruelty of indefinite imprisonment. Finally, internment invariably denies the individual any legal means of addressing the accusations leveled against him or herself. The internee no longer enjoys the rights which we, within a democratic political system, normally accord to all human beings. In effect, the internee ceases to be recognized as fully human. These inherent “flaws” of internment, if you will, hold true regardless of the era in which internment occurs, and regardless of the context of a particular internment. The following document explores some of these ethical issues in the specific case of the British internment of Germans and Austrians during World War II.

British Internment of Austrians and Germans during World War II

There was, and still is, reluctance to de-mythologise the “Battle of Britain” period, which coincided with the height of this internment period between 10 July and 31 October 1940. A strong cultural Romanticisation of this period persists, a situation outlined in the provocative

book *The Myth of the Blitz* by British historian Angus Calder.² In this work, Calder argues that the actual social and political complexity of the Blitz is often obscured by the prevailing myth of the Blitz period. This simplified narrative could be distilled into the following: a unified and resilient British people, who have overcome deep social class divisions in a time of national crisis to come together to fight Fascism and singlehandedly defend democracy for the world, all the while proudly maintaining traditional British mores and customs. The spirit of this myth is perfectly captured in photographic images depicting survivors steadfastly observing tea time amidst the rubble of utterly destroyed buildings. These striking images are copiously preserved in propaganda photos taken during the period.³

Without denying that this myth contains some truth, it must be acknowledged as far more complex and multi-faceted. This more nuanced perspective acknowledges the existence of diverse perspectives within British society regarding the war effort, including those of nearly 60,000 British conscientious objectors, a small but virulent group of homegrown Fascists (principally represented by the British Union of Fascists, led by the infamous Oswald Mosley), and the undemocratic and blemished reality of the civilian internment. As Calder has pointed out, these ambivalent aspects are often downplayed in a noble and simplified narrative of collective unified British resistance.⁴

Another reason for a lack of criticism is an understandable reluctance on the part of many internees themselves and their descendents to criticize the country that gave them refuge. Despite the significant injustices of internment, it is a fact that Britain saved lives in allowing refugees to immigrate in the first place, and this fact alone complicates the telling of this narrative. A sensitive reading of this episode must acknowledge this internal ambivalence. The tendency to avoid criticism in the immediate post-war period is further illuminated by contemporary publications, such as the brochure written by the German Jewish Aid Foundation entitled “While You are in England: Helpful information and Guidance to every Refugee.” This brochure cited eight so-called “commandments” intended to teach refugees proper public behaviour, admonishing them not to speak German openly and to avoid any overt criticism of British policy

² Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz* (London: Pimlico, 1991).

³ For vivid examples see *Ourselves in Wartime: An Illustrated Survey of the Home Front in the Second World War* (London: Odhams Press Limited, [1944]).

⁴ Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*, 10, 76–77, 112, 117.

or social norms. Above all, refugees were reminded to be grateful to England.⁵

Such directives suggest that Jewish refugees in particular faced special pressures toward assimilation. In *A Sense of Belonging: Dilemmas of British Jewish Identity*, Howard Cooper and Paul Morrison suggest that in Britain the psychological challenges of exile and the more subtle manifestations of anti-Semitism are often harder to recognize.

There is also a long history, predating the war, of strong pressure exerted on the Jewish community in Britain to assimilate into the larger dominant culture. A pointed satirical poem, dating from the 1890s and written by Israel Zangwill (in Yiddish originally), captures this cultural pressure. In part, it reads

My brothers, sisters newly here,
Listen to my wise oration,
You can live without the fear
Of hatred and repatriation,
All you have to do, I bid,
Is stop acting like a Yid.

Endeavor to be strong and fine,
And live just like the English do;
If you live like Eastern swine,
Our nightmare, left behind, comes true;
The man who lets his earlocks dangle,
Makes us all go through the mangle...

Accept from me this invitation,
My advice is so well meant,
We must have assimilation,
Men like me in Parliament,
Follow me and do what's right,
And may your strength be well upright...

Chorus:

Yes, we would love to be MP's
And we will learn to do all this,
We will say 'How do you please'
And cultivate communal bliss,
We will change our ways and struggle,
To eat our Christmas pudding right,
Put away our Yiddish kugel,
Read our Milton every night,
We will call Rev. Adler 'chief' And nobody will come to grief.⁶

⁵ For discussion and quotation of these "commandments" see Marion Berghahn, *Continental Britons: German-Jewish Refugees from Nazi Germany* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 140.

There seem to be two sides to this cultural pressure experienced by these immigrants to Britain: on one side, to assimilate, and on the other to excel—in other words, not to simply blend into the predominant culture but to be truly exemplary citizens. The Weimar era German Jews also experienced both pressures within German culture. As Ludwig Hollander of the leading liberal German Jewish organization put it, “Step children must be doubly good.”⁷ The highly complex issues of Jewish identity within Germany—indeed, the general issue of Jewish identity itself—are beyond the scope of this document, and have been the subject of extensive debate and study.⁸ In both Germany and Austria, the roots of this assimilation grew within the fertile soil of largely latent yet highly persistent anti-Semitism. Success in the wider German world was widely perceived as very difficult (or impossible) to achieve without assimilating.

It should be made explicit that British internment and imprisonment in German concentration camps are wholly different subjects and should not be confused. On the other hand, the sheer historical proximity of these phenomena has meant that criticism of British internment is rendered almost frivolous. In effect, because of what *could* have happened (ie., annihilation during the *Shoah*⁹), any criticisms of the British internment are made somehow undignified, even unjustified. As one former internee wrote years later,

When I recall the horrors of Nazi concentration camps—and they already existed at that time—I am almost ashamed to write about our internment. Despite many bureaucratic and often superfluous harassments, we were never actually maltreated. That is true at least of the Isle of Man. But we were scared [...] Most of us had fled from Hitler and in the event of an invasion we would already have been behind barbed wire. At that time our worries may have seemed petty

⁶ Israel Zangwill poem, translator unattributed, quoted in Cooper and Morrison, *A Sense of Belonging*, 76–77. During Nathan Marcus Adler’s leadership, the “Jewish ministry” in England developed into a recognized profession. However, rather than ordaining Rabbis, the “Jewish ministry” called themselves “Reverend.” This was part of *Minhag Anglia* (“English Usage”), which adopted English clerical terminology. Adler seemed to lead *Minhag Anglia*. However, with increasing immigration of (Orthodox) eastern Jews, tension grew between Rev. Adler and his followers and the new arrivals, who were often critical of Anglicisation. Hence the satirical reference to agreeing to call Rev. Adler “Chief (Rabbi).” Rabbi Raymond Apple, “Hermann Gollancz & the title of rabbi in British Jewry,” presentation to the Jewish Historical Society of England, Israel Branch, 30 May 2010, also available at <http://www.oztorah.com/2010/06/hermann-gollancz-the-title-of-rabbi-in-british-jewry/> (accessed 12 August 2010).

⁷ This phrase “Steifkinder müssen doppelartig artig sein” has been attributed to Ludwig Holländer, according to Peter Gay, *Freud, Jews and Other Germans: Masters and Victims in Modernist Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 183.

⁸ This is a highly prolific and ongoing discussion. For one such recent discussion, see Scott Spector, “Forget Assimilation: Introducing Subjectivity to German Jewish History,” *Jewish History* 20, nos. 3–4 (December 2006): 349–361.

⁹ The Hebrew term *Shoah*, meaning “the Disaster,” rather than the more commonly used term of “Holocaust” will be used throughout this document. The term “Holocaust” comes from Greek, meaning “sacrificial offering”; thus many writers prefer *Shoah*.

[...] but the fate of Jewish refugees in France certainly proved us right.¹⁰

There often was a natural concern with the potential social stigma of having been a prisoner of any sort. In fact, years after the war ended, the refugee assistance organizations based at Bloomsbury House destroyed almost all of their files to ensure anonymity, acting on requests of their former clients.¹¹ Not surprisingly, this concern would be a common reaction to internment: what would others think, especially those who are outside the refugee community?

Finally, on a practical level, the post-war refugee community in Britain was still largely insecure. Many refugees had arrived in Britain only on temporary transfer visas, yet the reality of the war had thwarted their original immigration plans. During the post-war period the emphasis was necessarily on surviving and acclimating oneself to a new life. Many refugees were struggling to gain the right to work in their pre-war domains of expertise (many had been allowed to enter the country only as “domestic workers,” for example, which in particular left many very well educated women restricted to menial jobs).¹² Many were trying to trace the fates of missing family members who were left behind on the Continent. Also of pressing urgency was the need to secure British citizenship. It is not surprising that, as a result, many refugees felt too vulnerable themselves to criticize and potentially “embarrass their somewhat reluctant hosts.”¹³

Given this overall charged context, it is rather understandable that there has been a noticeable lack of critical scholarship devoted to this larger subject. With my research, I hoped to offer two things.

The composers Hans Gál and Franz Reizenstein were both prominent musical figures within the two internment camps on which I chose to focus my research. As a musician, I wanted to introduce these two composers to contemporary players. I believe both these composers’ works deserve wider musical appreciation. In my view, widening the arena of musical repertoire is not only artistically rewarding for the performer, but also strengthens the continuing viability of classical music. We cannot only rely on the “safe and standard” of figures such as Bach,

¹⁰ Gitta Deutsch, *The Red Thread* (Riverside: Ariadne Press, 1996), 68.

¹¹ Naomi Shepard, *Wilfred Israel*, 9. “Bloomsbury House” was the general term used for the organized refugee assistance effort. Named for the actual building, it was centrally located in the Bloomsbury area of London where these assistance groups were based.

¹² See Marion Berghahn, “Women Émigrés in England,” in *Between Sorrow and Strength: Women Refugees of the Nazi*, ed. Sibylle Quack (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 1995), 69–80. As a visa condition, refugees were typically not allowed to undertake any work in Britain, with the exceptions of nursing and domestic service. Therefore, these exceptions primarily applied to women. Unmarried women, regardless of their prior education or training, often were allowed to initially enter Britain only as “domestic workers.”

¹³ Cesarani and Kushner, *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth-Century Britain*, 5.

Beethoven and Brahms, as much as we revere these composer's works. Further, there are countless fascinating and wonderful works of music created by this generation of "suppressed" musicians.¹⁴ For complex reasons which are later explored in this document, many of these "suppressed" composers have suffered from musical neglect. This situation presents an opportune pairing of musical "appetite" and musical "sustenance."

Further, I was also equally interested in exploring the context of internment: how it affected (in sheer human terms, as well as creatively) the musicians within that situation. Further, I was interested in offering what I viewed as a potentially valuable musical study in an under-explored context. Finally, I hoped to revisit, in an ethically critical manner, a historical precedent in internment practice. In this last regard, I hoped to make a meaningful contribution to the ongoing and admittedly controversial debate regarding current "detainee" policy.

Despite the flowering of creativity and the remarkable individual as well as communal achievements made within this historical internment period during World War II, it is essential to acknowledge the underlying injustice perpetrated on this internee population. The creative products of this internment are deserving of scholarly attention and public awareness, and uniquely and effectively portray the human experience of internment. However, the deeper and more central issue, residing at the very core of the practice of internment—that is, arrest and detention without charge or trial—is its inherent injustice. At the time of this writing, a public and official governmental apology has never been offered for the internment of German and Austrian refugees during World War II.¹⁵ This would be a most appropriate, and long overdue, acknowledgement.

¹⁴ "Suppressed music" is the term often used to describe this generation of composers who suffered neglect, persecution, exile (externally or internally), imprisonment (or worse) as a result of Nazi oppression. Besides Hans Gál and Franz Reizenstein, there are (in no particular order): Egon Wellesz, Berthold Goldschmidt, Mieczyslaw Weinberg, Walter Braunfels, Hugo Kauder, Erich Zeisl, Georg Tintner, Mátyás Seiber, Hans Krása, Ernst Toch, Alexander von Zemlinsky, Franz Schreker, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Ernst Krenek, Karl Rankl, Karl Amadeus Hartmann, Walter Arlen, Pavel Haas and numerous other composers waiting to be more fully explored and introduced to contemporary audiences.

¹⁵ There has recently been a movement in Canada dating from May 2009, stemming from efforts of Massimo Pacetti (Quebec MP), to solicit a governmental apology to Italians who were interned in Canada during World War II. This follows former Prime Minister (Canada) Brian Mulroney's apology in 1988 to Japanese Canadians interned during World War II. However, to date there has not been an apology given by any government regarding these German and Austrian internees.

Chapter 1 Introduction

In my sober moments it is clear to me that I am mad. Here I am writing this music, completely superfluous, ridiculous, fantastic music for a flute and two violins, while the world is on the point of coming to an end. Was ever a war more lost than this one now? What shall we do if peace is now concluded? What if none is concluded? Each possibility seems as hopeless as the other. I must, as so often in my life, think of the ‘Man in the Land of Syria,’ in the parable by Rückert.¹⁶ Yet I hang above the abyss eating berries. How wonderful that there are such berries! Never in my life have I been as grateful for my talent as I am today.¹⁷

— Hans Gál, British internment camp diary entry, 12 June 1940

May 1940 was a critical point in the British national experience. German forces had reached the French shore, which was only thirty-four kilometers away from the famed white beaches of Dover. The “Low Countries” (Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) had already fallen to German occupation. By the middle of May, the war in France had essentially been lost and Britain stood alone. The British, as well as the rest of the world, fully expected Britain would be invaded next. The British had not had to seriously consider the possibility of a direct attack since the Napoleonic period; the country had not actually experienced an invasion since the year 1066. Armed conflicts were expected to be settled on foreign shores.¹⁸ In the very simplest of terms, the British sense of vulnerability was what eventually led to a policy of mass internment of resident “enemy aliens” beginning in May 1940. By August some 25,000 individuals, mainly German and Austrian refugees, found themselves behind barbed wire.

Internment often posed serious challenges to the mental and physical health of those interned. One way in which internees met these challenges was by creating art within internment,

¹⁶ For an English translation of this Friedrich Rückert parable, originally entitled “Es ging ein Mann in Syrerland” and translated into English as “Life and Death,” see Richard Trench Chevenix, *The Story of Justin Martyr, and Other Poems* (London: Parker, Son and Bourne, 1862), 218. In this story, a man crawls into a well to escape a dangerous beast, only to find himself suspended between the beast above and a dragon at the bottom of the well. The root to which he clings are being gnawed by two mice, one white and the other black. These symbolize, respectively, day and night. While the man hangs there, suspended between death (the dragon) and the troubles of life (the angry beast above him) he sees some berries, and manages to forget both these threats while enjoying them. The berries represent the pleasures of life.

¹⁷ Hans Gál, *Musik hinter Stacheldraht*, ed. Eva Fox-Gál and Tony Fox (Bern: Peter Lang), 2003, hereafter identified as “Gál diary.” All excerpts from the Gál diary were translated into English and generously provided by Eva Fox-Gál, and appear by permission. This new English translation is currently awaiting publication.

¹⁸ Norman Moss, *Nineteen Weeks* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 188.

and classical music figured prominently in this artistic creativity. This thesis examines the vibrant musical culture that German and Austrian refugees managed to create during internment, despite significant deprivations and challenges. Despite the evidence that classical music was a primary cultural activity in internment, there has been relatively little academic attention given to this subject.¹⁹ Using the experiences of Hans Gál and the genesis of the *Huyton Suite* trio and the camp revue *What a Life!* as a lens, I hope to demonstrate the importance of the classical music culture created in British internment and how the music both reflected as well as affected the overall internment experience. This document consists of four chapters. This introduction offers the reader a basic orientation to this subject, including a review of the relevant literature. The second chapter focuses on the historical context and musical culture within these camps, beginning with a brief examination of the historical background of internment itself, including basic logistical information regarding the internment camps. Following this introductory material, the identity of the internees themselves will be explored, followed by a discussion of the actual arrest process. The facilities, conditions and consequences of these conditions will then be examined, followed by a brief discussion of the humanitarian advocates for the internees. The positive aspects of music making in internment will then be investigated in “Art as Advantage.” Two musical subjects follow “Art as Advantage:” first, the phenomenon of “House Concerts” (small scale chamber music concerts given within the camps) and second, a specific concert event given at the Palace Hotel in Douglas by a group of internees, which included composer Hans Gál. At the close of the second chapter is an examination of the potential reasons for the suppression of criticism of this internment by later observers. The third chapter is specifically devoted to interned composer Hans Gál: the man, the music which he composed in internment, and the musical challenges he faced, both during and after his internment. The final chapter profiles selected individuals who were of particular musical importance in internment, or who were significantly involved in the creation of the *Huyton Suite* trio and/or the *What a Life* revue, the two works composed by Gál during his internment.

Classical music—especially the German and Viennese masterworks—had typically been a prominent feature in both the childhood homes and education of these refugees. Daniel Snowman, author of the *Hitler Emigrés*, hypothesizes that this cultural prominence arose out of a

¹⁹ Oral interviews of former internees, extant at the Imperial War Museum Department of Sound Records (London, UK), repeatedly illustrate the prominence of classical music for these internees, and will be referenced later in this document.

sort of thwarted nationalism: after the humiliating German defeat in the Great War, the German people could remain proud of their internationally renowned musical culture of Bach, Beethoven and Brahms.²⁰ This traditional Germanic culture with its strong emphasis on classical music was, in effect, recreated in the “empty space” that was British internment, as the internees were largely left to their own devices. Therefore they quite naturally filled that space with Germanic culture—of which classical music was a central feature. Most of these refugees came of age during the creatively fertile “Weimar” era. During this period, there were strong trends of increasing secularism and cultural and intellectual cosmopolitanism.

For German Jews, whose special position within this refugee community will be one emphasis in this study, there was also a strong trend towards assimilation.²¹ As Daniel Snowman has pointed out, it was not until the establishment of Israel that Jews in the modern era became distinguished in military, political, and agricultural spheres. However, in music, philosophy, writing and other intellectual pursuits, Jews were often “disproportionately prominent.”²² This was both a “push/pull” phenomenon: a “pull” because of the value traditionally placed by Jews on scholarship, and a “push,” stemming from the anti-Semitic exclusion of Jews from certain realms, such as politics and the upper levels of the military.²³

There were several talented and accomplished émigré composers interned in Britain during World War II, including Egon Wellesz, Franz Reizenstein, and Hans Gál. Reizenstein and Gál in particular both continued to compose during their internment. Reizenstein completed at least one work, the *Ballet Suite for Small Orchestra*, which will be briefly discussed later in this document. It is in Hans Gál’s internment period compositions, however, that one finds a unique portrayal of the collective internment experience as expressed in both his trio known as the *Huyton Suite* and his revue titled *What a Life*. The performance history of these works will be of primary musical consideration within this document, but they will be contextualized from the perspective of the general phenomenon of internment and its aftermath.

²⁰ Daniel Snowman, *The Hitler Émigrés: The Cultural Impact on Britain of Refugees from Nazism* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2002), 11–13.

²¹ For a comprehensive discussion of these issues see Donald Niewyk, *The Jews in Weimar Germany* (New Brunswick, NJ, and London, UK: Transaction Publishers, 2001).

²² Snowman, *The Hitler Émigrés*, 6.

²³ *Ibid.*, 7.

1.1 Scholarly Perspectives on British Internment

There has been significant scholarship regarding the general experience and history of these refugees in Britain. A common theme in this literature, beyond the loss suffered by the refugees, is the cultural effect that refugees had upon the receiving countries in which they forged new lives. Works such as *The Hitler Emigrés* by the aforementioned Daniel Snowman and Tom Ambrose's *Hitler's Loss: What Britain and America Gained from Europe's Cultural Exiles* explore the immense contributions of these émigrés to British culture.²⁴ The subject of the Weimar era, a time during which many of these émigrés came of age, has been comprehensively studied as well. Donald Niewyk's *The Jews in Weimar Germany* is an example of one comprehensive overview of the subject as it relates to the Jewish émigrés; classic texts such as Peter Gay's *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider* specifically focus on the Germanic culture in which this generation of refugees was raised.²⁵ There has also been keen scholarly interest in the larger refugee experience in Britain. This is evident in the vast array of works written on the overall subject, which include Marion Berghahn's *Continental Britons: German-Jewish Refugees from Nazi Germany*, and J. M. Ritchie's *German Exiles: British Perspectives*.²⁶

However, there has been a comparative lack of specific scholarly attention to the internment episode itself within that émigré experience. There are two prominent exceptions to this neglect. The Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, based at the University of London (UK), regularly publishes on the subject of German and Austrian refugees in Britain. Publications include the 2002 book *Changing Countries: The Experience and Achievement of German Speaking Exiles from Hitler in Great Britain from 1933 to Today*, as well as an ongoing and significant yearbook series.²⁷ This yearbook series includes many works on this general subject, such as *Refugees from the Third Reich in Britain* and 'Immortal Austria?': *Austrians in Exile in Britain*.²⁸ Comprising eleven volumes, this series includes one very important volume

²⁴ Tom Ambrose, *Hitler's Loss: What Britain and America Gained from Europe's Cultural Exiles* (London: Peter Owen Publishers, 2001).

²⁵ Donald Niewyk, *The Jews in Weimar Germany* (New Brunswick, NJ, and London, UK: Transaction Publishers, 2001); Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1968).

²⁶ Marion Berghahn, *Continental Britons: German-Jewish Refugees in England* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books), 2007; J. M. Ritchie, *German Exiles: British Perspectives* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997).

²⁷ Marian Malet and Anthony Greenville, eds., *Changing Countries: The Experience and Achievement of German Speaking Exiles from Hitler in Great Britain from 1933 to Today* (London: Libris, 2002).

²⁸ Anthony Greenville, ed., *Refugees from the Third Reich in Britain* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002); Charmian Brinson, Richard Dove, Jennifer Taylor, eds., 'Immortal Austria?': *Austrians in Exile in Britain* (Amsterdam:

which is wholly focussed on this internment, entitled *'Totally Un-English': Britain's Internment of 'Enemy Aliens' in Two World Wars*.²⁹ Within this volume are two chapters on music. The first is written by Jutta Raab Hansen and is devoted to the significance of music in the internment during World War I, and the other, written by Richard Dove, is devoted to the revue *What a Life!*³⁰ The other prominent exception to the overall lack of serious scholarly attention given to internment is David Cesarani and Tony Kushner's *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*.³¹

Cesarani and Kushner examine internment as a substantial and serious historical event which fits into a continuum of British episodes of xenophobia. Indeed, in *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry*, Tony Kushner summarises this dynamic in his chapter entitled "British Anti-Semitism 1918–1945":

Rather than a temporary aberration by the normally liberal British, internment marked the climax of an anti-alienism that had been increasing since 1918 and which contained a powerful element of anti-semitism. Those who had been clamouring for internment in 1940—the right wing popular press and the security forces—had also objected to the Jewish refugees in the 1930's. To both the fact that the refugees were Jewish made them doubly suspicious—Jews could not be trusted.³²

This contrasts with the popularly expressed view of internment as primarily a short-lived mistake. Connery Chappell's *Island of Barbed Wire: The Remarkable Story of World War Two Internment on the Isle of Man*, is engagingly written and useful as a popular overview of the subject. However, Chappell states quite clearly from the outset that his book "confines itself to examining the life in the camps and what the internees meant to the Isle of Man; it tries not to debate the political or moral issues involved in the fact of internment itself."³³ Its lack of citations also limits its scholarly application. Previous popular literature, such as Stent's A

Rodopi, 2007).

²⁹ *Totally Un-English? Britain's Internment of 'Enemy Aliens' in Two World Wars*, ed. Richard Dove (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005).

³⁰ Jutta Raab Hansen, "Die Bedeutung der Musik für 26.000 internierte Zivilisten während des Ersten Weltkriegs auf der Isle of Man," in *Totally Un-English? Britain's Internment of 'Enemy Aliens' in Two World Wars*, ed. Richard Dove (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 63–83; and Richard Dove, "'Wer sie nicht erlebt hat, der begreift sie nie.' The Internment Camp Revue 'What a Life!,'" in *ibid.*, 121–38.

³¹ David Cesarani and Tony Kushner, eds., *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 1993).

³² Tony Kushner, "British Anti-Semitism, 1918–1945," in *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry*, ed. David Cesarani (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Ltd, 1990), 199.

³³ Connery Chappell, *Island of Barbed Wire: The Remarkable Story of World War Two Internment on the Isle of Man* (London: Robert Hale, Ltd., 1984), 20.

BeSpattered Page?: The Internment of his Majesty's 'Most Loyal Enemy Aliens,' tended to emphasise the intellectual achievements of the internees.³⁴ The potential reasons for this positive emphasis are understandable, and are explored in this document (see “Suppression of Criticism,” below). However, one unfortunate result of this emphasis was an unintended diminishment of the serious effects of internment and the issues of injustice inherent within the subject.

Instead, Cesarani and Kushner portray internment first and foremost as a serious breakdown of democracy. Rather than positioning internment as an aberrant and unfortunate mistake, internment is viewed more as a manifestation of widely held attitudes about British identity and its outsiders. Comparisons are also drawn between this internment and other internments, in particular that of World War I and the “detainments” during the first Gulf War in 1991. As the authors point out, questions regarding British identity were being asked with increasing intensity in the immediate pre-war and war period, all with great impact upon the resident alien. Who was an outsider? Who was British? Who was a “good citizen”? These were recurring questions with very long histories and of profound influence on internment policy.³⁵

Personal accounts, such as Stent’s *A BeSpattered Page?*, offer overviews of the internment with some attention given to the musical culture within the camps. Music is briefly discussed within the larger overall cultural context in these personal accounts. Similarly, Erich Koch’s *Deemed Suspect: A Wartime Blunder* is drawn from a personal vantage point.³⁶ Koch fled to Britain and was subsequently interned, first in Britain and then in Canada; his account also refers to music as one aspect of the larger experience. Walter Igersheimer, another former refugee internee, wrote scathingly of his internment experience in *Blatant Injustice: The Story of a Jewish Refugee from Nazi Germany Imprisoned in Britain and Canada during World War II*.³⁷ However, in none of these general accounts is music-making in internment the primary focus.

Composer Hans Gál’s internment diary, published as *Musik hinter Stacheldraht: Tagebuchblätter aus dem Sommer 1940*, centers on his musical work and artistic activity in both

³⁴ Ronald Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?: The Internment of his Majesty's 'Most Loyal Enemy Aliens'* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1980).

³⁵ For an excellent and succinct review of these issues, see in particular Tony Kushner’s “Clubland, Cricket Tests and Alien Internment, 1939–40,” in *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*, ed. David Cesarani and Tony Kushner (London: Frank Cass, 1993), 79–101.

³⁶ Erich Koch, *Deemed Suspect: A Wartime Blunder* (Halifax: Formac Publishing, 1985).

³⁷ Walter Igersheimer, *Blatant Injustice: The Story of a Jewish Refugee from Nazi Germany Imprisoned in Britain and Canada during World War I*, ed. Ian Darragh (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005).

Huyton and Central Camps.³⁸ The diary offers an intimate portrait of an individual artist in internment. This compelling account is, for the moment, currently available only in German.

Otherwise there has been virtually no scholarly attention given to the particular topic of émigré musical culture within this particular internment.³⁹

One practical reason for this neglect is that internment as a scholarly subject could be viewed as a “historians’ domain,” or at least outside musicians’ usual domain. Yet musically-related subjects tend to deter those without extensive musical training. The result has been a marked neglect in the literature on music in internment in general, with one remarkable exception: Minako Waseda’s extensive and excellent study of music within Japanese internment during World War II in the United States.⁴⁰ However, the subject of German and Austrian musical culture during internment in contemporary Britain has been left essentially unexplored. It is hoped that this study is a first step in addressing that neglect in the literature.

There has also been literature devoted to exile theatre in internment, which is relevant to the examination of the revue *What a Life!* Notable here is Gunter Berghaus’ 1989 collection *Theatre and Film in Exile*, which includes a chapter by Alan Clarke entitled “Theatre behind Barbed Wire: German Refugee Theatre in British Internment.”⁴¹ Often drawing on contemporaneous internment poetry, Clarke skillfully summarises the overall conditions of the camps and the way in which the arts functioned within camp life. This contributes to a general understanding of theatre as a cultural phenomenon within internment.

However, there was no specific scholarly attention given to Gál’s revue *What a Life!* before the aforementioned essay written by Richard Dove, the first scholarly work to specifically focus on the music created during this internment period.⁴² Dove reconstructs the original production of the revue, largely based on the internment diary of Hans Gál. It is an excellent

³⁸ Hans Gál, *Musik hinter Stacheldraht: Tagebuchblätter aus dem Sommer 1940*, ed. Eva Fox-Gál and Tony Fox (Bern: Peter Lang, 2003).

³⁹ There is, however, a forthcoming study by Alison Garnham entitled *Hans Keller and Internment: The Development of an Émigré Musician*, ed. Christopher Wintle (Melton, Woodbridge, Suffolk [UK]: Boydell and Brewer, 2011). Hans Keller was an émigré music critic and violinist. This appears to be the first book solely dedicated to this subject from a specifically musical perspective.

⁴⁰ Minako Waseda, “Extraordinary Circumstances, Exceptional Practices: Music in Japanese American Concentration Camps,” *Journal of Asian American Studies* 8, no. 2 (June 2005):171–209.

