

(Re)visiting the (Jewish) Archive of Gideon Klein - Terezín, 1941-1944

David Fligg

Abstract

Moravian-born composer and pianist Gideon Klein was just 22 when he was deported from Prague to the Terezín (Theresienstadt) ghetto. Working alongside fellow internees, some of them Czechoslovakia's finest musicians, Klein has been almost completely referenced by his imprisonment. Though understandable given the circumstances, such a view is nonetheless somewhat simplistic and problematic when evaluating the complex circumstances of what took place in Terezín. This chapter explores recent research surrounding Klein's final work, the String Trio, and how the piece might be referenced to Klein's Jewish background by way of the works Klein composed in occupied Prague. The chapter will also raise the issue of how we might define Klein's music beyond the discourse of creativity under adversity.

MUSICAL BACKGROUND

On 7 October 1944, the composer Gideon Klein, imprisoned in the Terezín (Theresienstadt) ghetto since December 1941, completed his Trio for Violin, Viola and Cello. Along with Viktor Ullmann's *Der Kaiser von Atlantis (The Emperor of Atlantis)* and Hans Krasa's *Brundibár*, Klein's String Trio is amongst the most widely-performed of all the music associated with Terezín, and has become a standard item in the string trio repertoire.¹ This is not only because it is a tremendously fine work, popular amongst performers and audiences alike, but also because it carries with it the emotive image of being the last work that the 24-year-old Klein composed, completed a few days before his deportation from Terezín to Auschwitz, and to his ultimate murder.

Undoubtedly, the circumstances of the Trio's composition are partly responsible for its current status, its frequent performances regularly located within the context of Holocaust commemorations. After all, it remains the case that whenever the Terezín compositions of Klein and the other imprisoned composers are performed, they are almost always presented within the framework of a programme celebrating creativity within adversity, or creativity as a vehicle for spiritual resistance. Despite an increasing frequency of performance in recent years, the music is not necessarily regarded as part of the established musical canon per se, but as belonging to a specific Holocaust archive of music by those who did not survive. Yet it is ingenuous to allow the effects of oppression to be the main validifier of this music. A balance has to be found by positioning Gideon Klein's Trio within the context of other music which informed it. No less important is to take into account the composer's Jewish background, as well as the unique environment in which the work was composed.

Gideon Klein was born in Přerov, Moravia, in December 1919, and was murdered, aged 25, by the SS at the Auschwitz sub-camp of Fürstengrube on 27 January 1945, the day that the main Auschwitz-Birkenau camp was liberated. He moved to Prague in 1931, studying piano part-time at the Prague Conservatory with Růžena Kurzová, known for her empathy with talented children, and full-time from 1938 with Kurzová's husband, the respected pedagogue Vilém Kurz. The following year, before the Germans closed down the universities and colleges, Klein studied composition with the pioneer of microtonal music, Alois Hába, and analysis with the eminent musicologist, Josef Hutter. Before being deported to Terezín in December 1941, Klein had given many concerts in Prague. At the same time, he had written a number of significant chamber works. However, there is no evidence that any of his extant pre-Terezín works were ever publicly performed in Prague, and their existence was unknown until

1990.² The situation was completely different in Terezín, where, Klein composed a number of important works which received public performances.³

EARLY COMPOSITIONS IN PRAGUE

The works that Klein composed throughout his teenage years, and up to his enforced exile from Prague, clearly demonstrate his engagement with styles inclined towards European modernism, Janáček in particular, and the Czech school in general. The influence of the Second Viennese School is most obviously manifested in the *Largo* from the Four Movements for String Quartet, completed in September 1938. Here the pervading atmosphere is informed by expressionist works such as Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, which received its premiere in Prague in 1924, and the String Quartet no. 1. Though Klein never fully utilised 12-tone technique in his completed works, some compositional fragments show that he experimented with serialism. For example, amongst his projected works is an undated incomplete sketch which is prefaced by a tone-row, for solo violin.⁴ In his completed works, aspects of serialism, however, are used with relative freedom. A good example occurs in the Four Movements for String Quartet. The viola solo's opening chromatically angular melody might superficially resemble a tone-row, until one notices repetitions of the twelve notes and omissions of pitches. On the other hand, the second movement of the Divertimento for Eight Wind Instruments, completed in April 1940, opens with a melody in the first oboe which uses all 12 chromatic notes over two bars. The next two bars are a retrograde of the original row, but with pitches displaced, and two notes swapped around. Harmonically, too, in this movement Klein uses 12-note chords, though there is never any strict adherence to dodecaphony. There are other places where he draws influence specifically from Schoenberg. For example, five years prior to the Divertimento, a note on the sketch for his Four Movements for String Quartet suggests that at one time he might have considered modelling the work on Schoenberg's partly-vocal String Quartet no. 2. The evidence for this comes in the instruction: 'In the 2nd and 3rd movement for a voice and string quartet. Text: part of poems by Otokar Březina',⁵ though in the event, Klein did not follow this idea through in the completed Four Movements.

