

Applied Ethnomusicology and Jewish Music Studies: Negotiating “Third Mission” Requests in Germany Today

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1. Jewish Music Studies between Applied Ethnomusicology and Third Mission

While the beginnings of applied ethnomusicology date back to the late nineteenth century, it was developed as a sub-discipline of ethnomusicology in the 1990s by scholars such as Jeff Todd Titon, Svanibor Pettan, Atesh Sonneborn, Daniel Sheehy, Martha Ellen Davis and others (Dirksen 2012, 4). The growing popularity of applied ethnomusicology, loosely defined as “ethnomusicological work that has social and cultural impacts” (Harrison 2016, 1), was spurred by various factors, such as the establishment of applied anthropology as an independent discipline and in opposition to “armchair scholarship”. The development of applied ethnomusicology was also motivated by the increasing interest of people in their own traditions, the proliferation of folk festivals, as well as the exponential increase in the number of PhD candidates in ethnomusicology and the simultaneous decline in positions at academic institutions (Dirksen 2012, 4). In the early 2000s, terms to describe this new area in ethnomusicology such as “applied”, “public”, “advocacy”, “activist”, “engaged” and others entered ethnomusicological discourses.¹ Arguably, what holds applied ethnomusicology together is the emphasis on “benefits” other than academic research, “a primary intended output of musical or social benefits, rather than the increase of original scholarly knowledge” (Harrison 2012, 519).

The ramified and complex discourses of applied ethnomusicology, its areas of application, levels of understanding, pros and cons, and finally, its theorization, have been discussed in detail elsewhere (see Harrison 2012, Dirksen 2012, Pettan and Titon 2015, Harrison 2016). For the purpose of this chapter, it is important to get an idea of what applied ethnomusicology is, inasmuch as ethnomusicologists working in an academic environment can interact or engage with groups or individuals participating in their re-

1 Some of the qualifying adjectives and nouns used most in ethnomusicology in this context are “applied” (referring to practical applicability of academic knowledge), “public” (referring to the scholar’s intention to bring academic results and knowledge to the general public); “advocacy” or “activist” (referring to a certain form of engagement that is directed towards socio-political issues) as well as “engaged” (reflecting the ethnomusicologist’s desire for a lasting engagement in a community) (cp. Dirksen 2012, 2–3).

search; but it is also important to discuss the specific limitations of these different interactions, and how these actually play out in the context of the work at the European Centre for Jewish Music (EZJM).

Jeff Todd Titon defines applied ethnomusicology as “a music-centered intervention in a particular community, whose purpose is to benefit that community [...] [i]t is music-centered, but above all the intervention is people-centered, for the understanding that drives it toward reciprocity is based in the collaborative partnerships that arise from ethnomusicological fieldwork. Applied ethnomusicology is guided by ethical principles of social responsibility, human rights, and cultural and musical equity” (Titon 2015, 4). Applied ethnomusicology is not only research-based in that it puts ethnomusicological knowledge to use, but in that it is also driven towards “solving problems and enhancing quality of life” (Harrison 2016, 8). What these problems actually are and how they are resolved depends on the perspective of those involved and the different power structures at play in their interactions. In Jewish Music Studies in the German context, one of the main problems is that the “social” problems that need to be solved are often imposed on the Jewish participants by asking them to carry out or be involved in some way in “Third Mission” initiatives. With regard to Jewish Music Studies, the problems in need of solving are often constructed as having to do with general political and societal themes, manifested in a general interest in all things Jewish. As such, they tend to have little to do with the difficulties of the Jewish communities whose music we study. Thus, the question arises: who – what community exactly – benefits from these music and people-centered interventions and to what extent are these interventions reciprocal?²

With regard to the EZJM, the interaction of different power differentials and actors and subsequent beneficiaries becomes apparent when taking a closer look at “Third Mission” initiatives. “Third Mission” is a fairly new trend in academia that shares many similarities with applied ethnomusicology. However, while “Third Mission” and applied ethnomusicological initiatives share many overlapping features and goals, they are not exactly

2 Reciprocity here refers to the parties involved both benefiting in some way from the interaction. It is problematic to ask a university institution, such as the European Centre for Jewish Music, to invest in the establishment of applied projects – of a third space of action meant to fulfil an addition mission – if this does not also benefit the university and the faculty involved.

the same. Consequently, this article looks at the intersections between applied ethnomusicology and “Third Mission” and how the latter can benefit from a positive alignment with applied ethnomusicological approaches. The main problem with regard to “Third Mission” in the field of Jewish Music Studies in Germany today is that it functions and is created primarily to service a very specific, older upper middle-class part of the German demographic. While mostly well-intended, the events – musical and other – organized through this framework actually often take agency away from Jews, even while they purport to support them. These interventions are dictated by non-Jewish actors, usually in positions of power, and are ultimately non-sustainable. This chapter examines the motivations, including the political and social agendas, behind “Third Mission” requests at the European Centre for Jewish music in Hanover, Germany. Using ethnographic fieldwork and auto-ethnographic experiences of the co-authors who are both ethnomusicologists working at the centre, some of the more problematic dynamics of these “Third Mission” requests are unpacked, including the power structures and ideologies motivating them as well as tensions and conflicts of interest experienced during the musical events.