⁴¹ Alan Clarke, “Theatre behind Barbed Wire: German Refugee Theatre in British Internment,” in *Theatre and Film in Exile*, ed. Gunter Berghaus (Oxford: Oswald Wolff Books, 1989), 189–222.

⁴² Dove, “‘Wer sie nicht erlebt hat, der begreift sie nie.’ The Internment Camp Revue ‘What a Life!’,” in *Totally Un-English? Britain’s Internment of ‘Enemy Aliens’ in Two World Wars*, ed. Richard Dove (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 121–38.

starting point for a more focused study of music within this British internment period. However, the scope of that chapter is limited to the creation of the revue and Gál's experiences in its creation. Dove does not focus on the revue music itself and the scope of the chapter obviously does not allow for a wider examination of the musical culture within the camps. It also does not draw upon other firsthand accounts of the revue, such as that found in Fritz Ball's memoir, which have since been discovered and are considered in this thesis. Interestingly, although Gál's *Huyton Suite* trio was at least as important a musical endeavour as the revue (and arguably even more so), there has been no scholarship on the *Huyton Suite* specifically. This thesis represents the first scholarly attention given to the genesis of the *Huyton Suite*.

Chapter 2 Historical Context and Culture within the Camps

2.1 The Background of British Internment

To better understand the dynamics of the mass internment decision ultimately made in the spring of 1940, one should first examine the conditions at the outbreak of war. War was officially declared by Britain on 3 September 1939. However, beginning the previous morning, all resident “enemy aliens” who were on a MI5 special list comprised of suspected Nazi-sympathists or active Nazi agents were either immediately interned or deported. This accounted for about 500 suspect individuals.⁴³ To ascertain the security risk of every other remaining resident “enemy alien” over the age of 16, tribunals were hastily established. These security evaluations were conducted locally and led by members of the Bar or county court judges. Often a local police officer and representatives from the refugee assistance organizations would offer evidence. The general tenor of this process was “local, individual and gentlemanly.”⁴⁴ However, there were many variables in this process, and these often negatively influenced the outcomes of individual cases. These variables included a lack of interpreters. One innocent poet was interned on the spot, for example, simply because he could not speak English and the court could not speak German.⁴⁵

Among the German and Austrian refugees brought before the tribunals, Jews faced special problems due to varied pressures for or against assimilation. The fact that the tribunals’ final decision was left to the chairperson alone, despite the recommendations of local police and refugee assistance organizations, was inherently problematic, as an individual’s prejudices could have an impact on decisions.⁴⁶ The outward appearance of a refugee (which gave some indication of his or her adherence to Orthodox Judaism), rather than their security risk, often affected their classification. The refugee organisations based at Bloomsbury House were well aware of this subjective factor and therefore encouraged their clients to “anglicise” themselves as

⁴³ Even amongst these, however, were several highly questionable cases. For example, amongst these was a Jewish refugee, Alec Natan, who had arrived in Britain in 1933. Further, there was Eugen Spier, who had been living in England for 18 years. Ironically, Spier had been politically active with prominent pre-war “anti-appeasement” political figures such as Churchill and Sir Robert Vansittart in the group known as “Focus for the Defense of Freedom and Peace” prior to war. See Ronald Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?: The Internment of his Majesty’s ‘Most Loyal Enemy Aliens’* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1980), 30–32.

⁴⁴ David Cesarani and Tony Kushner, eds., *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 1993), 83.

⁴⁵ Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 36.

⁴⁶ Cesarani and Tony Kushner, eds., *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*, 84–85.

much as possible.⁴⁷ Interestingly, the “Chief Rabbi’s Emergency Council,” which also assisted refugees in Britain, took a different view of this issue. One of their primary concerns was the survival of Jewish tradition and therefore the degree of a refugee’s “Englishness,” or even “potential Englishness,” was rather beside the point.⁴⁸ The debate over a refugee hostel, comprised of young Talmudic scholars rescued from Germany, demonstrated this philosophical divide. When these young men came before the tribunal in October 1939, the chairman was shocked at their total lack of knowledge of Britain. He felt they should all therefore be interned. However, the English Jew present on the board intervened on their behalf, and gave his personal assurance “that they would be in future looked after and guided by the Jewish community.”⁴⁹ There was also additional pressure from assimilationist factions within the Jewish community to act on this particular refugee hostel. Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz commented that

[he did not] regret, and certainly need not apologise for, my having rescued these Yeshivah students from Nazi concentration camps. Nor was it my first duty to teach them either British geography or English games, but to enable them to *live*. And I have yet to learn that the ignorance of British geography or of English games on the part of a poor hounded human being is sufficient reason for him being interned.⁵⁰

The liason officer retorted that

the people who it exempts from internment are not only beyond suspicion, but are likely to prove loyal citizens. Rabbinic studies alone in a German ghetto atmosphere can achieve absolutely nothing to this end [...] What chance have they of merely comprehending, let alone feeling, that love of England which is the veritable fountain head of these traditions of Anglo-Jewry of which we English Jews are so proud and which is itself the strongest bulwark against the anti-semitism in our midst?⁵¹

The tribunals classified every resident male and female “enemy alien” over the age of 16 into three different categories, based on their purported security threat: “A,” “B,” or “C.” Of the approximately 73,000 cases heard, only about 569 individuals were deemed a “significant risk” (“Category A”). Low risk cases were deemed “Category B.” The vast majority of cases, about 66,000 in total, were classified as “Category C”: no risk whatsoever.⁵² Of these about 55,000 were refugees from Nazi oppression, of whom ninety percent were Jewish refugees. Regions were also assessed very unevenly. The tribunals were established according to geographic

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 85.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 86.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 63.

regions without taking into consideration the numbers of cases to be inspected. The system in London, for example, was heavily overburdened, and certain county court judges, such as those in Chislehurst, Bromley and Beckenham, reportedly classified every case as “B,” regardless of individual profiles.⁵³

These tribunal evaluations were completed by the spring of 1940. However, during the period between the outbreak of war (in the fall of 1939) and the spring of 1940 the political climate had shifted significantly. Public anxiety had been growing, fanned by the press and some Members of Parliament, about a supposed “fifth column” element within Britain.⁵⁴ This fear of a “fifth column” was widely expressed by some newspapers, and was instrumental in swaying public opinion towards an acceptance of a mass internment policy. As Gál questions in his diary,

The war has entered a critical stage, Norway and Holland have fallen, Belgium and France are in the middle of a severe struggle. There has been treason everywhere. In one section of the press there has long been deliberate agitation against the refugees. Are there not other interests and other tendencies behind this measure, which was carried out without any visible preparation and literally overnight, to arrest all “enemy aliens” in the protected area on Whit Monday? We have enemies in this country, that is beyond doubt. These enemies were Hitler’s most loyal friends until the outbreak of war. Are secret forces of this kind now at work, are we, the *apparent* fifth column, ultimately the victims of the *real* one? And what will happen if such forces intervene here in the machinery of state and war?⁵⁵

The *Sunday Dispatch*, owned by Lord Rothermere, an outspoken supporter of Fascism before the war, was likely the sort of “section of the press” to which Gál referred.⁵⁶ By early 1940 the *Sunday Dispatch* had led a concerted two-pronged campaign against both resident aliens and Communists. By 14 April the paper featured a pointed article decrying Hitler’s “fifth column in Britain” comprised of “Fascists, Communists, peace fanatics and alien refugees in league with Berlin and Moscow.”⁵⁷ Articles appeared in other newspapers as well, including the *Daily Telegraph*, largely attributing the swift German success in Norway to a “Trojan Horse” strategy.⁵⁸ By the end of May 1940, the Low Countries had fallen and Britain stood alone against imminent German invasion. The fear of the aforementioned “fifth column” was acute. Rumour

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ The term “fifth column” was apparently coined in 1936, during the Spanish civil war. Franco’s General Mola boasted of having four columns to attack Madrid (which was being defended by the Republicans) with an additional “fifth column” which was secretly waiting to join his attack, from within the city. See Angus Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz* (London: Pimlico, 1991), 111.

⁵⁵ Gál diary, 13 May 1940.

⁵⁶ Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*, 111.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

amongst the public and in the press was widespread and largely attributed the fall of the Low Countries to this sort of clandestine activity.

Even amidst swirling rumours of potential betrayal at home, John Anderson, the Home Secretary, remained determined to avoid mass internment if possible.⁵⁹ However, after 9 May the military demanded internment of all male enemy aliens resident in the southeast and east of England (the areas of Britain perceived to be most vulnerable to a German attack). The Cabinet then supported this demand by the military authorities, and on 12 May arrests began.⁶⁰

While some recent scholars, notably Tony Kushner and David Cesarani in their aforementioned work *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*, have persuasively argued that there is a deeply entrenched xenophobia and a subtle but persistent anti-Semitic bias in British culture, both of which contributed to the decision for mass internment,⁶¹ the more commonly expressed view has been that this internment was a justified “panic measure,” given the extraordinary circumstances under which the policy was enacted.⁶² Panic, in itself, is certainly understandable given the imminent possibility of German invasion. However, the fact that comprehensive tribunals had already taken place in order to confront those justified security concerns is ignored or minimised if we view internment as a straightforward “panic measure.” Furthermore, wartime pressures—as significant as they were—unfortunately do not erase the possibility of xenophobia or anti-Semitism.

2.2 Camp Logistics

Unfortunately, specific internment camp logistics—their precise opening and closing dates, numbers of internees, and functions—is not possible to reconstruct reliably. As camps were closed down, their internees were typically transferred to the remaining camps; therefore the populations of individual camps were always in flux, and internees typically found themselves in several camps before they were finally released. The camp records were also

⁵⁹ Louise London, *Whitehall and the Jews 1933–1948: British Immigration Policy, Jewish Refugees and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 170.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ For a discussion of antisemitism in British society during this period, see also Tony Kushner, “The Impact of British Anti-Semitism 1918–1945,” in *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry*, ed. David Cesarani (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 191–208.

⁶² For this commonly held assessment one may refer to Chappell, *Island of Barbed Wire*, or Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*

notoriously sloppy. In fact, by early July 1940, the internees at Central Camp themselves, desperate for some sense of organisation, began to work out a simple but effective index card system, with one box listing current internees and their “house” numbers, and another box containing release information. According to interned composer Hans Gál, “the authorities are only interested in how many total internees were in the camp and whether the addition or subtraction caused by the most recent arriving or departing transports is correct.”⁶³

The process by which these camps were established is also unfortunately murky. As Kushner and Cesarani point out, “Even now [in 1993], with the destruction (mainly by accident) of much relevant material and continuing government reluctance to release relevant documentation, it is hard to reconstruct the exact nature of the decision making process in the crisis period of May-July 1940.”⁶⁴ Due to the imprecision of the available sources, an examination of this subject must rely in part on more anecdotal kinds of evidence.

When taken as a qualitative whole, the literature on internment yields some insight on logistical aspects of these camps. Each camp was run by a Commandant who was appointed by the War Office (after 5 August 1940, the Aliens Department of the Home Office was in charge of these appointments).⁶⁵ There was also an internal system of governance, whose representatives were chosen by the internees themselves. There was a “Camp Speaker” (variously called “Camp Father”) and his “deputy,” an assistant of sorts, at the head of this hierarchy. At the lowest level were House Fathers, who in turn elected the “Street Fathers” who reported to the “Camp Father.” Individual internees could bring complaints or personal concerns to their House Father, who in turn could bring the issue forward. The Camp Father was responsible for directly discussing concerns with the Camp Commandant.⁶⁶

The majority of these internment camps were located on the Isle of Man, a sparsely populated and largely rural island located in the Irish Sea. These include the relatively “large camps” in or near the town of Douglas: Hutchinson, Central, Palace and Onchan.⁶⁷ Hutchinson is known to have been one of the “best” of these internment camps, and had a particularly vibrant

⁶³ Gál diary, 8 July 1940.

⁶⁴ Kushner and Cesarani, “Alien Internment in Britain: An Introduction,” in *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*, 4.

⁶⁵ Louise Burtleton, “The State, Internment and Public Criticism,” in Cesarani and Kushner, eds., *The Internment of Aliens in Britain*, 105.

⁶⁶ Gál diary, 22 May 1940.

⁶⁷ Connery Chappell, *Island of Barbed Wire: The Remarkable Story of World War Two Internment on the Isle of Man* (London: Robert Hale, Ltd., 1984), 44.

artistic culture supported by the Camp Commandant, Hubert Owen Daniel (his humane reputation and consequently positive impact is explored in this thesis within “Art as Advantage”). Many well-known and mature visual artists were interned in Hutchinson, including Dadaist Kurt Schwitters, sculptor Siegfried Charoux and illustrator and graphic artist Hellmuth Weissenborn.⁶⁸

There were also two smaller camps in Douglas: Sefton and Granville.⁶⁹ Sefton was then located in a hotel of the same name on the picturesque Promenade in Douglas. Interestingly, Sefton is today a beautifully restored luxury hotel, yet there is no visible evidence that this hotel ever housed internees during World War II. There were also several camps elsewhere on the Isle of Man: Mooragh at Ramsey, Peveril at Peel, and two camps (intended for women and children, and eventually used for families) at Rushen.⁷⁰

A critically important internment camp was Huyton Camp, located on the mainland in the Liverpool area. This large camp was essentially utilised as a transit camp, clearly chosen for its proximity to Liverpool’s ports which led to the Isle of Man, as well as its plentiful rail connections from elsewhere on the mainland. This location therefore facilitated easy transfer of internees for the duration of the internment period. Huyton had a reputation as one of the worst places to be interned, as conditions were quite harsh, particularly in its early days and weeks (this will be explored at some length later in this document). By October, this camp appears to have been in the process of being broken down and its inhabitants were being transferred elsewhere.⁷¹ By March 1941 it had been closed.⁷²

Thousands of individuals apparently passed through Huyton en route to the Isle of Man.⁷³ From Huyton, many married men, including Gál, were transferred to more permanent locations on the Isle of Man. As Gerald Friedman, an eighteen-year old internee at the time, noted,

Unmarried men were sent to Huyton (Lancashire). Married men like my father were moved immediately to the Isle of Man. However, I think there was another unspoken reason. Huyton was a temporary place from which internees were often shipped overseas to other British allies.⁷⁴

⁶⁸ Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 170.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Alison Garnham, e-mail message to author, 26 January 2011. Garnham is author of the forthcoming *Hans Keller and Internment: The Development of an Émigré Musician*, ed. Christopher Wintle (Melton, Woodbridge, Suffolk [UK]: Boydell and Brewer, 2011), based on information from Hans Keller’s unpublished internment letters.

⁷² Visitors Report by Margaret Corbett-Ashby dated 5 March 1941, Friends House Library unpublished archives (London, UK), Box 25.

⁷³ Gál diary, 13 June 1940.

The policy of deportation was abandoned after the sinking of the *Arandora Star*.⁷⁵ On 2 July 1940 this large ship was sunk by German torpedo while en route to Canada. The ship was carrying about 1,200 internees who were being deported to that country.⁷⁶ 479 were A class Germans; of those, 175 were killed.⁷⁷ There were also 734 Italians of “very questionable” classification.⁷⁸ Of those, 486 lost their lives. Prior to this tragedy, the public was generally not aware that deportations were taking place. Louise London points out that

The transportation policy was hatched in May 1940 when the threat of invasion was at its height [...] This was kept secret from the general public. It was not even discussed in the Cabinet which was presented with a *fait accompli* on 11 June 1940. It was told that 3,000 prisoners of war and 4,000 internees were to be sent to Canada.⁷⁹

Along with the *Dunera* and the *Arandora Star* debacles, there were also the *Ettrick* and *Sobieski*, two additional ships carrying deported internees to Canada, whose sailings on 3 and 4 July 1940, respectively, were rife with abysmal conditions, outright robbery and abuse. However, it was the tragedy of the *Arandora Star* that led to public awareness of the deportations. This awareness ultimately resulted in a marked shift in both public opinion and internment policy in Britain.⁸⁰ Prominent individuals within Britain, including Eleanor Rathbone, MP (nicknamed “Member for refugees”), Bishop Bell of Chichester, and Colonel Josiah Wedgewood, MP, led the effort to bring about justice for the refugees in Britain. This effort is particularly evident in Bell and Rathbone’s pointed criticisms made in the 6 August 1940 debate

⁷⁴ Gerald Friedman diary, “Internment: June 1940,” in Part One of the memoir *You Bloody Alien!* See Chappell, *Island of Barbed Wire*, 44.

⁷⁵ Louise London, “The State, Internment and Public Criticism,” in Cesarani and Kushner, eds., *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*, 111.

⁷⁶ The very language which is typically used to discuss internment also acts to minimize and sanitise the subject. Specifically, the term “transfer” is most often used to describe what more accurately would be called “deportation.”

⁷⁷ However, it is clear that not all those in Class A were Nazis or Nazi sympathisers. Many were prominent political opponents of the Nazis, or Jewish refugees. See Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 106–7.

⁷⁸ Terri Colpi, “The Impact of the Second World War on the British Italian Community,” in Cesarani and Kushner, eds., *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*, 170–171. Unlike the refugees from Nazism, most Italians who were interned had been in the country for years and were not screened by tribunals during 1939–1940. Instead the government relied on lists of individuals which were given to inaccuracy, and at times persons appearing in them were interned as a result of prior anti-Fascist involvement.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁸⁰ By contrast, there were complex political reasons at play in Canada that prevented a reversal of internment policy. Although internees began to be released in Britain within months, those who had been deported, or had volunteered to be sent to Canada, instead languished in a bureaucratic limbo (see Walter Igersheimer’s *A Blatant Injustice: The Story of a Jewish Refugee from Nazi Germany Imprisoned in Britain and Canada during World War I*, ed. Ian Darragh [Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005] for an account of one Canadian internee’s struggle for freedom). It was not until December 1943 that an official order was finally enacted (PC 9440) to close the Canadian camps (see Gerald Tulchinsky, “Accidental Immigrants,” in *Branching Out: The Transformation of the Canadian Jewish Community* [Toronto: Stoddart, 1998], 60–62).

in the House of Commons.⁸¹ This historically important debate would be a turning point for the interned refugees, and would lead to the eventual dismantling of the overall internment policy.

2.3 Identity of Refugee Internees

As has already been suggested, hard data reflecting exactly who the internees were—how many were musicians, professors, and so on—does not exist. Roll calls twice daily typically gave inconsistent results. Internees often swapped identities when transports were at hand, and official records were extremely sloppy, or were lost. In fact, when telegrams arrived at Central Camp, they often went unanswered or were answered incorrectly because the administration simply had no idea where individuals were.⁸²

Any discussion of collective identity must instead be based on a plentiful anecdotal history which offers a consistent, though admittedly unscientific, depiction of who these internees were. It appears that a substantial percentage of German and Austrian refugee internees were established professionals and academics. These individuals had been able to immigrate to Britain in the first place through significant professional or personal connections; they also had the financial means to emigrate. Many of the Central Camp internees were, as Hans Gál described himself and his circle, “pampered people.”⁸³ Many of them were thoroughly assimilated middle-class German and Austrian Jews or, as many described themselves, “more German than Jewish.”⁸⁴ Many German refugees had come of age either just prior to or during the years of the Weimar Republic (1918–1933). As Peter Gay noted in his classic text *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider*,

The Weimar Republic, though it gave Jews unprecedented prominence across a wide scope, was not a “Jewish” republic, as its enemies have so often proclaimed it to be. It would not have been worse if it had been, but Jews taking a significant part in German culture were wholly assimilated. They were Germans. Ernst Cassirer's work on Kant was not a “Jewish Kant,” Bruno Walter's Beethoven was not a “Jewish Beethoven.”⁸⁵

⁸¹ Hansard report, House of Lords Debate 06 August 1940 vol. 117 col. 123, <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1940/aug/06/internment-of-aliens> (accessed 17 July 2009).

⁸² Gál diary, 8 July 1940.

⁸³ Gál diary, 13 May 1940.

⁸⁴ Stent, *A Battered Page?*, 166. This sentiment, which is quite common in the literature, is also the subject of the first chapter in Snowman, *The Hitler Émigrés*, entitled “More German than the Germans.”

⁸⁵ Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), vi–vii.

It should also be mentioned that for this generation of refugees, self-identifying as a Jew could be a particularly complicated matter. Many refugees from urban and cosmopolitan cultural centres within Germany and Austria, including Gál, had been brought up in a secular, deeply humanist environment.⁸⁶ For many of these deeply assimilated refugees, the philosophical principles of the Enlightenment were typically of first and foremost importance, while religious observance was usually relegated to lesser (or non-existent) status. Many refugees additionally felt they were “made Jewish” only by the dictates of the Nazi regime. Many, like pianist internee Hans G. Furth, had converted to Christianity and from that point forward no longer self-identified as Jewish.

In addition to this middle class and assimilated population, there was a sizeable minority of internees who had actually been long-time residents of the east side of London. These internees were typically observant (often Orthodox, and therefore visibly less assimilated) and often less affluent Jews who were not recent arrivals to England; many had earlier arrived in Britain as a result of the Eastern pogroms. After two transports of these individuals arrived in Huyton Camp, Gál writes

both transports consisted primarily of Eastern Jews from the London ghetto districts. There are sideboards [sideburns] and caftans, and a mixture of German and English which sounds like neither of the two. They are all “B cases.” How anyone could come to classify [them] as B, that is, suspected of Nazi sympathies, can hardly be guessed at. The idea that Hitler would seek his helpers among such people is absurd in the extreme.⁸⁷

2.4 Arrests

The arrest process was seemingly arbitrary and notoriously disorganised. Klaus E. Hinrichsen's account of his arrest in Britain is illustrative:⁸⁸

⁸⁶ See Martin Goldsmith's sensitive discussion of this question of identity in *The Inextinguishable Symphony: A True Story of Music and Love in Nazi Germany* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2000), 130–331.

⁸⁷ Gál diary, 13 June 1940. These comments also highlight the fact that tribunal classification had been essentially a subjective process, and could be easily coloured by prejudice. This was often to the detriment of those who were simply more visibly different, leading to their classification as “B,” rather than “C.” For a discussion on the inconsistencies of classification see Stent, “The Enemy at the Gates,” in *A BeSpattered Page?*, 53–68.

⁸⁸ Art historian Klaus E. Hinrichsen left Germany shortly after his arrest by the Gestapo on *Kristallnacht* (9 November 1938); he was released because he was *Mischlinge* (half Jew, half Aryan). He “found the situation intolerable, the incompatibility of his dual identities being heightened by the threat of his call up to military duty.” In May 1939 he left for a three month visit to England—ostensibly to visit relatives. He was interned in late June of 1940. See Shulamith Behr, “Klaus E. Hinrichsen: The Art Historian behind ‘Visual Art behind the Wire’,” in *Arts in*

One evening, in the boarding house where I lived, the landlady said, “They are coming for you in the morning.” So I said, “Why?” She said, “Well, they came with the name of Walter Bergmann. But they had arrested him already, in the morning. So they said, ‘Have you got anybody else?’ And she said, “Yes, I have got Mr. Hinrichsen.”⁸⁹

He went on to say,

It was totally haphazard. If you left your house before 7 am in the morning and went into Hyde Park or the West End or anywhere and came back after 5 pm you couldn't be interned because whoever did the interning at the time, they had office hours. And if you did stay out you couldn't be interned. And many people did. Apparently there was a complete exodus from Hampstead down to Lyons Corner House and back in the afternoon. But at that point I hadn't been long enough in England and I thought if they are going to intern everybody, they are going to intern everybody [...] (but) it was simply they had a quota, they wanted so many every day.⁹⁰

Hans G. Furth was, at that time, a promising young refugee pianist from Vienna.⁹¹ He recalled that

It wasn't done very decisively. If you got out of your house by 7 o'clock in the morning, you were safe—they would come between 7 and 8 in the morning, you knew this. So my piano teacher said, “Come to me and have breakfast,” so I left every morning at half past 6 and had breakfast there. I could have avoided it. But after some time, I got tired, and I thought, “well, why shouldn't they look after me?” [...] And there was one day a note, “Will you please stay in, so we can get you?” [He laughs] They were polite. So I stayed in, and they got me.⁹²

This ability to avoid imminent arrest is referenced in many other accounts. As Ronald Stent notes, those who lived in the

refugee belt of North-West London mostly had advance warning. Some of them were able to take evasive and sometimes successful action. It soon became known that the police never called between 5 pm and 7 am. People would therefore leave their homes or boarding houses at Cock's crow and sit around Lyons teashops or Corner Houses; some spent all night there, playing cards, wandered about in the Royal Parks or hidden in the recesses of the Hampstead or other public

Exile in Britain 1933–45: Politics and Cultural Identity, ed. Shulamith Behr and Marian Malet (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 31.

⁸⁹ Klaus E. Hinrichsen oral interview, Imperial War Museum (London, UK), Department of Sound Records, accession number 0037789/09. Sound recording on cassette tape, transcribed by author. Walter Bergmann, incidentally, was a continuo player and flutist who would eventually collaborate on Gál's *Huyton Suite*.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ Furth had converted to Catholicism while a youth in Vienna. While interned, he became acquainted with a group of Carthusian monks. After his release, he studied for seven years to become a Carthusian monk himself, before deciding his fate lay elsewhere. He later worked with Jean Piaget in Geneva, and ultimately became a renowned psychologist and Professor Emeritus at Catholic University in Washington, DC. Hans Furth, VHS tape, recorded 31 December 1990. Furth family collection, generously provided by children of Hans Furth. Special thanks to Peter Furth and David Walker for providing access to this videotape.

⁹² *Ibid.*

libraries until the witching hour of five o' clock had passed.⁹³

Gál was arrested in Edinburgh by a civilian police officer, and “given just enough time to pack the necessary things for a few days.”⁹⁴ Internees were not informed that they would be held indefinitely, and therefore they typically lacked adequate clothing or provisions of any sort. A certain “Dr. M. T.” who was interned in Huyton explained, “A great trouble was that we had been taken from our homes in such haste and under false pretenses so that we had nothing with us, neither change of clothes nor towels, handkerchiefs, etc. [...] Ninety percent of those who were interned together with me still wore the same dress and the same underwear they were in when they were (first) interned.”⁹⁵

From the local prison, internees were usually transferred in closed prison vans to various temporary holding places, before being sent to internment camps. In Gál's case, this temporary site was Donaldson Hospital in Edinburgh. Even though at this juncture Gál certainly must have been feeling very stressed and angry, his Viennese dry humor peeks through. “Outside,” he writes, “in the corner of the staircase, there is a large statue of Hygeia (the building was once a hospital), but to judge from the sanitary arrangements, Hygeia has long since given up her dominion.”⁹⁶ To make matters worse, there were already a few hundred German civilian prisoners from captured ships already being held in this hospital. Gál bitterly notices that these Germans, who are already settled in, manage the kitchen and dish out the food to the newly arrived prisoners. He says that the majority of these are benign individuals, but that “here and there some real Nazi faces, who greet us with sneering grins and evident satisfaction.”⁹⁷

From this temporary location Gál would then be sent to Huyton Camp.

2.5 Facilities, Conditions and Consequences

Many of the physical conditions in Huyton, which functioned as a “transit camp,” were completely inadequate at best. To understand the conditions which prevailed in Huyton when Gál arrived, one can consider the following description recounted by the aforementioned “Dr. M. T.”

⁹³ Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 135.

⁹⁴ Gál diary, 13 May 1940.

⁹⁵ William Ravenscoft Hughes, GEC report, 7 September 1940, Friends House Library unpublished archives (London, UK), Box 25.

⁹⁶ Gál diary, 13 May 1940.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

to Quaker relief worker William Ravenscroft Hughes.⁹⁸ Before his arrest and internment this gentleman had been appointed as a research fellow at the University of Hull.

On the way (to Huyton) we were addressed by the Lieutenant as “prisoners of war.” The manner in which we were marched through the villages was such that the onlookers must have had the impression that we were either prisoners of war or parachutists. As a matter of fact, I was asked by a lady “where I had jumped” which inquiry I answered, “from a bus.” While marching we sang to the tune of the British National Anthem, “We are refugees, thanks for your hospitality,” just in order to inform the onlookers that we had nothing to do with Hitlerism. The arrival at Huyton was without any doubt the most terrible during my whole internment period: You come to a site covered by little houses surrounded by barbed wire in a way that looked not only very ugly, but very formidable too [...] Then we were directed to our lodgings, small houses, completely empty, neglected and not suitable to be inhabited by human beings (dust and mud indicated they had not been used for many months). In spite of our fatigue we had to carry our luggage up the hill and there was nobody to help us. Then we had to get straw for our palliasses, but as there was not sufficient straw, a great many of us had to sleep on the filthy floor. The whole impression which I got from Huyton when I arrived was most depressing. The internees we met looked not like human beings. They were not shaved, dirty, their suits neglected and filthy. They were pale and thin and had a hopeless look in their eyes.⁹⁹

The “pale and thin” appearance of these internees is explained by Gál's description of the rations in Huyton. He says that

there is nothing to eat. The catering arrangements are in a desperate mess [...] We are constantly being put on half rations [...] there is still no real famine. But there is an atmosphere of hunger revolt in the camp, and the mess hall has acquired the nickname “Starvation Hall.”¹⁰⁰

This criticism of the conditions in Huyton is not unusual. Many of the physical conditions in the so-called “transit camps” (including Huyton, Lingfield, and Kempton) were insufferable, especially in the early and more chaotic days of internment. At the worst camps, such as Warth Mills in Bury, conditions were truly atrocious. Connery Chappell, in *Island of Barbed Wire*, described Warth Mills as

almost certainly the worst of them all. The main building had a broken glass roof and rotting floors and was rat infested. There was virtually no furniture; meals had to be eaten standing up. It was alleged that it housed 2000 men with 500 others camping in the hall. Living conditions were extremely primitive; the toilets were buckets, the medical facilities were woefully inadequate.¹⁰¹

Hughes remarked in his 10 July 1940 report that “This camp (Wharf Mills at Bury) is

⁹⁸ Quaker relief worker William Ravenscroft Hughes is profiled below.

