

OK, now try.

A, B, C, D, E, F.

Oh, it's fine.

Yeah.

It's fine. Very good.

Good.

OK. In fact, I think we could just start it as it is. And I don't really need to--

No.

--hear this anymore. Well, we're, today, the 6th of February 1996.

'96.

--in London talking to Professor Ulrich Simon. And Professor Simon, what I'd really like to start with, I'd like to know, also, about your activities, as well. But maybe we could start about the family, the history of the family--

Yeah.

--and your father's education, general education and music education, his musical career and activities up until his incarceration in TerezÃn--

Yeah.

--and as much as you know, including his visit to Palestine in 19--

I'd like to talk about that, yes. Well, let me begin by giving my father's genealogy. I mean he belonged to what you might call the established, liberal, Jewish, wealthy family. His father had been-- was a banker, a private banker. And the family was, of course, as you can well imagine, highly non-political, not controversial, very much concerned with the building up of the education of James, who was the eldest, and then Bertha, who-- and the girl, and Ludwig, the third son.

I can only tell you that he, as a young man, seems to have been very witty. Because I've seen some of his early postcards. And he, I think, hadn't got a care in the world, I would say, which is so paradoxical with what went on afterwards. But then he lived in this make-believe world, this Alice in Wonderland world.

He was born in 1880. So you can just imagine how, without even being aware of it, they luxuriated, without opulence or without ostentatiousness, in Berlin. And they went on holidays. But, of course, in those days things were so different from today. They were slow.

I didn't live there, so I can only describe what I've heard. My own feeling is that he was a very typical, upper-class Jewish student, who went from one university to-- when he matriculated, went from one university to another. Actually, I think he took his final examinations in Berlin, but he went to the other universities I know, Freiburg, Heidelberg.

Why did he switch to different universities?

They always did.

OK.

They still do. That is one of the privileges. Well, nowadays, of course, German universities are not what they were then. That was very much a status of privilege. But you were never expected to stay in the same university, not like Oxford and Cambridge-- quite unlike. There were no colleges, either.

Anyhow, he took a doctorate in philosophy. I can't remember. I know that he wrote a thesis on an Abbé Vogler. You may never have heard of V-O-G-L-E-R, who I think precedes, in time, the sort of Vienna circle of Mozart and Haydn.

I know the name.

You do know the name. And after having taken this degree, what we call a degree, he became a freelance musician, certainly a very good pianist. In fact, I think outstandingly good. But without any kind of pressure behind him, especially no financial pressure. I don't think he was very ambitious in his first compositions, which are pre 1914-- are very lyrical, very traditional.

And in retrospect, well, he couldn't change his temperament. They were quite unlike what was already in the air. In fact, he was a stranger to Mahler, to Schoenberg, I mean to the things which were already going on in Vienna. And later on, I mean there were very big rows between my mother and father, where my mother was progressive. And she wanted him to succeed. And she had always the feeling that he could have gone that way. But I don't somehow feel that it was in his nature.

He was a man who was devoted to the German classics, to German philosophy-- was very German, really. And as I should tell you later on, for me, he became the great guide of the great German classical repertoire, especially Bach and Mozart. I mean that was really his life.

He was active, then, as a performer?

He was active as a performer.

Recitals?

Yes.

Of his music?

Yes.

Concertos also?

Yes. Yes. Yes. But I have no programs. Nothing to prove it. But I mean, I think that he was always well liked. I know that he enjoyed social-- I mean, my parents were always out--

Well, I was only born in 1913. So I can't talk about those prewar years. But the one thing which impresses me now, because, since I knew you were coming, I reflected on it, is that he, of all the people who were then alive in the early '30s, late '20s, he was the only one who was never called to military service, although the Great War broke out in 1914.

Why do you think that was?

I think, well, he was frail. But he was not that frail. He was thin, almost ascetic looking. And well, I think the medical doctors of the army must have resolved that he would only be a nuisance or couldn't-- although, I mean, as you know, from contemporary military things, you can always use people in the backwater of clerical duties.

But anyhow, he was never-- unlike his brothers and brothers-in-law, he was never called upon. And I don't think he even registered it. He was very otherworldly. That is really the key thing about his life, that he could not and would not register what was going on. I mean my mother really governed the household.

So it wasn't an active feeling of pacifism or something?

No. I don't think he was at all political. And--

Indifference.

Yes. Unawareness, I would call it. He was totally unaware of-- certainly, later on, of the disastrous happenings. I don't think he registered that. My mother guided the household. I remember, for instance, rather to my mind, when I was a little boy, rather ridiculous, that he-- before he went out into-- we lived in a suburb and so on. And you had to get a fare together, he would go and take a mark or two marks from her to be given. You know, he didn't even keep a private purse. He was very, very otherworldly.

And yet, if you'd met him-- there's a photograph behind you-- you would have been impressed by a rather regal appearance, I think, a very, very fine appearance.

This is [? a younger ?] photograph, then.

Yes.

Which is one which I have.

And this is the family, which is a very bad photograph, but it just shows us, as a group of four, terribly conventional studied and not good. But I mean, you only look at him.

Ah, this is your father.

Yes.

And this is you?

Yeah, dreadful, isn't it?

And your--

My brother, who went-- who was lost in a Soviet Union in '36, '37. I mean he went east or he went west. So it becomes a tragic story. Well, I mean, I can only just proceed chronologically.

