

AJR Information

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Don't miss . . .

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Unseasonal

March being the month of Purim, this issue ought by rights to feature a kind of *Purimspiel*. The present moment is, alas, too fraught with danger to permit striking a jocular note.

Purim is normally an occasion when even as outrageous a practice as men dressing as women receives rabbinical sanction.

Individuals disguised as their opposites likewise characterise the present situation. Saddam, invader of an Islamic country – Iran – and rapist of an Arab neighbour – Kuwait – poses as defender of Islam and of Arab integrity. Russia, chief arms supplier to Iraq, presents an image of cautious moderation. PLO-supporting MPs parade as peaceniks bewailing loss of life.

How, faced with such competition, can a *Purimspiel* author come up with something equally risible?

Who guards the Guardians?

We live in a topsy-turvy world. The Germans deplore military action. Leningraders are saved from starving by German food parcels. Gorbachev switches overnight from *perestroika* to repression. In Britain we see the same overturning of old certainties. The Conservatives confer leadership first on a woman, and then on a quasi-prole. The Labour Party favours reduction of trade union power. A Liberal newspaper disseminates views that contain the germ of a new blood libel.

In its previous, Manchester-based, incarnation that paper played a crucially positive role in Jewish history: *Guardian* editor C. P. Scott brought about the meeting between Lloyd George and Chaim Weizmann which ultimately resulted in the Balfour Declaration. In the 1930s that same organ of liberal opinion took the lead in alerting the British public to the enormities perpetrated in Nazi Germany.

What, by contrast, did the *Guardian's* Com-

mentary column purvey on the day the Geneva talks between the US and Iraqi Foreign Ministers broke down? 'Egon Krenz could not bring himself to permit firing on demonstrators in Leipzig. Saddam Hussein and the Israeli police had no problem'.

This formulation places the panic-induced action of the police on Temple Mount on a par with the poison gassing of thousands of Kurds, and consigns the Israeli security forces to a place below the co-architect of the Berlin Wall in the league table of human infamy.

'Israel' Commentary columnist Edward Pearce continued 'has become a settler state, a Hassidic Rhodesia'. This depiction yokes together two repellent images; a priest-ridden obscurantist regime – a sort of Jewish Iran – holding down an exploited helot class. Now anybody who has visited Tel Aviv knows that it is light years away from chadoor-draped Teheran; he will also know about the relative prosperity enjoyed by Israel-resident Palestinians. As regards the majority of the Palestinians, Prime Minister Shamir and his followers don't so much want to exploit as to 'quarantine' them (while more extreme government supporters advocate mass expulsion across the Jordan).

But in Israel government and country are not identical. The present rightwing administration resulted largely from the post-Independence influx of Sephardic Oriental Jews. The previous Ashkenazi-based government had a more dove-ish outlook, and it may well be that by the late 1990s the newly arrived Russian Ashkenazim will tilt the country leftwards again.

The fact that Israel is a still evolving democracy subject to periodic transformations – political as well as demographic – is totally ignored by Mr Pearce. In place of a balanced appraisal he offers purple prose demonisation: 'Shamir – at the heart of the murderous King David Hotel bombing', 'the hanged British sergeants', etc. Do other commentators refer to the origins of the Irish Republic in the bloody Time of Troubles, or of Kenyan independence in Mau-Mau atrocities?

Why does Mr Pearce hark back forty-five years to a time when the Yishuv – traumatised by the Holocaust, and polarised into Ben-Gurion and Begin supporters – engaged in the bitter preliminaries to the War of Independence? The underlying thrust of



The Neue Synagoge Berlin, Oranienburger Strasse.
(Consecrated 5/9/1866).

continued on page p.2 col 3

German anti-Nazi murdered

A Bundeswehr soldier who had called two Göttingen skinheads *Scheissnazis* was fatally injured by them on New Year's Eve. The murder prompted a 4000-strong protest march through the streets of the university town. The protesters' demand for the extradition of the veteran Austrian Neo-Nazi Karl Polacek, chief instigator of rightwing extremism in the area, has received the support of the Interior Minister of Lower Saxony. □

Racists in court

Two men are to be prosecuted for disseminating antisemitic materials. The first man faces prosecution for displaying a placard allegedly intending to incite racial hatred. A warrant has been issued for the second who was selling T-shirts carrying racist messages. Sixteen other allegations of 'incitement to racial hatred' are also under consideration in the wake of a series of attacks, both verbal and physical, on the Jewish community last year. □

Child of a Kind

Frederick Stocken is the son of Susie Bechöfer whose transformation into Grace Stocken formed the subject of a moving *40 Minutes* programme on BBC TV in January. He has composed a choral work entitled *The Cathedral* which is to be premiered on the evening of 9 March at St Michael's, Cornhill, London EC3. □

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Profile

Doing well - and good



Helmut Rothenberg, OBE.

Upon meeting Helmut Rothenberg one is instantly put at ease by his affable manner and natural charm. His office in Blick Rothenberg, the highly successful accountancy practice which he founded in 1945 and built up to its present prestigious position, is large, tastefully decorated and functional while, at the same time, extremely comfortable. He dismisses his surroundings casually: 'If you're going to spend most of your time in a place it might as well be nice.'

He retired from the position of Senior Partner eighteen months ago, but remains at the company as Chief Consultant. Why? 'Because I enjoy working, it keeps me active and alert'.

Mr Rothenberg was born in 1915 and brought up in Frankfurt-am-Main. He came to Britain for the first time as an exchange student in 1930. He returned in 1933 when the Nazis came to power. Nominally this visit was only to last for one year. To date it has been fifty-eight.

Soon after his arrival he became deeply involved in assisting those who fled Nazi persecution after him and has been closely associated with the AJR since its earliest days, both as a member of the Executive Committee and as active and effective contributor and fund raiser.

His charitable works have included the foundation of the Rothenberg Memorial Trust, administered by the Royal Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults (MENCAP). Money raised by this

Trust has been distributed to support a number of initiatives in the field of mental handicap as well as a number of individuals and their families. As a natural expansion of this Trust the Rothenberg Fellowship was established to give practical help and encouragement to those working in similar fields in the Third World. He is also a founder governor of the MENCAP City Foundation which raises funds in the City of London.

As a child Mr Rothenberg had piano lessons. He credits his teacher, Miss Louise Löhr, with imbuing him with his love of opera, a lifelong passion. So perhaps it is to her that Highgate School owes a vote of thanks for the Rothenberg Arts Fund, which endows annual awards for music and drama for those pupils showing the most promise in these fields.

Glyndebourne, too, owes thanks to Miss Löhr, since the child she taught has had a long and close association with this institution. He was instrumental in initiating the Glyndebourne Musical Preparation Scheme which, in 1981, he financed.

Helmut Rothenberg has been happily married to Annema, née Hannes, for forty-five years. They have five children and nine grandchildren, nearly all of whom, he proudly records, meet every Sunday for lunch, the only regular absentee from these family gatherings being his daughter, who works with the Administrator of Central Park in New York City.

In answer to the question 'how would you like to be remembered?' Mr Rothenberg answers, simply, 'as a grandfather'. Those whose lives have been touched by his generosity will remember him as a great deal more.

Helmut Rothenberg was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire for Charitable Services on December 31, 1990.

□ M.N.

continued from page 1

his commenting appears to be that Israel's share of guilt for a Gulf War is no smaller - and conceivably even greater - than Iraq's.

Time was when Fleet Street enjoyed a punning joke that went 'Why is Beaverbrook's flagship called the *Express*? Because it used to be a newspaper?' Today, sadly, one has to add 'the *Guardian* used to be a liberal newspaper'.

Pondering national character

The question whether national character is constant or variable, so topical when the wartime Allies debated the future of Germany, has resurfaced with a vengeance. During the war the Germans showed a far stronger attachment to Nazism than the Italians – who had been exposed to indoctrination for far longer – did to Fascism. Despite this the Western powers, gambling on the revival of democracy (and therefore decency) in the German collective conscious, handed over ever more power to Bonn. The ultimate act of faith in a new Germany liberated from the Bismarck-Kaiser-Hitler syndrome occurred in 1989/90, with the international approval of Unification.

