A look at everchanging British perceptions of Germany

Fog in the Channel

Way back in 1870 a drastic shift in Britain’s outlook on Europe occurred within a few months. At the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War anti-French sentiment was near-unanimous. Louis Napoleon appeared as yet another French ruler – like Napoleon Bonaparte and Louis XIV – hellbent on disturbing the peace of Europe.

However, by the war’s end the British view of Germany – hitherto perceived as a land of poets and (pace Palmerston) “damn professors” – had irrevocably altered. The German threat was seen as greatly eclipsing that posed by France. The country was no longer typified by Grimm’s fairy tales, but Bismarck’s talk of “blood and iron”. Within a generation Kaiser Wilhelm dubbed England “perfidious Albion” and the British army “contemptibly small”.

Both utterances exemplify the mentality that led to the Great War. In its aftermath British opinion was divided on how to treat the ex-enemy. Conservatives were strongly “anti-Hun”, while the Left sympathised with the problems of the Weimar Republic. By the mid-Thirties the position had become reversed; now the Right pursued appeasement, and the Left were anti-Nazi.

Another split occurred after 1945. While the man in the street gagged over photographs of Belsen and accounts of war crimes, the Establishment gave prosecuting the Cold War priority over persecuting Nazi criminals. Accordingly willing executioners of Hitler’s orders one and all – off their pedestals. In a conditioned reflex worthy of Pavlov’s dogs, the leader of the Afrika Korps Veterans’ Association thereupon called Naumann an unpatriotic scoundrel (Bismarck’s hoary old epithet for Social Democrats).

In the same widely reported speech in which Kulturminister Michael Naumann complained of the British fixation on the Second World War, he also appealed to Germans to knock Rommel, Rundstedt and von Paulus – willing executioners of Hitler’s orders one and all – off their pedestals. In a conditioned reflex worthy of Pavlov’s dogs, the leader of the Afrika Korps Veterans’ Association thereupon called Naumann an unpatriotic scoundrel (Bismarck’s hoary old epithet for Social Democrats).

The resort to Gauleiter expletives on this side of the Channel, and to superannuated smears on the other, is to be equally deplored. Those who bandy such loaded phrases about are stuck in the past and pose a threat to our common future.
Jewbaiters

Six immortals famous for their contributions to the arts were selected for castigation by Richard Grunberger, Editor of AJR Information, in his talk ‘Great Antisemites’, given for Club 43. While their antisemitism was ancillary to their creative activity, it nevertheless informed their attitudes to Jews and Judaism.

It may come as a shock, said Richard Grunberger, to find Voltaire, pioneer of the Enlightenment, among them. Voltaire characterised Jews as usurious, leprous and fanatical. Together with Catholicism, Judaism was guilty of religious dogmatism and irrelevant to the latter half of the 18th century.

Dostoevsky argued that if the Jews were a majority in Russia, they would treat the Christian minority far more vindictively than the latter were treating them. He hated Disraeli for conniving at Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria and for thwarting Russia’s designs on Constantinople. In The Brothers Karamazov he failed to refute the Passover blood libel; in The Possessed he made a Jew one of the satanic characters who plans a notorious assassination.

Wagner regarded Germans as having a ‘special gift’ for creating soul-stirring works of art, talents denied the Jews whose compositions lacked profundity. Similarly, his belief in the purity of German as a non-bastardised language led him to write his own libretti and despise Yiddish. Paradoxically, throughout his career, Wagner was in close professional contact with Jews and often depended on them. Richard Grunberger called him “a monster of selfishness”.

TS Eliot regarded Jews as agents of decay and revealed the depth of his antisemitism in his poems: “The rats are underneath the pile, the Jew is underneath the lot”. Because of his fixation with the Middle Ages, when Jews were excluded from civil society, he saw free-thinking Jews as a danger to the Christian faith. Strindberg was immensely impressed by the Danish-Jewish critic George Brandes, but hated other Jews because they fell immeasurably below his standard.

Ferdinand Celine, a gifted French writer from an antisemitic family, suffered a head wound in World War I. His resulting paranoia led him to believe that Jews controlled most of the world’s centres of power, from the Vatican to the House of Lords! His genocidal Bagatelle for a Massacre was written in 1937. When the German armies retreated they took the collaborator Celine with them; he kept out of sight in Denmark – thereby avoiding the firing squad – before returning to France in the late 1950s.

Though not one of the six can be said to have practised direct violence against Jews, they nevertheless contributed significantly to a climate of opinion which favoured exclusion and allowed their admirers to justify violence and genocide.
Splendour of the grass?

From A (for Afghanistan) to Z (for Zaire) the world is a puzzling place. Afghanistan became a republic in 1973, its moderate leadership was wiped out five years later and the Soviets moved in soon after. Throughout the eighties the West helped militant Muslims fight the Red army. Today the country is free of Russians but subjected to inhumanly harsh Taliban rule.

Discuss which is worse: Five-pointed Star or Crescent?

In 1960 the Belgian Congo became a sovereign state after 80 years of harsh colonial exploitation. Since then Zaire has been racked by endemic tribal conflict, civil war, corruption and impoverishment. Its system of government has been fitfully described as kleptocracy.

Discuss which is worse: European colonialism or African independence?

At the forthcoming Oscar ceremony Elia Kazan, of A Streetcar Named Desire and Splendour In The Grass fame, is to be honoured for his lifetime's achievement in Motion Pictures. This award was passionately denounced by a surviving victim of the McCarthy purge, the screen-writer Abrahm Polonsky. Polonsky appreciates Kazan the artist, but abhors Kazan the man because in 1952 he informed on his colleagues and gave fellow-travellers' names to the authorities. Kazan justified his action by stating that, having been a fellow-traveller himself, he now perceived US Communists as conspirators against their own country, the national interest required that they be identified and rendered harmless.


McCarthyism brought to the surface an undercurrent of hysteria in American public life first glimpsed during the prosecution of the anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti in the 1920s. But was it all only hysteria or did Kazan's self-justification in 1952 have a basis in fact? The English novelist E M Forster once wrote that if he had to choose between betraying his friends or his country he hoped he'd have the courage to do the latter. Kazan manifestly disagreed with Forster and has been shunned by Liberal opinion ever since.

But was he simply a careerist? Is it not possible that he saw US Communists as Soviet agents? After all, that description fitted the atom spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, David Greenglass and Harry Gold. Ever more proof has emerged over the years that foreign Communist parties owed overriding loyalty to the Kremlin. The British Daily Worker, for instance, really did receive 'Moscow gold'.