Yes. What about his musical studies? When did he begin? And with whom did he study?

He studied with somebody called Ansorge. And I mean, he became an acclaimed pianist. I mean, he gave these regular recitals in Beethovensaal. We went, as boys, and were very impressed. There was quite a good audience. It was never sold out. It was not like Schnabel. He had some relationship with Busoni. I think, like Kurt Weill, he belonged to that sort of seminar, do you know? Without possibly benefiting a great deal from it, because I don't think he was made for modern music, for post-war--

And Busoni was very forward.

Very forward. My father admired Busoni, especially as a pianist. But I don't really think that he jumped ahead. Because, as you will see when you go to see his-- have you already seen some of his music? No?

I've seen some. But Susanna has.

Well, I never took to his music, so I'm not really a fair judge. Because I always felt-- I mean this is a son's prejudice, I suppose--

Yes.

--that he was very, very much in debt to Brahms, almost post-Brahms, even. And I've got a deep-rooted dislike of Brahms even to this day. I mean, I admire him, now, a little bit, you know? But it isn't really my preference. But I mean, we come now, chronologically speaking, to 1918, '19.

And, of course, everything was lost-- I mean this whole padding of financial wealth, of rich parents' houses and so on, incomes, which never interested him. He never looked at any accounts, had nothing whatever to do with it. And so I think one might almost, say, overnight, or, at any rate, over the two years after the war, we shared in the general misery of total impoverishment.

But was this inherited--

Yes.

--wealth or inherited means?

Inherited.

So that he didn't really have to--

He didn't work at all for--

He didn't work?

--money, not until then. It didn't arise until 1918 that there was any need for money. Because it was all interests, coupons, you know? Just as some people, even nowadays, manage to live just on that. No pension or anything like that, but simply income.

And this was actually the earnings of his father?

Yes.

I see.

Inherited. And my mother brought into the marriage the usual dowry, which was also not negligible.

What was his father's business or profession? You perhaps said.

My mother's father?

No, James' father.

He was a banker.

He was a banker.

But he died rather early. He was a diabetic. He would have lived much longer now. And let me simply summarize that the years when, now, by this time, I was eight, eight, 10, 11, which I have described, actually, about my own life, which

can be summarized as hunger. I mean, we knew what it was. And my mother kept us alive. I can see her dragging, if one could get hold of it, spinach or potatoes home. There was no transport.

There was civil war. I mean there were communists in Berlin. I can remember shootings. But, of course, as you know, as a child, you take all this in your stride. It didn't really particularly upset me. What did begin to upset me was the marital strife at home, which was quite pronounced. Because my mother, really-- of course, she suffered, too.

I mean they both suffered. But she suffered from the degradation of poverty. Although, of course, we still kept-- maintained a social life of some kind. I mean, but I can only remember that, in those years, which are the crucial years of '22, '23, '24, we were very poor.

And when my father had an American student, I remember, in Berlin, because Americans did come, and I think he was once able to be paid \$1 for a piano lesson, which I then took, I think, to pay for some grocery. And I was given four times the change of what was expected because of the inflation. You know, I mean, these were the days. Which, of course, happened in Russia now.

Yes, they are.

I mean that's what goes on all the time.

I wanted to ask you. You said it was from a very liberal Jewish family. Was there any awareness or Jewish consciousness in your growing up in the family?

Well.

Or was it highly assimilated?

Highly assimilated. My father still went to synagogue on the great feast days. But he rather mocked it. I mean he mocked the rabbis. He was good at imitation. But he didn't mock it, cruelly or severely. He was not a cynic.

My mother was very anti-Jewish, really, essentially. I mean she didn't believe in circumcision. She didn't believe in anything traditional. She certainly didn't go to synagogue and was completely secularized. She loved Nietzsche. It was very much that. She was a very romantic person and very, very highly intelligent, high caliber.

But in '24, '25, '26 things stabilized. And we enjoyed-- I enjoyed the short pre-Nazi period, when some kind of prosperity did return even to us. I mean he gave lessons, which he'd never given before. And he didn't enjoy it, nor did I think--

Well, Rosa was one of his pupils. She can tell you. I think she admired him. And he had some good artistic feeling as a teacher. But whether he helped her technically? We have got another cousin, who is very ill, in New York, and she-- so that our family income derived quite a bit from en famille.

And I think Rosa's parents subsidized our household, I think, quite considerably. And I think there was a feeling that her father had mismanaged our affairs with a mortgage, which went phut, but it's of no interest, really. Because it doesn't really concern my father, who completely ignored that side of life. He didn't want to know.

Well, he couldn't know, because it wasn't him. He was really becoming very much a composer. That was his life. I mean, in those periods, from 1922 until the Nazis came, he was always up at 7 o'clock in the morning. He was always at his desk. And he was really, I think, a composer of music and komponist.

Yes.

And he wasn't always lucky. And sometimes he was lucky. But I'll give you an example of his bad luck. Because the one opera, which I think, at least, as a Klavierauszug, I think, in Jerusalem--

Yes, right.

--"Frau im Stein," on which he worked. And I remember that very well, because I, being the only musical child, my son-- my brother was not very musical, he asked me, quite often, do you know, what I thought of this passage and that. And we formed a relationship, which was entirely musical, which had no other interests. And so he never wanted to know about my career or school or anything. It was entirely musical.

