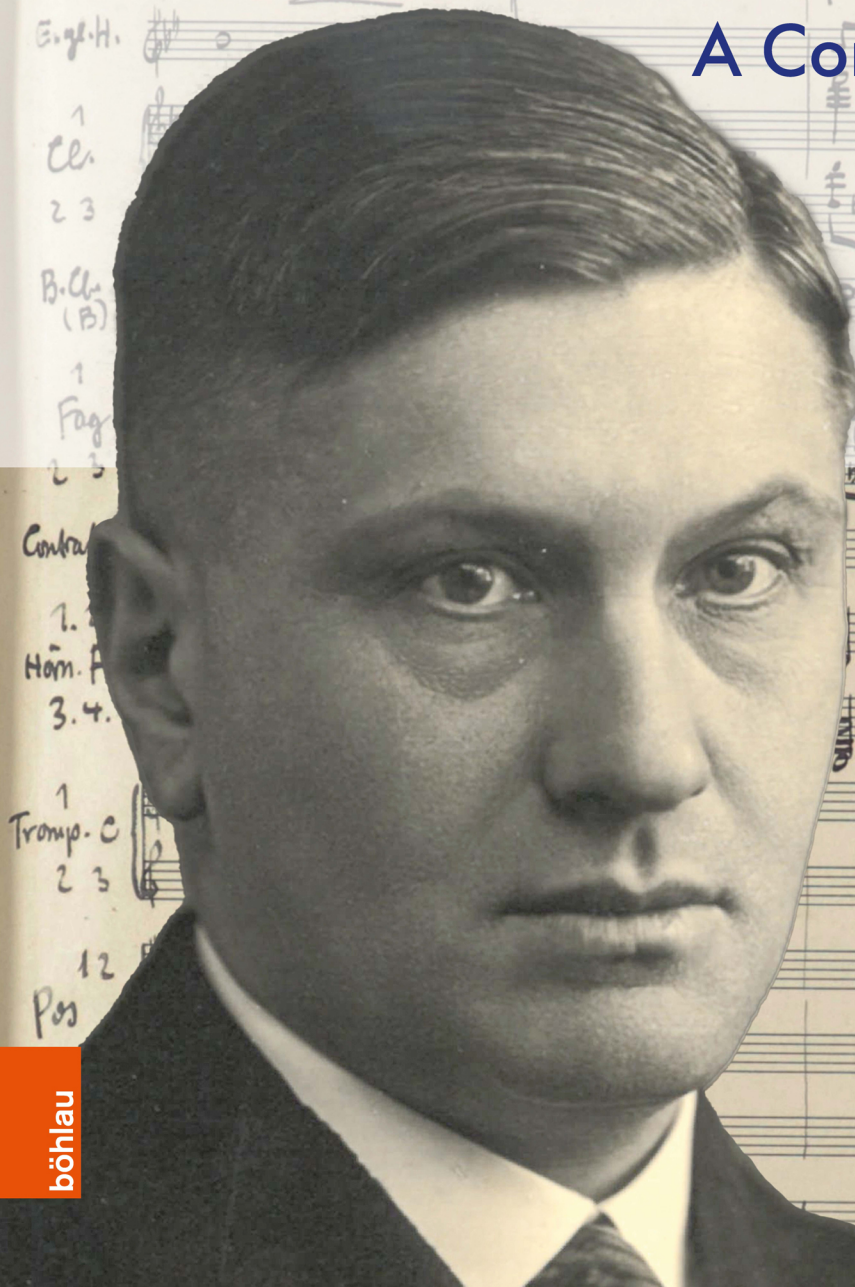


Valentina Strobl | Gerold Gruber (Ed.)

RICHARD FUCHS

A Composer's Search for Identity



Richard Fuchs (1933)



Valentina Strobl

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Böhlau



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Life is indomitable and inextinguishable; the struggle, the wrestling, the generation and the wasting away go on today as yesterday, tomorrow as today, and everything returns.