Concerning Elia Kazan I would suggest that, on the analogy of the questions thrown up by the Afghan and Zairean problems (see above), a rush to judgment should be resisted.

A unique resource

Dr Anthony Grenville, the son of Viennese refugees and a regular contributor to this journal, is the first academic to have undertaken systematic, scholarly research using AJR Information as the basis for a planned social history of the community of Central European Jewish refugees from Hitler who settled in Britain. He is revealing his preliminary conclusions at a special lecture to be given on Sunday 9th May.

AJR Information proved a mine of information about refugee activities, achievements, problems, attitudes and aspirations. Dr Grenville studied the reception received by German-speaking emigrés in Britain, against which by which they became integrated into British society they encountered. He has analysed their attitudes to alternative countries of settlement (Palestine/Israel and the USA) and to their countries of origin – which led them to opt to stay here – as well as their relations with established Anglo-Jewry. He attempts to explain the development of a distinctive 'Continental' culture deriving largely from the German language and culture which, as members in the main of the educated and assimilated Jewish middle class, they preserved in modified form in their adopted homeland.

Dr Grenville's lecture, 'The Formation of a Refugee Community Identity: AJR Information 1946-1950', will take place on Sunday 9th May at 3pm, at the Gustav Tuck Theatre, UCL. The lecture is jointly sponsored by the AJR and the Wiener Library with whom reservations can be made, Tel: 0171 636 7247.

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Piggyback ride on the Bard

**John Madden, SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE.**

On general release

**Shakespeare in Love** rides into tinseltown caparisoned in Oscar nominations. The adulators cite the movie's intermingling of the poetic and the farcical, Tudor decor and 'post-modern' gags (“I had that Christopher Marlowe in my boat last week”), swashbuckling and amorous enchantment.

I beg to differ. Plagiarism could be accounted a form of flattery, but for long stretches Tom Stoppard's screenplay cadges a piggy-back ride on the verbal splendours of *Romeo and Juliet*. At other times it befuddles the cinemagoer with convoluted intrigues spun by competing actor-managers and their conniving backers.

But for all that strolling players are depicted as a disreputable bunch, they undergo a collective catharsis on hearing of Marlowe's death. Alas, I am not a Marlovian. I see him as a murky, dangerous character, the circumstances of whose early death remain shrouded in obscurity. His plays, while lit by intermittent flashes of poetic inspiration are largely blood curdling epics bereft of Shakespeare's humanity or Ben Jonson's humour. In fact, Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* was a sixteenth century predecessor of *Der Stürmer*.

Another playwright with a walk-on role in the film is John Webster, of whom it was said, in a classic phrase, that he was much obsessed with death. John Madden, by contrast is much obsessed with sex. Sex in this film comes in two water-tight compartments. When it involves the quasi-star-crossed lovers it is reverentially treated; otherwise it is played strictly for laughs, with assorted bawds flung rudely out of bed when important - ie theatrical - business needs transacting.

On the other hand there is no denying the quality of the film's decor, costumes and general period feel. The standard of business needs transacting. The standard of...
Second sex in the Third Reich

Alison Owings.

"What was it like for you?" was the question Alison Owings, an American journalist, posed to German women who lived through the Nazi period. She found her subjects, all now elderly, surprisingly eager to talk. They stressed the idealism of the early years under Hitler, who restored national pride and provided work. They described the *Bund deutscher Mädel* as though it was a troop of jolly Brownies. Most had kept to the prescribed role of *Kinder, Kirche, Küche*. One proudly showed the author her medal for producing a large brood of Aryan children. Certainly in remote parts of the country where no Jew lived it would have been possible for a time to warm oneself at this fire without paying too much attention to the smuts that disfigured it – and most of them did just that.

There were, however, a few exceptions who had contacts with Jews. The rest include an unredeemed Nazi whose distortions could have come from the mouth of Goebbels. Another was drafted to a searchlight unit, but is coy about how many aircraft her outfit shot down. Perhaps the most interesting is a former guard at an outpost of Buchenwald. She maintains that she was conscripted for this job and had respect for, and friendly conversations with, the Hungarian Jewesses she was ordered to guard. She omits to mention that the prisoners in her charge were forced to handle dangerous explosives.

A prominent feature of the testimonies is the "we suffered too" syndrome. The women recount air raids, destruction of homes, loss of menfolk on the Eastern front, and rape by the advancing Russian soldiers.

Alison Owings has researched her subject well and is alert to the inconsistencies and rationalisations of her interviewees, for whom she nevertheless feels some compassion. She deduces that repression of shaming memories allowed the women to get on with their lives.

Most of the women failed their Jewish neighbours through ignorance, self-interest and fear. Many of the accounts are defensive and inconsistent, their fleeting expressions of guilt undercut by a repetition of the stereotype that Jews are "different" from ordinary folk and prone to cheating. We must be grateful to Ms Owings for a fascinating glimpse into a scene we couldn’t possibly have shared.

☐ Ronald Channing

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GOMBRICH'S BLOTING PAPER II

Sir - When I started the Thank-You-Britain Fund in 1963, I wrote to many prominent refugees asking for contributions. Prof. Gombrich was the only one to reply that the idea of the Fund was misconceived and that the refugees had already done quite enough to repay their hosts.

If, in Jonathan Miller's unforgettable phrase, you are merely Jewish rather than a full-blooded Jew, then your debt is lightish.

Ashford Victor Ross

KENT

A PERVERTED SYMBOL

Sir - It may be of interest that the swastika was also believed to be a symbol of good luck in our own times as recently as the First World War. The Reichsbund juedischer Frontsoldaten published a book in 1924 by one Felix A Theilhaber entitled Juedische Flieger im Weltkrieg (Jewish Airmen in the World War). It includes a photograph of a German aeroplane with a swastika painted on the side. The pilot was a Jew named Fritz Beckhardt. The author quotes a comment from a book called Voelker, Rassen, Sprachen (Nations, Races, Languages) by Luschans: "...that the modern Germans as successors to the Germanic tribes have an exclusive right to the swastika, is a naı̈ve and childish aberration..." Sadly it did not remain one.

Ashford F Kingsley

KENT

ANTI-HITLER CONSPIRATORS

Sir - In recent correspondence about anti-Hitler conspirators who were turned anti-Nazi by their revulsion against antisemitism, one man seems to have been forgotten, a survivor who tells us in his memoirs that this was his reason for turning against the regime, Colonel Axel von dem Bussche.