Well, anyhow, I remember that this "Frau im Stein" was given its first performance in Stuttgart. And I think it was a success. It was given several performances. It's all about Ariadne and Greek mythology and Theseus. And as bad luck would have it, after the first night, the president of the German Republic, whose name was Ebert, died.

And as you know in journalism, all the columns were removed of the early editions. And instead of--

So no reviews.

And there were no reviews. And this was really a bitter blow.

Of course.

A real death--

That might have pushed him onto other things.

Yes.

Were there reviews of his concerts?

Yes.

Do you have any of these?

I have no-- none, nothing. Nothing is left. I mean--

Presumably, one could go back to old newspapers of that time. I'll look around--

Yes.

--and search for those.

Well, I mean, there again, I remember that they were good. But they were little bit prompted by my mother's playing on the corruption of critics. Because, for instance, I remember that the Berliner Tageblatt had some man, who was very influential, called I think Marschalk or something. And she presented him with a little Bukhara carpet. That's how-- but that's not changed a lot now. I think these things still go on. I mean the artistic life is always penetrated by corruption.

Now, I know that among the printed works, which Susanna has, of course, are many, many songs.

Yes, he wrote--

--and cycles.

--HÃ¶rderlin songs.

Yes.

But these are all pre-1914, aren't they? None at all?

No, they are '14, '15, and '20.

Yes.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And he must have-- well, he obviously wrote, very professionally and musically, in the tradition of the German Lied.

Very much.

And he must have love poetry, too.

He loved it. Oh, yes, Hugo Ball. Yes, I mean, there's no doubt about it.

Did he share this interest, in the poetry, with the rest of the family, sometimes, finding a text, which--

Yes.

--he love so much that he then decided [? to read it-- ?]

Well, my mother was very productive. I mean, there is one work, which I believe was performed in Dresden, called "Pilgermorgen," and that is the poetry-- some poetry of Rilke.

Yes, that's the cantata which I will see if I manage to get a hold of.

Rilke, yeah. Well, I mean the text was prepared by her. And he obviously-- I mean so they collaborated. But they did fight. And as a child, of course, didn't like that at all. It was always really about Schoenberg and Hindemith, why can't you be like them? I mean, it's a silly thing to have said.

That's very interesting, because usually it just could be the opposite. Why do you have to be so avant garde?

Yeah, but he wasn't avant garde.

Yes.

I mean, if he'd been like Kurt Weill, he would have been a different person. Also, you see, when we now come to the critical years, he could have gone to the United States, like Kurt Weill, and he would have survived. But he felt so European.

Now, we come to the time-- well, to Nazi time. Well, yes, we might as well come to the Nazi time. I mean we all left Berlin early. So we were lucky. And we dispersed.

I went to London. I was supposed to go to the United States. And I'm glad I stayed here, because I found my wife. And what kept me here was the English language and especially Shakespeare, so I was already very much in literature, which I've remained until my dying day.

My brother, alas, had gone later than I. I had also been, of course-- everybody had been a communist. But I'd already graduated from that. I'd seen the corruption. But he went to Moscow. And my mother still visited him in '34, '35. And of course, he disappeared like everybody.

My father went to Zurich. And there, I think, he could have stayed. But I mean, we know that the Swiss were not welcoming.

I know that.

I mean there's a long story, now, because of one of these trials-- you know, rehabilitations?

Yes. Yes.

And I had a feeling that-- well, I don't know what my feeling is, right-- that he could have perhaps made it. But instead of that, he went to Amsterdam. And when my mother, who was really good in that respect, felt-- which he didn't feel, because he was apolitical.

You know, he didn't pay much attention to anything. He was still composing in Amsterdam. I think he had a sort of second liaison with a Frau Applebaum, whom Rosa still remembers, too. And one of these songs I think is dedicated to her. And she was in the States. She could have managed him to get into the States.

Now, when he went to Switzerland, where did his wife go? Where did your mother go?

My mother, when--

Did they--

They separated.

Oh, they separated.

But not officially. I mean they didn't divorce. She went to Paris to learn the trade of beautician. And she had settled in Amsterdam. Then he joined her in Amsterdam. Then I advised her, very properly, to give up Amsterdam, because I knew what was coming.

Sure.

And I said, just get rid of everything and come to London.

You were already in London when you made this advice?

Yeah.

Did they ever come to visit? She did. He didn't. And he then, on her behest, I think went to visit his relations in what was Palestine. And there, of course, I think he made a great-- I mean, Rosa always blames herself. But I told her, she can't blame herself. She was a university student. She was just engaged to [PERSONAL NAME], who, of course, died years ago. And I mean, she was very busy.

Her brother, Georg, who was a very promising chemist, had committed suicide. Her mother had died. Her father, I think, was not in good fettle. So you can't blame her. But we-- and this I do remember, because I was in Paris then-- sent a telegram to my father and said, whatever you do, stay there.

Stay in Palestine.

Go underground. And he didn't.

No, you say that he went to see some relatives. Which relatives?

Well, Rosa's mother was his sister.

see.

And there were others, too. I mean one of-- Martin Glass is still alive. There were several. And he-- well, one must, of course, admit on his side that there was not exactly, at that time, a great demand for musicians. I mean what people wanted were peasants, construction workers, engineers.