The sketches of the Four Movements for String Quartet provide further evidence of two major influences on Klein's early work with the inscription on the score 'At' žije A. Schönberg a Leos Janáček!!!' ('Long live A. Schönberg (*sic.*) and Leos Janáček!!!').⁶ With respect to the latter composer, there is some debate regarding the extent to which Janáček directly influenced Klein's musical language. For instance, Klein's biographer Lubomir Peduzzi suggests that Janáček's music had a relatively limited impact on his development.⁷ On the other hand, the final seven bars of the Four Movements for String Quartet clearly allude to the closing bars of Janáček's String Quartet no. 2, *Listy důvěrné* ('Intimate Letters'). Furthermore, as a pianist, Klein frequently performed Janáček's Piano Sonata ('1.X.1905'), *Zápisník zmizelého* (*The Diary of One Who Disappeared*), and the Concertino for piano and chamber ensemble. In 1940, following two performances of the Concertino, Klein made sketches for his own Concertino for piano and wind ensemble. Positioning Janáček alongside Moravian-born Klein enables audiences to encounter the latter within his Moravian context, an identity which clearly meant a great deal to him.

COMPOSITIONS COMPOSED DURING PRAGUE'S OCCUPATION

The Divertimento for Eight Wind Instruments was completed in occupied Prague in April 1940.⁸ Its third movement is a set of variations on the fourteenth section of Janáček's *The Diary of One Who Disappeared*, in which the song 'Slnéčko sa zdvihá' ('The Sun Climbs High') asks the questions 'What have I lost now, who can give it back again?' In the coda of the fourth and final movement of the Divertimento, Klein's scoring thins out, and a solo French horn proclaims the opening of the Hussite battle hymn 'Kdož sú boží bojovníci' ('Ye Who are Warriors of God'), the first discernible example in Klein's music of what could be described as spiritual resistance.⁹ Fiercely nationalistic in sentiment, it is a melody which had also been used most notably in Smetana's tone poems *Tábor* and *Blaník*, from *Má vlast* as well as in works by Dvořák, Suk and Janáček.¹⁰ More recently, it had been incorporated into the

Suite for Oboe and Piano, also composed in occupied Prague, by Pavel Haas, later interned in Terezín. Klein, then, was well aware of its nationalist potency, as were the Nazis, for in the early years of the Occupation they initially banned performances of *Má vlast*.¹¹

Somewhat earlier, in the autumn of 1939, Klein had joined Hába's composition class at the Prague Conservatory, and in December he commenced work on the Duo for Violin and Viola (in Quarter Tone System). The fair-copy manuscript carries the inscription 'To Prof. Alois Hába in respect and devotion,' a fitting dedication for a work which draws on Hába's pioneering accomplishments in quarter-tone music. It constitutes Klein's only music to employ his teacher's system of microtonality.¹² At that time, a less obvious influence on Klein is the music of Hába's friend, Paul Hindemith whose String Trio no. 1, of 1924 was dedicated to Hába. Hindemith met Hába in Prague the previous year and had performed in Hába's String Quartet no. 3. Given his familiarity with much contemporary European music, it is likely that Klein knew Hindemith's work via his teacher. However, Klein's own Trio demonstrates scant direct influence of Hindemith, apart from the exploration of neo-Classical, highly polyphonic three-part textures. A more conscious influence from Hindemith, this time from his Sonata for Solo Viola, op. 25 no. 1 of 1922, can be observed in Klein's intense and largely solemn Preludium for Solo Viola, composed in occupied Prague in April 1940. Hindemith dedicated his 1922 Sonata to the prominent Prague-based virtuoso violist Ladislav Černý, who became a member of the faculty at the Prague Conservatory in 1940. It is possible that Klein was either acquainted with him, or heard him perform. The slow, dramatic and confident opening of Klein's work is clearly modelled on Hindemith's opening, and the *Langsam* conclusion of the latter's Sonata, coming to rest on the tonality of C, was an idea which Klein evidently adopted for his *Lento* ending.

THE OCCUPATION TIGHTENS

Living in German-controlled Prague brought with it increasing restrictions for Jews. Enforced curtailment of public music-making and consumption necessitated the repositioning of artistic life for the Jewish population. The quality and quantity of the clandestine house concerts in Prague, which Klein was heavily involved in, became unintentional models for the cultural activities of those same Jews when they became imprisoned in Terezín. For Klein, the prohibitions in Prague led him to focus more and more on the musical activity which was not proscribed: composing. The Prague compositions allowed him to hone those skills that would be used for later compositions in the camp, so that by the time he arrived in Terezín, Klein's compositional facility had now been enhanced, as evidenced by the incremental development in his recent works written under occupation, especially the Three Songs for High Voice and Piano, op. 1¹³, the String Quartet no.2, and the Duo for Violin and Cello.

Once the Germans entered Prague in March 1939, the Nuremberg Laws, which now essentially legalised anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria, were soon invoked in the Protectorate.¹⁴ For a short while, Klein attempted to continue performing publicly as a pianist by assuming a pseudonym, Karel Vránek.¹⁵ He was no longer permitted to study at the Conservatory, though Hába agreed to continue teaching him privately and he turned his attention more and more to composition as his personal and professional freedoms receded.¹⁶ Whereas many of his earlier compositions were never finished, he now finalised a number of works. The last work to be composed in Prague was the String Quartet op. 2, completed in August 1941, and it shows how Klein's style had developed in a relatively short amount of time. The first movement, running at around 10 minutes, will remain his longest single movement. The third movement balances this, acting as a slow finale, whilst the short middle scherzo, at just three minutes long, provides a dance-like contrast to the flanking sections. In the Quartet, and the Duo for Violin and Cello, the latter left incomplete because of his deportation to Terezín, dense, polyphonic chromaticism is now used not merely for effect, but to achieve structural balance and thematic development. Fugato sections are used in the Quartet as a means of thematic development at central points within each movement. Whilst sonata form is not used, the opening material in the first and final movements is repeated, with only minor modifications, to act as a coda. In this respect, and although these outer movements are different in character, they balance one another structurally. The

Quartet and the Duo also demonstrate Klein's most confident, richly-scored and stylistic string writing to date.