He was another officer who failed to kill Hitler, despite an elaborate plan which involved sacrificing his own life. He realised the nature of the regime he was serving when he commanded a regi-

ment on the Eastern front and saw what the Einsatzgruppen were doing to the Jewish population.

Dedington Francis Steiner

Oxon

LOVING SHAKESPEARE

Sir - When recently in Washington I saw the film Shakespeare in Love and much enjoyed it, I had no idea that behind Gwyneth Paltrow stands a Jewish grandparent and so it aroused no musings in me about the bard and the Jews. But I do remember that acons ago, when our older daughter was asked to play Shylock at a school production, my wife objected and the headmistress of the Haberdashers School just did not understand it and tried to convince her that Shakespeare's portrayal was of a poor man to be pitied.

London W5 Ronald Stent

OMISSION

Sir - In her article "Galician genocide", dealing with a recent lecture by Robin O'Neil in the Wiener Library, on the Belzec extermination camp, Sue Monseell most regrettably did not mention the quite outstanding work done by Michael Tregenza, culminating in his massive MS "Belzec, the forgotten Death Camp", which will be published in the near future.

London NW11 Gerald Fleming

WAGNER IN JERUSALEM

Sir - In the January issue Miss Jane Edwards writes about Wagner, and in this context also mentions Liszt and R Strauss. Permit me to clarify a few points:

Liszt's book on Hungary's Gypsies and their Music appeared in a revised edition in November 1881. When the idea of a fresh edition had been proposed to Liszt he was only too happy to leave the proof-reading to his trusted friend Carolyne von Wittgenstein. When the book with the chapter on Jews appeared it created a storm of protest in Budapest.

We now know that Carolyne had in fact rewritten this chapter which was solely her work and contained her opinions and not Liszt's who had never been antisemitic. On the contrary, he numbered among his pupils many Jews whom he taught free of charge, as he always did.

As to Richard Strauss, a new biography makes it quite clear that he, too, was no antisemite. After all he collaborated with Hugo von Hofmannsthal and, after 1933, with Stefan Zweig.

Bexleyheath F Kingsley

Kent

READER BECOMES WRITER

Sir - Having subscribed to AJR Information for many years, I have particularly enjoyed reading the Letters to the Editor. Is it not about time that I sent a letter I thought. After all, it is good for the ego to see one's name in print. Yes, but what shall I write about? I really can't find any interesting topic. Does Frank Bright manage to think of all those things that he writes about?

I know. If I state how much I enjoy the various articles (as well as Letters to the Editor), this is sure to get published under the heading of Bouquet. Perhaps if I mention that I don't always agree with the editorial, that might also appear under the heading Brickbat. I've got it. If I say that I have at least 200 back issues and will read every one of them now that I know. If I state how much I enjoy the various articles (as well as Letters to the Editor), this is sure to get published under the heading of Bouquet. Perhaps if I mention that I don't always agree with the editorial, that might also appear under the heading Brickbat. I've got it. If I say that I have at least 200 back issues and will read every one of them now that I have retired, that surely should earn me a mention. Eat your heart out Frank, I am sure this will be the star letter of the month.

Southend-on-Sea Otto Deutsch

TOO MITTELEUROPEAN

Sir - I find the magazine contents of some interest most of the time, although one could think that the only people involved are of Austro/German origins, as probably 99% of the subject matter relates to people from those countries.

Wythenshawe Jan Podlaski

Manchester

READERSHIP PROFILE

Sir - I enjoy AJR Information – even if I sometimes wish you would remember that many of your readers have been assimilated for generations – my family since the 1850's – but I wouldn't subscribe to AJR Information if I didn't consider myself a Jew.

London NW8 Prof W Elkan
THE ALMOND DOME
Sir – Due undoubtedly to a fit of unconscious anti-gastronomism, you omit to mention (February issue) the possibility that pilgrims will visit Greenwich to pay homage to the “Mandeltorte”.

Alberdare Gardens
Ezra Jurmann
London NW6

THE GURU THAT FAILED
Sir – Reviewing Arthur Koestler’s Thieves in the Night (shortly after it came out) I said that Koestler has succeeded where others had failed to put our youthful Zionist feelings and longings into words and images. In the intervening time I have not changed my mind. I am equally sure that Darkness at Noon weaned a whole politically aware generation away from flirting with Red assimilation. Koestler’s fascinating autobiography Arrow in the Blue represents a unique record of that period in our youth.

Did Koestler chase women and did he rape? I am not sure that, at this stage, I much care. His merits and achievements in bringing clarity and understanding to the political process far outweigh any alleged sexual misdeeds.

Southgate
David Jedwab
London N14

Sir – May I add a dissenting voice to Martin Hasseck’s favourable review of David Cesarani’s biography of Arthur Koestler.

For my taste, this biographer is too dil­ligent in pursuing his own agenda. Totally lacking in empathy, his perspective is much too narrow to encompass his chosen subject.

He does not live up to what the first paragraph of the introduction promises: “One cannot fail to stand in awe of his (Koestler’s) corpus of work, or the intellectual energy and sheer effort that went into it. Yet today he is not as well known as he should be and the time has surely come for a re-evaluation of this remarkable man and his extraordinary career.”

The “re-evaluation” that follows is certainly not calculated to redress Koestler’s eclipse. The style of this demoli­tion exercise is pedestrian. The spirit is mean and the methods employed are downright malicious.

London N1
M Clare

Letters may be edited to reach publication.

THE WIENER LIBRARY
Memorial Plaques
This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Wiener Library in London. As part of our commemoration it has been decided to issue a limited number of 50 memorial plaques for mounting in the Reading Room and Memorial Hall. Users of the Library have often remarked that the existing plaques are among the most moving features of the Wiener Library.

We hope that you will wish to join us in commemorating those who perished in the Holocaust as well as those members of the refugee community who have given so much to Britain. Each plaque will be accompanied by a certificate, one copy of which will be preserved permanently at the Library.

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- a circular plaque (130mm diameter) mounted in a more prominent position at £1,000.

For more information please contact Ben Barkow, Deputy Director, at:

4, Devonshire Street, London W1N 2BH Tel: 0171 636 7247

Future of care for the elderly
Chief Executive of the Otto Schiff Housing Association, Tony Shepherd, explains to AJR Information the potential benefits for anyone who will need nursing and residential care in the future if the recommendations of the Royal Commission’s report on the Long Term Care of the Elderly are implemented.