But what is “Third Mission” in an academic context and how is it manifested? Since the early 2000s, the concept of “Third Mission” has gained increasing importance in the academe. While the term “Third Mission” is rather vague, it can be understood as defining a “new [...] third meaning and purpose of life for the university”, encompassing e. g. vocational education, knowledge transfer and civic engagement and related fields of activities increasing the direct involvement of the university in society (Geulen 2019, 1–2). In disciplines such as life sciences, natural and technical sciences, topics of popular interest can easily be communicated to the public, and these often include economically applicable knowledge. But what about humanities subjects, including Jewish Music Studies? If “Third Mission” is a new imperative, how can these disciplines apply knowledge, gained from the core tasks of research and teaching, to society and the economy in order to fulfil their so-called “Third Mission”? Is this actually the right question to ask?

In “Third Mission” initiatives the freedom of research and teaching can become curtailed by moral or political agendas, especially “when a strong political polarization occurs or when highly important moral values and projects seem to be at stake” (Lotter 2020, 17). Here, a re-prioritization of values involves active “care for particularly vulnerable individuals and groups, especially victims of discrimination and exclusion” (Lotter 2020,

17). The issue here is that morality and politics are highly subjective – so how does one define “political and moral” or lack thereof? Moreover, who decides whether projects are sufficiently “moral and political” and which groups should be the “recipients” of ethnomusicological interventions? Who controls these definitions and what does this actually mean in the applied sense? In Germany, topics such as Jews, Judaism and Jewish culture are inextricably linked by the greater society to “discourse on historical and structural injustice”; this connection motivates requests for “Third Mission” projects, often turning “academic practice [...] into an imaginary reparation project” (Lotter 2020, 17). This practice of “Third Mission” dealing with historically oppressed groups goes hand in hand with the idea that social and cultural inequity is caused by discursive power structures; as such, their deconstruction should be at the forefront of such initiatives. However, while many humanities subjects often pursue a “cultural policy agenda aimed at changing conditions by rewriting dominant narratives” (Lotter 2020, 17), this goal is often difficult to realize “in practice”.

The European Centre for Jewish Music (EZJM) at Hanover University for Music, Drama and Media (HMTMH), Germany, has – for the most part of its existence – been lauded for its “Third Mission” capabilities. The centre was founded in 1988 by musician and music collector Andor Izsák. Between 1992 and 2012 the centre was successfully established as a public forum for Jewish music in the city of Hanover and, to a large degree, was seen as representing “Jewish music” in Lower Saxony. Until 2012, the centre’s main purpose – and Izsák’s main agenda – was to collect rare source materials on European synagogue music, particularly the music of 19th century Reform Judaism, and to present this music to the public in concerts and at Holocaust commemoration events. By focusing almost exclusively on a certain type of Jewish musical repertoire – European Reform synagogue music – the former director of the EZJM, Andor Izsák, put forward a liberal-secular image of Jews and Judaism, approved by German politics and the larger civil society. This arguably made a narrow concept of Judaism and Jewish culture accessible to German society, while reinforcing external “Third Mission” political expectations. These “Third Mission” expectations continue to influence the work of the EZJM to this day, even though the centre’s goals are significantly different from what they once were.

During this period, the EZJM arguably served the idea of “Third Mission”, since it transmitted the history and spirit of synagogue music to a mainly non-Jewish, elderly German public. In so doing, the centre fit perfectly into

the Jewish cultural and academic landscape of Germany in the 1990s and early 2000s characterized by the paradox of a predominantly non-Jewish engagement with and control over Jewish culture and its institutions. An example of external control over representations of Jewish heritage is the emergence of a commemorative, Holocaust-focused culture in the 1970s that led to the foundation of Jewish museums, and later, Jewish Studies departments, which were to document Jewish life before the Holocaust. As a result, Jewish museums, regardless of the subject matter of their exhibitions, emphasized the Holocaust in the service of non-Jewish visitors, while researchers and teachers running Jewish Studies programs focused their endeavours on a historical engagement with Judaism and its culture from ancient times until the 19th century, or at the latest, until 1945. Typical institutional emphases transmit a clearly defined, very limited representation of Jews and Judaism in contemporary society that has little to do with living Jews and the diversity of Jewish culture past and present. In fact, institutional agendas are more aligned with the needs and expectations of the majority society, including the need for negotiating post-Shoah guilt. This prevalent non-Jewish involvement and engagement with Jews, Judaism and Jewish culture characterized by a pointed absence of living Jews and communities has been described by Ruth Ellen Gruber in the greater European context as “virtually Jewish” (Gruber 2002), and elsewhere as “Jewish renaissance” or, referring specifically to the German context, as the “Judaization of Germaness” (Tzuberi 2019).