And I think he probably felt-- well, he was not the sort of person to open a restaurant or even to serve in a restaurant. He could have tried, I suppose. But I don't think he wanted to.

Anyhow, there was a big row, because I know he came back. And my mother really scolded him and said, we did everything to try and keep you there. I mean, we don't really know. Did people go underground successfully in Palestine? Could one go underground? Could one escape the British?

Certainly, plenty of musicians came in the '30s.

And stayed.

I don't know to what extent they went underground. I think if they weren't active in any anti-British things, I imagine that they were more or less.

But he didn't have a visa. And he would have been a visitor, you see.

Yes.

It would have been illegal.

How long was he then?

Well, Rosa would know.

It was '38, I believe.

Yes, before [NON-ENGLISH] turned up, I think. Well, I don't think he was there for more than a month.

Oh, a really short visit. I wanted to ask you, were you aware or do you think he was aware of somebody else, who was very prominent, in Berlin, in the '20s, and then came to be one of really the very important 20th century composers, Stefan Wolpe?

No, I don't think so. I have heard the name. But I don't think it was ever mentioned at home.

Yeah. Well, probably with his conservative outlook, had he known him, he would have wished he hadn't.

Yeah. Yeah. Yes, I understand. Yeah.

But it is interesting that among the music which Shoshana has, of course, there's the manuscript of this cello lament--

Yeah.

--based on a Yemenite tune.

Yeah.

I will try to find, really, what's the source of that tune. I should be able to do that.

Is this "Ahasver," that, the "Wandering Jew?"

No. That's, I think, an orchestra work.

That may be in the--

In the library.

--print library. I think that was written rather late.

That was '38.

Yeah. Yeah.

That was when he was in Palestine.

And then he wrote music to the Tempest, like everybody else. Everybody writes Ariel. Too many people try. Well, of course, I hadn't heard any of this, the later music. For me, he remained really the beacon, a guide to-- well, I'm only an amateur, you see? But I mean, I live and by JC Bach, I mean whom I really do know, all this polyphony and so on.

And I mean my father, at the piano, he gave--

You mean JS Bach?

JS, JS, yes, and Mozart. And my father, I mean we had sort of domestic-- also for to make money, domestic improvisations, they were called. People came, who had money, paid. And they didn't know what sort of program would come. They were instrumentalists, too.

And my father was a splendid speaker on music, of course, in German, you know?

Yes. And his understanding of, I mean-- whenever I hear Mozart's Figaro, the famous finale of the second act, it's just him. Because he could do all these voices and do all the orchestration. And when he was ill, I mean he could lie in bed and just have him just read a score. And it was, for him, just like listening. So he was extremely musical. How creative? You will probably be a better judge than I am.

In addition to studying piano, did he study musicology?

Yes.

[INAUDIBLE]

He wrote this thing, there, which I put out for you. That's a very early work. And he wrote.

I think this was, also, of course, one of his lectures.

Yes.

--in TerezÃn.

In TerezÃn, yeah. Yeah. He also wrote quite regularly for a left-wing magazine called The WeltbÃ¼hne in Berlin. And this has been reprinted. I mean, these WeltbÃ¼hne, these articles have been-- not only just his articles but all these

periodicals. And they are definite-- that's definitely, yes, musicology. I think--

Do many of his published articles survive?

No.

No?

Nothing.

But again, one could search the library.

It's in the British Museum, yes. Yes.

Oh, articles also?

Well, in the WeltbÃ¼chne.

[INAUDIBLE]

No, I don't think so, not separate. I mean you could just look up, when you're there tomorrow, whether there's anything under his name. There may be.

Well, I have a colleague, who works in the Prussian state library in Berlin.

Yes.

And she could certainly--

She could certainly.

--look in his old

Yeah. Yeah

--musical journals--

Yes.

--to see if there's something.

He was very much a musicologist. And I think my mother probably felt and I probably felt that he was a little bit too academic. Because, I mean, it's always a tussle, isn't it, between academic knowledge and creativeness.

Yeah, one hopefully tries to find a balance.

Some people do.

Yes.

Some people do.

Yes.

Incidentally, this has nothing to do with it. Do you know this book, which Rosa once recommended-- I've now read it-- Wolfgang Hildesheimer on Mozart?

No.

I was just wondering what you'd think. I'd like to know what you think. Because I mean, there, again, I think it's a tussle not of Mozart's but of Hildesheimer, who is a sort of half-artist, half-archivist. I have always found it, myself, that if I-- well, my life is not really creative. I wouldn't call it creative. But if you want to be really creative, you have to be very free from too much prolegomena.

I mean, once you start that game, where does it come from, for whom is it written, why is it written, and so on, I mean, these are things which are not-- the spontaneity goes.

Well, again, I think if one doesn't get dominated by this, there are certain things which can shed light.

Yeah.

I wouldn't agree. I think that if you take it in good measure.

Well, I suppose you're--

And there's some things which can be useful.

Well, I quite agree that Bach and Mozart wrote for a purpose. I mean, you have to have a purpose. That I agree. And if you don't succeed, then, like Händel, you go mad. Oh, well, it's not the only reason for madness. But I think it's awful to lack an echo reception. But nowadays, in literary criticism, which bores me, it's always reception criticism. So that people don't ask much about the author but only, really, about the people, then and now, who received the text. Well.