⁹⁹ Testimony of “Dr. M. T.,” as recounted by William Ravenscroft Hughes, GEC report, 7 September 1940, Friends House Library unpublished archives (London, UK), Box 25.

¹⁰⁰ Gál diary, 22 May 1940.

¹⁰¹ Chappell, *Island of Barbed Wire*, 36.

certainly the worse than any I have seen. I feel pretty sure that any responsible person visiting at this time would share my conviction that it should be closed at once.”¹⁰² At the end of this same report he writes

An interesting incident occurred when a man stopped me and said “I saw you at Sachsenburg Camp.” This was true [...] Many of these interned men have been in German camps. Several had said to me that the physical conditions in Dachau were better than in Bury. Having seen both, I agreed, but we also agreed, “Die Leute sind ganz anders, Gott sei dank!” (The people are wholly different, thank G-d!)¹⁰³

Another rather surreal connection to Dachau could be found in the “ornamental gardens” of the British internment camps. These gardens were actually modeled on the gardens that Hughes had earlier observed in Dachau. Hughes then later suggested these ornamental rock gardens to the British authorities as a physical improvement for the British camps, a suggestion which, chillingly, was apparently implemented.¹⁰⁴ It should be further remembered that the vast majority of the internees made to suffer these inhumane conditions in Wharf Mills were Class C refugees—those posing no risk whatsoever.

The Commandant of each camp seems to have had considerable latitude in the exercise of power. They could effectively make the best out of a bad situation or alternatively, make life for “his” internees especially miserable. The suffering of internees due to the camps’ physical conditions was often compounded by the neglect and sometimes outright hostility of camp administrators. Gál writes on 26 May 1940 that

Plans are already afoot to establish a camp university. But there is initially opposition from above to everything. It is not allowed for more than ten people to assemble in one room. There are no books, no instruments or apparatus, not even blackboards and chalk. Whatever is suggested to our fat Captain, the answer is “impossible.” He finds things difficult enough as it is, and avoids anything that could create complications. But everything that is not foreseen in his “regulations” creates complications.¹⁰⁵

Gál also recounts that Huyton's Captain Tanner even

went around and confiscated musical instruments; he simply snatched the instrument out of the hand of one youth who was sitting on a straw sack playing his clarinet, from another he took a

¹⁰² William Ravenscroft Hughes, GEC report, 10 July 1940, Friends House Library unpublished archives (London, UK), Box 25.

¹⁰³ Ibid. Author’s note: for observant Jews, it is customary to avoid representations of “G-d,” including the spelled word, therefore the hyphen is utilised here.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Gál diary, 26 May 1940.

flute and from a third a concertina. Today he took an umbrella—it was pouring rain at the time—from an internee. It is hard to work out what is in his mind. The most plausible explanation is that he is inebriated.¹⁰⁶

Many years later, in a 1979 interview, Gál's frustration was still evident. When asked about his attitude towards being interned, Gál replied, "well, I've always been... [he pauses, searching for just the right word] *allergic* to stupidity, and I found it immeasurably stupid to arrest the best enemies of Hitler—this is all I can say."¹⁰⁷

A brief discussion of Hutchinson, one of the "better camps," will serve to better contextualize the situation at Central Camp, where Gál and many of the musicians were held. Conditions at Hutchinson, which opened on 13 July 1940, were often considered to be the "best" of the camps. One reason for this was that Hutchinson appears to simply have been less crowded than Central.¹⁰⁸ Instead of being located directly on limited beachfront space, it was located high up on a hill, which allowed a view of the Irish Sea. Hutchinson also boasted a quadrangle area in the centre of the camp which was a naturally suitable location for outdoor classes, concerts, and lectures.

Another reason for the better conditions at Hutchinson Camp was the efforts of its Commander, Captain Hubert Owen Daniel, remembered by many former Hutchinson internees as a fair minded, decent man.¹⁰⁹ A loudspeaker system installed by the internees themselves (members of the "camp technical school") allowed Daniel to address everyone simultaneously. This made communications and overall life better organised. Daniel also arranged for football games to be played against other "camp teams" by the end of 1940, with "carabanches" or buses, provided to transport "home team" enthusiasts—or perhaps people just seeking an opportunity to get out of the camp—to "away" games.¹¹⁰ According to Ronald Stent, one of Daniel's ambitions

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Hans Gál interview, Imperial War Museum (London, UK), Department of Sound Records, accession number 4304. Sound recording on cassette tape, transcribed by author. It is ironic that Gál chooses the word "allergic," since he suffered from a severe eczema during his internment, severe enough to require hospitalization and an early release under a medical hardship category; the doctor treating him in the camp also often referred to Gál as "a real allergic."

¹⁰⁸ See Stent, Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 158.

¹⁰⁹ Numerous oral history accounts are also available at the Imperial War Museum, London (for example, see Klaus E. Hinrichsen's interview, IWM Sound Records accession number 0037789/09, or Helmut Weissenborn's interview, IWM accession number 003771/04). Biographical information based on "Free BMD" (free online registry service provided by Office of National Statistics, England and Wales), <http://freebmd.rootsweb.com/> (accessed 14 June 2010). On Daniel see also Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 163.

¹¹⁰ Michael Corvin, "Sports and Entertainment," issue 1/2 of *The Camp*, Hutchinson Camp paper, Manx Museum, Douglas, UK.

“was that Hutchinson should beat (the camp at) Peel on the football pitch.”¹¹¹ Furthermore, a large hall was opened on Christmas Day, 1940, which could be heated during the cold winter months. This hall was used not only for concerts and lectures but also for table tennis, a table for which arrived early in 1941.¹¹² There were even weekly visits to the cinema. As Hutchinson was not closed until the spring of 1944—other camps, including Central, Sefton, Onchan, Huyton, Wharf’s Mill, and Prees Heath had long been shut down—there was more time for physical improvements such as these to be implemented.¹¹³

As early as September 1940, Quaker relief worker William Ravenscroft Hughes was writing in his reports about the exceptional educational efforts being made in Hutchinson by the internees themselves. The internee population of Hutchinson was famously academic: at one point there were reportedly thirty professors and lecturers.¹¹⁴ They were an enterprising group and they were also fortunate in having a sympathetic Commandant. By the fourth day of the camp’s existence there was already an organising committee of thirteen men, led by architect Bruno Ahrends, which arranged the first public lecture in the camp. In the combined 13th/14th issue of the Hutchinson Camp paper, *The Camp*, it was noted that there had been 600 lectures given, in addition to study groups and classes.¹¹⁵ Conditions were widely acknowledged as humane at this particular camp, and this undoubtedly was a factor which led to a rich cultural community life. As Hellmut Weissenborn, an accomplished visual artist interned there, recalled, “the accommodation was decent, clean and appropriate. The food could have been all right if you worked for it.”¹¹⁶

In contrast, Central Camp was comprised of thirty-four extremely overcrowded beachfront houses which held about two thousand internees. Shifting between states of disorganisation, administrative apathy, and sheer hostility, the administration did not facilitate concerts here as did the administration of nearby Hutchinson Camp. Daily life could be fairly characterised as quite difficult. A relief worker observed, “I obtained the impression that Central Promenade is the least well organized and the Commandant and Adjutant strict and

¹¹¹ Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 163.

¹¹² Klaus E. Hinrichsen, “Cultural Highlights,” in *The Camp*, 13/14 issue, 11, Manx Museum, Douglas, UK.

¹¹³ *The Camp*, issue 14, 28 July 1941, 1, Manx Museum, Douglas, UK. See also Chappell, *Island of Barbed Wire*, 117.

¹¹⁴ Chappell, *Island of Barbed Wire*, 63.

¹¹⁵ *The Camp*, combined issue 13/14, Manx Museum, Douglas, UK.

¹¹⁶ Helmut Weissenborn interview, Imperial War Museum (London, UK), Department of Sound Records, accession number 003771/04. Sound recording on cassette tape, transcribed by author.

unsympathetic.”¹¹⁷ Even a relatively simple gesture on the part of the administration, the allowance of a camp newspaper, was at first refused.¹¹⁸ As Gál described it,

From that first day onwards, there have been the same problems as in Huyton; the suspicious reserve towards the enemy aliens that first one has to overcome before one can expect understanding and helpfulness, and the incredible organisational incompetence in the face of the task of looking after two thousand people.¹¹⁹

Even in Hutchinson there were inherently unpleasant features of internment. First, there was the obtrusive barbed wire, which sometimes contributed to what was commonly known as “barbed wire sickness.”¹²⁰ Gál realized

how pathologically our perspective has shifted, how terribly inflated this barbed wire has become in our consciousness. Being imprisoned means much more than the loss of physical freedom; it means a clamp around the brain, a pressure that does not leave one, even in one's dreams.¹²¹

The very absence of freedom was, not surprisingly, the most intolerable feature of internment for many artists, including musicians Hans Gál and Egon Wellesz and sixteen visual artists (including the aforementioned Weissenborn). This group of visual artists from Hutchinson wrote a joint letter in August 1940 to the *New Statesman* newspaper, which read in part

Art cannot live behind barbed wire, whatever attractive picture is painted by some newspapers. We came to England because we saw in her the last bulwark, the last hope for democracy in Europe. We are asking our British colleagues and friends and all who are interested in art to help us obtain our freedom again.¹²²

There were widespread physical deprivations in nearly all of these camps. Access to water for bathing was one such issue.¹²³ As Gál coolly noted in his diary on 16 May, when he

¹¹⁷ William Ravenscroft Hughes, report dated 2 October 1940, Friends House Library unpublished archives (London, UK).

¹¹⁸ Gál diary, 15 July 1940.

¹¹⁹ Gál diary, 8 June 1940.

¹²⁰ Panikos Panayi, “Prisoners of Britain: German Civilian, Military and Naval Internees during the First World War,” in *Totally Un-English? Britain's Internment of 'Enemy Aliens' in Two World Wars*, ed. Richard Dove (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 37.

¹²¹ Gál diary, 5 July 1940.

¹²² Ernst M. Blensdorf, Siegfried Charoux, George Ehrlich, Paul Hamann, Hermann Feschenbach, Carl Felkel, Erich Kahn, Fritz Kraemer, Herbert Mankiewicz, Hermann Roessler, Fred Salomonski, Ernst Schwitters, Kurt Schwitters, Erich E. Stern, Fred Uhlmann and Hellmuth Weissenborn, joint letter to the editor, *The New Statesman and Nation*, 28 August 1940. Quoted in Klaus E. Hinrichsen, “Visual Art Behind the Wire,” in *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain*, ed. David Cesarani and Tony Kushner (London: Frank Cass and Company, 1993), 188. Also see Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 169.

¹²³ According to a relief report dated 31 July 1940, “There are hardly any baths or showers up to now and there is no hot water. Most of the internees have not had a bath for many weeks.” Wilfred Israel, Friends House Library

was still at Huyton, “we have three washrooms with two sinks and one toilet for over a hundred people, that's tight.” In fact, Gál had his first bath in internment only after three (hot summer) months, when he was issued a doctor’s note that was necessary to obtain a bath in Central.

In Central's first days, as at Huyton, food was also limited. Of his first meals in Central, cellist Fritz Ball writes

I can hardly follow the gentlemen from Vienna because of their dialect. But their conversation is very interesting. They talk about the Viennese Opera where the conductor worked [...] (and) about Viennese *Konzertleben*. The banker from Berlin knows a lot of people whom I know and he is also interested in Art and Literature, and so we forget in the first few days that we are leaving the table as hungry as when we sat down.¹²⁴

Rampant overcrowding was also a serious issue. A relief worker observed that

In all the men’s camps the prison like precautions are very obtrusive, a high double fence of barbed wire and sentries with fixed bayonets. This method of enclosure is quite inconsistent with the conception of friendly aliens, and has a most depressing effect [...] At Hutchinson, this effect is somewhat mitigated by the fact that there is some room to move about [...] but the five camps along the sea front at Douglas are little better than large cages.¹²⁵

Further, most of the internees suffered acutely from the awareness that they were being made helpless at the very time that the need to resist the Nazi regime was most urgent. The irony was that while the refugees were amongst the earliest and most unequivocal opponents of Hitler, they were now being looked upon as suspect by the very country which had offered them refuge. Further, they were being made completely useless in internment rather than being put to use in the war effort, which was after all, very much *their* war. That the internees were being prevented from joining in the fight for their own survival is a constant raw nerve throughout the literature.

Lack of privacy in these camps, even in Hutchinson, was absolute. When Gál began to write the *Huyton Suite* he observed, “I have found a patch of shade in the green area on one of the camp sites, where I am reasonably undisturbed; the nearest card-players settled on the grass leave me a space of perhaps two meters in diameter. For us that is so much that it almost borders

unpublished archives (London, UK), box 25.

¹²⁴ All Ball memoir excerpts, including English translations, have been generously provided by Sandra Ball. These transcriptions are approximate and have been adjusted here for syntax and spelling. This unpublished memoir, entitled “Dreimal interniert 1933 – 1948 in Deutschland und England” was given to Ms. Ball in 2009, along with the cello that Ball played in Central. After internment Dr. Fritz Ball and his family immigrated to the United States. Special thanks to Ms. Ball for allowing access to quotes from that memoir, and for all of her assistance.

¹²⁵ These “five camps along the sea front” included Central. Anonymous Friends visitor report, 28 October–2 November 1941, Friends House Library unpublished archives (London, UK), box 25.

on privacy.”¹²⁶ Men were typically forced, from lack of space, to also share two to a bed. This expectation was even more awkward for these internees than it might already appear to modern North American readers—within this era of Continental culture, even married couples did not routinely sleep in the same bed. As art historian Klaus E. Hinrichsen later remembered, “A very unpleasant surprise was that all the rooms had double beds. Now people who had practically never met before [...] cannot be asked to share a double bed [...] most houses solved the problem by taking off the mattresses [i.e. put them on the floor] but then there was very little room to move and you had to climb over people.”¹²⁷

There was a notorious lack of understanding of the Continental political reality by the whole of the British administration, from officer down to foot soldier. As refugee advocate Margery Corbett Ashby would lament in 1941,

Almost without exception, the men and women in authority (on the Isle of Man) have, in fact, no knowledge of Continental politics, and the effect of this ignorance and misunderstanding has on the men and women under their charge, who have endured so much and so long for conscience sake, is embittering and deeply depressing.¹²⁸

Nazis were not separated from refugees in these camps, despite the determinations made by the 1939 tribunals. As Gál observes, “When it is now explained that it is difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff and for security reasons the innocent must suffer along with the guilty, one can only respond that it was after all unnecessary to mix the wheat and chaff together in the first place.”¹²⁹ There were estimated to be between 5 and 15 percent Nazis amongst the Central population. As Margery Corbett Ashby described the problem,

Rather inadequate division of Nazis and Fascists from Anti-Nazis and Anti- Fascists has been attempted [...] As releases increase the proportion of remaining anti-Nazis to Nazis is reduced. They have again and again been victims of Nazi propaganda, and now, with their own leaders released and with no moral support from their British officers, their situation is increasingly depressing and helpless.¹³⁰

Importantly, there were reported to be about 150 Nazi concentration camp survivors in

¹²⁶ Gál diary, 4 June 1940.

¹²⁷ Hinrichsen interview, Imperial War Museum (London, UK), Department of Sound Records, accession number 0037789/09. Sound recording on cassette tape, transcribed by author.

¹²⁸ Report written by Margery Corbett Ashby, 5 March 1941; she will be discussed in greater detail below.

¹²⁹ Gál diary, 26 May 1940.

¹³⁰ Margery Corbett Ashby, 5 March 1941 visitors report, Friends House Library unpublished archives (London, UK), Box 25.

Central Camp.¹³¹ Among these was the cellist Fritz Ball. According to Gál, Dr. Ball was a “distinguished law officer and must have been an excellent cellist. His right hand became almost useless in a German concentration camp through frost bite, the fingers are crooked and incapable of gripping anything.”¹³² Despite this, Ball relearned how to play his cello after his release from Sachsenhausen, and Gál viewed Ball as a valued member of Central’s chamber music life.

Gál criticises the predominant attitude of the camp administration, saying

[t]here is, as mentioned, certainly no evil intention behind such events; but I find the inconsiderate, insensitive, thoughtless negligence with which such things are regulated by a Commandant who is responsible for two thousand men worse than deliberate malice. Anyone who does wicked things still has occasional scruples. But these people are of a mind blowing complacency which excludes any feeling that they could be wrong. A principle that, in all objectivity and sobriety, degrades people to cattle, whose feelings one doesn’t consider, for cattle are not supposed to have feelings—such a principle that has seemingly been applied for centuries to people with fewer rights—namely non Britons—makes comprehensible all the hatred that has developed towards this outwardly friendly nation everywhere when one has had to get to know them from this side.¹³³

Additionally, negative impacts were often significant and long term in their effects, even if this was not immediately apparent. Families of those interned were often negatively affected at a very deep level. Suicide, death from illnesses or accidents, interruption of employment and derailed careers, clinical depression, mental breakdowns, divorce and familial estrangement all can be included in these serious negative effects. One case of suicide was detailed by Eleanor Rathbone in her opening statement to a debate in Parliament on 10 July 1940. She stated

[There is] the case of a man who was a professor of chemistry for 23 years at a German university. He is 62 years old. He is an international authority on dyestuffs, and at this very moment his book on that subject is being translated by Harvard University. He was kept in Germany so that other countries could not profit by his knowledge; he was thrown into the most brutal concentration camp, suffered tortures for 17 days, and finally, when he was released, came to this country. He was permitted to do research work with a research grant, and for the last year has been employed by a company where he has been developing a process for utilising sisal waste, particularly for use in submarines. Is that work of national importance?

His firm applied to the Home Office for an exemption. A week ago the police called at his flat, he showed them his application to the Home Office, he asked them to wait until that application had been investigated; they refused, and told him that they would come back shortly. He warned them

¹³¹ Hansard report, House of Lords Debate, 6 August 1940, vol. 117 col. 123, <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1940/aug/06/internment-of-aliens> (accessed 17 July 2009).

¹³² Gál diary 5 July 1940. Gál continues, “It is a mystery how he can use the bow, but he manages it, although he is restricted and technical things can easily go wrong.”

¹³³ Gál diary, 2 July 1940.

that he could not endure another internment. They came back in two hours, but he had escaped from the stupidity and the malice of others—he had taken a quick poison.¹³⁴

One teenaged internee's account mentions both suicide and suicidal ideation. Both his tone, as well as the frequency with which he raises the issue of suicide, makes this level of desperation sound commonplace, at least in Huyton Camp in the early days of internment. Gerald M. Friedman's internment diary, written while he was held in Huyton Camp, simply notes, "Friday 5 July 1940. Two people hung themselves, one on Wednesday and then one today. Very bad lavatories."¹³⁵ He later mentions, within the same diary entry, "My tent mate, a jolly fellow (a good harmonic (sic) player) wants to commit suicide. His mother is a crippled woman who lives in London. Papers to be transferred from Vienna take six months now so he is very desperate." Only a few days later, on 8 July 1940, he writes, "One boy who was supposed to be sent overseas poisoned himself today, but he did not die. On Sunday one person cut his throat. Nobody takes any notice of that. Not even the papers get to know that."¹³⁶

Friedman offers a more detailed account of another suicide in Central Camp on 1 November 1940.

A Man (sic) had just committed suicide by throwing himself out the window. He was a young person of thirty years, with wife and children, a rich person. He was the owner of several shops in London [...] He was an Orthodox Jew, who lived all his life in England, but was born in Germany. His application for release was refused yesterday. He had just seen his wife yesterday when he went with the others to Port Erin. He jumped out of his window into the stony backyard. His skull and head were completely smashed, and his features could not be recognized. He was brought to the hospital with his head covered.¹³⁷

An old family friend of Gál's, the painter Arthur Paunzen, needlessly died in internment. The medical cause of his death was bronchial pneumonia, a death which might have been prevented by a speedy transfer to a hospital which could provide proper treatment. Gál was deeply saddened by Paunzen's death, and opines that "Murder has been committed on this man. We shall never be able to prove it in legal terms, but we know it: a murder, committed through

¹³⁴ Hansard report, House of Commons Debate, 10 July 1940, vol. 362, cc. 1208-306. Also see Norman Bentwich, *The Rescue and Achievement of Refugee Scholars: The Story of Displaced Scholars and Scientists 1933–1952* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1953), 30.

¹³⁵ Gerald M. Friedman, "'You Bloody Alien!' Part One: A Diary of a German Jewish Survivor in British Custody in World War II," 5 July 1940 diary entry. <http://www.geraldfriedman.com/> (accessed 2 August 2010), hereafter identified as "Friedman diary."

¹³⁶ *Ibid.* Both depression and suicide were serious problems in all of these internment camps, including the women's camps, such as Port Erin on the Isle of Man. The first suicide case of 1941 in Port Erin was a 48-year old female German internee who took her own life. See Chappell, *Island of Barbed Wire*, 86.

¹³⁷ Friedman diary, 1 November 1940.

thoughtless, heartless inertia.”¹³⁸

These serious negative effects on the individual level are embodied in well-documented scandals on a societal scale, such as the aforementioned infamous *Arandora Star* episode. Similarly, the serious abuses which occurred on other internee deportations, most infamously on the *Dunera*, a ship carrying internees bound for Australia in the summer of 1940, have become well known.¹³⁹ As has already been noted, the shifting of British public opinion and the eventual reversal of British internment policy in the late summer of 1940 is often attributed to the publicity of the terrible human loss that came with the sinking of the *Arandora Star*.¹⁴⁰

Incidentally, when deportations were being arranged from the British internment camps, the British camp administration attempted to entice internees, with promises of employment opportunities and reunion with their wives, to volunteer to go to Canada.¹⁴¹ Not knowing what future lay ahead for them in Britain, some decided to volunteer. Regarding this situation, Hans Gál wrote, “I mistrust (this) whole Canadian business. No country has been as utterly hostile to immigrants as Canada; I fear that those who are counting on relative freedom and employment possibilities there will be very disappointed.”¹⁴²

2.6 Visitors and Advocates

It was fortunate for these prisoners that visitors were allowed into these camps, as conditions seemed to improve in direct response to early relief worker visits which occurred in early July 1940. Amongst the first visitors to Huyton Camp and the camps on the Isle of Man were William Ravenscroft Hughes and Wilfred Israel.¹⁴³

Some of the most frequent visitors to the camps were members of the Religious Society of Friends (more popularly known as “Quakers”). Though Quakers were (and today remain) a tiny proportion of the overall British population, they played a major role in camp relief work.

¹³⁸ Gál diary, 9 August 1940.

¹³⁹ Internees were subjected to beatings, constant threats and verbal abuse. Their property was also stolen by some of the British soldiers on board. The physical conditions on board only worsened as the fifty-five day trip unfolded. See Terri Colpi, “The Impact of the Second World War on the British Italian Community,” 181.

¹⁴⁰ Louise London, *Whitehall and the Jews: 1933–1948*, 170–171; see also J. M. Ritchie, *German Exiles: British Perspectives* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 24–25.

¹⁴¹ Gál diary, 20 July 1940.

¹⁴² Gál diary, 2 July 1940.

¹⁴³ Naomi Shepard, *Wilfred Israel* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984), 174.

Their motivation was based on a central religious belief in the intrinsic sacredness of every human being. This underlying premise—“there is that of G-d in everyone”—fueled their work on behalf of the refugees. This motivation, coupled with a traditional concern for prison conditions, led to the formation in 1933 of the “Germany Emergency Committee,” or GEC.¹⁴⁴ William Ravenscroft Hughes (1880–1966) was one such British Quaker who was very proactive in internee as well as prisoner of war relief work; he had spent three years working amongst internees during the Great War of 1914–1918. Hughes, not unlike many Quakers, was to become deeply engaged politically.¹⁴⁵ In 1940, Hughes became a “convinced Friend,” meaning that rather than being born into the Society, he joined for compelling reasons of conscience and belief (in his case, at the age of 60).¹⁴⁶ By this time, Hughes was wholly engaged with the GEC, and had been appointed by the War Office to act as a liaison officer to visit the internees on the Isle of Man. By July 1940, he had become very familiar with all five men’s camps in Douglas on the Isle of Man.

By mid-summer it was clear to the Society of Friends that there was a need for a voluntary resident worker who could act as a “friendly liaison between the men, the camp officials and the welfare organisations, and take a special interest in work and occupations.”¹⁴⁷ Hughes stepped in to fill this role, and relocated, along with his family, to Douglas in the autumn of 1940. Hughes knew from his work during the Great War that one of the biggest challenges internees faced was lack of meaningful work. As he noted from his second visit, reported in July 1940, “The leaders among the internees are living very strenuous and busy lives, but the rank and file are already suffering from the effects of lack of occupation.”¹⁴⁸ Though he had officially sanctioned access to all the camps, he was most closely involved with the German and Austrian internees, rather than with the Italian, since there had already been a special committee (the Italian Internees Aid Committee) set up to address their needs. The pragmatic fact that he was

¹⁴⁴ There were numerous assisting organisations for refugees; the “Refugee Joint Consultative Committee” worked to coordinate all the various organisations. See J. M. Ritchie, “Refugees from Nazism,” in *German Exiles: British Perspectives* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 8–29.

¹⁴⁵ For Hughes, this activism led to his support of several socially minded Utopian projects. One extensive project, which fell through from an apparent lack of sufficient funds, ultimately called for an altogether new society based on quasi-communal living, progressive values and an agrarian setting; this new society was intended to heal pervasive post-World War II wounds. See Dennis Hardy, *Utopian England: Community Experiments 1900–1945* (London: Routledge, 2000), 84–87.

¹⁴⁶ Friends House head librarian Joseph Keith, e-mail message to author, 30 May 2008.

¹⁴⁷ Lawrence Darton, “Friends Committee on Refugees,” unpublished report at Friends House Library (London UK) (undated), 82.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

fluent in German, coupled with his experience during the Great War, must naturally have led to his closer involvement with the German speaking population as well.

Many of the internees desired lectures in English, especially on topics such as British social customs, British history, and the English language itself. On a practical level it was clear why learning English was so urgent. It was decided that the camp paper for Hutchinson, for example, be produced in English. As Hinrichsen later reflected, “It would be a bad idea, really, to go on speaking and using German if you claimed to the War Office and the Home Office that you considered yourself prospective Englishmen and people who were fighting the Germans.”¹⁴⁹ Another example of the effort to learn and use English was the fact that the *What a Life!* revue, presented relatively early during internment (late September 1940), was entirely bilingual.¹⁵⁰ Some Central Camp concert programmes, including that for *What a Life!*, were printed entirely in English. Interestingly, extant concert programmes intended for the holidays or given just prior to them (dated 21, 22, 24, 25, 26 and 31 December 1940) were, by contrast, written only in German. Perhaps this was a subconscious part of “letting loose” for the Christmas and New Year holidays, which a majority of these internees seem to have observed.¹⁵¹ This desire to learn about the British way of life and acculturate to it is also poignant, considering their imprisonment. The relief worker Hughes offered some lectures on English topics himself. Other sympathetic members of the clergy, such as Mr. Sheppard, a Manx vicar, volunteered as well.¹⁵²

Based on personal interviews with more than a thousand men, and his personal experience in close proximity to the camps, Hughes was able to develop a very comprehensive view of camp life in his written reports, and these reports were passed along to the Home Office of the British government. As Hughes himself humbly put it, he was able, by virtue of his position, “to push things along a little here and there.”¹⁵³

There were many relief workers and advocates for the internees outside of the Society of Friends. One such prominent advocate was Dame Margery Corbett Ashby (1882–1981). Born to

¹⁴⁹ Hinrichsen interview, Imperial War Museum (London, UK), sound records, accession file 003789/09. Sound recording on cassette tape, transcribed by author.

¹⁵⁰ Another reason for this was the fact that the revue was intended for an audience comprised of both English speakers (Camp administration and British soldiers) as well as the German speaking internee population.

¹⁵¹ The concert programme for the *What A Life!* revue was provided by the Gál family to the author; all of the other concert programmes were generously provided to the author by the Reizenstein family. In March 2010, these Reizenstein related concert programmes were discovered in a box of assorted personal papers. These papers, which were recently given to Franz Reizenstein’s son, remain unpublished.

¹⁵² Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 175.