Amongst his vocal music, the Three Songs for High Voice and Piano, op. 1, completed in June 1940, achieve a maturity of text-setting which would be further enhanced in his many vocal Terezín works. There are earlier text-settings, such as the sketch of *The Blood of childhood*,¹⁷ a setting of words from the collection of poems, *Sepie*, by František Halas, from 1935, and the incomplete Composition for Human Voice, Violin and Piano, Op. 2, from 1939, with texts by Otokar Březina¹⁸. But none of them are fully complete, and they suffer from a certain literalness of text setting, and solo lines which steer towards an instrumental, rather than vocal, style. Three Songs for High Voice and Piano, however, are certainly in a different category, containing idiomatic vocal lines and an accompaniment capturing the atmosphere of, though not literally describing the texts by Klaj, Hölderlin and Goethe.

TEREZÍN

The *Aufbaukommando*, or work-detail, the first wave of Czech Jews to be transported to Terezín in order to prepare the town for the influx of prisoners, consisted of young men chosen by the Germans from a labour index, though some men volunteered, in the belief that their families would soon be able to join them.¹⁹ The first *Aufbaukommando*, Ak-1, as it was known, arrived in the town on 24 November. On Monday 1 December, having been selected for the second *Aufbaukommando*, Ak-2, Klein was summoned to the Radiomarkt assembly point at Prague's Trade Fair Palace where, in cramped, unsanitary conditions, with little food, surrounded by barbed wire, he languished for three days. He was subjected to form-filling, the confiscation of forbidden personal belongings, such as ration cards, fountain pens, watches and keys, and his luggage would have been inspected for prohibited items.²⁰ From there, he went to the nearby Bubny railway station with his maximum allocation of 50 Kg of luggage. Along with 1000 others, on 4 December, he departed Prague on a passenger train, officially designated Transport J, and arrived just outside Terezín around three hours later. He was two days shy of his 22nd birthday. Ak-2 disembarked at Terezín's nearest railway station, Bohušovice, walked the one and half miles to the fortress town, escorted by Czech gendarmerie, eventually arriving at the dilapidated and increasingly overcrowded and unsanitary Sudeten Barracks which had been assigned to them.²¹

The camp was originally a Czech army garrison town, built at the end of the eighteenth century to house around 6,000 soldiers and their families. During World War Two, the occupying Germans, in what was now the *Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren* (the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia), evacuated the Czech army and turned the town, known by its German name as Theresienstadt, into a prison. At its fullest in December 1942, it housed 49,296²² inmates, almost all of them Jewish, and in total approximately 155,000²³ were imprisoned between 1941 and 1945.²⁴ Although Terezín was not an extermination camp, conditions were generally appalling. 35,440 people perished there, 88,000 deported to the death camps.²⁵ The SS who ran the camp eventually allowed the prisoners, for various and complex reasons which are outside the scope of this chapter, to run their own programme of musical, theatrical and other cultural events, as a way of deceiving the outside world, and the International Red Cross, that conditions in the camp were favourable.²⁶ Klein, as head of the instrumental music section of the so-called *Freizeitgestaltung* (FZG), or Free Time Administration, established during 1942 by the Jewish ghetto committee better known as the Council of Elders, was at the heart of musical activities.²⁷

In addition to his FZG responsibilities, Klein was also a youth educator for the *Jugendfürsorge* (Youth Care Department), and so he was kept intensely busy.²⁸ Recollections by those who remember him in Terezín confirm that he was energetic and optimistic, immensely active and influential as a pianist, composer, educator and, towards the end of his incarceration, conductor, and that he galvanised other musicians into activity.²⁹ Yet by the autumn of 1944, his confidence had vanished. Four days after completing the Trio, he watched as his mother, Ilona, and sister, Lisa (Eliška), were loaded onto cattle trucks crammed with a thousand people for their journey to Auschwitz.³⁰

A number of compositions by Klein and his imprisoned colleagues were written to satisfy the demands and the uniqueness of Terezín's cultural environment, with the professional composer and performer working alongside the amateur of varying abilities. Moreover, taking into account Michael Beckerman's entirely convincing argument that Klein's Trio utilises quotations from works by other composers, possibly to convey a message about the appalling situation that existed in Terezín, there is an undoubted link between creativity and environment.³¹ The type of intertextuality to which Beckerman refers can also be found in the works of other Terezín composers, namely Pavel Haas and Viktor Ullmann. As Michael Beckerman argues, Haas quotes the St. Wenceslas Hymn, another of those nationalistic melodies which defined Czech nationalism, in the first and third of his Four Songs on Chinese Poetry, composed in 1944, 'obliquely in an especially poignant way.'³² Likewise, Ullmann, in the finale of his Piano Sonata no. 7, also from 1944, quotes Yehuda Sharett's Zionist *Song of Rachel*, along with the Lutheran hymn 'Wir danken alle Gott' ('Now all thank God'), and the musical motif of B-A-C-H.³³ Ullmann's opera *Der Kaiser von Atlantis; oder Der Tod dankt ab* (*The Emperor of Atlantis; or Death Abdicates*), is replete with similar quotations,³⁴ though the Council of Elders, were probably the ones responsible for the opera not being performed, as they were fearful that its symbolism was too overt to risk the wrath of the camp's SS.³⁵

