

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

Three anniversaries

Each of the first three months of the year contains a day commemorating 'a turning point in history when history refused to turn'. They are the liberation of Auschwitz in January 1945, the collapse of Tsarism in Russia in February 1917, and the almost Europe-wide liberal revolutions of March 1848.

The 1848 revolutions, whose anniversary falls this month, were considered such a watershed that the entire preceding period was dubbed *Vormärz* (pre-March). In the German-speaking countries they certainly proved a turning point for Jews, who at last enjoyed equal rights and freedom from vexatious restrictions.

In the wider context, however, the German liberals lacked the sheer guts - and muscle - needed to face down a semi-feudal establishment. Their dilemma was symbolised by the Prussian King Frederick William IV's dictum 'I will not stoop to pick up a crown from the gutter' when the Frankfurt parliament offered him the role of Germany's constitutional monarch.

Twenty-three years later, in 1871, Germany was united not by a parliamentary vote but by a victorious army. Nearly half a century on, in 1918, the army suffered a rout but retained sufficient prestige inside the country for Ludendorff to offload blame for the defeat on to the politicians obliged to underwrite the peace treaty. By this stratagem he practically signed the death warrant for the Weimar Republic in its hour of birth.

The 1848 revolutions - like so much that happened in Europe - passed Russia by. The Tsarist empire was so vast, and so behind the times, that it required the shock of military defeat to galvanise it into reform. It suffered such shocks in the Crimea and the Far East, but the real knock-out occurred on the eastern front in World War One. By early 1917 a huge death toll and bread riots had eroded allegiance to Tsar Nicholas I and he was forced to abdicate. Russia now had a brief window of opportunity to turn from autocracy to democracy but Alexander Kerensky was out-manoeuvred by the authoritarian Bolsheviks, and the chance was missed.



Alexander Kerensky, Democratic Russian leader out-manoeuvred by Bolsheviks

There followed a brutal civil war between Whites and Reds, i.e. right-wing and left-wing totalitarians, which the former lost. Many Whites were *pogromshchiki* (pogromists), some of whom fled to Germany, where they made the nascent Nazi Party a 'present' of the Russian-manufactured forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

Not that the Nazis were in need of outside ideological reinforcement: the *völkisch* racist ideology had been taking root in the country since the 1870s, when Wilhelm Marr coined the term *Anti-Semitismus*. In the aftermath of the lost war and amid the apparent chaos of Weimar, the *völkisch* fringe burgeoned into a mass movement. Hitler took power and, virtually unhindered by the outside world, systematically prepared for the Holocaust. Even while he was perpetrating genocide on an industrial scale during World War Two his adversaries paid no special regard to the gargantuan slaughter.

The Soviet liberation of Auschwitz can therefore be considered a 'turning point when history didn't turn' because by January 1945 the German killing machine had practically completed its task.

This in no way detracts from the heroism of the Soviet - and British - forces who saved the last Jews left alive in the Nazi camps. But though the crematoria stopped belching smoke 60 years ago, the fires of hatred are still being stoked in Europe, most notably in the two aforementioned countries - Germany and Russia.

In the latter country some Duma deputies have revived not only the allegation of Jewish world rule made in the *Protocols of Zion* but also the medieval blood libel. In the East German region of Saxony a dozen NPD members of parliament walked out during a minute's silence for Holocaust victims.

In this country, the Holocaust commemoration at Westminster Hall was an immensely moving, dignified occasion, unmarred by a single false note. Even so, it was regrettable that the Muslim Council of Britain did not see fit to send a representative - ostensibly on the grounds that Israel pursues Nazi-style policies against the Palestinians.

This is a phrase that trips lightly off the tongues of even Western democratic politicians who ought to know better. Tony Benn claimed that the press lords hated the working class like the Nazis hated the Jews and Irish President Mary McAleese used a similar form of words about the Ulster Protestants' attitude to Catholics. However, both subsequently apologised for such unpardonable 'howlers'.

Dr Sakranie of the Muslim Council of Great Britain has not followed their example. He has equated genocide of the Jews with the measures of the Israeli army, although the Palestinian population has at least doubled since 1948 despite their toll of fatalities (Deir Yassin, Sabra and Shatila, etc).

Additionally, he has refused to mourn the victims of man's worst crime against his fellow-men at the very moment that, thanks to Sharon and Mahmoud Abbas, a chink of light has pierced the Middle Eastern gloom. Let's pray that 2005 will not prove another historic turning point 'when history failed to turn'.

As we go to press, we have learned with great sadness that Richard Grunberger, the Editor-in-Chief of the *AJR Journal*, has passed away. An appreciation of Richard's life and contribution to the *AJR* will appear in our April issue.

Making 'white' black

Richard Grunberger

Thirty years ago Birmingham, Alabama achieved global notoriety for inter-ethnic conflict as Black protesters demanded equal civil rights with Whites.

At the end of 2004 Birmingham, West Midlands, saw violence between police and Blacks - a.k.a. Sikhs - protesting at a play that offended their religious sensibilities.

We have been here before. In 1989 Muslim protesters burnt copies of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* outside Bradford City Hall. Though nominally non-violent, the *auto-da-fe* followed in the wake of the *fatwa* that caused the deaths of several of Rushdie's translators and publishers in other parts of the world.

The Bradford police treated the book burners leniently, for all that publicly incinerating a book doesn't fall far short of incitement to burning its author. The same charge of leniency can be levelled at the Birmingham police, who arrested two of the demonstrators for wilful damage. It is unfortunate that a Sikh spokesman reportedly described the director of the Birmingham Rep as 'White', i.e. insensitive to minority feelings.

Now, if there is one group in this country who are totally colour-blind, it is the acting fraternity. I have seen black actors play Plantagenet kings and Shropshire milkmaids on stage. Nowadays thespian racial sensitivity is so acute that no white actor would dare play Othello in black face as Laurence Olivier once did.

As so often happens, the Sikhs v Birmingham Rep story also has a Jewish angle. Asked about stage censorship, Corin Redgrave referred with regret to the banning some years ago of Jim Allen's play *Perdition*, which alleged Zionist complicity in the Holocaust. Redgrave's fellow-Trot, the film director Ken Loach, summoned the shade of the partial Holocaust victim Erich Fried, who reportedly said he was envious of Jim Allen and wished he had written *Perdition*.

Reading this left me speechless. When I recovered my voice I could only groan: with Jews like Fried - or, for that matter Trotsky - who needs enemies?

Help wanted for refugees' archives project

Sussex University's computer recording of nationwide German-Jewish refugees' personal and public archives

If you were a German-speaking refugee who came to Britain either as one of the 'Kinder' or as an adult between 1933 and 1950, or if you are a descendant, and are in possession of any papers, letters or photographs relating to those experiences, would you like to see them listed on a unique data base being compiled by the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex for scholars of the period?

In proportion to its size, Britain received more refugees from Nazi-occupied Europe than any other country. The aim of this project, which is being led by Professors Edward Timms and J. M. Ritchie, is to create a comprehensive database recording the existence and whereabouts of Jewish refugee archival collections in any part of the British Isles, including collections of audio and audiovisual narratives. Both German and English language resources are being sought.

To avoid any possible misunderstanding, while the new database will record the content and location of any documents relating to German-Jewish refugees that are in private or public hands, the University of Sussex is unable to accept the papers themselves. (Several other institutions, such as the Wiener Library, which houses the Bertha Leverton Kindertransport Archive, other universities, the Imperial War Museum, or your county library are among those which may wish to accept your papers, but must be consulted individually.)


Sponsored by the highly respected national Arts and Humanities Research

Board, the Sussex project will inaugurate a new era in migration research by recording the extent and variety of archival resources relating to German-speaking refugees, the majority from a Jewish background. To enable the project to be as comprehensive as possible, the Centre requests your help in recording collections which may range in size from a few letters to extensive private and professional papers. Please do not feel that you have to be a famous person for your papers to be included and you will be able to decide whether or not your papers should be made accessible to potential researchers.