¹⁵³ William Ravenscroft Hughes, Friends House library unpublished archives (London, UK), Box 25.

politically active and progressive parents in Danehill (UK), Corbett Ashby was motivated from a young age to work on behalf of the vulnerable and less fortunate. Her parents were both active in the suffrage movement, which was perceived as a radical stance during that era. Corbett Ashby became very active in politics while a student at Cambridge, where she completed her studies in 1904.¹⁵⁴ By 1907 Corbett Ashby became the secretary of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, as well as the editor of the political journal *The Common Cause*. During World War I Corbett Ashby worked in hospitals and managed a food service for local children in need. After World War I and the successful passage of the Qualification of Women (Voting) Act of 1918, she ran for political office on a then radical platform of full equality for women (she was unsuccessful in this bid for a seat). At the Versailles Peace Conference of 1919, Corbett Ashby nevertheless served as a representative for the International Alliance of Women. By 1932 she had been appointed to represent Britain at the Geneva Disarmament Conference. Corbett Ashby's extensive previous political experience quite naturally led to her involvement on behalf of the refugees in 1940; it is not surprising that she would become deeply involved with monitoring the conditions in the camps. On reading her reports on this subject, which were written for the GEC and shared with the Home Office, one can easily sense her moral outrage, despite her politely worded and carefully measured tone.

Eleanor Rathbone (1872–1946), popularly known as the “MP for Refugees,” was deeply concerned with refugee issues from her vantage point as an Independent MP. Gál recalled her in a 1979 interview, and credited her with the “start of an improvement” for the internees, saying there was a “courageous person in the House of Commons—Eleanor Rathbone—she was from Oxford.”¹⁵⁵ While many of her compatriots were still arguing for a policy of appeasement, Rathbone had realized the serious dangers posed by Hitler and Nazism; hers was an early and strong voice of opposition to British appeasement policy. Later she became a persistent and critical voice of the mass internment of refugees, forcefully leading the 10 July 1940 debate on this issue in the House of Commons.¹⁵⁶ Word of this critically important debate reached the internees in Central when they were finally allowed access to newspapers. Gál writes

¹⁵⁴ Hughes Hall of Cambridge, “History of Hughes Hall,”

http://www.hughes.cam.ac.uk/?section=about&page=history_of_hughes (accessed 13 August 2010).

¹⁵⁵ Hans Gál interview, Imperial War Museum Department of Sound Records, accession file 4304. Sound recording on cassette tape, transcribed by the author.

¹⁵⁶ Hansard report, House of Commons Debate, 10 July 1940, vol. 362, cc. 1208-306.

From today [15 July 1940] every house will receive a copy of the most widely available popular London papers. There is a scramble for it, whole bunches of people sit and stand around the lucky man who first gets his hands on one; it is read out aloud, translated, debated.

We had already previously learnt about the most important event for us from a stray page of a newspaper: on the tenth of July a great debate took place in the House of Commons in which the internment question was discussed in detail for several hours. Speeches were made in which the injustice perpetrated on the refugees was openly described and condemned.¹⁵⁷

Rathbone was one of the leading speakers in this Parliamentary debate. Today she is widely honoured, with her image featured on a British stamp. During her lifetime, she was an outspoken critic of many social issues which were controversial in her day.¹⁵⁸ Rathbone's primary motivation in all of her extensive political and social work was her unwavering belief in personal accountability. As biographer Johanna Alberti has noted, Rathbone's 26 October 1945 speech in the House of Commons reflects this ethos.¹⁵⁹ In this speech Rathbone stated, "that all responsibility is individual responsibility, that everyone in the world is responsible for every calamity that happens in the world."¹⁶⁰

Such an intensely felt need for action was shared by refugee advocate and visitor to the internment camps, Wilfred Israel (1899–1943). Israel said of himself, in a November 1939 letter to a friend, that he "felt the burden of his time too ardently."¹⁶¹ Born to a British mother and a German father, Israel was born in Britain but grew up in Berlin. He had, in fact, known William Hughes from his earlier days in Berlin. Active in efforts to secure emigration for endangered German Jews, he left Berlin only at the very last possible moment (late August 1939). He was flawlessly bilingual and intimately knowledgeable about both cultures, thus he was well situated to serve as an intermediary between the refugees and the British political establishment. Israel became a very prominent figure within the Jewish community; because he studiously eschewed public attention, however, he remains a highly enigmatic figure despite his critically important and courageous role during the *Shoah*.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ Gál diary, 15 July 1940.

¹⁵⁸ For example, Rathbone was largely responsible for the implementation of the "Family Allowances Act," which was a milestone in British social policy. This was the first law in Britain to provide a "social security" payment for child benefit. This Act was finally passed by Parliament in 1945, the year before Rathbone's death. See Johanna Alberti, *Eleanor Rathbone* (London: SAGE Publications, 1996), 141.

¹⁵⁹ Alberti, *Eleanor Rathbone*, 153.

¹⁶⁰ Hansard report, House of Commons Debate, 26 October 1945, vol. 415, cc. 2417. Also available at <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1945/oct/26/conditions-in-europe> (accessed 13 August 2010).

¹⁶¹ Naomi Shepard, *Wilfred Israel*, 11.

¹⁶² There are various explanations given for this reticence, beyond sheer personality. There is inconclusive evidence that Israel might have worked for British intelligence; this would be an obvious possible cause for secrecy.

After *Kristallnacht*, and from his residence in Berlin, Israel became one of the driving forces behind the establishment of the *Kindertransport* programme.¹⁶³ Later, in Britain, he became one of the founding members of the Association of Jewish Refugees, the leading self-help organization for refugees within Britain of that era (the AJR, as it is also known, is still in existence today). As one of the nine executive members, a balance of perspectives was obviously intended: three were Orthodox, three were “Liberal” and the remaining three were Zionists. The common thread which held these disparate groups together was, beyond sheer Jewish identity, was the ambition to “represent all the Jewish refugees from Germany for whom Judaism was a determining factor in their outlook in life.”¹⁶⁴

Israel’s work with the internees was from a unique vantage point, founded on this bi-national identity and his Jewish background. According to Vera Craig, the former Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee for Refugees, he was closer to the refugees than any Englishman, but understood the British mindset better than the Germans.¹⁶⁵ Tellingly, Israel felt that his work on behalf of the internees was “more thankless, and more painful” than any other work he ever had to undertake. Certainly this advocacy work placed Israel in a precariously balanced position. Interned refugees vented their frustration at him as a representative of Bloomsbury House, while the official Jewish leadership in Britain, afraid of both the appearance of divided loyalties and inflaming latent anti-semitism, was reluctant to openly criticise internment policy. The extensive reports written by both Israel and Hughes, dating from the beginning of July 1940, prompted later visits by concerned MPs, including Eleanor Rathbone, as well as members of the clergy such as Bishop Bell of Chichester. These early reports, far from merely “pushing things along a little here and there,” as Hughes so modestly put it, actually appears to have been the spark that ignited the critical debate in the House on 10 July 1940.¹⁶⁶

Furthermore, Israel was a homosexual in a culture and during an era where this fact was totally unacceptable. It is therefore possible that his secretiveness was due at least in part to a fear of discovery. This is particularly possible given that his elder brother Hermann, in disgrace over a homosexual scandal, tragically committed suicide. See *ibid.*, 4–5, 55–56, 130.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 146–149. *Kindertransport* was the name given to the large scale multi-faith rescue programme, established to rescue Jewish children. This became especially urgent after *Kristallnacht* (9–10 November 1938). The Kindertransport Association, “History,” http://www.kindertransport.org/history03_rising.htm (accessed 15 July 2010).

¹⁶⁴ From Ronald Stent, “Jewish Refugee Organisations,” in *Second Chances: Two Centuries of German Speaking Jews in the United Kingdom*, coordinating ed. Werner E. Mosse (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1991), 596.

¹⁶⁵ The biographical material in this paragraph is derived from Shepard, *Wilfred Israel*, 174

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Ultimately, Israel's life and work was cut short. On 1 June 1943, while returning from a rescue mission to help Jewish children who had been stranded in Portugal, the (civilian) plane in which he had been traveling was shot down by the Germans.¹⁶⁷

2.7 Art as Advantage

Although lack of meaningful occupation was usually the primary psychological challenge for internees, artists in general were able to continue with their work even if in far less than optimal circumstances. In this respect they had a distinct psychological advantage over other internees.

Gál's musical activities were both a stabilising presence in his highly uncertain life during internment, as well as a vital source of spiritual strength.¹⁶⁸ This was true for a striking number of internees, concert attendees, amateur music makers, and professional musicians alike. Years later, Professor Hellmut Weissenborn, a leading Hutchinson Camp visual artist, after briefly describing the food and housing, pointed out, "But, of course, the spiritual nourishment—that had to be created by ourselves [...] There were a few not very exciting pianos in one of the houses and soon some of our inmates started to make the concerts." He goes on to discuss the various musicians and concerts in the camp. Interestingly, this mental association of music with "spiritual nourishment," noted first before all other possible things, potently comes from a visual artist.¹⁶⁹ As the camp paper from Onchan Camp on the Isle of Man, the *Onchan Pioneer*, put it,

Many friends from the first weeks and months of internment will remember how the lack of musical inspiration made itself more and more urgently felt. Those of us who passed through Kempton Park and Wharf Mills were longing for a short song, as a thirsty man longs for a drop of water. This was most instructive: it proved that music is not only a superfluous luxury of life, but also daily bread and essential "spiritual vitamins."¹⁷⁰

One of the many ironies of internment was that it inadvertently provided opportunities to

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 1. It still remains unclear whether Wilfred Israel was actually the intended target, or one of three other men aboard that plane, amongst them famous British actor Leslie Howard.

¹⁶⁸ See opening Gál quote in the Introduction to this document.

¹⁶⁹ Helmut Weissenborn interview, Imperial War Museum (London, UK), Department of Sound Records, accession number 003771/04. Sound recording on cassette tape, transcribed by the author.

¹⁷⁰ Dr. W. S., "Music in Internment," *Onchan Pioneer*, 19 Jan 1941. Onchan, as stated in Chapter I, was one of the many British administered internment camps on the Isle of Man. Kempton Park and Wharf Mills were essentially used as temporary transit camps, from where internees would be transferred to more permanent locations.

focus on one's artistic practice. This suspension of normal life led many internees to undertake projects that lay outside their usual realm of expertise, as there was ample time to experiment. Thus one finds Norbert Elias, a sociologist, writing poetic texts and Gál, the "serious" composer, writing music for a cabaret.¹⁷¹ In the same spirit, musician Maryan Ravitz, of the then-famous piano duo "Ravitz and Landauer," explored sculpture for the first time.¹⁷² One former internee later recalled that Ravitz similarly began to experiment musically: "for the first time in his life he learnt to play Bach, which was very interesting because Bach turned out to be played in the rhythms of a Viennese waltz, he couldn't help it."¹⁷³

Internment meant that artists were also free from the often considerable financial concerns that frequently troubled them in normal life. This scenario, coupled with the rich intellectual environment, was regarded by some of the artists, such as young pianist Hans G. Furth, as beneficial, even wonderful.¹⁷⁴ This attitude was understandably more prevalent amongst young people who did not yet have careers or financial responsibilities, as did the adults. For example, young cellist Fritz Lustig (interned in Peveril Camp, another camp on the Isle of Man) later wrote, "I was only 21 years of age, eager to make the best of things and probably more adaptable than older men with established professions, jobs, businesses, etc. I then had little patience and sympathy with these people, who I can now see were quite understandably more upset by their predicament than I was."¹⁷⁵

Further, and very importantly, many of these young people had recently arrived in the UK as part of the *Kindertransport*. More than 1,000 Jewish boys and girls over the age of sixteen, who had been brought to the UK through this rescue programme, were interned.¹⁷⁶ The camp community thus often became a surrogate family of sorts. This seems to have been true of both string players Sigmund Nissel and Norbert Brainin, both of whom would later become world

¹⁷¹ Norbert Elias and his contribution to the *What a Life!* revue is discussed below.

¹⁷² Maryan Ravitz (1899–1970) and Walter Landauer (1911–1983) were well known for their piano duo renditions of popular classical melodies. They had settled in Britain in 1935 upon the invitation of Edward, the Prince of Wales.

¹⁷³ Klaus E. Hinrichsen interview, Imperial War Museum (London, UK), Department of Sound Records, accession number 0037789/09. Sound recording on cassette tape, transcribed by author.

¹⁷⁴ It should be noted that internment is often viewed in a more benign or even positive light when viewed in hindsight. Contemporaneous accounts are typically more critical: see for example Walter W. Igersheimer in *Blatant Injustice*, who details his ordeal in both British and Canadian internment in an account written immediately after the experience. In Furth's specific case, internment was in Hutchinson, which appears to have been a considerably better overall environment—both physically and psychologically—than either Huyton or Central.

¹⁷⁵ Fritz Lustig, "Internment in Peel, July to October 1940," unpublished Manx Museum archives.

¹⁷⁶ Kindertransport Association, "History," http://www.kindertransport.org/history05_Normandy.htm (accessed 10 August 2010).

famous performers in the Amadeus String Quartet, but were only teens when they were interned. The literature provides ample accounts of the way in which the older musicians mentored the younger musicians in their midst. For example, the young pianist Hans Furth considered his mentorship by older men, especially Richard Glas, as extremely important to his musical and personal development.¹⁷⁷ In fact Hutchinson Camp appears to have been a more musically sustaining environment for Furth than was his previous life. Furth recalled,

[My internment] was really the highlight of my musical career. I was surrounded by scientists of all kinds, by musicians, by artists [...] and it was the first time I played chamber music. We had some violin players and I was very much in demand (as a pianist). And I met a brilliant pianist, Glas, who gave me lessons [...] I really had a great time and had no intention of leaving. Except that eventually people left [...] I was there from May (1940) until March (1941) [...] it was like a University.¹⁷⁸

Creating music could also be psychologically advantageous under less generous conditions. Gál's later writings on the "Great Composers"—Mozart, Bach, and so on—provide a fascinating window into his own thoughts about the creative process, and illuminate his own personal ability to compose under duress. About these historical figures he wrote, "Again and again one marvels at the strength of resistance a creative will was able to give to a frail, ailing body, and the meagre encouragement on which such a creative urge could be maintained." He continues, "Creating is the aim and end of the artist's instinct. His struggles and suffering are but passing clouds; the reality is his work [...] the capacity to disregard everything else was a part of their equipment."¹⁷⁹ This, in fact, was also true of Gál himself.

A connection to music also sustained performers. The cellist Fritz Ball, who will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter IV of this document, describes how playing music could be a psychological asset:

In the camp I met a man, with whom I had played chamber music for many years in Berlin. He was, through this internment and other blows of fate, so broken that had not played a note in years. I asked him if he would play with me but he refused, until the evening of the first concert, when all the inmates were in the theatre and the camp was empty, that he finally gave in to my

¹⁷⁷ Hinrichsen recalled Glas as "a very gentle man who was much younger than Ravitz but [...] had quite a following and gave beautiful concerts on early classical music." Hinrichsen interview, Imperial War Museum, Department of Sound Records, accession number 0037789/09. Sound recording on cassette tape, transcribed by author.

¹⁷⁸ Hans Furth, Furth family archive, VHS tape, 31 December 1990. There are regular gaps in this commentary as Furth was responding to questions while recounting his experiences.

¹⁷⁹ Hans Gál, *The Musician's World: Great Composers in their Letters* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965), 448.

prodding. And from that day we played together daily, and he was my best accompanist. I could see that the music was freeing him from his depression.¹⁸⁰

2.8 House Concerts

An essential aspect of communal *Musikleben* in these internment camps was the “House Concert.” Such concerts had historically been a feature of Germanic musical culture and likewise became a standard cultural feature in the internment camps. Commenting on the significance of the House Concert to the internees, Gál recounted that he and a young talented violinist (identified only by the last name of “Kauffman”) played their House Concert programme four times,

and we would not lack an audience if we did it twice as often. But the artists would go on strike and I would not make an exception in this case. The people are starved of music. When I play Bach or Beethoven there is a reverence such as I have rarely experienced in music making.¹⁸¹

Rehearsals for these concerts were normally held in the mornings, with concerts held in the afternoons or evenings. The rooms could hold only about fifty people, and there was great demand for concerts, so this made it necessary to repeat programmes. In Central, House Number 5 apparently was the preferred location for House Concerts, as it had one of the best pianos in terms of pitch and its overall condition.¹⁸² The “Central Music Committee” was largely responsible for determining the programming of the House Concerts. The members of the Committee, at least in the fall of 1940, were Otto Erich Deutsch, Hans Gál, and Dr. Hermann Ulrich.¹⁸³ As cellist Fritz Ball indicated in his memoir, all the committee members were indeed Austrians.

¹⁸⁰ Fritz Ball, “Dreimal interniert” (op. cit.). The original German text reads as follows: “Ich traf im Lager einen Herren, mit dem ich früher vor vielen Jahren in Berlin einige Male Kammermusik gespielt hatte. Er war damals ein ausgezeichnetener Pianist. Aber er war durch seine Internierung und andere Schicksalsschläge so gebrochen, dass er seit Jahren keine Note mehr angerührt hätte. Ich bat ihm immer wieder mit mir zu spielen, aber er war nicht dazu zu bewegen, bis am Abend des ersten Konzertes, als fast alle Insassen im Theater waren und das Lager fast leer war, er endlich mein Drängen nachgab. Und von da an spielten wir täglich zusammen, und er wurde mein bester Begleiter. Ich konnte sehen, wie die Musik ihn aus seiner Depression befreite.” This quote translated by author with assistance from Alexander Fisher.

¹⁸¹ Gál diary, 27 June 1940.

¹⁸² Gál diary, 21 June 1940.

¹⁸³ Hermann Ulrich (1888–1982) was trained in both law and music, and worked as both a lawyer, writer, music editor and music critic. He immigrated to Britain in 1939. He returned to Austria in 1946. It is unclear how long this music committee remained intact after Gál’s release. As mentioned earlier, Deutsch contributed the poetic text for the camp revue *What a Life!*.

There were other relatively high profile musicians amongst the Central population who, for unknown reasons, were not involved with the Music Committee. Although their exact musical or scholarly activities within the camp are sometimes unclear, it can be fairly proposed that most of them participated somehow, given the inordinate amount of unscheduled time they faced and the highly intellectual, and presumably stimulating, company that they were keeping. Two Central Camp internees whom we know to have been involved with these House Concerts, but not the Music Committee, were Erwin Stein (1885–1958) and Alfred Rosenzweig (1897–1948). Stein, a former student of Arnold Schoenberg, had become a music editor with Universal Edition in Vienna.¹⁸⁴ Rosenzweig, musicologist and former music critic for *Der Wiener Tag*, had studied at both the Universities of Budapest and Vienna; apparently he had once been a former Gál student, possibly a private composition pupil.¹⁸⁵

The Music Committee had decided that all concerts were to be given free, although it was typical after each concert for a collection to be taken up for the camp “Welfare Fund.” One such series of House Concerts were the concerts given by cellist Ball accompanied by Gál. Ball also played in House Concerts with one whom he called in his memoir “the famous composer” or just “the composer,” by which he certainly referred to Gál. Ball reveals both Gál’s determination to make music and the popularity of these House Concerts more generally

My cello arrives in its case on the 15th of July, but I still have no sheet music. The composer asked me to play with him, and we began to make music together, some pieces from the cello literature and of chamber music, and the next day the Beethoven Sonata and other small pieces, letting me have no rest and announcing an evening concert for us. I ask if I could please have some time to practice, but he waves this off, he thought not, as we did not know how long we would be here together before being transported out [of the camp]. So this brings us to our first concert. In the camp we have three Piano Sonatas by Beethoven, and two pieces of the *Well Tempered Clavier* by Bach, Beethoven’s Sonata in A Major, the *Kol Nidre* by Bruch and two Schubert songs. The room is filled to the last seat. Tickets were made and we had to give the concert three times. On the last night the room is so full that it was difficult to move my bow.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ Stein immigrated to London in 1938, where he resumed working in the music editing and publishing business. At the time of his arrest, he was an editor at Boosey and Hawkes in London. Stein would eventually become “the midwife to (the) entire body of works” by composer Benjamin Britten. See Michael Haas, “The Musical Exiles from Nazi Europe in Great Britain,” *Brio: International Association of Music Libraries* 41, no. 2 (2004): 44–57.

¹⁸⁵ Gál diary, 11 July 1940. Rosenzweig would later produce a comprehensive monograph on Mahler, which would only see posthumous publication in June 2007 in a translated and edited form: see Alfred Mathis-Rosenzweig, *Gustav Mahler: New Insights into his Life and Work*, ed. Jeremy Barham (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007).

¹⁸⁶ Ball, “Dreimal interniert.” The original text is as follows: “Am 15. Juli erhalte ich mein Cello im Kasten zugesandt, aber ich habe noch keine Noten. Sofort drängt der Komponist mich mit ihm zu spielen, und wir intonieren von begeisterten Zuhörern umgeben, viele Motive aus der Celloliteratur und der Kammermusik, und als

This same concert appears to have been described in Walter Bergmann's diary as well, in which he writes that he attended a concert on 17 July 1940 played by Dr. Gál and "a cellist"; Bergmann says this programme included a Bach fugue, a Beethoven piano Sonata and some arrangements for cello.¹⁸⁷

Despite the prominence of classical music in these internment camps, there was also popular music making. Accounts in the literature, however, invariably focus much more on classical than popular music, which often is only mentioned in passing. This may well reflect the voices of creative personalities or intellectuals which would later dominate published descriptions of this internment. For example, some of the better known autobiographical accounts of this internment period were written by Gál, Fred Uhlmann (a visual artist and writer), Ronald Stent (a writer and history teacher), Erich Koch (a writer and professor of Social Science), and Walter Igersheimer (a psychiatrist and faculty member at Yale). If one was not drawn to the process of writing itself, there was little possibility of disseminating one's perspective.

Be that as it may, clearly some internees preferred to spend their time playing bridge or listening to popular music. One such popular musical ensemble was Central Camp's "Kurt Wolf and his Band," a piano, violin and accordion trio that played in the camp café for a fee. This fee was a point of philosophical contention for Gál.

As a matter of principle I have made sure that all concerts are free of charge, and I insist that the performers take no fee. As all work in the camp for the common good done by doctors, chemists, teachers and professors is carried out free of charge, I would find it contrary to professional honour for musicians to put themselves at the level of boot-boys, launderers, sock-darners and hairdressers, who are paid for their services.¹⁸⁸

This "no fee" policy set up by the Music Committee of Central Camp was apparently changed by December 1940, when the remaining musicians (Gál had already been released) adopted a policy

ich am nächsten Tage die Beethoven Sonaten und andere Kleinigkeiten erhalte, lässt er mir keine Ruhe und annonciert einen Abend für uns. Ich bitte ihn mir etwas Zeit zu gewähren, dass ich mich erst einspielen kann. Er winkt aber ab, er weiss nicht, wie lange wir hier bleiben, wann man auch uns abtransportieren wird. So bringen wir unser erstes Konzert. Im Lager sind nur drei Klaviersonaten von Beethoven und drei Stücke aus dem wohltemperierten Klavier von Bach, Beethoven's A-Dur sonate, das Kol Nidrei von Bruch und zwei Schubert Lieder. Der Raum ist bis zum letzten Platz gefüllt. Billets wurden zu den Konzerten ausgegeben, und wir müssen den Abend dreimal wiederholen. Beim letzten Abend ist es so voll in dem Raum, dass ich Mühe habe in den Raum zu gelangen und auszustreichen." Translated by author.

¹⁸⁷ Anne Martin, *Musician for a While: A Biography of Walter Bergmann* (West Yorkshire: Peacock Press, 2002), 43.

¹⁸⁸ Gál diary, 27 June 1940.

which accommodated both the musicians' desire to earn some money and to provide music as a sort of community service. By this point, after all, most of the musicians had been interned for about seven months. Although at least one (Walter Bergmann) had been earning some pocket money by editing music for the Schott publishing house through the mail, most had few avenues, if any, to earn any money at all. Some musicians (including composer and pianist Franz Reizenstein and violinist Hermann Baron) had thought there should be a fee charged for concerts, and this difference in opinion had erupted by 15 September 1940.¹⁸⁹ A meeting was called to discuss this and other complaints regarding the Music Committee (this will be explored more fully in "Rivalry and Conflict," the next subchapter of this document).¹⁹⁰ By December, however, a distinction was made between "members" of the *Vereinigung der Musikfreunde*, or the "Association of the Friends of Music," and the rest of the internees, the "non members."¹⁹¹ It is unclear what, if any, relationship existed between the Music Committee and this organization. However, the name and the apparent intent of the *Vereinigung* might remind one of the long standing Germanic institutions of classical music making, such as the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde* of Vienna, which was founded in 1812 to promote musical culture.

This distinction between musicians and audience might be seen as an interesting manifestation of the social tension which had quickly developed in the camp between professionals, the "real musicians," and mere music aficionados, or the "amateurs." Perhaps these sorts of distinctions grew in importance at least partly as a result of the loss of prestige and professional esteem so many men had experienced under the Nazi regime. In other words, distinguishing status by creating two musically based social "classes" might have been fueled by a desire to regain some sense of the status which they had so recently and abruptly lost. The actual fee itself was minimal but the symbolism of that fee and the control it represented was apparently potent, especially in a setting in which the individual had very little control over anything else.

In any case, by December, it appears that there was a concert admission fee of "2 d," or

¹⁸⁹ Gál diary, 15 September 1940.

¹⁹⁰ This will be explored more fully in Chapter 2.9 of this document.

¹⁹¹ The following discussion is based on concert programmes from Central Camp which were generously made available to the author by the Reizenstein family. Reizenstein family private collection. Many of the documents relating to these émigré "suppressed composers," such as Reizenstein's and Gál's oeuvres and related papers, have not yet been deposited in library archives and are currently held in private family homes. Many of these sorts of collections currently await professional cataloguing and safer storage in libraries where archival conditions (humidity, safety from flood or fire damage, etc.) are more easily controlled.

two pence, for the public.¹⁹² Though the fee was very low, its introduction is striking. Though it is certain there is a distinction being made between “members” and “non members,” as concerts were given on different dates for these two groups, it is unclear whether the members of the *Vereinigung der Musikfreunde* were assessed a different, lower, fee, attended concerts as part of the perks of membership, or merely had their concerts presented separately. It is unclear if the fee collected was used for the welfare fund, player remuneration or a blend of both, but it certainly was a change from the previous policy of a totally voluntary donation, collected solely for the Welfare Fund.

Recently unearthed concert programmes help to shed light on classical musical culture in these house concerts, and in particular illustrate the growing impact on camp musical life of Walter Bergmann. In the first months of internment, Bergmann had “initially found it difficult to establish himself as a serious musician and keyboard player as the professional musicians considered him to be a lawyer, not a musician.”¹⁹³ However, by November 1940, Bergmann clearly had made great strides in the matter of his acceptance by the professional musicians: he often played a central role in many of the winter concerts. Bergmann’s special interest was Baroque music, and this is reflected in the repertoire for the 8 December 1940 concert, which included music of Purcell and Handel. His contributions during this concert reflect a remarkable versatility on his part. Bergmann began the concert conducting Purcell’s *Fairy Queen*, followed by his performance as recorder soloist in a Handel Concerto, a piece which he had also edited himself and was soon to be published. Considering the level of detail, Bergmann probably provided the concert notes about this work which explained that

Handel wrote this piece twice: as a Sonata for recorder and Continuo and as a Concerto for Organ, Strings and Continuo. It was common practice in Handel’s time to substitute one solo instrument by another one. Thus the present form of this concerto is not an arrangement but an absolutely justifiable adaption compiled from both versions: Recorder Sonata and Organ Concerto. The work is being published by Schott and Co., London, edited by Dr. Walter Bergmann.¹⁹⁴

Bergmann also performed in the chamber orchestra on the last work in the programme, the *Ballet Suite for Small Orchestra* by Franz Reizenstein. The Central Camp Chamber Orchestra personnel

¹⁹² “Tickets 2 d each at House 29” is written at the top of the programme, which was originally dated 11 November 1940, and was changed to 8 December 1940.

¹⁹³ Martin, *Musician for a While*, 43.

¹⁹⁴ Central Camp Concert programme, originally dated 11 November 1940, adjusted to 8 December 1940. Reizenstein family private collection.

roster also lists Bergmann as percussionist!

This particular concert programme was originally dated 11 November 1940, but the date had been crossed out and replaced with 8 December 1940. This programme was probably postponed for some musical or administrative reason. If it had been a recycled programme—in other words, simply presented twice, which was commonly done to accommodate the keen audience interest—it would have been given sooner rather than postponed for an entire month. However, there could be another reason for the postponement. In October 1940 Bergmann had been informed by Schott that they wanted to include his realisation of this Handel Concerto in a collected volume of works for solo recorder and strings.¹⁹⁵ This postponement therefore might have been to give Bergmann a chance to actually hear the work he was actively editing at this time. Schott had sent him his realisation to make corrections at the end of November (along with a cheque for two guineas, which in itself must have been encouraging to Bergmann).¹⁹⁶ Finally, given the rather ambitious programming—selections from the *Fairy Queen*, a Handel Concerto for recorder and chamber orchestra, and the entire *Ballet Suite for Small Orchestra* by Reizenstein—this concert might also have been postponed because the programme was simply not musically ready.