THE STRING TRIO'S ENVIRONMENT

Irma Semecká recounts that in the weeks leading up to his deportation to Auschwitz, Klein was thoroughly depressed. Semecká, Klein's confidante and girlfriend in the final period of his Terezín internment, reports that he said:

I have been here for three years, and I am so destroyed that I think I will never be normal again. I will never be able to wipe these years away from my life – and it's not the end yet. And I don't even know if I'll ever get back. If only you knew how well I know it all. The pain, the poverty, everything. I was one of the first to come here. There was nothing here, but perhaps it was better in the beginning. I know what it's all about. I know and I can estimate anything that's going to happen here. Nothing can take me by surprise.³⁶

Evidence of Klein's increasing sense of desperation is uncovered in some allusions to other music in his Trio which is also highlighted by Beckerman.³⁷ In particular, he draws attention to a corner of the third and final movement. Here, in bar 128, the composer quotes from Schubert's song *Gretchen am Spinnrade* (*Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel*), where Goethe's text tells that '*Meine Ruh' ist hin, mein Herz ist schwer*' ('My peace is gone, my heart is heavy'). On first hearing, the reference to Schubert may not be aurally obvious, but a glance at the score shows a clear visual connection since it stands out as the only 6/8 bar in the movement.

A further and more disturbing musical allusion, uncovered by Beckerman, comes at the end of the first variation in the second movement where Klein possibly hints at the final bars of the first song, '*Nun will die Sonn' so hell Aufgehn*' ('Now the Sun Will Rise as Brightly') in Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* (*Songs on the Death of Children*), a work which was performed in the camp by Hilde Aronson-Lindt,³⁸ who also sang Klein's now-lost *Die Pest* (*The Plague*). Though the reference to Mahler is less obvious than the Schubert, it can possibly be regarded as Klein's way of conveying that there were dead children in Terezín. Even so, Beckerman urges caution in claiming this connection and that the similarity between the Klein and Mahler might simply be a way for Klein to include a musical gesture which is emotional, rather than specifically descriptive.³⁹ Nonetheless, in this song, Mahler's expression of grief gives way to, if not hope, at least a redemptive message of consolation, an emotional trajectory that is followed in Klein's Trio.⁴⁰

THE STRING TRIO WITHIN A JEWISH TRADITION

Intertextuality in the Trio goes beyond possible quotations from other music, however, and this brings the work within the realms of Jewish narrative. Klein was well connected to his Jewish roots. In many ways, he was far less assimilated than his Terezín composer-colleagues, Ullmann, Haas and Krása, and his childhood embraced the trappings of Judaic tradition and communal Jewish engagement. His paternal grandfather, Emanuel Klein, was lay-leader of Přeřov's Jewish community, and Emanuel and his wife, Louise, kept a traditionally Orthodox home. Louise in particular took it upon herself to ensure that Gideon and his siblings would come into contact with Jewish rituals, and she was largely in charge of overseeing the observance of, and providing hospitality to strangers during the Sabbath. Though relationships with things Jewish did not necessarily manifest itself through anything more than a nominal religious practice for Klein's parents, their home encouraged discussion on what was an increasingly important topic for many of the younger Czech Jews between the two world wars: Zionism.⁴¹ This sense of national and religious identity, coupled with a deep family commitment to music and culture, helped shape Klein's formative years..

It is therefore not surprising that Klein composed works which specifically draw on the Jewish liturgy, and on Zionist nationalism. The earliest example of this is a sketch dating back to 1934 or 1935 when he was in his mid-teens.⁴² It is a setting of the *Kiddush* prayer, the sanctification over wine, recited on the Sabbath and festivals, for tenor and piano (or perhaps organ) accompaniment, showing some influence of the type of accompanied *Chazanut*, or cantorial singing, typical of synagogue music throughout Europe, and which Klein would undoubtedly have heard in Přeřov. Another sacred text is a setting of *Psalm 144*, dated 1934, complete with the words written in Hebrew script by Klein.⁴³ A third sketch is scored for voice and string quartet, with the Hebrew transliterated, of what are the most important words in Jewish prayer: the *Shema*, as it is known, from Deuteronomy 6:4, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One'.⁴⁴

In Terezín, his two extant settings in Hebrew draw on secular words. They are the motet '*Bachur le'an tisa*' ('My boy, where are you going?'), dated December 1942, for three-part female choir,⁴⁵ choir, and *Wiegenlied*, a setting of the lullaby '*Sh'chav B'ni*' ('Sleep, my son'), for voice and piano.⁴⁶ There is no evidence to suggest that the motet is anything other than an original composition,⁴⁷ whereas *Wiegenlied* is an arrangement of what was a well-known Jewish song, Shalom Charitonov's pre-existing melody with later words by the Zionist writer Emmanuel Harussi.⁴⁸ Lost works include arrangements which have a specific Zionist influence: *Dva hora tance* (Two Horra Dances) for mixed choir and, most importantly, the Zionist anthem *Hatikvah* (*The Hope*)⁴⁹, which later became the State of Israel's national anthem. Klein's youth-work activities in the boys' home known as L417, placed emphasis on Jewish national identity, with the leaders of the *Jugendfürsorge* instilling their charges with Zionist ideals.⁵⁰ Klein was close friends with another youth-worker, fellow-musician Ella (known as Tella) Pollack, and Terezín survivor Ela Weissberger confirms Klein's Zionist credentials: 'Gideon and Tella were Zionists, and both of them planned to go to Palestine. He would have gone, for sure. She survived, and did settle there.'⁵¹ In his work as an educator, which included arranging Jewish-themed songs for the children's choirs, Jewish identity was central to this activity. He wrote about the challenges of how Terezín's youth might receive a Jewish education, and about issues of that time, such as how to reconcile Jewish identity based on faith, and identity based on the Zionist cause.⁵²