Once more: music is life, and like it inextinguishable.

Carl Nielsen

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Portrait of Richard Fuchs, taken
between 1940 and 1947
Archiv des Exilarte Zentrum der mdw,
Wien (A-Weaz)

1 INTRODUCTION

There is no single definition for the German term “Heimat”. According to the German dictionary Duden, it is “a country, part of a country or place in which one was born and grew up or in which one feels at home as a result of prolonged residence (often an emotionally charged expression of close connection to a particular region).”¹ The closest English translation of the word is “homeland” or “native land”. But “Heimat” is much more than that. Its meaning is multifaceted: home is also a social space which is shaped by relationships and emotions and which in turn creates identity. “Heimat” is a place where one has a voice and where is both heard and listened to. Home is a place where people experience appreciation and belonging. The loss of this “Heimat”, one’s homeland, entails psychological estrangement, loss of identity and even physical displacement. In the wake of National Socialist violence, people were ostracized, forced into exile, and thus robbed of their homeland and sense of identity. Some managed to flee, but countless others were murdered. One of the many people whose homeland was taken from them was Richard Fuchs.

Fuchs was an architect by profession but a musician by passion. After Nazi Germany imposed a ban on the professional employment [*Berufsverbot*] of Jews in the 1930s, he increasingly devoted himself to composing. In this capacity, he stood up not only for himself, but also for all his Jewish fellow-citizens. When he was forced into the *Kulturbund* ghetto

and required to compose ‘Jewish music’, he was compelled to address this subject and set almost exclusively Jewish texts to music. His greatest work was the oratorio *Vom jüdischen Schicksal* [*Of Jewish Destiny*], with which he won the *Kulturbund* competition. However, the authorities banned the planned performance of the oratorio at the last moment, thus silencing Fuchs. Following his arrest the morning after the November 1938 pogrom, he was imprisoned at Dachau Concentration Camp. His immigration permit to New Zealand, which arrived at the last moment, secured his release and enabled him to seek refuge abroad. However, he was considered an “enemy alien” in the British colony, so his longing for a true homeland remained unfulfilled there. In New Zealand, news of Nazi atrocities on the other side of the world eventually broke Richard Fuchs emotionally, silencing him as a composer.

Richard Fuchs continuously found himself living in the wrong place at the wrong time. His life was a perpetual search for a home and acceptance, always accompanied by pressure and tribulation. This book seeks to shed light on his life and work, demonstrating how his lifelong search for a homeland and identity – robbed from him, as from countless others, by the National Socialists – ran like a red thread through his six decades. Ultimately, the paper intends to answer the question of whether and to what extent homeland and identity also played a role in his compositions.

1 “Land, Landesteil oder Ort, in dem man [geboren und] aufgewachsen ist oder sich durch ständigen Aufenthalt zu Hause fühlt (oft als gefühlsbetonter Ausdruck enger Verbundenheit gegenüber einer bestimmten Gegend).” “Heimat”, in: Duden online, last accessed March 23, 2024 at: <https://www.duden.de/node/64751/revision/1222740>.

To this day, no published monograph dealing with Richard Fuchs has been made available. Given the limited availability of sources, extensive research was required to write the thesis. In addition to individual articles and essays, both online and in published works, the Fuchs estate was the main source for this thesis. Autograph material such as sheet music, letters, diaries and various other documents can be found at the *Exilarte Center for Banned Music* at the *mdw – University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna*, at the *Leo Baeck Institute*, and in the possession of Fuchs's descendants in New Zealand. Due to the limited number of published resources, additional online sources were necessary.

For the purposes of this biographical account, Richard Fuchs's life has been divided into three sections: Fuchs as a German; Fuchs as a Jew; and Fuchs as a New Zealander. To contextualise these sections, they are preceded by a chapter on his origins, his family, and his education. Two of his compositions are analysed in more detail in sub-chapters, which exemplify each stage of his life. A chapter examining his work as an architect and painter is also included to provide a complete picture. The purpose of this study is to restore a voice to Richard Fuchs and to oppose oblivion.