The main recommendations, namely that personal care should be free at the point of delivery (wherever that care is provided) and that measures should be taken to provide a more client-centred approach with a single point of contact, were warmly welcomed by Tony Shepherd. Should the Commission’s recommendations be adopted, he believes, needs assessment should then be undertaken by social workers and nurses working together to ensure an optimum ‘care package’.

An enormous amount of time and money is currently being wasted in determining whether a client needs health care or social care. Primarily, this is a financial exercise to establish who should pay, rather than an assessment of what would be best for the client.

With an extension of the direct payment scheme to people over 65, clients would have more choice in purchasing their own care. Those living in nursing homes would no longer be denied NHS nursing care which is currently available only to people living in residential care homes.

While welcoming the report, Tony Shepherd recognises that just as today’s funding fails to meet the needs of older people requiring care, the Treasury’s constraints on future public expenditure could mean that the Royal Commission’s recommendations might never be fully implemented.

Tony Shepherd is National Chair of the Royal College of Nursing Independent Sector Forum.

50 YEARS AGO
LORD PAKENHAM’S PRAISE
Since its inception, the AJR advocated the idea that immigrants were not a burden, but an asset to a country.

It is gratifying for Jews from Central Europe that Lord Pakenham, a former Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in charge of German affairs, paid special tribute to the achievements of Central European Jews from whose experiences the country has benefited.

He mentioned in particular the important part played by refugee scientists in the development of atomic energy, radar and penicillin, as well as the fact that the manufacturing skills of refugees and the techniques introduced by them had given employment to a large number of British people.

AJR Information, April 1949
AJR Reports

LUNCHEON CLUB
Revealing writing

G
raphologist Andrea Lyttleton told a very full house of Luncheon Club members that graphology, the study of handwriting to analyse the writer's character, was first practised in Germany.

She came to graphology from a background in calligraphy and counselling, was awarded her advanced graphology diploma in 1993 and now teaches the subject. Her main area of expertise is in recruitment where she provides clients with confidential profiles as an aid to other selection procedures. Used responsibly, Andrea believes, graphology could be of great benefit in today's employment minefield.

Andrea demonstrated a number of writing styles to which she applied her analytical techniques - honesty, shyness and open-mindedness were some of the characteristics she claimed to identify. From samples, members were asked to guess whose handwriting was that of Margaret Thatcher, John Major and Tony Blair, not to mention Sigmund Freud and other well-known people. Audience participation proved very popular and her talk was much enjoyed.

Befrienders needed

Volunteers are needed urgently to befriend AJR members living in Walthamstow, Wembley and in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. If you live in or near any one of these areas, and have a couple of hours to spare once a fortnight, do please consider lending a much valued helping hand to an elderly former refugee.

AJR has a number of disabled members living alone who are rather isolated. Having few or no family members, increasingly with the passage of time they are unable to continue leading independent lives. Befrienders and members enjoy one another's company, stimulate their minds and may make short trips together.

Amanda Clark, AJR's Volunteers Services Co-ordinator, will be pleased to discuss any way that you could be of help. Do call her at Head Office on 0171 431 6161.

A shared cultural heritage

The Association of Children of Jewish Refugees originated in 1965 when Lily Allen's advertisement in AJR Information invited a response from people sharing a common continental background. It produced 20 replies, and within a year from the initial meeting the ACJR was launched with a hundred members, a number which has subsequently been maintained. The ACJR's main events include a second-night Seder, a barbecue, a charity event and AGM, in addition to a monthly programme offering both the light-hearted and more serious. Some activities focus on our shared background - films, plays, talks, discussion groups, etc - while others are gatherings of friends to visit an art exhibition, enjoy a concert or a walk in the country.

It is not uncommon for members to feel that they do not fit easily into a mainstream Anglo-Jewish environment, though the difference - as children of 'foreign' parents who survived discrimination and persecution in Nazi Europe - is difficult to define. Speaking personally, the ACJR provided me with my first Jewish community and a number of close friends.

Nevertheless, ACJR's discussion groups reveal huge differences in attitudes to Germany, mid and east-European culture, and in religious observance and belief. It is to be expected that our parents' histories have been a strong influence on our lives; the ACJR allows us to share thoughts and feelings with others who seem to understand.

For further information please contact Caroline Salinger, ACJR Chairperson, on 0181 579 9906, or Paul Sinclair on 01723 364 842.

East Midlands AJR inauguration

All AJR members within the Nottingham, Leicester, Derby and Lincoln region, and other interested parties, are invited to participate in the inaugural meeting of an East Midlands group which is to be held on Sunday 25th April, from 3pm to 5pm, at Nottingham Progressive Synagogue, Lloyd Street, Sherwood, Nottingham.

Following a warm welcome with a coffee klatsch afternoon tea, the AJR's Outreach Worker, Myrna Glass, will discuss the merits and benefits brought to the members of such a group, of which there are now several in different parts of the country. Everyone will have the opportunity to express their views as to how best to run a local AJR group, the main aim of which is to provide people who share a similar European background with the opportunity to enjoy each other's company in an informal environment.

Please call Bob Norton on 01159 212 994 if you would like further information.

Pinner AJR

At our last meeting, Fay Granat illustrated with brilliant photos her arduous trek through Sinai's magnificent scenery. Bedouin and camels in train, in aid of the One-to-One charity for disadvantaged families in Israel. Far from mobile phones and all mod cons, sheclambered over boulders in hot sunshine and slept under a canopy of stars on cold nights.

AJR Chief Executive Michael Radbil and Outreach Worker Myrna Glass joined us to say a sad farewell to Sheryl Smookler, so instrumental in starting our group (with Vera Gelman), creatively publicising its programme and making it the success it has become.

Pinner Group's next meeting, on 15th April at 2pm, is at Pinner Synagogue. Enjoy good company, an excellent tea and card and board games.

Michael Radbil to visit Cardiff

AJR Chief Executive, Michael Radbil, will be addressing an open meeting on Wednesday 26th May at 2.15pm, at Cardiff United Synagogue, Brandreth Road. He will be speaking about the work of the AJR, including the provision of social services, a day centre, counselling and advisory services, outreach groups and a monthly magazine.