Händel was of great interest in the '20s. Wolpe composed Händel texts. Wolpe composed some Händel texts. Josef Matthias Hauer wrote Händel-Lieder in the '20s. Ullmann, when he was in Paris, he wrote a number of Händel pieces, as well.

Yeah. But you take poor Schubert, I mean, there's tremendous output, and then you'd starve to death at 31. And send it to Goethe, and he sends it back. No, this is a-- no wonder the quintet, at the end, is one of the most painful works ever written. It's a marvelous piece.

The C Major Quintet?

Yeah.

With the two cellos?

Isn't it.

It's a fantastic piece.

It is.

Fantastic.

It always simply moves me so much, that I can hardly bear it.

Sure. Sure. Sure.

Did you hear your father play chamber music?

Yes, but not a lot. But I did hear it, oh, yes. Yes. Yes. But my musical life really was interrupted, because, I mean, in 1933? Well, I suppose when we all dispersed, I was 20. But I was very much-- I had to get on with my own life. And that was difficult enough, because I came, here, with nothing and had to start all over again.

And musically, I really only came to life after the war. I mean there was a long lacuna. I didn't have an instrument. And there was-- well, it was rather primitive, really. I mean England has just simply flourished. It's just unbelievable. There's a sort of Renaissance now-- too much.

Yeah.

It's too much.

Well, so many people, and who came here, like Berthold Goldschmidt--

Yes he's been revived.

--who is very, very much revived.

Very much. Do you like his Music

I haven't really-- I must say, I haven't really listened to that much.

No.

So some of the chamber music and piano music I have heard, I think it's quite good. Some string quartets, I've heard. I have the opera, which I haven't really studied yet. It is recorded.

He was on the radio a few months ago, and I listened to that.

There was a student. But, all of a sudden, I can't remember his name-- a student of Webern. And I hadn't even been aware of him. But I saw an exhibition of his manuscripts and printed works, in the Nationalbibliothek, in Vienna a few years ago. The name will undoubtedly come to me later.

But did anyone in the family receive even a postcard, from your father, from TerezÃn? Because people could send out postcards. It was well known, they could write 30 words in a postcard.

The only thing that Rosa sent me, recently, which very much surprised me, was a photocopy, which you may have seen, in his writing, thanking a certain Dr. So-and-so.

Oh, Karl [? Hammond ?] Right

And I never knew who he was.

Karl [? Hammond, ?] I think was a businessman, who had a great interest in the arts. And he knew many of the artists. And he knew many of the academic people. And he knew the musicians.

Could he help them?

Well, I don't think he could help them, being in TerezÃn. Perhaps he was a patron before. About that, I don't know. But he amassed a huge collection of really souvenir sheets, like your father did and many other composers and artists wrote, and then a little inscription. And sometimes, they would make a little quotation from a musical composition.

Yes, you asked me a question, which I can now answer. The only thing that I remember, which is true, is that after the war, naturally, we didn't know that he was dead-- you know, not for sure. But when we inquired in Amsterdam whether anything was left, a whole box of things were sent. Otherwise, it wouldn't be in the British Museum. That was not complete.

And that contained-- well, it also contained, really simply, scores of Mozart's "Idomeneo," which is very touching, because, recently, I followed the score. And when it comes to Idomeneo addressing his son, [NON-ENGLISH], my father underlines it and puts an exclamation mark. Not that I have anything to forgive, you know? But that is very touching. And we've got them. Well, he sent, but he obviously treasured, "Idomeneo," "Marriage of Figaro," and "Cosi Fan Tutte." Unfortunately, not the Magic Flute, anyhow. and a few other things, you know, also piano music, Chopin. Because he played a lot of Chopin.

And then, I mean, his own. But my mother was furious. Because I mean, she said that it had been ransacked. I'm not sure that she was right. Anyhow it was kept by some-- well, they were really music vendors, I think, in Amsterdam. And they obviously accepted this box, which was just an ordinary-- just an ordinary--

Who would have given it to them, your father? Or the family that he stayed with?

I don't know.

Shoshana mentioned something to me. And I perhaps made a note about it. But I don't recall, at the moment, about the circumstances or with whom he stayed.

Well, he stayed in Beethovenstrasse. I know he was a border. And I mean, he stayed on there. And that, of course, is when the Nazis came. I mean, in a way, it is tragic that he did not accept the offer of an affidavit from the United States. Because, I mean, we all had the options of affidavits from a very-- well, he's dead now-- marvelous man called Greenberg. But I am very much in touch with his daughter.

And I think he saved about 70 people. I don't know how he managed it, because it was not so easy with the American administration. But I didn't go, because as I've told you why. And my father didn't go, because he, curiously enough as a musician, was a very poor linguist. And he felt he would never be at home in a non-German-- although, in Amsterdam, you couldn't really speak German. I mean, you know, he made--

I mean, he wasn't really sufficiently aware. He lived-- he led a very great inner life. And it's very curious how this comes out. I mean, I've got a son, who's, in many ways, quite different. He works actually in the German embassy as a translator. And he's a very musical person, too-- very musical. And he also has got this streak of innerness, which not many people have nowadays. Well, he's aware of what goes on in the world. And you can't live in this world, now, unless you have some awareness. But I think my father really lacked the awareness of danger.

