

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

Godfathers and their wards

Murder as an instrument of politics goes back at least to the assassination of Julius Caesar. Even so, politically motivated murders were infrequent occurrences until the 1880s when extremist ideologies like anarchism took root in Russia and elsewhere.

Dostoevsky viewed the revolutionaries who killed Alexander II and other Tsarist notables as the veritable 'spawn of Satan'. His novel *The Possessed* was intended as a *mene tekel* to a society imbued with waning religious faith and menaced by bloodcurdling nihilism. In Dostoevsky's perception, characters like Raskolnikov and Ivan Karamazov were ready to commit heinous crimes because in cutting themselves off from God they had divested themselves of humanity.

The century since the writer's death has seen an absolute sea-change. Today serial acts of viciousness beyond the scope of Dostoevsky's fevered imagination are carried out at the behest of 'men of God'. Islamic clerics are godfathers of terror worldwide - from Chicago via Karachi to Jerusalem. They have helped create a culture of macabre death-worship, in which the parents of 'martyred' suicide bombers routinely receive congratulations rather than condolences at their children's funerals. If we look at the other billion-strong world religion, we find that the Catholic Church crucially supported nationalism in some countries - Poland, Croatia, Slovakia - while failing to do so in others. (In Italy the Pope opposed unification, and Irish bishops excoriated the nationalist leader Parnell because he figured in a divorce case.)

The Palestinian struggle against the State of Israel was initiated by secular

groups, with organisations like the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine taking the lead. The PFLP's methods - aircraft hijackings, the murder of Olympic athletes, the drowning of Leon Klinghoffer - were repulsive in all conscience, but they pale beside the stomach-churning atrocities of the clergy-led Hamas and Islamic Jihad.



Jan Palach

Islamist suicide bombers are by definition religiously motivated. What drives the perpetrators is the certainty vouchsafed in the Koran that martyrdom leads straight to paradise.

There has been much ill-informed comment about the provenance of individuals who elect to be Koran-inspired kamikazes. According to the Cherie Blair school of thought, they are deprived youngsters who, having grown up in refugee camps, see no hope for the future. This is a sentiment-befuddled misreading of the situation. Most suicide bombers are students, or even graduates - as demonstrated by the academic qualifications of the men involved in the attack on the World Trade Center - and not slum-bred

no-hopers. Given the perpetrators' personal histories, the driving force behind their heinous deeds is far more likely to have been all-consuming hate than bleak despair.

Nor is it inevitable that someone driven by the crushing pressure of circumstances should feel a need to end many other lives at the same time. When, after the aborted Prague Spring of 1968, Soviet tanks rolled into Czechoslovakia and crushed all hope for the advent of 'socialism with a human face', Jan Palach was seized by deep despair. In a transcendental gesture of defiance of the Soviet colossus, he set himself alight in one of Prague's public squares. (Buddhist monks in Vietnam have been known to act in like manner.)

Palach's method of throwing down the gauntlet clearly drew inspiration from Gandhi's passive resistance campaign in India and Martin Luther King's similar endeavours in the United States. Palach proved that Stalin's oft-quoted quip 'How many divisions has the Pope?' was too cynical by half. He also proved posthumously that spiritual force can play a decisive part in contemporary affairs when, 21 years after his self-immolation, the central square in Prague was renamed in his honour.

Meanwhile, Islamic clerics, whose medieval predecessors converted half the world by force of arms, have not changed their mindset. While the ends remain essentially the same, the means employed are mutable. They have adapted to the modern world by commissioning new arms, which never fail to home in on their - invariably civilian - targets. These miracle arms are human beings, primed to go off like bombs.

Antisemitism in a Jew-less land

Richard Grunberger

Poland's Jewry, the largest in pre-war Europe, also suffered the heaviest losses. By the war's end, out of three and a quarter million barely 200,000 had survived (mainly in Russia). Over the next 20-odd years, this number was further decimated by an exodus resulting from right-wing atrocities - particularly at Kielce in 1946 - and the Communist cold pogrom of 1968. Today's community numbers between 10,000 and 20,000 in a country of 38 million.

But phantom Jews still loom large in the paranoid imaginings of the rank-and-file of the Christian nationalist party led by the Europhobe Andrzej Lepper. Grassroots party members told Joe Klein, a US journalist reporting for *The Guardian*, that Jews had (a) helped the Russians take over the country; (b) usurped the leadership of the anti-Communist Solidarity movement; and (c) used the media to denigrate Poland.

The media personality they targeted as chief calumniator of his homeland was none other than the cradle Catholic Andrzej Wajda, a director who single-handedly put Poland on the map of world cinema during the postwar years. As regards the *Zhidokommunist* canard, only few historians - of whom Professor Norman Davis, alas, is one - now subscribe to the view that Jews were preponderant in the Communist secret police.

The facts about the alleged Jewish dominance over Solidarity are these: ex-student leader Jan Michnik is a half-Jew, and former foreign minister Bronislaw Geremek was a Jewish baby reared by a Catholic family (to whose care his Auschwitz-bound parents entrusted him). Interestingly, when interviewed, both Michnik, currently editor of the leading Warsaw daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*, and Professor Geremek assured Joe Klein that they felt optimistic about the future of the country with which, despite all the antisemitic slurs, they still totally identify.

'Family reunion' at Northern Groups' first Get-together

Ronald Channing



For the very first time, 140 members and supporters of both long-established and newly-formed AJR groups travelled from the North, the Midlands, Wales and Scotland to join a Northern Region Get-together at the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre in Nottinghamshire, where they were warmly welcomed by director Mrs Marina Smith. Even the sun came out, encouraging members to share one another's company while enjoying the calm and beauty of the Centre's memorial gardens.

Founder-director Dr Stephen Smith spoke of Beth Shalom's privilege at hosting AJR's first northern meeting. Opened in September 1995, Beth Shalom was intended as a place of peace for victims of the Holocaust and where young people could consider their own roles in life, tens of thousands having passed through Beth Shalom and visited its Holocaust exhibition. Education was vitally important and, although it took time, said Stephen Smith, it did promote tolerance and understanding. Beth Shalom was now committing half its resources to advising governments, our own among those of Lithuania, South Africa and Rwanda, from where Stephen had just returned. As part of 'project refuge', the Centre was recording testimonies at ten local schools, each working with a refugee relating and explaining their personal experiences.

AJR's Head of Community Relations, Ronald Channing, who chaired the day's programme, commended Regional Co-ordinators Susanne Green and Myrna Glass for their success in establishing new groups. Together with Social Services reaching out to isolated individuals, these were policies adopted by the AJR which had brought conspicuous success. He invited groups to arrange special visits to the Continental Britons Exhibition and to the AJR annual tea and opera entertainment on 20 October.

AJR's Head of Social Services, Marcia Goodman, described the country-wide

Dr Stephen Smith, centre, hosting the Northern Groups Get-together at Beth Shalom, with, left to right, Dr David Wolgroch, Marcia Goodman, Ruth Finestone, Sarit Simon and Ronald Channing.

visits of the AJR's social work team, aimed at maintaining people in their own homes as long as possible. Home care, gardening and emergency aid were other areas in which help could be provided. Dr David Wolgroch outlined the work of the Holocaust Survivors Centre and of Shalvata, its associated psychotherapy centre, and later met with members of the children's generation. Marcia, together with her colleague Ruth Finestone, and Sarit Simon of the Central Office for Holocaust Claims, made themselves available for individual consultations throughout the afternoon.