In late 2015, Sarah Ross, professor for Jewish Music Studies at the HMT-MH and co-author of this paper, took over as director of the EZJM. The EZJM then experienced a re-orientation towards academic research and teaching, engaging with many forms of Jewish music around the world. Through the establishment of a sustainable Jewish music studies program in a situation in which Jewish music is almost completely absent from the research agendas of Jewish Studies as well as musicology departments, the EZJM now fills a lacuna in the cultural and academic landscape of Germany. Overall, the EZJM acts on the assumption that the communication and transfer of a broad knowledge of Jewish music as a mirror of living Jewish cultures can prevent the further stereotyping of Judaism, Jews and Jewish culture in Germany. As such, most of the EZJM’s initiatives can, to some extent, be regarded as applied, or involve intersections between “Third Mission” and applied ethnomusicology. Indeed, the centre has to negotiate “Third Mission” expectations while defending its new scholarly interests

and academic mandates from being overwhelmed by public requests for an array of externally requested initiatives that serve the needs of the interested non-Jewish public more than the academic community and university students, let alone the needs of the Jewish communities in Germany.

Arguably most teaching and research initiatives at the EZJM overlap with the aims of “Third Mission” and applied ethnomusicology owing to the impact on the greater society of everyday research – but in particular teaching – occupations of the centre, as well as the nature of Jewish music studies. First of all, Jewish music research is not only directed towards culture, society and politics, but Jewish musical practices in cultures, societies and politics are what we study and examine; they are the objects of scholarly achievements in knowledge. Consequently, Jewish Music Studies, as well as the humanities in general, have always addressed the results of their research directly and immediately to a reading public (cp. Geulen 2019, 2, 7–8). In this sense, Jewish Music Studies, such as any discipline in the “humanities and cultural studies pursue what Niklas Luhmann and Jürgen Habermas call the critical self-observation of society. Their themes grow out of society and they address their insights back to it. A large part of what is being discussed today under the buzzword of ‘Third Mission’ is therefore [...] ‘First Mission’” (cp. Geulen 2019, 4–5). Second, the fundamental concern of Jewish Music Studies is and has always been to have an effect on society, namely by providing training in knowledge transfer, imparting the ability to communicate knowledge and allow it to have an impact on society. In practice, many courses are offered at the EZJM for graduates who are pursuing careers in journalism, public relations, politics, cultural and educational institutions etc. to increase scholarly aptitude and knowledge, but also to raise social and cultural awareness and their applicability in contexts outside the university. Particularly with regard to the latter, it becomes apparent that the social, political and economic benefits of Jewish Music Studies are not directly or immediately visible. Their value and validity are long term and require considerable investment and are thus not easily demonstrable to a consumer-public. In other words, the current projects at the EZJM in Jewish Music Studies should be considered *per se* applied work even if their impact on society is subtle and not directly traceable (cp. Geulen 2019, 2, 7–8): this applicability of humanistic knowledge, takes on increasing significance in Jewish Music Studies in the German context.

2. “Third Mission” in Practice: Assumptions and Challenges

Since the EZJM’s reorientation in 2015, the centre has to consistently negotiate and even deflect external “Third Mission” expectations in order to defend its scholarly interests and academic goals from public requests for “Jewish edutainment”. Examples of these requests include an array of outreach initiatives, such as public concerts, workshops on Jewish music and culture in high schools, museum-related projects, cultural festivals and Jewish heritage events, all of which are highly regulated by the requesters and serve the needs of a non-Jewish public outside the university.³ These initiatives are often imposed “from above” and are requested and/or controlled by non-Jewish German institutions, such as government factions – state and national, and regional and national social, political and religious (Protestant and Catholic Christian) organizations. The overarching goal of these initiatives is often articulated as “preventing anti-Semitism” in the local community and in Germany at large. Thus, academics are often not viewed as experts dedicated to research and teaching, but rather as resources through which anti-Semitism can be (symbolically) combated. While most of these requests are well-intended and some very fruitful projects have taken place as a result, they are rife with challenges with which the researcher must cope. The main problem with these “Third Mission” requests is that they are often created primarily to serve a very specific, older, non-Jewish, upper middle-class part of the German society, while often unwittingly ignoring Jewish communities or even taking agency away from them. Moreover, while they are often requested as if they are a “natural” obligation, there are several reasons why undertaking them might be undesirable or unfeasible. *There are practical limitations* – such

3 It should be noted that the EZJM does engage in applied work that follows a more conventional definition of applied ethnomusicology, empowering Jewish minority actors, such as the community-based online project www.soundscape-synagogue.de that enables Jewish community members from around the world to share their musical heritage. However, these initiatives were not externally motivated and do not operate under the auspices of “combating anti-Semitism”, but rather in preserving musical traditions for the Jewish communities themselves.

initiatives are simply beyond the EZJM's purview in practical terms (e. g. working hours required, lack of personel etc.). *The initiatives can be symbolic and contradictory* – the definition of anti-Semitism in German – and European – society is often imposed on Jews from above by government institutions and representatives and is part of a broader discourse that only symbolically recognizes the dangers of anti-Semitism and ascribes anti-Semitism conveniently to different ideologically displaced actors (“them, not us”).⁴ Finally, engaging in “Third Mission” initiatives can *cause trauma for the participants who do not want to engage with the hate-filled agenda of anti-Semitism (e. g. the Holocaust)*. With regard to the latter point, while there is scholarship on e. g. immigrant (including refugee) responses to Holocaust education in Germany (e. g. Özyürek 2018);⁵ the group that is practically ignored in this discussion are the Jewish participants who live with – and are continuously dealing with – the consequences, including the collective memory, of genocide. In the case of the Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union who constitute most of the Jews in Germany today, experiences of anti-Semitism include those experienced in their former countries of residence.⁶ This potential for trauma is almost totally ignored in these “Third Mission” requests: in fact, it is often regarded as “right” and “natural” that Jews should want to engage in these ventures even though it can severely affect their well-being, mental health, and sense of self in a situation in which they are one of the smallest religious minorities in the German landscape.