In another series of House Concerts, celebrating Christmas Day and Boxing Day in 1940, Bergmann contributed an arrangement for chamber orchestra of five pieces by Purcell, accompanied a vocal soloist as well as performed as the piano soloist in a concerto for keyboard and string orchestra by Johann Christian Bach.¹⁹⁷ It is also possible that he played in the chamber orchestra for the remaining piece on the programme: the second movement of the Concerto for Two Violins by Johann Sebastian Bach, which featured a then eighteen-year old named Sigmund Nissel (1922–2008).¹⁹⁸ Bergmann recognized Nissel's potential, writing in his diary that "he would be a fine violinist one day."¹⁹⁹ As Bergmann's diary entries had become spotty by this time, it is possible that he was simply far too immersed in his multi-faceted projects to write about them.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁵ Martin, *Musician for a While*, 45.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Central Camp Chamber Orchestra concert programme, 25 and 26 December 1940. Reizenstein family private collection.

¹⁹⁸ Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 151. Nissel would later become a student of acclaimed violin pedagogue Max Rostal, and eventually a member of the famed Amadeus Quartet.

¹⁹⁹ Martin, *Musician for a While*, 45.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

2.9 Palace Hotel Concert

While the *Huyton Suite* rehearsals were well under way, there was also a collaborative concert “on a grand scale” being planned by many of the camp musicians; for this project the musicians had been given permission to use the “large, beautiful theatre” (with a seating capacity of 2,000) in the Palace Hotel, where the camp administration had their headquarters.²⁰¹ This concert would ultimately take place in early August 1940. Violinist Hermann Baron, the acting second violinist in the *Huyton Suite* trio and a recent student of the acclaimed teacher Max Rostal, performed in this concert; he was accompanied by gifted pianist and composer Franz Reizenstein, who will be discussed in detail later.

Erwin Weiss (1912–2004) was a young brilliant pianist from Vienna who had been “discovered” in the camp by Gál.²⁰² Weiss made his “camp debut” in this concert, playing virtuosic works by Brahms and Schumann. Gál thought very highly of Weiss’s talents and also seemed somewhat mischievously pleased to be able to show pianist Reizenstein that his was not the only virtuosic talent in the camp!²⁰³

On this same Palace Hotel concert, flutist Nicolo Draber played some “short, pleasant pieces” accompanied by Gál. In addition, the young baritone Hans Karg-Bebenburg sang music by Schubert, Brahms and Lowe, also accompanied by Gál. Karg-Bebenburg was a talented and handsome man (according to Gál) who was in his early thirties in 1940 and had been a singer with the State Opera in Linz before internment.²⁰⁴

It is interesting that Gál mentions that “we want to present the best forces in our camp in as effective a way as possible, if only because the officers will probably be present.”²⁰⁵ There could be many interpretations of this statement, but it is possible the concert partly served as a subconscious attempt to maintain (or regain lost) dignity or respect. He mentions that none of the officers are really interested in music, so why would he be especially intent on a positive

²⁰¹ Gál diary, 26 July 1940.

²⁰² After the war ended, Weiss would return to Vienna to teach at his former alma mater, the Vienna Conservatory of Music. Music Information Centre of Austria, “Erwin Weiss,” http://www.musiknavigator.at/person/person_detail0fe6.html?clr=5&iID=65558 (accessed 13 August 2010).

²⁰³ Gál diary, 26 July 1940. “(Weiss) plays virtuoso pieces in such a way that one really has pleasure in it. To get Reizenstein to see this would be quite a feat!”

²⁰⁴ Gál diary, 26 July 1940.

²⁰⁵ Gál diary, 26 July 1940.

reception by them? Is it also possible that the internees hoped to demonstrate the folly of the internment through cultural achievement, or to somehow express themselves in ways that words could not? Numerous times in his diary, Gál laments both the inability of the British administration to understand the folly of the situation, and their refusal to even listen to the internees. He also mentions that the officers do not “treat them as equals” (a single officer is cited as an exception to this). Relations between the internees and the administration were often extremely strained in Central Camp. Was this concert then a kind of attempt to make better connections, on a human level, with the British officers of the camp? It is unclear but this is a possibility.

2.10 Rivalry and Conflict

Despite internment, competition was still solidly part of the musical process. The substantial stresses of internment could also be a fertile breeding ground for interpersonal conflict. Both these aspects were evident on multiple levels and confirmed by several individual accounts, including those of Gál, Bergmann, and Ball.

At one point, Central Camp’s acting “music impresario,” Herr Hamburger, asked pianist Alfred Blumen to play on a camp concert.²⁰⁶ Blumen agreed, but only if the entire concert be reserved as a solo recital for him.²⁰⁷ In an apparent compromise, the second half of the concert was reserved for Blumen. However his programming for the second half was, according to Gál, really better suited for an entire concert: The Schubert *Wanderer Fantasie*, Schumann’s *Carnaval* and “a lot of Chopin.”²⁰⁸ This worried Gál: if the “Music Committee” approved this demand, they might not *have* an audience in future. Otto Erich Deutsch disagreed. Since Gál was hospitalised by this point, the choice was left to Deutsch.²⁰⁹ The resulting concert became a sore political point amongst some of the musicians, although the concert itself in musical terms was a resounding success. After hearing Blumen’s piano debut, Gál fully acknowledged Blumen’s extraordinary playing. He also noted that Deutsch was, as a result and at that moment,

²⁰⁶ Herr Hamburger’s first name is unknown. According to Gál, this man promoted the camp concerts, distributed tickets and all the usual tasks of the “impresario.”

²⁰⁷ Alfred Blumen is profiled in Chapter 4.6 of this document.

²⁰⁸ Gál diary, 26 August 1940.

²⁰⁹ Gál had been suffering from a skin disease, which had worsened to the point of requiring hospitalisation.

the most hated man in the camp—this fine, restrained scholar, who has never made any demands for himself and has devoted himself exclusively to the matter in hand! They will never forgive the person who caused Blumen to become the music sensation of the camp.²¹⁰

Continuo player and flutist Walter Bergmann also wrote of the musical rivalry in the camp. Always a sensitive man, Bergmann noticed a certain amount of what he felt was snobbery from the professional musicians towards him. As already noted, he felt they initially did not take him seriously, since he had been a lawyer by profession. However, over time Bergmann notes in his diary that his relations with the professional musicians improved as his abilities and training were acknowledged.²¹¹ This improvement is also evident by his total immersion in the overall musical activities within the camp by December 1940.

Fritz Ball made the same criticisms as Bergmann initially did, saying his concert with Gál on 17 July ended the “happiest period” of his internment. Ball explains, “For some of the young artists in the camp will not let it rest that the famous composer had performed three evenings in a row with me. Young as they are, they accused me of being a Lawyer, that is all, and want to put me in my place by this barrier.”²¹² Ball also expresses some bitterness about the Musical Committee itself:

A musical committee is formed, which no one has chosen, composed, of course, of only Viennese musicians. The committee determines who can take part in the official concerts and who is allowed to use the pianos.

I can only use the piano when the rest are taking their walks. The composer, who is also a committee member, becomes ill, unfortunately. That means that the other committee members have all the power.²¹³

Ball later says that “when the ill composer got better, he apologised for the way in which the other members of the music committee had treated me.”

By late August there was deepening conflict between the Music Committee and a number

²¹⁰ Gál diary, 28 August 1940.

²¹¹ Martin, *Musician for a While*, 44.

²¹² Fritz Ball memoir. The original text reads: “Denn einige junge Künstler im Lager lässt es nicht schlafen, dass der berühmte Komponist mit mir drei Abende hinereinander gegeben hat. Sie werfen mir, jung wie sie sind, vor, dass ich ein Rechtsanwalt sei, und sie tun alles, um mich an die Wand zu drängen.” Reprinted by permission, and provided and translated by Sandra Ball.

²¹³ *Ibid.* The original text is as follows: “Es bildet sich ein Musikkomitee, das niemand gewählt hat, und dieses natürlich nu aus wienern bestehende committee regelt jetzt das öffentliche Musikleben im Lager, indem es vor allen Dingen eigenmächtig entschied, wer an den Öffentlichen Konzerten teil zunehmen habe, und wer an die Berechtigung besitze die Klaviere zu benutzen. Der Komponist, der auch im Committee Mitglied war, erkrankte leider bald. So übten die beiden anderen Mitglieder unbeschränkte Macht aus.”

of the musicians. Gál attributes the origins of this “storm in a teacup” to disgruntled musicians upset with Deutsch’s handling of musical affairs while Gál was in hospital. Gál writes,

Reizenstein and Baron have now called a meeting of all “artists,” musicians as well as amateurs, all those who feel undervalued or underemployed, the others grumble because they don’t get enough time to practice the piano or have not been allocated the best instruments, one is puffed up with feelings of bitter resentment because he once didn’t receive a complimentary ticket for a concert, and some, unfortunately, really do have reason to protest, as [Otto Erich] Deutsch has made promises that he can’t keep.²¹⁴

Gál then concludes this particular diary entry with the observation that there was also now a *bon mot* in circulation in the camp, “Nazi from Refugee Oppression.” By mid-September, the social fabric, at least amongst the musicians, appears to have become somewhat frayed, and nerves were on edge.

About the aforementioned “artists meeting” Ball comments,

Meanwhile the mood became [chilly?] as shortly before my release all musicians in the camp decided to go on strike if the Committee did not step down. An assembly was organized, and they invited me as well. I did go, and listened silently to their discussion. When my opinion was asked I said only that I had just heard that I was to be released, and I wished to remind the gentlemen that no one came to my aid when I was the first to be forced to retire from so-called public musical life due to the Committee.²¹⁵

2.11 Releases

As has been previously discussed, the tragedy of the *Arandora Star* resulted in a marked shift in both public opinion and internment policy in Britain, and debates in Parliament, led by political figures such as Eleanor Rathbone, led to both the abandonment of the deportations and a gradual unraveling of internment itself.

Internees were finally released by virtue of the so-called “White Papers.” In Britain, “White Papers” are the governmental documents which formally declare Parliamentary

²¹⁴ Gál diary, 15 September 1940.

²¹⁵ “Die Stimmung war aber inzwischen [frostig?] geworden, dass kurz vor meiner Entlassung alle Musiker im Camp erklärten, in Streik zu treten, wenn das Komitee nicht abtrete. Eine Versammlung wurde veranstaltet, und sie luden auch mich ein. Ich ging auch hin, hoerte stillschweigend zu, um was sie berieten, und als man meine Meinung zu hören wünschte, erklarte ich nur, dass ich gerade gehört habe, dass ich entlassen werden würde und den Herren nur ins Gedächtnis zurückrufen möchte, dass mir keiner zuhulfe gekommen sei, als ich als erster gezwungen war mich wegen des Komitees vom sogenannten öffentlichen Musikleben zurück zuziehen.” Fritz Ball memoir. Private Ball family papers. Reprinted by permission, and provided by Sandra Ball. Translation courtesy of Alexander Fisher.

decisions, and facilitate the subsequent policy changes. There were ultimately three White Papers that addressed release mechanisms. The first was issued in July 1940, the second in August 1940, and the third in October 1940. In November the release categories were expanded even further but without issuing a formal White Paper.²¹⁶ Even so, these White Papers failed to address the inherent injustice of mass internment. As Gál put it,

From the point of view of a normal sense of justice, this White Paper is a monstrosity. It means, objectively speaking, that an unacknowledged injustice remains generally valid in principle, and is only suspended for those who are immediately and urgently needed. This criticism of it has already been made in the House of Commons; we hope that, after this first retreat by the government over the internment question, public opinion will work more and more towards putting right the injustice that has been committed.²¹⁷

As aforementioned advocate Margaret Corbett Ashby observed, “The releases appear to [the internees] to be given or withheld quite arbitrarily, for although loyalty to this country is naturally supposed to be the test for release, it appears that manual usefulness to this country is in practice preferred.”²¹⁸

Many of the musicians were finally released by virtue of the last of the three White Papers.²¹⁹ The first two White Papers issued entirely ignored artists as a potential release category until the third White Paper was finally issued in October 1940.

Ralph Vaughn Williams was deeply involved with assisting artists to secure their freedom, as the following letter dating from December 1940 from Henry C. Colles (British musicologist) to Egon Wellesz indicates. Wellesz had been released sometime in the fall, probably resulting from the issuance of the third White Paper. After his own release he had assisted other internees to likewise gain their freedom.

Thank you for the help you gave to Vaughn Williams and to me about others who ought to be released forthwith. Our committee has worked very hard and Vaughn Williams himself has put in a great deal of personal work, far more than I consider a creative artist ought to be allowed to give to wrestling with stupid officials of government departments. It is trying to chop wood with a razor.²²⁰

As is widely reported, Vaughan Williams did indeed serve as the head of the committee

²¹⁶ Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 208–211.

²¹⁷ Gál diary, 1 August 1940.

²¹⁸ Margaret Corbett Ashby, visitors report, 5 March 1941. Friends House Library unpublished archives (London, UK), Box 25.

²¹⁹ Stent, *A BeSpattered Page?*, 211.

²²⁰ Caroline Cepen Benser, *Egon Wellesz (1885–1974): Chronicle of a Twentieth Century Musician* (New York: Peter Lang, 1985), 164.

which ultimately decided on releases. He had also been quite active as a refugee advocate in general terms. For example, he advocated quite vigorously on behalf of his former pupil Reizenstein. On 6 December Vaughn Williams wrote to the camp administration regarding Reizenstein's joining the Pioneer Corps.²²¹

A very high proportion of German-born Jews would join the British army in order to fight Nazism; some sources claim that as many as 10,000, or about one out of every seven refugees in Britain, would fight with the British armed forces during World War II.²²² Of the musicians involved with the *What a Life!* revue, for example, it is known that at least three (Draber, Lesser and Karg- Bebenburg) joined. It has been reported that Reizenstein was actually rejected for the Pioneer Corps on account of his poor eyesight.²²³ However, even before he went before the medical board, Reizenstein was apparently feeling pressured to join the Pioneer Corps in order to secure his release and naturalization, which will be explained shortly.

Reizenstein's reluctance in joining, Vaughan Williams wrote, stemmed from a "reason with which I entirely sympathise." Vaughan Williams continued,

[Reizenstein] is a first rate pianist. If he undertakes hard manual labour he will almost certainly ruin his hands for playing, and on this his livelihood depends. Would it not be possible to reserve him for musical or clerical work for which he would be admirably fitted? Surely there is ample scope for workers of both these kinds.²²⁴

Vaughan Williams proceeds, ever so diplomatically, to press this issue of enlistment in the Pioneer Corps with this unnamed official, who probably was Captain Davidson, of Central Camp.²²⁵ He closes his letter with a veiled quasi-chastisement.

I believe that enlistment is voluntary but Mr. Reizenstein is under the impression that his chances

²²¹ This letter lacks a year, but it is almost certainly from 1940, given the contents of the letter. Reizenstein family private collection.

²²² These numbers refer to the total numbers of refugees in Britain. Approximately 25, 000 refugees were interned, however the total number of refugees in Britain numbered around 70,000. National Geographic, "Churchill's German Army," <http://natgeotv.com/uk/churchills-german-army/about> (accessed 13 August 2010).

²²³ Simon Wynberg, "Reizenstein," OREL Foundation website, http://orelfoundation.org/index.php/composers/article/franz_reizenstein/ (accessed 12 August 2010).

²²⁴ Vaughan Williams to camp administrator (very likely Captain Davidson, though it is only addressed "Dear Sir"), 6 December 1940, Reizenstein family private collection.

²²⁵ In his 8 December letter, Vaughan Williams writes again, this time a very short letter addressed to Reizenstein himself, merely stating "I have written a letter to Capt. Davidson saying that you will ask for an appointment—when you go to see him take the enclosed letter with you." It seems likely that the letter he refers to is the letter dated 6 December. It appears nearly identical, being written with what appears to be the same pen, and appears to be in the same hand. Further, if it were not the same letter, Reizenstein would likely not have had the 8 December letter in his possession (it would have instead been in the recipient's possession).

of naturalization will be impaired if he does not join the Corps. *I feel sure that he is mistaken in this and that no such pressure will be put on him* [emphasis mine].²²⁶

Another internee's internment diary sheds light on Reizenstein's "mistaken" impression regarding the relationship between his hoped-for naturalization and his joining the Pioneer Corps. Young internee Gerald Friedman records that, during the *What a Life!* revue intermission, Captain Davidson said to him, "I want every fit man between the ages of eighteen and fifty. We want to build up an enormous army."²²⁷ Friedman then describes a speech that Captain Davidson made to the internees the morning after the *What a Life!* revue performance. Friedman writes

In the Morning I went to the Palace to hear an address by Captain Davidson who had come down from London to recruit most of us for the AMPC [Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps].²²⁸ On the stage sat Captains Davidson and Moss and Lt. Smythe (?).²²⁹ Our Commandant Major Francis (sic) came in shortly after Captain Davidson commenced (sic) his speech. Captain Davidson stated among other things: You might not get British passports after the war, nor might not be allowed to remain in this country after the war is over even though having served with the Pioneers, but your case will be reconsidered then. Your families will be looked after. Wives and children will be allowed for, parents will receive allowance from the Assistance Board. Every man who serves England truly and loyally will find the rest that "Poor Jacob" has been looking for and could not find.²³⁰ If you join the Pioneers and pass the medical test you will not have to wait long [for induction into the armed forces] [...] Many people registered their names when Davidson ceased speaking.²³¹

The subtext here is fairly clear: even *if* an internee serves in the Pioneer Corps, permission might not be given to stay in Britain. Therefore, chances for naturalization, if deciding against joining, are that much more unlikely. This explains Reizenstein's concern, which undoubtedly was shared by other internees.

The aforementioned aspiring pianist Hans Furth, from Hutchinson Camp, recalled how the release categories became quite elastic by 1941.

The British issued a White Paper, according to various rubrics you could be released. If you were an Anti-Nazi fighter, if you had a job indispensable for the war effort, if you had a family, all sorts of reasons. But I didn't fall under any of them! And I didn't *feel* like going out. I was quite comfortable and looked after. So the Commandant [Daniel] called me in and said, "What are you still doing here?"

²²⁶ Ralph Vaughan Williams to unnamed camp official, 6 December 1940, Reizenstein family private collection.

²²⁷ Friedman diary, 26 September 1940.

²²⁸ This organisation was later known as simply the "Pioneer Corps."

²²⁹ This question mark is included in the original diary entry. This man was likely Lt. Crowle-Smith, who is described briefly in Chapter 3.2.

²³⁰ Here Davidson makes a direct reference to the revue performance of the previous evening.

²³¹ Friedman diary, 27 September 1940.

“Well, Sir, I didn't fall under any of the rubric.”

“What do you mean; you don't fall under the rubric? You are an excellent pianist!” And so I looked at the rubric: “World Famous Musicians, Recommended by the Penn Club or the Music Club.”

So he said, “Why don't you apply?”

I said, “But I am not world famous!”

He said, “We-l-l-l...you can say you HOPE to be world famous!”

So I applied and said, “Will you release me on the hope of my becoming world famous?” And they did (release me), Vaughan Williams was the one who signed it.²³²

Bergmann was told on 8 January that he was to be released, and after beginning to pack his things, was then told that there had been a mistake: it was a *Richard* Bergmann who was being released! By 17 January he was again depressed, as his release was still completely uncertain; he also worried about how he would even manage to get to London, as he had no money to pay for the trip there. Added to these worries, he learned on 23 January of the mass deportations of German Jews and of their imprisonment in concentration camps and, naturally, he was deeply concerned about the well-being of his relatives left behind in Germany. The following week Bergmann would finally be released (29 January 1940), the same day as his close musical colleague Dr. Rudolf Pick. The two newly freed men travelled together to the harbor on the 8 a.m. bus where they filled out the necessary papers and completed their release process.²³³

Reizenstein, given his close relationship with Vaughan Williams, had as early as August 1940 a letter written by the composer endorsing his release.²³⁴ Nevertheless, the gears of government turn notoriously slowly, and Reizenstein was not actually released until 3 January 1941. Upon release he was, like all released internees, to register with the authorities in his given municipality. Apparently there were bureaucratic hassles for him in this process, as a carefully handwritten letter from Reizenstein to an unnamed official illustrates. He seems to be making explanations for a breach of correct legal procedure. The letter illustrates the sort of bureaucratic hurdles with which internees routinely dealt, and gives a rare glimpse of the minutiae of the release process.

²³² Hans Furth, 31 December 1990, Furth family private collection.

²³³ Martin, *Musician for a While*, 45.

²³⁴ Vaughan Williams to unnamed government official, August 1940. Reizenstein family private papers.

Sir,

May I be permitted to submit a few facts, which indicate that I have not willingly committed an offense against the law.

I was released from internment as a person who had taken a prominent part on the fight against the Nazis and as an artist of eminent distinction on Friday, 3 January. Immediately after my arrival at Euston I went to the police in Euston Station and asked the officer to make a phone call for me to 50—Rd. to which address I was to proceed. As they had no room for me, the Officer advised me to stay in the station and to report to the West Hampstead Police in the morning. I went there at 8:30 am, and again at 11 a.m. and asked for a change of address to—, where my family lives.²³⁵ I arrived here Saturday 4th in the late afternoon and went to sleep until Sunday mid-day. On Sunday 5th in the afternoon the first thing I did was to go to the police in Kingston although I was told beforehand that the Aliens Officer would probably not be here on a Sunday. On Monday morning I went there again and reported in due course. All this shows that I not only tried to comply with the regulations but that I was overanxious to do so. On Monday 6th I went to Town to take up my teaching. I had no intention to stay up in town. My work, however, would have compelled me to come up again today, and as I finished late last evening, I did not want to risk the journey, communications being rather poor. After [...] ²³⁶

The letter abruptly ends here. It seems that Reizenstein realised at this point that it would be more effective to speak to someone in person, or appeal directly to someone who might have the ability to cut through some of this bureaucracy. It is unknown exactly how the problem was resolved, though clearly it did not prove a serious impediment to his eventual naturalization process.

By March 1941, most of Hutchinson's musicians and artists had been released.²³⁷ It is revealing that of all the supplies that could have been requested by the remaining internees in the camps—clothing from the camp at Peel, agricultural books from Onchan Camp—the one item Hutchinson Camp most desired was musical instruments, as most of their musicians had by then left, and taken their instruments with them.²³⁸ For his part, Gál had been released from Central Camp early (late September 1940), under a medical hardship category, as he had been suffering from an extremely severe form of eczema. He had, in fact, written all the music for *What a Life!* directly from a camp hospital bed. He regarded his internment as unequivocally “the worst period of his life.”²³⁹ However, he stayed a day beyond his official release to give the final

²³⁵ These personal details have been omitted for privacy reasons.

²³⁶ Reizenstein to unnamed British government official, undated.

²³⁷ However, as mentioned earlier, the camp itself remained open until 1944.

²³⁸ Anonymous Friends report, 23–30 March 1941, Friends House Library unpublished archives (London, UK), Box 25.

²³⁹ Eva Fox-Gál (daughter of composer), personal statement in roundtable discussion, The Impact of Nazism on

performance of *What a Life!*, which reflected through art much of the total experience of this internment—the absurdity, the comradeship, the “camp conservatory,” and the tragedy of the German refugee.

Chapter 3 Hans Gál

3.1 Life

Hans Gál was born in Brunn am Gebirge, outside Vienna, on 5 August 1890. The Gál family was scholarly, but not particularly musical.²⁴⁰ His father was a doctor of homeopathy and the immediate family avidly attended concerts, especially the Viennese Opera, as well as other cultural events, but they were not musicians by profession (with the exception of an aunt who had sung prominent operatic roles at the court opera of Weimar). After obtaining his teaching certificate at the age of nineteen, Gál taught harmony and piano at the New Vienna Conservatory and studied form and counterpoint with Eusebius Mandyczewski, who had been a close associate of Johannes Brahms. Mandyczewski became a close friend and the primary musical mentor to Gál, who considered him his “spiritual father.” Together they compiled the complete edition of Brahms works and this experience was seminal for his future compositional work.²⁴¹ By the age of twenty-three, Gál had completed his doctoral dissertation on Beethoven’s early period, soon published within Guido Adler’s prestigious series *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft*.²⁴² Shortly thereafter, Gál was awarded the Austrian State Prize for Composition for his First Symphony in 1915. Despite this award, Gál withdrew the work before performance, dismissing it as an “apprentice work.”

Like many other young men of his generation, Gál’s life was interrupted by the Great War. Gál served in the Austrian army between 21 June 1915 and 30 November 1918. While stationed in Belgrade he wrote *Serbian Dances*, op. 3, a piano duet; he likewise wrote his first opera, *Der Arzt der Sobeide*, op. 4, while in uniform in Italy. This ability to continue to compose—even under unlikely circumstances—would prove highly valuable during a lifetime perforated by political upheaval and personal adversity.

Gál’s early professional ascent could well be described as meteoric. There were twenty-

²⁴⁰ All biographical details on Gál’s life prior to internment are based on <http://hansgal.com/> unless otherwise designated. This website is maintained by the Gál family (accessed 18 July 2010).

²⁴¹ The first edition of this joint publication was issued in 1926–7 by Breitkopf and Härtel. Of the 26 volumes, Gál was responsible for the first 10 volumes.

²⁴² Gál, “Die Stileigentümlichkeiten des jungen Beethoven und ihr Zusammenhang mit dem Stil seiner Reife” [Characteristics of the style of the young Beethoven and their relationship to the style of his maturity] (Ph.D. diss., Vienna, 1913), also in *Studien zur Musikwissenschaft* 4 (1916): 58–115.

four new performances of ten Gál works in the year 1926 alone—the same year in which Gál received the Art Prize of the City of Vienna. Both his operatic and orchestral works were receiving widespread recognition; the *Overture to a Puppet Play*, op. 20, for example, became an international favourite. The work, as his daughter Eva Fox-Gál notes, enjoyed “over 100 performances in a short time, from Stockholm to Basle, under prominent conductors such as Furtwängler, Keilberth, Szell, Weingartner and Busch.”²⁴³

By 1930 Gál had been appointed director of the prestigious Mainz Conservatory, an institution hosting around one thousand students and a faculty of about seventy. During this period in Mainz Gál had also served on the directorate of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein*, together with Alban Berg and Ernst Toch.²⁴⁴ Through this organization, contemporary music festivals throughout Germany were arranged and reviews of the compositional submissions were made by the three men comprising the directorate. Berg and Gál were responsible for the Austrian submissions, and although the two held radically different aesthetic perspectives, they usually agreed in their appraisals of submissions. This activity with the *Musikverein* also offered Gál ample opportunity for travel throughout Germany. This artistically stimulating work, along with the security that his Mainz Conservatory directorship provided, was the basis for a happy and productive period for Gál.²⁴⁵

Mainz was apparently not a centre of Nazi sentiment. When the Nazis occupied Mainz in 1933, an SS detachment from Worms reportedly had to be sent to establish control over the city.²⁴⁶ However, anti-semitic articles began to appear in local newspapers, accusing a purported Jewish control of the Conservatory. One of these articles specifically ended with the words, “Away with the Jew Gál. Mainz Conservatory for German Art!”²⁴⁷ By 29 March 1933 Gál—being Jewish—had received his dismissal letter, which simply read “I hereby suspend you with immediate effect.”²⁴⁸ No overt mention of his Jewishness was made in this letter but the subtext

²⁴³ Anthony Fox and Eva Fox-Gál, <http://www.hansGal.com/biography/11-success.html> (accessed 20 July 2009).

²⁴⁴ “The Mainz Period,” <http://hansgal.com/biography/14-mainz.html> (accessed 20 July 2009).

²⁴⁵ Margaret Monkrieff-Kelly, “Hans Gal: Composer, pianist, conductor and musicologist of international renown (1890–1987): A Personal Tribute and Memoir,” MusicWeb international, <http://www.musicweb-international.com/classrev/2003/Mar03/gal.htm#ixzz0whd8ErwK> (accessed 15 August 2010).

²⁴⁶ Interestingly, the Gál’s landlord refused to accept any rent from April to August 1933, “his own personal protest against the Nazi regime.” Anthony Fox and Eva Fox-Gál, <http://www.hansGal.com/biography/15-nazitakeover.html> (accessed 23 May 2010).

²⁴⁷ Anthony Fox and Eva Fox-Gál, <http://www.hansGal.com/biography/15-nazitakeover.html> (accessed 23 May 2010).

²⁴⁸ Anthony Fox and Eva Fox-Gál, <http://www.hansGal.com/biography/15-nazitakeover.html> (accessed 23 May 2010).

was painfully clear. Despite what must have been a tremendous blow, according to his then secretary, “director Gál just picked up his hat and went.”²⁴⁹ To make matters worse, his compositions could no longer be performed or published in Germany.²⁵⁰

The family left Mainz, first retreating to the greater anonymity of the Black Forest, and then returning to Vienna. Throughout this substantial upheaval Gál continued to compose. It was during this tumultuous period of 1933 to 1938 that he composed *Nachtmusik*, a large-scale vocal work (with flute, cello and piano) as well as his powerful *Cantata de Profundis*.²⁵¹ With the *Anschluss* the family finally left the Continent; Gál arrived in Britain in March 1938.

