

AJR Information

Volume XLVII No. 8
August 1992

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Don't miss . . .

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questionnaire p3

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Cloaca maxima

A tide of 'revisionist' filth is polluting Europe. A street name in Lvov honours the Ukrainian pogromist Petljura. Zagreb radio gives air times to the daughter of the war criminal Pavelic. The *Kronenzeitung*, read by one Austrian out of two, denies the existence of Nazi gas chambers. A few short years after the fake diaries of Hitler we are regaled with the outpourings of his Mephisto-like spin Doktor. In the process the sensation-hungry *Sunday Times* legitimises David Irving's 'work', and the *Daily Mail* enriches the Swiss Nazi Genoud. Printer's ink is poisoning the wells of truth; Goebbels stalks the land. □

Reflections on Amos Oz, Heisenberg and Bomber Harris

Apportioning guilt

The award of this year's Peace Prize of the German book trade to the Israeli writer Amos Oz is significant. Alternatively dubbed 'the conscience of Israel' or 'a traitor to his country' by his compatriots, Oz has long been a hero to the international peace movement for advocating a peace-for-land compromise with the Palestinians. However, the hero instantly turned villain in peacenik eyes some 18 months ago when he supported the Gulf War against Saddam Hussein. By honouring Oz with their prize the Frankfurt jury are making overdue amends for the discreditable stance the German peace movement, in particular, took over Iraqi aggression.

The nub of the matter – in the Gulf crisis as elsewhere – is that the cause of peace may be better served by the readiness rather than the refusal to go to

war. The whole complex of war and morality is a tangle in which truth can be lost among special pleading and posturing hypocrisy. Nothing illustrated this better than an article in *The Independent* lauding the Third Reich's physicists for not developing an atom bomb. This is pure mythology designed to inculcate Allied scientists engaged on Project Manhattan. The reason why Heisenberg's team can polish their haloes in retrospect is that they were too far behind in the race to pursue a nuclear option.

Just as Heisenberg's boffins have no call to feel morally superior to Anglo-American physicists so German, and other, critics of the statue to Bomber Harris have little reason to vent moral outrage. Even if Dresden was not a prime military-industrial target it served as a communications centre for Wehrmacht units facing the Red Army in Poland. The Germans in Dresden, Hamburg and Cologne were only reaping the harvest sown earlier by the Nazis in Guernica, Warsaw, Belgrade and Coventry.

Was there in fact a marked difference between Germans and Nazis? This is, admittedly, a complex question; nonetheless the answer would appear to be in the negative. In 1933 about half the electorate voted for Hitler, and over the next few years support indisputably rose to about 90 per cent. Even the turn in the fortunes of war had little impact – so that the men engaged in the July 1944 Officers' Plot were widely considered traitors rather than patriots. In the very last week of the war, while the Italians were meting out summary justice to Mussolini, the architect of their misfortune, Goering fetched up in a public air raid shelter in Berlin and fellow shelterers did not even boo him.

Bomber Harris' strategy has been condemned – rightly – both for its waste of air crews and counterproductive effect on German civilian morale. Yet it had a positive effect on British morale and raised spirits in a usually forgotten quarter: in February 1945, as the SS closed down Auschwitz and organised the survivors' death march in a westerly direction, some walking skeletons will have drawn fresh hope from the pall of smoke that hove into view over Dresden on the far horizon. □



The controversial statue of 'Bomber' Harris at Aldwych.

Photo: Newman.

Golden Twenties' afterglow

A glance at London's theatre scene reminds one of the description of Berlin's Weimar years as the Golden Twenties. First there was Pam Gems' adaptation of the *Blue Angel* (which, incidentally, hewed closer to Heinrich Mann's *Professor Unrath* than Josef von Sternberg's film classic). Now the Dominion Theatre is staging Vicky Baum's *Grand Hotel*—a memorable starring vehicle for Greta Garbo in 1932—as a musical, while the Greenwich Theatre hosts Carl Sternheim's comedy *Bürger Schippel*. This is the third time in recent years that Sternheim's satire on the mores of German provincial *Spiessbürger* has been put before London audiences. Now called *Schippel the Plumber* it features actors who were coached in Lieder singing to fit in with the requirements of the plot. □

Not only vandals

The long-neglected Jewish cemetery at the first gate of the Vienna Zentralfriedhof is gradually being rehabilitated. Those involved in the work include *Bundesheer* soldiers, police cadets and a sizable number of volunteers from secondary schools. □

Rabbi honoured

Henry Brandt, Landesrabbiner of Lower Saxony, has been awarded this year's Hedwig Burgheim medal by the University of Giessen for his work in fostering Christian-Jewish understanding. □

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Profile

Model member



Mr Fred Dunston.

Photo: Newman.

The elderly hero of a Viennese inter-war comedy is told by the Lord Mayor 'As long as our city has citizens like you I don't fear for its future'—lines remembered after well over 50 years because they were spoken by Hans Moser. It is a colleague of Moser's, Szöke Sakall, whom Fred Dunston resembles, both in appearance and air of benign avuncular concern.

Born in 1917 into a Viennese middle class family of Hungarian extraction, Fred had a happy childhood, with his eight *Gymnasium* years still unshadowed by the rise of Nazism. He joined the Scouts and looks back on attendance at two Jamborees as the highlight of his teens. His rank as group scout master made him an experienced youth leader, so that the Vienna Jewish community asked him after the Anschluss to run courses for hundreds of youngsters thrown out of school.

His charges belonged to diverse Zionist youth groups, from the rightwing *Betar* to leftist *Shomer Hatzair*; Fred's face assumes a troubled expression when he recalls the intra-Zionist faction fights he had to resolve in those traumatic days. In early 1939 he came to England to help prepare Kitchener Camp. Later he moved on to run a tented transit camp for Youth Aliyah. (It was a less than happy experience: the agricultural training on offer consisted of unskilled work on a bulb farm.)

Then came internment, followed by war work as a centre lathe operator. Eventually he joined a small firm making watch straps set up by his only surviving close relative. This was to be Fred's one and only job till retirement in 1985.

Almost a foundation member of AJR, postwar he joined the Hyphen—a group comprising refugees in the age range intermediate between adults and Kindertransportees. At the Hyphen he met his (similarly Viennese-born) wife. They married in 1951 and had two sons. Unlike many youngsters who grew up in the turbulent Sixties, the lads were diligent at school, gained scholarships and went to Cambridge. They also, Fred reflects happily, felt Jewish and evinced an interest in their Central European roots.

Seven years ago Fred was widowed. He bore the blow with fortitude, immersing himself in voluntary work, both locally—he is a school governor—and at AJR head office. In addition he has written papers about his past work for the Vienna Community, Kitchener Camp and Youth Aliyah; these repose in the Wiener Library.

But Fred has also (in a manner of speaking) worked for the future: both Dunston 'boys' serve on the AJR executive. Sometimes his past mirrored the future; just as he got to know his own wife at the Hyphen, so his elder son met his at the ACJR, the Association of Children of Jewish Refugees.

At the end of our talk I was tempted to tell Fred (*pace* Hans Moser) 'As long as our AJR has members like you I don't fear for its future!' However, knowing his modesty, I resisted the temptation. I herewith repair this omission in print.

□ R.G.

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Readers' questionnaire

A widespread positive response

The questionnaire we sent out in April has yielded around 1,100 replies, representing just over a quarter of the readership. The yeah-sayers greatly outweighed the nay-sayers: 118 respondents declared themselves fully satisfied with the journal, 15 were highly critical, and a further 28 expressed irritation at certain features (such as *Verse and Worse*).

Over 90 per cent indicated that they read every issue, the rest read most issues. The majority felt well-informed about the range of AJR services.

Regular features

Our regular features were listed in the following order of preference: 1 Front page leader, 2 AJR news, 3 Personality profile, 4 News of members, 5 AJR at work, 6 Book reviews, 7 Letters to the Editor, 8 Theatre/film reviews, 9 Obituaries, 10 Art notes, 11 Advertisements. (The first on this list received 350 'first preference votes', the second 147, and the third 73.)

Asked whether the journal should carry more illustrations around 65 per cent

thought the present pictures-to-text ratio just right.

On the question of which topics readers wanted more fully – or newly – covered the ranking was as follows: 1 Jewish affairs, 2 European politics, 3 Israel, 4 British politics, 5 Literature, 6 Music, 7 Travel, 8 Theatre, 9 Art exhibitions, 10 TV/films, 11 Sport. The most popular 'write-ins' were Bridge and Crosswords.