Further information can be obtained from Sam Phillips, whose telephone number is 01222 753 044.
AJR invites you to the

Madeleine Brook
Bridge Evening

on Wednesday 9th June 1999
at the Day Centre
15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL
Supper 6.30pm – 7.30pm
Rubber Bridge 7.30pm – 10.30pm
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11.45 for 12.15pm

Guest speaker: Rabbi John Rayner
‘Where do our loyalties lie?’

Reservations (£8)
from Sylvia, Renée and Susie
Tel: 0171 328 0208

Duty freeze

S
ince time immemorial, or at least since non-military travel recommenced after World War II, voyagers temporarily quitting England’s shores did so safe in the knowledge that this egress conferred upon them the right and distinction of purchasing a measure of alcohol, several packets of cigarettes and – should there be a wife or secretary deserving of especial appreciation – perfume, all at ‘duty-free’ prices far below those pertaining
in shops within the bounds of the mother country. In their wisdom, governments have continued to waive the imposition of excise and purchase taxes thus making ‘luxury’ goods available at bargain prices.

The concessions, first given to sailors who needed brandy and tobacco to fortify themselves, were extended to passengers on ships in international waters and adopted by packet boats plying across the English Channel. The Chicago Convention of 1947 transferred these concessions to aeroplanes and gave birth to a multi-billion pound industry which became an adjunct to airlines and airports the world over. Faced with the abandonment of the whole duty-free edifice next June 30th, to serve the admirable aim of creating an undistorted common market in goods and services throughout the EU, the whole plastic-bag-clutching tribe has advanced, clinking its bottles and wielding its flags (ably backed by Europe’s £4 billion duty-free lobby) to frighten the life out of the British Government, ‘Off with their heads’, I say, as quickly as possible. The custom is indefensible: substantial revenue is lost to the exchequer, monopoly profits are made by port and airport concessionaires, while bus and train operators compete without this privilege. Does anyone really prefer to fly on a plane stacked with highly combustible alcohol in small containers adding considerable danger and totally unnecessary weight?

None of this impedes the roaring trade being done in duty-paid alcohol and tobacco where vanfuls return from daily runs across the Channel with quantities ‘for personal use and consumption’, flouting the regulations with impunity, making fools of us as well as the Customs and Excise, and fortunes for criminal lawbreakers. This loophole should be plugged immediately, whatever misguided EU regulations appear to permit.

Ronald Channing

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Thur 1 CLOSED – PESACH
Sun 4 CLOSED – EASTER SUNDAY
Mon 5 CLOSED – EASTER MONDAY
Tue 6 Jack Davidoff entertains
Wed 7 CLOSED – PESACH
Thur 8 CLOSED – PESACH
Sun 11 Nikki van der Zyl accompanied by Barry Weinberg, piano
Mon 12 KARD & GAMES KLUB
Tue 13 Ann Kenton-Barker & Basil Taylor (baritone) accompanied by Margaret Gibbs, piano
Wed 14 Geoffrey Strum & Helen Blake
Thur 15 Suzanna Marks, soprano, accompanied by Janet Beale, piano & accordion
Sun 18 GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUIZ – Quiz Master – Lily Rudolph
Mon 19 KARD & GAMES KLUB
Tue 20 Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton

accompanied by Peter Gellhorn, piano
accompanied by Angus Cunningham, piano
accompanied by Jean Brown
accompanied by William Patrick, piano
accompanied by Brian Evans, MBE, piano
In Memoriam


3-4 March 1943, Marvin and Lotte Reichenback and the other 281 Dresden Jews deported from Hellerberg camp and murdered in Auschwitz that night.

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Correction

We apologise for stating that the late Dr Otto Haas died aged 100 – instead of 90 – in the March issue.

Societies

Beacon Reunion June 17. For information contact Erica Prean, 12 Marlborough Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight PO33 1AA. 01983 562747.

Association of Jewish Berliners. Please contact Peter Sinclair 0181 882 1638 for information

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West Midlands: Edgar Glaser (Birmingham) 0121 777 6537

North: Werner Lachs (Manchester) 0161 773 4091

East Midlands: Bob Norton (Nottingham) 01159 212 494

Pinner: Vera Gellman (HA Postal District) 0181 866 4835

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includes many of Pollock's most famous large-scale paintings, such as “Mural 1943” and “Number 32, 1950”. His premature death in a car crash in 1956 made him into a legendary figure whose influence on succeeding generations of artists has been immense. Until June 6.

**Roman Baroque Drawings** at the British Museum shows the development of the Baroque style which dominated the city from the beginning of the 1620s until the close of the century. On view are some 150 drawings by all the major artists of the period, such as Bernini and Domenichino. Also at the Museum is a fascinating exhibition devoted to the history of the homes the Museum has occupied for nearly 250 years. Until April 18. **Modern Britain (1927-1939)** at the Design Museum until July 18, focuses on the Thirties Modern Movement, with works by Francis Bacon, Paul Nash, Barbara Hepworth and other well-known artists.

**SB's Column**

The New Covent Garden Opera has apparently overcome its most pressing problems and has published opera and ballet programmes for the 1999/2000 season; productions of operas like *Meistersinger* and *Rosenkavalier* in which star guests Placido Domingo, Roberto Alagna and Angela Gheorghiu are scheduled.

**Munich.** It was a pleasant surprise to find Sari Barabas, the Hungarian soprano, in the cast of a Gypsy Princess performance at the Gärtnerplatz theatre. Well known and respected as a guest artist in London, she had left the stage in 1985 but is now enjoying a comeback. In a TV interview she declared herself happy to resume her career at the age of 82.

**Vienna.** As part of the city's spring festival several 'Music for Survival' concerts will take place during April and May. The works to be performed, such as Viktor Ullman's Second Symphony, originated in Terezienstadt concentration camp. They are to serve as a reminder of the dark days when unforgettable compositions were created under terrifying circumstances.

**Birthdays.** German actor Karl Schönböck, elegant interpreter of innumerable bonvivant film rôles, celebrated his 90th birthday.

Lisa Della Casa, the Swiss-born soprano, who specialised in Mozart and Richard Strauss parts and won widespread praise as Arabella, is 80 years old.

**An addendum.** Further to the obituary of Hanne Norbert-Miller (February issue): she did not only perform cabaret at the ‘Laterndl’, but was a stage actress in her own right. She is well remembered for her appearances at the Swiss Cottage Embassy Theatre in the fifties when she was a beautiful and sonorous-voiced 'Iphigenie' well able to compete with any other German-speaking actress of the day.