2 THE COMPOSER RICHARD FUCHS

In the German-speaking area, the music of the first half of the 20th century, especially the beginning, is characterised by a marked stylistic pluralism. The variety of different movements was immense. While some preserved the tradition of the previous epoch, others broke new ground. The continuation of late Romanticism was followed with the same enthusiasm as further developments and reorientations. Romantics clashed with "Neutöner", i.e. exponents of "New Music". For composers, there seemed to be more opportunities than ever before. In "'Jewish Destiny' and the Defiance of Richard Fuchs", Michael Haas illustrates the flourishing of musical styles in the early 20th century by focusing on three composers: Hans

Gál, Ernst Toch, and Alban Berg.² Of this triad, Hans Gál was the most traditional. Drawing on 19th-century music, he developed his own style, seeing it as a continuation and development of the past. The most important influence on his personal style, to which he remained faithful throughout his life, was Johannes Brahms. Alban Berg turned to Expressionism and, as a pupil of Arnold Schoenberg, became one of the most important figures of the Second Viennese School. In contrast, Ernst Toch turned away from emotional music in favour of the reality-based New Objectivity movement, which was to become central to the German-speaking world in the 1920s.³ Richard Fuchs was born in the same year as Toch. He

2 Michael Haas: "'Jewish Destiny' and the defiance of Richard Fuchs", in: *Forbidden Music*. Last accessed March 23, 2024 at: <https://forbiddenmusic.org/2019/07/21/jewish-destiny-and-the-defiance-of-richard-fuchs/>.

3 Ibid.

remained rooted in the musical language of Romanticism, especially the German tradition, which he regarded as the basis of his compositional style. In addition to Brahms, his work was also significantly influenced by Wagner, Strauss, Mahler and Bruckner. He is also described as a “romantic expressionist” with a “unique voice in a Germanic idiom, with refer-

ences to the cultural maelstrom of the age he lived in.”⁴

Despite their different approaches, there is one thing that connects all the composers mentioned: They and their music were to become a source of significant consternation for the National Socialists some four decades later.

2.2 THE FAMILY FUCHS

Richard Solomon Fuchs was born in Karlsruhe on April 26, 1887. He grew up in Southern Germany as the eldest son of a wealthy and educated Jewish family – a detail which was to have a significant impact on his later life. The Fuchs family originally came from Weingarten, a rural area near Karlsruhe. At the age of eleven, Gustav Fuchs, Richard’s father, moved to Karlsruhe with his family.

The family and their belongings were loaded onto two carts, and they set off along the country road via Durlach to Karlsruhe – twelve children, their parents, and their grandmother. [...] In Karlsruhe, the grandparents had bought a house in Zähringerstraße. This part of town was

*disparagingly called “das Dörfle”, meaning “the little village”. It was a poor neighbourhood. Decades later, when the family had become wealthy, they did not always like being reminded that they had started out as poor immigrants in the “Dörfle”. It would be the next generation who would take pride in the family’s humble beginnings.*⁵

His father, Gustav Gedaljah Fuchs, was a wealthy timber merchant whose successful company, H. Fuchs & Söhne, had been in the family for many years.⁶ The company, a GmbH [LLC/PLC], was one of the most renowned businesses in Karlsruhe at the time. Based at Hansastraße 5 and 9a, the company was active not only in the timber trade, but also

4 Richard Fuchs: *The songs of Richard Fuchs. In a strange land* (Margaret Medlyn, Jenny Wollerman, Richard Greager et.al.), CD, [Wellington]: Rollover Productions, 2011.