Trude Silman (Leeds), Werner Lachs (Manchester), Henny Rednall (Birmingham), Walter Knoblauch (Newcastle), Steve Mendelsson (Sheffield), Bob Norton (Nottingham), Hillary Anson (Glasgow) and Susanne Green (Liverpool) presented short reports on their group's activities.

The concluding session, mentored by Stephen Smith, sought to identify key issues and recommendations for a 'wish list' of support services and activities. Among several put forward were: an expansion of social services in the Northern Region (especially for isolated people); the organisation of further communal gatherings; and visits to former European home towns (both the latter seen as opportunities for members to share their common heritage).

Walter Knoblauch caught the mood of the majority when he commented: "The whole wonderful atmosphere was one of an informal family gathering. Although most of us had never met before, and we may have had different individual experiences, we all had broadly similar backgrounds and were immediately talking together like lost friends. It was like a family reunion."

A short discourse on demography

Richard Grunberger

At present, Israelis make up 37 per cent of world Jewry, but by the year 2030 it is estimated that just over half of all Jews will be living in Israel. This shift will occur because Diaspora Jewry is constantly crumbling around the edges - due to intermarriage, conversion, etc - while the Israeli community cannot but stay intact.

But though intact, it will - with the exception of the Orthodox segment - show no sizable future increase in numbers. This is in stark contrast to the steep curve of Palestinian population growth, exemplified by one of the major stumbling blocks at Oslo. The number of Palestinians uprooted by the Israeli War of Independence in 1948 had been around three quarters of a million. Yet, just over half a century later, Yasser Arafat claimed a 'Right of Return' for 4 million - a claim undoubtedly based on solid fact.

Given the huge disparity of the opposing sides lined up in the 'battle of the wombs', it redounds greatly to Israel's credit that annual 'gay pride' marches are now a part of the urban landscape. The latest city to stage such an event is Jerusalem, whose Orthodox-dominated municipality refused to give it financial support - but grudgingly obeyed a Supreme Court instruction to hang multicoloured flags and banners symbolising the gay and lesbian movement from the lamp posts. (It needs to be pointed out that the parade took place in West Jerusalem: Muslim inhabitants of East Jerusalem would have given participants short shrift.)

However, while one takes pride in Israel's bedrock commitment to democracy, even in a virtual war situation, things are, alas, never quite clear-cut. While *quantitatively* the influence of homosexuality on the birthrate may not be great, there are reasons for supposing that it does make a *qualitative* difference. From Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo to Tchaikovsky, some of the world's

greatest creative spirits have been gay. (Jews of the same orientation include Proust, Rathenau and Wittgenstein.)

Thus the freedom of gays to organise and proselytise, while earning Israel badly needed brownie points, may produce a less than salutary effect on the national gene pool.

If a percentage of the most creative people in a society fail to produce offspring, the average level of achievement of that society cannot but fall short of what it might potentially have been. A case in point is the Catholic Church, which over many centuries recruited a sizable segment of the ablest individuals in Christendom into the ranks of the clergy. As clerics, these possessors of above-average intelligence were prevented by the cast-iron rule of celibacy from passing on their gifts to succeeding generations.

In the sixteenth century Christianity split asunder, with a large part of Europe remaining Catholic, and a smaller, but still hugely important, part turning Protestant. The Protestant states - England, Holland, Scandinavia, parts of Germany - abolished monasticism altogether and allowed the clergy to marry. It has often been remarked how many talented people in Britain - from the Brontë sisters to Gordon Brown - are children of the manse.

Is it an exaggeration to say that the advantage relatively small England and Holland gained over their larger Catholic rivals France and Spain in all sorts of spheres - for example navigation, trade, industrialisation - owed a lot to the release of hitherto untapped creative talent? Probably not.

To which I would add my suspicion that the traditional *shtetl* custom, whereby the daughter of the local *gevir*, or richest man, tended to marry the rabbi - i.e. the most learned one - helped raise the average intelligence level of Jews above that of their peasant neighbours.

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CONTINENTAL BRITONS:

Lectures and
discussions fill
exhibition programme
Ronald Channing



Hans Seelig and Peter Gellhorn



Professor Maxine Seller



Nick Hardwick

The Search for Refuge

The opening seminar in the Continental Britons programme, entitled 'The Search for Refuge: Lessons for Today', was presented by Dr Louise London, lawyer and author of *Whitehall and the Jews*, Dr Joanna Newman, Education Director of the London Jewish Cultural Centre, and Professor Tony Kushner of the Department of History at the University of Southampton and author of *Refugees in an Age of Genocide*.

Louise London equated yesterday's refugees with today's asylum seekers. She suggested it was "popular fiction" that Britain always welcomed Jewish refugees and believed that the country's supposed humanitarian behaviour was something of a myth. Asylum seekers being left "in limbo" by bureaucratic delay was indefensible, for the quality of life was important rather than just life itself.

Drawing on her studies of Jewish emigration in the Caribbean, Joanna Newman had discovered unregulated immigration, though the destination was totally unsuited for refugees. In 1940 Camp Gibraltar was built in Jamaica in anticipation of the arrival of that island's 4,000 inhabitants, although they never arrived in those numbers. Their non-arrival left space for Central and Eastern European refugees, but the enormous potential of the camp was never adequately utilised.

Professor Tony Kushner remarked that, although something was known of the 80,000 refugees who came to Britain before the war, until recently there had been little interest in survivors who arrived after the war's end. Britain had no necessity to take in any survivors and Jews were seen as unwelcome newcomers after 1945. Though 732 surviving children, 'The Boys', were found and brought to Britain, there was little truth in the associated mythology as it was government policy to keep Jewish people out of the country. Most of those who gained entry under the

'distressed relatives' scheme had to tell lies when completing their application forms and came as domestics or agricultural workers, occupations which did not reflect their capabilities.

Changing Countries: Refugee Voices

Dr Anthony Grenville, Dr Marian Malet and Dr Charmian Brinson, authors of a major recent book based on a programme of detailed interviews with former refugees, *Changing Countries: The Experiences and Achievements of German-Speaking Refugees from Hitler in Britain*, participated in a seminar at the Jewish Museum. They discussed the writing of the book with three distinguished interviewees: Peter Gellhorn, composer and conductor, Hans Seelig, lecturer and chairman of Club '43, and Elisabeth Rosenthal, educationalist and lecturer. Contributions from panel members were followed by a lively and enjoyable discussion.

Self-educating internees

Professor Maxine Seller discussed *Education Among Jewish Refugees Interned by Britain in World War II*, under the aegis of the Jewish Historical Society. Prof Seller stressed the paradox of the - mainly Jewish - refugees "being imprisoned by the country that saved their lives." Faced with an imminent Nazi invasion the British government interned 28,000 men and women of 'enemy' nationality living in Britain in the Spring of 1940, in the Isle of Man, Canada, Australia and on mainland Britain. Although adequately housed, fed and rarely mistreated, they were cut off from family, friends, school and work. The internees made the best of a bad situation by creating educational resources and social networks.

We Built Up Our Lives, Maxine Seller, Greenwood Press/EDS.