Further research will demonstrate how the stated goal of combating anti-Semitism is largely symbolic. It should be noted that some participants did consider their views on Jews to become “more tolerant” as a result of “Third Mission” initiatives. However, ironically, these positive outcomes tended to happen when the initiatives were not about “preventing anti-Semitism”,

4 Hence, in left-wing initiatives, anti-Semitism is a purely “right-wing” phenomenon; more conservative initiatives tend to attribute anti-Semitism to the “alt-left” and as “imported” in migrant communities. Almost never is it treated as a middle class, run-of-the-mill phenomenon. Arguably, anti-Semitism exists to small and large degrees in many different areas of German society and political alignments.

5 This includes an array of publications, which cannot be itemized here, that include Eastern European and Muslim perspectives, with a particular focus on secondary students who learn about the Holocaust in the German curriculum.

6 This was derived from personal communication with members of the Hanover Jewish community from Russia, the Ukraine, Georgia and Uzbekistan (2016–2019).

but rather, geared towards teaching students about new performance practices to diversify their curriculum.⁷ Interestingly, this often happened as a “side effect” of musical interventions in which the musical performance acted as a “contact zone” for intercultural encounters. For example, the EZJM leads workshops at a local “sister” university to teach MA students about Jewish music. These sessions are the result of an open invitation in which the instructors are relatively free to construct their approaches. As such, “preventing anti-Semitism” was not imposed as the main agenda by external institutions. In practice, these sessions involved multiple performative engagements, such as participation in sonic representations of Diaspora and the composition and performance of wordless Chasidic spiritual melodies (*niggunim*). After one session conducted in 2018, a student, Mehdi, a recent refugee from Syria, approached the instructors. He stated that in his home country there were a lot of negative stereotypes about Jews and Judaism. The instructors were the first Jewish people that he had met. He said that participating in the session had caused him to become accepting of Jews and Judaism in a nuanced way. For this person, and others, the workshops seemed to have a positive effect in promoting tolerance. This effect seems to happen more often when the stated goal is music-making, rather than “promoting tolerance”. While only one example is cited here, this was not an isolated incident. Moreover, it was the students who took it upon themselves to perform the difficult task of confronting what they perceived to be their social biases, resulting in many fruitful conversations and exchanges. However, these experiences remain the exception to the norm, since “Third Mission” requests usually are connected somehow with the Holocaust and therefore have a much more fixed “script”⁸ in which minority representation or even intercultural dialogue, at least where living Jews are involved, is rarely possible or, at best, uncomfortable.

Music-related activities are particularly likely to be requested as part of “Third Mission” initiatives owing to current perceptions about the function of music. Music is considered to be a medium that transports feelings and that allows people to experience their environment in a sensitive way, but it is also a medium that can be controlled to a great degree by its listeners in terms of consumption and interpretation:

7 These workshops could be considered both “Second” and “Third Mission”.

8 The theatrical and “fixed” aspects of such events from the 1970s onwards have been the subject of some critique (e. g. Bodemann 1996).

[w]e determine how, where, and when we engage with music. Musical experience thus is not something that is done to us. To the contrary, across a range of contexts and forms of listening, musical experience is, rather, something we do. [...] When we do things with music, we are very often engaged in the work of creating and cultivating the self, as well as creating and cultivating a shared world that we inhabit with others. As active perceivers, we are in many ways perceptual composers. Music invites this kind of dynamic engagement. (Krueger 2011, 2)

This being the case, how does music in these “Third Mission” initiatives play out in practice and how do Jews and Judaism figure in this process?

3. The Figure of the Jew

In the assumptions and configurations of “Third Mission” requests and their accompanying musical performances, the figure of the Jew for non-Jews plays a central role. *Jewish Friends: Contemporary Figures of the Jew* (Lapidot and Tzuberi 2020) critically analyses figures of the Jew in Western thought. These, sometimes contradictory, images serve as counter-images for the formation of non-Jewish self-understanding: the Jew has paradigmatically been the figure of the antithesis, “a legalistic foil to Christian love, reactionary particularism against the universal humanism of enlightenment and progress, an alien or parasite in the Aryan national body”. In this context, the presence of living Jews or references to them are irrelevant. In fact, their absence is a decisive factor (Lapidot and Tzuberi 2020, 103, 104–105).