A year on no more encomia are showered on the Germans. The *Sunday Telegraph* sees them as a mixture of Basil Zaharoff, merchant of death, and Joan Baez, folksinging peacenik. Is this too harsh a judgment? Yes and no. The two leading contestants in the German political arena are the Bonn coalition and the Socialist-Green oppo-

sition. Each camp is culpable in its own way. Bonn long turned a blind eye to firms supplying Saddam (and earlier, Gaddafi) with poison gas, and other lethal weaponry. The opposition espouses a highminded pacifism which, though laudable in relation to the events of fifty years ago, lacks all relevance in a world threatened by today's Hitler.

Worse still, this pacifism is often suffused with virulent anti-Americanism. Where, one is entitled to ask, would present-day Germany be without the USA, its Marshall Plan, Berlin Air Lift, commitment to NATO, etc?

If it has taken the Germans fifty years to swing from unthinking bellicosity to thoughtless pacifism, the French exhibit mutually exclusive tendencies at one and the same time. Paris makes correct responses to Allied appeals for solidarity, while simultaneously undertaking last-minute attempts to 'cosy up' to Saddam.

In extenuation the French argue that they have to regard their three-million strong

Moslem minority, many of them Arabs.

The Arabs are undoubtedly the chief destabilising factor in the post-Cold War world. That this is so has not a little to do with their religion (and its influence on what is euphemistically described as political culture). Alone of the three great monotheistic faiths, Islam has remained set in stone for close on one and a half millenia. Christianity has undergone Renaissance secularisation, Reformation and Counter-Reformation. Judaism has engendered Misnagdim, Maskilim and Reform. Islam, by contrast, is as adamant as the *Kaaba* in its resistance to change.

This makes it virtually impossible for Moslems to enter the modern world on equal terms; already the Arab countries range below S.E. Asia in the world's economic league table. The endemic instability can in essence be traced back to that source, and the survival of tribal codes of honour and shame. 'Palestine' is another symptom the Arabs have long mistaken for a cause of their deepseated malaise. Could it be that the shock of the current upheaval will, by catapulting them out of the Middle Ages, reshape their national character?

□ R.G.

Gulf between crises and Isis

On the day the Commons overwhelmingly endorsed military action in the Gulf the Oxford Union voted against it. 'We will fight to defend freedom' clamoured the peace spokesman 'but not the production of oil'.

'No blood for oil' is a resonant catchphrase. It triggers a whole cluster of associations. Oil is a pollutant, central to the car-obsessed life style pushing the world towards ecological disaster. As a (largely) Third World resource extracted for the benefit of the First it symbolises the North-South divide between white-skinned Haves and coloured Have-nots. Oil is also associated in the public's consciousness with mega-tycoons like Rockefeller and

Armand Hammer. Those who ascribe the Gulf Crisis to oil are therefore echoing the British Communists' denunciation of the Second World War in 1939/40 as a 'millionaires' war'.

Interestingly enough the man in the street, though worse educated than Oxford's alumni, thinks the Gulf conflict is not about oil, but about undoing an act of aggression. He intuits, without benefit of higher learning, that collective security was the unattainable goal of the League of Nations, whose collapse triggered the Second World War. But even if the Oxford Union's analysis had been correct, and the West's response to the rape of Kuwait has been prompted by concern over oil supplies,

that would not have been as morally reprehensible as the self-styled peace lobby asserts.

Oil, to mix metaphors, is in fact the life blood of the industrialised West. Due to the lopsided development of the global economy, a major disruption of Western industrial activity, far from benefiting the Third World, would accelerate its downward spiral into bankruptcy and chaos.

In the 1930s the Oxford Union's historic vote 'not to fight for King and Country' had the most unfortunate consequences. Since then most British people have arrived at the conclusion that appeasement, instead of procuring peace, only provokes a greater, more terrible war. Oxford, however, remains what it has been since Charles I – the city of dreaming spires and home of lost causes.

□ R.G.

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Opera and Uproar

A Times dispatch headed Wagner-mania reports an American boom in comic books featuring Siegfried, Brunnhilde and Wotan. Readers of these 'books' apparently believe that the Ride of the Valkyrie was specially composed to accompany the helicopter assault in the Vietnam War movie *Apocalypse Now*. Though they are wrong in this specific instance, their underlying assumption is not so far-fetched.

There has long been a link between the drama of history and the drama enacted on the opera stage. In Germany Wagner's musical creations interacted, albeit subliminally, with Bismarck's political handiwork. In Italy Verdi both promoted, and benefited from, the national resurgence, or *risorgimento*. The chorus of the exiled Hebrews in *Nabucco* was a cry – in code – from the nation's heart for freedom and unity. Unification focused on Victor Emmanuel of Savoy whose partisans spread the slogan *Vittorio Emanuele Re D'Italia* country-wide; its acronym V.E.R.D.I. gave the composer fortuitous publicity.

In Belgium, too, opera had an energising effect on the national cause. The 1815 Congress of Vienna had placed the recalcitrant country under Dutch control as a barrier to revanchist post-Napoleonic France. One evening in 1830, a year of Europe-wide brushfires, Brussels opera-goers were so stirred by Auber's *La Muette de Portici* – about an anti-Spanish uprising in 17th century Naples – that they poured into the street, dug up paving stones for barricades, put the Dutch garrison to flight and proclaimed Belgian independence.

In interwar Germany the separate strands of Bismarck's and Wagner's heritage became totally entwined in Hitler's patronage of the Bayreuth Festival. At the very same time in Soviet Russia a drastic departure from the earlier, more liberal, cultural policy was signalled by Stalin walking out of the Bolshoi Theatre halfway through the premiere of Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtensk District*. Contemporaneously Mussolini vetoed the staging of Lehar's *Giuditta* at the Rome Opera because it depicted an Italian officer's amour with a married woman; such a plot device, according to the *Duce*, reflected badly on the honour of an army which was soon to drop high explosives on Abyssinian tribesmen.

Of late the interaction of opera with the drama of history has been rather happier. A case in point is the performance of *La Traviata* at Leningrad's Kirov Theatre some

days after the shootings in Vilnius, when in contradistinction to the Russian singers around him, the Latvian baritone cast as Père Gremont sang in Italian – and the audience rewarded his gesture of protest with applause.

□ R.G.

When Left translates as sinister

A whole generation before the advent of National Socialism August Bebel, the grand old man of the German labour movement, had the insight to characterise antisemitism as 'the Socialism of fools'. Had he lived in our times he might have defined anti-Zionism as 'the folly of Socialists'.

In the Adjournment Debate at Westminster Labour MP Andrew Faulds identified Israel as the spider spinning the web that entrapped the World in the Gulf War. A similar argument was advanced by the onetime Labour Foreign Office minister Lord Mayhew, who told radio listeners that in the narrow Congressional vote that authorised America's going to war in the Gulf, the winning 52:47 margin had been provided by Senators under pressure from the well-heeled Jewish Lobby. The former French Socialist Defence Minister Chevenement is president of the France-Iraq Association and speaks in tones consonant with that office, while Austria's Socialist Interior Minister Franz Löschner likened Israel's occupation of the West Bank to the Iraqi rape of Kuwait.

The above are expressions of significant, but not necessarily representative, opinion within the mainstream Left. The loony Left, by contrast, is collectively in the grip of anti-Zionist paranoia. Taking her cue from Jim Allen's play *Perdition*, which depicted Hungarian Zionist leaders as Nazi collaborators, Vanessa Redgrave has appealed for the defence of Iraq 'from unprovoked American, British and Israeli aggression'.

The actress has also been a visitor to PLO training camps – an honour shared with Ulrike Meinhof. Wilfried Böse, who, like Meinhof, graduated from the German extra-parliamentary opposition of the 1960s, took leftwing extremism to the point of overlap with Nazism: having hijacked an Air France plane to Entebbe in 1976 he separated the Jewish passengers from the others in preparation for shooting them one at a time.