In the first instance, please contact the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at Sussex University (not the Kindertransport or the AJR please) by phone, letter or email to give them an indication of the size of your collection. You will be sent a short questionnaire asking for a few basic details about yourself and your papers. Thank you for your co-operation in the vital task of keeping alive the cultural heritage of German-speaking refugees who came to Britain.

Professor Edward Timms

For all enquiries and to offer information, please contact:
Dr Andrea Hammel at the
Centre for German-Jewish Studies,
Arts Building B 120,
University of Sussex,
Falmer Brighton BN1 9QN
Telephone 01273-877178
email a.hammel@sussex.ac.uk

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Playing the 'Jewish card'

Richard Grunberger

In modern Europe antisemitism has always been a political weapon of the right (for all that some early socialists like Proudhon vilified the Jews as the vanguard of capitalism). Only in Britain have things not been so clear-cut as that because the (baptised) Jew Disraeli both led a Tory government at a crucial time in world affairs and coined the phrase 'One Nation Conservatism', which still has a resonance in current politics.

Even so, it is undeniable that the appeasement policy of the Tory prime ministers Baldwin and Chamberlain was influenced by the antisemitic prejudice of opinion formers like Lord Rothermere of the *Daily Mail*.

In the late 1940s Labour showed that it could be equally insensitive to Jewish concerns when, in order to appease the Arabs, Ernest Bevin stopped concentration camp survivors from reaching Palestine. Thirty years later the maverick Tory cabinet minister Enoch Powell not only stirred the racial pot, but also threatened postwar asylum seekers with revocation of British citizenship.

Prominent Labour politicians meanwhile denounced all forms of racism and antisemitism. This simple formula broke down when the rise of a self-conscious Muslim bloc of voters impacted on British politics. From a prolonged bad patch in the Eighties Tony Blair led Labour to an astonishing victory in the Nineties, marginally helped by the ethnic vote.

Labour lost the support of Muslim voters (as has been demonstrated in bye-elections) over the Iraq war, and it has been suggested that their projected posters for the oncoming election campaign - the flying pigs with Howard's and Letwin's faces and Howard as a latter-day Fagin - were anti-Jewish ploys to regain Muslim votes.

At around the same time Tory leader Michael Howard came out with the pledge that a future Conservative government would fix quotas for the

admission of asylum seekers to this country. This has elicited a protest from AJR's Chairman Andrew Kaufman, who argued that a quota system might prevent genuine refugees from reaching a safe haven, as tragically happened in the Thirties.

In other words, on the eve of the 2005 general election both major parties have laid themselves open to charges of pandering to prejudice, with charges and counter-charges flying back and forth.

In my personal opinion, Labour HQ can be absolved of antisemitic intent - though not of clumsy insensitivity - in the commissioning of the controversial posters. The charge that Michael Howard played the xenophobic card has more substance - but he would probably put forward the supreme Machiavellian justification that, in fighting for his political life, he had to try and land a blow on Labour where it was most vulnerable. I personally also find the maunderings of A. N. Wilson in his weekly literary columns in the Tory-supporting *Daily Telegraph* - where he has paid obeisance to Sir Oswald and Lady Diana Mosley - quite offensive.

Where Labour comes dangerously close to antisemitism is in the extreme anti-Zionist utterances of some of its - not necessarily official - spokespersons. Thus when Mayor Livingstone was challenged by a Green member of the London Assembly about lethally homophobic statements by Sheikh Qaradawi, he hit back alleging a Zionist conspiracy behind the challenge. And now, as Iran, with its nuclear ambitions, is moving up the political agenda, there are those who project a Jewish component in the dangerous standoff. They do this by questioning Israel's right to be the only nuclear-armed country in the Middle East. What these critics conveniently forget is that a nuclear threat to Israel would put the long-term survival - not so much in the physical sense as in the psychological - of the Jewish people in doubt.

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Growing interest in Northern Second Generation

Barbara Dorrity

Eighteen members of the Second Generation have met for the second time in Leeds to discuss issues relating to their shared history. Participants travelled from as far afield as Middlesbrough, Liverpool, Leicester and Birmingham.

The whole-day event began with discussion groups. The meeting was then addressed by Helen Bender, a psychotherapist who had worked with Link and had initiated second-generation gatherings in London in the mid-1990s, organising two major conferences. She also facilitated a workshop in the afternoon with the title 'Lost Jews and Assimilation'.

The level of interest shown by those living in the North indicates, firstly, that many have missed out on such opportunities until now, due in part to their geographic location, and, secondly, that the issues are still current and significant to those in their 30s, 40s and older. The mailing list for these events comprises 50 addresses and is still growing.

The next gathering is planned for May 2005 and any interested members of the Second Generation can contact Barbara Dresner Dorrity, AJR's Northern Region Social Worker, on barbara@ajr.org.uk or on tel 0161 368 5088.

Record number of 'hits' on AJR website

The unusual interest generated by Holocaust Memorial Day this year led to an exceptionally high number of hits on the AJR's website. As a result of the unprecedented media interest, the AJR's website recorded just under 8,000 visits in January alone.

Friends again - after half a century

On a recent visit to the Holocaust Survivors' Centre in north London, AJR's Accountant at head office, Ernie Goldmann, happened to strike up a conversation with another member. Hearing



Ernie Goldmann

the man mention he had spent several years at the Jewish Orphanage in West Norwood, Ernie burst out astonished: 'But I was there between 1944 and 1948!' Looking at him again, the man exclaimed: 'You're not Ernie Goldmann, are you? I'm Gerard Kramenstein!' Ernie was flabbergasted. The two had been close friends at the Orphanage. Having come together again after 55 years, their eyes moist with emotion, the two men vowed to stay in touch permanently.

Arts and Events Diary March 2005

To Thurs 17 March 'Art Behind Barbed Wire'. Exhibition of works by refugees in internment camps during the Second World War. Artists include Hugo Dachinger, Walter Nessler and Fritz Rosen. London Jewish Cultural Centre

Sun 6 Book Event: History, Memory and Identity, with David Baddiel in association with Book Week. David Baddiel discusses his recent novel *The Secret Purposes*. With Jonathan Freedland and Anne Karpf. Venue: Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London WC1. Time tbc. London Jewish Cultural Centre

Sun 6 Kressman Taylor's Address Unknown, 'the most effective indictment of Nazism to appear in fiction'. A reading by Andrew Sachs and Henry Goodman. Jewish Book Week. 5.00 pm. Royal National Hotel Tel 020 8343 4675

Mon 7 'To What Extent Should Freedom of Speech Be Absolute or Not?' Martin Page will introduce a discussion with special reference to *Jerry Springer the Opera* and the play *Behzti* (Dishonour) at

the Birmingham Repertory Theatre. Club 43

Tues 8 Music Programme: An Evening with Joseph Horovitz. 7.30 pm. Venue: Jewish Cultural Centre

Tues 8 Dr Mona Siddiqui (University of Glasgow), 'Judaism and Islam'. Parkes Institute, University of Southampton. 5.30 pm. Room 1163, Avenue Campus. Tel 023 8059 2261

Thur 10 A Reading: A Battered Page? The Internment of 'His Majesty's Most Loyal Enemy Aliens'. Author Ronald Stent will discuss his work on internment with his daughter Monica Howes. 7.30 pm. London Jewish Cultural Centre

Sun 13 Anthony Sher. In conversation with Nick Hern. **Jewish Book Week.** 5.00 pm. Royal National Hotel. Tel 020 8343 4675. 8.30 pm

Mon 14 Mary Shakeshaft MA, 'Living Just Up the Road: The Life and Works of John Keats'. Club 43