After the Shoah, the perception of the figure of “the Jew”, as well as related concepts such as “Judaism” and “Israel”, changed. Formerly an antithesis to the description and presentation of global agendas, “the Jew” became an essential and integral – even representative – element of Western political-cultural self-understanding. From Lapidot’s perspective, the once antithetical figure of the Jew even became a “friend”:

(1) insofar as it [the figure] arises from the contemporary opposition to the history of animosity towards Jews, an opposition to anti-Judaism or anti-Semitism [...]; (2) insofar as it manifests the inherent ambivalences – political, epistemological – of the very notion of “friendship”; and (3), lastly [...] insofar as

it is solidary and even complicit with [...] the very process of figuration or self-figuration that constitutes what may presently be called and understood as “the contemporary”. (Lapidot 2020, 109)

According to Lapidot, the paradigmatic contemporary figure of the Jew has no substance and is therefore only visible in its basic form of disfiguration. This figure is “friendly” inasmuch as it is often used as part of what Lapidot terms an “anti-anti-Semitic discourse”: “The basic strategy of this discourse is to reject anti-Jewish statements or images [...] by rejecting and discrediting the very legitimacy of making any general statements about ‘the Jews’, negative or positive [...]” (Lapidot 2020, 109–110).

The Jew in anti-anti-Semitic discourse is particularly applicable to the German social and historical context. Here, Jews as well as their cultural heritage, play a key role in the creation of a new German/European self-understanding, which is seen as tolerant, pluralistic and multicultural. This “renaissance of Jewish life” has become an essential moment in Germany’s recent history, particularly with regard to the country’s coming to terms with the past (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*) and search for a new German, as well as European, identity. Jewish life and its basic needs for subsistence and sustainability is not of primary relevance in this process. Therefore, it remains questionable to what extent the Jew of today – as a figure of national discourse – can actually promote pluralism and multiculturalism (Lapidot and Tzuberi 2020, 103).⁹ The majority of German society has tried

9 This symbolic framing of “the other” for the needs of the majority society is not limited to Jewish minorities in Germany. While a comparative study cannot be included here, it is worth mentioning this parallel, since it places this symbolic treatment of Jews and Judaism in a broader context. Schirin Amir-Moazami (2018) and Sarah Bracke and Nadai Fadil (2012) demonstrate that there are specific discursive framing devices used in the academe and public discourse to describe Muslims in Europe, employed primarily by non-Muslims. While Schirin Amir-Moazami discusses the fallacy of and fixation on “objective” statistics (2018), Sarah Bracke and Nadai Fadil talk about framing questions – like the discourse on the hijab – and multiculturalism as an epistemological device through which “nation” is constructed (2012). What these framing devices have in common with the way in which the “Jewish questions” are framed in the German/European context are that they are almost always thinly-disguised political agendas which benefit the majority society in some way, as well as controlling mechanisms of the minority group in question. The discourse about Muslims

to realize this agenda of pluralism primarily through the reconstruction and touristic management of Jewish culture and Jewish cultural heritage (see Ross 2020), but also, as indicated above, through the increasingly forced invitation of university institutions to participate in “Third Mission”. But if “Third Mission” is conceived solely according to the model of applied science, as a provision of secure knowledge for the solution of social problems, then subjects like Jewish Music Studies will have real difficulties in meeting this demand without being bent beyond recognition (Geulen 2019, 10). Thus, it remains open who the Jews of today really are. According to Lapidot and Tzuberi, however, this is not a question about “Jews as an object of knowledge”, but about “knowledge of Jews or Jews as knowledge”: “‘Jews’ inasmuch as they are something that is known, understood, perceived, imagined, discussed and performed: ‘Jews’ as figures” (Lapidot and Tzuberi 2020, 103). Referring back to intersections between applied ethnomusicology and “Third Mission”, which can both be considered as “results in an epistemic shift in academic work towards greater practical relevance” (Harrison 2016, 15), the question remains: how to improve these applied ethnomusicological/“Third Mission” initiatives, at least the ones that the EZJM has actually taken on? As will be shown in the following part of the chapter, the added ethnomusicological/Jewish Music knowledge is precisely what makes them tolerable and proactive.

4. Performing at a Holocaust Memorial: Voiding the Performance Contract?

The following section considers “outreach performances” with a “Third Mission” function that took place near Hanover, Germany. These performances took on a specific set of implicit “norms” and rules that governed them, forming an unspoken “performance contract” that has been constructed since post-war Germany through which Jewish music was performed. Arguably, this “contract” forms an important vehicle through

has similar functions, but employs different focal points (and sometimes stereotypes) in aid of the strategy. The differences in the “unquestioned” modes of discourses about Jews and Muslims likely has a lot to do with the fact that there are simply far more Muslims demographically speaking and therefore different “control” strategies need to be used.

which German identity is configured.¹⁰ Analyses of these performances, in which one of the authors participated as a performer, reveal that the “performance contract” is both conscious and unconscious and is largely shaped by anti-anti-Semitic discourse and the “Figure of the Jew”, with all its “friendly” and “pre-fabricated” attributes, to fulfil certain functions in the greater (non-Jewish) German population. “Violating” the terms of the performance contract can cause dissatisfaction among the audience members, not just because they do not enjoy the music or find it inappropriate, but because it obscures the image of Jews and Judaism that is necessary for the cathartic sense of having performed a civic duty or having been a moral person/community.