Fortunately, British musicologist Sir Donald Tovey held Gál in high esteem and had been able to arrange for Gál a six-month position reorganising the Reid Library at the University of Edinburgh. The lowbrow nature of the project left Gál unflustered. With his characteristic pragmatism, he took advantage of the ample time for reading and also discovered an unpublished Haydn symphony.

In autumn of 1939, Gál's wife was offered a housekeeping position (which came with fortuitous accommodation for the entire Gál family) at the cultured home of Sir Herbert Grierson.²⁵² Gál became quite fond of Grierson, who was a retired English professor at the University of Edinburgh, and the time spent at Grierson's home was a happy and more secure period for the Gál family. This allowed Gál to focus on re-establishing himself as a composer. During this productive period he established the Edinburgh Refugee Orchestra, formed a madrigal choir and befriended other refugee intellectuals, including Max Born (the physicist who would later win the Nobel Prize). He would soon find himself interned with many of his new Edinburgh friends, as well as old friends from the Continent.

3.2 Huyton Suite

Huyton Suite, a work which was eventually published in 1948 and is commercially available today from Schott, is scored for two violins and a flute—instruments chosen because

²⁴⁹ Anthony Fox and Eva Fox-Gál, <http://hansGál.com/biography/15-nazitakeover.html> (accessed 23 May 2010).

²⁵⁰ Anthony Fox and Eva Fox-Gál, <http://www.hansGál.com/biography/15-nazitakeover.html> (accessed 23 May 2010).

²⁵¹ Anthony Fox and Eva Fox-Gál, <http://www.hansGál.com/biography/17-vienna.html> (accessed 23 May 2010).

²⁵² Gál diary, 17 May 1940.

they were available in the camp.²⁵³ True to his lifelong pragmatic working style, he preferred to write for actual performance opportunities—even if imperfect—rather than imagined ones. This trio instrumentation is unusual since it lacks the low voice which normally serves as a sort of musical anchor. *Huyton Suite* instead has three high voices and a technically challenging, rhythmically entangled texture which runs the risk of falling apart in performance. Gál was well aware of this risk, and after some shaky rehearsals, reminded himself that “we are not in the Wigmore Hall; if that should happen we shall just start again.”²⁵⁴

There are four movements in the overall work, entitled *Alla Marcia*, *Capriccio*, *Canzonetta con Variazioni* and *Fanfaronata*. The work opens entirely cheerfully. The primary theme of the *Alla Marcia* has a relaxed, innocent personality. The predominant open fourths and fifths add to this character, with lighthearted rhythmic patterns reminiscent of playful children. The movement ends tenderly, after the camp “roll call” is first quoted. This reveille, the trumpet call which was used to wake the internees every morning at six, is stated in the unaccompanied flute in the first and last movement (see fig. 1, in the second ending). The violins then return to gently escort the flute, in *pizzicati* chords, to the end of the movement.

The second movement continues in this mood. There is an increase in energy and playfulness, as the three instruments chase each other within the fugato texture. However, the overall mood remains gentle.

²⁵³ See later discussion of this work’s publication circumstances in “Reception of the Huyton Suite.”

²⁵⁴ Gál diary, 28 July 1940.

With the third movement one finally encounters the deep melancholy that one might expect given the context in which this work was conceived. The seriousness of the era seems to be evoked most prominently in this movement. The primary theme, in G-harmonic minor, has a forlorn and haunting quality which is particularly poignant. This theme, so reminiscent of a folk song in both its key and its simplicity, seems to reflect the deep loss that these refugees had so recently experienced. However, another melody, in a bright G-major, immediately answers the aforementioned primary theme. The overall effect is one of well-proportioned balance between the sorrow of the “eastern” theme, and a sweeter reality which in its $\frac{3}{4}$ time and general character is reminiscent of a pre-war Viennese affability. Both sides of life then are reflected in an even-handed way, both the deep sorrow and the inherent sweetness—however fleeting—of life.

In the lively fourth movement, the *Fanfaronetta*, the reveille returns. About this motive Gál writes,

The reveille appears again in the finale, nicely closing the circle. I had to laugh when I suddenly realised that at the end even our burly captain with the whisky cheeks had slipped in without my being aware of it. The man has a favourite sport: he blows his whistle and all the soldiers who are within earshot have to run to him, line up outside the house in question, and two men rush in, brandishing their rifles, to arrest the supposed rebels. At least we assume that this is the point of the exercise. He sometimes repeats it for hours on end, in the dust and heat, and sometimes even at night, to make sure his men stay in training. I have a strong suspicion that he has composed his way into an episode in the last movement, but it will do no harm.²⁵⁵

Ironically, the premiere performance was interrupted by the *real world* roll call, right at the moment of the reveille motive:

The conclusion was, however, interrupted by the intervention of a higher power. We had started a little late, and just as we were in the middle of the finale, at the place that I ascribe (but I told no-one about this) to the whisky-jowled captain, the whistle sounded, summoning us to roll-call. We could easily have played for the few minutes until the end, there wouldn't have been any danger in that, but the audience nevertheless became a little restless, and when a conscientious house occupant, whose duty this is, began to toll a bell wildly on the staircase, that was naturally the end. Everyone scattered in a strange mixture of humour, annoyance and enthusiasm.²⁵⁶

Gál reflected on the relationship between the internees' shared collective experience and this trio.

An experience like this performance is recompense for all kinds of hardship. I can hardly remember any chamber music piece of mine having such a direct impact and such an immediate

²⁵⁵ Gál diary, 13 June 1940.

²⁵⁶ Gál diary, 1 August 1940.

effect as the *Huyton Suite* did. But then nowhere else can one find the audience for whom a piece was so tailor-made and dedicated as this was to my friends and fellow-sufferers. They see themselves in the mirror of this music, which reflects the feelings and life of all of us at that time; they feel that much more strongly in the supra-real, more general expression of music than they would feel it in a concrete utterance. The listener's own memory and imagination contribute creatively.²⁵⁷

Having acknowledged the subtle connections between Gál's life experience and elements in this work, it would be a mistake to assume that its meaning can be exhausted solely through its extramusical connections. As Gál indicates, experience can be the starting point of inspiration, but it cannot determine all of its contours:

A work of art is only in exceptional cases a direct report; that if it has any bearing on the artist's personal experience, it is after this has gone through the deepest layer of his soul and come out changed and purified, as the rainwater is filtered through layers of sand, soil and gravel till it wells up as a clear spring. Whenever emotion is blurted out in music with a crude directness, unashamedly, you may be suspicious of the sincerity both of the music and of the emotion.²⁵⁸

That same year, Gál would again write about this concept, this time in direct relation to *Huyton Suite*.

Chamber music, as the most intimate expression, is the realm to which the musician always returns, in order to retain the connection with its essence. In a duo, a trio or quartet, independent individuals speak out together, cooperatively. The musical symbol for this process is Polyphony: the most complete, most transparent form of polyphony is for three voices, and I have therefore always had a fondness for the trio, the finest medium of polyphony [...].

Chamber music in the true sense is intended in the first place for the players, the listeners are, so to speak, accidental to the process [...].

When I mention the circumstances surrounding any of these compositions, I do it only because they are somewhat picturesque. The title of my trio for flute and two violins is actually "Huyton Suite." Huyton is a small village near Liverpool, near the English west coast, where I spent the summer of 1940. This village was then inhabited by thousands of inmates, and there were all kinds of pastimes, but no music, because the instruments were lacking. The only strong musicians with instruments, that I could find, were a flutist and two violinists. It was for them that I wrote this trio, which in a series of performances brought much enjoyment to all the participants.

I forgot to mention that the village was surrounded by barbed wire, because its occupants were interned "enemy aliens." In itself it was incidentally a mild sort of imprisonment, of which the only harshness was the robbing of one's freedom. *I think I can assure you that the barbed wire, one of the symbols of our modern civilization, has left no noticeable traces in my music; but*

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Hans Gál, *The Golden Age of Vienna* (New York: Chanticleer Press, 1948), 57.

rather, the beautiful, warm summer days during which it was composed (emphasis mine).²⁵⁹

Huyton Suite, on the whole, indeed possesses a persistent optimism which entirely transcends this dismal birthplace. This optimism is evident in that aforementioned G-major theme, marked *dolcissimo*, which immediately responds to the sorrowful primary theme of the *Canzonetta*. This quality of optimism is a pervasive feature of Gál's personality, and by natural extension, his work. Despite acknowledgement of the darker aspects in life, he never relinquishes his basically optimistic orientation. When the devastating news of the collapse of the French front reached him by mid May 1940, Gál remarked that

I have never been a pessimist. The thought that this war could in fact be lost never crossed my mind until the Norwegian defeat. Ever since, this thought has become a hellish reality. Everything is crumbling away! Every front collapses when the enemy just taps it. Where will this lead?²⁶⁰

Despite these worries, by the beginning of June the writing process had completely captured his imagination. He writes that

The trio is growing like an asparagus. I have nothing else in my head. I see nothing, hear nothing, do nothing else. My friends laugh that I don't allow myself to be either disturbed or even briefly interrupted by the loud conversations in the room, by visitors or controversies.²⁶¹

This need to remain totally dedicated to his work, despite the pressures of the outside world, was something of which he was very aware. In writing about Schubert, he notes that a composer

needs a minimum of living space, a secure domain behind invisible walls where he can live unmolested with his dreams, his visions. His most essential requirement is to be undisturbed, the very thing which the world, with its inescapable bustle, its urge to enter a realm that seems so strange and wonderful and to which such an elect has the key, is least ready to grant him.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ Gál, "Vorliebe fuer das Trio" (article for a chamber music concert in Wiesbaden), 25 September 1948, Gál family private collection. Translated by the author, with thanks to Eva Fox-Gál and Tony Fox for generously providing this material. Gál might be implicitly comparing his internment with all the other imprisonments which occurred during the World War II period (especially since these notes were written just three years after the war ended). In this sense this assessment is, of course, absolutely accurate. However, as historians Kushner and Cesarani have pointed out, "the significance of alien internment in the modern British experience has to be found within its own national context." See Tony Kushner and David Cesarani, "Conclusion and Epilogue," in *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain* (London: Frank Cass and Company, 1993), 210. Finally, this concert note was clearly not a place where these issues would be examined in any case, so it does not contradict the assessment of this internment as a serious episode.

²⁶⁰ Gál diary, 16 May 1940.

²⁶¹ Gál diary, 7 June 1940.

²⁶² Hans Gál, *Franz Schubert and the Essence of Melody* (New York: Crescendo Publishing, 1977), 12.

Gál, who was consistently and stringently self-critical, was pleased with the finished work, affectionately describing it as “looking as if it were made of air, light and sunbeams.”²⁶³ In fact, years later, Gal further says

During the latest 20 or 25 years of my life as a composer, I mainly wrote chamber music. It was because of the intimacy and the feeling of being perfectly in balance with myself. I can't express it in any different way. So, besides the *Huyton Suite* for flute and two violins, I wrote a Trio for oboe, violin and cello – the most transparent sound, where every note is so essential that one couldn't do without it.²⁶⁴

There were many obstacles for the *Huyton Suite* ensemble to overcome. The original trio was broken up when one violinist was left at Huyton, while Gál and the others were transferred to the Isle of Man. Next, Gál's flutist and one of the violinists were deported to Canada. He then asked an elderly amateur flutist from Berlin, Dr. Hans Fronzig, to play the flute part. As Gál first describes Fronzig, “His flute playing has good tone but he has a weak sense of rhythm and is a poor sight reader. I am curious to see how he will cope with the task, but in any case he is practicing with burning enthusiasm.”²⁶⁵ Unfortunately for Dr. Fronzig, enthusiasm did not compensate for apparent lack of technique. After the first rehearsal Gál lamented, “[the] rehearsal was anything but satisfactory, as poor Fronzig produced considerably more beads of sweat than right notes, and lost his place more easily than he found it again.”²⁶⁶ Shortly afterwards, Fronzig fortunately realised his own musical limitations and decided to pass the part to newcomer Walter Bergmann.²⁶⁷

This work would ultimately enjoy four highly successful performances in Central Camp. At the last performance, there was a British officer in the audience whom Gál simply identifies as “Smith,” very likely Lt. Crowle-Smith.²⁶⁸ Gál credits him with not only being the sole English officer at Huyton or Central who was seriously interested in music, but also the “only one among the officers who associates with us as equals.”²⁶⁹ Crowle-Smith had earlier heard Gál's work

²⁶³ Gál diary, 12 June 1940.

²⁶⁴ Martin Andersen, “Hans Gál in Conversation,” *Journal of the British Music Society* 9 (1987): 33–44. Also available at <http://www.jmi.org.uk/suppressedmusic/newsletter/articles/002.html> (accessed 1 February 2011).

²⁶⁵ Gál diary, 3 July 1940.

²⁶⁶ Gál diary, 11 July 1940.

²⁶⁷ Gál diary, 18 July 1940.

²⁶⁸ First name is unknown.

²⁶⁹ Gál diary, 13 August 1940.

entitled *The Three Princesses* and had been quite impressed.²⁷⁰ Gál's impression of this officer was echoed by a visiting relief worker, Wilfred Israel (who is earlier profiled in the "Visitors" portion of this document), who noted Crowle-Smith's "sincerity of conviction and kindness of heart." Crowle-Smith also remarked during this same visit with Israel that "he had always shown great personal interest in all cases of genuine refugees."²⁷¹

3.3 Musical Challenges

Beyond the overt challenges of wartime and the austerity of the immediate post war period, there were other hurdles for the dissemination and performances of Gál's works, especially outside of Germany and Austria, where his reputation as a composer managed to survive. One of these challenges was the now generally-acknowledged cool climate within Britain towards the acceptance of the contributions of these émigré composers as a whole. Starting in 1934, long before war was declared by Britain, there was already discussion underway in ministerial committee regarding the role of the BBC in a possible future war.²⁷² This conversation grew in intensity as the war progressed, and widened to include the proper role of music in relation to the war effort. There were those who wanted to reduce the amount of German, Austrian, and Italian music played on the air and those who wanted to preserve what they perceived as artistic freedom. One critic of censorship, the editor of *Musical Record*, wrote in September 1939

The empire of politics has no claims on the kingdom of culture; the attempt to incorporate that kingdom would be a wanton and foolish aggression. For that reason contemporary German music, if it is available, should be accepted on exactly the same footing as the music of any other nation.²⁷³

Ostensibly, the reason for not performing "enemy music" was that the royalty fees paid to "enemy composers" would be essentially "bringing aid and comfort to the enemy."²⁷⁴ *The*

²⁷⁰ This is the fourth movement of the Five Songs for Middle Voice and Piano, op.33. My thanks to Erik Levi for this insight. It was performed by Gál and Karg-Bebenburg, as a single movement, in a Central Camp concert.

²⁷¹ Wilfred Israel, "strictly confidential" visitors report, dated 31 December 1940, Friends House Library unpublished archives (London, UK), Box 25.

²⁷² Robert MacKay, "Being Beastly to the Germans: Music, Censorship and the BBC in World War II," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 20, no. 4 (2000): 513–525.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 515.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 516.

Daily Telegraph quoted Adrian Boult as saying there was no ban on German music, “except in so far as it would be necessary to restrict payments of copyright fees to living German composers.”²⁷⁵ By July 1940 a “banned composers” list was adopted; this banned “all works by enemy aliens published in enemy countries.”²⁷⁶ This move led to heated discussions within the BBC (although the ban was *not* announced to the public) of what constituted undesirable music and whether *Siegfried Idyll* should be allowed but not *Siegfried*.²⁷⁷ In this charged atmosphere, certain works such as *Finlandia* by Sibelius were banned; this ban was upheld to 1945 (which extended even beyond the 1944 armistice between Russia and Finland).²⁷⁸ Composers such as Richard Strauss were criticized, as he was “notoriously anti-British during the last war and is evidently the same way today, or he would long ago have become a refugee.”²⁷⁹ This overall dynamic was complex and a full exploration of this war-time atmosphere is beyond the scope of this discussion. However, it is one aspect of the sort of hurdles that German and Austrian émigré composers in Britain faced during the war.

The 1949 competition which was held to select the “best new British opera” pointedly illustrates this climate.²⁸⁰ The winning compositions were then to be performed in the 1951 Festival of Britain. All submissions were judged anonymously to ensure fairness. The four winning entries turned out to have been written by two refugee composers, Karl Rankl and Berthold Goldschmidt, as well as two openly Communist composers, Alan Bush and Arthur Benjamin.²⁸¹ However,

The hoped-for performances of the winning operas never took place. The new English operas performed at the Royal Opera House through the Festival of Britain were Benjamin Britten’s *Billy Budd* and Ralph Vaughan Williams’ *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. Years later, Berthold Goldschmidt philosophically admitted that he had, if nothing else, contributed to the canon of English-language opera.²⁸²

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Ibid. Exceptions were allowed, especially in the area of light music. For example, the exclusion of Lehar was viewed as too damaging to the commerce of British theatre, light opera companies, and so forth.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 519.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Ralph Hill, editorial column, *Radio Times*, 1 November 1940, quoted in MacKay, “Being Beastly to the Germans,” 517.

²⁸⁰ Michael Haas, “The Émigré Composers,” Jewish Music Institute, <http://www.jmi.org.uk/suppressedmusic/composers.html> (accessed 11 August 2010).

²⁸¹ David Gordon and Peter Gordon, “The Émigré Composers: His Majesty’s Most Loyal Internees,” in *Musical Visitors to Britain* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 208.

²⁸² Michael Haas, “The Émigré Composers,” Jewish Music Institute, <http://www.jmi.org.uk/suppressedmusic/composers.html#top> (accessed 28 May 2010).

The decade of the 1970s, particularly within the British musical establishment, was a time of fascination with all things *avant garde* and enthusiasm ran high for the experimental. This taste for the radically new also certainly did not work in Gál's favour, nor did it foster a positive reception of Gál's works during that period within the British musical establishment. Indeed, this prevailing taste for the new led other relatively traditionalist composers, such as Berthold Goldschmidt, to simply stop composing altogether.²⁸³

In 1970, furthermore, Gál was already eighty years old (indeed, Gál worked productively until the very last of his ninety-seven years). His longevity paradoxically worked somewhat to his disadvantage when it came to his compositional reception—as a living composer a degree of modernity might be expected, yet keeping up with musical trends was not what interested or motivated Gál.²⁸⁴ Gál's attitude towards aleatoric music, an emerging compositional approach in the post-war period, for example, is summed up with his wry statement: “In the music where there are no wrong notes, it follows there can be no right notes either.”²⁸⁵ Rather, his musical approach relies on classical forms, a pervasive lyricism and a restrained, yet Romantically inspired, harmonic language.

Gál's particular individual style had developed along the trajectory of his “musical grandfather,” Johannes Brahms. Gál enjoyed a direct connection to Brahms through Eusebius Mandyczewski, Gál's highly influential counterpoint and form teacher. According to Gál, during the last two decades of Brahms's life, Mandyczewski was one of the master's closest associates. This influence and insight was solidified in the time Gál spent with Mandyczewski as they together compiled the Breitkopf and Härtel complete edition of Brahms' works. Reflecting on this inheritance, he says, “If I thus consider myself the last surviving bearer of a direct Brahms tradition, I do so in all humility and without overestimating this circumstance, but nevertheless with a sense of obligation to pass on my experiences to the best of my ability.”²⁸⁶

²⁸³ From 1958 to 1982 Goldschmidt, discouraged by the lack of interest in his compositions, entirely stopped composing. Fortunately for Goldschmidt, a renewed appreciation of his work took root in the 1980s, led by the recording companies Largo and Decca and prominent musicians including Simon Rattle and Charles Dutoit. Michael Haas, “The Émigré Composers,” under “Berthold Goldschmidt,” <http://www.jmi.org.uk/suppressedmusic/composers.html#goldschmidt> (accessed 17 July 2010).

²⁸⁴ Eva Fox-Gál and Anthony Fox, “Gál's music,” <http://hansgal.com/biography/25-galsmusic.html> (accessed 30 May 2010).

²⁸⁵ Margaret Moncrieff-Kelly, Hans Gál Personal Tribute, <http://www.musicweb-international.com/classrev/2003/Mar03/gal.htm> (accessed 15 August 2010).

²⁸⁶ Hans Gál, preface to *Johannes Brahms: His Work and Personality*, trans. Joseph Stein (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), vi.

One might reasonably expect that this direct musical linkage to Brahms would make Gál a living and priceless connection to this estimable Germanic musical tradition. This was certainly true of his musical admirers, which included prominent conductors Rudolf Schwartz, Fritz Busch and Otto Schmidtgen.²⁸⁷ However, the link to tradition also seems to have had the unfortunate effect, in certain eras of musical tastes, of fostering the perception that he was a bit “outdated,” a quaint feature of a bygone era.²⁸⁸ Besides the obvious career derailment wrought by the Nazi period, this incongruity between the then prevailing winds of musical fashion and his own artistic sensibility was undoubtedly one of the factors in the delayed post-war recognition of Gál’s work.

3.4 Reception of the *Huyton Suite*

It is not surprising that along with the ambivalence associated with any overall discussion of internment, there has also been a corresponding ambivalence in the reception of the musical works which were clearly written during internment (distinguished either by title or content). Looking closely at the history of reception of *Huyton Suite*, interesting aspects of this ambivalence emerge. The work was intended to contain a short preface, written by the composer. This original text reads:

In Huyton, a village near Liverpool, the composer spent a part of the summer of 1940 amongst a couple of thousand interned ‘enemy aliens’ behind a barbed wire. At a time when no piano was to be found within these precincts and hardly any music at all, this suite was written for a trio of musicians who happened to be available with their instruments: a flute and two violins. And this trio provided an entertainment, there and later at Douglas, Isle of Man, which some of my fellow internees may still remember, as they may remember a bugle signal, the daily morning call, which is quoted both in the first and the last movement.²⁸⁹

However, this mild and matter-of-fact description of the context of this composition was left out. In a 1979 interview, Gál mentions that the publisher didn’t include the preface he had intended.²⁹⁰ Gál does not give an explanation for the exclusion: it is possible that the publisher,

²⁸⁷ Eva Fox-Gal and Anthony Fox, “Wartime Works” and “New Works,” <http://hansgal.com/biography/21-wartimeworks.html> and <http://hansgal.com/biography/22-newworks.html> (accessed 15 August 2010).

²⁸⁸ Ibid., “Gál’s music,” <http://hansgal.com/biography/25-galsmusic.html> (accessed 15 August 2010).

²⁸⁹ Hans Gál, from the note preceding the original work, Gál family private collection.

²⁹⁰ Hans Gál interview, Imperial War Museum (London, UK), Department of Sound Records, accession number 4304. Sound recording on cassette tape, transcribed by author.

Simrock, simply did not want to bother with additional translation and printing costs. However, it is also quite possible that Simrock preferred to avoid an overt reference to an unpleasant chapter in British recent collective memory. There may have been some concern that public acknowledgement of this history might potentially dampen enthusiasm for the work, or even worse, Gál's *oeuvre* in general. Perhaps it was seen as prudent in terms of social mores and/or sheer economics to simply avoid mentioning the context of this work altogether.

Gál did not apparently include a preface to any of his other compositions, so the fact that this was his only work bearing an explanatory preface might seem to be significant. Also, the fact that he mentions the preface to the interviewer, years after it had been written, might also lead one to think that this preface statement was of some significance to him. As both a writer of prose (as evident throughout his written account of his internment, *Musik hinter Stacheldraht*), and a composer, Gál was extremely precise in his language. He was typically understated and by nature a private and restrained person. In fact, one German radio producer would say of Gál that he was, “the most unpushy composer I have ever met.”²⁹¹ Given this personal and compositional style, it would follow that Gál believed this short preface to be significant—if it were not, he would not have wanted to include it.

A somewhat resigned attitude in general towards publishers comes across in Gál's writings. In his book *Franz Schubert and the Essence of Melody*, Gál discusses Schubert's smaller piano pieces (which, as he points out, had titles chosen and affixed to them by the publishers, rather than the composer). In one work, the *Impromptu* op. 90, no. 3, he notes that the publisher even changed the key, from G-flat major to G-major, ostensibly to make it more accessible. However, Gál points out this not only changed the sound of the work but, ironically, detracted from the playability of the work. Betraying his own personal attitude, Gál writes that “Schubert must have realised long ago that there was no point in protesting the arbitrary interference of publishers.”²⁹² In any case, as a result of this interference, subsequent generations of performers would have little way of knowing the important and unusual historical context of the *Huyton Suite*.

While it is not surprising that works intended for a specific, non-reproducible context like the revue *What a Life!* might remain generally inaccessible to modern performers (this work has

²⁹¹ Roger Oliver, “Hans Gál at 95,” *Tempo*, New Series no. 155 (December 1985): 2–7.

²⁹² Hans Gál, *Franz Schubert and the Essence of Melody* (New York: Crescendo Publishing, 1977), 149.

remained in a “print on demand” status, and is only available by private arrangement), Gál might have expected a work like *Huyton Suite* to have broad appeal. *Huyton Suite* was composed in 1940, and it was first published (although without an opus number) in 1948, by M and H Publications.²⁹³ The work was republished in 1970 by N. Simrock. Gál clearly believed in this work, but his personality was such that he likely did not forcefully promote this work. Gál, like many an artist, preferred to put his energy into composing and performing. Near the end of his life Gál described his own personal approach to this aspect of his career, stating

I was never very active in promoting my own cause, and when I came to this country, not far off fifty, I was practically unable to do it, so what happened on my behalf happened through friends, through musicians who were interested in my work – through others. I was much too passive to do anything.²⁹⁴

The *Huyton Suite*, the *Serenade* for clarinet, violin and cello, and the Trio for oboe, violin and viola (op. 92, 93 and 94, respectively) were all published in 1970 by N. Simrock. All of these works were without piano, and all were written much earlier, during the chaotic years of 1940, 1935 and 1941, respectively.²⁹⁵

When writing about the lack of appreciation during Schubert’s lifetime for his works, Gál notes that “an outstanding achievement can be misunderstood for various reasons.”²⁹⁶ He then reminds his readers that Bach had been wrongly assessed for being too learned, and Schubert for at least *appearing* not learned enough. Interestingly, this last scenario seems to apply to the critical reception of *Huyton Suite* as well.

The work was entirely dismissed in *The Musical Times* review of July 1972 by Peter J. Pirie.²⁹⁷ This negative review followed Pirie’s glowing review of *Imaginini*, a work by Wolfgang Fortner, a proponent of the modernist Darmstadt School, in which the reviewer seemed most impressed by the sheer volume of information on the page. The reviewer actually appears to not address the central substantive issues: the musical substance and the musical intent of the work. He then turns to Gál. Clearly Pirie personally preferred modernist styles, but the fact that Gál was not a modernist should have been irrelevant for a fair assessment of the work. However,

²⁹³ Eva Fox-Gál, e-mail message to author, 13 August 2010.

²⁹⁴ Martin Andersen, “Hans Gál in Conversation,” *Journal of the British Music Society* 9 (1987): 33–44.

²⁹⁵ Eva Fox Gál and Anthony Fox, “Catalogue of Works,” <http://hansgal.com/catalogue-eng.html> (accessed 31 May 2010).

²⁹⁶ Gál, *Schubert and Essence of Melody*, 13

²⁹⁷ Peter J. Pirie, review of *Huyton Suite* by Hans Gál in *The Musical Times* 113, no. 1553 (July 1972): 700–1.

Pirie begins by stating that “(a)ll four works by Gál look painfully alike, and after the Fortner their rather unenterprising conventionality verges on the banal.”²⁹⁸ He goes on to merely list the keys in which the works happen to be, and the number of movements they all possess, as if this sums up the music. In effect, classical proportion, lyrical melodic writing and masterful control of form were merely dismissed as “nineteenth century cliché.”²⁹⁹ This review, which must have discouraged potential players, was fairly representative of the sort of reception challenges Gál experienced during this era.³⁰⁰ Gál’s expression towards this sort of rejection was “Das Papier ist geduldig” [paper is patient]!³⁰¹ A consolation for Gál when encountering this sort of reaction—which was fairly representative during this era—must have been his knowledge that, in being completely dismissed, he was in the company of many a great composer who had gone before him.

