

AJR Information

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£3 (to non-members)

Don't miss . . .

Kremlin chimes
at midnight p3

Silver spoon girl
p12

Singer of our
song p14

Blinkered God-seekers

Brand, in Ibsen's play of the same name is so God-obsessed that he disowns his own mother and wife. The Jewish family too has its Brands who are not on speaking terms with their kin they deem insufficiently observant. Their exclusiveness has to be tolerated, but when it causes scandal censure must be expressed. It is to be hoped that the new Chief Rabbi who faces a dauntingly difficult task reconciling the disparate tendencies in Anglo-Jewry will also be able to address this problem with some effectiveness. □

Re-evaluating hero figures

Taking the story out of History

The year 1992, which will soon be upon us, is a date charged with multiple significance. In Europe it will see the launch of the Single Market, with all that entails in economics as well as politics. America will commemorate the quincentenary of being discovered and Spain will celebrate its role as prime agent of that discovery.

Both the commemoration and celebration are subjects of controversy. Fragmentary evidence points to the Vikings having reached America four centuries ahead of the Spaniards; more importantly an increasing number of people view Columbus's discovery and its aftermath as a cause for shame rather than celebration. According to their way of thinking Columbus was a greedy and brutal racist and the Spaniards brought nothing but genocide and enslavement to the indigenous Americans.

This criticism of the quincentenary is simultaneously well-founded and blinkered. The Spaniards did indeed wipe out the Caribs and turned the Indians on the mainland into helots – but they also overthrew the Aztec kings who practised ritual human sacrifice. The impact of the Old on the New World occasioned

much misery, but it is sentimental to view the Stone Age civilisations destroyed in the process as havens of tranquility. What the critics likewise leave out of account is that the chief indirect result of Columbus's discovery – the creation of the USA – has overall redounded to the advantage of mankind. Two World Wars this century would have had a different – not to say disastrous – outcome but for American intervention (and the same holds true of the Cold War). And what about the role of the United States as a haven for Europe's 'poor huddled masses yearning to be free'?

Fittingly, a Jewess, Emma Lazarus, composed this epigraph for the Statue of Liberty; had a significant proportion of our people not passed through Ellis Island by 1924 our demographic losses during the Second World War might indeed have proved terminal. At the same time it must be said that in the 1930s many Americans from President Roosevelt down remained stonily indifferent to Jewish suffering in Europe.

This means that FDR, one of the saviours of the world from the black night of Nazism, lacked common humanity. It probably also means that there is no such thing as a flawless hero.

What we know for certain nowadays is that many a conventionally eulogised historical figure has been no more than a whited sepulchre. The critics of the Columbus celebrations justifiably pillory Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile as monsters of greed and bigotry, but the English pantheon of heroes, too, needs drastic revision. Richard the Lionheart perpetrated massacres of Muslims and Jews in Jerusalem. Simon de Montfort slaughtered Albigensians. The Black Prince caused several Oradours *avant le lettre*. Cromwell inspired an Irish curse – but he also readmitted the Jews to England. Post-Cromwell an array of English public personalities – Wilberforce, Macaulay, Balfour, Churchill – truly deserve their cachet.

Clearly every nation – and such supranational bodies as the Catholic Church – has to re-evaluate its hero figures. The renaming of Leningrad contributes to that process; Chancellor Kohl's attendance at the reinterment of Frederick the Great emphatically does not!



Anne Frank in London

Universal interest in the Anne Frank story has prompted the organisation of a 'traveling exhibition' by the Anne Frank Centre. The exhibition has already been shown in New York, Frankfurt, Berlin, Tokyo and Marseilles. It will open later this year in the USSR, Australia, Israel and South America.

Belsize Square Synagogue, in conjunction with St Peter's Church, has made arrangements for the exhibition to be shown at Belsize Square Synagogue from Monday 4th to Thursday 28th of November. The theme of the exhibition will be co-operation between Christians and Jews and the significance of Anne Frank's story for today's world.

The exhibition will be open to the public from Monday mornings to Friday lunch-times and on Sundays. Admission will be £2 for adults, £1 students and OAPs and £0.50 for children. Special rates can be organised for group or private evening bookings. For more information about this event contact Henny Lehmann at Belsize Square Synagogue. Telephone: 071-794 349. □

Research project

The History Department of the Technical University of Berlin are researching the role of women in the German resistance movement.

Any former residents of the Düsseldorf-Essen area who feel they can help this research are asked to contact Dr Christl Wickert, Solinger Strasse 4, W-1000 Berlin 21. □

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Profile

To be of Use to Others



Arnold Horwell.

Photo: Newman.

Among the British soldiers who in April 1945 liberated Belsen concentration camp was Captain Arnold Horwell. He walked through the gates overcome by the thought that it was only by the grace of God that he wore the uniform of the liberators, and not the striped garb of the pathetic inmates he had helped set free. Born in Berlin in 1914 Arnold had taken his *Abitur* in 1932, read Economics and Politics at the (re-named) Humboldt University and, two years after graduation, been awarded the degree of *Dr.rer.pol.*, probably the last ever Jewish student to receive a doctorate in the Nazi period. Interestingly, his thesis (*summa cum laude*) is still referred to in academic discussion of economic theory and the price mechanism.

In the biographical notes published with the thesis he stated 'Alongside pursuing my studies, I have worked for various Jewish organisations as an academic assistant'. In different circumstances he would indeed have been assured of a distinguished academic career, but now he felt duty-bound to place himself at the disposal of the persecuted Jewish community. As an official of the prestigious *Hilfsverein*, he became an expert in emigration matters, and, travelling all over Germany, urged fellow-Jews to leave while there was still time.

He himself left Berlin for England in June

1939, to take over the department at Kitchener Camp concerned with onward emigration. Upon the outbreak of war Arnold, née Horwitz, joined the Pioneer Corps, changing his name to Horwell. ('I lost my wits' he quips, 'but all was well.') He went to France with the Expeditionary Force and was evacuated from St. Malo in 1940. He was commissioned in 1943 and was posted to 102 Control Section BAOR soon after D-Day. At Belsen he worked day and night to bring the pitiful survivors back to normality; and he pays tribute to the way in which the British Army accomplished that tremendous task. He recalls, too, that he was able to intervene at that time in favour of Jewish displaced persons for whom repatriation to their East European countries of origin would have spelt disaster.

In 1946 he returned to civilian life, and in 1950 he and his wife Susanne went into business distributing, exporting and later manufacturing medical instruments and laboratory equipment. 'At first, we sold hypodermic syringes by ones and twos', he recalls. By the time they sold the company 39 years later, it had become a market leader in its field. Although he is no longer a member of the Council of the Laboratory Trade Association, on which he served for eighteen years, his services to his industry and to the community at large have been recognised by his admission to the Worshipful Company of Scientific Instrument Makers as a Liveryman and by the award of the Freedom of the City of London.

Arnold has also served our immediate community well. He is a former member of the AJR executive and conducts the annual Seder of the AJR Club (of which his wife Susie is co-chairman). He also acts as advisor to the Spiro Institute of Jewish Culture and History, where his lifelong interest in Judaica stands him in good stead.

Arnold's presidency of the B'nai B'rith Leo Baeck (London) Lodge coincided with its 25th Anniversary. Addressing the celebration banquet at the Guildhall on 4th July 1968, Lord Hailsham, then MP for St. Marylebone, acknowledged the country's debt to those who had 'managed to build themselves into one of the most solid, one of the most talented, one of the most respected and one of the most respectable elements in the British community.' There are few better examples than Arnold and Susie Horwell.

□ David Maier

The Kremlin chimes toll midnight?