This discussion focuses on a performance in Hanover at a Holocaust commemoration site by a university-affiliated ensemble.¹¹ The ensemble was at the time an extra-curricular course offering at the EZJM that was meant to compliment student learning. The members met during their free time to perform different kinds of Jewish music. The idea was to implement a “learning through doing” approach and to introduce Jewish history and culture through musical performance in order to diversify the student curriculum. More than that, however, the group provided an outlet through which the students could leave the rigorous confines of their classical music training at the university.¹² Thus, in addition to learning about Jewish traditions, including musical repertoire, the ensemble functioned as a “safe space”, a judgment-free zone in which students could experiment with new musical idioms, instruments, languages and performance behaviours. At this particular performance, the group was not given direction about what should be played other than that it should be “Jewish music” focusing on the *Hachshara*, namely, an early Zionist movement originating in the late 1800s.¹³ The site itself was once a Zionist gardening school until World War II when it functioned as a Gestapo headquarters. The theme therefore

10 The “performance contract” assumes a set of implicit “rules” generated by social assumptions and expectations that govern performance events (Holt 2007).

11 It should be noted that while critical emphasis is placed on the problematic aspects of this event and similar events, this particular performance was a relatively positive experience for most of the participants.

12 This was expressed by many student members in interviews conducted in 2017.

13 The movement referred to the acquisition of technical skills (gardening and land cultivation) of Zionist youth movements in Europe as participants prepared for emigration to Palestine, later, Israel.

fit the site and accordingly, the ensemble chose to perform Zionist work songs, such as “Zum Gali Gali”, “Hatikva” and others.

An analysis of the people attending these types of performances in general reveals that the “normal” attendee is German, of Christian or Christian-secular background, and usually over the age of fifty. Moreover, many of the attendees are government officials, such as the mayor of the neighbourhood or regional or even national politicians.¹⁴ This political cohort is typically present at these events, musical or not. Such events almost always begin with multiple speeches by these political actors. The content of these framing speeches usually concerns how happy the officials are to be present, a rejection of an anti-Semitic past and a stated commitment to rejecting anti-Semitism in the future. Thus, these performances are themselves framed by the broader agendas of these political ambassadors.¹⁵ As such, these events at Jewish sites at which Jewish music is played consist of a relationship between the performers and a specific demographic of German society, including political spokespeople. Rarely are these events attended by, for instance, by young adults,¹⁶ working class groups, or non-white or first or second generation immigrant communities.¹⁷ The most surprising absence is possibly that of the Jewish communities in Germany. Most of the latter group came from the former Soviet Union and immigrated to Germany in the 1990s. However, these Jewish immigrants are usually absent: only specific individuals in these communities who are somehow able to “cross the bridge” into this performance context are sometimes present.¹⁸ In fact,

14 At the performance in question, there was a senior university professor who specialized in the field of landscape architecture, presumably because his field was related to the role of the school when it was run by the Jewish community of Hanover (before World War II).

15 From an insider-Jewish or musical perspective, these speeches arguably usually have little to do with the performances.

16 It should be noted that there are specific “Jewish” events for students in secondary schools in the official curriculum. Arguably these are controlled to some extent by the demographic that attends these musical events.

17 This refers to any non-German immigrant communities, such as groups from Eastern Europe or the Middle East.

18 Further research needs to be conducted to ascertain why a tiny minority of the “Russian” Jewish community (three have been identified in the Hanover Jewish community) is able to be present at these “German” events. Precursory analyses reveal that usually these individuals come from the upper classes and have

the performance oscillates within a binary demographic framework: the absent or nearly-absent “Jews” represented metonymically in performance and the German Christian/secular audience, who are present, but who are also represented symbolically through political ambassadors. This is a pre-negotiated relationship in which a mono-culture representation of German society with a tiny (metonymic and controllable) Jewish minority is represented – usually at a space that had (or is constructed to have) some sort of Holocaust-related significance.

During a performance of October 2017, several violations of the “performance contract” occurred during and directly after the performance. These resulted in both amused tolerance and negative reactions of the audience members. One of the most poignant of these “violations” was the performance of the Israeli national anthem, “Hatikva”, sung a capella by four of the ensemble members, including a Jewish member for whom this particular version had particular significance. The piece had been arranged by a contemporary composer of Jewish music who works at the EZJM, Jean Goldenbaum. This version was slightly darker than most arrangements.

The alto part opens by running in parallel sixths with the soprano voice. This normally would not be difficult to sing, except in this case, the soprano voice outlines the F-minor scale of the well-known opening, while the alto voice sings an A-flat major opening. The piece is characterized by “crunchy” passing chords throughout that often exude bi-tonality. For example, in measure 2 on the first syllable of the word *p’nima* (within), there is a iv chord (B-flat minor). The B-flat minor chord remains in the bass and tenor voices, but the tenor voice leaps up a sixth to the third of the chord, destabilizing the texture, while the soprano and alto voices move down a tone, resulting in a iv7 chord made of the notes B-flat, D-flat, A-flat and C (Figure 1).

a native command of the German language.

Figure 1. “Hatikva”, m.2

While the chord almost immediately resolves back to the tonic, the “crunchy” passing sound is not typical to conventional arrangements of the piece. These dissonant passing chords occur throughout. For instance, the last two syllables of the word *tsofiya* are the chords V7 to i, which would seem typical. However, the “in-between” chord has that hint at bi-tonality (C-E-F-A-flat) owing to the fact that the C is the bass pedal note (Figure 2). And even if we consider it an F7 diminished chord, it is dissonant (a i7 chord) and causes the resolution to the tonic (F minor) to sound odd.