3.5 What a Life!

What a Life!, a bilingual camp revue, took place in September 1940 and enjoyed two highly successful performances. This revue included popular cabaret style songs, improvisational dialogue, acting, stage painting, scenery and props (which included massive, oversized masks for caricatured portrayals of then contemporary historical figures, such as Hitler), and poetic text, in addition to a chamber orchestra score. The musical style itself could be fairly characterised as light and popular in style. The Entracte movement and the Quodlibet scene are the fullest in terms of orchestration, utilizing the entire chamber ensemble. The Entracte material is repeated at the end of the Revue, where it concludes with a charming string quartet. Each song musically features a single solo instrument, such as the flute in “The Barbed Wire Song”, the clarinet in the “Song of the Double Bed,” the cello in “The Cleaning up Song,” and the violin in the “Women’s Song.” As Gál observed, this approach provides “colour, each of the players can enjoy a solo, and our unpracticed singers on stage will be reliably accompanied by the piano and not be confused by an orchestral accompaniment.”³⁰² Therefore, the music to each of the scenes is lightly orchestrated, with the piano acting as the element which holds the entire structure

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Eva Fox Gál, email correspondence to author, 4 June 2010.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Gál diary, 26 August 1940.

together. In fact, in the revue performances given in the camp, Gál directed from and played the piano, which was placed in the centre of the orchestra.³⁰³

Because the nature of this revue was highly improvisational, the entire revue has unfortunately not survived in its original form. However, abundant primary sources offer detailed accounts of both of these performances, and from these we can surmise the overall form and intent of the revue.³⁰⁴ In addition, the extant concert programme for the second revue, given on 26 September 1940, identified and attributed many of the artistic contributions.³⁰⁵ This included the flutist Nicolo Draber, the clarinetist Wolfgang Lesser, the pianist Erwin Weiss, the cellist Erich H. Meier and the young violinist Erich Markowitz. Contributing visual artists included Rudolf Wallfried, Peter Strausfeld, Paul Humpoletz and Moritz Wolff. From the programme alone, it is clear that this revue was a large scale effort; sheer lack of space prevented listing all contributors on the programme.³⁰⁶

This enterprise completely absorbed Central's artistic community, including Gál, who wrote the orchestral score. This inclusivity is striking. *What a Life!* involved nearly the entire spectrum of the internee community, from the very modest contributions of a young teenager who made the copies of the revue programme on the Camp Office copying machine, to the "actors" Herr Levy and Herr Meyer who had never acted before, but successfully "played themselves" on stage, to the more involved contributions of film professional turned theatre director G. M. Höllering, Gál as conductor and musical director, and the orchestra musicians, who were a thorough mix of professionals and amateurs. Among them was the seventeen-year old Wolfgang Lesser, the later President of the East German Union of Composers and Musicologists (1985–1989).³⁰⁷ The multifaceted Dr. Rudolf Pick doubled as an *opera buffa*-type singer in this revue as well as serving as a cantor in the camp, at least until the High Holy days

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Many individuals refer to this revue in their memoirs or diaries, including Hans Gál's *Musik hinter Stacheldraht*, Fritz Ball's memoir "Dreimal interniert" and Gerald Friedman's memoir "You Bloody Alien: Part I: Diary of a German Jewish Survivor in British Custody in World War II."

³⁰⁵ 'What a Life!' concert programme, Fox-Gál family papers. My thanks to the Fox-Gál family for allowing generous access to this and other Gál papers.

³⁰⁶ The programme remarks, "There are many others who have also helped in the production, but it is impossible to mention them individually here."

³⁰⁷ In 1942 Lesser became a member of the Communist Party of Germany. He then (1943–7) served in the British Army, followed by formal studies in composition at the East Berlin Hochschule für Musik (1950–4). In 1971 he became a member of the East German parliament, and later became President of the East German Union of Composers and Musicologists (1985–9). Gabriele Baumgartner and Dieter Hebig, *Biographisches Handbuch der SBZ/DDR 1945–1990* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1996–7), 474.

when the two camp “careers” became unseemly.³⁰⁸ Another singer in this revue was Hans Karg-Bebenburg, mentioned earlier in this document.

Each scene in this revue pointedly represents a specific aspect of internment. The titles of the scenes were:

1. The arrival of the Internees
2. The Camp representatives
3. Roll call
4. Seaside Promenade
5. Camp Offices
6. A Picture Puzzle
7. Camp Conservatory
8. Another Picture Puzzle
9. Camp Youth
10. The Little Coffeehouse
11. Put that light out!

At the very bottom of the programme, under the listing of the movements, is an added line which read: “Perhaps more, perhaps less, perhaps nothing!” This tongue in cheek note refers to the freshly created, improvisatory nature of this revue. In fact, there were many changes made after its first performance, largely in order to entice the audience to part with their three pence for a second performance. Attendance at the first revue was larger than had been expected, despite camp regulations of a maximum of 1,000 internees in the theatre at one time. The reason for this was simply that British military regulations required that the ratio be 20 soldiers per every thousand men, and there were simply not enough soldiers to guard two thousand, which was the total number of seats in the theatre.³⁰⁹ Apparently there were “blind eyes turned”; this led the producers of the revue to worry that they might not have an adequate turnout to cover the costs of production if the revue was simply repeated. As a result it was decided to make many changes to entice internees to attend a second performance. Gál mentions that admission for this second

³⁰⁸ Gál diary, 15 September 1940. Dr. Pick also led a weekly Buddhist meditation group in Central.

³⁰⁹ Gál diary, 5 August 1940.

performance was an unprecedentedly high fee of six pence; funds were being raised from these ticket sales to benefit air raid victims.³¹⁰ He also notes that two thirds of the second performance of the revue was new, and therefore they had higher than expected production costs.³¹¹

The noise of musicians practicing was incorporated into the movement titled “Camp Conservatory.” This movement was (and remains, in this performer’s estimation) not nearly as simple to perform as one might expect. This “practice noise” was represented by an amusing mixture of fragments from the classical repertoire—a so-called “quodlibet.” In the first revue performance the players simply played randomly, mixing together famous strands of classical pieces, to illustrate the reality of musical practice in the camp. Gál was amused when an elderly gentleman approached him after the first performance, telling him that the part he liked best was this conservatory scene, “where they all play so beautifully mixed up together.” The fact that the man “took this pandemonium to be music” struck Gál as very amusing. However, it also led him to wonder, “Why should one not actually compose the scene? Everyone plays something different, but together it can still make a piece of music.”³¹² The end result, although it sounds improvised, is fully composed. The bass soloist sings the popular tune *Auch ich ein Jüngling mit lockigem Haar*, which serves as a “cantus firmus,” while the various orchestral instruments weave snippets of famous melodies through the overall fabric. This movement portrayed the opinion of many internees that music making had become a “major nuisance.”³¹³

What a Life! had serious moments as well, the “Ballad for Poor Jacob” and the “Ballad of the German Refugee.” The poetic text for these two sections of the revue were written by world-renowned sociologist Norbert Elias and the acclaimed musicologist, Otto Erich Deutsch, respectively. Regarding the text, Gál said; “There is no one here who is really a professional [librettist]. I think of Deutsch, who looks as if he might have written poetry in his youth. He is very skilled as a writer and has helped us with a lot of things. for example, he provided the first, German part of the Black Out Song. Höllering got hold of him straight away; he likes the idea and will give it a try.”³¹⁴

Concerning Elias’ contribution to the second version of the revue, Gál writes that

³¹⁰ Gál diary, 20 September 1940.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Gál diary, 7 September 1940.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Gál diary, 6 September 1940.

Professor Elias, the sociologist, who it now appears, also has a literary side to him, came with a very unusual and extremely interesting work, half in prose, half in verse, which is to be performed with music and illustrated with some kind of living pictures, "The Ballad of Poor Jacob."³¹⁵

In both of these the seriousness of the refugee situation is portrayed through the text and the tone of the overall music. For example, this Ballade begins with a chorus, posing the below questions to persecutors of Jews, in the four different locales (Munich, Holland, Belgium and Paris) portrayed in this song:

Why, then, can you not bear them?
Why do you wish to beat them yourselves?
Instead of quarreling among yourselves, you would rather find a weakling, thrash him, thump him, and bash him together with a "Juchheiserassa" and "Juche"!³¹⁶

The plight of the Jew, constantly seeking refuge and instead finding persecution, is the subject of this Ballade. The refrain, which returns in slightly altered forms five times, reads:

And then the two together beat the poor, little Jakob
until he was out of breath,
and until, finally, there was not much left to beat.³¹⁷

At this point the text then describes Jakob seeking a home in the aforementioned European locales. In each he is the object of scapegoating and prejudice, and is forced to leave. As this somber narrative unfolds, there are musical interludes which periodically punctuate the text, but the music is never presented simultaneously with the text.

The refrain repeatedly concludes with the words:

And then Jakob goes on, without money
And he goes a bit further into the wide, wide world.³¹⁸

Gál initially had misgivings about this undertaking, as he personally abhorred any kind of

³¹⁵ Gál diary, 15 September 1940.

³¹⁶ Exclamations meaning something akin to "hurrah" and "whoopie!" In this context, these exclamations imply a great deal of sadism. The original German text reads: "Warum könnt ihr euch denn nicht vertragen? Warum wollt ihr denen euch selber schlagen? Statt euch miteinander zu verkrachen sucht euch lieber einen Schwachen und verdrescht ihn und verhaut ihn und verprügelt ihn gemeinsam mit Juchheiserassa und Juche!" Translation courtesy of Alexander Fisher.

³¹⁷ The original German text reads: "Und dann schlugen beide im Verein auf den armen kleinen Jakob ein bis ihnen die Puste ausging, und bis da schliesslich auch nicht mehr viel zu schlagen war." Translation courtesy of Alexander Fisher.

³¹⁸ The original German text reads: "Und dann zog der Jakob öhne Geld wieder ein Stück weiter in die weite, weite Welt." Translation courtesy of Alexander Fisher.

what he termed “melodrama”; in addition, he feared that the serious nature of the work would not be appropriate for a revue. However, he says he was “half won over” when he saw the poem, and decided on an approach which he felt would avoid the dreaded “melodrama”: namely, that the music would only start when the prose turned to verse. Höllering, the director of the revue, was not worried about the apparent incongruity of the seriousness of the material. According to Gál, Höllering was enjoying experimentation almost solely for its own sake.³¹⁹

Another change made from the first revue to the second was the replacement of Dr. Rudolf Pick because of the approach of the Jewish High Holy Days. Gál acknowledges that “[Pick] seems to feel he would lose dignity if he were to appear as a buffoon on the stage. Buffo and cantor are admittedly occupations which are hard to combine.”³²⁰

Fritz Ball, who performed in the first show, recalled that

The review was excellent. The rehearsals took place in the theatre. All the scenes were played behind barbed wire [...] and the whole effect was successful and funny. Our lives in the camp were represented in these scenes, and the concluding scene showed a soldier shouting that we should turn out the light in the room. But it is all dark in the room, except for the moon still shining through the window. Finally a sentry “turns out the moon” [represented on stage by a light that is switched off], while the entire house sings together the refrain of the final song under the little light that can be seen. Naturally there is no lack of pointed jokes against the guards and the officers present laughed heartily.³²¹

On the surface the revue was intended as entertainment. One teenaged internee, Gerald M. Friedman, made the following comments, which are interesting for their factual details:

I went to the Palace to see the show *What a Life* for the benefit of the air raid victims. In the first row were the officers. There were three or four majors, captains, etc. Among them was the distinguished Captain Davidson from Bloomsbury House and later on another man who I knew very well from London wearing a Captain’s uniform. On the stage they showed me the following: first there was a scene of the arrival of internees, and then various parts of the camp were shown. In the front a white horse with a big ink-pot trot over the stage. The Camp Representatives. The Camp council, doctors among which there were two men carrying a torn out tooth, camp office, document office, post office with a letter which took two months to get here, *Rechtsausschluss*

³¹⁹ Gál diary, 15 September 1940.

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ The original text reads: “Die Revue war ausgezeichnet. Die Proben fanden im Theater statt. Alle Szenenbilder spielten hinter dem Stacheldraht [...] und das Ganze war sehr gelungen und drollig. Unser Leben im Lager wurde in vielen Bildern dargestellt, und das Schlussbild zeigte wie die Soldaten immer riefen wir sollen das Licht in den Zimmern ausmachen. Es ist aber alles dunkel in den Zimmern und nur der Mond schien von den Fenstern wieder. Schliesslich knipst ein Posten den Mond aus, waehrend das ganze Haus den Refrain des letzten Schlagers, ueber das Bisschen Licht, das man scheinen sieht, mitsingt. Natuerlich fehlte es in der Revue nicht an derben Witzen gegen die Gefangenenwaerter, und die Offiziere, die der Revue beiwohnten lachten kraeftig mit.” Excerpted from Fritz Ball’s memoir and generously provided by Sandra Ball. Translation by author with assistance from Alexander Fisher. Ball would ultimately be released before the second show.

[legal office], Lost Property office...then a boy in a sack jumped over the stage with the letters FREEDOM. Then the “Ballad of the German Refugee” was recited, how they suffered in Germany, then came over to England and were interned. Then he attacked the Nazis and when he spoke of them the curtain was drawn away and revealed Hitler with a knife and blood all over himself looking like a human killing butcher, Goebbel’s with a devil leg, Himmler like Master Death with a scythe, and Ribbentrop carrying bottles of wine [...]

After the interval “Ballad of Poor Jacob” was recited on the stage, beaten up in Munich, fled over the Dutch border, was sent to the Belgium border, from there to the Dutch border again, then back to Belgium, always imprisoned and beaten up, then to France, was interned, then fled again, etc., always wandering around the wide wide world. The next play [scene] was “Put that Light Out.” Two chaps were in a bed, guards always shouting “Lights Out!” Then he gets up, dreams that he goes with a gas mask and walks to the barbed wire which drops in front of him. Then he awakes the next morning still in bed.³²²

This reference to Hitler, Goebbel, Himmler and Ribbentrop which Friedman mentions in his diary is explained in Gál’s diary. Gál says

Deutsch is working at high pressure on his barbed-wire ballad. When he brings four verses, three are rejected and the fourth reshaped. But he doesn’t get disheartened, keeps having new ideas and eventually manages what I want of him. The first group of four verses is now complete and it is extremely powerful. We tried it out with Baum, including the music.³²³ He does it excellently and the effect is extraordinary. The fourth verse is about the leaders of the Third Reich. Höllering has had a series of life-size, terribly bloodthirsty caricatures painted, which will file past behind the ballad singer. That is just at the limits of good taste, but such things are excusable under the circumstances.³²⁴

The primary intention of the revue was to entertain. However, in process and product alike there was also deeper significance. This deeper meaning was apparent to at least some of their audience. “This morning one [audience member] told me how priceless he had enjoyed himself, and how he then cried half the night because it was so dreadful. So there are such sensitive people.”³²⁵

As for Gál himself,

the whole creative process, this direct involvement with and in amongst the realities of the stage, this improvisation, experimentation, the immediate confronting of the conceptual with the living manifestation, has been something incredibly stimulating and refreshing. Through it I feel as though I have once more come closer to the essence of things, and it has been exactly the same for my colleagues. For our comrades we shall be giving a lovely performance, a nice, stimulating evening of theatre. For ourselves it is certainly more than that.³²⁶

³²² Friedman diary, 26 September 1940.

³²³ Baum was the speaker for the Ballade of Poor Jacob.

³²⁴ Gál diary, 15 September 1940.

³²⁵ Gál diary, 3 September 1940.

³²⁶ Gál diary, 22 September 1940.

Years later, Gál was asked if he, a serious composer, had found it “somewhat trivial” to write the music for this revue. He remarked, “Not at all, because it was such a genuine improvisation, written within days [...] with gifted performers, gifted singers, actors ... everything there was real, it was a real community.”³²⁷

³²⁷ Hans Gál interview, Imperial War Museum (London, UK), Department of Sound Records, accession number 004304/04. Sound recording on cassette, transcribed by author.

Chapter 4 Conclusion

Although the British internment period was of a relatively short duration, it had a significant effect upon many interned individuals and their families. Responses to the experience were utterly individual, yet the effects of internment were often marked and serious in nature. As discussed earlier in this document, the prevailing emphasis in the literature until very recently has often been on the cultural achievements of the internees, with an eye for the comic, ironic, or absurd aspects of the internment. However, more recent research better weighs the totality of the internment experience, in its tragic as well as lighter aspects.

The musical culture within this specific internment period has heretofore been largely ignored, except in peripherally in other more general research on internment. It was evident that music played an important role within internment life, but this aspect has not yet been explored fully. Richard Dove's research provides a starting point, but it limits itself to the vantage points of the director and the conductor. Dove notes the "ephemeral nature of artistic performance" which is "compounded by the absence of contemporary records and artefacts in the improvised circumstances of internment."³²⁸ However, there is greater existing evidence than might first appear.

It is true that music is indeed ephemeral, but even within such an ephemeral art there often remains quite significant material evidence for musical phenomena. Revealing these processes of music-making in internment sheds further light on both the biographies of the individual interned musicians—such as Gál, Reizenstein, and Bergmann—as well as the role of internment within the respective musicians' lives and work. Although the fact that musicians had been interned was certainly known, we have lacked until this point a study of their particular experiences. There was also considerable ambivalence surrounding the phenomenon of internment itself, which has been explored in some detail in this document. The result of that combined neglect and ambivalence was a "blind spot" concerning the music of this internment period. This lack of attention has been evident in the existing historiography of these émigré musicians, although this is a newly emerging area of study.

³²⁸ Richard Dove, "Wer sie nicht erlebt hat, der begriefft sie nie. The Internment Camp Revue *What a Life*," in *Totally Un-English: Britain's Internment of 'Enemy Aliens' in Two World Wars*, ed. Richard Dove (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 122.

This document has demonstrated the extensive musical activity within Central Camp, particularly highlighting the central contributions of Bergmann, Gál and Reizenstein. It is hoped that the biographical data, especially of those lesser known musicians such as Draber, Ball and Blumen, will also acknowledge and honour their individual experiences. Furthermore, the experiences of these lesser known or largely forgotten figures, such as Blumen, help to put a human face on an historical event—the internment—that too often has been trivialised or minimised. The individual narratives of these musicians, as pieced together by the remaining body of evidence, makes doubly clear that this internment experience was far from insignificant.

The musical legacy stemming from this particular internment had not been systematically explored prior to this research. This specifically musical legacy, as it related to Huyton and Central Camps, is particularly embodied in three new compositions: Gál's *What a Life!* revue and the *Huyton Suite*, as well as Reizenstein's *Ballet Suite*. It is also reflected in the many other, though perhaps more subtle, internee achievements, such as Bergmann's new editions, premiered in Central by the Central Chamber Orchestra during December 1940. It remains to future research to uncover the music which was composed in other camps and other internment periods.

Another “deeper” but nonetheless central issue to the study of the internment during World War II is the degree to which the active process of music making served to bolster emotional resiliency. This is striking, and gives testimony to the value of music itself. As discussed throughout this document, and as is made clear from extensive examination of the literature and relevant unpublished archives, music was critically important on what one could variously call a “spiritual” or “emotional” level. Given that suicide was such a serious and actual risk in these camps, music therefore arguably helped some at-risk internees simply to survive.

Also not to be forgotten are those musicians who by virtue of their internment were able to concentrate on their art practice, such as the teenaged violinist Sigmund Nissel and the young pianist Hans G. Furth. This unanticipated result, which was often (but not exclusively) experienced by the more youthful internees, could significantly alter one's overall experience, or perception, of internment. In this manner, the internment sometimes could shift from a purely negative to a more nuanced experience, one characterised not only by privation but also by surprising benefits to one's artistic practice.

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Appendices: Selected Biographies of Interned Musicians

Here I offer the reader some more detailed biographical discussion of several musicians who, apart from Gál, assumed particularly important roles in the musical culture of these British internment camps. First, Nicolo Draber and Walter Bergmann were flutists who were directly involved with the creation of the *Huyton Suite* and/or the revue *What a Life!* Norbert Elias, as the author of the poetic text to the “Ballade of Poor Jakob,” is also profiled, as is Otto Erich Deutsch, who was the author of the poetic text to “Ballade of the German Refugee.” Franz Reizenstein was the most musically active and prominent composer interned in Central alongside Gál; the two men not only knew each other but seemed to enjoy a respectful and cordial (though somewhat competitive) relationship. After Gál was released, Reizenstein played a key role in the musical life of the camp. Alfred Blumen’s biography represents the multitude of those performers displaced by the events of the war years, and his profile balanced the profiles of those musicians who were more successful at continuing their respective musical careers. Egon Wellesz, as a composer, is an important representative of the more modernist style of composition, in juxtaposition to Gál’s more conservative compositional style; the two men were contemporaries, being born only five years apart and both enjoying long and productive lives. Like Gál, Wellesz was also a very established and respected composer on the Continent by the time he emigrated to Britain. Wellesz also exemplifies the many distinguished artists, such as composer and conductor Karl Rankl, who were known to be temporarily silenced by the stress of exile and internment.

A1 Egon Wellesz

Egon Wellesz (1885–1974) had been one of Schoenberg’s earliest pupils (from 1904 to 1906) at the University of Vienna, and in fact published the first biography of his mentor in 1921.³²⁹ By 1925, no less a figure than Nadia Boulanger had recognized Wellesz’s potential as a

³²⁹ Egon Wellesz, *Arnold Schönberg* (Leipzig: E.P. Tal, 1921). Cited in Phillip Ward, “Egon Wellesz” in Michael Haas, “The Émigré Composers,” <http://www.jmi.org.uk/suppressedmusic/composers.html#wellesz> (accessed 28 May 2010).

composer, and pronounced him “the most promising disciple of Schoenberg.”³³⁰ On the Continent, Wellesz had enjoyed considerable success as a composer prior to the outbreak of war, forging a successful dual career in composing and musicology (specializing in Baroque and Byzantine music). Bruno Walter and Wellesz were together in Amsterdam at the time of the *Anschluss*, where Walter was conducting performances of Wellesz’s tone poem *Prosperos Beschwörungen*. At the advice of friends, Wellesz left for England rather than return to his native Austria. His musical style, being modernist, was clearly not of the type the Nazi regime would tolerate, and he was also of Jewish birth despite his recent conversion to Catholicism. Like Gál, Wellesz regarded the year 1940 as an extremely low point in his life.³³¹ Prior to the war years, Wellesz had many long standing professional ties to the British musical world. In fact, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Oxford in 1932 for his efforts in promoting contemporary British music. As a co-founder of the International Society of Contemporary Music, Wellesz had been responsible for introducing the music of contemporary British composers including Gustav Holst, Arthur Bliss, and Ralph Vaughan Williams to Continental audiences.³³² Despite this strong connection to British culture, Wellesz was arrested on 5 July 1940 from Oxford, where he had become a fellow of Lincoln College.³³³ Many academics were arrested directly from their college rooms and shipped by train to undisclosed destinations, which in Wellesz’s case was a transit camp in Seaton, Devon.³³⁴ Their personal belongings were confiscated, and the men were examined for venereal diseases.³³⁵ Very unluckily for Wellesz, he was then transferred to Wharf Mills at Bury—arguably the worst of all of the British internment camps.³³⁶ In addition to the deplorable physical conditions, there was also little to keep the mind distracted from this awful reality. This undoubtedly demoralising experience might very well have contributed to the continued suspension of his creativity: he did not compose anything between 1937 and 1943.³³⁷ One has to question: if Wellesz had not been interned, might he have

³³⁰ Olin Downes, *New York Times*, 20 Jan 1925.

³³¹ Caroline Cepen Benser, *Egon Wellesz (1885–1974): Chronicle of a Twentieth-Century Musician* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1985), 161.

³³² *Ibid.*, 59.

³³³ David Gordon and Peter Gordon, “The Émigré Composers: His Majesty’s Most Loyal Internees,” in *Musical Visitors to Britain* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 209.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 208.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*

³³⁷ Cepen Benser, *Egon Wellesz*, 161.

emerged sooner from this compositional dry spell? Fortunately for Wellesz he was again transferred, this time to Hutchinson, which was a far more tolerable situation, as we have seen. During his internment Wellesz managed to fruitfully shift his attention from composition to scholarly activity and, in this capacity, fully participated in the cultural life of Hutchinson. He gave lectures on several topics, including opera, Byzantine music, and modern Viennese music.³³⁸ According to his friend and fellow internee Dr. Richard Friedenthal,

There were lectures on any possible subject of the world. And since people had nothing to do, they went to any lecture [...] My good friend [...] Egon Wellesz [before internment] did a lecture on Byzantine music and all the times [sic] had perhaps three listeners [...] Now, he had three hundred or five hundred, you know, who eagerly discussed the finer points of Byzantine music.³³⁹

A2 Walter Bergmann

Walter Bergmann (1902–1988) was born into a musical family. He first learned the piano as a youngster and later took up the flute in his early teens. Believing that law would be a more practical career path during a time of serious economic and political instability in Germany, he decided to pursue the law as a profession rather than music. Later in life he attributed this choice to the fact that he had strong feelings regarding injustice and “saw red when injustice or violence were done.”³⁴⁰ Ironically, his musical abilities would ultimately save his life, as music was the means by which he was able to immigrate to Britain. Being versed in German law was not a transferable skill, but being a musician was.

While still in Germany, Bergmann’s Jewish ancestry had been made public during divorce proceedings from his first wife. As a result of this fact, and compounded with other circumstances, Bergmann was arrested on 11 June 1938, and imprisoned. The conditions of this imprisonment were harsh, and included solitary confinement and interrogation by the Gestapo. He was then turned over to the regular German courts. This, as writer Anne Martin points out, was “fortunate, as it gave him protection from disappearing [possibly into a concentration camp] and his family knew where he was.”³⁴¹ While in prison, Bergmann resigned from the

³³⁸ Gordon and Gordon, “Émigré Composers: Loyal Internees,” 208–209.

³³⁹ Richard Friedenthal interview, Imperial War Museum (London, UK), Department of Sound Records, accession number 003963/05. Sound recording on cassette tape, transcribed by author.

³⁴⁰ Martin, *Musician for a While*, 9.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 23.

Reichskammer (the official German legal organisation), and decided to commit himself to music as a profession.

He was finally released at the end of September 1938, and was advised to leave the country as quickly as possible. He left Germany on 21 March 1939 and immigrated to Britain with a guarantee given by British musicologist Edward Dent as well as assistance from the Germany Emergency Committee of the Society of Friends.³⁴² Despite this assurance, Dent told Bergmann after his arrival in May 1939 that he believed there were, in fact, “no opportunities in England for foreign musicians, particularly for a true continuo player, as in England all continuo parts were fully realised and written out before performances so that any competent keyboard player could play them.”³⁴³ Dent offered this sobering assessment, and even suggested Bergmann would probably have better opportunities in the United States.³⁴⁴

In any case, Bergmann was suddenly arrested shortly before 8 a.m. on 9 July 1940 from his boarding house in London and his efforts to build a new life were abruptly interrupted. Like most internees, he was given a half hour to get ready. He left his boarding house “struggling with a heavy case (which presumably contained his music, manuscripts and his flute).”³⁴⁵ His arrest and internment was understandably depressing, particularly considering his recent harrowing prison experience in Germany. After first being sent to Hampstead Prison, and from there a transit camp (Kempton Park), Bergmann and the other internees were sent to Liverpool and finally the Isle of Man on 11 July 1940. For the last leg of this journey they were given meager provisions: one small piece of cheese, two pieces of bread and 4 squares of toilet paper.³⁴⁶

His first day in internment was “long and boring,” as his case containing his instrument and music had not yet arrived. Bergmann began a new diary, as the first had been confiscated by the authorities at the time of his arrest (written material was typically confiscated, along with any sharp implements such as razors, knives or scissors). He noticed a degree of tension between the professional musicians and the amateurs in the camp, and initially had trouble being taken seriously as a musician rather than a lawyer.³⁴⁷ He struggled with both depression and anxiety over his predicament. His young family was separated; his wife took domestic employment in

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 25.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 35.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 42.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 43.

³⁴⁷ This dynamic would also be noted by another lawyer musician, Dr. Fritz Ball, and is discussed above.

order to support herself, but her employer did not permit their daughter to be with her (their seven-year old daughter had to live with friends). The question of whether Bergmann would be deported (either to Canada or Australia) was also a serious worry. By 20 July he had still not received any letters or money, which only added to his depression. Despite this—or perhaps because of this—he quickly became active in the musical life of the camp. In fact, Bergmann would eventually become one of the most active and versatile musicians in Central Camp, as has already been detailed in the House Concerts section of this document.

Gál summed up Bergmann, in terms of his flute playing, as a “good, well trained musician,” through “not perfect as a player.”³⁴⁸ Ironically, their privately held assessments were very similar, with Bergmann describing Gál’s piano playing as “without a great deal of technique but very (musical).”³⁴⁹ Bergmann and Gál had met in the first days of internment, when they had “played the Schubert Introduction and Variations on *Tröckne Blumen*, op. 160, until they were sick of it because it was the only [flute and piano] music they both knew from memory.”³⁵⁰

Despite Bergmann's enthusiasm, this personnel arrangement of Erich Markowitz (first violin), Hermann Baron (second violin) and Bergmann as flutist, also eventually fell apart. According to Gál’s account of the *Huyton Suite* rehearsals, acting second violinist Baron was extremely difficult to work with, and was resentful over playing second in the first place. He and Bergmann finally had a major falling out over tempi and other nuances. Gál tried unsuccessfully to repair the breach but finally replaced Bergmann with flutist Nicolo Draber.

A3 Nicolo Draber

(Franz) Nicolo Draber (1911–1987) traveled a life path which, like so many refugees, was deeply marked by dislocation and loss.³⁵¹ Draber was born in Ostendorf, a town near Bremen, Germany, on 12 April 1911. He was the only son of musicologist and flutist Hermann Wilhelm Draber and Gertrud Elizabeth Charlotte Friedburg, a “learned lady of Jewish

³⁴⁸ Gál diary, 18 July 1940.

³⁴⁹ Martin, *Musician for a While*, 43.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ All biographical information for Nicolo Draber is based on the Draber family’s unpublished four-page biographical summary of Nicolo Draber’s life, unless otherwise noted. This unattributed text was found in family papers. Special thanks to the Draber family for allowing access to this material.

descent.”³⁵² The family was musical, with Nicolo’s sister Rahel also becoming an accomplished musician.