**Yom Hashoah**

an evening of remembrance
Monday 12th April 1999
8pm-10pm – Pinner Synagogue

Guest speakers:

- Janina Fischler-Martinho
- Rudy Kennedy, Freddie Knoller
- Bertha Levertov, Janek Weber

*Mincha, followed by Haga’ah, begins at 7.40pm

We would like to show that our commitment to remembering and passing on the legacy to future generations continues.

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Many patients react to the suggestion that they should give up smoking with, “I have smoked for years and stopping now won’t make any difference”. In fact, stopping smoking when one is older is probably of more benefit than giving it up at an earlier age.

There is conclusive evidence that cigarette smoke severely affects both respiratory and cardiovascular function at all ages. But as the body grows older, both these areas tend to deteriorate so the effect of smoking on the lungs, heart and blood vessels is exacerbated. Another not uncommon problem of aging is a reduction in blood flow to the arteries serving the legs, which may be painful, especially when taking exercise.

Nicotine in cigarette smoke worsens the ability to chest infections which may destroy part of the lungs. While there are no easy ways to give up smoking, reducing the number of cigarettes smoked each day is much better than doing nothing. A number of devices containing nicotine may well help those addicted to it, but are of no use to those for whom smoking is a ritual or something in their mouths.

The fact that someone may have been smoking for years makes the habit more difficult to stop, but it is certainly worthwhile trying as many of the benefits will quickly become apparent.

Dr Max Boyer

Regretfully, personal correspondence cannot be entered into.
Stent's remembrance of times past

Berlin 1929 – 1935

'Die Kameraden' had been founded in Breslau in 1916 by Jewish members of the increasingly antisemitic Wandervogel movement. Steeped in the 'simple life', 'back-to-nature' traditions of German romanticism, we sang their German folksongs and Landsknechtlieder. We sat around campfires, with guitars, fiddles and mouth organs accompanying lusty voices; reciting Rilke, wearing ridiculously short pants and dedicated to turning the world of our parents upside down.

I had joined the Kameraden at fifteen, an eager beaver and rebel with a cause. I thoroughly enjoyed their lifestyle and their ideas. We had our discussions and our differences and took them all very seriously. Some of us were religiously anchored, others were wholly secular; some, but not many, looked towards Zion. For the majority, the deutsch element in the German-Jewish symbiosis was the dominant one.

In 1932 with the political situation deteriorating, we split threefold. On the 'left' were the Zionists, who I think became the Werkeute. The bulk in the middle changed their name; those on the 'right', including myself, said good-bye and formed the Jugendabteilung der Schwarzen Fahne (Black Pennant Youth Group). This very self-conscious name shows how we thought of ourselves in the best of medieval Treu-Teutsche traditions. Some 25 percent of the Kameraden joined us.

I also became involved in another politicised movement on the fringe of Jewish society, the Vortrupp (vanguard). Founded in February 1933, according to Hans Joachim Schöps, its creator, it never attracted more then a hundred disciples, but bis ambitions were boundless. Schöps, or Jochen to us, a historian and Considerable religious philosopher, propagated ideas. That briefly had a profound impact on me.

Because the Weimar Republic had become a social and cultural cauldron with a breakdown of law and order, street fights, disillusionment and intellectual Synicism, I had a yen for order and discipline which attracted me to Schöps' unorthodox ideas. At the core of his propositions was the claim that there existed a strong affinity between the best conservative traditions, as expressed by the 19th Century Prussian political scientist, Friedrich Julius Stahl, himself a baptised Jew, and biblical Judaism, as articulated by Martin Buber. 'Prussia' meant for Schöps discipline, enlightened authoritarianism, elitism and service to the community. Man was there to serve the state and not the other way round. 'Prussia' in that sense was the only concept to confront Bolshevism, Fascism and 'mob democracy.'

Early in 1932 I wrote an essay for my forthcoming school-leaving Abitur on the subject: The Individual and the State, as analysed in Kleist's Prinz von Homburg. My German literature teacher, a typical rightwing German nationalist, thought I had laid too much stress on service to the state and given too few rights to the individual. All the same, I got top marks.

At that stage I had ingested some of Spengler's morose ideas, but had not ever read any Locke, Tom Paine or J S Mill. Nor had I ever heard, I think, of the nineteenth-century English Utilitarians and their belief that the main purpose of government was to create the conditions for the greatest happiness for the greatest number. If I had, such a wishy-washy concept would have shocked me.

In Schöps' 1930 book entitled Bereit für Deutschland (Ready for Germany), with the subtitle 'Der Patriotismus Deutscher Juden und der Nationalsozialismus' he advocated the sacking of the existing German-Jewish leadership, reared on the out-of-date ideas of 'National-Liberal' politicians, like Lasker or Bamberger, and their replacement by the younger generation, imbued with bundischer, soldatischer Kraft. They would exclude Zionists and Ostjuden, who did not consider themselves Germans anyhow. He did not state whom he had in mind as Führer of rejuvenated German Jewry, but the implication was obvious.

I left Germany in 1935. It did not take very long to cleanse myself of my youthful follies. A few attendances at debates in the House of Commons and regular Sunday morning visits to Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park soon set me on the right path.

I saw Schöps once more in 1937, when he briefly visited my wife and me in London. He left Germany after Kristallnacht for Sweden. I had one last letter from him in late 1939 which stated in a matter of fact tone that he could be contacted again after the war at his old Berlin address, with the same telephone number. He did indeed return to Berlin, but I never found out whether I could have got hold of him again on his old number. I just did not want to contact him again.

He became a distinguished and honoured professor at Erlangen University. His son became a well-known historian in due course. From 1963 onwards, he republished a number of his old pamphlets and articles. Unbelievably in one of them he proudly asserts that he still cherish the same ideas about Conservatism, Prussianism and Judaism as he held when he was twenty years old!

Recalling Jewish life in Leipzig

The Leipzig Museum of Urban History, together with the Ephraim Carlebach Foundation, is gathering documents, photographs, ritual objects, advertisements, books from Jewish publishing houses, and other memorabilia, to establish a collection illustrating the vibrant Jewish life which existed there.

In 1933 Leipzig's was the sixth-largest Jewish community in Germany and Jews contributed significantly to the economic, cultural and social development of the city and beyond. Sadly, their achievements have largely become forgotten, even unknown to members of younger generations.