Apart from providing invaluable feedback your replies also yielded interesting data about the membership.

The age breakdown of the respondents was: Over 70: 748, 60–70: 258, 40–60: 32, under 40: 5.

Employment status

As regards employment status, of 982 respondents who answered this question 793 were retired, 118 worked part-time (or as volunteers), and 71 full-time.

Of the 1,010 who filled in details about original nationality 676 were German, and 219 Austrian; the rest were Czech, Polish, Hungarian, British or stateless.

Information about length of AJR membership was provided by 875 respondents. 194 had joined 40–50 years ago, 110 30–40 years ago, 163 20–30 years ago and 140 10–20 years ago. An encouragingly large number – 170 – had enrolled in just the last five years.

* * *

The winner of the Prize Draw, picked by Mrs Lydia Lassman and witnessed by Mr Fred Dunston, is Miss L. Stern in London N11. Miss Stern will receive a £25 Marks & Spencer gift voucher. □

Bitter-sweet return

After 50 years I've been back to Aachen as guest of the town in the fullest sense of the word 'guest' – with everything paid for. We were treated to a crowded programme of visits, guided city tours, trips to the surrounding countryside, opera performances and organ recitals.

The planning for the event by the city council and Society for Christian-Jewish Collaboration began three years ago. It was a marvel as an example of the art of organisation! We filled in a questionnaire as to possible requirements such as medical needs, diets, wheelchairs etc.

No hesitation

When invitations arrived at the end of 1991 for one 'native' and one companion, my husband and I did not hesitate long and accepted. Two of our sons also came.

On departure day, 29 April, smiling, red-jacketed young people met us in the maze of Frankfurt airport who smoothed out all travel problems. A warm welcome by the local head of the Christians and Jews awaited in a V.I.P. lounge. Then came a nostalgic coach journey through the Rhine valley in spring.

In the hotel gifts of welcome of local specialities: *Printen* (ginger bread) and *Spekulatius* (butter shortbread). A lovely homely touch and exhilarating.

The next morning – *Yom Shoa* – we all gathered at the cemetery. We were in a flood of tears, of course, but it was good to rediscover other survivors of the disrupted network of family and friends.

The tone was set that evening at a reception in the thousand-year-old town hall, where the Lord Mayor gave a moving and brave address.

Witnesses of terror

We were kept extremely busy during the week not only seeing Aachen as it is now, meeting people on parkbenches or shops – very positive and encouraging – but also speaking as witnesses of the terror years to our old schools. The local press reported it all.

If our town had invited just us – *dayenu*. If they had feted us as they did with the most lavish hospitality – *dayenu*, but inviting the whole kehillah, all 375 of them, was almost the best part of it. We revelled in meeting second and third generations and seeing our beloved Aachen, 80 per cent destroyed and literally risen from the ashes, almost more beautiful than before.

□ Irmgard Treuherz

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Reviews

Growing up in 1984

Elena Bonner *MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS*, Hutchinson 1992, £18.99

Like many another autobiography, this account by Andrei Sakharov's widow of her Russian childhood in the '20s and '30s started life as a personal record for the immediate family. It begins and ends with the death of her mother, the acute sense of whose loss was doubtless intensified rather than diminished by the fact that the relationship between mother and daughter had been a troubled one. As a dedicated Party worker the former had little time for family life, was exasperated by the child's frequent illnesses, and left her and her younger brother in the care of her own mother. She it was who provided the stable element, and a sympathetic portrait of this handsome, gifted and essentially 'bourgeois' woman emerges gradually from the pages. She is clearly subsumed under the title, which, however, leaves out of account the equally affectionate mosaic the author pieces together of her Armenian-born stepfather.

Privileged childhood

Both parents belonged to the new Soviet élite, and in Russian terms hers was a privileged childhood. Yet as we follow the young Elena from kindergarten to forest school to dacha and Comintern summer camp, the Western reader may get a sense of

Kafkaesque claustrophobia. Moving in the course of duty from Chita in Siberia to Leningrad, thence to 'provincial' Moscow and back again to Leningrad the family inhabits a bewildering succession of 'buildings' (mostly former hotels) teeming with communal life.

A recurring image is that of doors or the absence of doors, of unmarked secret doors, of numerous back doors but no front door, or of gates which, like those at the children's camp run by the Secret Police, mysteriously open inwards only.

Upstaging great events

None of this is in any way pointed or *durchkomponiert*. Indeed, the style and composition of the book exhibit an artlessness which would be more beguiling were it not for the obtrusively American translation. Throughout the writer endeavours to adopt the child's eye view: 'Reminiscence is not knowing what lies ahead', she tells herself. Accordingly, childish things – the domestic 'zoo', the 'forbidden' Christmas tree, the adolescent's glance into the mirror to discover she is pretty – naturally upstage the great events and personalities which were impinging upon and shaping her young life. (The one mention Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Andropov receive is in a cheerful description of one of the big military parades, when a good time was had by all.) She cannot always avoid asides which tend to leave open as many important questions as they answer trivial ones. We want to know much more about her Jewish background, of her rejection of her real father, or of the events leading up to her parents' arrest.

Flash-forwards

'I fear the reader will find it difficult to follow me', she admits with characteristic frankness. If this is, sadly, true, the chief fault lies in the ever shifting time sequence, the uncertain chronology of events, and above all the frequent flash-forwards (mostly printed in italics) to every possible point in her later life, right up to 1988–89 when she was working on her book. One of these affords a tantalising glimpse of Sakharov's 'science fiction' activity in Pitsunda, which, though not strictly relevant, one would not wish to do without. But it also serves to underline that the first fourteen years of this remarkable woman's remarkable life were not perhaps the most interesting!

□ Brigitte E. Hay

Cain's mutiny

Howard Jacobson, *THE VERY MODEL OF A MAN*, Viking 1992, £14.99

One cannot accuse the author of pulling his punches. At times he goes further than Salman Rushdie in affronting true believers. Rushdie was execrated for insulting the Prophet Mohammed, who is not a god; Jacobson does not even spare the Creator Himself. We all know the Muslim reaction to their renegade. Judaism has confined itself to literary critiques.

August Mann

In my view the 'blasphemies' in Jacobson's idiosyncratic retelling of the story of Cain and Abel are incidental. But while his treatment must affront the fundamentalists, the use he makes of much of the received Scriptural text can hardly please the sceptics. Add to this some interchanges between the protagonists which would not have disgraced Thomas Mann at his most august, and one feels justified in asking: 'Witty, cheeky old H.J., where art thou?'. He claims that this book is essentially no different from his others; judgement, therefore, lies with the individual reader.

He must transport himself into Eden, but abandon all notions that this place is what is usually conceived of Paradise. It is inhabited by a family more neurotic than patients in Freud's waiting room. Adam and Eve have ceased to be lovers; Abel is a pretty lad watched over by the obsessional Cain who sees himself very much as his brother's keeper. All are constantly disturbed by a jealous godhead chasing his laggard creation and making up prohibitions as he goes along. All fear and revere Him, except Cain who is developing a rationalist outlook.

Jealous deity

God's jealousy has the effect of making Cain envious and jealous, too. He tries to improve on the 'boss's' work by agricultural labours and the naming of species, of which there are new ones every day. The Nameless One, 'the enemy of vowels', does not approve of Cain's doing; Cain does not approve of Him. The first womb-born man feels that the deity's jealousy is mostly focused on Eve. Though unlike Zeus He does not actually practise seduction, he woos her with his *Shekina* (the aura of His presence). Some of his angels participate in

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the game; one of them self-destructs in a dive aimed at the Mother of Mankind.

We all know what 'happens' next. God either is very partial to barbecued meat and turns down the vegetarian offering, or favours Abel, the co-operative shepherd, over Cain the compulsive agriculturalist. At any rate, Cain slays Abel – or, in Jacobson's version, loves him to death.

Then God shows the culprit who is master by instantly transforming Cain into the Eternal Tourist (it is too early for the Wandering Jew). The reader now enters the time warp which Scripture itself has provided. Where, when the Edenites go abroad, do all the other people they meet come from? Have other gods created other mankinds? A fine field here for speculative heresies and rationalist argument.

Mark of fratricide

Next, Cain, adorned with the mark of fratricide which is both protection and stigma, disports himself in Babel, a great and populous city. He is much appreciated as a storyteller full of the tales of Eden, which are believed in a literal sense only by a soothsayer who adds greatly to the warping of time.