Then there is the much-diminished, but still existent, orthodox Communist Left. Its authentic voice is the Soviet general who recently denigrated independence-minded Balts as *bourgeois* nationalists – the very same terms in which Lenin anathematised Zionists. Major General Filatow, editor of the Soviet Army's in-house *Journal of Military History* is about to publish *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as a follow-up to some excerpts from *Mein Kampf* already featured in his columns.

Les extrêmes se touchent. While the *Protocols* are a rightwing (i.e. Czarist-inspired and Nazi-adapted) phantasmagoria about a Jewish conspiracy to take over the world, the Left has not been sluggish in producing conspiracy theories of its own. Noam Chomsky, the (Jewish) chief intellectual adornment of the American Left, has interpreted the Gulf War as a US ploy to monopolise Third World resources against the opposition of 'radical nationalists' like Saddam Hussein. A reader's letter in the *Guardian* probed even murkier conspiratorial depths. With the Cold War over, the US arms industry faced recession; to rectify this CIA veteran George Bush ordered his ambassador in Baghdad to give Iraq the green light to invade Kuwait. Saddam walked into the trap, thereby providing the pretext for a war designed to restore the fortunes of the military-industrial complex.

Such version of events has no overt antisemitic ingredient – other than that profitmindedness is popularly considered a Jewish character trait (and there is a strand in the Socialist tradition, which *pace* Proudhon and Bakunin, sees the Jew essentially as a capitalist). □

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Reviews

CHILDREN OF A
LOVELESS
MARRIAGE

Hans Jürgen Schultz (ed.). *ES IST EIN WEINEN IN DER WELT. Hommage für deutsche Juden. Quell Verlag, Stuttgart. 1990. 479 pp. (In German.)*

The title ('there is a weeping in the world') of this volume of biographical essays is taken from a poem by Else Lasker-Schüler, one of the twenty Jews to whose memory the book is dedicated. There is a galaxy of genius here, the cream of Jews who, within the last one hundred years, made so significant a contribution to their beloved German culture that their elimination from it without replacement has left that culture impoverished and bereft.

It is suggested that their life and work illustrate all too clearly the failure of attempts at creating a symbiosis between the members of two dissimilar nations, Jews and Germans: frustrated efforts, since the overwhelming longing for it on the part of the former was largely unrequited by the latter. This phenomenon of modern European history is perhaps most convincingly demonstrated by the example of Walther Rathenau. He, the scion of an old-established Prussian-Jewish family, son of a commercial entrepreneur, himself a successful industrialist and political commentator, was typical of those highly assimilated upper-class Jews who desperately hoped to prove that they were no less German than were Saxons, Swabians or Bavarians – only to find that being rich was not enough, nor joining a prestigious regiment, nor even owning a real castle. Try as he might, Rathenau was denied entry to the nobility. Only the 1914–1918 War brought him to high State office, only the Weimar Republic offered him a post in its government. Five months into his term as German Foreign Minister, at the age of 55, he was assassinated – as a Jew.

Freischar murder

This, too, was to be the fate of Rosa Luxemburg, the fascinating subject of ex-Chancellor Willy Brandt's sensitive study. Rathenau and Luxemburg were, of course, complete opposites in most respects: he, the rich son of wealthy parents; she, the child of



Albert Einstein in 1927.

poor Galician traders; he, the conforming establishment figure, she, the radical revolutionary. And intellectually she was vastly his superior: not only politics and philosophy attracted her interest; she was no mean expert in literature, music and the natural sciences. But the workers' cause as represented by *Spartakus* took up most of her time and energy. Her fatherland was not, she once declared, a country limited by frontiers: it was the mass of working men and women everywhere. Her concern for truly democratic socialism, so different from Lenin's communist dictatorship, was genuine. So, too, was her opposition to war, which in 1914 landed her (not for the first time) in prison. In 1919, at the age of 48, she fell victim to a *Freischar* murder. Her corpse was dragged from Berlin's Landwehr Kanal.

Martyrs and emigrants

Are tears enough? Cry then for Gustav Landauer, whose equally short life and similarly violent death, in the same year and at the hands of the same group of Jewbaiting thugs, is dealt with in another of the essays. Born in Karlsruhe, the son of a Jewish shopkeeper there, Landauer became a political writer and one of the intellectual leaders of the extreme left. His role in the short-lived Munich *Räterepublik* led to his arrest. He was beaten up in his cell and done to death.

Less than twenty years later, three men and three women saved their lives by emigration. Their names are household

words far beyond their respective fields: philosophers Buber and Hannah Arendt, physicists Einstein and Lise Meitner, psychoanalysts Sigmund Freud and daughter Anna. The author of the presentation of Martin Buber's lifework is a Christian clergyman, a close personal friend, whose reminiscences read like a sermon. These pages glow with admiration for Buber's greatness. Chassid, Zionist, Jew, and (therefore?) brother to all humankind, including Christians, Germans and, above all, Arabs, Buber is shown as the uniquely powerful interpreter of universal love in Jewish, not Christian, terms. His hopes for 'a peace of genuine cooperation' between Jews and Arabs commands the author's respect. This is a moving tribute to a man of genius who, for all his tendency towards 'religious anarchism', remained 'ein rechter Israelit'.

Enraptured by Kant

Hannah Arendt, too, remained faithful to her Jewish roots. She grew up in Königsberg, and in her teens became enraptured by the works of Kant. As a student at Marburg she fell in love with her professor, the philosopher Martin Heidegger. He, in due course, became a Nazi sympathiser, but by then, Arendt had already turned towards another teacher, Karl Jaspers, who became for her a father figure. At 23 she came to Berlin. Here she became interested in Jewish matters and in the 'paradox of assimilation within German-speaking Jewry'. She became an active Zionist. Soon after 1933 she left Germany for Paris and then settled in New York. By the end of the war she had made a name for herself as a writer, a historian, an observer of contemporary politics and philosophy. Her name ranks high among the thinkers of our time.

Another woman who achieved success in a male-dominated sphere was Lise Meitner. She had grown up in Vienna at a time when 'nice girls' did not need to bother with a higher education and she had to fight her corner both as a woman and a Jewess throughout her distinguished career. But she succeeded. Her pioneering discoveries in the field of radioactivity earned her the highest reputation as a theoretical physicist. When, in 1933, the 'golden age' of German science came abruptly to an end, Lise Meitner fled to Sweden. Throughout the war she remained ignorant of the development of the atomic bomb, which would have been impossible without her work. But

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then she received fame and honour, and, unlike Einstein, accepted several German awards. But she did not return, and died in England at the age of 90.

What can be said of Albert Einstein that has not been told before? The main theme of the essay in his honour is his relationship with Germany and Germans. He was exposed to animosity while still at school and completed his studies in Switzerland – not without certain difficulties even there. His early published work was not taken seriously by most German physicists and he declined offers of posts in Germany proper, preferring a professorship at the German University of Prague. After a brief return to Switzerland he took up, in 1913, the invitation of the Prussian Academy of Sciences to become head of a new Institute of Physics. Here he accomplished the revolutionary General Theory of Relativity and soon achieved world-wide acclaim. In 1924 he received the Nobel Prize. But attacks on him continued. For him, his emigration to the USA marked the final, irrevocable dissociation from the country of his birth.

Psychoanalysts

The author of the chapter on Sigmund Freud is himself a practising psychoanalyst and an academic in the field. He writes of the current 'state of the art' as postulated by the Freudian school and shows to what extent psychoanalysis influences today not only medicine and sociology but also criminal justice, education and other disciplines. He pays tribute to Freud's singular personal courage, which he ascribes to the great man's Jewishness. If, by the same token, he suspects Freud of a certain Jewish nervousness as to the possible impermanence of all things, so that he thought it necessary to create a movement in order to preserve his ideas for posterity, the author takes such human frailties as an inspiration for his own continued practice.

The achievements of Freud's daughter Anna are ascribed not least to her self-sacrifice in the fulfilment of her filial duties during her father's prolonged illness. The resulting close relationship led to her becoming Freud's 'vicar on earth'. For 43 years she kept alive his memory in the house in Maresfield Gardens. Here she perfected her work in child psychology. Here she looked after children made homeless by the war, then orphans of the camps. Over the years she rose to international acclaim. Interestingly, the chapter concludes with an eloquent espousal of the cause of a memorial in Germany for emigrants and emigration – a noble but probably a lost cause.