Tues 15 Hilde and Max Kochmann Memorial Lecture. Professor Edward Timms (University of Sussex), 'Origins and Angels: Karl Kraus's Religious Ideas as Interpreted by Gershom Scholem

and Walter Benjamin'. Wiener Library. 7.00 pm

Tues 15 European Voices. An Evening with Author Robert Menasse. Venue: Austrian Cultural Forum. 7.00 pm. London Jewish Cultural Centre

Mon 21 Laurence (and Geoffrey) Ben-Nathan, 'A Tourist in Ethiopia: Birds, Churches, ... People Relax and Enjoy' (with slides). Club 43

Tues 22 Dr Jael Geis, 'Yes, you have to forgive your enemies, but not before they are hanged'. Reflections on Revenge for the Destruction of European Jewry. Wiener Library. 7.00 pm

Mon 28 Club 43. No lecture (Bank Holiday)

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

Club 43 Belsize Square Synagogue. Meetings 7.45 pm. Contact Hans Seelig tel 01442 254360

London Jewish Cultural Centre, Kings College, Kidderpore Avenue, London NW3, tel 020 7431 0345

Wiener Library 4 Devonshire Street, London W1 tel 020 7636 7247

Holocaust Memorial Day marked by the AJR

On Tuesday 25 January, two days before the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the AJR held a memorial service at the Belsize Square Synagogue in northwest London. Some 150 people took part in the gathering, the venue of which had to be changed from the AJR Day Centre owing to the overwhelming demand for seats. At the deeply moving service, memorial candles were lit and Rev Larry Fine read out the names of over 450 family members of those present who perished in the Holocaust.

The following evening, the AJR hosted a dinner in a north London restaurant for 35 members from Liverpool, Manchester, Dundee and elsewhere in the UK who had come to London to take part in the national commemoration of the Holocaust.

On the morning of Thursday 27 January, around 200 AJR members attended a reception for Holocaust survivors held by the Queen and Prince Philip at St James's Palace. In the afternoon, the Royal couple joined some of the survivors and liberators of Nazi concentration camps at a ceremony in Westminster Hall to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

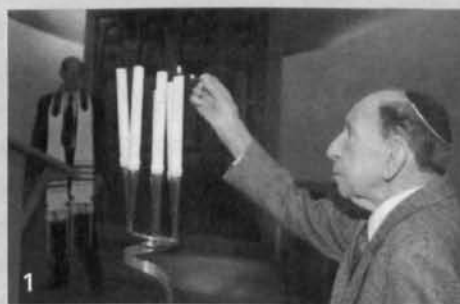
Holocaust Memorial Day: thank you

Thanks to all AJR staff concerned for making our two days so memorable - to those who made possible our evening at the Edgware restaurant, and to those who 'ferrying' there and back to the hotel as well as to the Westminster Hall. We realise just how much work went into this 'project'.

On behalf of all members of the 45 Society (Manchester) - many thanks.

Mayer and Lily Bomsztyk Salford

This letter is typical of many received by the AJR - Ed.



- 1 Max Abraham lights a candle at Belsize Square Synagogue memorial service for AJR members; Rev Larry Fine in background. Photo: Ben Domb/The Jewish News
- 2 AJR members at Belsize Square Synagogue service. Photo: Ben Domb/The Jewish News
- 3 Chajm Nagelsztajn with his son
- 4 Out of town members at dinner in north London restaurant hosted by AJR
- 5 Hermann Frankel and his wife
- 6 Maria Stern and her husband
- 7 Prince Philip in conversation with Freddie Knoller (centre). Photo: Buckingham Palace Press Office
- 8 The Queen meets Lippa Tepper. Photo: Buckingham Palace Press Office



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

WE MUST NOT FORGET

Sir - I read with great interest the article by Ruth Rothenberg about Frank Foley (January and February issues), especially in these days as we commemorate the liberation of Auschwitz. In the next few months, when we will remember the end of the Nazi evil, it is only fitting that we remember those who helped us to emigrate to freedom and, beyond the call of duty, laboured so hard in order that we might survive. Your worthy publication stands in the forefront of honouring Frank Foley, Nicolas Winton and others.

The individual who helped me and some of my friends to find refuge at the Kitchener Camp was the British trade commissioner Sir Thomas Frame. Immigration was not his portfolio yet he helped so many youngsters to leave Germany. He always mentioned that as immigrants we would have an excellent chance to emigrate to the dominions. He worked closely with Philip Kuzower, a leading member of the Jewish community.

It is sad that it took so many years to honour these people. Only recently Colin Powell, the former US Secretary of State, honoured a former US vice-consul in Marseille, Harry Bingham, who defied the State Department and other US authorities by issuing some 2,500 visas in order to save people's lives. He helped many people to arrive in the USA via Spain and other countries. Marc Chagall and Max Ernst were among those he saved. He lost his diplomatic position. As Jews, it is our duty to follow the precept *Al tishkach* - we must not forget.

Leo Klag
Montreal

INSPIRER OF A GENERATION OF YOUNG MEN

Sir - I read Anthony Grenville's review of *Deutsche Juden im Kampf um Recht und Freiheit* (October issue) with great interest and, since I do not have access to that book, I would like to ask whether any mention is made of my Uncle Ludwig Tietz, who died in 1933 at the tragically young age of 37.

He was the creator of the *Reichsausschuss der Jüdischen Jugendverbände Deutschlands* and, as such, inspired a whole generation of young men, including the AJR's Werner Rosenstock, who had a photograph of my uncle on the wall behind his desk. In 1937 a technical school (*Lehrwerkstätte*) was opened in his name at Jagur in Palestine. While the school has undergone changes a memorial plaque to Ludwig Tietz is still to be found there.

It occurs to me that it might not be inappropriate for the *AJR Journal* to run a series on people like Ludwig Tietz, Dr Leo Baeck and other members of the Centralverein and similar organisations who, 60 to 70 years ago, sacrificed their time, energy and even their lives for the benefit of the Jewish community. How many of us who are left today know of these people and their sacrifices?

Richard B Tait
Richmond, Surrey

Lugwig Tietz is not mentioned in any of the essays - A.G.

IF PIGS COULD FLY

One of the units of the Soviet army invading Czechoslovakia in August 1968 had the task of occupying Zlin, the Moravian town made famous by Tomas Bata, the founder of the shoe empire. This town's inhabitants decided to express their feelings by hanging out

black flags - the symbol of mourning. Most households possessed such a flag in case of the death of any of its occupants. Black was accepted as the colour of mourning - black armbands were worn too. But the commander of the Soviet unit knew differently. He had been brought up in a culture where black was the symbol of anarchism - the last internal enemy of Bolshevism to be defeated after the Revolution. He threatened the representatives of Zlin with dire consequences if the flags did not instantly disappear. In any case, the town was given a hard time as a punishment. The attempt to explain was met with a lesson from Russian history - the officer had his certainties and his present experience was enforcing them.

The discriminatory legislation requiring Jews who had to take an oath to stand on a bloody pigskin was abolished in Prussia in 1869, around the time that general suffrage (for men) was introduced. This was also a year after the publication of the novel *Biarritz* by Sir John Radcliffe (pseudonym for Hermann Joedsche), which featured secret nocturnal meetings in Prague's Jewish cemetery of the 12 Jewish tribes allegedly preparing to take power over the Christian world. In 1870 the Pope was declared infallible and Rome replaced Florence as the capital of the (almost) unified Italy. Germany became a unified state in 1870 too.

I would like to know why the saying goes 'if pigs could fly' - rather than cows or donkeys. Also, I would like to know how it came about that the particular two gentlemen are at the helm of the Conservative Party at this particular time. No doubt this will be minutely researched - with no effect on anyone's understanding.

In some quarters, relativism is a dirty word these days. But we need to reconcile ourselves to norms, values, interpretations of symbols being culture-bound - the black flag of the counter-revolution and the connotations of *kosher* and *trefe*.