Judaism is built around grand narratives where, in order to ensure that key events are remembered, memorialised and commemorated for generations to come, stories are told. The most-observed example of this is at the traditional and lengthy Passover-eve meal, the *Seder*, where the story of the exodus from Egypt is recounted and symbolically commemorated by all participants. Sometimes the Judaic narrative is more metaphorical and allegorical, such as in the folklore stories found in elucidations of Biblical texts. These are generically known as *Midrash*, in other words, interpretations and investigations of texts which date back into antiquity, but which are still added today, responding to contemporary issues.⁵³ Re-telling a story is central to how Jewish tradition is taught. For Klein the educator, his Trio fits into the tradition of *Midrash*, the Jewish practice of instruction through allegory.

The concept of concealing a message within a larger story is part of Jewish tradition, and there is no Jewish custom which exemplifies this better than the festival of Purim, whose story has clear parallels with the Holocaust, and which is a festival we know Klein's family in some way observed.⁵⁴ On the face of it, the Purim story, as related in the Biblical Book of Esther, tells how, in the fifth century BCE, the Jewish Queen Esther thwarts an attempt by the wicked Haman to annihilate all the Jews of ancient Persia. Reading the Book of Esther, referred to in Hebrew as *Megillat Esther*, one hardly needs to exercise one's imagination to draw equivalences between Haman and Hitler. Haman, Esther tells us, intended to 'destroy, to slay, and to exterminate all Jews, young and old, children and women...and to plunder their possessions.'⁵⁵ *Megillat Esther* has its own *Midrash* associated with it, part of a large compilation of *Midrashim* known as *Midrash Rabbah* (Great Midrash), compiled between the fifth and eighth centuries CE.⁵⁶

Terezín was the only Nazi camp where the Jewish prisoners could practice their religion undisturbed. The first head of the Council of Elders, Jakob Edelstein, was an Orthodox Jew; the head of the *FZG* was a rabbi, as was the Council's final head. Although only a minority of prisoners were religiously committed, there was a general recognition of religious festivals and regular prayer services took place. Indeed, Jewish funeral rites were followed as much as was possible.⁵⁷ The first Purim celebration to take place in Terezín was in early March 1942, and the festival was observed from the start, with staging of what are traditionally known as *Purimspiels*, or Purim plays, usually comedy versions of *Megillat Esther*, complete with in-jokes and satire.⁵⁸ So although it is always a religious obligation to recite the sober message of *Megillat Esther*, a *Purimspiel* allows this weighty drama to be played out with frivolity, in a type of carnival style.

This juxtaposition can be observed in Klein's Trio. The light-hearted and playful outer movements of the Trio flank the weighty set of variations of the middle movement. These are based on a Moravian folksong, *Ta kněždubská veža* (*The Kněžduby Tower*), a movement which is longer than the combined durations of the sections which border it. The folksong's words are about a wild goose flying up to the tower, and though there are variants on this text, it would undoubtedly have had a special resonance for the Moravian Klein, now far from home, and an understandable connection, crucially at that time, to Czech identity. In contrast, the second theme of the finale underlines something of a carnival atmosphere, and with its instruction of 'Burlesco', it becomes the most light-hearted passage in the work.

Not surprisingly, Purim, this potent symbol of the vanquishing of evil, had considerable meaning for the Terezín prisoners. Writing about one of the plays, called *Esther*, devised for the Purim of 1943, the actress Zdenka Fantlová, who took the part of Queen Vashti, has written that the Purim story 'was deeply significant for Terezín and its inhabitants'.⁵⁹ Of one cherished parchment scrolls of *Megillat Esther* which prisoners had managed to smuggle into the camp, one of the inmates, Richard Feder, reflected that it was 'a symbol that Haman failed to exterminate all the Jews of Persia, and nor could Hitler exterminate all those of Europe.'⁶⁰ A song by an unknown author sung by the children in the Hannover Barracks during the Purim of 1943 demonstrates this, expressing the idea of hope and redemption which is part of the Purim story:

But once the day will arrive
When we'll walk out of the ghetto,
And life will smile at us.
In defiance of the Hamans
We will break the bars.
Forward our hope leads us.⁶¹

Nothing is what it seems in the Purim story. On the one hand, it can be read as an exciting account of the good vanquishing the thoroughly evil. However, as Rabbi Steve Greenberg explains:

Purim is about concealment. More specifically, it is about movement from the covert to the overt. There is a sustained tension between what characters are and what they seem to be that moves the plot forward. It is the careful unravelling of disguises that makes for salvation.⁶²

Even God is concealed in the *Book of Esther*, the only section of the Bible, apart from the Song of Songs, where His name is mentioned not even once. Some who were caught up in the Holocaust questioned at the time whether God had in fact gone into hiding, into concealment.