5 “Die Familie und der Hausrat wurden auf zwei Leiterwagen verstaut, und so ging es auf der Landstraße über Durlach nach Karlsruhe, zwölf Kinder, ihre Eltern und ihre Großmutter. [...] In Karlsruhe hatten die Großeltern ein Haus gekauft, in der Zähringerstraße. Der Stadtteil hieß verächtlich ‚das Dörfle‘. Es war ein ärmlicher Stadtteil... Jahrzehnte später, als reiche Leute, haben sich die Füchse nicht immer gerne an die Tatsache erinnern lassen, dass sie als arme Zuwanderer im ‚Dörfle‘ angefangen hatten. Erst die folgende Generation kommt dazu, stolz zu sein auf den bescheidenen Beginn der Familie”. Manfred Koch: “Die Epoche der Reichsgründung: Bürgerliche Gleichstellung und Emanzipationskrise”, in: Schmitt, Heinz (Hrsg.): *Juden in Karlsruhe. Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte bis zur nationalsozialistischen Machtergreifung*, Karlsruhe: Badenia 1988 (Veröffentlichungen des Karlsruher Stadtarchivs Band 8), p. 101.

6 Gustav Gedaljah Fuchs (September 22, 1858 – September 23, 1931); “Gustav Gedaljah Fuchs”, in: *geni.com*, last accessed April 19, 2022 at: <https://www.geni.com/people/Gustav-Fuchs/6000000000598740101>.



Gustav Fuchs (1858–1931)
Archiv des Exilarte Zentrum der mdw, Wien (A-Weaz)



Timber factory H. Fuchs & Söhne
Archiv des Exilarte Zentrum der mdw, Wien (A-Weaz)

owned a planing- and sawmill, as well as a parquet factory. Thanks to the large number of employees, "H. Fuchs & Söhne", along with several other companies, was of great importance to the labour market in Karlsruhe.⁷ On August 1, 1938, the company would ultimately be sold as part of the "Aryanisation" process.⁸

The Fuchs family was large and close-knit. An important figure in the family was Fanni Fuchs, Richard's grandmother.⁹ Her husband, Hirsch Fuchs, died in 1893.¹⁰ Fanni, regarded as the "matriarch of the family", was also its heart.

The enormous house he was born in was a lovely house of the end of the XVIII century of rose coloured sandstone, typical of the county of Baden. It had a large entrance for carriages and horses which opened onto a courtyard with stables and a garden [...]. The grandmother, who, when widowed, continued to occupy during twenty years an

apartment on the first floor even after it became the property of Foulkes' parents [Gustav und Sara Fuchs]; this was the family centre.¹¹

Sunday family gatherings, which always brought the whole family together – Fanni and Hirsch Fuchs had thirteen children – usually took place at the home of Bernhard Baruch Fuchs.¹² He was the eldest of the Fuchs brothers and Richard's uncle.¹³ Soni Fuchs remembers these family gatherings:

The Fuchs family circle was large, and its members saw each other quite often. Every Sunday afternoon, the Karlsruhe family was invited to Bernhard, Hirsch Fuchs's eldest son, for coffee and cake. We had sandwiches, apple cake and marble cake. Even as a small child, I used to go to the big flat on Haydnplatz.¹⁴

The family members' houses were located all over Karlsruhe, especially in the so-called "Musicians' Quarter". Uncle Bern-

7 Josef Werner: *Hakenkreuz und Judenstern. Das Schicksal der Karlsruher Juden im Dritten Reich*, 2. überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage, Karlsruhe: Badenia 1990 (Veröffentlichungen des Karlsruher Stadtarchivs Band 9), p. 23f.

8 Strauß, Wolfgang: „Fuchs, Philipp“, in: *Gedenkbuch für die Karlsruher Juden*, last accessed October 22, 2023 at: <https://gedenkbuch.karlsruhe.de/namen/1124>.

9 Fanni Fuchs (July 20, 1832 – March 1, 1913); "Fanni Fuchs", in: *geni.com*, last accessed July 23, 2023 at: <https://www.geni.com/people/Fanni-Fuchs/6000000004589981996>.

10 Hirsch Fuchs (December 24, 1824 – October 1, 1893); "Hirsch Fuchs", in: *geni.com*, last accessed December 15, 2023 at: <https://www.geni.com/people/Hirsch-Fuchs/600000000402844580>.