If ever a state embodied an 'idea made flesh' it was the (happily now defunct) Soviet Union. This idea – however subsequently 'modified' by Lenin and Stalin – germinated in the capacious, and convoluted, brain of Karl Marx. The cradle-baptised, and antisemitically inclined, Marx had rabbinical forbears and Communism has often been perceived as Jewish-inspired.

There is some foundation of truth to this perception. Marxist socialism secularised the Messianic longing that has been part and parcel of Judaism for two millenia. It is likewise true that Jews like Trotzky, Sverdlov and Zinoviev were disproportionately represented among the key actors during the Ten Days that Shook the World. The hitherto discriminated against Jewish population also benefited from the equal opportunity policies introduced by the Russian Revolution.

It is nonetheless a gross exaggeration to say that, all things considered, Jews were net beneficiaries of the Soviet system. Under the post-1917 dispensation they had to endure the proscription of religion and of Hebrew – as well as, subsequently, of Yiddish-culture. Though lacking a national territory within the USSR they had 'nationality: Jewish' stamped in their passports. Babi Yar and other exemplars of Jewish martyrdom during the Shoah were drained of their Jewish associations by Kremlin newspeak. Periodically – at the time of Stalin's Doctors' Plot, Khrushchev's purge of economic criminals and Brezhnev's anti-Zionist campaign – the ballooning genie of antisemitism was let out of the bottle.

Recently Gorbachev's reforms brought Soviet Jewry both greater freedom to organise (and above all, emigrate) and greater peril at the hands of antisemites.

Now, in the post-coup phase of Soviet history the expected demise of Gorbachev, and the incipient dissolution of the Union into its constituent parts, brings closer the

spectre of intra-ethnic strife, and with it the danger of Jews being caught in the crossfire. This is the rather daunting medium-term prospect as the old order dies, and a new one undergoes the travail of being born. In the long run, though, new structures that will evolve – through consent rather than coercion – on former USSR territory hold out the promise of a better life to the sorely tried ex-subjects of the Kremlin. It may not be fanciful to speculate that Jews will be able to contribute to the building of that new society whose outline can only be dimly discerned at present. Perhaps the fact that one of the three heroes who fell on Moscow's Garden Ring Road was Jewish – like such earlier KGB victims Babel, Mandelstam and (indirectly) Pasternak – will prompt tomorrow's Russians to view their Jewish neighbours through eyes healed of the astigmatism of prejudice. □ R.G.

In a grey area

In the summer of 1988 I saw a notice in *AJR Information*: 'To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, I would like to compile a list of all the Jews who lived in Luckenwalde at that time. Please contact Pfarrer Detlev Riemer . . .'. My paternal grandparents had lived in Luckenwald, so I replied.

Within a very short time Pfarrer Riemer found a record of the names, dates of birth and addresses of my grandparents. However, as he could not discover when, or to where, they had been deported, he referred me to Yad Vashem. We kept in touch though, expressing a mutual wish to meet one day.

The opportunity arose in 1990 when I was invited to speak at a conference in Berlin. Since the borders were now open I contacted Detlev and we arranged a visit to Luckenwalde. The plan was to meet at my hotel at 3.30pm and drive the 30 miles to my grandparents' home town by 5.00pm. We would visit their old house, take tea with Detlev's family and then meet his

congregation. As Luckenwalde is now *judenrein* they wished to speak to me about Judaism. Unfortunately, this simple plan began to go awry at the East German border. Although I had been assured that no visa was necessary for entry to the East, the guard at the border post announced that as long as Margaret Thatcher won't let him into Britain without a visa he couldn't see why he should let me into East Germany. It was now too late to get to the nearest tourist office to procure a visa.

Detlev saw my disappointment and displayed great resourcefulness: 'As a vicar I hesitate to suggest it to a rabbi, but we could cross at Checkpoint Charlie, get a day pass and drive into East Germany. It is illegal, but we could take a chance'. We did.

As we arrived, nearly two hours late, Pfarrer Riemer's congregation were already assembled. Never having seen a Jew before, never mind a rabbi, they were shy, but friendly and interested. Questions came thick and fast.

By 9.30pm I was hungry, tired and beginning to worry. Our day pass only lasted until midnight. I had visions of being late and earning a long stay in a Gulag labour camp. 'Don't worry,' said Detlev, 'we can make it in an hour.'

We visited the former home of my grandparents, now part of a new pedestrian zone, and left Luckenwalde at 10.30pm. The motorway was jammed solid all the way to Berlin! At five to twelve we decided to make a run for the nearest checkpoint, even though my permit stipulated that I leave East Berlin by the same crossing by which I entered.

At Heinrich Heine Strasse crossing on the stroke of midnight the border guard informed us, helpfully, that this was not Checkpoint Charlie. Pfarrer Riemer remonstrated with him, but all our arguments seemed of no avail. Finally, the border policeman said: 'I have no authority to let you through', and turned his back on us. The wooden barrier was open. We took the hint and drove through.

□ Harry M. Jacobi

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Reviews

Patchwork guilt

A SENSE OF BELONGING, Broadcast 30 June, 7 July, 14 July, 21 July, Channel 4

During 'a month of Sundays' television put the state of Anglo-Jewry under the microscope under such headings as . . . *Jewish Daughters*, *Jewish Sons: Exile and Exodus*. From the first the project aroused controversy, though I feel that the early critics were wrong to jump the gun. That is not to say that *A Sense of Belonging* was flawless.

It used the modish and now seemingly obligatory method of leaping wildly all over the place, constantly picking up subjects and dropping them again, persistently interrupting the flow of spoken thoughts and reverting to them when the sense had evaporated. It is a method often used when 'ethnicity' is dealt with, and particularly when it concerns Jews. Of course, overall – for the patient and fair-minded viewer – this patchwork revealed itself as a whole at the end, but rather as if one were watching an Impressionist trying his hand at ultra-modern painting. This approach has its virtues and its place, but one wishes TV producers would remember that there are others.

Some viewers felt that the social mix of British Jewry had not been accurately represented, with too much emphasis on the middle classes. This derived from the introductory programme: the sons and daughters came across as overly materialistic, too eager for their offspring to become 'solicitors, accountants and millionaires' (the last uttered half jokingly). Subsequently we saw people work with their hands, and memories of hardships were touched upon. It was all too fleeting though, and left the feeling that only in Israel did the Jewish worker give – and get – his due. Anglo-Jewish history was dealt with in a necessarily sketchy manner. The York massacre, the expulsion, Oliver Cromwell's re-admission, mass immigration from Eastern Europe. At each juncture the native Jews looked anxiously over their shoulders at the often hostile Gentiles, and did their best to help the newcomers to go somewhere else. This also applied to our own arrival as we fled the fury of the worst persecution from a milieu of maximum assimilation. Former German/Austrian refugees felt that Anglo-Jewish hosts welcomed them, and yet feared

their numbers. This subject was also dropped almost as soon as it had been raised. The War and the Holocaust overshadowed everything and left everyone with sorrow and guilt.

One facet emerged clearly: at the turn of the century British Jews had felt it vital to be British. Yiddish was suppressed, Judaism became a mirror image of the host country's mores. Three of the four programmes averred that those attitudes are now regretted, and discarded in favour of the search for identity. Nearly all speakers understood this to mean (increasingly religious) Jewish identity – but no reference was made to the fact that similar forces are at work in most communities throughout the world.

□ John Rossall

Post-war private eye

Philip Kerr: *A GERMAN REQUIEM*, Viking, 1991, £13.99

I left the Imperial Crypt with as much spring in my step as Lazarus' . . . that is the kind of wisecrack uttered by private detective Bernie Gunther on escaping death at the hands of a Russian secret service agent. But whoever thinks that this is a Chandler or Hammett pastiche is mistaken, for Gunther is an ex-SS man engaged in hunting down the murderers of Nazi-hunters, and flushing out a nest of hidden German war criminals in Vienna two years after the end of World War Two. Hard to believe? Nevertheless, this is the theme of the book.