Considerations of space prevent more than a mere mention of the names of the others whose memory is honoured by this collection: Mahler, Kafka, Schönberg, Sperber, Max Reinhardt, Erich Fromm, Ernst Bloch, and Anna Seghers, Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch, Max Horkheimer, Else Lasker-Schüler. High credit must go to the editor of this magnificent volume who has assembled a talented team of authors to produce a book of considerable depth and power. It is, of course, intended for a German readership for whom it makes its point without prevarication, clearly, bluntly. In spite of the indifference and the hostility, Jews within the German-language orbit have given of their best to their host culture which they so desperately sought to make their own. Will Germany, it is asked, heal the self-inflicted wound, the loss, perhaps for ever, of its Jews?

For Jewish readers the message is different, but just as clear. Rathenau, Luxemburg, Landauer – why did their murder not alert their fellow-Jews? Why did so few of them see, as even Rathenau did, the rising shadows on the wall? If there was blindness then, before the storm, should we not now know that 'it cannot happen here' is a flawed prognosis?

□ David Maier

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Humane enemy

David Grossman, *The Smile of the Lamb*, Published by Jonathan Cape, London, £13.99.

'We have suffered enough humiliation, and the *sumud*, the phase of passive resistance, which is nothing more than cowardice, is over and done with... Tyranny will be met by force, the iron fist will be crushed by a leaden one.'

Three years into the *Intifada* such hackneyed Palestinian rhetoric seems hardly worthy of note, and indeed it would not be but for the fact that it was uttered by a character in an Israeli work of fiction written some six years before the Palestinian uprising began.

Literary debut

One rarely comes across a novel which can articulate with consummate passion, and predict with uncanny foresight, the subterranean currents which signal the coming of a cataclysm. More remarkable still is that the *The Smile of the Lamb* was David Grossman's literary debut.

A precursor to Grossman's internationally renowned *The Yellow Wind*, this prentice piece exhibits a similar ability to get beneath the skin of the subjugator and subjugated and give vent to their gnarled and twisted sensibilities.

In essence the book is a full-blooded dissection of the manifold falsehoods and fantasies that an individual amasses in the course of Life's journey. Grossman uses his characters to illustrate how lies can corrupt goodness, or as Grossman puts it, 'the nucleus of love'.

At the centre of the book stand two inviolably good human beings. One, Khilmi, an ancient insane Palestinian hermit who until the Israelis killed his son in a raid, lived in a fantasy world where reality only intruded at the margins. The other, Uri, an idealistic young Israeli who has been brought to the occupied territories by his soulmate Katzman, the local military commander, ostensibly for the purpose of giving the occupation a more human face.

Their lives become inextricably enmeshed when Uri goes to the cave where Khilmi lives to tell him of his son's death. The news forces Khilmi into confronting reality full-square and as a consequence compels him to fight the occupation, albeit against his will.

Khilmi issues an ultimatum that unless the Israelis withdraw from the territories they have occupied in war, he will kill his

continued on page 7

adopted son Uri. For his part, Uri readily accepts his role as the sacrificial lamb.

Here at the heart of the novel we are presented with a simple question: Is the life of one of the occupiers (one of us), equal to that of all the occupied (one of them)?

Grossman is far too compassionate an author to offer a simple unequivocal answer. What he offers the reader instead, is a series of individual odysseys that chart various stations on humanity's inexorable fall from grace. At the apex stands Khilmi, the innocent peasant, at the abyss stands Katzman the rational and amoral commander.

Each character acts as a human sponge, soaking up the evil and good that exists around them, in accordance with their own innate proclivities and experiences. Grossman drives home the point that love and justice are not the monopoly of one or another people, that they are intrinsic qualities randomly distributed among humankind.

In an onslaught on Israeli dogma he concludes that, 'those who fight wind up the slaves of what they were fighting. Because in order to fight you have to have some points of similarity'.

Short on plot, the book is a labyrinthine abstract journey of self-exploration by the four main characters involved. At times it is hard reading, yet its rich evocation of diverse images, its colourful use of language and above all its relentless assault on conventional morality make it compelling reading.

□ Peter Grunberger

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Growing pains

Janos Nyiri BATTLEFIELDS AND
PLAYGROUNDS. Macmillan, £12.95

This is the tale of a child who, his tender years notwithstanding, quickly grows into an adult in the forcing house of evil. It invites comparison with the story of Anne Frank.

The book's protagonist is male, a Hungarian, and both Anne and he had spent formative years away from the centre of infection . . . Germany. There the similarity ends; Jozsef knew none of the liberal atmosphere of Holland which Anne was able to enjoy for a brief time; he grew up in semi-fascist Hungary. Right from the beginning of his conscious perception of affairs he had to put up with the primitive anti-semitism in a wine-growing village – and later, in the capital, with pseudo-learned imitations of the 'scientific' variety, plus all shades of theological justifications of Jew-hatred.

At first the boy thinks, naively but understandably, that there are 'three Gods' in the village, each of whom has a house: the Catholic one (the biggest), the Calvinist one, and the Jewish one. He then modulates into a state of rebellion against school, religious lessons, grandparents, parents, while longing for mother and stability. He sometimes passes for non-Jewish and consorts with the 'other side'. Before the full tragedy breaks over the Jewish community he does not know who Hitler is, and when Hungary enters the war he feels patriotic at times. But then mother takes him to the capital, and there he shares the metamorphosis of a once brilliant and prosperous community pressed into designated ghettos and forced to wear the Jewish star.

By this time he has learned something about the world, mostly through illegal

broadcasts, and he expects his fellow Hungarians to act like the Danes towards their Jewish fellow-citizens. But disappointments never demoralise him; to Anne Frank's fine sensitivity he opposes the near-loutishness of a boy. Luck and good management by the mother keep them afloat. Surprisingly they are sometimes helped even by antisemitic neighbours. And they survive into the time when the Russians are so near that even the death trains cannot depart for their destinations any more; now they have to cower in ruined cellars, together with their once hostile neighbours, and endure first 'friendly' bombardment, and then, looting expeditions from their liberators. Still most of them are a great deal more human than the precipitately departed Germans. Mother and son evince a superior Jewish morality when they refrain from denouncing neighbours who have shown them hostility; father, a cheerful skeleton who has survived a labour battalion, returns.

What distinguishes *Battlefields and Playgrounds* is its robust humour. There is nothing artificial about it; quite naturally Jozsef roughs it out, and loathes Jewish petty tyrants quite as much as gentile ones. Of course, he was spared the ultimate encounter with the executors of evil, but then so was Anne Frank unto the final page of her diary.

□ John Rossall



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*Afternoon entertainment –***MARCH**

- Monday 4* Justin Joseph Entertains At The Piano
Tuesday 5 With A Song In My Heart – Jack Harris accompanied by Happy Branstons (Piano)
Wednesday 6 Me – My Music and You – Linda Roth (Mezzo) accompanied by Norman Sydee (Piano)
Thursday 7 Popular Classical Music – Maurice Isaacs (Violin) accompanied by Isabel Isaacs (Piano)
Monday 11 Four Strings Each – Light Classical Entertainment with Violin and Piano – Lucy White and Julier Davey
Tuesday 12 –ditto–
Wednesday 13 –ditto–
Thursday 14 –ditto–
Monday 18 Songs from the Shows – Leonie Page
Tuesday 19 Love and Dreams – Musical Entertainment – Sylvia Hartman (Soprano) accompanied by Hermione Goldsmith (Piano)
Wednesday 20 (a) Outing to the Theatre
(b) Concert by The Trinity College of Music
Thursday 21 Hans Freund: Que Sera, Sera
Monday 25 The Wynn Corbett Singers
Tuesday 26 'The Hit Man' – A Comedy played to you by Gay Berenzweig, Helen and Chris Wilson and Barry Serjent – followed by further entertainment
Wednesday 27 Cello and Piano Recital – Felicity Vincent (Cello) accompanied by Lynn Hendry
Thursday 28 An Hour of Violin and Piano Entertainment – Mateja Marinkovic (Violin) accompanied by Margaret Marinkovic (Piano)

APRIL

- Monday 1* CLOSED
Tuesday 2 Piano and Cello Concert – Atalia Weiss (Piano) and Rachel Atkinson (Cello)
Wednesday 3 European Songtime – Ariana Prussner (Mezzo) accompanied by Elizabeth Upchurch (Piano)
Thursday 4 Music by The Bagatelles – Francoise Geller

The AJR at Work

Social Service changes

Samuel Wolfe.