Cain also 'marries' and tries to shed his Oedipus complex towards Eve and his undiminished obsessional love for, and jealousy of, his dead brother. This is little fun for him or the lady concerned, but it may enthrall the reader.

Furthermore, Cain conceives the ambition to build the Tower of Babel. Faced with the vaunting ziggurats, the Mesopotamian equivalents of the Pyramids, he decides to aim yet higher. The celestial advisers warn the deity that Cain, in his eternal oppositionism is attempting to storm the heavens. Once again we know what happened. His card house was smashed, and in the process the heavenly powers-that-be made the world polyglot so that prospective conspirators should find more obstacles in their way.

□ J.R.

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Encapsulated history



Class 1 from the Akiva School with the Museum's Education Officer, Ruth Anne Lenga.

Photo: London Museum of Jewish Life.

The London Museum of Jewish Life was founded, initially as the Museum of the Jewish East End, in 1983. It is dedicated to the rescue and preservation of the social and cultural history of the capital's diverse Jewish communities. Since 1984 the museum has been based at the Sternberg Centre, Finchley, where it presently occupies the top floor. It was in 1984 that it received a government grant to employ a full-time curator. The job was given to Rickie Burman, the energetic young lady who did so much work in establishing the Manchester Jewish Museum in the Cheetham Hill district of the city. The London museum has a large collection of objects, photographs, documents and oral history recordings. Some of these are used in the permanent exhibition which traces Jewish immigration and settlement in London, with reconstructions of a tailoring workshop, an immigrant home and an East London bakery. Since, because of space restrictions, it is impossible to exhibit all the material which the museum has stored, much of it is used in the construction of the active programme of temporary exhibitions, education programmes and travelling displays which it mounts. The recent exhibition *The Last Goodbye—The Rescue of Children From Nazi Europe*, which opened

on 12 January 1992, was one of these which proved to be of great interest to AJR members.

The museum also organises family history workshops, which teach methods of research for those with an interest in their ancestry. Guided walks of Jewish areas all over Britain and cultural events can be attended as part of the active provision of advice and resources for those researching aspects of Jewish history.

Bright and exciting ideas

Ruth-Anne Lenga, the Education Officer, has, in conjunction with practising teachers, designed a number of educational programmes aimed at capturing children's imagination and commitment with bright and exciting ideas. One of these programmes, aimed at bringing history alive for the younger generation, brings two generations together. Survivors of, or refugees from, the Holocaust come and talk, and listen, to a young audience. It requires a certain kind of courage to talk about one's past openly, to reopen old wounds in the hope of passing something of value on to others, but many of those who have taken this step believe that the experience has been of value for all concerned.

Preserving the past

The museum, too, is of value. It preserves the past for the education of the young. In the very near future the London Museum of Jewish Life will move down to the first floor of the Sternberg Centre. This means that there will be much more room for the permanent exhibition. Readers who wish to find out more about its work, or feel that they have artifacts or documents which may be of historical value, should contact the Curator, Rickie Burman, on: 081-346 2288.

□ M.N.

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Letters to the Editor



RED WHITE AND RED ALL OVER

Sir – It is indeed true to say that the Vienna Philharmonic were as antisemitic as any other Austrian group: which explains why it took my uncle, a brilliant violinist, about 20 years to be promoted to the position of orchestra leader.

Soon after the Nazi takeover he was sent to Dachau; we feared the worst. But then, to everyone's surprise, he returned after a few weeks. What had happened?

It seems that shortly after my uncle's arrest a few members of the orchestra and the administration used their influence to obtain his release. At first they were unsuccessful. But then a leading singer of the Vienna State Opera – a party member! – threw his weight behind their efforts and my uncle was freed. And yet this VIP was a Nazi and therefore a committed antisemite before, during and after his intervention: a paradox indeed!

Sheen Park
Richmond (Sy.)

C. P. Carter FCSD

Sir – Congratulations on your excellent leader. Regrettably your views are not available to a much wider public in this country.

Holland Park Avenue
London W11

J. Rotter

WHERE DO YOU PUT YOUR CROSS?

Sir – I have never in my life voted Conservative and am sure I'll never do so in the future. It is very sad that more Jews are Tory than Labour voters. (Why did you omit the Liberal Democrats?)

I am only a retired SRN and not very political – but never Conservative.

Sispara Gardens
London SW18

M. Kahn

DISADVANTAGED GROUP

Sir – I came to Birmingham in 1937 to a very nice family who lived in a farmhouse with four children and five dogs. Out of my pay of five shillings a week I had to pay three for the heating of my own room. But we managed.

London NW3

Alice Schwab

COMPOSER'S SUCCESS – IN GERMANY

Sir – May I draw your attention to a few errors in the above-mentioned article in the June issue:

- (1) The 'Lost Composer' was shown on BBC 2, not Channel 4.
- (2) My opera *Der gewaltige Hahnrei* will now be recorded in Berlin by the Radio Symphony Orchestra this coming November.
- (3) My 90th birthday will be in January 1993 – unfortunately not in two years' time.

Belsize Crescent
London NW3

Berthold Goldschmidt

MARKET RESEARCH

Sir – Recently back in Berlin, after 55 years, we had the following experience.

In the 'S' Bahn, on the way to Friedrichstrasse, an unscheduled entertainer appeared in the compartment.

He commenced his programme by playing Schubert's *Trout* on the recorder, abominably. Unsurprisingly the reaction to his offering was decidedly cool.

He paused, peered at me more closely, and at once launched into the *Hatikvah* – whereupon I paid.

Mercers Place
London W6

Klaus Heymann

FROM GALICIA TO GRANADA

Sir – Mr Goldenberg's pride in his half-brother's connection with 'kings' is naive beyond belief. The Islam he found irresistible is wholly based on Judaism by its founder who – like Luther – initially had real affection for the Jews until they refused to accept him.

The Arabs in the period concerned were emotionally, if not actually, on Hitler's side. I, the husband of a refugee, will never understand why *AJR Information*, whose front pages in recent issues have been of a standard that could teach the *Jewish Chronicle* a thing or two, should have bothered with Mr Goldenberg's revelations.

Lindsay Drive
Kenton, Middx

H. Needham

MOLLY PICON

Sir – In the June issue SB referred to Molly Picon having played opposite Robert Morley. The play was *Majority of One* and it was delightful. I saw it with my late husband and we enjoyed it enormously. Extraordinarily I have been unable to find anyone who saw it. Perhaps people have forgotten it. For us it is unforgettable.

Best wishes and many thanks for your excellent journal.

Park Lane
Wembley, Middx

Inge Munro

REUNION AFTER 53 YEARS

Sir – In a search notice in an Israeli paper, someone recognised the maiden name of my girlfriend, who emigrated to Palestine in 1938 from Munich. While there recently, two schoolfriends and I went to visit Sclomit Plat at Kibbutz Dovrat; we had a lot to tell each other.

We were also invited to a Tel-Aviv meeting for former citizens of Munich.

After many hours we left and promised to keep in touch.

Roxborough Park
Harrow, Middx

Ilse Rosenduft, née Durst

TAKE A STAND

Sir – I am unrepentant. Would any of your (genuinely) high-minded correspondents who advocate admission to these shores of thousands of semi-destitute immigrants with an entirely different way of life take even one such family into *his* home and guarantee their upkeep? Why do they expect the *indigenous* population to give up their living space and reduce their standard of living?

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Guns and dynamite

It is a little-known fact that the Bren gun gets its name from BRno in Czechoslovakia and ENfield in England. Arms, in other words, have long figured prominently among Czech exports. Under German occupation the country, with its huge Skoda plant and skilled workforce, was an armoury of the Wehrmacht. Incentive payments accompanied Gestapo terror as a means of boosting production. Alternating carrot and stick, Heydrich sedated the Czechs into acquiescence with Nazi overlordship. It was this state of affairs that prompted the Czech government-in-exile, and British Intelligence, to encompass the assassination of Heydrich.

Tanks and guns

Not long after liberation Czechoslovakia passed into the Soviet orbit. The new rulers courted popularity by boosting backward Slovakia in relation to technologically advanced Bohemia and Moravia. Alas, the key element in the industrialisation of the province was the creation of more factories producing tanks and guns.

Since the collapse of Communism Czechs and Slovaks have pulled in opposite directions. Age-old Slovak resentment of 'Prague rule' has been exacerbated by President Havel's idealistic policy of reducing arms exports (with attendant job losses).