Refugees - 60 Years On

Nick Hardwick, Director of the Refugee Council, discussed whether 1930s experiences offered Britain guidance when faced with today's asylum seekers. The vast majority of refugees go from one poor country to another. Of the 2% of the world's refugees seeking residence in the UK, the European average, about half were eventually permitted to stay. A comparison of newspaper headlines in the 1930s and those of today showed striking similarities with refugees 'flooding in', etc. Even the arguments were similar, belittling the persecution from which people were escaping. The right to asylum was an absolute right and asylum seekers should not be required to give up their identity. Perhaps, like Continental Britons, they would possess more than one!

'Immigration and Settlement'

'Continental Britons: Immigration and Settlement of Jewish Refugees from Nazi Europe' was the title of a lecture given by AJR historian Dr Anthony Grenville at the Jewish Museum, drawing on his research for the associated exhibition. He concentrated on three areas of refugee history: the little-known early years of the Association of Jewish Refugees, which grew into the organisation that represented the Jews from Central Europe over the following decades; the experience of wartime Britain as a key factor influencing the refugees' attitudes to their adopted homeland; and the refugees' relations with the British in the post-war period, as revealed through the pages of the *AJR Information*. A large and appreciative audience then contributed to an entertaining and informative discussion.

'Exile, Legacy and Memory'

Daniel Libeskind, architect of the Spiral Extension to the Victoria & Albert Museum, addressed the symposium on



Dr Anthony Grenville



Daniel Libeskind



PHOTOS: RONALD CHANNING

refugee architects organised by the London Jewish Cultural Centre in association with the Royal Institute of British Architects. Polish born, his parents were the only two survivors from an immediate family of 85, yet he stressed the importance of one's contribution to life. "Lucky" to win the competition for Berlin's Jewish Museum, he felt that "buildings and civic space" were the key dimensions in cities, and spoke of the "vitality of history shaping what we human beings think we are." The Imperial War Museum North, opening in Manchester, despite suffering considerable cuts in budget, provided "the maximum of architectural input with the minimum of resources," as a "large barn," parts of the roof of which could be touched. "Architecture has to be memorable," said Libeskind.

The exhibition 'Continental Britons - Jewish Refugees from Nazi Europe' is at the Jewish Museum, Albert Street, Camden Town, London NW1, Sunday to Thursday, until 20 October. For details call 0207 284 1997.

Continental Britons Exhibition Events Diary August

Until 8 September *Ludwig and Else Meidner* - an exhibition on two German refugee artists. Ben Uri Gallery, 108a Boundary Road, St Johns Wood, London NW8, tel 020 7604 3991 Monday-Thursday 10 am to 5.30 pm, Friday 10 am to 3 pm, Sunday 12 noon to 4 pm

Wed 28 *Nicholas Winton - The Power of Good*, a new documentary film by Czech director Matej Minac Panel discussion with Bertha Leverton, Muriel Emanuel and Vera Gissing, followed by reception for Kinder and other AJR members in Museum atrium. Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 at 5 pm. Free but pre-booking is essential with the Jewish Museum, Sternberg Centre, 80 East End Road, London N3 2SY enclosing SAE. Tel 020 8349 1143

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Central Office For Holocaust Claims

Michael Newman

Banks to repay charges

British banks have agreed to repay the commission levied on reparations received by Holocaust survivors and refugees. The British Bankers Association (BBA) guidelines, which came into effect on 1 June 2002, also ensure that henceforth charges will not be imposed on any compensation or restitution payment. Those eligible for a repayment are advised to contact their bank with evidence that they are in receipt of reparations and that commission has previously been deducted.

Pensions for ghetto inmates

Following on from the 1997 act granting pension rights to victims interned in the Lodz ghetto, the German parliament has adopted a social security law approving pensions for inmates in all ghettos on the territory of the German Reich.

Applicants will have to show that they were interned in a ghetto and that they were somehow paid for the work they performed. It is generally considered that those aged 14 and upwards at the time will have been paid and will therefore be eligible to receive a pension. Applications received before 30 June 2003 will be backdated to 1997.

Because the new law is a social security provision, those eligible to claim and already in receipt of a state pension should contact their pension authority in writing. Those not in receipt of a state pension should write direct to the German government social security department: Landesversicherungsanstalt, Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg, Uberseering 10, 2000 Hamburg 60, Germany. Details of lawyers assisting claimants are available from the Central Office for Holocaust Claims.

Further help

Written enquiries should be sent to Central Office for Holocaust Claims (UK), 1 Hampstead Gate, 1A Frognaal, London NW3 6AL. For assistance with the completion of application forms, please telephone 020 7431 6161 for an appointment.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

KATHARINENSTIFT

Sir - I was distressed to learn (June issue) that the antisemitic songs referred to in your February issue originated in the Stuttgart Katharinenstift. It is not generally known that one of the greatest and most humane of German poets, Eduard Mörike, was a teacher there in his latter years. Fortunately his poems, and the wonderful settings Hugo Wolf found for them, will outlast those of the perverter of youth named by your correspondent Irene Ward.

*S S Praver
Queen's College, Oxford*

PALESTINE-ISRAEL CONFLICT

Sir - You are quite right that the Palestine Solidarity lobby should have been pleased about the establishment of a Western type of democracy in the Middle East. Most of the Arab Israeli MKs belong to parties banned in neighbouring Arab states and they themselves would be in mortal danger if they exercised their right of free speech there, as they can do in Israel.

Nevertheless, Israeli Arabs have faced continual discrimination in Israel in almost every field since the establishment of the state. One example: while Jews are free to buy Arab land, Arabs find it almost impossible to do the reverse. Last year an Arab-Israeli doctor had to apply to the supreme court in order to buy a plot of land for erecting a house. An Arab cannot join a kibbutz because common ownership implies that the Arab would become part-owner of Jewish land and this is forbidden. Such rules may be understandable from the Zionist point of view but, as long as laws of this type exist, the Palestine

Solidarity lobby in this country finds it difficult to welcome Israeli democracy. When Israel changes its laws the Palestinians may think differently.

*Peter Prager
Ilford, Essex*

Sir - Two sentences say it all: 1) If the Arabs put down their weapons today there would be no more violence. 2) If the Jews put down their weapons today there would be no more Israel.

*Lenore Janoff
New York*

Sir - Tom Paulin's comment quoted in the June issue is not new. It has been expressed, by different people, on various occasions since the creation of a new Israel was first mooted. Did the thought not motivate Ernest Bevin? It was certainly expressed in a motion for debate at a university course in London in early 1948, shortly before the state was founded - "That the creation of a Jewish State in Palestine will be neither just nor in the interest of world peace" - which, in the latter respect, may now be regarded as more prescient than might have been thought at the time. The house divided more or less equally, the leading student conservatives supporting the motion on the ground that the new state would be communist!

I have never forgotten the most prominent of the conservatives rising, putting one foot on a chair beside his own, and beginning his speech with: "I just do not see the Jewish case." That, of course, was much closer than Mr Paulin to "the greatest tragedy any people ever suffered".

*Alan S Kaye
Chalfont St Giles, Bucks*

Sir - The West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza were in Arab hands from 1948 to 1967, and they could then have established a Palestinian state there. But they did not do so because they were intent on making war on Israel and on having a state in the whole area of the former Palestine. If they had been successful in their intention, would they later have handed back any territory?

Israel has never intentionally targeted civilians. The refugee camp at Jenin was a nest of suicide bombers. Israel could have destroyed it in minutes by bombing to save risking the lives of its soldiers - as the Americans did in Afghanistan. But it sent in troops who encountered fierce resistance.