Those familiar with Philip Kerr's previous fiction may remember Bernie as a police officer in pre-Hitler Berlin. He abominated the Nazis, and became a private inquiry agent when they seized power. As such he helped to find 'disappeared' persons, also – without being especially philo-Semitic – he saved a Jewish girl, and foiled a plot by Streicher to instigate a pogrom. All Kerr's books are remarkably true to their locale, with Berlin as the usual stamping ground, though here it is Vienna. The hero had an awful war: as a former police officer he was conscripted into the SS and ordered to Minsk with a mass murder squad commanded by his ex-superiors. Sent to the front at his own request he was captured by the Russians. Upon repatriation a KGB colonel asks him to save an SS

man about to be hanged for the murder of an American war crimes investigator. The prisoner, Becker, is known to Gunther as a special-squad killer, but the Russian knows that Becker is not the murderer of the American captain and he is beholden to the Nazi for saving the life of his (the colonel's) son.

Gunther is none too diligent in his efforts to free Becker who, he thinks, deserves his fate, but instead he discovers a Nazi conspiracy, murder by the Russians and corruption among the Americans.

I would recommend this book even to readers who deprecate the thriller element, or the overly detailed political background, for the sake of the marvellous evocation of those hungry years poised between misery and re-awakening hope in two of the great cities of Europe.

□ J.R.

Nuremberg cameos

Hilary Gaskin, *EYEWITNESSES AT NUREMBERG*, Arms and Armour Press, London, 1990 – £14.95

This book shows the Nuremberg War Crime Trial from the point of view of the 'foot soldiers', secretaries, interpreters, assistant lawyers and others who were interviewed more than forty years after the event.

The most interesting part is the interviewees' recollection of the 21 defendants. Almost all recall Goering dominating the proceedings, though a photographer says they had a good laugh when it was announced that 'he had done himself in'. Albert Speer had the misfortune to have his picture taken with Himmler in a concentration camp, discussing how half-starved prisoners could be put to use as slave labour for war production. This led to Speer, under interrogation, admitting knowledge of what took place at the camps, and to his ultimate conviction (a fact omitted from his lengthy self-exculpating autobiography).

The American lawyer, Brady Bryson, who helped prepare the case against ex-Reichsbank President Schacht, amazingly fails to get Schacht's history right. He alleges that Schacht was a member of the Nazi Party 'from the beginning', whereas in 1923 when he stabilised the German currency after run-away inflation Schacht

belonged to the Democratic Party (which made use of this fact in the subsequent Reichstag elections).

The majority of the interviewees appreciate the importance of the trial for future generations. While none felt that the Nuremberg decision would end war in the world the fact that there *was* this trial, that principles were enunciated and punishment meted out to aggressors, cannot help but have an ultimately salutary effect on international law.

□ F. Hellendall

Sins of the fathers

Gerald Posner *HITLER'S CHILDREN*, Heinemann 1991, £16.95

Adolf Hitler died without offspring. Yet he so bestrode, and besmirched, the world that he is credited with innumerable children . . . not of his loins but of his provenance.

Oddly there are two books entitled *Hitler's Children*. Jillian Becker's, published in 1978, dealt with the Baader-Meinhof group who so abhorred the sins of their fathers that they tried to wreak revenge on them by terrorism, and threw away their own lives in the process.

The other book of the same title is just out. This time the children are those of Hitler's close collaborators and enthusiastic henchmen. Not surprisingly, many of them were unwilling to talk to the author; others refused to have their identities revealed, which would have diminished the book's authenticity. Eleven consented, including Goering's daughter Edda. Among the refusers were the daughters of Henrich Himmler and Martin Bormann.

Edda defended her father and denied that the blood of the Jews was on his hands. She is mistaken. The historical consensus is that in his glory days fat Hermann was overlord of all beastliness; he gave the SS, SD and Gestapo the green light for the Final Solution.

Rolf Mengele, son of the Auschwitz doctor, went to see his father in the latter's Brazilian hiding place. He was horrified to encounter an unrepentant progenitor ready to regurgitate racist drivel in defence of unspeakable crimes.

It is encouraging for one's hopes for the future that many of the Nazi offspring interviewed by Gerald Posner did condemn the past and were eager to teach their own children decent values.

□ John Rossall

Shades of Andalusia's past



The Maimonides monument in Judios Street.

Cordoba's synagogue was built in 1315 at the western edge of the town, not far from the famous Mosque which contains within it a large altar for Christian worship. The Synagogue, situated in the Calle Judios, has all four walls standing, showing a recess for a holy ark in one wall and a ladies' gallery, currently under repair. On the walls are large areas of stucco tracery, alternating floral and geometrical decorations with Hebrew inscriptions. After the expulsion of the Jews from Spain it underwent changes, but was declared a National Monument in 1885. The Synagogue is open at normal tourist times and can be viewed for a nominal entrance fee.

About 100 yards South in Tiberiades Square, is a life-size metal monument of Maimonides, who lived in Cordoba, erected in 1964.

In the Hotel Maimonides adjoining the Mosque is a large vitrine containing several silver Jewish appurtenances. A short walk from the hotel takes one to the equally incongruously named Cafe Jehuda Halevi.

So far as is known these are the only physical reminders of the once so important Jewish community in Andalusia.

□ Rudi Leavor

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Letters to the Editor



SELLING HITLER

Sir – I am aware that the so-called historian David Irving is selling Hitler as the great champion of the West against communism. However, one aspect of Hitler's conduct of the war has been ignored and it has puzzled me for a very long time why this has not been mentioned.

In November/December 1944 the advance of the Western allies had come to a virtual halt, partly due to the winter weather. At the same time the Russian offensive was in full swing, causing heavy losses to the German army and forcing it to retreat. It was at this time that at least 6 of the best German divisions were withdrawn from the Eastern front by the direct order of Hitler, so that offensive operations could be carried out against the Western allies with a vague hope of pushing them out of Europe. The result: the advance of the Russian army was facilitated, while the Western allies had to regroup and replenish before the final push into Germany.

This action by Hitler lost the Western allies a very valuable trump card as they could have pushed much deeper into Germany and prevented the Russians from posing as the only liberators of Eastern Europe. Hitler's action during the last stages of the war helped the communists to establish their hegemony over Eastern Europe and enabled them to hold sway until recently to the great cost for the whole free world.

Hitler was therefore a traitor to the West, and not its staunch defender against communism, as Irving and others of his ilk falsely claim.

Church Drive
London NW9

G. Gordon, B.Sc.

A BENEDICTION OF BENITO

Sir – G. Schmerling castigates *AJR Information* for lack of political neutrality and not being exclusively pro-Jewish. The journal carries the torch of European culture: the memory of a civilisation massacred by bigots and racists. As a non-Jew, I battle with Christians who define Judaism as the anal phase of human evolution. Shtetl mentality and ghetto pettiness make one see the good sides of Christianity: universal goodness, regardless of race, faith, or

nationality. Don't let those down who died for the noble Torah of civilised Jews!

St Swithun Street Gertrud Walton (Mrs)
Winchester

Sir – I am most astonished – and somewhat upset – by you publishing Mr Schmerling's defence of Mussolini. I object to an organisation such as yours publishing a letter of this nature. It is simply not true that 'no Jews were deported from Italy until Germany occupied the North of Italy in 1943'.

Defence of a mass-murderer (in Abyssinia), and describing him as a decent man just because he persecuted the Jews at a later date than Hitler did is most objectionable.