Henry Schermer
Stoke-on-Trent

JEW IN THE GERMAN ARMY

Sir - Your correspondent Ralph Blumenau is not correct in stating that no Jew was ever a commissioned officer in the German (Prussian) army (February issue). The most distinguished Jew in that army was Meno Burg, who taught at the Royal Prussian Artillery School, eventually reaching the rank of major. He died in 1853 and was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Berlin with full military honours.

Henry Walton should know that Jews who served as frontline soldiers in the First World War were sent to Theresienstadt as a reward for their services. Most ended their lives together with their families in Auschwitz, although the founder in 1919 of the *Reichsbund Jüdischer Frontsoldaten*, Leo Loewenstein, survived in Theresienstadt.

Alfred Simms is only partly correct. Jews were permitted to volunteer for a year as probationary reserve officers but, after their year's service, they were never confirmed in that rank. Even Walter Rathenau, of whom a photograph exists as a *Gardekurassier* in all his officer's regalia, was never accepted (1890-91). He became an industrialist and organised the German war effort of 1914-18 and eventually became Foreign Minister during the Weimar Republic. He was assassinated in 1922.

*Ernest G Kolman
Greenford, Middx*

ISOLATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Sir - Nothing is to be gained from shutting ourselves off from Estonia (January issue), as Frank Bright suggests. Czechoslovakia was a little country, about which we knew nothing. Better to involve ourselves, through an enlarged Europe, with the opportunity to influence by word and example than let the sore fester across an unchallengeable national boundary.

*Alan S Kaye
Marlow, Bucks*

CONFUSED AND MISLEADING

Sir - Alfred Kessler, who wrote a letter about Austria in your February issue, seems somewhat muddled. He is mixing up the payments from the Nationalfond with those from the General Settlement Fund (GSF). Yes, we are receiving an extra 1000 Euros from the Nationalfond. No, we haven't received a penny yet from the GSF. I therefore do not understand his words 'final restitution from the General Fund by the Austrian government': they are confusing and misleading. As for his great appreciation of the offer by the Austrians of a free week's stay in Vienna, he is a lucky man if that is all he expects from them. What a cheap 'gesture of reconciliation'!

*Peter Phillips
Loudwater, Herts*

RETIREMENT OF SYLVIA MATUS

Sir - Just a line to say thank you for inviting me to Sylvia Matus's retirement party at the Day Centre in West Hampstead. It was a very pleasant party and I only wish the reason for it had been a different one. I have known Sylvia for quite a long time and she has never been anything but kind and loving. I will miss her very much but I am hoping she will perhaps attend a few meetings now and again. I wish her all the very best and hope that she enjoys her retirement.

*Henny Rednall
Birmingham*

FEMME FATALE

Sir - When reading about Purim's Queen Esther (February issue) one must always remember that by doing what she did she saved the Jewish people from destruction. Queen Kimberley may well require her own type of *Megillah*, just to record the names of all her lovers.

*Fred Rosner
Chigwell, Essex*

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ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

Turkey, with its whirling dervishes, warlords, dancing slave girls, insouciant sultans and secretive sensuality, fires the romantic Western imagination. The fantasy is fed by Turkey's peculiar position as it straddles two continents: Europe and Asia. What became the Ottoman Empire had its roots in a disparate and nomadic tribespeople who roamed Inner Asia over 1,000 years ago. **Turks**, the **Royal Academy's** celebrated exhibition, charts their artistic development from the time when the Turkic peoples, considered barbarians by the Chinese, entered the steppes of Western Eurasia and founded an empire in Mongolia and the Altai. Traces of this poly-ethnic and multi-lingual culture survive in primitive human and animal sculpture, resembling Aztec art, and runic, Turkic scripts.



Enigmatic painting by Muhammad Siyah Qalam, 'Muhammad of the Black Pen'

This was the first of a series of Turkic empires, from the Khazars and Uighurs of Ukraine and Inner Asia right up to the 400-year-old Ottoman dominion, which dissolved during the First World War, eventually leading, among other things, to the creation of the state of Israel.

Turkey is a long story. But her modern history is not dealt with here. Instead, we are invited to admire the artistic wealth of this polyglot entity which gave rise to a great nation. After the collapse of the first Turkic empires,

these tribes moved into Central Asia, Iran and Turkey, asserting their power by conquering Persian or Arab rulers. And here a new challenge met them. They became patrons of the arts. Their multi-ethnic and multi-religious traditions were a key to artistic variety, fostered at the time of the Silk Route, the commercial land roads that traversed the edge of the desert between China and the West.

Eighth-century wall paintings featured bejewelled deities, sun and moon gods playing the flute or riding in chariots. By the twelfth century, these gave way to Chinese-influenced, stylised warriors, emblematic of sacrifice. Centuries of Turkic migrations brought contacts between Iran, India and Tibet, with Buddhism, Christianity to Islam, which the Turks adopted in the 900s. Despite all the illuminated manuscripts, mosaics, ceramics, inlaid metalwork and calligraphy for which their art has become known, this exhibition offers too much - and not enough.

What happened to Byzantine Christian art after the Ottoman Emperor, Mehmet II, conquered Constantinople in 1453? During the European Renaissance this far-sighted emperor welcomed European and Eastern Islamic art and literature and invited Italian artists to paint his portrait. These were done, however, not from life but from fragments of his likeness on coins, and the static profiles that resulted were a far cry from the golden age of Byzantine art.

Yet some work, like the fifteenth-century paintings of Muhammad Siyah Qalam (Muhammad of the Black Pen), are considered among the richest and most enigmatic examples of Islamic art. Demons and dervishes reflect nomadic life and offer a glimpse into their imagination. Turkey's artistic odyssey ends in the 1600s. It would have been interesting to take it further. No doubt political considerations - concerning her controversial moves to enter the EC - are at play.

RG's INTERFACE

Tel Aviv The resilience of Israeli democracy after the second *intifada* is attested by the launch of *Mita'am*, a periodical 'for literature and radical thought'. The first issue provides space for the Israeli pro-Palestinian academic Ilan Pappé to articulate his critique of Zionism.

New York The famous and famously controversial architect Daniel Libeskind has published the story of his life - from being the child of survivors in postwar Poland to the present. Entitled *Breaking Ground*, it is a mixture of autobiography and settling accounts with rivals and municipal bureaucrats in Berlin and New York.

Zürich A year ago the New York-based *Aufbau* expired after 70 years of publication. Now, a rather glossy periodical of that name has surfaced in Switzerland. The first issue carries an interesting article on the different treatment accorded to Jews in the cinema, which is still reverential, and on television, where series like *The Simpsons* and *South Park* feature thoroughly dislikable Jewish characters.

Ludwigshafen The Ernst Bloch Centre is staging an exhibition entitled *Ernst and Carola Bloch in Leipzig*, covering the time the famous Marxist philosopher and author of a study on utopianism - *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* - spent in the DDR before defecting to the West.

Vienna Before the Anschluss the Austrian capital enjoyed a vibrant cabaret scene in which Jews predominated. To evoke that golden age, the Armin Berg Gesellschaft regularly puts on programmes under the title of the comic's catchphrase 'Ich glaub ich bin nicht ganz normal'. An equally famous contemporary, Fritz Grünbaum, will be commemorated by a public reading in April on the anniversary of his death in a concentration camp.

London Michael Verhoelven's excellent anti-Nazi film *The Nasty Girl* - Oscar-nominated for Best Foreign Language entry - is now available on DVD from Arrow Films Ltd.

A doomed love affair

THE PITY OF IT ALL: A PORTRAIT OF JEWS IN GERMANY 1743-1933

By Amos Elon

Penguin Books 2004, £10.99, 464 pp.

Erich Maria Remarque, the exiled anti-Nazi author of *All Quiet on the Western Front*, was asked whether he missed Germany. 'Why should I?', he answered. 'I'm not Jewish.' This book is a story of a doomed love affair that promised happiness to Jews through *Bildung*, the acquisition of German culture through emancipation and conversion. The best educated, the wealthiest and the most ambitious converted, but they soon realised that their hopes of instant equality were only dreams.