*Henry Schragenheim
London N15*

Sir - Rabbi Rayner wrote (June issue): "As for the occupied territories ... Israel missed many opportunities to exchange these for peace, as Ben-Gurion advised in 1967 ..." I have followed press and diplomatic sources carefully over this period. I note the Arab response to Ben-Gurion at Khartoum (no peace, no negotiations, no recognition) and the terrorism and vile accusations levelled against Israel and the Jews over the past 35 years. The PLO and Hamas charters have continued to emphasize their aim of driving the Jews into the sea, and even a truncated Israel does not appear on Arab maps. Regrettably, I have failed to notice any occasion on which a Palestinian leader offered peace in return for territories. The apparent offer at Oslo was repudiated at Camp David and Taba. Please could Rabbi Rayner be more specific about these peace opportunities, perhaps naming people, places and dates?

*Prof Bryan Reuben
South Bank University*

Sir - Regarding Peter Zander's letter (June issue): his accusations are groundless and the conclusions he draws are odious and beneath contempt. Israel is a First-World

democracy, with one million Arabs who enjoy more democratic rights than any Arab in any Arab country. Israel, with its universities and scientific institutes, is an asset to mankind, unlike those who seek its destruction.

*S L Ellman
London N2*

Sir - It is very sad that any Jewish paper gives publicity to hate voices like Peter Zander's. There is such highly organised publicity coming from the Arabs that makes even Jews blindly take over their views. Israel is a success, after hard work, and the envy of the world!

*Clare Parker
London NW3*

CONTINENTAL BRITONS

Sir - I am appalled - and saddened - by the report of Lord Moser's speech at the opening of the Exhibition (June issue). The patronising and offensive tone adopted (if the report is accurate) towards "most of the rest [who] were pleased to make more modest contributions" suggests total ignorance of the "most", who devoted their lives - and surely made their individual mark - to this country in virtually every sphere of the professions, industry, commerce, trades, vocations, and the armed services. Naturally, we are proud of those who have achieved prominence in their chosen field and have become public figures. However, please do not let academia and their limited view of the scope of "German Jewish culture" remain blinkered to the rest of our community as so often seems to be the case in the *Journal*.

*Vernon Saunders
Weybridge, Surrey*

SEARCH

Sir - As part of its Life Experience Project, the Leeds Holocaust Survivors' Friendship Association (HSFA) is trying to find people who came to Leeds and the Yorkshire area in the 1930s/40s. We would be especially pleased to hear from anybody who came on Kindertransport and stayed in Leeds in the Stainbeck Lane Boys Hostel, the

Ort School Hostel, or the Girls Hostel in Knaresborough Road, Harrogate.

*Thea Skyte
23 Alwoodley Chase,
Leeds LS17 8ER*

LEARNING CURVE

Sir - I have noticed with great pleasure that your political views have, over the last few years, matured for the better. Did this conversion take place on the road to Damascus?

*Anthony Goldsmith
Wembley, Middx*

THANK YOU

Sir - Thank you for the 'get-together' at Beth Shalom - I have not had such a happy day for at least five years. It was truly delightful meeting all those foreigners from Scotland etc., and especially those who knew Leer in Ostfriesland and all the cattle-dealers there and the rabbis... It was also good to hear how other people ran their groups and the things they thought should be altered or amended. It was good talking to the members of other groups. Everyone was so friendly, there was such a marvellous atmosphere - we must do it again as soon as possible. Much love from the Chair, Midlands Group of the AJR.

*Henny Rednall
Birmingham*

Sir - Thank you very much for all your hard work in connection with the northern 'get-together' at Beth Shalom. It was a most enjoyable day and everything went very smoothly.

*Trude Silman
Chair, HSFA, Leeds*

BOUQUET

Sir - Your editorials and articles in the *Journal* are always excellent and well researched, showing links with the past, which you must have studied thoroughly. What caused me to write with sincere appreciation today was your article entitled 'Holding the demons at bay'. It is really excellent, linking Haider with Le Pen as it does.

*Herbert Anderson
Norwich*

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ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

Lucian Freud's faces have a habit of burning their way into your subconscious and implanting themselves on strangers everywhere. Whether portraits or nude studies, they are equally denuded of all but their essential being. There is nothing romantic or prurient in the work of this outstanding artist, particularly in his later years when he rejected a certain formalism in his quest for complete artistic integrity. Beauty does not interest him and he refuses to allow his models to wear make-up, as art historian William Feaver, who curated **Tate Britain's** largest Freud retrospective, told a TV interviewer.

It is as though the artist has entered the canvas via his subjects, tearing through the epidermis to reflect their genuine selves. His nudes, whether large women, young girls or ageing men, are resplendent and natural, without a hint of self-consciousness. With such exhaustive mental discipline, Lucian Freud conveys the intensity of his subjects - mainly friends or his children - so that they become the characters in their own story. And this is as true of his human subjects as it is of his dogs. As Feaver says: "Freud is like his whippets, who sniff before they think."

The hallmark of Freud's mature work is his lack of colour. His subjects share a greyish-pink complexion and eyes that stare at what appears to be an inner realm of being. The rigour of honesty is all. This dedication to laying bare the soul and junking everything else becomes almost a religion, and nowhere is it more powerful than in his intermittent portraits of his mother, whom he depicts in her sadness following the death of her husband. In **The Painter's Mother Resting** (1982), she is lying on her bed, dressed in white, with sad, gnarled hands - an

old bride contemplating widowhood, with an expression so inward, with such quiet anguish of memory, that watching her becomes an intrusion. A powerful full-length study of Baron von Thyssen is shown with extraordinary long fingers, denoting the man's mental and physical dexterity.

Sometimes Freud depicts nudes on hard floorboards with paint rags as a backdrop, so that these, too, seem as contextually valid as the subject. He is, however, neither symbolist nor respecter of artistic convention. If dark paint is usually applied more thickly than light, he does the opposite.

His latest self-portrait showing his perpendicular head and troubled face under the tousled grey hair was recently delivered to the Tate as stand-in for the 79-year-old artist, who - surprise, surprise! - declined to be guest of honour. The exhibition continues until 22 September.



Esther (1982-83) by Lucian Freud

The **Ben Uri's** move to **Boundary Road** in London's St John's Wood has clearly delighted its energetic chairman, David Glasser. At its European Day of Jewish Culture and Heritage last month, he described it as the culmination of a six-year quest: "In the last 18 months we have refused more new works of art than we have accepted, but we have taken two oils by **Mark Gertler** and three by **Solomon J. Solomon**," he said. The **Meidner Exhibition** took place as we went to press and has been held over.

RG's INTERFACE

Philosophers. Harvard University Press have just published *Gershom Scholem, A Life in Letters 1914-1982*. Scholem rebelled against his assimilated family background, left Berlin in the 1920s, and became Professor of Kabbalah Studies at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. This volume contains his correspondence with Walter Benjamin and Hannah Arendt, whose book *Eichmann in Jerusalem* he severely criticised. His own literary monument was Dr Weltfremd, a character in the Hebrew novel *Shira* by the Nobel Prize winner SY Agnon. (By coincidence, in June Radio Four broadcast the play *Reni and the Brownshirts* based on the reminiscences of his niece Renée Goddard, née Scholem.)