I know a number of people in Italy who had a terrible time before 1943.

Red Lane G. V. Wolf
Disley, Cheshire

We eschew all forms of censorship – other than on grounds of length. Ed.

TREASON OF THE CLERKS

Sir – I should like to add to the list of distinguished left-wing personalities vilified by you the name of the wonderful socialist historian, A. J. P. Taylor. I would not read a paper expressing such biased right-wing views as yours, if, as a German Jewish refugee, I did not feel solidarity with the members of the Association.

I suggest that in future you confine yourself giving information to Jewish refugees as the name of your paper implies.

Although I am aware that many Jewish individuals are adherents to the 'money culture', Jewish concepts and traditions are on the side of justice and compassion. One might say that the children of Israel created the first welfare state. The Levites who acted as doctors and teachers and were paid out of what is now income tax. Their services were available equally to all members of the community, as was what I have to call the late NHS.

Abercorn Road Maire Sackin
London NW7

Re my 'vilification' of A. J. P. Taylor: knowing that I have Alan Bullock on my side eases my conscience. As to confining myself to information of interest to Jewish refugees: the distinguished leftwinger Noam Chomsky, whom I also 'vilified', demanded freedom of speech for Professor Faurisson to deny the existence of Nazi gas chambers. Ed.

Trauerarbeit

Cinema-goers may recall the film *The Nasty Girl* whose central character entered an essay competition about the history of her hometown under the Nazis and caused a local outcry. This (real life) story had a parallel in the Franconian town of Karlstadt.

Andrea Gehring painstakingly researched the fate of the 19 Jewish families, totalling 48 men, women and children, who lived in Karlstadt – population 3350 – at the beginning of 1933.

Her treatise *Die Karlstadter Juden unter dem Hakenkreuz* documented in dramatic detail many of the individual tragedies which befell the Karlstadt Jews. At least 7 out of the original 48 were murdered in concentration camps, whilst 4 others died locally before 1939. Most of the remaining 37 are said to have emigrated, mostly to the U.S.A., and a few to Brazil or South Africa. Karlstadt was declared *judenfrei* on March 21, 1941, in common with 127 towns and villages of Lower Franconia which had Jewish communities.

In recognition of her work Andrea Gehring was invited to Israel, where she was received by the President. Tragically she lost her life in a motoring accident at the age of 21.

□ H. P. Sinclair

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Honorary doctorate for Ernest Foulkes

Extracts from the citation by the Public Orator at the Honours Degree Ceremony of Newcastle University on 10 May 1991:

Mr Chancellor – Amongst those who fled to Britain from the horrors of Nazi Germany in the 1930s, few have done more for their adopted country than Dr Ernest Foulkes.

Arriving in Britain in 1936, via Spain, he quickly established his own machine tool business – Measuring and Scientific Equipment, known universally as MSE – which, after the war, became involved in the development and production of laboratory apparatus, especially centrifuges. MSE centrifuges became the world leader in the field. There are few medical scientists working in Britain today who have not used an MSE centrifuge. The company exported widely and was one of the first, in 1966, to receive the Queen's Award for Export Achievement.

During his business career Ernest Foulkes became aware of the need, in medical research, to fuse medicine with biology. After his retirement, he therefore endowed the charitable foundation which bears his name to remedy this deficiency. Over the past 15 years, more than a hundred young basic scientists in Britain and Israel have been provided with the opportunity to undertake medical training.

British medicine and medical science has cause to be extraordinarily grateful for the contributions made by Ernest Foulkes. These have been recognised by his appointment as a Commander of the Order of the British Empire, and by his election to the Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians of London. As a further mark of the respect and esteem in which Dr Foulkes is held by the academic community, I now ask you to confer on him the Degree of Doctor of Medicine *honoris causa*. □

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Literal Black Hundreds

The United States is unique in the pluralistic West in never having had more than two political parties, the Republicans and the Democrats. Even between these two adversaries basic disagreements have only (to paraphrase Dorothy Parker) run the gamut from A to B. This provides ammunition for homegrown critics of the American system who complain of being stifled by consensus politics. Such dissenters – mainly campus intellectuals and ethnic spokesmen – undermine their own case, however, by overlooking the fact that academe has its own orthodoxy and uses fair means or foul to uphold what it deems PC (politically correct). Right now it is PC to view the evolution of America as governed by racism, exploitation and male chauvinism. For campus radicals diagnosis is not enough; this state of affairs has to be remedied by inculcating a new consciousness in the rising generations. School and university syllabuses need to be restructured via such innovations as Hispanic Studies, Womens' Studies, Afrocentric education, and so forth.

Afrocentric education locates the cradle of civilisation in Africa. It claims that the Ancient Egyptians were black – and that Napoleon's soldiers hacked off the Sphinx's broad (i.e. Negroid) nose to destroy evidence of that fact. It also claims that Greek civilisation was stolen from the Black Egyptians, that Beethoven had Negro forbears, and that the Whites monopolised the slave trade.

Now this farrago has received further elaboration. According to black New York academic Leonard Jeffries the slave trade was financed by Jews, and the Jews controlling Hollywood fixed the stereotype of Black inferiority in the American consciousness.

Even before Dr Jeffries thus updated the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, the Negro ghettos of the U.S. resonated with echoes of Julius Streicher. In Harlem folklore Jews figured alternatively as landlords charging extortionate rents, or as doctors injecting black babies with the HIV virus which causes AIDS. Then there was Louis Farrakhan who exclaimed 'You can't say Never Again to God, because when he puts you in the ovens it's for ever!', not to mention Jessie Jackson's appellation of New York as 'Hymietown'.

What motivates this demagogy? It cannot be ignorance of the fact that the Jews have done more for Black emancipation than any other segment of American 'white' society.

Jews supplied two of the six founder members of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People as long ago as 1909. They were disproportionately involved in the Urban League, and such radical groupings as CORE and the New Left.

When, in the course of the 1960s civil rights agitation, Mississippi rednecks shot three members of the Students Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee dead, two of the victims bore the names Schwirmer and Goodman.

Jewish martyrs for the Black cause were not only to be found in the U.S.A. In South Africa, Ruth First paid with her life for pro-ANC activity, and her husband Joe Slovo headed the military wing of the ANC.

When Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu stood trial in 1963, their co-defendants were D. Goldberg, L. Bernstein, J. Kantor, H. Wolpe and A. Goldreich. From Torch Commando leader Kane-Berman via Progressive MP Helen Suzman to the novelist Nadine Gordimer, Jews have been in the forefront of opposition to the apartheid régime since its inception.

France shows a similar picture, with Leon Blum the first Premier to appoint a Black to a colonial governorship (in the 1930s), and André Schwarzbart prominent among writers pleading the Black cause.

Could it be the fact that Jews have exerted themselves unduly on their behalf that makes a number of Blacks espouse anti-semitism? Psychology revealed the structure of the human mind to be convoluted, not to say twisted.

The awareness of a debt of gratitude can be as much of a burden as any other form of debt.

Perhaps Farrakhan, Jeffries et al have, by some strange trick of logic, convinced themselves that Jewish defence of their cause was just a more subtle form of colonisation, of white liberal condescension? It is hard to know.

□ R.G.