11 Juan Campos: "S. H. Foulkes, Pioneer on the frontiers of the groups", in: *Website von Grup d'Anàlisi Barcelona*. Last accessed December 15, 2023 at: http://arxius.grupdanalisi.org/GDAP/SHFoulkes_JC_ing.pdf

12 Danny Mulheron (Director) / Sara Stretton (Director): *The Third Richard*, DVD, Rollover Productions 2008.

13 Bernhard Fuchs (April 28, 1856 – December 3, 1926); "Bernhard Fuchs", in: *geni.com*, last accessed April 19, 2022 at: <https://www.geni.com/people/Bernhard-Fuchs/6000000004590054898>.

14 "Der Fuchs Familienkreis war groß und man sah sich ziemlich oft. Jeden Sonntagnachmittag waren die Karlsruher Fuchse bei Bernhardt [sic], dem ältesten Sohn von Hirsch Fuchs, zu Kaffee und Kuchen eingeladen. Es gab belegte Brote, Apfel- und Marmorkuchen. Schon als kleines Kind war ich in der großen Wohnung am Haydnplatz dabei". Sonny Fuchs: "Klavierspiel, Kakao und Schweinsöhrle", in: Doris Lott (Hrsg.): *Hopfenduft und Butterbretzel. Karlsruher Kinder erzählen*, Karlsruhe: Lindemanns Bibliothek 2012, p. 44.

hard Fuchs lived on Haydnplatz, and Richard's cousin Philipp Fuchs lived on Wendtstraße.¹⁵ Another cousin, Albert Fuchs, lived on Bachstraße, and Herbert Fuchs lived on Schubertstraße.¹⁶ This placement would be enough to indicate that music was an essential part of the entire family, and that Richard was brought up with it more or less from infancy.¹⁷ Sara and Gustav Fuchs named their five children after characters

from Wagner's operas: Siegmund, Walther, Gottfried, Senta and Richard, after the composer himself.¹⁸ Gustav Fuchs even named his horse Wotan. The name Richard was chosen with great care: nicknamed "The Third Richard" by his father, he seemed destined to follow in the footsteps of Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss.¹⁹

2.2.1 Richard Fuchs's siblings

2.2.1.1 Gottfried Erik Fuchs: an Excursion

At the time, the best-known of the Fuchs brothers was probably Gottfried Erik Fuchs, who was born on May 3, 1889.²⁰ As his life and fate took similar turns to those of his brother Richard, his biography will also be discussed here. He began his career as a professional footballer in 1904 with Düsseldorf FC 1899, the predecessor club of today's Düsseldorf

SC. With this team, he became West German champion in 1907.²¹ After spending time in England, he returned to his hometown in 1909 and went on to play for the local club, Karlsruher FV. He enjoyed great success with this team, including winning the German championship in 1910.²² Alongside his career as a professional footballer, Gottfried Fuchs

- 15 Philipp Fuchs (August 20, 1888 – November 10, 1938); "Philipp Fuchs", in: *geni.com*, last accessed April 19, 2022 at: <https://www.geni.com/people/Philipp-Fuchs/6000000004590183770>.
- 16 Mulheron / Stretton: *The Third Richard*; Albert Fuchs (later: Albrecht Foulkes) (October 7, 1893 – 1972); Albrecht (Albert) Foulkes (Fuchs), in: *geni.com*, last accessed April 20, 2023 at: <https://www.geni.com/people/AlbrechtFoulkes/6000000000403285425>.
- 17 Mulheron / Stretton: *The Third Richard*.
- 18 Sara Fuchs, geb. Durlacher (June 13, 1863 – March 12, 1941); "Sara Fuchs", in: *geni.com*, last accessed April 19, 2023 at: <https://www.geni.com/people/Sara-Fuchs/6000000000398950763>.
- 19 Mulheron / Stretton: *The Third Richard*.
- 20 Gottfried Fuchs (May 3, 1889 – February 25, 1972); Gottfried Fuchs, in: *geni.com*, last accessed June 22, 2023 at: <https://www.geni.com/people/Gottfried-Fuchs/6000000000387841065>.
- 21 Founded in 1898 as the Rheinischer Spiel-Verband (RSV), the regional football and athletics association was renamed Rheinisch-Westfälischer Spiel-Verband (RWSV) in 1900, before finally adopting the name Westdeutscher Spiel-Verband in 1907. The league matches organised within this framework constituted the basis of the West German Championship at the time.
- 22 Ernst Otto Bräunche: "Gottfried Fuchs", in: *Stadtlexikon Karlsruhe*, last accessed June 22, 2023 at: <https://stadtlexikon.karlsruhe.de/index.php/De:Lexikon:bio-0503>.