After seven years with the AJR Mr Samuel Wolfe, Head of the Social Services Department, is leaving for pastures new. He is going to Seattle, in the United States, where his mother has lived for some years.

It was Samuel who initiated the first AJR 'outreach projects' contacting hundreds of members to find out what they needed to make their lives easier. Those he could not reach by telephone he would write to. In meeting the members and listening to them he came to realise what a great resource a sympathetic counselling service would be. In the seven years since Samuel Wolfe became the Head of the Social Services Department it has come a very long way.



Aggie Alexander.

We are sorry to lose Mr Wolfe, who has given such sterling service and wish him the best of luck in his new life.

The new Head of the department will be Aggie Alexander, with whom many AJR members will already be familiar.

Aggie, who will step into the breach, has worked with us for two years as a Welfare Rights advisor, and will continue in that role as well as taking on her additional duties. In her two years service she has had many successes and helped solve a large number of our members' problems. We are sure that she will be highly effective in her new role and are very pleased that she has accepted this challenging position. □

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(Club closed on March 31st)

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Twice weekly advice sessions offering help with filling in forms, checking benefits received, checking entitlements, claiming benefits, fuel problems, money matters, etc., etc., are being held as follows:—

**TUESDAYS 10 am–12 noon at
15 Cleve Road, London NW6**

**THURSDAYS 10 am–12 noon at
Hannah Karminski House, 9 Adamson
Road, London NW3**

No appointment necessary but please bring along all relevant documents, such as Benefit Books, letters, bills, etc.

A new folks home



The news takes precedence over chit-chat for one of Balint House's new residents.

Photo: Newman.

Residents of the new Balint House in the Bishops Avenue are experiencing all the comforts of home. This is surprising as they only arrived in the new building one week ago at the time of writing. They all moved here, *en masse*, from Otto Schiff House without a hitch, and it feels as if they have been domiciled on the new premises for years.

Much of the credit for making the transition so smooth belongs to Miss Loni Rieger, Head of Home. Knowing some of the residents to be a little apprehensive

about the approaching upheaval, she pulled out all the stops to ensure that disruption would be cut to the absolute minimum. This included personally overseeing the transport and unpacking of everyone's personal effects so that no one would be faced with the prospect of moving into a roomful of boxes.

Many others 'pitched in', including AJR staff, members of the House Committee and staff of the housing association, to make the move as untraumatic as possible. The operation seems to have been a complete

success. The residents with whom I spoke were full of praise for all those involved. One gentleman, upon being asked how he had coped with the transition, said: 'There was no trouble, they brought us and it was ready. The rooms are very nice, everybody thinks so.' I asked another resident how she liked her new home: '*Alles ist wunderbar*', she replied.

The change of scenery has worked wonders for one resident in particular. She had been moved to Otto Schiff House from another home some two years ago. Since that time the lady in question had spent almost every day closeted in her room refusing to speak to anyone. In the past week she has had a most remarkable upswing in spirit and can be seen strolling around the new building chatting amiably with staff and fellow residents alike.

For all those who have shared the experience of moving to the new home a new warmth and sense of belonging seems to have been engendered, giving an almost family feel to the community. As anyone who has a wide experience of life knows – people are more important than places. But if the place is nice, why argue?

Eighteen of the twenty-six rooms in Balint House have been occupied by ex-Otto Schiff residents. The remaining rooms are being taken very quickly. After seeing the building and meeting some of the people who live there I can see why.

□ M.N.

FOUNDER MEMBERS

Did you join the AJR in 1941?

We wish to pay tribute to our founding members during this, our 50th anniversary year.

If you have been a member since 1941 please contact Lydia Lassman at:

Hannah Karminski House
9 Adamson Road
London NW3 3HX
Telephone: 071 483 2536

The views expressed in *AJR Information* are the editor's – and not necessarily those of the Association.

You can contact the AJR by

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- (2) A visitor for a lady in Finchley. (Possibly to help with shopping.)
- (3) A visitor for a member.

Would you help?
Offers to Laura Howe
AJR Office 071 483 2536.

OUR DAY CENTRE NEEDS:-

Volunteer drivers to take people to and from the Day Centre in Cleve Road NW6. Also a volunteer hairdresser to give us some time each week.

Please contact SYLVIA MATUS/
RENEE LEE 071- 328 0208.

Quotes of the month

There is a joke which is currently popular in Moscow: the second to last Jew in the Soviet Union is emigrating to Israel. His friend is seeing him off at the airport. The one who is catching the plane says to the other: 'When you leave, don't forget to switch the light off'.

Rachel Osorio, The Scotsman 11/12/90

10 Downing Street,
London SW1 1AA

John Major putting his address in a regimental visitors book whilst visiting troops in Saudia Arabia

According to a distinguished friend of mine, feminism caused this war. Everyone in the State Department, he maintains, knew that April Glaspie was unfit to be the US ambassador in Baghdad. They did not dare object, however, because Miss Glaspie was a woman.

Charles Moore, Spectator

Kiln joy

The 87-year old potter Lucie Rie became a Dame of the British Empire in the New Year's Honours list. A Jewish refugee from Vienna, the artist had previously been honoured with a CBE – as well as having her work reproduced on British postage stamps. □

High anxiety

Amongst the worried callers to the Israeli Embassy in London last month was a Liverpoolian who expressed grave concern about the possible return home of Ronnie Rosenthal. Rosenthal is Liverpool Football Club's star striker and an Israeli international. □

Not in the blood

Nicholas Mosley (aka Lord Ravensdale) has received the 1991 Whitbread Prize for *Hopeful Monsters*, a novel that has a German Jewess as its heroine. The author is the son of the notorious prewar British Fascist leader, Sir Oswald Mosley. □

VERSE AND WORSE

HEATH

Unravelling yards of flannel
He 'abolished' the Channel,
Later, meeting the devil,
He said 'Please call me Neville'.

HAROLD PINTER

His father's dummies taught him silence
When Dalston gave off ultra-violence,
Now with a Lady he is smitten
And has the Longfords for *machiten*

SALMAN RUSHDIE

A hyper-literate belittler,
Gave Maggie the moustache of Hitler,
Likened the bobbies to SS –
Now they're his bodyguards, no less

GEORGE STEINER

Dons compare to poly-Steiner
Like row-boats to an ocean liner
It's a thought that nags and nags,
'I wish he'd pack his Oxford bags'
– How often does one hear it said –
'The Fellow's brains go to his head!'

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Making a will? Remember the AJR

Something that none of us should avoid is making a will and keeping it up to date.

We know we cannot take our worldly possessions with us but we can – at least – see that whatever is left behind goes:

- (a) where it will be appreciated,
- (b) where it will do some good,
- (c) where it is needed.

Many of our former refugees have found their association with the AJR a rewarding one. This is an opportunity to support the AJR Charitable Trust. Your solicitor will be able to help you; alternatively you can consult with our welfare rights advisor, Aggie Alexander, on 071-483 2536 (Tues, Weds, Thurs) or the social workers at the Day Centre 071-328 0208.

If you have already made a will, it is quite easy to add a codicil.

Whatever amount you are able to leave to the AJR, it will be well received, carefully applied and remembered with gratitude.