The name Esther suggests the concealment that we find in the Megillah. Esther comes from the same root as 'hester', or hiding. [...] But revelation is also implicit in the name Megillat Esther, for Megillah means 'revelation.' Just as, in the title of the book, we can distinguish two opposites, concealment (Esther) and revelation (Megillah), so too in the festival itself. On the one hand, the idea of concealment lies behind the name of Purim, a Persian word, and one connected with the decree against the Jews. On the other hand, it is a festival which in its celebration and rejoicing surpasses all others...a celebration without limit.⁶³

Despite the rampant anti-Semitism of Haman and his followers, Persia's Jews did not succumb to spiritual suicide, and there is something strongly affirmative about the Purim story. 'As the story unfolds, there seems to be a redemptive quality in self-expression', writes Greenberg.⁶⁴

Perhaps this is also how we should read Klein's String Trio: as a concealed story, where the message is in the medium, which unfolds and which becomes redemptive by virtue of the hopeful finale dispelling the unsettling darkness of the middle movement. After all, this is the best and only way in which Klein could engage with performing the archive of his memory, his own personal archive, drawing on Jewish tradition, and connecting with his far happier earlier life. Thirteen bars before the end of the Trio, the violin, in octaves, states the folk-song theme clearly and affirmatively, as a crescendo takes Gideon Klein's wild goose flying up to its Moravian tower. As Greenberg says, and this could apply to what Klein was aiming for when he wrote his Trio: 'And when the moments come to stand for one's inner truths, for principle, for one's people, then we must turn inside out and witness, loud and proud and sure.'⁶⁵

¹ There have been at least 18 commercial recordings of the String Trio. See, for example, the Klein discography, which lists many of these, at *Mes musiques régénérées*, <<http://www.musiques-regeneeres.fr/Terezin/MyKlein.html#18-23>>. [accessed 9 May 2017]

² Before his deportation to Terezín in early December 1941, Klein had the presence of mind to entrust personal papers and manuscripts for safe keeping to a friend, Eduard Herzog. Lain forgotten for half a century, Dr. Herzog's family returned these to Klein's sister, Lisa (Eliška) Kleinová, in 1990. David Bloch, 'Gideon Klein', *Music and the Holocaust* <<http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/de/places/theresienstadt/klein-gideon/>>. [accessed 9 May 2017]

³ The following extant works were all performed in Terezín: Fantasy and Fugue for string quartet; Czech folksong arrangements for male choir; an arrangement of the Soviet song *Poljuško, pole* (Song of the plains); the Hebrew setting *Bachuri Le'an Tisa* (My boy, where are you going?); two Madrigals (words by Villon and Hölderlin); the folk-poetry setting *První hřích* (The First Sin); a birthday-greeting for choir, *Spruch* (Saying); *Wiegenlied*, the arrangements of the Hebrew lullaby *Sh'chav B'ni* (Sleep, my son), for voice and piano. Rafael Schächter was invariably the conductor of the choral pieces. The following works, now lost, also received performances: arrangements of Two Horra Dances, Moravian, Silesian and Hebrew folksongs; an arrangement of *Hatikvah* (The Hope); the song-cycle *Die Pest* (The Plague) for alto and piano with words by fellow-prisoner Petr Kien. See Milan Slavický, *Gideon Klein: A Fragment of Life and Work*, (Prague: Helvetica-Tempora, 1996), 110-111, 119. There is no evidence that his other two substantial concert works, the Piano Sonata and the String Trio, received public performances in the ghetto. The incidental music for Gonda Redlich's play *Velký stín* (The Great Shadow) has been lost, though we know from Redlich's diary that it was performed. See Saul S. Friedman (ed.), *The Terezín Diary of Gonda Redlich* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1992), 87-88.

⁴ The Estate of the Musical Composer and Pianist Gideon Klein, Jewish Museum in Prague, Inventory item 16i. Though undated, this sketch for solo violin was probably drafted in 1939, as it appears with other dated fragments.

⁵ Jewish Museum, Inventory item 5

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ See, for example: Michael Beckerman, 'Klein the Janáčekian', *Musicologica Brunensia*, . 44 (2009), 25–33, where the author refutes Peduzzi's contention in: Lubomír Peduzzi, 'Gideon Klein und seine Monographie', in *Musik im Ghetto Theresienstadt* (Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2005), 115-128. Peduzzi argues that Klein was not directly influenced by Janáček.

⁸ Klein's scoring is for two each of oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns.

⁹ The horn parts here, as in Klein's manuscript, are written 'in C'. He indicates 'Corni in Do basso'.

¹⁰ Amongst the notable works quoting the Hussite chorale are Dvořák's *Hussite Overture*, op. 67, Suk's Symphonic poem *Prague*, op. 26 and 'Song of the Hussites' from Janáček's opera *The Excursions of Mr Brouček*.

¹¹ The history of this ban is not as straightforward as it might seem. In 1941, performances of *Má Vlast* were prohibited in occupied Bohemia and Moravia for fear of arousing too great a nationalist sentiment from the Czech population. That same year, however, Václav Talich, the conductor of the Prague-based Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, was ordered by the Reich Minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, to take the orchestra on tour to Germany. Talich agreed, on condition that *Má Vlast* could be included in the concerts. Following the February performances in Dresden and Berlin, the ban on this music in Prague was lifted. See: 'My Country in service of the swastika?', History of the Czech Philharmonic <<http://www.ceskafilharmonie.cz/en/about-us/history/>>. [accessed 14 August 2017].

¹² Jewish Museum, Inventory item 10.