Pandora's box

Now the intransigent Slovak leader Vladimir Meciar wants to do for his people what Tadjman has done for the Croats. (Both men, incidentally, share a nationalist-Communist background.) However, outright Slovak secession will open a veritable Pandora's box of problems. A truncated Czech state would be even less capable of resisting German economic dominance than the present one. The sizeable Hungarian minority in Slovakia, fearful for their future, could solicit help from Budapest in what might turn into a bloody showdown with Meciar's triumphalist followers.

For us the primary concern are the newly endangered Jews of Slovakia. Just as Tadjman's Croatia traces its descent – however shamefacedly – from Pavelich's Ustashe state, so Meciar's sovereign Slovakia would be heir to the regime set up in 1939 by Monsignor Tiso and his genocidal Hlinka Guards. The denunciation of Havel as a Jew by part of a hostile crowd in Bratislava recently may be a chilling foretaste of things to come.

□ R.G.

Pirate Jenny's sad end

A recent German radio play dealt with a young boy brought up in a Soviet children's home after the arrest of his parents. This everyday story of life under Stalin had some extraordinary aspects. For one the boy's parents, an engineer and an actress, were German anti-Nazis who had gone to Russia as political sympathisers. For another their arrest as Trotskyites followed a denunciation by fellow emigré Eduard von Wangenheim, theatre director and hardline Communist.

For some time the mother was incarcerated alongside Margarete Buber-Neumann, another alleged Trotskyite, who, handed back by the KGB to the Gestapo, miraculously survived Ravensbrück. An even more famous acquaintance from the mother's earlier incarnation, Bertholt Brecht, made cautious, but foredoomed efforts to intervene on her behalf.

Frantic efforts

She in turn made frantic efforts from inside the *gulag* to establish her little son's whereabouts. In this she succeeded after a fashion; one of her letters actually reached the children's home whose Party-appointed director, however, failed to pass it on.

In 1975 the long-orphaned son, now middle-aged, received permission to leave the Soviet Union for West Germany. There he began to research his parents' story and eventually turned it into a radio play.

What gave the broadcast additional resonance was a recording made in 1930. It was taken from the Threepenny Opera, the greatest stage hit of interwar Germany, in which the mother – Carola Neher – had played Pirate Jenny. For her, alas, no 'ship with eight sails and fifty cannon' ever dropped anchor outside the *gulag*.

□ Richard Grunberger

Hereditary endowment

Around the turn of the century Hungary's hesitant move into the modern world was illustrated by the passage of two laws: one established civil marriage, the second granted civic equality to Jews. The man who drafted both was the lawyer-deputy Nadas, who told parliament 'If anyone objects to the fact that Jews also live in this country, let him please emigrate'.

Secret printing press

His daughter subsequently showed similar courage by contracting the first ever purely civil marriage in Europe. Avoidance of the synagogue became a tradition in the (fully Jewish) Nadas family. An atheistic grandson of the aforementioned legislator met his similarly Jewish-descended Jewish wife in the interwar Communist underground. During the Second World War he had himself bricked up in a Budapest cellar, where he operated a secret printing press turning out forged identity papers alongside Communist leaflets.

After the war he and his wife should have had brilliant careers in Soviet Hungary. The opposite happened. The wife, a pioneering feminist, fell out with the regime over its anti-abortion law. Soon after, she died of natural causes. Then, in the aftermath of the Hungarian Uprising the husband killed himself out of a mixture of personal grief and political disillusionment.

At liberty to hate

They left behind a son who, born in 1942, had survived the Nazi Occupation with a baptismal certificate. Still a toddler after the Communist take-over, little Peter was kept in deliberate ignorance of his Jewish background by his parents. The makebelief suddenly evaporated when he was eight. Stung by Peter's remark that he hated Jews his mother told him to look in the mirror. 'Take a good look. There you have a Jew you are fully at liberty to hate!'

This experience, and others endured over the last 40 years, have provided Peter Nadas with the raw material – and given him the sensitivity – that made him a writer. His novel *The Book of Memory*, published in Hungary in 1985 subsequently achieved large sales in Germany, and was recently awarded the Austrian State Prize for Literature. Like his 'co-religionist' Georgy Konrad, President of International Pen, Peter Nadas seems set to play a key role in modern Hungarian letters. □

OPEN DAYS IN THE HOMES

Balint House
Sunday 2 August
3.00 p.m.

Entrance £2 (Children £1)

Heinrich Stahl House
Sunday 30 August
3.00 p.m.

Entrance £2 (Children £1)

All entrance prices include refreshments

The AJR at Work

Upcoming concert



An enjoyable afternoon in good company. The Annual AJR Charity Concert will be taking place on November 8.



(Pictures of 1991 concert goers: Newman.)

As the 1992 AJR Charity Concert approaches we urge as many members as possible to offer their support simply by coming along and enjoying the music, as well as meeting up with their friends, old and new, at what has become over the years the most popular event on the Association's yearly calendar.

As has been mentioned in previous issues, the revenue from the concerts has been falling off in recent years. In order to continue staging them a great deal of help is needed. When you are filling in your ticket application forms this year (see the enclosed leaflet) think about buying a ticket for a friend or relative, even if they aren't members, who may enjoy a day out at the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Impressive programme

This year's artists, John and Katheryn Lenehan will be performing works by Dvorak, Debussy, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Rachmaninov and Ravel. In addition to this impressive programme a new work, especially commissioned for the AJR from Barrington Pheloung, will be performed.

Please remember that on this occasion you will be supporting your organisation, and making a valuable charitable contribution, merely by spending an enjoyable afternoon in good company.

Disabled visitors should pay special attention to the blue insert included with this issue of *AJR Information*.

We look forward to seeing all of you on Sunday 8 November. □

Breath of fresh air

The extended hours at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre have now become a popular routine. Throughout the summer the garden has been full of life as many of the activities usually confined to quarters, from bridge to bingo, have edged into the sunshine.

The enthusiasm with which members have taken to the new schedules gives us great satisfaction and we are pleased that the AJR Club have been such regular

attenders. In recognition of the Club's long tradition the Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday afternoon sessions at the Day Centre will now be designated AJR Club. Of course, all AJR members will be welcome to attend and AJR staff will be responsible for the administration and organisation.

As facilities at 15 Cleve Road expand and improve they are becoming better known throughout the community. As a result a number of requests have been received from outside organisations wishing to hire the hall for ad hoc functions. These will be permitted on occasion, as long as they do not interfere with regular activities in any way and comply with the conditions of hire (for further details contact Lydia Lassman: 071-483 2536).

In the meantime the centre will continue to provide high quality catering (and the takeaway meals service, which will, hopefully, soon be expanded to include a meals-on-wheels service) and all the other services which visitors have come to expect. We look forward to welcoming old friends, and many new ones, to take part in the varied menu of activities on offer. □

AJR TAKEAWAY MEALS SERVICE

Members can now take advantage of the catering facilities offered at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre, in the comfort of their own homes.

Meals consist of three courses: soup, main dish (a choice of fish or meat), and dessert. The cost is only £1.50 per meal.

Clients who do not attend the Day Centre can collect meals at 15 Cleve Road between 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Monday to Thursday. All dishes are deep-frozen, ready to be re-heated in a conventional or microwave oven.

For further details please contact SYLVIA MATUS 071-328 0208

AJR INFORMATION is available on tape

Please contact Mrs Irene White 081-203 2733 before 9 a.m. or after 6 p.m.

Volunteers' meetings

Recently some of the AJR volunteers who carry out domiciliary visits came together at Hannah Karminski House. Mary Copsey, Head of Care at the Otto Schiff Housing Association (OSHA), spoke to us about caring for people in the residential homes for refugees. She pointed out that because people live longer these days the average age of entry to the homes now is 85. People of that age find it more difficult to adjust to new circumstances and often require more nursing care and a higher nursing ratio.

All this means that a well-motivated and trained staff is necessary. Nursing and psychological (or psychiatric) training is needed (many people going into Osmond House have Alzheimer's Disease), as are greater emphasis on mental stimulation, a structured day and an overall aim of preserving the dignity of each resident. Miss Copsey pointed out that OSHA is fortunate in having nurses, social workers, physiotherapists and occupational therapists on the staff. Members of staff are taught to respect the Jewish background of the residents and how to celebrate Shabbat and the

festivals. There are 200 members of staff in all.