To preserve and display those remaining proofs of Jewish life in Leipzig, the museum's director especially welcomes the help of former Jewish citizens in acquiring documents and artifacts that demonstrate the contribution made by its Jewish citizens to the city's history for the benefit of future generations.

Please contact Dr Volker Rodekamp (director) or Dr Andrea Lorz at the Stadtgeschichtliches Museum, Altes Rathaus, Markt 1, D-04109 Leipzig, Germany. Tel: 0341/96 51 30. Fax: 0341/96 51 352.

Holocaust archive

The Hungarian Government intends to convert the former synagogue building on Budapest's Rumbach Street into a Holocaust archive and cultural centre. Plans to use it to house a national museum were opposed by the Jewish community.
‘Thank You Britain’ fund

In 1965 AJR launched a “Thank You Britain” appeal and, with the funds collected, a fellowship was endowed which is administered by the British Academy. The aim of the fellowship is to provide resources for young scholars to undertake research into human studies, widely interpreted in their bearing upon the wellbeing of the inhabitants of the UK — subjects such as sociology, economics, geography, history with a contemporary angle and international relations.

At biennial intervals an eminent member of the British Academy gives a “Thank You Britain” lecture, to which members of the AJR are invited.

For the academic year 1997/8 the Fellowship award was given to Dr Donald Martin to complete research on the evolving geographical incidence of unemployment across Britain. A considerable amount of research had been carried out dealing with unemployment in Britain from 1970 onwards on an aggregate national level, but too little was known about regional variations. Better knowledge in this area could be of considerable relevance in the design and implementation of labour market policies intended to help the unemployed. For this purpose, data concerning rates of unemployment for regions, travel to work areas and local authority changes in unemployment for regions, has changed substantially due to the dramatic increase in the number of adult members of the labour force registered as sick — 0.5 million in the early 1980s to more than 1.5 million in the early 1990s. The official unemployment statistics therefore increasingly underestimate the true extent of joblessness.

Overall the research has shown that a geographical perspective is essential for a full understanding of Britain’s changing job market — there is no such thing as a national labour market, but rather many local markets. Further, labour market processes operate differently and differentially from area to area, so that labour market policies — such as the Workfare Scheme — need to take locally varying conditions and mechanisms explicitly into account.

As a result of this research, Dr Martin has been asked to undertake further investigations into unemployment problems.

Edward Levy

Twentieth century warfare

Having conducted an exhaustive analysis of British, American and Australian soldiers fighting in both world wars and in the Vietnam war, historian and Fraenkel prize-winner Joanna Bourke questioned preconceived notions of soldiers’ reactions on the battlefield, especially of those engaged in ‘face-to-face’ killing, during a lecture given at the Wiener Library.

According to Dr Bourke, most soldiers “coped well” with battlefield conflict in World War I, but as many as 25-30% were rendered militarily useless by trauma and psychiatric disorders, though it remained virtually impossible to quantify warfare’s emotional strain. At the time it was widely believed that psychological breakdown was a form of cowardice, though escape into a personal, mythical world was one way in which to cope with being “trapped in a living death, a landscape of horror”.

Crude stereotypes of those who would or would not make good soldiers, supported by a theoretical pseudo-science of combativeness used in selection procedures by recruiters, endured well into World War II. However, training regimes in World War II aimed to strengthen an individual’s identification with a group in order to enhance his effective combativeness.

In practice, surprisingly few soldiers were called upon to undertake face-to-face combat with the enemy, even in World War I. Dr Bourke pointed out that “Neither the individual nor the group counted for much in the face of modern electronic weaponry”, In a need to personalise their enemy, combatants often gave them a face or a name. Ironically, the only occasion when Dr Bourke identified ideology (Nazi) as a significant motivating factor was on the entry of Allied soldiers into the concentration camps.


SEARCH NOTICES

Jewish ex-service men/women with the British Army in Germany after 1945 are invited to share their experiences with a German historian for an oral history project. Please write to Dr Ulrich Baumann, Thauroggener Str. 16, 10589 Berlin, Germany.

Inge Ehrlinger (née Roettgen) of Shipley, Yorks, Gisela Nurse (née Roettgen) of Gloucester, and Ursula Roettgen (married name unknown) of Christchurch, Bournemouth, are being sought by first cousin Hal Leeser, 1128 McClain Dr, Vineland N.J. 08360, USA.

Goldington Road School, Bedford (now Castle Lower School celebrating its centenary) wishes to contact former refugee pupils who may have lived in Highbury House where a Miss Curtis was matron. Please contact Rosalind Birtwistle Tel: 01234 261 775 Fax: 01234 326 666.

Heinz Koblitz, b. Neustadtel 1918, Kreis Freystadt in Lower Silesia. Parents had kitchen furniture factory; left for England 1938. Also Fritz Koblitz, b. 2.8.21, interned in Australia 1940, possibly joined Australian Armed Forces, later perhaps lived in Tilbury, Essex. Please contact GBC Liebich, 9 Meadowcroft, St Albans, Herts ALl 1UD Tel: 01727 852 420. Fax: 01727 762 910.

Koch. Son and daughter of ornithologist and broadcaster, the late Ludwig Koch. Son died in 1974. Daughter, Erica Marks, was a photographer specialising in portraits of London’s Diplomatic Corps. Please contact Corinna Schnabel, Kaulbachstrasse 48, 60596 Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

Heinz Koblitz, 37, Munich; b. Neustadtel 1918, Kreis Freystadt in Lower Silesia. Parents had kitchen furniture factory; left for England 1938. Also Fritz Koblitz, b. 2.8.21, interned in Australia 1940, possibly joined Australian Armed Forces, later perhaps lived in Tilbury, Essex. Please contact GBC Liebich, 9 Meadowcroft, St Albans, Herts ALl 1UD Tel: 01727 852 420. Fax: 01727 762 910.

Koch. Son and daughter of ornithologist and broadcaster, the late Ludwig Koch, who died in 1974, being sought by a writer and broadcaster. Son played basoon with the London Philharmonic; daughter, Erica Marks, was a photographer specialising in portraits of London’s Diplomatic Corps. Please contact Corinna Schnabel, Kaulbachstrasse 48, 60596 Frankfurt am Main, Germany.
Obituary

Rudi Graupner

Rudolf Graupner, who has died aged 92, was one of the last in the line of eminent German/British refugee lawyers who had a substantial impact on the development of international jurisprudence in the UK after the war.