Composers (a) Alexander Zeinlinsky was an Austrian composer-conductor connected with Mahler and Schönberg, who died as a refugee in wartime New York. His opera *König Kandaules* is being staged at the current Salzburg Festival with décor by Alfred Hrdlicka (who, incidentally, sculpted the monument of the pavement-scrubbing Jew outside Vienna's Albertina Gallery). (b) Georg Kreisler, 80 this year and likewise an Austrian Jewish refugee, made his name with song hits such as *Tanten tanzen Tango*. He recently showed his versatility by composing the opera *Der Aufstand der Schmetterlinge*, which had an enthusiastic reception in Vienna.

Hoofers. According to the *Radio Times*, Rita Hayworth had a Sephardi (Spanish-Jewish) father and was a cousin of Ginger Rogers. The latter was famously partnered by the - possibly Jewish - Friedrich Austerlitz, alias Fred Astaire.

Movie mogul Lewis Wasserman, who died aged 89, was president of the Music Corporation of America, which produced films, television series and records. Steven Spielberg, who had made *Jaws* and *Jurassic Park* under Wasserman's aegis, dubbed him a "benevolent godfather".

Playwright Tom Stoppard, whose work, interestingly, makes no allusions to his Jewish refugee ancestry, has completed a trilogy about nineteenth-century Russian political exiles Alexander Herzen, Mikhail Bakunin and Ivan Turgenev bearing the overall title *The Coast of Utopia*.

Journey of musical rediscovery

CONTINENTAL BRITONS - EMIGRE
COMPOSERS

Wigmore Hall, London, June 2002

'Continental Britons - Emigré Composers', two recent Wigmore Hall concerts, provided a fascinating voyage of musical rediscovery of works by composers who found refuge in Britain from Nazi Europe in the 1930s. The enterprising initiative by the JMI - a musical complement to the Jewish Museum's current AJR-sponsored Continental Britons Exhibition - was given in association with *Andante*, a new classical music website which will later release CDs of the music. The outstanding violin-piano duo of Nurith Pacht and Konstantin Lifschitz, the baritone Christian Immler and musicologist Erik Levi, and the notable Ensemble Modern, Frankfurt, all gave superb accounts of little-known works by influential figures such as Egon Wellesz, Mátyás Seiber, Franz Reizenstein, Berthold Goldschmidt, Karl Rankl and Hans Gál. Reasons for their neglect in Britain, especially by the BBC, were explored in a provocative seminar chaired by British music authority Lewis Foreman. His distinguished panel included Seiber's pupil Hugh Wood, Hans Gál's daughter, and nonagenarian conductors Peter Gellhorn and Vilém Tausky.

The range of styles was breathtaking. The Viennese Hans Gál (1890-1987), who settled in Edinburgh in 1938, composed prolifically, and an attractive song cycle - Violin Sonata and Serenade for clarinet, violin and cello, all from his pre-war years - showed him a skilful traditionalist with late-Brahmsian tendencies. By contrast, Seiber (1905-60), who came from Hungary in 1935, was an accessible avant-gardist with a flair for jazz, qualities shown in his excitingly rhythmic Violin Sonata, and the punchy 1956 *Permutazione a Cinque* for Wind

REVIEWS

Quintet. The gem for me was the brilliantly concise and colourful Wind Quintet by Franz Reizenstein (1911-68), a student of Hindemith and famous Hoffnung composer. It was the first work performed in Britain by the then 23-year-old and one of his masterpieces that deserve more airing, as do those of another influential Continental, the Viennese Egon Wellesz (1885-1974), a Schönberg student who settled in Oxford after the Anschluss. His Viennese works, the Debussyesque 'Cherry Blossom Songs' op. 8 and the richly-textured 'Sacred Song' composed in 1918 for Schönberg's Society for Private Performance of New Music, whilst astonishingly powerful, contrasted with the far more accessible 1948 Octet, betraying the influence of British composers Walton and Vaughan Williams, alongside Mahlerian elegance.

Other highlights included early songs by Hamburg-born Goldschmidt (1903-96) and his ravishing Fantasy for oboe, cello and harp, a 'late work' composed at the age of 88, songs by Goldschmidt's fellow Festival of Britain Prize winner, the Viennese Karl Rankl (1898-1968) and a UK premiere of violin pieces by Leopold Spinner (1906-80). But the most poignant moments came as both Gellhorn and Tausky stood to receive applause for their music, Gellhorn's Intermezzo for violin and piano, of 1937, and Tausky's 'Coventry', expressively played by the Ensemble Modern. This beautiful string quartet evokes Tausky's wartime memory of the bombed cathedral, while serving in the Czech free forces in 1940. Sixty years on, the shimmering strings sounds still convey like an angelic choir Tausky's vision of the 'ruined tower' of the

cathedral as a 'symbol of the future'. It is a future enriched by the cultural contribution of all these composers, whose works will hopefully reach ever wider audiences.

Malcolm Miller

A celebration of achievement

THE HITLER EMIGRES

Daniel Snowman

Chatto & Windus £20.00

This is not a book for the impatient reader. In chronicling the contribution of Jewish refugees to British culture, Snowman has provided not so much a story as an encyclopaedia. Everything is there: politics, history, potted biographies of famous personalities and some well-chosen anecdotes (i.e. British host to George Weidenfeld: "I hear you come from Germany. Did you know the Goerings?") One also has to wade through lengthy details of cultural events.

Much of the historical background to the early twentieth century and the war years must be familiar to AJR readers, yet no one could encompass all the information Snowman brings to light. In fact, the first chapter supplied me with the answer to a question that has haunted me all my life: What drew my father to Vienna from his native Lemberg (Lvov)?

Of the first immigrants who came to Britain, some, like musicians Fritz Busch and Karl Ebert, did so because of their abhorrence of the Nazi regime. Many of the Jewish immigrants, at this time still few in number, also had marketable talents and good connections. *Kristallnacht* brought thousands more. Snowman deals briefly with the oft-debated question 'Could the British government and the Jewish community have done more to rescue Jews before the war?' To this he provides the sad but sober answer: "[G]iven the fear of unemployment and the size of Britain

she did more proportionally than most other countries." One achievement Snowman celebrates is the saving of the lives of 10,000 children through the Kindertransport. I have to count myself among that number.

The rest of the book is concerned with the big names who were responsible between them for launching Glyndebourne (Busch and Ebert); the Edinburgh Festival (Rudolf Bing); the revival of Covent Garden Opera (Karl Rankl); and the building of the National Theatre (Peter Moro). There are accounts of the contributions of Hayek and Karl Popper to political thought and of Gombrich's popular *Story of Art* with its famous opening sentence "There is really no such thing as Art; there are only artists." The Freuds get a mention, as does, of course, the fascinating story of the Amadeus

Quartet interned on the Isle of Man as "enemy aliens" whose playing was to delight concertgoers after the war.

Born in 1938, Snowman has little personal acquaintance with the psychological aspects of refugeedom. There are, it is true, some references to problems of adjustment to a new country and culture, yet for a reconstruction of the atmosphere of the "Finchleystrasse" one must go elsewhere. This book is mainly a celebration of achievement, and it is good that this should be commemorated. But where are the women achievers? There are only two sentences on Lucie Rie and brief references to Anna Freud, Hilde Himmelweit, Eva Figes and Judith Kerr, whereas there are 38 to George Weidenfeld. The Jewish patriarchal tradition, it seems, is alive and well.