In answer to a question about the numbers of residents we were told that Leo Baeck House holds 44 of the fittest, Heinrich Stahl 55, Balint House 27 and Osmond House 52 of the most frail. The Charles Jordan Wing obtained nursing home status for 17 last year and is open to residents from any of the homes who have reached the stage when they need a high standard of nursing care. Otto Schiff House is being adapted as sheltered accommodation for 25 people and Eleanor Rathbone House has 54 flats. On behalf of the Leo Baeck Housing Association, OSHA also administers Clara Nehab House, a small, cosy house with 25 rooms. The modern trend is for small homes, or homes which can be operated in small groups, like the recently opened Balint House, so that people can settle in more easily. Clara Nehab House also has two bungalows used as sheltered accommodation.

Our speaker emphasized that House Committees and voluntary visitors bring different interests and the outside world into the homes so that residents feel part of the community. □ L.H.

Volunteers' in action

One of our voluntary visitors learned about AJR through visiting a friend who is a resident at Leo Baeck House. She is now an 'official' volunteer visiting a member still living in her own home, and her family has become the family of our member. Holidays have been shared, outings enjoyed and the quality of at least one life improved. Not content with this, our volunteer conducts the Day Centre choir. It was sad that Jack Harris moved and had to give up the choir but Angela has picked up the baton. She leads the choir at Cleve Road on Mondays with the musical help of Gerard Tichauer, and will take them to their next concert on Sunday, 16 August.

Aid and support

Devotion comes in many shapes and forms. Another volunteer has kept in regular contact with one man since 1986, visiting him in hospital when necessary, collecting his pension and giving him aid and support. In their spare time the same volunteer and his wife visit residents in Heinrich Stahl House. □ L.H.

PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL
Tel. 071 328 0208

Open 9.30 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday to Thursday. 2 p.m.-7 p.m. Sundays.

Morning Activities - Bridge, kalookie, scrabble, chess, etc., keep fit, discussion group, choir (Mondays), art class (Tuesdays and Thursdays).

Afternoon entertainment -

| | |
|-------------|---|
| AUGUST | |
| Sunday 2 | The World of the Musical Stage - Valerie Hewitt and Anne Berryman (Piano) |
| Monday 3 | Take a Quick-Step Back in Time with Geoffrey Strum and Johnny Walton |
| Tuesday 4 | The Stanley and Bertha Lishak Duo |
| Wednesday 5 | Songs and Arias - John Freeman and Helen Blake |
| Thursday 6 | Fiddlers Two - Gillian Cohen and Marina Solarek |
| Sunday 9 | Great Musicians of the Past - Presented by Yacov Paul |
| Monday 10 | Orient Express - Fred Rosner and Rosa Butwick (Piano) |

AUGUST

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Tuesday 11 | Four Hands on the Piano - Marion Grant and Lorely Teppich with Miriam (Violin) |
| Wednesday 12 | Me - My Music & You - Linda Roth and Norman Sydee (Piano) |
| Thursday 13 | Love Unspoken - Favourite Arias and Duets - Lianne-Marie Skrinari and Sean Sweeney with Kevin Bashford (Piano) |
| Sunday 16 | The AJR SINGERS - Conducted by Angela Arratoon with Gerard Tichauer (Piano) |
| Monday 17 | DUO KINOR Entertain with a Pot-Pourri of Music - Madeline Whitelaw (Piano) and David Richmond (Violin) |
| Tuesday 18 | Sheila Kominsky Entertains on Piano and Piano Accordion |
| Wednesday 19 | Harmony and Humour - Tessa Newman and Isabel Barry |
| Thursday 20 | Talk and Demonstration on Reflexology - Marie-Ange Gonzalez |
| Sunday 23 | How to be an Author - Talk by Irene White |

AUGUST

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Monday 24 | Jack Harris and Happy Branston Serenade You |
| Tuesday 25 | An Hour in Summer with Sally Popperwell (Piano) and Helen Pitstow (Violin) |
| Wednesday 26 | The Singing Guitarist - Max Witriol |
| Thursday 27 | Songs from Many Lands - Lola Rand accompanied by Sylvia Cohen (Piano) |
| Sunday 30 | Solo Piano Recital of Light Classical and Other Music - Debbie O'Brien |
| Monday 31 | CLOSED |

SEPTEMBER

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Tuesday 1 | Songs with Memories - Rita Davis (Mezzo) accompanied by Jack Davis (Piano) |
| Wednesday 2 | Eddy Simmons Sings and Entertains with Piano Accompaniment |
| Thursday 3 | Take a Quick-Step Back in Time with Geoffrey Strum and Johnny Walton (Piano) |
| Sunday 6 | 'Plain and Pearl' Entertain - Maggie Stables and Larry Barnes |

FAMILY EVENTS

Deaths

Anderson Kurt Anderson, beloved husband of Lilo, passed away suddenly on June 18 after an unexpected short illness. He would have been 90 this August.

Sinclair Liesl Sinclair, born Elisabeth Woltär in Aussig/Elbe, died in London on 25 June 1992. Missed by Suzanne (her sister), Paul (her son) and Eva, Annette (her daughter) and Colin, Frances and Karen, as well as all her other relatives and many friends. *May she be remembered for a blessing.*

Companion/Carers

Visitor required NW11 area to take sociable old lady for short walks, shopping and for conversation. 2 to

3 hours once, or preferably twice a week. Own car useful, but certainly not essential. Fee by arrangement. Please call David Brooke: 081-340 2421.

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Ladies alteration work. For quick, accurate, reliable service phone: 081-455 0168. (German spoken)

Does anyone have a music stand which they could donate to the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre? If so, please phone Hannah Goldsmith: 081-958 5080.

**WHO IS WHO
IN THE AJR OFFICE**

- Administrator
Lydia Lassman
- Editor, *AJR Information*
Richard Grunberger
- Publications and PR Manager
Maurice Newman
- Assistant to Administrator
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- Sheltered Accommodation
Katia Gould
- Head of Homes Department
Ruth Finestone
- Head of Social Services
Aggi Alexander
- Day Centre Organiser
Sylvia Matus
- Volunteers Co-ordinator
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Alice Schwab

Art Notes

The 224th Royal Academy Summer Exhibition continues until 16 August, with a tremendous amount to see. A number of our old friends are on show: Jack Goldhill in Gallery IX, Hans Schwarz and Peter Coker in the Central Hall, Milein Cosman in the Large South Room, alongside Agatha Sorel, Simon Brett, Lotte Dorner, Richard Baer and Judy Bermant. Bernard Cohen and Sandra Blow are in Gallery III, as are Leonard Rosoman and Ben Levene.

Manet; the Execution of Maximilian is an ambitious exhibition at the National Gallery (until 27 September). It centres on three large paintings by Manet of the execution in 1867 of the Austrian Archduke Maximilian who had been installed as Emperor of Mexico by Napoleon III.

The B.P. Portrait Award exhibition is at the National Portrait Gallery (until 6 September). The winner of the £10,000 first prize was Lucy Willis, recently artist-in-residence at Shepton Mallet Prison, with her picture *Her Majesty's Pleasure*.

Bridget Riley is one of Britain's foremost painters; an exhibition of 25 of her recent works will be at the Hayward Gallery (17 September–6 December). At the same time the Hayward will be showing *The Art of Ancient Mexico*, a major exhibition of pre-Columbian sculpture and pottery.

John Heartfield (Helmut Franz Josef



Her Majesty's Pleasure by Lucy Willis.

National Portrait Gallery.

Herzfeld) became one of this century's pioneers of photomontage. Berlin-born he was a member of the KPD, changed his name as a political protest and fled to Prague in 1933. In England since 1938, he returned to Germany in 1950 to work with his brother Wieland Herzfeld in the Communist Malik Verlag. Some of this work is being shown at the Barbican Art Gallery (13 August–11 October), together with *The Cutting Edge*, an exhibition about how art and caricature in Britain reflects social and political comment.

Turner and Byron at the Tate Gallery (until 13 September), an exhibition exploring Turner's relationship with poetry, comprises about 70 works from the Gallery's own collection supplemented by important

loans from public and private collectors. Also at the Tate (until 6 September) is a major exhibition of the work of Richard Hamilton, and there is a further exhibition of the work of the German artist Georg Baselitz (until 1 November).

On a fine summer's day what could be better than a boat trip down the Thames to see *Pirates: Fact and Fiction* at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (until 5 September).