Figure 2. “Hatikva”, m.4, 2nd ending

Indeed, the bass voice oscillates from singing long pedal tones, to wide leaps and eighth note movements. The voice-leading in general is eclectic relative to standard versions of the piece. As such, even the non-dissonant parts take on subtle turbulence and uncertainty. This is particularly noticeable in the first repetition of the words *eretz tsion ve'Yerushalayim* (the land of Zion and Jerusalem), in which the phrase ends on a slightly anticlimactic VI when mentioning “Jerusalem”: this is further accentuated by preceding passing tone forming the i chord (F minor) (Figure 3).

The image shows a musical score for the song "Hatikva" at measure 13. It consists of four staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The Soprano staff has the lyrics "ru - sha - la - - yim" written below it. The music is written in a style that is somewhat atypical for a traditional setting, with wide intervals and a somber mood.

Figure 3. “Hatikva”, m.13

The fact that it was sung a third lower in performance and at a slow tempo (quarter note = c.60) made the dissonances particularly noticeable and added a degree of somberness to the arrangement. This is not the triumphant, whimsical sound of most “Hatikvas”, but a contemporary version, with small moments of uncertainty. This “Hatikva” arguably represented less an idyllic longing for home and its national realization, but more a post-modern response to the idea of the “Land of Israel” and its complicated contemporary realities. This was perhaps not an ideal piece for such an event, as audience responses seemed to border on surprise and distaste, possibly thinking that the ensemble was singing out of tune.

One of the songs performed at the concert was the well-known “Yerushalayim shel Zahav” (Jerusalem of Gold). At the last minute, we had the – admittedly kitsch – idea of blowing a shofar on the words: *shofar kore behar*

habayit ba'ir ha'atikah (a ram's horn is sounded on the Temple Mount in the Old City).¹⁹ The EZJM's large shofar made from a kudu's horn was used: it is three feet long and curly and quite impressive-looking. The brass-player of the group was chosen as the one who should play it. On the appropriate words, the great shofar was sounded. The noise that emerged was like a fog horn, low, but also highly penetrating, clashing with the tonality of the song. It reverberated in the echoing basement room of the site, drowning out the music and causing many audience members to look shocked. In fact, with regard to Jewish religious practice, the shofar was fulfilling its function perfectly. In Jewish tradition, the sound of the shofar is a wake up call from Ancient times that links the distant past to the present through a sonic "intervention".²⁰ In some sermons, the sound of the shofar is described as an incitement to perform *mitzvot* (Jewish commandments). However, here the loud blast destroyed the peaceful lull of the song, resulting in embarrassment and many amused or shocked expressions on the part of the audience. Here, the shofar inadvertently acted as a counter-metonym for the "Figure of the Jew" in anti-anti-Semitic discourse. According to Lapidot, the figure of the Jew in this discourse is characterized by friendliness, contemporaneity, tolerance and enlightenment albeit as a purely theoretical presence. The "Jewish" in this discourse exists as "a purely de-epistemized collective" (Lapidot 2020, 114), an absent collective that is therefore beyond critique owing to its non-presence. Contrastingly, in this setting, the loud, incongruous shofar call represented an unwelcome Jewish orthodox interloper, characterized by the observance of religious ritual practice – the sonic manifestation of Jewish agency. This sonic intervention demands immediate recognition through the sound, and the breath (*nefesh*, also meaning "soul") of the living. The sound communicates the fact that "the attribution of epistemic value to Jewish-being has been an exercise carried out by the Jews themselves, precisely as the performance of their Jewishness" (Lapidot 2020, 115). Indeed, the shofar is the epitome of a statement of epistemic Jewishness – linking the "Jewish people" in what is a specifically religious

19 The use of the shofar is common practice, both in this song (the Ofra Haza version) and in other forms of Jewish popular music (e. g. in groups like the Idan Raichel Project).

20 The horn in the Asante tradition has a similar function in that it is used as a "sound barrage" for sacred experience (Kaminski 2014).

Jewish vision of time-experience, from the shofar blast on Mount Sinai that made the Israelites tremble in fear (Exodus 19) to the present day.

Some feedback was given during the post-concert reception in the main atrium of the building, as attendees consumed after-concert refreshments surrounded by innumerable copies of *The Diary of Anne Frank* and six-foot tall wall hangings with depictions of German Jews being deported to Bergen Belsen. Some comments indicated that the performance expectations had not always been met. “You need to practice more!” was a refrain of one particular lady in attendance, although interestingly this critique and others by other audience members were not directed at the few Jewish members and the member from Spain, but rather at the young non-Jewish, German students (as if, by not respecting the performance contract they had somehow not performed their civic duty). While this may or may not have been true, many of her comments were directed at the pieces that were dissonant, such as “Hatikva”. While these comments could be seen as rude, they were actually more appreciated by the ensemble members than the stunned silence or bemused partial tolerance of some of the other audience members. However, the stated goal of the ensemble was that of musical experimentation and freedom, to some extent an applied ethnomusicological initiative directed at the student community. Thus, performances by the ensemble were not intended to be a “polished product” but rather to showcase the potential of the ensemble as a musical pedagogical tool to teach nuances of Jewish music through performative engagement.