Christian opposition to conversions emerged in 1791, with Rattenauer's pamphlet positing an immutable Jewish character that made integration not only undesirable but impossible. Fichte, a fervent democrat, excluded Jews from equality. Goethe violently opposed Jewish emancipation. Heine courted the Germans though he was aware of the admired host nation's Jew-hatred. Even Herzl was affected by the Jews' love affair with Germany. His hero as a youth was Bismarck and his dream was to become a German nobleman. Significantly, it was not German but French antisemitism that convinced him of the necessity of a homeland for Jews as the only solution to their centuries-long persecution.

Jewish support for the 1914-18 war exceeded that of non-Jews. Leo Baeck strongly approved of it and Ernst Lissauer wrote *Gott strafe England*. The Jewish chemist Fritz Haber invented Germany's 'secret weapon', poison gas; ironically, it was he who developed Cyclon B, the gas that was used in Auschwitz. Many other Jewish intellectuals espoused the false justifications for the war, among them Freud, Buber, Hugo von Hoffmanstahl and Paul Ehrlich. Einstein led a few dissenters such as Schnitzler. Soon, however, the war began to turn the love affair sour. Rathenau, the postwar foreign minister, saw the end coming: 'The more Jews die in the conflict', he wrote in 1916, 'the more persistent will be their opponents' complaints that the Jews did nothing but sit behind the

REVIEWS

front lines profiteering from the war. The hatred will double and treble.' The presence of many Jews in the 1918 revolutionary movements was used to foment antisemitism.

The pity of it was that, as the last chapter of the book describes, the period of the Weimar Republic was a time of intense creativity in the arts and sciences. Of the five best known Expressionist dramatists three were Jews: Ernst Toller, Franz Werfel and Karl Sternheim. It was a time of extreme paradoxes, of growing Nazism and rising Jewish prominence but tragically Jews mistook this for an index of successful integration.

The Third Reich was the product of the German psyche historically steeped in antisemitism. Perhaps it all had to happen, if only to bring home to Jews intent on settling among strangers the lessons of Spain and Germany that Jewish integration is a self-deceptive dream. This book records not only German Jewry's tragic mistakes but also its never-to-be-forgotten glorious achievements and - yes - the terrible pity of it all.

Andrew Herskovits

A what if story

THE PLOT AGAINST AMERICA

By Philip Roth

Jonathan Cape 2004, £16.99

This is a 'what if' story. Roth imagines what would have happened in America if in 1940, instead of Roosevelt being re-elected, the celebrated aviator and Nazi sympathiser Lindbergh had occupied the White House. The story is seen through the eyes of a child growing up in a typical Jewish second-generation immigrant family in Newark, New Jersey. The father is a hardworking insurance agent; his wife is active in the parent-teacher organisation at their sons' school. Curiously, only the older boy, 'Sandy', has a name. The others are 'my father' or 'my mother'. They consider

themselves safe in their American identity, protected by a constitution which proclaims 'All men are created equal'. And yet, when the father is offered a promotion that would entail living in a neighbourhood where his family are the only Jews, he turns it down.

Gradually their carapace of security is shattered: they are turned out of a hotel in which they had booked rooms and appalled by the overtly antisemitic speeches of Lindbergh: 'The Jews' greatest danger to this country lies in their large ownership and influence in our motion pictures, our press, our radio and our government.' He accuses the Jews of being warmongers, bent on sacrificing American lives and in his diaries deplores 'the infiltration of inferior blood'.

Astonishingly he is supported by a crazy rabbi who rationalises these rabid speeches as a desire to help Jews to emerge from the paranoia of their self-imposed ghetto. He concedes that Lindbergh has been received by Hitler and decorated by Goering, but asserts that he was in reality spying for America. Still blinkered, the rabbi is happy to attend a White House party where Ribbentrop is an honoured guest.

A scheme by the newly created 'Office of American Absorption' aimed at bringing Jewish boys into contact with rural Christian Americans proves attractive to Sandy and divides his family. His cousin, on the other hand, who reacts by volunteering for the forces in Canada, returns from the war having lost a leg and his idealism. Then there is a decree ordering the dispersal of Jewish families to remote parts of the country. Some flee to Canada, but Sandy's father decides to stick it out. Fear stalks the Jewish community. There are pogroms in which synagogues are burned and shops

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
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looted; a brave anti-Nazi reporter is killed, and the fellow-travelling rabbi is arrested.

What is fascinating about the book to a British reader is the insight it gives into Jewish American life in the 1930s-40s. It is full of American place-names, and describes attitudes, hobbies, preoccupations. It also shows how cleverly propaganda is manipulated either to frighten, or reassure, a helpless minority. On the richer scale of terror, the book does not score highly: to a survivor of the Lodz ghetto the events described would only be the nursery slopes of persecution. Which proves how difficult it is for an American like Roth, brought up miles away from Europe, to engage with the full horror of what happened there.

Martha Blend

FILM

No worlds left to conquer

ALEXANDER

Directed by Oliver Stone

On general release

As a fan of - some would say sucker for - films set in classical antiquity, I simply had to follow up *Troy* with *Alexander*. The advance publicity was much as before - epic blockbuster, cast of thousands - and so were the negative critiques. US box office takings were additionally affected by the depiction of Alexander as gay. In fact, he is shown as bi-sexual, and his attachment to his warrior-buddy Hephaestus is expressed through manly hugs of the type witnessed on football pitches every time a goal is scored.

My personal criticism of the film starts with the fact that the screen Alexander, Colin Farrell, hardly conforms to the noble-visaged image conveyed by marble busts at the British Museum. Farrell is Irish, and so are some of the actors playing warrior chiefs; did Oliver Stone perhaps try to suggest that Macedonians weren't fully Greek, just as the Irish aren't full Brits? What irked me most was Anthony Hopkins hamming it up unconscionably as Ptolemy in the tiresome narrative between the,

admittedly sometimes over-lucid, action scenes. Even so, the screen images of the colourful splendour and lush exoticism of Babylon were alone worth the price of admission.

But Oliver Stone's *Alexander*, unlike *Troy*, also has a subtext. Its emphasis is not on the warrior king standing on a cliff top in India sobbing 'I have no worlds left to conquer', but on the visionary who rose above the ethnocentric tribalism of the Greeks, which dubbed all non-Greeks 'barbarians'. Though the film unaccountably omits the mass wedding at Bursa, where Alexander presided over the union of 10,000 Macedonians with local girls, the underlying message is that Alexander projected a super-state which, centuries in advance of its time, would treat Greeks and conquered Asiatics as equals.

Richard Grunberger

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Letter from Israel

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson

And the rains came. Since water in Israel is a very precious commodity, whenever the first winter rains descend the nation rejoices. After that first moment of elation, however, we start longing for the sun to reappear. Israelis are used to seeing that golden orb beaming down on them for most of their waking hours, and many people get quite downcast when it is obscured by clouds for more than a day or two.

Of course, there is always the consolation of knowing that in the summer there will be unabated sunshine for months on end, and then one will be able to complain about the interminable heat. But just now, as the depths of winter loom, that is still a very distant prospect.

The Israeli winter is not unalloyed gloom, however. Far from it. There are many days of warm but not hot sunshine, when the air is crisp and cool and the whole world seems to have been burnished after the rain. Those are the days when children refuse to wear their sweaters or forget their coats in school. Those are also the days when I agonise about which shoes to wear, and usually end up wearing the wrong ones.

These are also the days when everyone is busy coughing and sneezing, except for those who have been laid low with the flu. Some people blame the constant changes in temperature, others the fact that they were not warmly enough dressed (or were too warmly dressed), while true misanthropists tend to blame other people for spreading their germs around.