After studying at the Universities of Munich, Heidelberg and Berlin, he qualified as a lawyer in 1933, but was never allowed to practise. He arrived in Britain after Kristallnacht and by 1941 had obtained a law degree at the LSE. After qualifying as a solicitor, he eventually arrived at the firm of Buckeridge and Braune where he practised with his brother-in-law (in both senses of the word). When the firm merged with Fritchard Englefield and Tobin in 1977, he remained as a partner (and latterly as a consultant) working until just a few months before his death.

Rudi specialised in Anglo-German legal problems which he pursued with intellectual vigour and great tenacity. He was personally responsible for many landmark cases, often persuading a reluctant German litigant to take action - for example, he obtained the first English judgement in a foreign currency decades before the word 'euro' had become fashionable.

The German Embassy appointed Rudi their lawyer, and on two occasions he was honoured by the German Government, as well as receiving a doctorate from the University of Würzburg - having left his original thesis on a Berlin bus!

Rudi remained a somewhat absent-minded professor. When the Bishopsgate bomb hit the office he telephoned one of his partners to make sure that the apple core in his waste paper basket was not thrown away - he had left his false teeth in it.

Rudi thoroughly enjoyed the practice of law and was always surrounded by female trainees with whom Kaffee and Kuchen in the afternoon was obligatory. His main out-of-office interests were art and antiques - he was often to be seen at Sotheby's - and family life. He was devoted to his wife Ruth, to whom he was married for nearly 59 years, their daughter Frances (who had no choice but to follow him into the law), his son-in-law Stephen and his two grandsons.

Fred Parkinson

V iennese-born Fred Parkinson has died, aged 76. As Fred Kessler, when I first knew him in the army, he was the fastest Bren gun stripper, the speediest distance runner and a leading light in the platoon's general knowledge quizzes. Moreover, impressive books by his bedside caught the Captain's eye, and before long Fred was marked out as officer material.

It all happened 50 years ago, while we were training in Bury St Edmunds. Forty years on I stumbled upon him at University College London, as Dr Parkinson, Senior Lecturer in the Sociology of International Law. To get there many hurdles had been overcome. He arrived here at
**NEWSROUND**

**Far right’s election success**
Austria’s far right ‘Freedom Party’ gained more than 42% of the vote in Carinthia’s elections. Its populist leader Jorge Haider campaigned against immigrants and played on fears of the European Union’s expansion into central and eastern Europe.

**Camp commander on trial**
Former commander of the Jasenovac concentration camp in Croatia, Dinko Sakic, who was extradited from Argentina, is standing trial in Zagreb. Under Croatia’s wartime pro-Nazi Ustashe régime, some 600,000 Serbs, Jews and gypsies were brutally murdered.

**Switon charged**
Polish nationalist and antisemite 68-year-old Kazimierz Switon, instigator of the campaign to plant hundreds of crosses at Auschwitz, has been charged with incitement to racial hatred, reports the Jewish Chronicle. Switon distributed pamphlets calling on Poles to wage war against a ‘Jewish-Communist masonic’ conspiracy.

**Victims’ names**
Israel’s Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Authority plans to complete the computerisation of Holocaust victims’ names by the year’s end to compile a definitive list. Details of their families, cities and villages, and of their ultimate fate are also included.

**Soldiers’ arrest**
Two soldiers serving in the British Army, and at least three other people, have been arrested in an investigation into the activities of the extreme right-wing group Combat 18. Searches have been carried out at several addresses in an attempt to counter racism and any possible association with terrorist groups.

**Gideon Rafael**
Berlin-born Gideon Rafael, formerly Ruffer, has died aged 85. Rafael worked with British intelligence in Syria, organised illegal immigration into Palestine, was a founder of Israel’s Foreign Ministry, its UN representative, and was Ambassador to the UK 1973-77.

**Gratuitous insult**
Hungary’s intended compensation payments for the loss of parents, brothers and sisters in the Holocaust (maximum £85) are a derisory fraction of those for the heirs of victims of Communist rule. Representatives of Hungary’s Jewish community have protested.

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**Secret Jew and avowed Zionist**

Any man who had direct involvement in establishing the forerunner of Israel’s Defence Forces, drafted the Balfour Declaration, was in charge of Britain’s Mandate in Palestine from 1925 to 1929, worked continually for the creation of a Jewish state, and railed against the denial of a place of refuge for “hapless refugees from Hitler’s torture chambers” in Palestine, is worthy of the gratitude of the Jewish people and Israel’s highest honours.

Yet the individual who performed these deeds, Leopold Amery, is painted as a comparatively minor figure on history’s twentieth-century canvas, being recalled principally for his catalytic intervention in the Commons debate on 7th May 1940 which brought down Chamberlain’s Government and propelled Churchill into Downing Street.

Leopold Amery was seen as an archetypal Englishman: born in the Imperial India of 1873, Harrow and Oxford educated, an influential politician and Cabinet Minister. His younger son Julian later served in both the Macmillan and Heath governments. Yet, according to Prof William Rubinstein, writing in the February edition of History Today, there is incontrovertible evidence that Amery had a Hungarian-Jewish mother and was therefore halachically a Jew, though from his schooldays onward he determined to conceal this for a lifetime and beyond.

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His mother, born Elizabeth Johanna Saphir, says Rubinstein, was a member of “a distinguished family of assimilated Hungarian Jews who had converted to Protestantism and were remarkable for their intellectual abilities”. Elizabeth divorced her adulterous husband in 1885 and, having gained custody of their three children, strove to provide them with a superior education.

In contrast to many who concealed their Jewish ancestry by adopting the role of Jew-hater, Leopold Amery consistently supported the Zionist cause and befriended its leading protagonists. (Paradoxically, Amery’s elder son John was pro-Hitler and shot as a traitor).

As Secretary for the Dominions in Baldwin’s Government from 1925 to 1929, Amery was in charge of the Palestine Mandate at a time when the infrastructure and institutions of the future state were being built. He remained out of office until invited to join Churchill’s wartime coalition as Secretary of State for India.

Prof Rubinstein reveals that Amery’s diaries “contained occasional moving references to Nazi genocide”. In June 1944, for example, Chaim Weizmann turned to Amery for advice when faced with Germany’s obscene offer to barter the lives of a million Hungarian Jews for massive supplies of war materiel.

In 1950 Amery was probably the first establishment Brit to visit the newly-recognised State of Israel and, while he supported Jewish and Zionist causes up to his death in 1955, his maternal bond with the Jewish faith remained hidden.

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Ronald Channing