From 10 August to 27 December the Tate Gallery will be showing *The Painted Nude; From Etty to Freud*. Twenty four works are being shown, ranging in date from 1830 to 1989, by William Etty, Lord Leighton, Gwen John, Vanessa Bell, Mark Gertler, David Bomberg and Lucian Freud. □

SB's Column

Life in Leipzig, a city once famous for books and furs, has become drab and dreary. Though the fur trade has shrunk, thanks to the agitation of animal liberationists, the city still holds an annual *Messe* which during the DDR years centralised the output of pelts from Poland, Russia and Czechoslovakia. Book publishers have seen the number of firms in the 'graphic quarter' of the city dwindling; Kiepenheuer, whose authors included Heinrich Mann, Feuchtwanger and Brecht, announced a turnover of 1–2 Million DM in 1991 (compared to up to 15 Million before privatisation). Two thirds of Leipzig's publishing houses are again in private hands, but many of them are mainly distributors, and book production figures are low. Against that hotels are full, restaurants

well-frequented and the opera house, still an emblem of beautiful Augustusplatz, presents the whole classical and modern repertoire.

Two works by Neil Simon are announced for Vienna's Josefstadt: the play *Lost in Yonkers*, a story of two boys from a disrupted Jewish family, will be presented in December this year, while *Plaza Suite* (well-known to filmgoers), is planned for next February with Christine Hoerbiger in the lead.

Paris. The Comédie Française, once more back to its roots, ended the 1991/1992 season with a typical French classical repertoire including *Malade Imaginaire* (Molière), *Marriage of Figaro* (Beaumarchais) and *Caligula* by Camus.

Birthday. As successor to Furtwaengler, Sergiu Celibidache became conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra around 1950; according to the critics the orchestra

would have developed in a different direction if he had not, in turn, handed over the reins to Karajan in 1952. Rumanian-born, modest and extremely conscientious, yet eloquent and vivacious, this celebrated musician was eighty in June.

Obituary. Margarete Wallmann, director of operas and choreographer, has died in Monaco at the age 88. She was one of the first women to enter the field of opera production before the age of female emancipation. She spent the years of emigration in Hollywood and directed films, crowning her career by directing Cherubini's *Medea*, starring Maria Callas. □

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE

A HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING LANDS

Part 2: The Period of the Crusades. (I)

Economic Motivation for Persecution

Hostility towards the Jews had begun before the Crusades roused the religious passions which led to such savage persecutions from the end of the 11th century onwards. The organisation of medieval society drove the Jews into a particular economic niche in which their contribution was initially valued, but which in due course provoked resentments.

The economic basis of medieval society was land-owning; and as Europe settled down after the Dark Ages, land-owning became increasingly tightly organised in feudal structures, bound together by religious oaths which the Jews were unable to take. As a result, even when they were not actually forbidden to buy land (which they often were), they were excluded from a place in the feudal system. If they did by chance hold land, their own religious laws prohibited them from owning Jewish serfs or slaves; and they were prohibited by Christian laws from owning Christian serfs. They could therefore never have large land-holdings, since they could call only on the labour of their own families. In any case, land-holdings would be giving hostages to fortune once persecution or expulsions could be expected: in 1200 the first known expulsion of Jews took place, from Mainz. An expelled person could not take his land with him; whereas money made from trade or money-lending was portable; and so were many skills – from the knowledge of medicine to that of artisanal crafts, though Jews were not always able to practice these. Many crafts were forbidden to them by law and, like land-holding, were becoming organised in oath-bound guilds which, in Northern Europe, controlled practically all artisanal activities.

The Hanseatic League

All this naturally strengthened the tendency of Jews to gravitate towards trade, an area in which they had historically excelled anyway, and in which, in the very early medieval period, they had relatively few rivals. But as society settled down after the turbulence of the Dark Ages, merchant cities slowly developed. The rising Christian trading class saw the Jews as rivals. In Germany many of the merchant cities formed the alliance of the Hanseatic League which closed its ports to Jewish traders. The League developed its own

expertise in international trade, taking over the Jews' role. Eventually they were driven into petty local trade and peddling.

Hansards, Lombards, Fuggers

If successful in local trade, they could accumulate enough money to engage in the one promising activity that was still open to them: that of money-lending. The Catholic Church had legislated against usury at the Third Lateran Council in 1179; therefore, theoretically, no Christian could engage in money-lending. The Talmud had also forbidden usury – but neither Jew nor Christian adhered to these prohibitions. In post-Talmudic times the rabbis had permitted usury 'if a livelihood cannot be earned in another manner', as was very often the case. And wealthy Christians could get round the prohibition by distinguishing between *usury* (defined as the reward for running risks) and *interest* (defined as compensation – 'quod interest' – for the difference between wealth before and after a loan). Great Christian banking houses arose who were prepared to lend money on a large, even international, scale. The 'Lombards' (great Italian banking houses) and the Fuggers of Augsburg developed skills in an area which the Jews had previously dominated. Large-scale Jewish money-lenders were relatively rare, although they did exist: all classes, from rulers downwards, borrowed money from Jews, who at times financed even church building and the equipping of the armies that set out on the Crusades!

But it was the small farmer, in years when the harvest failed – or between gathering crops – who most frequently had recourse to the small Jewish money-lender. The risks of the debt being defaulted on were very high, not least because of the ever-present danger that a ruler, seeking to stave off revolts during periods of hardship or capitalising on the religious passions aroused by the Crusades, might simply cancel debts owed to Jews. The higher the risks, of course, the higher the interest that was exacted; and in Northern Europe interest rates were sometimes as high as 43 per cent.

Instruments of princely extortion

Even when the rulers – who in the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation ranged from princes and dukes through

bishops to governing bodies of Free Cities – did not cancel their own debts or those of their subjects, they benefitted by laying heavy taxes on Jewish money-lenders: in tolerant years something like 20 per cent, at other times often very much more. When the princes themselves were not in debt, they profited from a high rate of interest; there were actually instances of rulers prescribing the rates to be demanded.

Property of the Emperor

They could be totally arbitrary in how they treated the Jews, all of whom were legally their property. Between 1146 and 1356 the Emperor successfully claimed that the Jews were his property and not that of the princes or cities. This period saw the heaviest expulsions of Jews, for not only did the Emperor's claim mean that the lesser rulers could derive no profit from the Jews, but it also gave the Emperor the opportunity to interfere in their affairs if they tried to exploit the Jews for their own benefit. In 1356 under the Golden Bull the ownership of Jews reverted from the Emperor to the cities and princes, who now found it worth while to readmit the geese that laid the golden eggs. In law, the wealth of a Jew and the debts owed to him escheated to the Crown on his death; this provision was sometimes enforced. In return for such exactions, the princes agreed to protect the Jews under their rule against attacks by the populace; but such agreements expired with each prince and had to be renewed – for a price – with his successor. In 1463 a Margrave of Brandenburg declared that every new German king 'may, according to usage, either burn all the Jews or show them his mercy, and, to save their lives, take a third of their property'.

The Infidel at home

The princes therefore did not suffer unduly from being in debt to Jews: they could always free themselves from the burden if it proved too onerous. It was far otherwise with the small farmer or burgher who was driven to borrow money at such high rates. Whenever there were riots against Jews, the mobs always sought to find and burn evidence of indebtedness. And it can be imagined how a soldier, setting forth to fight the Infidel in the Holy Land, would feel about leaving behind him his family burdened by a heavy debt to the Infidel at home: no wonder he would like to extinguish the debt together with the creditor. The Crusades therefore fused religious and economic passions in a terrible incitement to massacre.

To be continued.

□ Ralph Blumenau

Assimilation – public enemy number one

They are sometimes called the 'lost generation', they being the 20–35 year olds, many of whom are opting out and quietly disappearing from Jewish life.

For all the communal breast-beating over assimilation – cast as Anglo-Jewry's enemy no. 1 – no one knows the true numbers involved. What statistics there are suggest disturbingly large losses but they are not detailed enough to give an accurate picture.

For instance, in the early 1950s, British Jewry – then at its numerical peak – was put at around 430,000 (reckoned by some demographers an over-estimate). According to the latest report by the Board of Deputies, we now number below 300,000 – a drop of almost a third in 40 years.

Even more disconcerting are the synagogue marriage statistics. Of those born in the '60s, only a third appear to be reaching the *chupah* in this country. It is impossible to say what becomes of the rest, since research into these 'missing' thousands has yet to be done.

Many marry out

Some, presumably, emigrate, some marry other Jews in a civil ceremony, some cohabit with Jewish partners and some remain single. Many marry out – which act needn't imply a wish to dissociate from the community; work done by the Sternberg Centre demonstrates that many of the intermarried want to retain their Jewish links. But a great many do slide out of Jewish society for good.