Well, this is something which Max Bloch, who was an amateur musician, who had studied with Ullmann in Prague, in the '30s. And he wrote an article in the Arnold Schoenberg Institute Journal in 1979. And he devotes a paragraph or so to [NON-ENGLISH], "The Anthroposophical Drama of Albert Steffen," who was the house poet of the whole Anthroposophic movement.

Yeah.

He felt that it really seems to be written by somebody with his head very much in the clouds, who really wasn't aware of what was actually taking place at that time.

No, no. No.

It's hard to imagine that with your father's intense musical activity, conservative or otherwise, that he wouldn't have continued to write in TerezÁn. And therefore, it's strange.

That. Yes.

I would imagine that he must have done some--

So do I.

--composition. But--

We never know. We'll never [? share. ?]

Yeah.

How was this camp when it was-- was it liberated by the Russians?

By the Russians on May 8, '45.

On May 8? And it was deserted? No, it was not deserted.

No, no, the sick ones stayed there, because of this typhus epidemic, until they were able to leave. And I suppose, fairly soon after, certainly when they left, then the Czech population came back. They had been simply evacuated in the beginning. And in the very beginning, actually, until all of the local Czech citizens were evacuated, the Jews had to just stay indoors. They couldn't even go out.

Well, when you speak with TerezÃn survivors, everyone has their TerezÃn, as they remember it. And there are some people, who, while acknowledging that it seems to be really almost strange or horrible to say it, they were young enough and healthy enough to look upon this as really quite good and positive years, despite all of the horrible conditions and so on. They suddenly were free of their parents. They discovered love. They this, they that, and so on. Other people, of course, it was--

I soon learned, because of my own enthusiasm, immediately thinking that everyone, who had been there, was so active, even if in a passive listening way to the music, and I realized, very quickly, that many people were not psychologically or physically even interested are capable of caring about it at all. And of course, also, in my lectures, there have been a few occasions where some people have indicated that there was a certain resentment they felt that there was certainly this group of the Prominenten

But Edith Gross said, for example, many of the concerts took place in the Magdeburg Kaserne. And that's where many of the Prominenten lived. And it was relatively easy for them to get these tickets. You didn't pay for it, but you had to have a ticket to get in. And that was why so many of them attended. But, of course, the concerts were done repeatedly, because there was a great hunger for these things.

I've been present at discussions on the part of survivors. Some feel that what they were doing was a conscious spiritual rebellion. And others feel that they weren't aware of such a thing. They were just very grateful to lose themselves in music and art for an hour.

One wonders how one would react oneself. I just can't imagine. I mean, I have reread, in Italian, Primo Levi, you know? Which is a sort of guide, isn't it? And it always-- I think it's a remarkable book, also La Tregua, on sort of coming back. But I mean, he committed suicide. At least some people now deny that he committed suicide, in Genoa when he came back to Torino. And then Celan, the poet--

Yes. Yes.

--came back, married, had children, and then walked into the Thames. I think there are certain wounds that will not heal. I've always felt, myself, that even-- I mean, I wasn't there. But there are certain wounds which they recur in dreams.

They're recurring.

Oh, sure. Sure.

Generally, you can never get rid of them.

No, of course, of course. I mean, I know enough survivors. And I know people who work in the area of support for survivors and second generation.

Yeah.

And this is one of the least funded areas. And it would be far better, in many ways, if instead of all these multimillion dollar Holocaust memorial institutions, that some of those funds would go towards helping these people to rebuild their lives.

I do agree with you about--

So much surfaces, resurfaces even in their children, even at a later age. But again, it's difficult to know without being there. I know at least one lady, who is very familiar with Ullmann's writings, and she feels that he would have been a very likely candidate, had he survived, at some point, perhaps, to have taken his own life.

He would, yeah.

It's just sort of an opinion, a feeling from his poetry and stuff.

Yes.

And again, we'll never know.

Yeah. Yeah. I agree with you, your remark, just now. I think there are too many highly funded Holocaust studies. I mean, you don't want to make an industry of it.

No. No. That worries me.

This should never be done. This should never be done. And indeed, in the case of the Terezín music, when I lecture about it now, and I do it very often, I devote whatever time I'm given, at least half of it, devote to introducing these composers, certainly the big four composers, those normal Czech-Jewish composers, in the first half of the century.

Yeah. Yeah.

As if Terezín didn't happen. Obviously, sometimes in the music, their music in the '30s, you find little clues leading to certain motifs and certain imitations that Ullmann did, in the [NON-ENGLISH], which then reoccurred in [NON-ENGLISH], for example. But I think one can never forget and one should never fail to mention where this music was born. But the music is not responsible for this horrible place where it came to life.

No.

And the real redemption of this, which is happening worldwide, is that these pieces are getting on to the repertoire of normal concerts--

Yeah.

--and not just in ghetto concerts. It's very understandable, when people first learn about this, there's a great excitement. And they do concerts, as I did, myself, of putting them all on a single program. But more and more--

Yeah.

--they're simply-- I mean Ullmann's second quartet is a marvelous [CROSS TALK].

Really? Really?

And if you didn't know anything of the circumstances, at least you would think it's some unknown and unjustly forgotten Kleinemeister from the '30s.

Yeah.

I think that's important. I think one has to see it in a context--

Yes. Yes.

--as well.

Yes.

And that's my feeling about any artist. I mean, you have to really know all that they've written or certainly vast representations from early to middle to late. You have to know their vocal works and instrumental works. You have to know what kind of texts they took, et cetera, and the same for these composers.