Martha Blend

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Film Review

Czechs bouncing back

DIVIDED WE FALL

(on limited release)

directed by Jan Hřebejk

Czech cinema has a fairly long pedigree stretching back to *Extase*, the 1930s 'shocker' starring the nude Hedy Lamarr. Under Communism, with the country politically comatose, cinema served as a conduit for muted dissent - the prime example of this being Milos Forman's *The Fireman's Ball*. In the mid-sixties, too, Jan Kadar filmed the poignant Holocaust story *The Shop in the High Street*, starring the peerless Yiddish actress Ida Kaminska.

In the post-Communist era, Czech cinema garnered the Oscar for best foreign film with Jan Sverak's *Kolya* in 1996. Now it has produced an equally worthy contender for the supreme accolade in Jan Hřebejk's *Divided We Fall*.

The film admittedly falls into the

contentious category of Holocaust drama made palatable by infusions of comedy. There are people who consider this mixture deeply offensive; some even wanted the best-known recent example of the genre, Roberto Benigni's *Life is Beautiful*, boycotted. Unlike the latter, though, *Divided We Fall* does not take the camera inside the camps. All the audience see is the deportation of a Jewish family, whose son David contrives to escape and returns, a wraithlike figure, to his home town. Here, by a stroke of extremely rare good fortune, he is given shelter by a childless couple who are the main protagonists of the film. The wife is vivacious, broody and pious - the husband a latter-day Svejik, vacillating between his innate humane instincts and the importunities of his self-styled protector, a Nazi collaborator. This opportunist with a Hitler moustache and a comically inflated ego wangles a job on the staff of the local Nazi bigwig for the husband. The downturn in Germany's military fortunes coincides with the disgrace and demotion of the *gauleiter* character. Stripped of his high rank, he has to vacate his villa and threatens to move into the childless couple's house (in whose cellar David is hiding).

It would be invidious to reveal the white-knuckle *dénouement*, except to add that after liberation the husband - ever the hapless Svejik figure - comes close to being shot as a collaborator.

As readers may have gathered, I, a lifelong theatregoer, have fallen out of love with the medium in recent years. My parallel cinema addiction, which I have long been feeding at the rate of one visit per week, has likewise been waning of late - but *Divided We Fall* has gone some way towards restoring my faith in the art form.

RG

PROFILE

Howard Spier

A second generation voice



Gaby Glassman

Gaby Glassman was born in Holland after the war. Her father's family had owned oil and flour mills in the Rhineland city of Neuss since the 1880s. In 1936 her father, René Simons, fled to Holland like so many other German Jews. He met Gaby's mother, who had arrived from Hamburg a year later, just before the outbreak of the war, and they did not meet again until the onset of the war.

Whereas Gaby's mother survived the war in hiding, René managed in 1942 to cross the Dutch border into Belgium with the help of smugglers en route for France. Interned in the South of France, he was recruited as a bookkeeper in a tinned fruit factory, and soon promoted to a directorship. As his mother was Belgian, he was fluent in both German and French. Whereas the Gestapo was looking for him because of his Jewishness, the French Resistance suspected him of being a German spy and arrested him six times, on one occasion threatening to execute him. As his language skills undoubtedly helped him to survive, it is perhaps no coincidence that Gaby's children are the third generation to have a bilingual upbringing. The war over, Gaby's father returned to Holland, where, in 1947, her parents married.

Gaby grew up in the post-war Jewish community of Amsterdam. On her birth in 1950, her parents received a gift from their friend Otto Frank, the father of Anne Frank. She also started at the school at which Anne herself had been a pupil. In 1968 she began her studies in psychology at Amsterdam University. Two years later, while staying with relations in Leicester, she met her husband-to-be David. Gaby later began work on a postgraduate thesis on the transgenerational effects of experiences of the Holocaust.

Wall of silence

After the war there was a taboo in society around the issue of the Holocaust. In the family too, a 'wall of silence' was created: parents did not talk about their experiences in order to protect their children from their pain, and children did not wish to ask potentially troubling questions for fear

of hurting their parents. The trauma experienced by survivors might be passed on to the second - and even third - generation. Not until the late 1980s, following a virtual explosion about the Holocaust in the media, was the taboo broken. The concept of the 'second generation' - the children of Holocaust survivors and refugees from Nazism - came into being.

In 1985 Gaby began in private practice. She is a psychologist registered with the Department of Health in the Netherlands and a counsellor accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. Previously, she had worked in the psychiatric department of the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery.

In 1989 Gaby set up short-term groups for second-generation Holocaust survivors and refugees which still meet at Belsize Square Synagogue, in London's Swiss Cottage area, where many of the Holocaust survivors and refugees had settled. She has now seen hundreds of members of the second generation. A year later she and the late Irene Bloomfield established small groups which included members of each generation. Now Gaby has made the psychological problems experienced by the first and second generations her life's work. In July 2000 she was one of

the organisers of the International Holocaust Survivors' and Second Generation Gathering at the University of London. She is the author of numerous scholarly articles.

Gaby pays regular visits to Prague and Berlin, where she works with groups of child survivors and second-generation gatherings. She is also one of the founders of the Holocaust Survivors' Centre, with the late Rabbi Hugo Gryn, the late Professor John Heimler and Jack Santcross. She was a member of the executive committee of the Second Generation Network and is a member of the AJR's Management Committee.

Gaby initiated, and runs, the annual Yom HaShoah 'Evening of Remembrance' at Pinner Synagogue, an event attended by several hundred people. 'British Shindler' Nicholas Winton was guest of honour this year. Neighbouring synagogues now hold events based on the Pinner model. The second generation has obtained a voice of its own.



'Desperate Journey'

PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

Freddie Knoller, a survivor of Auschwitz and Dora-Nordhausen, launched the publication of his memoirs at the Imperial War Museum, where he appears as a video witness in the Holocaust Exhibition. Born in Vienna, after Kristallnacht he sought refuge in Belgium, Vichy France and occupied Paris before being arrested by the Gestapo and deported. He was liberated from Belsen in April 1945, two days before his 24th birthday.

INSIDE the AJR

Essex: Miracle of the Kindertransport

Our latest meeting had no fixed programme, just a useful get-together. As it was somebody's birthday, we sang the usual Happy Birthday songs. A list was made to send birthday cards to all our members. But then the mood changed. Our thoughts went back to the past, with all its bitter memories. How hard it is to forget! Yet there is always the miracle of the Kindertransport, whose reunion was founded by Bertha Leverton, which saved all those Jewish children from certain death.

Julie Franks

Next meeting: Tuesday 13 August

Brighton and Hove Sarid hear talk on Spanish Inquisition

Andrew Herskovits gave a most interesting and well-researched talk on the Spanish Inquisition to a well-attended meeting. We learned, for instance, that the Inquisition was established primarily to investigate the 'New Christians', the Jews who had converted rather than being forced into penniless exile and were suspected of surreptitious Jewish activities. We also learned that until recently - well after the end of the last war - there was a law which prohibited Jews from living in Spain and becoming Spanish nationals. There was a lively question-and-answer session.