In short, as one leading Jewish social scientist said, we don't know what's happening to 2,500 young Jews every year.

Despite the glaring gaps in our knowledge, we can guess at the causes of attrition. Not least is the impact of secularisation. As Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks recently pointed out, most of the young are the great-grandchildren of those who came in the great waves of immigration from East Europe. The third generation may have practised Judaism out of habit, sustained by memories of grandparents steeped in *stetl* Yiddishkeit.

But for this present fourth generation, there is no such nostalgic pull. For many of them, a few tepidly celebrated customs at home, the occasional trip to synagogue and reluctant Sundays in cheder when they were children are insufficient to keep their Jewish allegiance in adulthood; so they cut and

run, leaving behind their experience of Judaism as little more than a ragbag of primitive folklore.

The synagogue, once universally regarded as the central communal institution, no longer functions as such for everyone. In bygone days even straying young Jews may have found their way back by their mid-20s as they settled down, got married and had children and thus naturally joined the local *shul*. But since large numbers don't even think of marrying till their 30s, there is more time for them to drift out of the synagogue orbit. Other diaspora Jewries have purpose-built community centres which may act as an alternative focus to the synagogue – British Jewry has none.

Decline of secular movements

The decline of secular Jewish movements like socialist Zionism or Bundism has closed off options for the non-religious. Though there are secular Jews aplenty and Jewish organisations providing secular activities, no new movements have arisen which, in place of religion, might inspire deep-seated commitment and give inner coherence to people's lives.

There are numerous young people who call themselves 'ethnic' or 'cultural' Jews, but whose Jewishness goes little beyond a vague, sentimental attachment. Ideologically, they are of no fixed abode; it is hardly surprising that many fall by the wayside.

Too busy to worry

Other factors such as 'careerism' also contribute. Material success, status and professional achievement are highly prized by British Jews, but at the cost of parents placing secular above Jewish education. Many young Jews are simply too busy making their way to worry about Jewish involvement.

And for the intellectually active, the image of leading Anglo-Jewish institutions – staid, conformist, intolerant of dissent

and resistant to new ideas – will have done nothing to arouse their interest.

Role of women

Questions over the role of women, defence policy (against antisemitism), Israel's actions in Lebanon and the Territories, intermarriage etc, arose in the 1980s to challenge the received wisdom. But few organisations were willing to address them. (To give one example: some years ago the Board of Deputies decided against a debate of the implications of the marriage statistics because the subject was deemed too controversial. It was discussed a few months ago, sign of greater openness within the establishment.)

If the demographic data offers little comfort, there are nevertheless a few bright lights in the gloom. Social conditions today are more favourable to some kind of Jewish recovery. Whereas previously the desire to fit in with English society might have led many to slough off their Jewish affinities, now the pluralism of a multicultural society encourages young Jews to take pride in their ethnicity.

New Moon

Optimists point to a new assertiveness among young Jewry: the formation of a national network for the 20–35s, Fujs (Friends of the Union of Jewish Students), the launch of a monthly arts magazine, *New Moon*, and a growing number of Jewish cultural events – music, film, comedy – attract those otherwise distanced from Jewish activities.

For their part, community leaders place their faith in education, especially the new Jewish day schools into which tens of millions of pounds are being poured. It will take two decades or so to gauge the effect of this expansion. But while good education can produce more committed Jews, bad education can achieve the reverse. How many past pupils have cited their Jewish schooldays as a reason for exiting Judaism altogether? Short of a great religious resurgence sweeping the West, thousands of young Jews will still remain detached from the synagogues that have formed the cornerstone of Anglo-Jewish life. Other organisations will have to try to reach them.

In the short-term, the sensible policy is to commission badly needed research. For until we know what in Judaism and Jewish society attracts, repels, excites or dismays the young, we will never be in a position to devise an effective strategy against assimilation.

□ Simon Rucker

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ALL LEGAL WORK UNDERTAKEN

Cookery Corner

No. 5 STIR-FRIED CHICKEN

Chicken and vegetables fried in soy sauce and tomato puree.

Ingredients (serves 2-3):

2 chicken breast fillets, skinned
2 cloves garlic
1 small onion
 $\frac{1}{2}$ red pepper
 $\frac{1}{2}$ green pepper
6 oz white cabbage
3 oz mushrooms
6 oz bamboo shoots (available in Sainsbury's)
Soy sauce
Tomato puree
Vinegar (red or white)
Mixed herbs
Grain mustard

Method:

Slice the chicken into thin strips. Place them on a side plate and cover with the crushed garlic. Sprinkle with mixed herbs (fresh or dried). Cover with soy sauce and dash of vinegar. Leave to soak whilst slicing vegetables.

When vegetables are prepared heat one tablespoon virgin olive oil in a large frying pan (or wok, if available). When the oil is hot place the chicken and all juice (on the side plate) in and stir gently until the chicken is almost cooked through. Add the sliced peppers and continue stirring. Add a generous tablespoon of tomato puree and a teaspoon of grain mustard. Stir until a paste forms, then add the onion and cabbage (thinly sliced). Continue stirring until cabbage softens. Add mushrooms and extra soy sauce if the paste needs thinning. Add the bamboo shoots and fold them in. Cover and simmer for 1-2 minutes. Serve on a bed of rice.

The adventurous can attempt to eat this with chopsticks.

□ M.N.

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MECIAR

A Commie who swung to the right,
Foe both to Prague and gipsy tinkers,
Born of the Slovak soil, he might
Well be a son of Father Hlinka's

40 Years Ago this Month

LEGACY TO AJR

A legacy has been bequeathed to the AJR by Mr Simon Rubinstein, who died in London some time ago. Mr Rubinstein came from Prague, where he was a fur merchant. His wife and his little son perished in Europe. It was obviously in commemoration of his deceased child that in his will Mr Rubinstein expressed the wish that the legacy should be used for the relief of refugee children.

The principles according to which the Social Services Department of the AJR is to administer the legacy will be laid down by the Executive shortly.

The Executive of the AJR was deeply moved by the generous act of the deceased Mr Rubinstein, who, having left no children of his own, decided to lend his help to children of the Community whose fate he had to share. The Executive will try its best to use the fund in the spirit in which it was put at its disposal. The memory of Mr Simon Rubinstein will be kept alive by his noble deed.

AJR Information August 1952.

Search Notices

Mrs M. Arnold, last known address 7 Cumberland Ave, Grimsby (business address: 58-60 Lumley Road, Skegness) or her daughter Anita, married to Brian Segal, please contact old friend Chava (Eva) Mayer, née Spier, 34739 Haifa, Romema Hazalafimstr. 4. Israel.

Alice Neumann (Lissy Newman), fashion designer, born 1901 in Berlin and emigrated to England 1936. Her niece Tanja, born 26.2.1939, daughter of James Neumann and Margot, née Citron, Düsseldorfstrasse 6, Berlin 15, would like to hear from any surviving relatives.

Ernö Weisz, born 15 November 1925 in Apagy, last known address (August 1945) Magdolna U. 43 Budapest and **Joszef Kahan**, born 28 December in Tiszabercel. Both of these men gave detailed information about the massacre in Rohone (Rechnitz). They also worked as forced labourers in the camps of Köszeg, Mauthausen and Gunskirchen. An investigation is being conducted into events at Rechnitz. Information about Mr Weisz or Mr Kahan should be sent to Dr Avshalom Hodik, Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Amtsdirektion, Seitenstettengasse 4, A-1010 Vienna or Eduard Erno, Extrafilm, Grosse Neugasse 44-24, A-1040 Vienna.

Barbara Lubin, at Daphne Vernon between 1958-61, please get in touch with Philippa Thomas, née Wood, 22 New Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1YY, England.

Karl Phillip Lewinsohn, born 1922/3. Last known address in Germany: Holsteiner Ufer 17, Berlin 21. Please contact: Hans Jaffe, Kurvenstr. 27, 2000 Hamburg 70.

Rudolf Hahn, born Goettingen, 1919, worked in Hamburg until late 1938/early '39 and migrated to UK - understood to have served in British Army 1939/45. Parents had shoe factory in Goettingen. Please contact Hans Guenter Jensen (formerly Jeruchem) c/o P.O. Box 915, Crow's Nest, Sydney, 2065, Australia. Phone: (612) 438 5925. Fax: (612) 437 5804.

Would **Ken (Kurt) Berger, Rosi Ilberg or Werner Martin Ilberg** (Who were last heard of in Manchester) please contact Jürgen Kumléhn, Am Kaiserwald 7, W-3305 Sickte, Germany.