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Please contact our German speaking partner Mr Hans H. Marcus or our resident German attorney Dr Karsten Kuehne at the following address:

Pritchard Englefield & Tobin, 23 Great Castle Street, London W1N 8NQ.
Tel: 071-629 8883 Fax: 071-493 1891

Alice Schwab

Art Notes

First of all a few reminders! Apart from the *Art in the Making: Impressionism* exhibition at the National Gallery, the important Berggruen collection is also to be seen there (both until 21 April). This is a splendid opportunity to see some great works and should not be missed. And another fine private collection, that of Emil G. Bührle can be seen at the Royal Academy (until 29 March).

From 10–24 March John Denham will be showing works by Laura Marks, the London-based Toronto artist. Laura works in oils and watercolours and produces detailed meticulous views of the houses, gardens and plants, as well as some portraits. Walter Nessler recently had an exhibition at the Sweet Waters Gallery. The exhibition was opened by Helmut Wegner of the Germany embassy. Nessler is a man of great artistic vigour despite his age and he continues to paint with freshness and wit. He recently had an important and successful exhibition at 'Galerie Berlin', and his visionary painting 'Premonition' (1937) takes pride of place in the RAF Museum, Hendon.

The Tate Gallery is undergoing a comprehensive rearrangement. During 1991 special displays are being devoted to the Camden Town Group, Mondrian, Kokoschka, and many others. On the Lower Floor, the Tate has mounted an exhibition of *Pop Prints, Aspects of Printmaking in Britain and the U.S.A. 1950–72* (until 22 June). Drawn from the gallery's extensive permanent collection, the display includes works by Dine, Warhol, Oldenberg, Hamilton, Hockney and Paolozzi. More Turners will also be seen at the Tate (until 12 May) in *Turner, the Fourth Decade*, watercolours and drawings 1820–30.

Jack B. Yeats (1871–1957), brother of the poet W. B. Yeats, is esteemed as the leading Irish 20th century painter. An exhibition of his work can be seen at the Whitechapel Art Gallery (until 26 May). Incidentally, those who watch the Antiques Road Show on television, will have seen an excellent small painting by Yeats which was discovered, neglected, in a local museum. The value of the painting by the experts raised many eyebrows!

A rare treat is in store at the Queen's



The Avenue, Sydenham (1871). By Pissarro (1830–1903).

Photo courtesy of the National Gallery.

Gallery, Buckingham Palace, where an exhibition has been mounted to show the artistic tastes of George IV. Some of the works on show, including pictures, furniture, porcelain, weapons, etc. have never been on show before.

Whether it is art at all must be judged by viewing the work of three contemporary artists, Richard Artschwager, Cindy Sherman and Richard Wilson at the Saatchi Collection, 98A Boundary Road, NW8 (Fridays and Saturdays 12–6, until July). But this enormous gallery is one of the few places where it is possible to examine these striking pictures with care.

Derain claimed that 'art is always the same'. And if this were true, it is easy to imagine what Picasso, Braque, Matisse and Bonnard might have become. A somewhat uninspiring exhibition of Derain's late work is at the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford (until 17 March).

Russian art is now all the thing. And the South Bank Centre has also got into the act. *The Twilight of the Tsars: Russian Art at the Turn of the Century* is at the South Bank Centre (until 19 May), including examples of the international Art Nouveau style in Russia, the revival of earlier Slavonic and Russian traditions, symbolism, Diaghilev's World of Art Society and the obsession with the East – the Steppes of Central Asia by artists of the Blue Rose and Avant-Garde.

Treasures and Trinkets at the Museum of London (until February 1992) is a visual delight with over 500 pieces of jewellery from the Museum's collection, including the stock of a Roman jewellery merchant in Eastcheap and the jewelled parasol given to

Queen Victoria at the opening of the great 1851 exhibition.

A major Rembrandt exhibition is being organised by the Gemälde Galerie and Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the National Gallery in London. It will be shown in Berlin, Amsterdam and in the new Sainsbury wing of the National Gallery, London – more details to follow.

Finally, *SLAP!* a celebration of stage make-up, a new exhibition at the Theatre Museum (until 7 April). In a special dressing-room set, visitors to the exhibition can try out some of the different make-up for themselves. Who could wish for more? □

ANTHONY J. NEWTON & CO Solicitors

We have established contacts with leading Berlin lawyers in preparation for property claims in East Germany.

For further enquiries

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CLUB 1943

Anglo-German cultural forum Meetings on Mondays at 8 p.m. at the Communal Hall, Belsize Square Synagogue, 51 Belsize Square, London NW3.

For details:—

Chairman: Berta Sterly, 4 Grey Close, NW11 6QG. Tel: 081-455 1535.

Letters to the Editor

LEAVES FROM A FAMILY TREE

Sir – In the index of *I came alone* (reviewed in the October issue) I discovered one Dorith Sim who, like me, is a *née* Oppenheim from Kassel. Her contribution to the book told me very little, as she was only born in 1931 and I left in 1936, aged 16. I was certain that we were not related, but we had been very friendly with another family Oppenheim. In fact, one of my best friends was Lotte Oppenheim, who lives in Kent, with whom I am still in touch.

I decided to write to Dorith in Scotland to find out a little more as I was sure she belonged to Lotte's family. A few days later she telephoned me. She told me that, although her parents were killed in the Holocaust, her grandparents managed to emigrate to Canada. They had left her some documents, including a family tree – of which she sent me a copy.

My assumption was right – my friend Lotte and all her family were in the tree, and Dorith is a third cousin of theirs! Also attached to the document was a 'Marriage Contract' of her grandparents, drawn up as a joke for the wedding. All the guests were witnesses and I found some people I remember among the signatures. For that couple's silver wedding anniversary their children drew up an 'up-date' of the contract, again signed by the guests at the party. This document was even more interesting to me as the signatories included members of my father's family. It was all very strange.

Dorith is now planning a visit to London and we have arranged to meet at the home of yet another *Kindertransportee* from Kassel! It is all very exciting.

This is just one of many results of the reunions and Mrs Leverton's book. All involved have done a wonderful job.

Rofant Road
Northwood

Marianne Herz

CRI DE COEUR

Sir – I have come no nearer to finding out why we Jews are so bitterly hated. If Austrians really do love Jesus, they will be grateful to us for providing him – but for some reason it doesn't work that way at all. In sadness and confusion.

Cricket Road
Oxford

Hans Hammerschmidt

UNIQUE CEREMONY

Sir – On 11 April 1991, a unique ceremony entitled *unto every person there is a name* will take place in the Knesset courtyard on Yom Hashoa (Day of Remembrance) for the Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

The purpose of this day will be to perpetuate the memory of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust by reciting their names, birthplace, age and place of murder.

Thanks to the strong personal link between Jews alive today and those who perished in the Nazi genocide, and in the face of widespread efforts to deny the Holocaust, we feel that this occasion will arouse great interest in the refugee community of the UK.

Those wishing to take groups out to Israel in order to participate in this day will be given support by the Organising Committee in Israel in obtaining informational material, as well as prepared lists of victims' names. However, please advise us beforehand of the number and names of participants.

The schedule for this project will be as follows:

Opening by the Speaker of the Knesset, the Honorable Dov Shilansky.

10.00: Siren (countrywide moment of silence)

10.00–13.00: Recitation of the names.

Closing by the Prime Minister, His Excellency Mr Yitzhak Shamir.

18 Great Marlborough Street Vivy Shmueli
London W1V 1AF Israel Government

Tel: 071-434 3651

Tourist Office

PRAISEWORTHY PUGILIST

Sir – Your January issue states (p. 11) that Max Schmeling won the world heavyweight boxing title by beating Joe Louis in 1936. This is incorrect.

The title was won by Schmeling in 1931 against Jack Sharkey, the former Lithuanian seaman who had taken out US nationality, and was disqualified in the fourth round for hitting low. Schmeling lost the title in their return fight the following year on points; but it was a close decision and most observers thought that Schmeling had won. When Schmeling fought Joe Louis in June 1936 in a non-title fight, he entered the ring as an 8:1 outsider. Yet he managed to knock out Louis in the 12th round.