F Goldberg

Next meeting: Monday 19 August, 10.45 am. General discussion (group members)

Leeds HSFA: combating Mosley's fascists

'Antisemitism in Leeds in the 1930s' was the theme of a talk by Amanda Bergen. In 1937 the Leeds Jewish community behaved cautiously, even advising against attending a counter-demonstration when Mosley's



Members of the Liverpool group celebrate AJR's 60th anniversary

blackshirts marched in Leeds. Nonetheless, thousands turned up, curbing the fascists' activities. In this period there also arrived in Leeds some 1,000 Jewish refugees from Central Europe. Strenuous efforts were made to facilitate their immigration but many more could not be accommodated. Some members of the audience who came to Leeds at that time contributed their personal experiences to the discussion. Contemporary photographs and lists of hostel 'inmates' provoked much discussion.

Next meeting: Sunday 1 September. Yehuda Bergman, 'Rosh Hashanah - Is It the Beginning ...?!'

Pinner 'home-grown' session

In a thoroughly enjoyable 'home-grown' session, Hannah Graber entertained us with witty Ogden Nash readings, Kurt Simmons read German poems poking fun at internment, Alf Keiles played dance music composed by his South African friend Benny Michael as well as Jewish tributes to jazz, and Irene Marcus read more Ogden Nash plus an extract from Josephine Nutzenbacher's *Viennese Tart* contributed by Paul Samet in his absence. All this interspersed with beautiful renditions of Schubert and Schumann by Annette Saville on the piano.

Next meeting: Thursday 5 September, 2 pm: The Swinging 30's and 40's with Bill Phillip

West Midlands lunch party

Twenty-four members (out of 26) turned up for a splendid lunch party at the home of Leon Jessel. With further guests, including Sylvia Matus and Carol Rossen from AJR head office in London,

there were 31 of us in all. Due to the poor weather, we had to abandon our original plan for a garden party. We can't thank Leon enough for his generosity, but we did manage to collect £109.30 for the charity of his choice, of which he allocated £50 to his lodge and the remainder to the AJR Charitable Trust.

Next meeting: Sunday 1 September, 2.30 pm at Progressive Synagogue, Sheepcote Street, Birmingham: Brief review by members of their experiences on first arriving in England

East Midlands

Next meeting: Wednesday 21 August. Afternoon Tea (*Kaffee Klatsch*) at the home Mr and Mrs R. Norton. Please contact Myrna Glass at head office for details.

North London members at Continental Britons exhibition

Twenty-four of us paid a visit to the Continental Britons exhibition at the Jewish Museum. Following an introductory talk by Susanne Alexander, Bea Lewkowitz gave us the background to the exhibition. We were also shown a 12-minute extract from a 50-minute documentary featuring interviews with refugees, some of them prominent, others less so. The exhibition is well presented given the very limited space available, and is supported by a number of talks, educational programmes and concerts. A thoroughly enjoyable meeting concluded with tea (what else?) and pastries.

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: Thursday 29 August: first anniversary party.



Surprise party

Fred Dunstan, a popular and long-serving AJR member and volunteer, celebrated his 85th birthday at a surprise party given by his colleagues at head office. Born in Vienna, Fred became a scoutmaster and experienced youth leader who organised courses for hundreds of children deprived of their schooling after the Anschluss. In 1939 he came to England, where he helped to prepare the Kitchener camp.



PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

American intern at AJR

Kate Weiss, fourth from left, a history student from Clark University in Massachusetts, worked as a social services volunteer at AJR head office for 14 weeks. At a surprise farewell and thank you party, Kate is pictured, from left to right, with colleagues Marcia Goodman, Estelle Brookner, Ruth Finestone, Michael Newman, Viviana Markstein and Amanda Shaw.

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Wed	28	Mike Marandi - A Trip around the World
Thur	29	Yakov Paul - A Selection of Music from Vienna

Classified

Death

Wallace. Ann Wallace (née Pollard), beloved daughter of Lili Pollard (née Weissman) and sister to Robert, sadly died on 15.4.2002 after a long illness bravely borne. She leaves two daughters and three grandchildren.

Condolences

The AJR extends its deepest condolences to Peter and Sylvia Prager on the sad and tragic loss of their daughter Hazel.

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Obituaries

Lewis Goodman

Breslau-born Lewis Goodman has died in London, aged 75. His parents (who subsequently perished) sent him to stay with an uncle in Bradford after the Kristallnacht pogrom. In Bradford he attended a technical college, later joining Marks & Spencer as a junior cloth buyer. From there he moved into quality control and was eventually given a seat on the firm's board in charge of textiles technology. The control system he pioneered there was to become a model for the entire UK fashion and clothing industry.

Goodman later became a director of Vantona Viyella, and served voluntarily on such influential bodies as the British Standards Institute. He also chaired the frequently embattled - on account of the Arab boycott - Anglo-Israel Chamber of Commerce.

Appointed an OBE in 1990, he supported a whole range of good causes including B'nai B'rith sheltered housing, the Jewish Association for Mental Illness, and the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at Sussex University.

RG

Klaus Meyer

Berlin-born Klaus Meyer, who has died at the age of 83, was a printmaker of considerable repute. His surgeon father died in 1938, the year Klaus came to London to study graphics. After having been interned on the Isle of Man in 1940/41, he scratched a living as a commercial artist and did graphic work for the left-wing *Freie Deutsche Kulturbund*. Whereas his elder brother 'went back' to East Berlin after the war, the newly married Klaus settled down in a succession of dingy Hampstead flats, taking a prominent part in local artistic activities such as the Whitestone Pond open-air show.

In the mid-fifties he switched from painting to other branches of the visual arts. Aided by a German restitution grant, he studied woodcuts, etching and lithography at the Slade School. In the 1960s-70s he worked at Hornsey and

Kilburn colleges of art. Subsequently he launched a series of portfolios of prints - a project that enlisted the co-operation of E H Gombrich and Michael Hamburger - which formed the crowning achievement of his life.

RG

Jack Hellmann

Jack (Hans Joachim) Hellmann was born in Tann, Germany in 1925. As a result of Nazi persecution, his parents sent him to the Flersheim Sichel Stiftung in Frankfurt, a residential home for Jewish boys who attended the Philanthropin. In March 1939 the boys, together with their house parents and their two daughters, were able to emigrate on a Kindertransport, through the kind auspices of the Rothschild family. Jack was fortunate in that his parents escaped just before the war and he joined them in the USA in 1940. In New York, after having done military service, he built up a very successful construction company. He was delighted to be invited to reunions of the 'Cedar Boys' in Waddesdon and acted as spokesman in the book and film of *Into the Arms of Strangers*. He is survived by his widow Ann, his children and grandchildren.

Helga Brown

Kurt Marx

Kurt Marx, born in 1923 was one of the 'Cedar Boys' mentioned in *Into the Arms of Strangers*. All were rescued by James and Dorothy de Rothschild and accommodated in Waddesdon. Kurt was born in Biebrich, Wiesbaden. Neither his brother nor his parents survived the Holocaust. He arrived in England on a Kindertransport in 1939. Following internment he joined the Army Pioneer Corps, soon becoming a Sergeant Interpreter. Subsequently he was a telephone engineer in Newbury, where he became the town's Mace Bearer and the Mayor's Attendant. The Mayor's Gala this year was in his honour and the Town Council paid tribute. He was a devoted husband to Florence, who survives him.