¹³ Klein's use of opus numbers is inconsistent and arbitrary, and not necessarily chronological.

¹⁴ For further information on how the Nuremberg Laws affected Czech Jews, see: <http://www.holocaust.cz/en/history/final-solution/the-final-solution-of-the-jewish-question-in-the-bohemian-lands/anti-jewish-policy-after-the-establishment-of-the-protectorate-of-bohemia-and-moravia/> [accessed 9 May 2017]

¹⁵ Jewish Museum, Inventory item 26: Concert programme for an evening of folk poetry, and music by Janáček, hosted by *Umělecká beseda* (Czech Arts Forum), 29 and 30 January 1940. Klein performed Janáček's *From the Diary of One Who Disappeared*, and the Concertino. The name Karel Vránek sounds similar, and might have been in tribute to Klein's first music teacher, Karel Mařík. Maybe choosing the name Karel, in Czech meaning Free Man, was not entirely coincidental.

¹⁶ Lisa Kleinová, recorded interviews with Peter Ambros, 1994. (Author's private collection). Some of these formed the basis for: Peter Ambros, *Leben vom Blatt gespielt – Eine dramatische Lebenspartitur* (Dresden: Thelem, 2003). The author is grateful to Peter Ambros for allowing transcripts to be made of these recordings.

¹⁷ Jewish Museum, Inventory item 6.

¹⁸ Jewish Museum, Inventory item 3.

¹⁹ Ruth Bondy, *Elder of the Jews: Jakob Edelstein of Theresienstadt*, trans. Evelyn Abel (New York: Grove Press, 1989), 243

²⁰ 'Radiomarkt', *Yad Vashem :The World Holocaust Remembrance Center*, <http://db.yadvashem.org/deportation/assemblyArea.html?language=en&itemId=T9478792> [accessed 9 May 2017]

²¹ 'Transport J from Praha' *Yad Vashem* <<http://db.yadvashem.org/deportation/transportDetails.html?language=en&itemId=5092337>>, [accessed 9 May 2017]. See also: H.G. Adler, *Theresienstadt 1941-1945: The Face of a Coerced Community*, trans. Belinda Cooper, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 60. Adler's monograph on the Terezín/Theresienstadt camp remains the most comprehensive scholarly study on the subject. The author was a Terezín survivor, and first published his monumental study in 1955. Originally in German, it was revised in 1960, and first appeared in English translation in 2017.

²² Adler, *Theresienstadt 1941-1945*, 267

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- ²³ ‘Theresienstadt’, *Yad Vashem – The World Holocaust Remembrance Center*, http://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/about/ghettos/theresienstadt#narrative_info. [accessed 9 May 2017]
- ²⁴ ‘Theresienstadt’ in *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005424>>. [accessed 9 May 2017]. This provides general information about the ghetto, as well as its cultural life.
- ²⁵ *ibid.*²
- ²⁶ Livia Rothkirchen, ‘The Spiritual Legacy of the Terezín Inmates’ in *The Jews of Bohemia and Moravia: Facing the Holocaust*, (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 265-283. This provides a detailed discussion on the cultural activities of Terezín.
- ²⁷ Rabbi Erich Weiner was the head of the FZG. In 1943, he wrote a comprehensive report about the FZG. Archives of the Prague Jewish Museum, Document.JMP.Shoah/T/2/A/10a/316c/001. For a translation, see: Rabbi Erich Weiner, ‘Freizeitgestaltung in Theresienstadt’, in Rebecca Rovit and Alvin Goldfarb (eds.), trans. Rebecca Rovit, *Theatrical Performance during the Holocaust* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999), 209-230. Klein’s name appears in an undated document listing all the section-heads of the FZG. Archives of the Prague Jewish Museum, Document.JMP.Shoah/T/2/A/10a/316a/001
- ²⁸ For the full personnel of the *Jugendfürsorge*, see: Margalit Shlain, ‘The Youth Care Department (*Jugendfürsorge*) in Ghetto Theresienstadt (1942-1945)’, *Newsletter of the Theresienstadt Martyrs Remembrance Association*, issue no. 70 (2011), 7-10
- ²⁹ There are many personal recollections about Klein from other prisoners. Some are in the public domain, but others have been recounted to the current writer. For a useful snapshot of Klein’s activities, see: Joža Karas, *Music in Terezín 1941-1945*, (Hillsdale, Pendragon Press, 2008), 59-61
- ³⁰ The name of Klein’s mother, Ilona, is listed on Transport EQ from Terezín to Auschwitz, 12 October 1944. See the database of Holocaust.cz: <http://www.holocaust.cz/en/database-of-victims/victim/98905-ilona-kleinova/>> [accessed 9 May 2017]. She was murdered on arrival. His sister, Lisa, survived, and due to privacy considerations, names of survivors do not appear on the lists of deportees inventoried on this, or similar official (for example, Yad Vashem), databases. Her personal testimony, which details this deportation to Auschwitz, is archived at the Prague Jewish Museum, and is available in Czech here: <<http://www.holocaust.cz/zdroje/vzpominky/pani-eliska-k-nar-1912/>> [accessed 9 May 2017]
- ³¹ See, for example: Beckerman, ‘Klein the Janáčekian’, 25-33.
- ³² Michael Beckerman, ‘Pavel Haas’, *The Orel Foundation: Rediscovering Suppressed Musical Treasures of the Twentieth Century* < http://orelfoundation.org/index.php/composers/article/pavel_haas/> [accessed 9 May 2017]
- ³³ David Bloch, ‘Hidden Meanings: Musical Symbols in Terezín’, *India International Centre Quarterly*, vol. 32 (2006), 121
- ³⁴ *ibid.*
- ³⁵ Rothkirchen, *The Jews of Bohemia and Moravia*,, 274-275
- ³⁶ Jewish Museum, Inventory item 34, Irma Semecká, ‘Memories of Gideon Klein’ 1945 (trans. Hana Trojanová),
- ³⁷ Michael Beckerman, ‘What Kind of Historical Document is a Musical Score? A Meditation in Ten Parts on Klein's Trio’, *The Orel Foundation: Rediscovering Suppressed Musical Treasures of the Twentieth Century* <http://orelfoundation.org/index.php/journal/journalArticle/what_kind_of_historical_document_is_a_musical_score>. [accessed 9 May 2017]
- ³⁸ Recital of songs by Mahler, 9 July 1943. The original programme is in the archives of Beit Terezín, Israel, Inventory item 297.000.062 .
- ³⁹ Beckerman, ‘What Kind of Historical Document is a Musical Score? A Meditation in Ten Parts on Klein's Trio’
- ⁴⁰ See Donald Mitchell, ‘Mahler’s Kammermusikton’, in Donald Mitchell & Andrew Nicholson (eds.), *The Mahler Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 218
- ⁴¹ Lisa Kleinová’s, recorded interviews (author’s collection), includes extensive discussions about her family’s engagement with Judaism and Zionism.I. There is additional information in Kleinová’s testimony in the Prague Jewish Museum: <<http://www.holocaust.cz/zdroje/vzpominky/pani-eliska-k-nar-1912/>> [accessed 9 May 2017]