However, this is not all there is to Schmeling. Under the Nazis he and his wife went to see Hitler to get his permission to retain his Jewish manager, Mike Jacobs, which was grudgingly granted. Kurt Tucholsky in his exile in Sweden called this gesture '*sehr anständig*'. Schmeling was not popular with the Nazis, and as practically the only *Spitzensportler* in Germany, was called up into General Kurt Student's paratroopers. He was dropped over Crete in 1941, sprained his ankle on landing and was invalided out of the forces.

Schmeling stopped boxing in 1948, to devote himself to his ferret farm, as well as doing the odd spot of public relations work for the German Social Democratic Party.

London W4

Professor F. Parkinson

*Fahr mich auf den Rollschuh'n nach
Addis Abeba*

*Dort kämpft Max Schmeling mit Louis
dem Neger.*

*Sie kämpfen zusammen wie Katze und
Maus –*

*Ein Schlag in die Rippen und der
Boxkampf ist aus.*

We used to sing this little song, which, with typical Berlin wit and irony, pointed out at a time of supposed German supremacy that the Negro had won, and so easily! I was at a municipal school, not a Jewish one, yet the song was very popular among the children.

Croxley Green
Herts

Gertrude Stranz

HISTORY MAN

Sir – Shame on Sir Geoffrey Elton for only remembering the 'two sergeants', but forgetting the previous hanging of Jewish boys. No more Jews were executed by the British thereafter.

Prince Albert Road
London NW8

L. Leon

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SB's Column

Reviving German Film Production The opening of the Berlin Wall as well as the free cultural exchanges between East and West, have prompted appeals to revive film-making at Neubabelsberg on the outskirts of Berlin where 50 years ago the film industry flourished. It is reported that the legendary international film star Marlene Dietrich, now 89, is ready to sponsor such an enterprise. Not many recent German films have found exhibitors in this country. An exception is the London Goethe Institut, Princes Gate, which will screen two interesting movies this month. *Meier* (18 March) directed by an East German expelled to the West, is a 1980s comedy about relations between the two Germanies, while *Linie 1* (18 March), taking its name from Berlin's underground railway, demonstrates that Germans can produce a screen musical. It proved a big hit with German cinema-goers.

Playright's Comeback After the death in December 1990 of the important dramatist Friedrich Dürrenmatt (best remembered for *The Visit*, and *The Physicists*), Rolf Hochhuth, of *The Representative* fame, came back into the limelight with his new drama *Summer 1914*; it is a critical play about the origins of World War I in which the main culprits are the bosses of the international arms industry.

'Die Pfeffermühle' The Munich Edition Spangenberg, who over several decades published the posthumous work of Klaus Mann, have just issued a book about Erika. Daughter of the great Thomas Mann, she shared his emigration years in Switzerland. Her political cabaret 'Pepper Mill' was founded in Germany in January 1933, and thus had to close rather quickly. Sharp, witty and aggressive, it soon became known in Switzerland, and, with brother Klaus and Therese Giehse in the ensemble, success was ensured. Erika Mann was clever, daring and apprehensive of the future; her poem, *Beteiligt Euch, es geht um Eure Erde*, provides the book's title. She died in 1969.

Birthday Wolfgang Schneiderhahn, husband of the late Irmgard Seefried, had his 75th birthday. He replaced Arnold Rosé, as first violinist at the Vienna State Opera. Rosé subsequently emigrated to Britain.

Obituary Paul Hoffmann, grand seigneur of the Vienna Burgtheater whose director he was between 1968 and 1971, has died in Vienna, aged 88. An elegant, well-mannered gentleman, he was German-born, but Austrian by choice. Active to the last, he played Attinghausen in Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* just weeks before his death. □

Song vom Nebengleis

*Wir fahren
die ruhelose Reise
Städte waren
nur Stationen
und wir wohnen schon seit Jahren auf
dem Gleis.*

*Räder rattern
und die Wagen wiegen
Menschen, Bilder fliegen bunt vorüber
und verfliegen.*

*Manchmal war es als ging die Reise
ohne Sinn in einem Kreise
und schon mancher Passagier ist mut-
los ausgestiegen.*

*Doch wir andere wussten,
dass wir doch am Ende landen
mussten.*

*Jäh, auf einmal warf uns eine Hand die
Weiche um,
Bremsen knirschten
und der helle Sang der Räder wurde stumm:
und wir rollten leise
auf ein stilles, abgelegnes Nebengleise.*

*Ungehalten gab man uns zu hören
dass wir den Verkehr und das Getriebe
stören
in dem Fahrplan dieser Welt –
und so seien wir einstweilen abgestellt.
Und der ganze Schienenstrang
ist bis in die Bohlen krank.
Er bebt bis in die letzte Ecke
unserer halbvergessenen Nebenstrecke.*

*Und so sind wir abgeschoben auf ein
Nebengleise
und wir warten auf die Weiterreise
denn wir wissen unsere Karten
gelten weiter als bisher.*

Anon

(Sherbrook Internment Camp, Canada, was a
disused railway repair shed.)

Salomon Sulzer (1804–1890)

To many, if not most, Jews the name of composer/cantor Salomon Sulzer does not mean anything. This is not only regrettable, but almost incomprehensible since, in all likelihood, they know and sing his melodies of *Lecho Dodi* and *Mo-aous tsur*.

It is, of course, understandable if commemorations of Mozart's death overshadowed all comparable events in this anniversary year. However, ludicrous as any attempted comparison would be, the importance of Cantor Sulzer pertaining to (reformed) Jewish liturgical music, cannot be overestimated. His settings, embracing the entire liturgy, felicitously combined Hebrew with Western melody lines and harmony.

Salomon Sulzer was born in 1804 in Hohenems, Austria. He was appointed Chief Chazzan in Vienna at the age of twenty-one(!), and remained in that capacity well into his 66th year.

The timbre of his voice and unique interpretations attracted many non-Jews, including such famous musicians as Franz Liszt, to attend his services. Conversely, irrespective of their faith, composers received commissions from him, as had Schubert, whose setting of the 92nd Psalm is well known.

The then famous Ignaz Seyfried, a friend of Mozart and Beethoven, was Sulzer's teacher of composition. In 1844 Sulzer himself taught singing at Vienna's *Hochschule für Musik*.

He died in Vienna, and his son later edited his vast oeuvre. (A great-granddaughter of Sulzer's, living in Sydney, Australia, is a personal friend of the author of this article.) □

George Krausz

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FAMILY EVENTS

Deaths

Kirk Leo Clive Kirk passed away on 6 January in his 88th year. Mourned by his wife Hildegard Babette and all who knew him.

Lieberman Illy Lieberman passed away peacefully on 28 January at her home: 39 Iverna Gardens, W8. Deeply mourned by her loving husband Freddy, her children and grandchildren.

Mollich Walter Mollich, born in Frankfurt a.M., passed peacefully away at the age of 82 on the 7 February 1991 after a short illness. Sadly missed by his nephews and nieces Ernie and Trude, Fritz and Gladys. Cousins Irma and Harry. We will always remember him with affection.

CLASSIFIED

Miscellaneous

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SEARCH NOTICE

Anton Gill, author of *The Journey Back From Hell*, is preparing a history of Berlin, 1918-1939, and would like to meet and talk to, or correspond with, anyone who lived, as an adult or youth, in that city during that period, especially artists, doctors, journalists, lawyers and politicians. Please contact him at 15 Chestnut Road, London SE27 9EZ. Tel: 081-761 5926.

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Obituaries

Dr Peter Meyer

Berlin born Peter Meyer, who died aged 85, was the trusted advisor and personal friend to many German-Jewish refugees. Having just finished his studies he fled Germany at the Nazi takeover and arrived in England in April 1933. After obtaining his British qualifications in 1939, he became a widely sought after physician and practised in Harley Street for 23 years until he retired two years ago.

Over 50 years he evolved into an institution in our community, whose position he understood so well because he had shared its fate. His care went beyond medical treatment to help and advice. He was a family doctor in the truest sense of the word.

A onetime member of the KC fraternity, with close relatives in Israel, he was always aware of the specific situation of our people. One of the doctors appointed by the Germany Embassy to assess the damage done to the health of Nazi victims, he was greatly devoted to this work and very sympathetic to his special patients.