During this performance and others like it, taking place from 2016 to 2018, the co-leader of the ensemble who is also the co-author of this chapter, found herself at a disadvantage owing to a lack of proficiency in German. Camera crews and curious guests were present and eager for discussion; however, the student leader quickly took over through his native ability in German and his extroverted presence. These characteristics had aided the running of the ensemble, but here caused the non-German, Jewish leader to be effectively silenced. Moreover, no space was made for her to correct the student leader or add her own perspective if she did not agree with what he said or wanted to add nuance to the discussion. During a conversation with another audience member, she was given a lecture on German grammar and told that she should send her children to German school otherwise they would never learn the language. What politeness inhibited her from mentioning was that her grandfather spoke perfect German, but was forced to leave Germany under inauspicious circumstances when the Nazis

came to power. But perhaps politeness should sometimes be eschewed in favour of promoting intercultural dialogue, since it is precisely this truncation between “past and present” that is problematic at these sorts of events.

There are so many interactions of identity, power, and social and musical conventions that are observable at these “Third Mission” performances that it is impossible to unpack them fully here. What does become apparent is a disjuncture between the stated goals of musical commemorations and what actually happens at them – often making Jewish participants and other (potential and actual) members of the audience feel unwelcome, not because the initiatives are anti-Semitic (indeed, they are almost always well-intended), but because from a Jewish perspective, the activities are not “for them” but “about them”. As such, living Jews can constitute a “violation” of the performance contract through the “unheimliche” post-modern reality of their presence, especially if they do not – or cannot – follow the unspoken conventions of these “Third Mission” performances.²¹

Overall, analysing these violations of the performance contract, many questions arise. For instance, why is the performance of nuanced student education about Jews and Judaism not fulfilling the “performance contract”? Is it only because this category of performance arguably belongs to the “Jewish edutainment” genre and therefore cannot be student-community music (pedagogical) or too “dissonant” (“Hatikva”) or embody living Jews while connecting them to the past (shofar)? Or is it that if performance conventions change significantly they will no longer offer a space that allows a specific demographic of the diverse German population to symbolically perform their civic duty and denounce anti-Semitism, behaviours which belong to what Lapidot terms “anti-anti-Semitic discourse” (2020)? And if so, why is this need so important that it should trump the agency of the Jewish communities themselves, including that of the Jews participating in the performances, many of whom are descendants of Jewish Holocaust survivors? It is beyond the purview of this article to answer these questions. But it should be noted that, with applied ethnomusicological approaches,

21 For instance, they can simply be unaware of the social conventions or they may not be proficient in German. Perhaps they might be observant Jews and the performance falls on the Jewish Sabbath, or performing certain pieces might make them uncomfortable (e. g. owing to Holocaust associations), or they perceive themselves unwelcome since they feel like they cannot express themselves with a modicum of freedom.

promoting self-awareness and cultural sensitivity, and the goodwill and openness to dialogue of many of the non-Jewish actors in this process, these rigorous standards can be negotiated and changed, so that they can benefit all interested participants. Moving forward, these interactions can only improve if we continue to draw self-critical attention to these interactions, and thereby open up these events and their music to an open exchange of ideas resulting in possible reinterpretation and reinvention.

Concluding Reflections

Spivak's question of whether the subaltern can speak or, as she elaborates, whether it can make its voice heard (1988) is particularly relevant when reflecting on these experiences and the hegemonic structures through which they are framed. The question is how "we may render those voices intelligible within a discursive structure" (Bracke and Fadil 2012, 55) in mostly well-intended "Third Mission"-motivated events in which a regulated, symbolic idea of Jewishness acts in service of a majority non-Jewish population. In the interest of giving agency to Jewish voices, the EZJM has designed new "musical interventions", including a series of university seminars to be offered winter 2020 to summer 2022. These will be offered by the (Jewish staff members of the) EZJM in collaboration with (Jewish) musician and artistic director of the Villa Seligman, Eliah Sakakushev von Bismarck. Through a broad and critical reflection on Jewish music as "Third Mission", students will learn about the possibilities and limitations of such endeavours, and consequently, how they can organize and perform Jewish music in a culturally sensitive way. Students will be asked to generate new performative formats, which will aim at diversifying the audience that usually attends Jewish music concerts in Hanover. These formats will also critically address socially relevant topics such as anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination through the medium of music, but in such a way so that Jewish involvement is no longer purely symbolic, but is negotiated and interactive, with room for growth, change and a diversity of approaches.

The role of the ethnomusicologist (and the musician) in such transformations is to employ different approaches such as participatory research practices; closeness of dialogue with research participants [...]; awareness of impact; self-reflexivity of the researcher combined with the questioning of "objectivity"; to pay attention to research ethics, all of which con-

stitute aspects of “applied ethnomusicology”. This is in line with a major epistemic shift in ethnomusicology towards pragmatism and relevance in society, part of a widespread change across the arts, humanities and social sciences. What one calls the different components of this shift and how one groups them is a matter of perspective, individual positioning and politics (Harrison 2016, 15). These approaches allow us to critique and transform approaches to “Third Mission” initiatives, expanding the possibilities of performance to something wide-ranging and eclectic, allowing for an array of Jewish voices to be heard on their own terms. This still places the onus on academics and performers at Jewish institutes to pave the way forward, but at least it is a step in the right direction.

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