⁴² Jewish Museum, Inventory item 16c

⁴³ *ibid.*, 18c

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 19

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, 20

⁴⁷ See Nick Strimple, 'Choral Music in Theresienstadt, 1941-1944', *The Orel Foundation: Rediscovering Suppressed Musical Treasures of the Twentieth Century*.

< http://orelfoundation.org/index.php/journal/journalArticle/choral_music_in_theresienstadt_1941-1944/> [accessed 9 May 2017]

⁴⁸ See: Michael Beckerman and Naomi Tadmor, 'Lullaby: The Story of a Niggun', *Music & Politics*, X/1(2016), < <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mp/9460447.0010.101?view=text:rgn=main>> [accessed 9 May 2017]

⁴⁹ This appears along with other folksong settings and *Bachuri Le'an Tisa* on an undated programme. Inventory item 33c, The Estate of the Musical Composer and Pianist Gideon Klein, Jewish Museum in Prague

⁵⁰ Margalit Shlain, 'The Youth Care Department (*Jugendfürsorge*) in Ghetto Theresienstadt (1942-1945)', Newsletter of the Theresienstadt Martyrs Remembrance Association, 70 (2011) , 7-10

⁵¹ Author's interview with Ela Weisberger, 28 November 2010.

⁵² The Annual Report of the Youth Home L417 (the Czech boys' home in the Ghetto) of July 1943 contains Klein's essay *O tak zvané politické výchově mládeže* (On the so-called political education of the youth). Archives of the Prague Jewish Museum, Document.JMP.Shoah/T/2/A/9b/001/304/1/018. For a translation, see: Milan Slavický, *Gideon Klein: A Fragment of Life and Work*, (Prague: Helvetica-Tempora, 1996), 87–98

⁵³ Rabbi Gerson Schwartz, 'Is There Still Midrash Today? Finding Midrash in current events, your local synagogue and your movie theater', *My Jewish Learning* < <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/is-there-still-midrash-today/>> [accessed 9 May 2017]

⁵⁴ In her recorded interviews, Lisa Kleinová mentions how she dressed up to take part in Purimspiels.

⁵⁵ Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz (ed. & trans.), 'Megillat Esther', *The Book of Megillos*, (New York: Mesorah Publications, Ltd., 1986), 29 (verse 3:13)

⁵⁶ Rabbi Jill Jacobs, 'Midrash Rabbah. Rabbinic interpretations and discussions of the Bible,' *My Jewish Learning* < <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/midrash-rabbah/>> [accessed 9 May 2017]

⁵⁷ Rothkirchen, 266

⁵⁸ A Purimspiel, *Esther*, was performed in the camp for the first Purim, March 1942: Archives of the Prague Jewish Museum, Document.JMP.Shoah/T/2/A/10c/318c/001

⁵⁹ Zdenka Fantlová, *The Tin Ring*, (Newcastle upon Tyne: Northumbria Press, 2010), 124.

⁶⁰ Richard Feder, 'Religiöses Leben in Theresienstadt', in *Theresienstadt*, ed. Walter Hacker (Vienna: Europa-Verlag, 1968), 64

⁶¹ Archives of the Prague Jewish Museum, Document.JMP.Shoah/T/2/A/10j/326/084/006. Translation in Karas, *Music in Terezin 1941-1945*, 74. Karas incorrectly states that it was sung by children in the Brandenburg Barracks.

⁶² Rabbi Steve Greenberg, *Purim Inside Out* (New York: The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, 2000), 1..

⁶³ Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, 'Purim', in Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (ed. and trans.), *Torah Studies* (London: Lubavitch Foundation, 1986), 130.

⁶⁴ Greenberg, *Purim Inside Out*, 2

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, 3.

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