also worked full-time as a businessman in his father Gustav's timber company.²³

He made his debut for the German national football team in March 1911, scoring a goal in his first match against Switzerland. Although he only played for the national team six times in total, he scored 13 goals – a remarkable goal-to-game ratio that would not be bested in the team's history until decades later.²⁴ At the 1912 Olympic football tournament in Stockholm he scored ten goals against Russia, setting a record that remains unrivalled in Germany to this day and was only bested internationally in 2001.²⁵ Upon his victorious return from Sweden, Fuchs was presented with a silver cup by Crown Prince Wilhelm of Prussia in recognition of this achievement.²⁶

His "scoring instinct" and the many goals he scored after solo runs would come to be regarded as his trademark.²⁷ In 1956, *Sport Magazin* characterised Gottfried Fuchs as follows:

*He was an outstanding player with admirable elegance on the pitch, and he was quick and accurate with his shots on goal. The KfV striker had a wonderful overview of the game and always played unselfishly. He is regarded as one of the most brilliant centre forwards ever to play for a German national team. For him, football was simply about enjoying the game.*²⁸

During the First World War, Fuchs and his brothers fought on the front line for their homeland. Serving as an artillery officer, he was wounded four times. After the war, he briefly continued to play for Karlsruher FV, before ending his career as a professional footballer in 1920.²⁹ Although he had once been celebrated as a German football star, his fortunes changed abruptly in the 1930s. Following Hitler's appointment as chancellor in 1933, he was expelled from all clubs, removed from the official list of national players and much of his data and records were deleted from the statistics and

23 Lorenz Pfeiffer: "Gottfried Fuchs", in: *Zwischen Erfolg und Verfolgung. Jüdische Stars im Sport bis 1933 und danach*, last accessed April 19, 2023 at: <http://juedische-sportstars.de/index.php?id=190>.

24 Bräunche, "Gottfried Fuchs".

25 "Gottfried Fuchs", in: *Website des Deutschen Fußball-Bunds*, last accessed April 19, 2023 at: <https://www.dfb.de/datencenter/personen/gottfried-fuchs/spieler>; "Gottfried Fuchs", in: *Wikipedia*, last accessed April 19, 2023 at: https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gottfried_Fuchs, "Erinnerungen an Richard und Gottfried Fuchs", in: *Facebook-Präsenz des Deutschen Fußballmuseums*, last accessed April 21, 2023 at: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=3748514688522445>.

26 "Zum 50. Todestag von Gottfried Fuchs", in: *Website des Deutschen Fußball-Bunds*, last accessed April 19, 2023 at: <https://www.dfb.de/news/detail/zum-50-todestag-von-gottfried-fuchs-237155/>.

27 Ibid.

28 "Er war eine überragende Spielerpersönlichkeit von bewundernswerter Eleganz im Spiel und schnell und sicher im Torschuss. Der KfV-Stürmer besaß eine wunderbare Spielübersicht, spielte immer uneigennützig und gilt als einer der genialsten Mittelstürmer, der je in einer deutschen Ländermannschaft stand. Fußballsport war für ihn nichts weiter als Freude am Spiel". Ibid.

29 Bräunche: "Gottfried Fuchs".