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Afternoon entertainment –

OCTOBER

- Tuesday 1* CLOSED
Wednesday 2 Recital by Students from Trinity College of Music
Thursday 3 From Russia with Love – Alla Sharova (Violin) accompanied by Lynn Hendry (Piano)
Monday 7 Let me Sing and I'm Happy – Jack Harris accompanied by Happy Branstom
Tuesday 8 Love Duets – Francoise Geller and Gordon Griffin accompanied by Rosa Butwick
Wednesday 9 Health & Beauty Care for the More Mature Woman – Talk & Demonstration by Valerie Monese (Beauty Therapist)
Thursday 10 Musical Memories from the Past – Ariane Prussner (Mezzo) accompanied by Elizabeth Upchurch (Piano)
Monday 14 Real Silver Flute Quartet – Presented by Caroline Ardren
Tuesday 15 Metropolitan Police Band
Wednesday 16 Ronnie Goldberg Entertains with Songs & Guitar
Thursday 17 A Singer & A Song – Geoffrey Strum (Tenor) accompanied by Johnny Walton (Piano)
Monday 21 Musical Entertainment by Gonzalo Barros (Piano)
Tuesday 22 Eddy Simmons Sings & Entertains with Piano Accompaniment
Wednesday 23 Dreams – what have they to do with life and living – Talk by Louis Grossley
Thursday 24 Musical Gems from the Past – Bernard Wilcox (Tenor) & Valerie Monese (Soprano) accompanied by Leslie Barnes (Piano)
Monday 28 Love & Dreams – Musical Entertainment – Sylvia Hartman (Soprano) accompanied by Hermione Goldsmith (Piano)

The AJR at Work

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Aggie Alexander.



Ruth Finestone.

AJR social workers are working to full capacity, not only visiting members who live in London, but as far afield as Dover, Brighton, Manchester, Northumberland and beyond.

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that the lady had only asked for help with one dentist's bill.

Some of those visited are eligible for admission into an old age home, but do not wish to give up their independence. Our social workers expend a great deal of time and effort in helping them to achieve this goal. Members who are not claiming their full benefit entitlement, or are forced to go to law, for any reason, are put in contact with Aggie Alexander, our fully qualified welfare rights advisor. Aggie's tenacity on behalf of her clients has earned her the respect of many government officials.

Our social work team is kept up to date with changes in legislation concerning welfare rights and care techniques through a constantly updated series of training courses administered by recognised organisations. The members of our social work department remain committed to working hard to achieve the best possible service for our members. As Ruth Finestone put it: *We could spend 24 hours a day, seven days a week visiting people. We do what we can.* □

- Tuesday 29* Solo Piano Recital – Debbie O'Brien
Wednesday 30 Two Comedies by Chekhov & The Brothers Quintero performed by Gay Berenzweig, Helen & Chris Wilson & Barry Serjent
Thursday 31 Music by Debussy & Schumann – Maja Elliott (Piano)

NOVEMBER

- Monday 4* London Ladies Choir
Tuesday 5 Paris Cafe – Parisian Songs by Nina Fogelberg (Soprano) with own Piano accompaniment
Wednesday 6 The Art of Breadmaking *mit* Feeling – Talk & Demonstration by Vivian Goswell of Goswell Bakeries

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Shared anniversary



The Rosenzweigs.

Photo: Newman.

As the AJR was being founded in London, in 1941, a young couple were getting married in Riga. Ilse and Frank Rosenzweig (from Berlin and Vienna respectively) were also refugees. Like their counterparts in Britain they were interned. However, not for them a few months in a dingy cotton mill in the North of England or a camp on the cosy Isle of Man. They were sent to Siberia. And there they stayed, until 1947, doing hard labour.

In 1946 their son was born. When they were finally released the couple travelled to Vienna by train. The trip took three months. On route Ilse wet-nursed the baby of a travelling companion too ill to manage the feeding of her own child.

After a year in Vienna the couple came to Britain. Soon after Frank and Ilse started their own business. Frank was a button dyer, Ilse made fabric-covered buttons.

The Rosenzweigs continued in this trade until their retirement. In the decade prior to finishing work they started making voluntary visits to hospital patients. For the last 15 years they have been members of the AJR. They now act as volunteers at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre.

The AJR is proud to share its golden anniversary with this popular, cheerful couple who have faced such great adversity in their lives, and yet still have energy and spirit enough to share with others.

□ M.N.

Thank-you notes

Dear Chairman – Thank you for sending me the certificate on the occasion of my fifty years membership.

I was introduced to the AJR by Professor E. Mittwoch and clearly remember taking part in many meetings with the management committee. Mr Schoyer, Professor Mittwoch, Doctor Breslauer and Adler Rudel were always present. Doctor Kurt Alexander was in the chair and Doctor Rosenstock took the minutes. I was also present when Rabbi Leo Baeck gave his first speech, after coming here from Theresienstadt in Churchill's private plane, an impression I will never forget.

With friendly greetings.

Golders Green Road
London NW11

J. Sachs

Dear Chairman – Thank you very much for the nice certificate which I will treasure and am proud to own.

I wish I lived nearer so that I could contribute more, but I shall always keep in contact.

With every good wish.

Brixton Hill
London SW11

Kate Conrad

Dear Chairman – Just a line to thank you very much for sending me the 50th anniversary founder-members certificate.

I am glad I joined the AJR 50 years ago and just regret that I cannot play an active part in its doings.

With best wishes.

Camden Road
London NW1

Hilde Guttmann

Return to the easel



Ruth Gee.

Photo: Newman.

Ruth Gee is one of the earliest members of the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre art class. She is also one of its most successful pupils. Mrs Gee is a busy bee of a woman, full of life and energy. As a youth she showed some promise as an artist, but her career was cut short by the events of the period. In the intervening 60 years she established her own business, supplying many of London's most famous stores with craftwork and becoming a founder member of the British Toymakers' Guild.

After her retirement Ruth Gee returned to the easel. Rediscovering her talent has given her great joy and, judging by the success of her several exhibitions, has given pleasure to many others as well.

Ruth is a woman of great talent and few vices. As we strolled around the Buttery at Burgh House, Hampstead, where a selection of her paintings are on view she told me: 'I don't smoke, I don't drink, I only speak to strange men'.

There are a number of other new talents coming to light through the art classes, and the quality of some of the work being produced is extremely high. If you are interested in trying your hand at painting contact the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre for details (Telephone: 071-328 0208).

□ M.N.

Dear Chairman – I wish to thank you and your committee very much for the beautiful certificate acknowledging my 50 years of AJR membership.

The certificate arrived two weeks after my 90th birthday, and now holds a place of honour amongst the cards and certificates given to me by some of my personal friends.

With many thanks again and best wishes.

Kings Mount
Leeds LS17

Dr M. Roll

FAMILY EVENTS

Birth

Meier Singer Jonathan and Helen are happy to announce the birth on 6 September, of Daniel, a brother for Rachel. A welcome grandson for Trude and Arnold Meier and Hanna and Peter Singer.

Deaths

Baumann – Lotte Baumann passed away peacefully on 13th August 1991, a selfless, loving and devoted mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, who will always be remembered with love and affection and will be deeply missed by her daughter Liesel, son-in-law Henry and family.

May she now rest in everlasting peace. SHALOM.

Evans – Anna Evans, nee Presser, formerly of Vienna died 15.8.91, deeply mourned and missed by her

grieving family and sister Riga (Regina).

Personal

Mrs Lottie Jacoby wishes to thank all her friends for the wonderful presents and birthday cards on the occasion of her 96th birthday.

Miscellaneous

Collector of old Jewish and Palestine picture postcards. Single cards purchased. David Pearlman, 36 Asmunds Hill, London NW11. 081-455 2149.

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'The Wednesday Observer' – The Lodges' Spoken Magazine, edited by Dr Arnold Horwell.

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Alice Schwab

Art Notes

Sir Anthony Caro is a very distinguished sculptor and it is fitting that the Tate Gallery has devoted the second in its series of one-artist exhibitions to his work (16 October–5 January 1992). While at the Tate it is worth visiting Room 46 to see a selection, from their own collection, of John Piper's paintings.