Hans Alfred Mathias, born in Hofgeismar (Hesse) to Siegfried and Fränze Mathias (Nee Elsbach). Came to UK on a kindertransport in the late 1930's. Last known address: 201 Netheroyd Hill, Cowcliffe, Huddersfield. Please contact Pfarrer Michael Dorhs who is conducting work on behalf of the Stadtmuseum Hofgeismar, Mainzer Gasse 28, D-3550 Marburg/Lahn, Germany. Phone: (06421) 26387.

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Marlene: The world is poorer for her passing

Film was(is) the first of the mass media catering to a worldwide audience. Its stars – Garbo, Chaplin, Monroe, Brando – truly became legends in their own lifetime.

Marlene Dietrich was the only German to belong to that select company. She rose to prominence in 1920s Berlin which, with its cabarets, UFA studios at Babelsberg, and Reinhardt's Grosse Schauspielhaus, bade fair to become Europe's metropolis of the arts. Alas, Berlin's sophistication and cosmopolitanism was anathema to the *Spiessbürgertum* that infested the German provinces. The capital's febrile vitality prompted accusations of asphalt-bred decadence and rootlessness. The Nazi accession of power denoted the triumph of militant provincialism over receptiveness to the new and different, as much as the victory of dictatorship over democracy.

Goebbels' banning of *The Blue Angel* in 1933 followed as a matter of course. Not only was the film 'decadent', but it came from the pen of the peerless critic of Wilhelminian mores, Heinrich Mann.

For the by now Hollywood-based Marlene Dietrich, who had matured in the Berlin *bohème* in the company of Jews, leftists and homosexuals – three groups

stigmatised by the Nazis – the question of returning to Germany hardly arose. She was reinforced in this attitude by her equally famous non-Jewish emigré colleague, and sometime lover, Erich Maria Remarque, who immortalised her as Joan Madou in the refugee novel *Arc de Triomphe*.

Of her two co-stars in *Der blaue Engel*, one, Emil Jannings, worked enthusiastically, and the other, Hans Albers, reluctantly, in Goebbels' 'dream factory'. (Albers had previously had a liaison stigmatised as *Rassenschande*, race defilement, by the Nazis.)

During the war Marlene toured diverse theatres of operations, dressed in GI uniform, to entertain American troops. Because of that she faced public obloquy and accusations of treason on postwar visits to Germany. She could have refuted them by stating she had been a U.S. citizen at the time; instead she said that the Nazi murder of children had left her no choice.

This oblique reference to the Holocaust leads on to another aspect of the Dietrich saga: philosemitism. All the afore-mentioned giants of the silver screen had strong Jewish connections. Greta Garbo owed her early stardom to Moritz Stiller, Chaplin thought he was of part-Jewish descent, Marilyn Monroe married Arthur Miller, and Marlon Brando learnt 'Method' acting under Lee Strasberg.

To place the final stone in the mosaic, Dietrich's 'Svengali' Josef von Sternberg –

director of *Der blaue Engel*, *Morocco*, *The Devil is a Woman*, etc – was also Jewish. In addition she was directed by Ernst Lubitsch in *Desire*, Billy Wilder in *A Foreign Affair*, and (half-Jewish) Fritz Lang in *Rancho Notorious*. No less important were her Jewish song-writers, from Friedrich Holländer (*Falling in love again*) to Max Colpet (*Where have all the flowers gone?*) half a century later.

When the mortal remains of the immortal Marlene are laid to rest in Berlin, maybe a faint echo of the golden Twenties will return to the town that lapsed overnight in 1933 from a metropolis of the arts into a huge flag-bedecked, raucous-throated provincial backwater.

□ Richard Grunberger

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Snapshots of France

Boulogne. An unpleasant fishy odour pervades the air near the docks, but the town looks prosperous and go-ahead. It also boasts a historic quarter encircled by walls and ramparts. Though this turns out to be something of a tourist trap, commercialisation has been kept to a discreet minimum. Just as I am about to give silent thanks to the city fathers I notice a street sign: Place de Godefroy de Buillon. I withdraw my thanks. The leading Crusader knight, de Buillon instigated pogroms in the Rhineland and Jerusalem.

* * *

Rouen. A city splendid on account of its river-lapped position at the foot of gently sloping hills, and its Gothic buildings. The most impressive edifice, though, is not an old building but an avant-garde church – with a roof like the ribbed hull of a ship, modern stained glass and an almost austere interior – commemorating St Joan. Having first been burnt as a heretic by the Church the 'Maid' was later canonised; today she is an icon purloined by Le Pen. What a fate!

* * *

The chateaux of the Loire. Playground of Renaissance kings and architects. Leonardo da Vinci lived at Amboise, in a mansion now turned into a museum full of IBM models based on his 'blueprints'. I discover that the massive round towers flanking the chateau accommodated spiral-shaped ramps for the ascent of mounted knights and horse-drawn carts. Chambord has a 'double helix' spiral staircase in its central air shaft, and is topped by a riot of turrets and cupolas that prefigure the dream king Ludwig of Bavaria's castles. Chenonceaux seems to defy the laws of gravity by floating on water. Blois is a petrified stage set echoing with the eerie presence of Mary Stuart, widowed at 16, and the Huguenot-massacring Catherine de Medicis.

* * *

Burgundy. Vineyards as far as the eye can see. Villages with names like Chablis and Pommard that are near-global household words. Burgundians, good local patriots with an eye to the main chance, claim that their wines, sauces and cheeses are the best in the world. (As regards *fromage* they're certainly right.) The charm of the undulating wooded countryside turns a journey along the autoroute into an aesthetic experience. The landscape is dotted with centres of medieval Christianity such as Cîteaux, birth place of the Cistercian Order. At the



The François I staircase at the Chateau de Blois.
Photo: Grunberger.

hilltop cathedral of Vézelay St Bernard of Clairvaux, a sado-masochistic 'pillar of the Church', preached the Second Crusade, thus stealing a march on the Pope. Paradoxically Vézelay was also the last home of the Nobel Prize-winning author Romain Rolland, Pacifist friend of Stefan Zweig's.

* * *

Pacifism had led the elderly Rolland into unthinking support for Communism. His name therefore appears on street signs and façades of local theatres in the Red Belt of industrial suburbs around Paris. Another name from the interwar years commemorated thereabouts is that of Vaillant-Couturier, stage manager of various Congresses

against War and Fascism. (And what a cast Vaillant used to assemble: Gide and Malraux from France, E. M. Forster from England, Pasternak from Russia, and Heinrich Mann and Brecht from the 'Other Germany'!)

If the Other Germany had any particular prewar centre it was certainly Paris. Koestler's autobiography and Feuchtwanger's *Paris Gazette* have documented the political emigration; refugee life as such was most poignantly evoked in Jolanda Földes' *Street of the Fishing Cat*.

Where have all the transients who resided in the *Rue du chat qui pêche* gone? The answer is provided by a sculpture at the entrance of Gare St Lazare depicting a pillar of battered suitcases; the plinth bears no inscription.

* * *

Not far from the station is Montmartre, backdrop to the Byzantine church of Sacré Coeur, and breeding ground of the *bohème*. Montmartre's pioneer bohemians around the turn of the century were Utrillo, Picasso, Chagall and the Jewish-born Catholic mystic and poet Max Jacob. Under Nazi occupation the original Latin place name Mons martyrum (Hill of martyrs) from which Montmartre derived became apposite again: disappointed in the hope that his friend Picasso – who had contact with Wehrmacht officers – might save him, Max Jacob died at Drancy en route to Auschwitz.

* * *

A stroll along the classically ornate grounds of the Palais Royal near the Louvre evokes happier associations. It was here that Colette, who managed to extricate her Jewish husband from the clutches of the Gestapo, had her 'grace-and-favour' apartment.

The Louvre is currently being refurbished and added to by the construction of a glass pyramid. Far from universally approved, the pyramid has been dubbed Mitterrand's folly. So, indeed, have the stunning La Défense arch, central edifice of a veritable city of the future along the continuation of the Place Concorde-Etoile axis and the new Opéra at the Bastille.

London's counterpart to La Défense – Canary Wharf – notoriously has a Jewish provenance in the Reichmann brothers. In France the initiator of a generous building programme focused on the arts is likewise a Jew: Culture Minister Jack Lang. He was recently also made Minister of Education – a promotion that thrilled me more than Malcom Rifkind's to the semi-redundant Ministry of Defence.

□ R.G.

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