Is there much talent in Israel, for now, I mean among the younger people? I know Rosa's niece is a flautist. And I mean--

Musical talent?

Yeah?

Oh, yes, a lot.

Too much?

Oh, too much?

You can never have too--

Too much is only a function of employment.

I know, that's what I meant. Yeah.

There's an early music group, which is active in Europe and based in Europe, of Israelis, substantially, Israelis. And I noticed, recently, that they came and they did some performances in Israel. And actually, now that they've begun to work together, they're very happy that they can work together and even do all their rehearsing in Hebrew. But economically, they can't make it there.

They cannot?

Not if they want to continue doing it. And one, in an interview, said he'd be very happy to get rid of his house, here, and to get rid of his BMW and live much more modestly, if he had sufficient work, really, to do there. We have, I think in the last few years, we've had 4,000 or so Russian musicians who have moved there.

Yes, of course, I heard about that. Yeah.

There's all kinds of orchestras, which have been formed of them. But they're very gifted young people. A recent example is that there was the reconstruction-- well, not reconstruction, representation of a specific TerezÃn program that was given by the young string quartet colleagues of Gideon Klein in 1943. It was called the Theresienstadt Streichquartett.

And for them, he wrote his Fantasy in Fugue, which is on our CD. And then they played Beethoven Opus 18, Number 6, and Brahms Number 3. And so this exact program was given, again. Now what was interesting was that, in addition to these very young-- I mean teenage and early 20s string players, who were participating in a wonderful string program, at the Jerusalem Music Center, there were two veteran violinists, who joined them in some several of the works.

One of them was Henry Meyer, who was, 40 years, a founding member of the LaSalle Quartet. And he had played in the Auschwitz orchestra. And this I know from an interview with him in the Jerusalem Post several years ago. And he had actually, consciously decided not to say that he had done so throughout his professional career. He didn't want anybody to try to help him out of pity for what he had gone through. But now, to his surprise, he's willing to talk about it. He's willing to go to Germany and lecture and so on. So he played.

Then there was Michael Tree, from the Guarneri Quartet.

Yeah.

But these young people were just splendid musicians. And this was an ad hoc grouping. They all had the quartets they work in. But they were put together, artificially.

Well, I think, technically, they're just in a different category from all the famous [INAUDIBLE] quartets, so on, or what we had, in the past, when I was young. I mean this is staggering, the perfection.

Yeah.

Well, perfection isn't the only attribute of this.

No, but perfection-plus.

Yes. Yes. They're very good. And there's a lot of quite gifted young composers, as well.

Yeah. Yeah.

Well, I'm very glad to have talked to you. I must say it's been a great pleasure. You're flying back tomorrow?

Tomorrow, I'm going to Prague for a week.

Oh, for a week. And then I'll go back. I've been on sabbatical this semester. I have to get back and put together my courses for the next semester. I wish, you know, that I could find somebody-- and hopefully, at some point, I would-- who would remember having heard your father's lectures--

Yes.

--in TerezÃn.

Yes.

It's always possible. And unless I'm mistaken, I have the distinct feeling that I saw one of those typed lists, from the [NON-ENGLISH] of your father's recitals. But I have not been able to find the collection.

No. Well, if, by any chance, I ever hear or find anything, I'll certainly let you know. But I think it's very unlikely.

Is this book about, Faust in der Musik, is this the only surviving published writing of your fathers?

I think it is in the British Museum.

This book, itself?

Yes.

I'll ask them. I'll ask them. I would certainly-- look, my feeling is that there's a great deal of interest, now, in these composers, these artists and creators, who were dealt with-- got cut-off mid-career or early career or whatever. And so everything that they did is of potential great interest including [CROSS TALK]

This series, I noticed just now, was edited by Richard Strauss, it says at the beginning. The title, up there, Richard Strauss.

When did this come out? It's still in Gothic.

Oh, it's pre-war, pre, pre, pre, pre, very early-- 190-something.

1906.

Yeah.

Privilege of copyright in the United States.

It is extraordinary, isn't it, that people in 1906 were not aware. Well, I think-- I mean, I have got a feeling that the Schoenberg's and also some of the painters were aware of what was coming, don't you? I mean their music? I mean it's already doom and foreboding.

Well, maybe. They were certainly aware of new currents in physics and so on.

Yes, exactly. Exactly. Einstein, yeah.

I did my dissertation on the music of Edgard Varèse. And I found an interesting book. I think it was British geneticist Charles Waddington. I can't remember at the moment the title of the book-- oh, Behind Appearances.

And one of the things they talked about was that, in the cafes, in Paris, prior to the war and during the First World War, there was all of this coffeehouse talk about the new physics and so on. And he had the feeling that it wasn't that these people really had the expertise to be able to totally understand Braque and Picasso and so. But they had a feeling that was something exciting in the air and a new way of looking at things.

And so, in a non-technical way, it fired their imagination and produced cubism and all of these various other isms that were so active at that time.

What puzzles me, going back to Berlin and during my own childhood and the whole Jewish environment, which I said was extremely liberal, that, although it was not a ghetto, and one certainly had some Gentile friends, I mean, on the whole, I think, we were already very-- it was very much a Jewish background. I mean, we lived in a suburb, Berlin-Grüneberg-- very nice. And I went to, of course, a very good school, which is now called Walther-Rathenau Schule. Well, they've made restitution. Because Rathenau was killed just outside that school in '23.