Search Notices

Walter Hyde (formerly Hecht). Born Vienna 23.6.23, died Birmingham 29.11.01. Father Friedrich Hecht, born 19.12.1879 at Olmuetz Czechia, number was 48T 1447/58-5, Nr. 3069/1959. Mother Elsa Hecht, née Hartmann, born 2.2.1894, number was 48T 1447/58-5, B. Nr. 3068/1959. Friedrich and Elsa married 18.5.1921 Vienna. Family lived Vienna 18th district, Vinzengasse nr. 9. Friedrich previously married 1914-18, first wife died. Their daughter, Lisbeth Hecht, born 22.11.1914. Regarding estate, any relatives of Walter Hyde and anyone who knows whether Lisbeth survived Holocaust and had any descendants, please contact Dass Jakhu Solicitors, The Old Doctor's Surgery, 50 Newhall Street, Birmingham B3 3QE, tel + 44 (0)121 248 4000, fax + 44 (0)121 248 4020, email law@dassjakhu.com.

Fritz Schneck. Joined Pioneer Corps 1939. Served until Demob. If you knew my father or know which company he was in, please telephone 020 7431 1984.

Martin Rosenfeld, born 28.7.1873 Schwersenz, died 11.9.1962 Richmond, Surrey, UK. Father's name Samuel Rosenfeld (Rabbi). Spouse Marie Rosenfeld (née Cohn), born October 1884 St Petersburg, died 23.4.1967 Richmond. Martin one of 13 children, born in 'Polish corridor'. Attended university in Charlottenburg, Germany, graduated 20.3.1906. They had daughter, Mia, in May 1924. She married John Harvey in October 1944, settled in Richmond. John and Mia Harvey had Linda (30.12.1950), David (11.9.1954), Alice (15.2.1957). There are brothers of Martin in America but unknown who or where they are. Their names include Julius, Leo, Albert, Ernst (who died in concentration camp). We have portrait of Samuel painted by Boris Pasternak 1906. Any related Rosenfelds from Germany or America, please contact Rebecca Riley mail@englishteacher.fslife.co.uk.

'Risa' came to England a refugee from Austria. Well-known at Austrian Centre during war. Lived St. Stephen's Gardens, London W2. Married to Englishman, one daughter. Later married fellow refugee. Information on her whereabouts, please contact R. Ackerholt, 50 Platts Lane, London NW3 7NT, tel 020 7435 7357.

Annual General Meeting 2002

Raising AJR's profile

Chairman Andrew Kaufman reported that the AJR's 60th Anniversary celebrations had concluded with the Continental Britons exhibition at the Jewish Museum in London which had raised the AJR's profile among the wider community. Six new groups in England and Scotland had been formed and 149 new members had joined during the year. That very day 140 members of northern groups were getting together at the Beth Shalom Centre in Nottinghamshire, and the AJR was grateful for the assistance of the Claims Conference in providing additional funding.

AJR's Social Services department was coping admirably with the additional referrals imposed by an ageing community and brought the benefits of the Homecare Assistance scheme to 63 members. In addition, Self Aid grants approaching £250,000 in total also enabled members to remain in their homes as long as possible. The Day Centre, for many members a second home, continued to provide 'tender love and care' and fine catering. A dedicated team of volunteers backed the provision of services.

The newly-titled *AJR Journal* was "well respected and sometimes deliberately controversial", and the website had completed a year's operation. Cultural visits were being organised, including those to the Imperial War Museum and the Gilbert Collection, and group holidays to Bournemouth were being made twice a year. A visit to Prague was being planned for Spring 2003. The Central Office for Holocaust Claims, formed under an Umbrella Group of six refugee and survivor organisations, had helped thousands of claimants to complete complex forms and register difficult claims.

Owning one-third of Eleanor Rathbone House, the AJR was involved in the rehousing of tenants organised by B'nai B'rith JBG Housing Association. Other AJR members were living in OSHA homes in the Bishops Avenue which were being professionally managed by Jewish Care.

Andrew Kaufman congratulated AJR President Ludwig Spiro on reaching his 90th birthday and expressed appreciation to Judy Field, who was retiring from the Management Committee. He paid special tribute to the former Chairman, the late Max Kochmann, for his exemplary stewardship of AJR investments.

The Chairman reported that the Trustees of the AJR Charitable Trust believed that, subject to regular review, the AJR should maintain sufficient funding to continue the Association for 15-20 years, with priority maintained for the provision of services to the refugee generation. Further development as an educational trust was an option. Nominees for the Management Committee were re-elected and Andrew Kaufman, David Rothenberg and Eleanor Angel were returned as Honorary Officers. The Treasurer's report was approved.

The mysterious conference

Guest speaker Mark Roseman, Professor of Modern History at the University of Southampton and author of *The Villa, the Lake, the Meeting: Wannsee and the Final Solution*, said that the precise reason why the conference was called remained a puzzle to historians.

In 1947 US officials in Germany discovered a document headed 'Secret Reich matter'. The Wannsee Protocol, as it came to be known, summarised the results of a 90-minute meeting of top civil servants, SS and Nazi Party officials in January 1942 on the shores of Berlin's Lake Wannsee. The so-called Protocol laid the groundwork for a 'total solution to the Jewish Question'.

Many now believed that security chief Reinhard Heydrich called the meeting simply to ensure that everybody knew what Hitler wanted done and to establish SS oversight of the process. However, while Wannsee was not a decision-making conference, this did not diminish its importance. From that point on the whole of the German state apparatus was drawn into the process of the systematic killing of European Jewry.

Newsround

Blue plaques on Freud's house

English Heritage has unveiled two commemorative plaques on the house in Maresfield Gardens, Hampstead, in which Sigmund Freud, creator of psychoanalysis, lived in 1938 and 1939 after arriving from Vienna. A second plaque honours his daughter Anna, a pioneer of child psychotherapy, who lived there until 1982, when it became a museum.

New Jewish cultural centre

Plans for a Jewish cultural centre to serve London and the South East were announced by UJC Chairman Allan Morgenthau. It is to be sited at Ivy House, Hampstead, former home of the ballerina Anna Pavlova, and will offer cultural and educational facilities for conferences, exhibitions, plays and concerts.

Anne Frank case reopened

The Netherlands Institute for War Documentation is opening an enquiry into the identity of the betrayer of the Frank family's Amsterdam warehouse hiding place. Anton Ahlers, a business associate of Otto Frank, and Lena Hartog, a cleaning lady, are both suspects in new biographies of Anne. Another, Willem Van Maaren, who also worked at the warehouse, died in 1971 professing his innocence.

Protests at Hitler anti-Euro advert

Jewish communal leaders led a protest against part of an anti-euro currency cinema commercial depicting Hitler giving a Nazi salute and saying 'Ein Euro!' Former Home Secretary Lord Brittain, who lost family members in the Holocaust, was reported as describing the film as "tasteless".

Holocaust-denier's books taken off library shelves

Following a lengthy campaign by a Greater London Assembly member, Camden Council has agreed to remove books by David Irving from its library shelves. The decision brings Camden into line with neighbouring boroughs Barnet and Harrow.

Charges against Möllemann dropped

German prosecutors have decided not to press charges of racial incitement and slander against Jürgen Möllemann, vice-president of the Free Democratic Party. The complaint stemmed from comments Möllemann made suggesting that German Jewish leader Michel Friedman helped provoke antisemitism by his manner and behaviour.

'Desperately seeking solidarity'

The second and final part of this article will appear in a future issue.