'The Queen's Pictures: Royal Collectors Through the Centuries' is in the new Sainsbury wing of the National Gallery (until 19 January 1992). British royalty having been discerning collectors the exhibition contains works by Holbein, Rubens, Van Dyke, Bruegel, Canaletto, Vermeer, as well as British artists such as Gainsborough, Lawrence, Stubbs, Wilke, Frith, Landseer and Lady Butler. A catalogue by Christopher Lloyd, Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, is available (£17.95 paperback, £30 hardback).

An ambitious Toulouse-Lautrec exhibition is at the Hayward Gallery until 19 January 1992. Work on show, gathered from museums and private collections all over the world, includes his famous paintings and posters for the Moulin Rouge. (For this exhibition you can beat the queues by booking in advance with a Cancan ticket (071 928 8800) or from the usual ticket agencies).

At the British Museum (until 16 February 1992) there is a major exhibition *Collecting the Twentieth Century*, displaying works from the many diverse cultures represented in the Museum's collections. More details about this exhibition later.

Ernest Neuschul (1895–1968) studied at the Berlin Academy and later became director of the Kunsthochschule, Charlottenberg. An exponent of Social Realism, he had his work declared degenerate by the Nazis and was forced to flee. In England since 1939 he painted under the name 'Norland' but failed to attain recognition. A retrospective exhibition of Neuschul's work is being held jointly by the Boundary Gallery and the Manor House Society (until 10 November). A lecture on his work will be given by his son at the Sternberg Centre on 29 October at 8 pm.

The 314th Exhibition of Watercolours by the Royal Watercolour Society is being held at the Bankside Gallery (until 3 November). Informal tours of the exhibition are organised each Tuesday at 6.30 pm during the course of the exhibition.

Ernst Barlach's graphic work is always worth seeing and the exhibition at the Goethe-Institut (until 15 November) should not be missed. It includes illustrations for Barlach's own plays and for Goethe's *Faust*, as well as print cycles for a Goethe anthology and Schiller's *Ode to Joy*.

Ever-enterprising Irene Scheinmann, painter and printmaker, has arranged an exhibition *Print Europe* at the Concourse Gallery, Barbican Centre (until 18 November). Part of it is devoted to the work of Stanley William Hayter (1901–1988) whose Parisian printmaking workshop, Atelier 17, was important to generations of European printmakers.

As part of the Japan Festival in the United Kingdom, Annelly Juda has mounted the first London exhibition of the figurative sculpture by Katsura Funakoshi (until 12 October). The sculptures are carved in camphor wood and, although the materials and techniques are traditional, the figures are contemporary.

Celia Paul's first exhibition at the Bernard Jacobson Gallery in 1986 was much acclaimed. New paintings by this gifted artist are being shown at Marlborough Fine Art and new etchings and drawings at Marlborough Graphics (until 19 October).

The late Henry Mathews, one-time designer and manufacturer, and former President of the B'nai B'rith Leo Baeck Lodge, painted idiosyncratically in an idiosyncratic style, combining the visual arts with musical themes. A retrospective exhibition of his paintings occupies the Library Gallery, Dolphin Centre, Poole, Dorset from 31 October–9 November. □

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SB's Column

Schnitzler über Alles. A theatrical marathon took place at the Upper Austrian town of Gmunden in August. A matinee performance of *Anatol* was followed by *Der Reigen*, followed in turn by two one-act plays at 10 p.m. The audience was then transferred by steamer to Villa Toscana where a huge buffet and champagne concluded the gala in style.

The Opera House, Zürich, just reopened with Wagner's *Lohengrin*, has ambitious plans for the new season. It is attempting to equal the quality and variety of other Central European opera houses, many of which – Dresden, Leipzig, Prague, Budapest – are now easily accessible to opera lovers for the first time. Apart from operatic works by Verdi, Richard Strauss and Ligeti, Zürich will feature a rich programme of concerts, four of which will be given by the Alban Berg quartet.

An experiment in Salzburg unconnected with the annual festival, was the performance of Elie Wiesel's Purim play *Der Prozess von Shamgorod*. The play, about 17th century pogroms which left few survivors, was designed for more responsive audiences. There was hesitant applause for the recitals of old Jewish folklore, singing and dancing, but the combination of artistic glitter with the play's morbid background jarred.

An international Rendezvous. Vienna's Konditorei Demel, restaurant and pâtisserie, stamping ground of Austrian and foreign 'glitterati', has been sold to a German concern for a reported £7 million. Demel's history stretches from Habsburg to the filming of the *Third Man* in the Fifties, when Orson Welles was a regular customer. The famous house on the Kohlmarkt is a must for every tourist.

Hans Albers, film actor with the sparkling blue eyes, star of *Bomben auf Monte Carlo* and *Der Sieger*, would have been 100 this summer. German TV presented a biographical collage of the actor, who had a hard time during the Nazi period when, in consequence of protecting his (non-Aryan) wife, he was barred from stage and screen. Albers died in 1960. □

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Silver spoon girl

In the first of two extracts from his book *OLD ADAM NEW EYES* (Vision Press, £8.95) Richard Grunberger looks at the early life of Erika Mann. The book is available from branches of Waterstones, Dillons, Books Etc, and (post free) from Vine House Distribution, Waldenbury, North Common, Chailey, E. Sussex BN8 4DR

George Bernard Shaw famously told Mrs Pat Campbell he hoped any putative children of theirs would have her looks and his brains – but feared it might fall out the other way round. No such fears needed to trouble Thomas and Katja Mann when they began to raise a family at Munich in the 1900s. Mann looked almost as good as he sounded on the printed page, and Katja combined beauty – painters sought her out as a sitter – with sufficient academic ability to have gained university admission.

It is no exaggeration to say that siblings Klaus and Erika were born with silver spoons in their mouths. Talent and looks did not exhaust the sum of their advantages from birth. The parental home was a riverside villa with pillared balconies, *Generalmusikdirektor* Bruno Walter lived next door, and he and other members of Munich's cultural elite were frequent house guests. After a none-too-happy stay at a progressive boarding school Klaus decided, at an age when most boys' interests focus on sport or girls, to become a writer – just like his father and Uncle Heinrich; Erika, Klaus's junior by a year, elected to go to acting school. The siblings showed extraordinary precocity. By eighteen Klaus was a regular contributor to *Weltbühne*, a politico-literary journal; Erika, after graduating from acting school, divided her time between appearing on the legitimate stage and collaborating with Klaus and a few kindred spirits in theatrical experiments at Hamburg.

Bard's bairns

One such kindred spirit was Pamela Wedekind (daughter of the author of *Lulu*) whom Klaus became engaged to, but as a minor could not yet marry; another was the up-and-coming actor Gustav Gründgens whom Erika soon married.

The theatrical debut of the four prompted newspaper comments mocking their extreme youth and privileged *filis du papa* status; one headline read 'Bard's bairns (*Dichterkinder*) play at theatre'. Though reviews were mixed, Gründgens' talents got him noticed and he subsequently gained rapid advancement. Appointed *Intendant* of the Hamburg Kammerspiele, he created a

'revolutionary theatre' for which he commissioned his brother-in-law to write a cabaret style *revue*. However, when Klaus submitted his script Gründgens, scenting failure, wanted to drop the project, whereupon Erika all but threatened divorce unless it went on; she got her way – with the result that the *revue* was panned by the critics and Gründgens vindicated. This wasn't Klaus's only setback at the time: when, on reaching the age of majority, he asked for Pamela Wedekind's hand she said she considered their engagement void and intended to marry the middle-aged playwright Carl Sternheim. As a distraction from such excursions and alarms the siblings undertook an American trip in the course of which they spent Christmas 1927 as Emil Jannings' guests at his Hollywood home. Hereafter extended travel became a favourite pursuit of theirs. Although this was not simply self-indulgence – since it yielded material for a series of travel books – it cost far more than it brought in; it was only Thomas Mann's receipt of the Nobel Prize (for *The Magic Mountain*) in 1929 that enabled him to pay off the debts his two firstborn, gifted, but wilful, children had run up on a round-the-world trip.