Everyone has their pet remedy or prophylactic, be it Vitamin C, Achinacea, liquorice or chicken soup. But when all is said and done, just like the winter, the common cold has to be allowed to take its course. All one can do is hope to emerge from both stronger and more resilient.

Born in Vienna in 1940, Alexander Christiani spent the first five years of his life as an only child insulated from the brutalities of war: his father was a liberal-minded biochemist pursuing cancer research in the countryside. Initially he intended to emulate his father, but he chose law as a more 'utilitarian' profession, which enabled him earlier to marry his wife Renate.

His leaving university in 1964 with a doctorate in law coincided with the re-opening of the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna where, with the encouragement of Foreign Minister Bruno Kreisky, he joined the first intake, entering the Austrian diplomatic service two years later. From the first, he dealt with United Nations work, which led to his appointment in 1969 as Assistant to Austria's Secretary General for Foreign Affairs.

The following year he was posted to the Austrian UN mission in New York, his appointment coinciding with Kurt Waldheim's election as UN Secretary General, the news of which he recalls being the first to have told Waldheim. Unsurprisingly, Waldheim offered Christiani the opportunity to join his UN staff, but he opted to remain with the Austrian legation in New York. In the ensuing five years he assumed the senior post of Alternate Representative of Austria to the Security Council.

Christiani's next posting was to have been in Algiers, but he was recalled by the Foreign Office for an even greater challenge. In 1975 Vienna was set to become the third largest centre for UN activities and he was charged with the task of developing, opening and directing the Vienna International Centre. This responsibility extended to all international organisations based in Vienna and gave him direct access to Chancellor Kreisky. He was next posted to Berlin to head the Austrian Delegation, reporting directly to Vienna from a city beleaguered in the midst of the communist GDR.

In 1986 Dr Christiani was appointed to his first ambassadorial post, to the Republic of South Africa. He reveals his brief as 'having as little contact as possible with the apartheid regime and as much as possible with the disadvantaged'. To protect congregants,

PROFILE

Ronald Channing

Dr Alexander Christiani Ambassador of the Republic of Austria



he often attended mass in the certain knowledge that the state police would not enter a church in which he was praying. He knew many of the country's leading figures. FW de Clerk - 'an impressive man' - confided that the Dutch Reform Church's ruling that apartheid could not be justified by the Bible spelled the inevitability of major change.

In 1990 Nelson Mandela was released from his 27-year imprisonment. The briefing Mandela gave the diplomatic corps was arranged and chaired by Christiani, then the doyen of the diplomatic corps.

Appointed Director of the Middle East and Africa Department at the Foreign Ministry later that year, he developed policy towards 65 countries. In August Iraq invaded Kuwait and Christiani formulated his country's Middle East policy. Eager to foster reconciliation between Israel and the Palestinians, he played an honourable role in the negotiations which led to the Oslo agreement of 1993, participating in no less than 48 meetings and chairing the important Working Group on Water Resources, whose first meeting he organised in Vienna.

In 1996 he was appointed Ambassador

to the Netherlands and Permanent Representative of Austria to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in The Hague. During his term in the Netherlands, Christiani was thrown into the quagmire of the 'sanctions' against Austria by EU member states following the Austrian Chancellor's decision to form a coalition with Jörg Haider's Freedom Party. Between February and June 2000 he gave numerous interviews to the Dutch media in an occasionally 'self-critical' way for Austria, succeeding in turning an initially hostile attitude in Austria's favour.

In 2000 he took up his last posting, as Ambassador to the Court of St James's, a position from which he is shortly to retire. He set himself a priority to address university students, schoolchildren and representative institutions, as well as leading organisations in the Jewish community, on his government's negation of the dictum that the Austrians were Hitler's first victims. 'Austria cannot escape collective shame and responsibility' for its participation in the destruction of its Jewish community, he said. The most important challenge today for Jews and non-Jews alike is to teach the younger generation 'never again'.

His moving address at the unveiling of the Kindertransport statue at Liverpool Street Station marked an historic affirmation of the intent of today's Austria to make just restitution to the victims and their heirs. 'One cannot compensate people for loss of life, total loss of property, your home and much, much more', he reflects. 'We can make a small humanitarian gesture, admit to our guilt and seek to improve the society we live in.' He sees Austria as no longer being at the margins of progressive, liberal and democratic states, but once again with an enhanced role placed strategically at the epicentre of the newly expanded European Union.

A tall and distinguished man, welcoming and outspoken, Dr Christiani plans to pursue an active life in 'retirement'. He wishes to make a modest contribution to restoring confidence-building measures to Israeli-Palestinian relations - and will take the opportunity for piano lessons to increase both his classical and jazz repertoire!

INSIDE the AJR

Leeds HSFA 'Memories'

Following our AGM Liesl Carter gave a poignant talk entitled 'Memories', describing her escape from Nazi Germany. At the age of four, she travelled alone to Norway, where she was given accommodation by a Norwegian family before journeying on to Britain. After the war she tried unsuccessfully to contact those who had given her shelter, but her employer finally managed to trace the family, who had moved from Bergen to Oslo. Liesl has remained in contact with the family ever since.

Martin Kapel

Wessex party

We had a quiz at our Chanukah party which tested our knowledge of history, grammar, music and media. Our chairman, Mark Goldfinger, gave an interesting introductory talk and, finally, we read out the names of our prisoners in Iran or Syria (nobody knows): Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman and Yehuda Katz, and (in Butner, Colorado) Jonathan Pollard.

George Ettinger

Next meeting: Tues 22 March. Richard Grunberger

HGS outing to Disraeli exhibition

We were welcomed at the Jewish Museum in Camden Town by Education Officer Susanne Alexander, who explained the background to the exhibition. The exhibition itself was a series of fascinating pictures interspersed with summaries of the stages of Disraeli's life. A high point was the collection of contemporary cartoons, whose biting wit often illuminated the events in the life of this remarkable man.

Paul Cohn

North London discussion on HMD

Our guest speaker was Rabbi Colin Elmer, the minister of our host venue. His intended subject was 'Travels with the Rabbi', but, given that our meeting coincided with Holocaust Memorial Day, we opted to have a discussion on that subject. All present were impressed by the variety of points raised. We concluded with a memorial prayer and a memorial candle was lit.

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: Thurs 31 March. 'The Grand Tour', a musical based on the story 'Jakobovskiy and the Colonel', presented by Walter Woyda

Dick the Milk remembered in Harrogate

Our first meeting this year and a very pleasant afternoon. We were informed that the commemorative bench to Dick the Milk (Richard Hyman), to whose cost we contributed last year, had been erected at Knaresborough House. Earlier, Susanne Green reminded us of the next Northern holiday in St Annes in July.

Inge Little

Next meeting: Wed 30 March, 2.00 pm at Masham Close Harrogate

Leeds HSFA: the story of Barbra Streisand

Norman Stone gave an excellent account of the life and career of Barbra Streisand, illustrating the stages of her rise to fame with relevant recordings. One of these enabled us to hear her voice during childhood, while others showed clearly how her talent matured in later years. Particularly moving was her rendering of *Avinu Malkenu*.

Martin Kapel

Jovial meeting in West Midlands (Birmingham)

At a jovial get-together at the home of Phillip and Lia Lesser the 90th birthday of our dear Helen Freeland was celebrated - much to her surprise and delight. We are most grateful for the Lessers' wonderful hospitality.

Werner Abraham

Next meeting: Mon 7 March, 2.30 at Rake Way, Tennant Street, Birmingham. Alf Keiles, 'The Jewish Contribution to Jazz'

Essex: the importance of Tzedaka

Rabbi Mendel Lew told us that *Tzedaka* means not only charity but can also mean kindness or justice. For example, if the more fortunate among us give some of their wealth to the poor, that is not charity but justice. Equally, he who gives to the needy deserves the gratitude of our community, whereas he who gives without disclosing his name deserves it even more.