As medical advisor to Otto Klemperer he was always in attendance on him when he conducted in London.

Both Dr Meyer and his wife, with whom he shared his life for 61 years, were AJR members and regular visitors to our annual concerts.

The sense of loss shared by all who knew Peter Meyer is mitigated by the thought that he was granted a long, successful and happy life, enhanced by the love of his family.

□ W.R.

Gershom Schocken

Gershom Schocken, who died in Tel Aviv aged 78, influenced the political and social development of Israel over a fifty year period through his editorship of the independent newspaper Haaretz.

German born, Schocken moved to Jerusalem with his family when Hitler gained power in 1933. His father, Saloman, a 'prince of commerce' and one of the most generous patrons of Jewish culture in Europe, established the Schocken publishing house in Jerusalem and New York. In 1939 he bought Haaretz and passed it on to his son who was only 27 years old at the time. He soon established the paper as the most respected and widely read morning

journal in the country. Although not always an easy read, the paper was outspoken yet fair and down to earth whilst promoting liberal viewpoints.

In later years Schocken planned an English language version of the paper, but contracted cancer which put an end to this idea. It is, however, hoped that his son, Amos will take on the project.

Although he disliked politics and politicians, in 1955 Schocken stood for the Knesset as an Independent Liberal. He resigned after only one term, believing that he could exert more influence through his newspaper. Since then he used the journal as a showcase for the best in Hebrew writing and is credited with enhancing the cultural life of Israel. Beyond this, unfortunately, it is unlikely that he had a great deal of influence, even though some of his direst warnings were subsequently fulfilled by events.

Although regarded by many as a 'voice in the wilderness' Haaretz remains one of the most respected newspapers in Israel. In 1983 Gershom Schocken received the accolade of Editor of the Year from the New York-based World Press Review. It was much deserved. He will be greatly missed. □

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40 Years Ago
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Friends of the Jews

It is gratifying to note that when the anti-Communist Jew-baiters appeared in Devon, the local newspaper at once took up the challenge in forthright words: 'Our Jewish population in this part of the world is very small. They are accepted without question as members of the community and stand on their own merits as individuals. Any attempt to single them out would no more be tolerated by public opinion than it is by the law. We fought a ghastly war against this sort of thing, and would-be Himmlers will receive short shrift'.

At the same time, guard must be taken against outbreaks of anti-Semitism, particularly in Hampstead, as the Hampstead Council of Christians and Jews were told by the Rev. Copland Simmons, of Frognal. Speaking of the Nazi atrocities, he said: 'We are inclined to think that these things could not happen here, but those who live here know that they could - if not physical, mentally'. Nevertheless, the Rev. Simmons felt that the quiet understanding between Christians and Jews in the Council was gradually making it impossible for anti-Semitism to assert itself in the borough.

It was also encouraging to read a new judgment on Shylock in a prominent Catholic paper. 'My sympathies are all with the Jew', a critic exclaimed in a note on the 'Merchant's' recent performance at the Old Vic. Antonio was described as a Christian whose greed 'would have enraptured, and indeed may have inspired, the late Reichsmarschall Goering'. Shylock, it was said, despised the persecutors of his nation 'with understandable, almost laudable, ferocity'. The words had rather a topical ring in the hubbub around the war criminal. C.C.A.

AJR Information March 1951.

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The other Amadeus

The title of Mr C. F. Flesch's book brought back memories of musical activities in Prees Heath Internment Camp in the summer of 1940. One day Norbert Brainin was practising some concerto in a quiet corner of the camp, well away from the hustle and bustle of his fellow inmates, when he noticed a young man listening from a respectful distance. As Norbert finished and packed up his instrument, the young man approached with the words *Ich spiel' auch die Geige*. Thus the leader and the violist (Peter Schidlöf) of the Amadeus Quartet met for the first time.

There was then a great deal of difference in the manner of their playing. Norbert, a year younger than Peter, had had excellent tuition in Vienna and had studied for a time with Prof Carl Flesch in England. He was already showing great promise as a budding professional. By contrast Peter – a late developer – could at best be regarded as a gifted amateur. Nobody hearing him play at the time could have had the slightest notion that he would eventually mature into one of the finest and best loved violists in the sphere of chamber music. He was born in a small Austrian village where he had his first violin lessons from the local blacksmith. He continued lessons with the music teacher of a Roman Catholic Boarding School which he had joined at an early age. Although the only Jewish pupil in this Catholic institution, he was on one occasion called upon to entertain Cardinal Innitzer during this dignitary's visit. He then played Kreisler's *Schoen Rosmarin* for the Austrian Primate.

In Prees Heath Peter had advanced to leader of the camp orchestra which consisted of three violins, one flute, one clarinet and one piano accordion. Leo Wurmser, pre-war *répétiteur* at the State Operas at Vienna and Dresden, was provided with blank score paper by a culture conscious camp commandant and concocted arrangements for this slim-line band of such potboilers as the overtures to *Rosamunde* and *The Barber of Seville*. These were then played in an open-air concert, with Peter as soloist in his party piece, the Canzonetta from the Tchaikovsky concerto, for which Wurmser had similarly written a suitable 'orchestral' arrangement. It all sounded a bit thin in the wide-open spaces of Prees Heath Internment Camp. As usually happens with amateur activities, it was much more fun for the few performers than for the vast audience. Nevertheless, the latter also enjoyed themselves because admittance to



Carl F. Flesch, author of *Und spielst Du auch die Geige?* Photo: Newman.

the concert was gratis and there was little else to do anyway.

Because Norbert Brainin met Peter Schidlöf in Prees Heath and Peter subsequently met Siegmund Nissel on the Isle of Man, it has been widely accepted that the birth of the Amadeus Quartet was largely the achievement of HM Government's Internment Policy in 1940. Indeed, when asked what brought them together, the three would frequently answer that they met in 'prison'. Whilst this makes good reading, it is probably an oversimplification. Had they not been interned, they would certainly have met a few years later as pupils of Max Rostal, distinguished violinist and teacher, who had formerly been chief assistant to Prof Carl Flesch. Rostal took them under his wing, never charging a penny for his tuition which enabled them to develop into the top class professionals who would eventually conquer the world of music.

When the cellist Martin Lovett was introduced to them they started playing quartets for fun. At the beginning Brainin and Schidlöf took the lead in turn, alternating on viola. It was Max Rostal who recognized the group's potential. He coached them and, on his advice, Norbert took over the lead permanently and Peter concentrated on viola. It is Max Rostal who deserves our gratitude for the pleasure these artists have given us for almost 40 years.

The untimely death of Peter Schidlöf in 1987 and the subsequent dissolution of the Amadeus Quartet was a grievous loss from which music lovers the world over have to this day not yet fully recovered.

□ J. Rotter

The law's delay

After the French authorities appeared to shy away from judicial proceedings against Rene Bousquet 'in the interest of public order' the ex-Chief of the Vichy police is to stand trial after all. □

Showbiz buzz

A musical called *Freudiana* has opened in Vienna; it features the song *Upper Me: The Ego and the Id*. British TV meanwhile is gestating a series entitled *Selling Hitler*. This deals with the forged Hitler Diaries, the costliest practical joke ever. One sequence in the series shows the staging of *Wieland der Schmidt* the opera Herr Kujau, the forger of the diaries, claimed Hitler had written. □

Communal revival

Gustav Zoltai, head of the Hungarian Jewish community, has announced the completion of renovation work on the country's premier synagogue, the so called *Tabaktempel*; in addition the Budapest Jewish Hospital has opened a new wing with 50 beds. An even more gratifying indication of the Jewish revival in post-Communist Hungary is the doubling of synagogue attendances over the last year, and the constitution of two new provincial communities (at Pápa and Monor). □

Kindling the light

Two dozen members of Berlin's Jewish Youth Centre, themselves fairly recent arrivals from Russia, visited immigrant hostels where they helped sixty newly arrived children and teenagers celebrate Chanukah with the aid of Russian translations and Cyrillic transcriptions of the prayers. □

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