Father-son conflict

In the year of her father's Nobel award Erika and Gründgens divorced; their marriage which had never been consummated – since he was homosexual and she lesbian – finally came to grief when Erika suddenly withdrew from a scheduled production so she could join Klaus on a car safari across Africa. The actress who replaced her at short notice, Marianne Hoppe, was to be even more useful to Gründgens in the long term: during the homophobic Third Reich her collusion in a *mariage blanc* provided him with an alibi similar to Elsa Lanchester's for Charles Laughton in contemporary Hollywood. Klaus was homosexual, too. He also shared another trait with Gründgens – serious drug dependence – but his most intractable problem throughout life was having to stand in his father's shadow.

As for the father, he could not but be censorious of the son on personal as well as artistic grounds. Mann, whose fiction often depicted the contrast between the values of the bourgeoisie and of the artist, was still enough of a bourgeois himself to deprecate Klaus' bohemian life style (which had made a right-wing critic dub him 'the narcissus of the swamps'). As for literary creation the father, habituated to a pattern of work that aimed at solidity, not to say ponderousness, entertained grave doubts about the worth of the son's facile-seeming overproduction. (In

one year, 1932, Klaus published five titles.)

This fraught relationship curiously did not affect Erika – now a rising actress – who remained both her father's trusted counsellor and her brother's soulmate. (Chum might be a better term since she was a chainsmoker, car rally driver and doughty combatant in the escalating fight against Hitler-Lucifer *ante portas*.)

The Pepper-Mill

Erika's unique closeness to Klaus contrasted markedly with sibling relationships in the previous generation: Thomas and Heinrich Mann had hardly been on speaking terms for years. This owed something to professional jealousy, but more to profound disagreements about culture and politics; regarding the latter the conservative minded Thomas had pleaded the German cause in the First World War, while the radically-inclined Heinrich had decried it. Postwar, however, the painfully evident fragility of the Weimar Republic had gradually converted Thomas Mann into a staunch partisan of democracy. Even so he wanted to defend the Republic from a moderated conservative standpoint miles removed from Heinrich's and Klaus's radicalism. Thus, although the whole family was anti-Nazi, their responses to the catastrophe threatening to overwhelm Germany in the winter of 1932/33 differed somewhat. In early January Erika inaugurated, together with the well known actress Theresa Giehse, the political cabaret *The Pepper Mill* which made an instant impact in Munich's supercharged political atmosphere. Thomas and Katja Mann happened to be on a lecture tour outside the country at the time. When the burning of the Reichstag in February provided the Nazis with the pretext to round up all political opponents Heinrich fled to France, and Erika and Klaus phoned their patents in Switzerland warning them that 'bad weather' in Germany made a return inadvisable.

Mephisto

In early March, as Hitler's election victory rang down the final curtain on German freedom, Erika and Klaus escaped to Switzerland. However, in April Erika returned clandestinely to Munich, at grave personal risk, to rescue her father's incomplete *Joseph* manuscript – the fruit of years of work – from the locked up riverside villa and take it back to him. Back in Zurich she and fellow fugitive Theresa Giehse reconstituted the *Pepper Mill* cabaret; its sketches, mainly written by Erika, captivated local audiences. Later the *Pepper Mill*

was to tour Switzerland, Czechoslovakia and Holland – havens adjacent to Germany, where anti-Nazi émigrés assembled to continue a fight the first round of which they had so disastrously lost. Commuting frequently between Zürich and Amsterdam, seat of an émigré publishing house, Klaus conducted his fight by the (to him) familiar means of the printed word. He founded, together with André Gide and Aldous Huxley, the anti-Nazi journal *Die Sammlung*, wrote political novels, and addressed indignation-charged open letters to ex-colleagues of his – like the poet Gottfried Benn and the actress Emmy Sonnemann – who were collaborating with the Nazis. The latter, who became Frau Goering smoothed her friend Gründgens' path to the summit of the German theatrical profession. Goering, who as Minister President of Prussia had the directorship of the Prussian state theatres in his gift, appointed Gründgens to the post. Thus, while Klaus Mann subsisted on the bitter bread of exile – albeit materially somewhat sweetened by parental subsidies – Gründgens, his incriminating past (i.e., the revolutionary theatre at Hamburg) happily forgotten, enjoyed the patronage of the second most powerful man in Nazi Germany. In addition he garnered a succession of triumphs as director, film-star and stage actor – the latter particularly in the role of Mephisto in Goethe's *Faust*. That archetypal figure gave Klaus the title and central image for a novel in which he settled scores with his turncoat brother-in-law. In *Mephisto* he depicted Gründgens (disguised as the actor Hoefgens) as an opportunist ready to sell his soul to the devil for the sake

of self-advancement; the novels' subsidiary characters, turncoats of various shades of villainy or vanity, were likewise based on people prominent in German cultural life. In only one respect did the author depart from verisimilitude: to avoid giving any sort of legitimacy to the current Nazi witchhunt against gays ('the men with the pink triangles') he changed the despicable Hoefgens from a homosexual into a masochist. *Mephisto* came out in a limited edition in Amsterdam, the town that served Klaus as home (in so far as an exile can be described as having one at all). Another temporary resident of Amsterdam was Christopher Isherwood who lived there with his German lover, Heinz. Klaus knew Isherwood and introduced him to his sister. At the time the intrepid Erika had a number of reasons for acute worry. Gestapo agents were kidnapping anti-Nazi émigrés, she herself had had *Pepper Mill* performances disrupted by gunshots outside the theatre and – most threatening – she had heard that Berlin was about to deprive her of her German passport. She therefore seized the opportunity of her first encounter with Isherwood to ask him to marry her (and give her the protection of British citizenship). Isherwood refused. He feared any publicity that would endanger Heinz, and was, moreover, ideologically opposed to marriage – but volunteered to pass on the request to his friend Auden. He told Erika he was certain Wystan would oblige. Auden, currently teaching at a boys' school near Malvern, proved as good as Isherwood's word. Immediately on receiving news of Erika's plight he telegraphed the one-word reply 'Delighted'. □

'Seek the Peace of the City'

(Jeremiah 29,7)

In May 1989 *AJR Information* carried a report of the Judaica Department of the Hofgeismar Municipal Museum. Since then the museum has staged a substantially enlarged exhibition, accompanied by an 80-page booklet with the above title.

The recorded history of Hofgeismar Jewry stretches back some 500 years. A comprehensive evaluation of its contribution to the welfare of the town has not yet been made, and the booklet is an honest attempt in this direction. Even today, over 45 years after the war, there are still doubts about whether the depressingly high number of Hofgeismar holocaust victims is genuine, but – much as one would like to reduce the death lists – the hard evidence says otherwise. The underlying desire that today's youth should not have to identify their forebears as 'criminals' cannot produce any proof to the contrary.

Like many other communities in small towns Hofgeismar Jewry experienced its peak around the mid-nineteenth century with about 250 persons. Emancipation itself, which was so hard fought for, stimulated the movement from the boundary into big cities with their greater scope. Since antisemitism was also more strongly felt in smaller places the community had declined by 1933 to about 30 persons.

The Jews of Hofgeismar had always played their full part in the life of the town, serving on the Town Council and participating in various local societies. The Memorial, honouring the dead of World War I, included three Jewish names; in that conflict most able-bodied Jewish men served in the forces and some were decorated with the Iron Cross.