Julie Franks

Next meeting: Tues 8 March, 11.00 am

Iford: a brave story well told

Despite a bleak winter's day, 31 members and friends were present. With the arranged speaker unable to come due to sickness, one of our own members, Maurice Moskal, gave a vivid account of his many journeys during the war after leaving Poland, ending up in Africa in a group of only 30 Jews. A brave story well told.

Meta Roseneil

Next meeting: Wed 2 March, 10.30 am. 'Churchill', by James Taylor, Head of Research, Churchill Museum

South London special meeting

Twenty members attended a special meeting on the future of the group following the retirement of Ken Ambrose. Presentations were made to our wonderful treasurer, Helen Aronson, who has retired, and to Lotte May, who has retired from the Planning Committee, where she did such good work. After Walter Woyda had read out the results of a questionnaire sent to members, it was decided to continue for another year at the South London Synagogue with meetings as before, every two months.

Herbert Wolff

Next meeting: Thur 10 March, 2.00 pm at South London Liberal Synagogue. Magen David Adom Director Eli Benson

HGS members' contribution to Britain

At a well attended meeting at Balint House members spoke of their contribution to Britain and of their travels before reaching these islands. Many participants were blissfully unaware of the very useful roles they had fulfilled, such as doctors, probation officers, teachers and in many forms of commerce, although most had started at rock bottom as domestic servants.

Jack Lee

Next meeting: Mon 14 March. Susannah Alexander, 'The History of the Jews in England - An Overview'

Pinner: a question of trust

A record audience of 56 turned up eager to hear BBC journalist Jo Coburn speak on 'Trust Me ... I'm a Journalist'. After a break due to a second addition to her family, she is about to return to the hectic life of a journalist. The lively questions indicated that there was a feeling of unease regarding bias in the BBC's Middle East reporting.

Walter Weg

Next meeting: Thurs 3 March, 2 pm. Geraldine Auerbach, Director, Jewish Music Institute, 'How Does a Girl from Kimberley Get to Have Tea with the Queen?'

Brighton & Hove Sarid: revenge and forgiveness

Rabbi David covered this subject in depth and with a subtle mixture of information and open-ended uncertainties. His talk was based on biblical and talmudic commentaries and the comments of Holocaust interpreters. The lively questions from the audience which followed included the issue of forgiveness for the Holocaust as well as discussions on the Jewish concepts of hate and revenge. A highly enjoyable and well-researched talk.

Arthur Oppenheimer

Next meeting: Mon 21 March, 10.45 am. Ivor Richards, 'The Crypto-Jews of Portugal'

Rabbi David Mason conducts a Holocaust Memorial Day service in the garden of the Imperial War Museum where the Borough of Southwark planted a tree four years ago. The service was attended by the Mayor of Southwark and other council officials as well as Liberal Democrat MP Simon Hughes. Rabbi Mason, a regular visitor to Lodz, offered to try and trace the parents of Herbert Wolff, who took this photograph. His parents were deported to Lodz from Frankfurt am Main.



DIARY DATES

Below is a schedule of events the AJR is planning for 2005. We will be updating this schedule every month, but please contact Head Office for information about any of these events.

May 6	Yom HaShoah
May 8	Frank Foley statue unveiled
June 12	Trip to Beth Shalom
June 19	AGM (at Cleve Road)
June 26-3 July	Holiday in Eastbourne
June 29	Scotland and Newcastle Northern Get-together, Edinburgh
July 6	Scotland Get-together, Edinburgh
July 10-17	Northern Groups holiday, St Annes-on-Sea
July 13	Day out to St Annes
July 27	Trip to Westcliffe
August 16	Northern Groups Get-together, Manchester
October 23-30	Holiday in Bournemouth
November 9	Kristallnacht

British yes, English no

Speaking to a crowded lunch meeting of KT-AJR at the Day Centre on the topic 'Can Immigrants Ever Become British?', *AJR Journal* Editor-in-Chief Richard Grunberger



answered the question in the affirmative. He cited a number of factors - from the absence of an antisemitic tradition among this country's mainstream political parties (in contrast to the Continent) to the current dilution of Britishness under the impact of mass immigration.

As for himself, Richard admitted that despite steeping himself in British history, literature and politics, he still felt unintegrated because of his lack of interest in sport and avoidance of pubs. In the lively discussion that followed most contributors distinguished between feeling British and English - no refugee, it was agreed, could ever claim the latter.

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Andrea Goodmaker 020 8385 3070

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre
15 Cleve Road, London, NW6
Tel: 020 7328 0208

AJR LUNCHEON CLUB

Wednesday 16 MARCH 2005

David Lerner of JFS & UJIA will speak on the history of JFS since 1732 and will focus on the attendance of wartime evacuees at the school.

11.45 am for 12.15 pm

Early reservations please!

Lunch now only £5

Please telephone Susie on 020 7328 0208

FUTURE DATES FOR WEDNESDAY LUNCHEON CLUB

13 APRIL Otto Deutsch 'Travel'

18 MAY Hannah Saadat 'The Bahai Religion'

15 JUNE Michael Smith 'Frank Foley'

KT-AJR Kindertransport special interest group MONTHLY MEETINGS AT CLEVE ROAD

Monday 7 MARCH 2005

11.45 am for 12.15 pm

Bertha will entertain with her Reading of the Megillah!

Reservations required

Please telephone 020 7328 0208

Monday - Thursday
9.30 am - 3.30 pm,
Sunday 2 pm - 5.30 pm

February	Afternoon
	Entertainment:
Tue 1	CLOSED
Wed 2	Kentertainers
Thur 3	Katinka Seiner
Sun 6	CLOSED
Mon 7	KT LUNCH - Kards & Games Klub
Tue 8	CLOSED
Wed 9	Jack Davidoff
Thur 10	Simon Gilbert
Sun 13	CLOSED
Mon 14	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 15	CLOSED
Wed 16	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur 17	Mike Marandi
Sun 20	DAY CENTRE OPEN
Mon 21	Kards & Games Klub
Tue 22	CLOSED
Wed 23	Nicola Smedley
Thur 24	Margaret Opdahl
Sun 27	CLOSED
Mon 28	Kards & Games Klub

Editorials and articles published, and opinions expressed, in *AJR Journal* are not necessarily those of the Association of Jewish Refugees and should not be regarded as such.

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths

Thein. Alice. After a long illness passed away on 10 January 2005.

In Memoriam

3-4 March 1943 Martin and Lotte Reichenbach and the other 281 Dresden Jews deported from Hellerberg camp and murdered in Auschwitz that very night.

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Second Night Seder Service
Sunday 24 April 2005
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Rev Larry Fine
will be officiating

Please telephone
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B B C

The BBC is researching a programme for BBC1 called "We'll Meet Again", which will be a pre-recorded special for BBC ONE to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of VE Day.

We are looking for people who have lost touch with friends, family and service colleagues since 1945. We are also interested in Jewish Holocaust survivors who want to be reunited with British ex-servicemen/women and families who helped them in some way.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Production Team if you feel you would like to participate.

Victoria Greenly 020 8576 1041
victoria.greenly@bbc.co.uk
Anna Fowler 020 857 63695
anna.fowler.01@bbc.co.uk

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Obituary

Dr Herbert Tint

Herbert Tint was born in Karlsruhe, Germany in April 1924. In 1939 he arrived in England on a Kindertransport with a group of boys from a residential home in Frankfurt who were sponsored by James and Dorothy Rothschild to settle in the The Cedars, Waddesdon, Bucks. He attended Bicester Grammar School until his internment in May 1940. After his release he completed his examinations and joined the Royal Navy, where he attained the rank of Petty Officer.

Having been awarded a PhD by London University, he left in 1945 to pursue an academic career. During his professorship his subject was French history. He wrote two books, published in 1972 and 1980 respectively, on France and French foreign policy. He retired to Kent, where he devoted his leisure hours to voluntary work in his local hospital, travelling and introducing his guests to his culinary expertise. Sadly his parents perished in the Holocaust and his wife predeceased him. He is survived by his children and grandchildren and will be greatly missed by them and by all his friends.