After working as a freelance flutist in Berlin (his career reportedly included performances as an extra with the Berlin Philharmonic), Draber left Germany in 1933, the year of the Nazi rise to power. He then worked as a flutist in the Russian cities of Charkov and Kiev from 1933 to October 1937. While in Charkov he married. His wife, Anna Rhode, was also of German background, but held Russian citizenship by virtue of a prior marriage, a fact which would later prove decisive for the family. In the spring of 1936 their son, Thomas, was born. In 1937 the Russian secret police (known as the N.K.V.D.), in a wave of xenophobia, decreed that all foreigners were to be expelled, and Draber was forced to return to Germany. However, his wife and son (who both held Soviet citizenship) were not permitted to leave the Soviet Union. Since Draber’s mother was Jewish he feared for his own safety and fled Germany in August of 1938, managing to immigrate to the UK in 1939. His wife and son, however, were not allowed to leave the Soviet Union until April 1940. Moreover, Draber, who by this time was in the UK, was interned very shortly after that date; his wife and child returned to Berlin where her relatives lived. Apparently the Gestapo shortly afterwards forced his wife to divorce him, threatening to send both her and their child to a concentration camp if she did not comply. By early 1942 Draber had received, through Red Cross channels, the letter requesting the divorce.

Meanwhile, in the spring or early summer of 1940 Draber was interned as an “enemy alien.” Draber, then 29 years old, had arrived in Central Promenade camp shortly before 18 July. Draber had studied at the Berlin Musikhochschule and was apparently an extraordinary player. Gál overheard him practicing shortly before this point and, excited to hear such fine playing, he “rushed hot-foot upstairs to see what rare bird had suddenly flown in.”³⁵³ Though Gál was characteristically quite understated, he was effusive in his praise of Draber, routinely referring to him as “an excellent flutist.”³⁵⁴

Gál mentions that rehearsals had to take place exclusively in the evening, as Draber refused to rehearse during office hours on account of a job he held in Camp Headquarters. According to Gál, Draber took his work in headquarters “very seriously”; however, it is unknown exactly what

³⁵² Hedwig and E. H. Mueller von Asow, *Kurschners Deutscher Musiker-Kalendar 1954*, 2d ed. (Berlin: Walter De Guyter & Co., 1954), 216. Special thanks to Charles Reynolds, librarian at University of Michigan.

³⁵³ Gál diary, 18 July 1940.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

work he was engaged in during his internment.³⁵⁵ It is known, however, that Draber later joined the Pioneer Corps of the British army, and eventually did translation work for British intelligence. Given this history and the fact that he viewed his work in camp headquarters as important enough to limit his musical activity in the camp, it is possible he might have already been doing some sort of translation work supporting the war effort during his internment period. Despite this limitation on rehearsal scheduling, the premiere performance of the *Huyton Suite* finally took place at the end of July and was a huge success. Undoubtedly, this success was in large part owing to Draber's considerable talents as a flutist. Draber would also take part in later "Central Chamber Orchestra" concerts, serving as the first flutist. In this capacity he would play in the premiere of Franz Reizenstein's *Ballet Suite for Small Orchestra*, as well as in many other concerts.³⁵⁶

Following his release from internment, Draber took the new British name of Nicolas Frank Debenham and, by 1943, had risen to the rank of Corporal in the Pioneer Corps. Debenham was transferred to a special intelligence unit which was stationed in Germany, where his German language skills were useful in translating Nazi documents. On 10 November 1943 he remarried, with the permission of his commanding officer, during a brief "home-leave." By February 1946 Debenham was released from the British Army. Sadly, his second wife died in 1953, just eight years after their marriage.

Debenham eventually gave up music as a profession, although the reasons for this decision are unclear. Perhaps after years of personal instability a solid and more reliable profession was desirable to him. Nevertheless, Debenham became a successful accountant. However, he remained deeply connected to music throughout his life, and he also became a close friend and supporter of Peter Pears and Benjamin Britten. Draber is buried beside Pears and Britten in the Anglican cemetery of Aldeburgh, Britain.

A4 Norbert Elias

Norbert Elias (1897–1990), the author of the poetic text for the "Ballade for Poor Jacob," was the only child of an affluent textiles manufacturer in Breslau, Germany. After first studying

³⁵⁵ Gál diary, 26 July 1940.

³⁵⁶ Central Camp Chamber Orchestra concert programme, originally dated 11 November 1940, adjusted to 8 December 1940. Reizenstein private family collection.

medicine, Elias then studied philosophy before focusing on sociology. He first immigrated to France in the spring of 1933, but after two very difficult years, he realised his career prospects were hopeless in France despite his fluency in French. He then left for Britain, though he had almost no knowledge of English. Beginning in 1935, Elias worked for three years on his hugely influential book, *The Civilising Process*.³⁵⁷ Working single-mindedly and with the support of a refugee assistance grant, he spent nearly every day of those three years in the British Library; the first volume of two appeared in 1938. An academic post at the London School of Economics soon followed. He was evacuated to Cambridge and with his colleagues enjoyed “the most peaceful of lives, punting on the river, and drinking coffee and tea in a nearby village. It was a thoroughly peaceful, phoney war.”³⁵⁸ However, by 1940 he was also receiving alarming letters from his parents who were still in Breslau; his father died in 1940 and his mother was deported to Auschwitz where she is believed to have been murdered in 1941. To accept this brutal fact would be a lifelong struggle for Elias, particularly because his parents had visited him as late as 1938 in London. Elias, at that time a young man without a secure income, was unable to convince them either of the danger in returning, or the plausibility of their staying in London.

Elias was arrested at Cambridge in 1940, along with many of the other members of the prestigious London School of Economics, and interned in the Isle of Man. Elias’s internment lasted for eight months. He recalled years later that it was “very fruitful for me, because I could practice giving lectures in English. There were other people from the LSE in the camp. C.P. Snow, the writer, and the sociologist Ginsberg helped get me out.”³⁵⁹ He would later publish several volumes of poetry, yet his contributions to the field of sociology were on a monumental level.

Years later, he was asked if he felt he was English. Although he would live in Britain for forty years (from 1935 to 1975) he answered, “No—quite impossible. I felt like a British citizen, but that is different. No English person would say I am English. An Englishman is somebody born in England.”³⁶⁰ An astute observer of culture, his seminal work in sociology concerned outsiders in society, which was shaped by his experiences both as a (perceived) Jew in Germany

³⁵⁷ Norbert Elias, *The Civilising Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982); originally published as *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* (Basel: Haus zum Falken, 1939).

³⁵⁸ A. J. Heerma van Voss and A. van Stolk, “Biographical Interview with Norbert Elias,” in Norbert Elias, *Reflections on a Life*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 62.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

and then, ironically enough, as a (perceived) German in Britain. These very themes would be expressed, albeit in an artistic form, in his contribution to the revue *What a Life!*

A5 Otto Erich Deutsch

Otto Erich Deutsch (1883–1967) was originally from Vienna and returned to Vienna after the war. Deutsch is best known for his comprehensive catalogue of Schubert’s works, which is still well known and used regularly by musicians. He is also credited for developing what has been termed the “comprehensive documentation” style of research, which greatly expanded the range of materials considered in musicological research, including press clippings, school reports, iconography, letters, and so on.³⁶¹

Deutsch was arrested at Cambridge on 12 May 1940. As his daughter recalled, neither of them knew where he was to be taken. His wife had died in 1937 from an illness, so his teenage daughter, Gitta, was left entirely on her own. Two weeks later, when she reached the age of seventeen, Gitta was arrested as well. Both were sent to the Isle of Man; however, it would be a full six weeks after her arrival before Gitta knew her father was also on the island. Eventually Deutsch would be allowed to write short letters to his daughter; however, since communications had to be approved by the censor on the mainland, it usually took many weeks for letters to reach their intended recipients.³⁶² Gál noticed that Deutsch, already in his mid-fifties by 1940, did not seem to be handling the harsh physical conditions and stresses of early internment very well. On 28 May, Gál writes that Deutsch looks “pale and distressed and is anxious about his sixteen year old daughter, whom he has left behind alone.”³⁶³ Eventually there was a group of men from Central Camp who were allowed to travel to the women’s camp to visit their interned wives for an afternoon. Deutsch resourcefully posed as a “visiting husband” and in this way was able to finally see his daughter.³⁶⁴

As has already been mentioned, Deutsch was a member of the Music Committee in Central Camp, and was involved with organizing concerts such as Blumen solo recital and the *What a Life!* revue, for which he supplied the poetic text for “Ballade of the German Refugee.”

³⁶¹ Barry S. Brook, “Remembering O.E.D. 1883–1967: An Homage,” *The Musical Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (Autumn 1983), 595–598. See also Deutsch, *Franz Schubert: thematisches Verzeichnis seiner Werke in chronologischer Folge* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1978).

³⁶² Gitta Deutsch, *The Red Thread* (Riverside, CA: Ariadne Press, 1996), 67.

³⁶³ Gál diary, 28 May 1940.

³⁶⁴ Gál diary, 28 July 1940.

A6 Franz Reizenstein

Franz Theodor Reizenstein (1911–1968) was a promising young composer whose career in Germany was cut short by the Nazi regime. He had been born and raised in a musical and intellectually inclined family in Nuremberg. By all accounts he was a child prodigy, composing his first works at the age of five and his first string quartet by the age of seventeen. He attended the Berlin Musikhochschule where he was a leading composition pupil of Paul Hindemith. His fellow classmates included Bernard Heiden and Harald Genzmer, who would both become prominent composers after the war.³⁶⁵ By 1934, however, his teacher was being publicly denounced as an “atonal noisemaker” by propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels.³⁶⁶ Reizenstein decided to leave Germany that same year.³⁶⁷

Reizenstein was able to immigrate to Britain by virtue of having relatives already living in Britain. He completed his studies at the Royal College of Music in London where he studied composition with Ralph Vaughan Williams and piano. Reizenstein was something of a trailblazer in that he was reputedly one of the earliest German refugee composers, and evidently the very first of Hindemith’s students, to arrive in Britain. This distinction is made in the 21 December 1937 letter of support that Sir Donald Tovey wrote on his behalf to the Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Labour, to support his application to remain in Britain.³⁶⁸ It read in part:

Mr. Franz Reizenstein, who is applying for a further extension of his permission to teach music in England, has asked me to explain some particulars of his case.

What he specifically wishes to teach is the harmonic system of Paul Hindemith, a subject which nobody resident in England is qualified to teach, and which is, in the opinion of those qualified to judge, of the utmost importance to all musicians who hope to see order emerge from the present chaos of modern music.

At present, Hindemith’s treatise (*Underweisung im Tonsatz*) is being translated into English; and until the translation is available, it would be obviously unfair to estimate Mr. Reizenstein’s ability to maintain himself by teaching on Hindemith’s method.

³⁶⁵ Hindemith composition class recital at *Berlin Musikhochschule* dated 7 July 1932. Reizenstein family private collection.

³⁶⁶ Hindemith Foundation website, “Biography,” <http://www.paul-hindemith.org> (accessed 13 August 2010).

³⁶⁷ Erik Levi, “The German Jewish Contribution to Musical Life in Britain” in *Second Chance: Two Centuries of German Speaking Jews in Great Britain*, coordinating ed. Werner Mosse (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr and Paul Siebeck, 1991), 282.

³⁶⁸ Tovey to Reizenstein, dated 21 December, 1937. Reizenstein unpublished family collection. Like Vaughan Williams, renowned British musicologist Sir Donald Tovey was also generous in his involvement and support of the refugees; Gál, for example, was able to come to the UK largely because of Tovey’s efforts.

I, on the other hand, can state unhesitatingly, from my long experience as a musician trained on classical lines, and a past president of the Union of Graduates in Music, that this method is no obscure by-way of modern eccentricity, but it is the outcome of the practical experience of one of the most eminent and genuinely public spirited masters of modern music [...] In short, I think it would be in accordance with public policy to secure Mr. Reizenstein's continued presence in England for the eminently practical purpose of propogating Hindemith's teaching.³⁶⁹

Another prominent supporter was in the person of Ralph Vaughan Williams, who wrote numerous letters on Reizenstein's behalf. One such general reference letter was written 7 September 1939, where Vaughan Williams described Reizenstein as "an excellent well trained musician and a pianist of the highest rank"; as if fearing this praise might not be enough, Vaughan Williams ended his letter with the added observation that Reizenstein also had "a good knowledge of Spanish and French besides his own language (German)."³⁷⁰ In another letter, dated 18 December (year unknown) there is reference to Reizenstein's application for "renumerative work." Vaughan Williams mentions that medical students need to take an English medical degree before being allowed to undertake work in England, so he suggests the composer sit for the ARCM examination. This, Vaughan Williams notes, should be no problem for someone as accomplished as Reizenstein, and would likewise establish "some status in the profession."³⁷¹ Despite the fact that Reizenstein had been in Britain since 1934, he was nonetheless interned. A South American concert tour with the violinist Roman Totenberg during 1937–38 had apparently disrupted his naturalisation process.³⁷²

Reizenstein's compositions were performed in House Concerts in Central Camp. One such work was *Jig*, which was performed at one of these events in October 1940 (see fig. 2).³⁷³ This work would eventually be published after the war in 1946 by Schott.

A short fragment, currently housed in the Manx Museum on the Isle of Man, is evidence not only that the work was adapted for this House Concert for flute and piano, but that someone, perhaps the composer, intended the concert itself, as an event, to be remembered. This short fragment is

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

³⁷⁰ Vaughan Williams to Reizenstein, dated 7 September 1939. Reizenstein family private collection.

³⁷¹ Vaughan Williams to Reizenstein, dated 18 December (n.d., but likely late 1930s). Reizenstein family private collection.

³⁷² Claude Torres, "Franz Theodor Reizenstein: 1911.6.7 Nürnberg, Germany ~ 1968.10.15 London, England," <http://claude.torres1.perso.sfr.fr/GhettosCamps/Internement/GreatBritain/Reizenstein/Reizenstein.html> (accessed 15 August 2010). Roman Totenberg, incidentally, is the father of the (US) National Public Radio announcer and personality, Nina Totenberg.

³⁷³ Reproduced by kind permission of Manx National Heritage. Many thanks also to Wendy Thirkettle of the Manx Museum for her considerable support and assistance. Image of manuscript# 09477 reprinted by permission of Jonathan Reizenstein.

not long enough to be pragmatically useful, but rather poignantly exists for sheer symbolic meaning.



Figure 2. Fragment of manuscript: *Jig* by Franz Reizenstein. Reproduced by permission.

The fragment was probably part of a memento gift for an unknown recipient, although it is impossible to know for certain.³⁷⁴ If the introductory letter from then Central “Camp Father”³⁷⁵ Max Sugar was intended to accompany this fragment, then the recipient was probably a British officer working within Central Camp, and this fragment, along with other pages, was given as a “going away” gift. However, if it was marking a departure, it was surely only the departure of the recipient. The note Max Sugar wrote to preface this gift from the internees is also a perfect distillation of the diplomatic tightrope the “Camp Fathers” and other Camp representatives had

³⁷⁴ Commandant Cecil Francis of Central Camp was at one time in possession of these papers; he also served as Commandant in 1940. However, the connections between these papers cannot be confirmed, as they were originally deposited in loose leaf form in a folder. Wendy Thirkettle, e-mail message to author, 2 June 2010. From this information one could reasonably guess that the memento was either given to Francis or a close associate of his.

³⁷⁵ The term “Camp Father” was used to describe the elected head of camp representatives to the British camp administration, elected by the internees from amongst the internee camp population.

to walk, to both honour their own feelings of injustice and yet also somewhat placate the men who, after all, controlled every aspect of their lives within internment.

You asked me to write a few words to serve as an introduction to these leaves, and which are meant for your remembrance of the time spent in Douglas.

There is nothing I should like more than to show the camp's and our own appreciation for all your kindness and understanding. You will not think it my fault if I cannot convey it as fully as I would like to do it, but the barbed wire acts not only as a physical but also as a psychological obstacle between men. You are outside this difficulty, I am in it, but I feel you know best where I should stay.

Perhaps I shall have the honour and opportunity of adding the missing lines after the war is over.³⁷⁶

One might question: if this particular piece of music was included as part of this memento gift, then why? It could have represented a concert that was particularly enjoyed by the recipient, given that it was common to have British officers, other administrative or relief workers and various other visitors from outside the camps in attendance. Or was it that, like so many others of this era, Reizenstein felt that his own world was at the point of coming to an end, and he wanted to leave this music behind as proof of his existence? Or it could have been the only newly created composition performed in the camp since Gál had been released back in late September. Though it is impossible at this juncture to know for certain, it remains an intriguing question. The *Jig* is actually a single movement from the larger work entitled *Partita* which was commissioned by the recorder player Carl Dolmetsch. Dolmetsch was interested in developing a body of modern repertoire for the recorder. To this end, ten works were solicited in the late 1930s from contemporary composers working in Britain (including Lennox Berkeley, Benjamin Britten, Peter Pope and Christian Darnton). Unfortunately some of the works were destroyed in air raids (including Benjamin Britten's Sonata) and many were delayed publication by the war.³⁷⁷ Reizenstein's contribution was this *Partita*.³⁷⁸ It was originally written in 1939 for treble recorder and piano—the form in which it is normally still performed—although it was later arranged for flute and piano, as well as flute and string trio.

³⁷⁶ Quoted from MS 09477, page 1. Manx Heritage Museum, Isle of Man. Special thanks to archivist Wendy Thirkettle for her assistance.

³⁷⁷ Franz Reizenstein, performed by Carl Dolmetsch and recorded in Christ Church, Chelsea UK, notes written by Dolmetsch for LP record sleeve. Record sleeve notes provided to author by John Reizenstein.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

There are four movements: Entrada, Sarabande, Bourrée and Jig. The Entrada is bold and declamatory, as the name suggests, with an exacting polyphonic structure that is reminiscent of Bach. Precision and high energy is required from both the piano and flute, with the two instruments equally balanced. There is a technically intricate texture featuring delicate trills throughout this movement. The Sarabande offers the calm one would expect, with very naturally expressive writing. It is characteristic of Reizenstein's writing that there tends to be a keen understanding of instrumental idiosyncracies. This may stem, in part, from his early training with Hindemith. Within Hindemith's teaching studio, all composition students were required to actually learn how to play the wind instruments for which they would later write. As Reizenstein modestly recalled,

[Hindemith] arranged for his students to take up different wind and stringed instruments in turn... We played together regularly and provided most of the music by composing it ourselves. We would not let anyone listen to the ghastly noises we produced—not that anybody wanted to—but we did learn how to write for the various instruments.³⁷⁹

This deep knowledge is evident in the wholly idiomatic and natural writing for which Reizenstein would be later praised by players. Reizenstein and Dolmetsch first met in June 1939 at a London Contemporary Music Centre concert. Dolmetsch recalled,

Franz, who had perfect pitch, must have been warned to avoid the missing high F-sharp when writing his Partita, for he came up to me after listening to Berkeley's Sonatina and said, "I distinctly hear you play several F-sharps!" I assured him that all things were possible on the modern recorder—within its compass—if one knew how, but we agreed that this note was best avoided if the work were to be published.

His splendid sophisticated Partita contains not a single F-sharp; it reveals the composer's intuitive gift of writing with a fluency and style ideally suited to his chosen medium.³⁸⁰

In the middle section of the movement (at rehearsal number 5) one hears a particularly strong influence of Paul Hindemith in the harmonic colours and weight in the piano writing. There is an overall pensive mood here, which is lightened by the playful Bourrée that follows. Here one can glimpse the virtuosic character in Reizenstein, also evident in the writing for the flutist which includes a brilliant and effective quasi-cadenza.³⁸¹

³⁷⁹ Simon Wynberg, "Franz Reizenstein," Orel Foundation web article, http://orelfoundation.org/index.php/composers/article/franz_reizenstein/#topBar (accessed 15 August 2010). Wynberg does not indicate his source for this quote.

³⁸⁰ Dolmetsch, notes from aforementioned record sleeve, provided to author by John Reizenstein.

³⁸¹ The work is indicated half note = 96 to 104. The fact this work was originally for the recorder means a tempo of 104 might be most effective for the flutist for this particular movement. The cadenza is more fluid and brilliant if

The last movement, which was performed as an encore piece for a House Concert, has a stronger English character than the rest of the work (which is overall in a more German Baroque vein, updated by modernist Hindemithian harmonies). There are interesting cross rhythmic passages which highlight the vigor and muscularity of the movement; it must have served well as an encore. This Jig, with its melodic contours and underlying jaunty 6/8 rhythmic patterns, might even call to mind an English Sea Chanty. However, the harmonic language is strongly influenced by Hindemith, with whom Reizenstein had earlier studied in Berlin. In sum, this work reflects an interesting synthesis of Reizenstein's native and adopted musical environments.

In addition, Reizenstein's *Ballet Suite* for small orchestra was premiered in the camp on a Sunday afternoon concert, played by the "Central Camp Chamber Orchestra." It is unclear exactly when this group was actually formally organized but it is clear from extant concert programmes that this chamber orchestra was in existence by December 1940. The premiere of the *Ballet Suite for Small Orchestra* took place 8 December 1940 in House No. 29, and was conducted by the composer. One can only imagine the crowded conditions of this premiere, with an orchestra, conductor and soloists as well as an eager audience in attendance at a House Concert. Reizenstein states the genesis of this work in the concert programme:

This Ballet Suite was in the process of composition when the composer was interned. The Finale was written in the internment camp. The Arts Theatre Ballet, London, intends to produce the work this season. It was specially scored for the players in the Central Camp.³⁸²

Unfortunately this particular chamber orchestra version is lost; however, it is possible that it exists in as yet unexplored private family papers.³⁸³

The chamber orchestra winds consisted of the aforementioned flutists Nicolo Draber as principal, and Dr. Hans Fronzig on second flute. The clarinetist was seventeen-year old Wolfgang Lesser.³⁸⁴

The strings of this chamber orchestra were comprised of five violinists which included a young Sigmund Nissel, later of the Amadeus Quartet, and Erich Markowitz, who had premiered the

played in one breath from the fifth bar after rehearsal number 8 until rehearsal number 9.

³⁸² Central Camp concert programme, originally dated 11 November 1940 then adjusted to 8 December 1940. Reizenstein family private collection.

³⁸³ As has already been noted, many of these sorts of collections have not yet been professionally catalogued and are currently held in private collections.

³⁸⁴ Lesser had also performed in the camp revue, *What a Life*, and had immigrated to Britain at the age of sixteen. After internment Lesser would join the British Army, and after the war would develop a dual career as a composer (particularly in the realm of film music) and a prominent politician in East Germany. See Lesser entry in "Who was who in the GDR," in *Bundesunmittelbare Stiftung des öffentlichen Rechts* http://www.stiftung-aufarbeitung.de/service_wegweiser/www2.php?ID=1697 (accessed 12 August 2010).

Huyton Suite on first violin and also played in the revue; a violist named Hans Berge; and a cellist named Erich Meier, who seems to have acted as resident cellist after Fritz Ball had been released. Joining the orchestra forces was a pianist named Joachim Grabau, the accordion player Hans Gerson, and finally Walter Bergmann, who is listed as the percussionist, though he clearly had acted in a remarkable multitude of roles.³⁸⁵

Reizenstein spent the last month of his internment in an astonishing level of creative activity. He conducted half of a Christmas Day/Boxing Day concert programme (sharing this duty with Walter Bergmann), which were sandwiched between two separate and ambitious *Klavier-Abend* solo recitals.³⁸⁶ On 21 and 22 December 1940 he performed the famously difficult Mussourgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition* followed by the rigorous Beethoven *Hammerklavier* Sonata.³⁸⁷ He then marked New Year's Eve 1940 as well as New Year's Day of 1941 with another virtuosic programme.³⁸⁸ Reizenstein's characteristic sense of humour was subtly apparent in his choice for a final piece in this, his final concert during his internment on the Isle of Man: the somewhat ironic choice of Debussy *L'Isle Joyeuse*.

A7 Alfred Blumen

Alfred Blumen, a native of Austria, enjoyed a glittering international career as a successful concert pianist during the 1920s.³⁸⁹ Blumen was still a youth when he toured South America with the Vienna Philharmonic under the baton of Richard Strauss during 1923.³⁹⁰ By the late 1920s he had left Europe and was concertising and teaching piano in the United States, with numerous recital engagements in Boston, New York and Chicago.³⁹¹

³⁸⁵ This single page listing of the "Central Chamber Orchestra" is unfortunately undated, but was found together with other orchestra programmes which all featured the "Central Chamber Orchestra," and all these programmes date from December 1940. It probably reflects the personnel of the orchestra at the time of the Reizenstein *Ballet Suite for Small Orchestra* concert on 8 December 1940: the faded typeface matches that programme's typeface, and that particular programme also required a chamber orchestra. From Reizenstein private, unpublished family papers.

³⁸⁶ The 25/26 December 1940 concert programme featured music by Purcell, J. S. Bach (both conducted by Reizenstein), Mendelssohn and J. C. Bach (both conducted by Bergmann), Concert programme from Reizenstein family private collection.

³⁸⁷ Central Camp concert programme, titled "*Klavier-Abend*," dated 21 and 22 December 1940. Reizenstein family archives.

³⁸⁸ Central Camp concert programme, titled "*Klavier-Abend*," dated 31 December 1940 and 1 January 1941. Reizenstein family archives.

³⁸⁹ Unknown author, review of Blumen concert, *Christian Science Monitor*, 10 December 1926.

³⁹⁰ Alan Sanders, CD liner notes for *Richard Strauss: The Last Concerts*, live concert recording from 1947, Testament CD SBT2-1441 [2008].

³⁹¹ Unknown author, review of Blumen concert, *New York Times*, 29 December 1927.

In November 1926 Blumen performed the Beethoven Triple Concerto, op. 56, with fellow soloists Jacques Gordon and Alfred Wallenstein. Frederick Stock conducted the Chicago Symphony.³⁹² In his 1926 Boston recital at Jordan Hall, Blumen gave the American premiere of the Sonata in C minor, op. 2, by Karol Rathaus, and championed this work in subsequent American performances.³⁹³ Rathaus (1895–1954) was himself an Austrian émigré of Jewish descent who had studied with Franz Schreker in Vienna and then Berlin.³⁹⁴ Blumen also promoted other contemporary émigré composers in his performances, including Leopold Godowsky (1870–1938) and Pancho Haralanov Vladigorov (1899–1978).³⁹⁵ Blumen successfully presented many solo recitals between 1926 and 1928, appearing in high-profile venues such as Aeolian Hall and Town Hall in New York and Jordan Hall in Boston. By May of 1927, Blumen was also awarded an exclusive recording contract with Welte-Mignon Library.³⁹⁶ It is unclear whether Blumen himself was a Jewish refugee, political émigré or some combination of the two, but by 1940 he was in Central Camp; the circumstances leading to his immigration to Britain and his internment are unknown. It seems that Blumen unintentionally stirred up already simmering tensions amongst the interned musicians with his camp solo debut concert, a controversy described earlier in this document. This concert also made quite a musical impression on those who were there. Gál was “completely won over” by Blumen’s piano playing, describing his pianistic gifts as “extraordinary.”³⁹⁷ Former internee and later prominent British jurist Michael Kerr specifically recalled this concert many years later, saying that Blumen gave his solo concert on a grand piano “found in the foyers of one of the hotels. There was an audience of hundreds, listening to him playing Schumann, including my father’s favourite *Davidsbündler*, and many of the older men were crying uncontrollably.”³⁹⁸ Blumen remained in the UK after his release from internment.³⁹⁹ In October 1947, Richard Strauss was invited to conduct a festival in London of his own works, including the *Sinfonia Domestica*, *Don Juan*, and the *Burlesque* for piano and orchestra. Strauss chose Blumen, his old

³⁹² Felix Borowski, review of Blumen concert, *Christian Science Monitor*, 10 November 1926.

³⁹³ Unknown author, review of Blumen concert, *Christian Science Monitor*, 10 December 1926.

³⁹⁴ Larry Langman, *Destination Hollywood: The Influence of Europeans on American Filmmaking* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, Inc., 2000), 16.

³⁹⁵ *Music Trade Review*, 21 May 1927, <http://www.arcade-museum.com/mtr/MTR-1927-84-21/MTR-1927-84-21-13.pdf> (accessed 10 June 2010).

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁷ Gál diary, 28 August 1940.

³⁹⁸ Michael Kerr, *As Far as I Remember* (Portland: Hart Publishing, 2002), 142.

³⁹⁹ Alan Sanders, CD liner notes for *Richard Strauss: The Last Concerts*, op. cit.

colleague, as the soloist for the *Burlesque*, one of the works which they had performed together during the South American tour of 1923.⁴⁰⁰ Both men had suffered a turn of economic fortune as a result of the war and its aftermath. Strauss was unable to collect many of his royalties during the war and also had not conducted in the preceding three years.⁴⁰¹ As for Blumen, he struggled to rekindle his previously glittering performance career. Reputedly one pragmatic reason for Strauss having chosen Blumen as soloist was to simply ensure that his old colleague received the soloist's fee.⁴⁰²

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Ibid.