But I wonder if Rosa would agree, that most of her friends and most of my friends were not Gentiles. And yet there was

no divide. I mean, it wasn't a sort of racialism. I don't suppose it would have made any difference if it had been otherwise.

In other words, they were Jewish, most of your--

Yes.

--immediate [? compliment. ?]

Yes. Yes, I think they--

But less by virtue of the--

Not religious.

--religious aspect and rather just because of a similar intensity of cultural interests.

I think so, yeah. But even so, it's odd, isn't it? I mean, the only thing I remember is that, when I was a very little boy, I made music in the Haydn "Toy Symphony." And that house was quite famous, because Harnack, the theologian, that was their house. And Bonhoeffer, the young Bonhoeffer, who was martyred for his [BACKGROUND NOISES], he was older than me, but I saw him there for the first time.

But I mean that was an exceptional family. Because, I mean, they were definitely-- well, his sister was married to a Jewish professor, Leibholz, who went to Oxford. But on the whole, the interplay, although everyone talks about assimilation, was not complete.

It was not-- well, what would you say about the United States? I mean is that a total interplay? I suppose it is.

Well, there's a great deal of assimilation, of course. There's a tremendous amount of intermarriage.

Yes, there is. Yes. That's new. My friends had a such--

[CROSS TALK] for years that push, as much as possible, for Jewish education, which is really the only thing that can really [? stop this. ?]

Yeah. Yeah.

I remember a colleague, who was actually an anthropologist at Portland State University, where I taught before I went to Israel, Jacob Fried, and he once came, actually, to some meetings, that I was involved with, from the Jewish community. And he said, what we really have? We have a community, here, which has been existing on capital for many years.

Yes.

But it's capital is running out.

Dwindling, yeah.

And the capital is dwindling. And if something isn't done to re-insert that investment, then, eventually, the community is going to die. Well, it's difficult. This is a problem. These are big, broad questions.

Of course, on top, I mean, these sort of higher echelon relations are excellent between churches and synagogues and rabbis and bishops and so on, I mean. And even Islam, unless it's fundamentalist, I mean, it's not at all bad. But of course, it doesn't really touch the secularized society.

Tell me a bit about your own academic work.

Well, I became a Christian in the '30s, here.

Was that out of conviction or convenience?

Yes. No, no, it was conviction. There was a Jew, called Dr. Philip Levertoff. And he was very instrumental. Well, I wouldn't call it that he made me into a Christian. But the fact that he was a Hebraist. He was from Odesa and was a refugee. And as a refugee, you've never experienced that. You go from dinner to dinner. And I had-- really, I mean, it was again, I was put back into this category.

But I never had any self-pity about it. I'm perfectly happy. And then I met a lot of people and also, an old lady, who my brother had known in London, who also helped me. And so I underwent this conversion to the Church of England and became a parish priest during the war and went through the war in South London and bombs.

And then when King's College opened in the Strand, reopened after the war, I became the junior, junior, junior lecturer in Hebrew, which I had learned but not in Berlin. I'd learned it here.

Biblical Hebrew?

Yes, Biblical Hebrew. And I think, really, from then, I just went ahead as one did in those days. You no longer do now, because things are quite different in universities. As long as you did your duty and published-- you know, I have several books here-- you just became, at first, a senior lecturer, a reader, professor. And I finished up, in the Strand, at King's College, as the dean and professor of Christian literature.

And my main interest-- of course, I was fortunate, in a sense, that I am multilingual. So I mean, I wrote about Thomas Mann and Dante and French, a bit like George Steiner. I don't know if you've heard of him-- [INAUDIBLE] at Cambridge. But it was a very happy life and, in many ways, a really most rewarding life.

The students were good. And most of them were-- almost all of them were ordinans, to be priests. And things have changed completely. I left in 1980.

Yes.

That's 16 years ago. I went for, one year, to Chicago, which I enjoyed. I mean, all I can say is, then we went, of course-- once, we visited Israel and once visited Berlin, and traveled. But I mean nothing of great. And I wrote one more or two more books after I retired.

What were the titles of your books? I think one was-- do you know, I have to remember it. I'm completely out of it. Now, it doesn't really interest me anymore. I very much changed. Where are we?

You see, I wrote about Auschwitz. I was one of the first ones to write about our Auschwitz.

The Theology of Auschwitz.

I was one of the first ones. I didn't know it was going to become a major industry. I wrote a book about Kafka.

Oh, this one, The Trial of--

Yeah.

--The Trial of Man.

Yeah.

And I see, you have stories of-- what is it?

I always-- unlike my father, I was just the opposite. I always anticipated things. Because, I mean, I published this about Story and Faith years before everybody began to talk about story. And now it's sort of common coinage. It's really quite a good book if you're interested in that. But what is the?

Then I wrote this, Pity and Terror. That's the latest book, which I wrote and published, which is really about tragedy and wrestles with the whole problem of-- well, it doesn't really wrestle with the problem. It simply shows that we, in our modern age, cannot claim that our great sufferings are tragic, alas. Individual fates are tragic. But I mean I can't regard Auschwitz as a tragedy. Because there's no catharsis for it. There is no coming up. It's all powder and dust. And that's, you see, where I'm a very deep pessimist about it.

I'm not sure that I follow. You can't regard it as a--