Helga Brown

Search Notices

Kinder-Link, the newsletter of the KTA in America, is planning to publish a lead article on the 'Children of La Hille'. Information is needed on recent meetings among survivors, and, above all, on how to make direct contact with survivors, possibly for a first-hand account of their experiences. Attempts to contact Walter Reed, who has written and spoken about the experience here in the USA, have failed. Any information please to Irene Katzenstein Schmied, editor, *Kinder-Link*, at ireneschmied@verizon.net

Ilse Kummer, born Berlin 26 January 1920, emigrated after 1942 first to Israel then to the UK. Any information please to Andreas Gres (genealogist in Vienna) on 0043 664 2800 150/ 0043 151396 4653.

Maria Lazar was a well-known Jewish writer and journalist who was forgotten after she fled from Austria in 1933. I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Goettingen who would like to republish her work and, for this reason, contact her daughter Judith, who lives in the UK and administers her estate. Any information, please contact Katja Schoenwandt, Klinkerfuesstraße 34 37073, Goettingen, Germany, tel 00495513793997

My mother came to England from Vienna in late 1938-early 1939. I would like to find out exactly when she came and anything about the circumstances (type of visa, etc). I was born a few months after her arrival and vaguely remember being in a Jewish children's home of some kind in Hemel Hempstead during the war years. I would like to find out about that institution and if any records from its period of operation still exist. Secondly, does anybody know **Klara Fränkel** just before or during the war years? She came from Vienna in late 1938 or early 1939. Her daughter is trying to find out about the circumstances of her arrival in England and her activities during the war years. Thirdly, does anyone remember **Rudolfine Adler**? She came to London as a refugee from Vienna and returned to Austria around 1954. Any information please to Eva Ryten, 48 Somerford Road, Cirencester, GLOS. GL7 1TX, tel 01285 657 606

My grandfather, Georg Schuldenzker Nitterl, is 92 and in perfect health but missing Austria terribly. We are trying to find any relatives, friends or anyone who might have information. His family fled Austria to Peru. He is now living with his daughter and grandson in California. Any information, please contact Joseph Anthoni Nitterl at Angelo415CA@aol.com

My grandfather, Oscar Stern, had a large warehouse in Altona, Hamburg. He was in the exotic fruit import business. My mother's name is Ruth. She had two sisters, Manzi and Kate. My grandmother's name was Rosa Stern née Berkwerk. Any information at all please to Susan Peretz, Kiriat Shmuna, Israel at stavrula@zahav.net.il

Central Office for Holocaust Claims Michael Newman

Israeli bank account list

Under the terms of the report of the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee for the Location and Restitution of Assets of Holocaust Victims, Israeli banks will have to pay NIS 41.2 million (approximately £5.25 million) and the Israeli government NIS 100.8 million (approximately £12.5 million) in compensation to the owners of dormant bank accounts.

The balances were held in banks under the British Mandate Custodian of Enemy Property, which was established following the introduction of the Enemy Property Act (1939). The legislation was designed to prevent access to assets held by citizens of countries at war with Britain. Following the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 the Custodian was superseded by an Israeli agency with responsibility for enemy property.

An investigation found that 2,276 bank accounts, probably belonging to Holocaust victims, were transferred to the British Mandate Custodian of Enemy Property and later forwarded to the Israeli government.

The advisory committee's report also alleges that the Custodian General did not pay proper interest on accounts transferred to them but accepts Bank Leumi's main claim that it no longer holds any accounts of Holocaust victims.

The list of unpaid assets as well as the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee's report can be found at http://www.knesset.gov.il/committees/eng/docs/shoa_finalreport_eng.htm

Austrian life certificates signing

The AJR continues to be available to notarise the *Lebensbescheinigungen* (life certificates) for Austrian pensioners. Please note that an item of official identification, such as a passport or driving licence, must be presented when asking an AJR representative to legalise a certificate.

Further help

Written enquiries should be sent to Central Office for Holocaust Claims (UK), Jubilee House, Merrion Avenue, Stanmore, Middx HA7 4RL, by fax to 020 8385 3075, or by email to michael@ajr.org.uk Assistance can be provided strictly by appointment at the Holocaust Survivors Centre in Hendon, north London. For an appointment, please ring 020 8385 3074.

Berlin's Holocaust memorial

Ronald Channing



'Undulating field' of concrete slabs dedicated to victims of the Holocaust

The memorial to the murdered Jewish victims of the Holocaust being erected in Berlin is nearing completion. Though mired in controversy ever since a national German memorial was first proposed 20 years ago, the final slab of the chosen scheme has now been set in place.

Extending over an area the size of four football pitches, and adjacent to the Brandenburg Gate at the heart of what has once again become German's capital city, the vast memorial of undulating concrete slabs creates an appropriate impression akin to row upon row of gravestones, among which visitors will be permitted to pass. The architect, Peter Eisenman,

however, sees his giant slabs rather as symbolising the sense of bewilderment and fear of persecution experienced by Europe's Jews during the period of Nazi hegemony.

The monument, which will also include an underground information centre, is scheduled to be dedicated in May this year. It is certainly seen by the German authorities as a major advance in its contrition and expiation for the murderous acts of the Nazi regime, as well as a further opportunity to demonstrate the strength and permanence of its democratic institutions, under which new generations have grown and flourished.

Umbrella group

In the United Kingdom, the Claims Conference supports various services provided by the umbrella group comprising all social service agencies that work with Holocaust survivors. The group provides homecare, emergency assistance, outreach to Nazi victims in isolated areas, transportation, and case management and counselling services. In 2003, more than 250 survivors were receiving in-home services through this program, totalling over 36,000 hours. The umbrella group social workers made over 2,000 visits to assist and assess clients in a variety of capacities.

As of December 2003, the outreach program had expanded to 31 regional groups throughout the country, nearly double in size from the program's inception in 2001. The outreach groups held 143 meetings with 3,591 attendees, compared to 100 meetings and 2,754 attendees in 2002. A new group established in Manchester met for the first time this year.

From *Claims Conference: The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, 2003 Annual Report with 2004 Highlights*

Newsround

German president addresses Knesset

Addressing the Knesset at a special session marking the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Israel and Germany, Germany's President, Horst Köhler, devoted part of his speech to xenophobia and racism, 'which have not disappeared from Germany'. He added that Germany 'must contend courageously with the extreme right and combat antisemitism'.

Neo-Nazis targeted in France

The French government has pledged to get rid of neo-Nazi groups, which it says represent a 'threat and a danger' to society. Interior Minister Dominique de Villepin said he would introduce measures to break up far-right groups, banning their public meetings and closing down their websites.

Jewish museum planned for Warsaw

Poland has agreed to contribute £15 million towards the building of a Jewish museum in Warsaw. According to a report in the *Jewish Chronicle*, the remainder is to come from foreign donations.

Last hunt for Nazi war criminals

The Simon Wiesenthal Center has launched what it describes as one final effort to capture suspected Nazi war criminals in Germany. Operation Last Chance has already been launched in eight other countries, mostly in Eastern Europe. 'Germany is the culmination of the project', said Efraim Zuroff, chief Nazi hunter at the Center. 'It offers the most potential suspects and in Germany there is the will to prosecute such people. The question is whether the evidence will be sufficient.'

British media accused of inciting rise in antisemitic incidents

A sharp rise in antisemitic incidents in the UK in 2004 has been blamed by an Israeli minister partly on 'incitement' by the UK media. According to a report by the Global Forum Against Anti-semitism, which operates in part under the auspices of the office of the Israeli prime minister, the number of antisemitic incidents in Britain rose from 163 in 2003 to 310 in 2004. Diaspora Affairs Minister Natan Sharansky said it was impossible to ignore 'the incitement in the British media against Israel'.