The brief history continues with the sad chapter of the Jewish congregation under the swastika and ends with a 'triumphant' announcement in the local press that as of 29 July 1939 Hofgeismar was *judenrein*.

□ Walter Sharman

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He conversed in French, employed Voltaire,
Built *Sans Souci* (without care)
Engineered the blatant seizure
Of half of Poland, all Silesia,
Loved some men more than his wife
Enhanced the state, diminished life.

Selbstgespräch

Dem Leben kann ich nichts mehr geben,
Da sollt' ich doch mein Leben nehmen.
Doch das Gewissen sprach dagegen
und gab mir hier nicht
seinen Segen
'Oh nein, Du Mensch,
das ist nicht richtig,
Dein Leben ist noch viel zu wichtig.
Es ist Dein Gott,
dar daran denkt und deine Wege
richtig lenkt'.
So sprach es ernsthaft
auf mich ein – und half mir
glücklicher zu sein.

□ Victor Spencer

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Singer of our song

Polish-born, American-domiciled Isaac Bashevis Singer was unique in ways almost too manifold to list. He gained the Nobel Prize for work in a language spoken by fewer people worldwide than read the *Times* newspaper. His oeuvre represents the culminating achievement of Yiddish literature, yet he deviated from the Yiddish literary tradition in two major respects. His novels and stories, whose plots invariably unfold against the backdrop of the hazards of Jewish existence, contain no scintilla of sentimentality. Also, in contrast to traditional Yiddish writing, he did not see the pen as a weapon in the fight for social justice. In postwar America, for instance he questioned the prevalent notion that slum children were candidates for crime. 'People' he asserted 'have grown up in houses without bathrooms for thousands of years. Did Abraham have a bathroom?' Though the Yeshiva-educated scion of a rabbinical dynasty he eschewed all Judaic practice and belief, drawing spiritual sustenance from Spinoza's pantheism instead. Yet he was so steeped in Jewish mysticism that he perceived the world as populated by spirits and demons as well as people. He even ascribed free will to his typewriter. 'If I write a story the typewriter doesn't like it stops working. It says *It is not my duty to write such a story as this.*'

Ghosts love Yiddish

This was more than mere whimsy. A deep poetic truth underlay the discourse on ghosts Singer delivered on his receipt of the Nobel Prize for Literature in Stockholm in 1978. 'I like to write ghost stories, and nothing fits a ghost better than a dying language. Ghosts love Yiddish, and as far as I know they all speak it. I am sure that millions of Yiddish-speaking corpses will rise from their graves one day, and their first question will be: Is there any new book in Yiddish to read?'

For all such apparent otherworldliness Singer was enormously life-affirming. Both his life and work were suffused with eroticism. He scandalised some of his traditional readership with an autobiographical account of a visit to a brothel, and *Enemies, a Love Story* (a novel turned into a film) open with the observation 'In the beginning was lust. Desire is both a divine and a human principle.'

If this emphasis on the libido places Singer among the literary *avant-garde*, he was thoroughly old-fashioned in his insistence that story-telling was the essence of

literature. He deeply disliked preaching and editorialising under the guise of writing. This was strange, since his own background was in journalism, first on the *Literarische Bleter* in Warsaw, and then the *Daily Forverts* in New York. A poignant anecdote about the latter publication shows Singer to have been quite unlike any of his fellow Nobel laureates. Once, travelling on the subway, he was approached by an elderly man who had read his most recent story. The man was under the impression that it was about him personally, and wondered how that could be since they had never met before this chance encounter. Singer valued this response from the 'common reader' more than the most appreciative literary criticism.

The Brothers Moskat

Another anecdote is equally revealing. After a public reading he was once asked if he expected to see the Messiah. 'I have the same hopes' Singer replied 'as the people of Chelm. There a man is employed to welcome the Messiah. It is not a well-paid job, but provides steady employment.'

By the time he produced this *bon mot* the writer had gained some distance from the impact of the *Shoah*. Earlier on, while composing *The Brothers Moskat* as the concluding section of a sprawling three-tier chronicle of Polish-Jewish life up to the eve of the Second World War, he had been in the grip of a far more apocalyptic mood. The novel ended with the truly shattering observation 'The coming Messiah, the saviour the Jews had perpetually longed for, was Death'.

□ Richard Grunberger

Search Notices

Kurt Hamburger, friend of Fritz Freudenheim, formerly of Siegmund Strasse/Allee in Berlin – Tiergarten. Thought to have arrived in England on Kindertransport 1938/9, aged 12 (approx). Please contact Eva Weil-Freudenheim, c/o Steinschneider, Altheimstrasse, 10, 6000 Frankfurt aM. or tel: Frankfurt 511956.

Robert Kronfeld (1904–1948): any information on this famous Austrian-born glider pilot will be appreciated by biographer, Professor John Haag, Department of History, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602, U.S.A.

Sinauer, could any descendants of the Sinauer family, originally from Grötzingen, near Karlsruhe, particularly the descendants of Hermann Sinauer, who emigrated to New York and then settled in Paris, please contact: Richard Tolman (great-grandson of Therese Gutmann, née Sinauer), 19 Highgate Avenue, London N6 5SB.

Obituaries

Max Rostal

Max Rostal, the violinist has died, aged 85. Born in Teschen, Silesia, he was a child prodigy who gave his first recital at the age of six. He studied in Vienna with Arnold Rosé (Mahler's brother-in-law), but the most important influence on him was his apprenticeship with Carl Flesch in Berlin. Flesch was one of the first to bring a method into violin teaching. Rostal became his assistant, and at the age of 25 was the youngest professor at the Berlin Hochschule für Musik.

In Britain he first taught privately and then formed a partnership with the pianist Franz Osborn, appearing many times at Dame Myra Hess's wartime National Gallery concerts. During the war he also taught members of the Amadeus Quartet (whose release from internment he helped to effect). In 1944 he became professor at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and subsequently held equivalent positions at the Cologne State Academy of Music and the Berne Conservatory. In 1974 he helped found the European String Teachers' Association, becoming its first president. □

Hans Weigel

Hans Weigel, who died near Vienna, aged 83, was the last great exemplar of the near-extinct species *Kaffeehausliterat*. After dabbling in law and publishing he became a freelance writer whose prolific output – both in pre- and postwar Austria, and wartime Switzerland – comprised plays, novels, Molière translations, cabaret scripts and reviews.

As a young man Weigel had known Karl Kraus whom he resembled in several respects. He was obsessed with language (*pace* his book *Die Leiden der jungen*

Wörter), and dispensed devastating critical comment – for which Käthe Dorsch slapped his face in public. Like Kraus, he also had a negative attitude to his origins. After formally disaffiliating from the community in his mid-twenties he no longer considered himself a Jew. As a postwar returnee to Vienna he deliberately downplayed the extent of Austrian antisemitism (in contrast to Alfred Polgar, who observed that the country had more Nazis than inhabitants).

Weigel also never tired of castigating Israel. What cannot be gainsaid is that, aided by his self-perception as a fully integrated Austrian, he contributed notably to the resuscitation of Viennese culture after its near-destruction by the Nazis. □

Paul Lichtenstern

Vienna-born Paul Lichtenstern has died, aged 88. He is best remembered by AJR members for his regular concerts at the Homes in The Bishop's Avenue.

As a child he showed outstanding talent as a piano player. He went on to study at the Vienna Academy and then the Sternsche Konservatorium in Berlin. By the time he came to England in 1939 he had established a reputation as a soloist and chamber musician, performing in many European cities and in broadcasts.

With his wife, Johanna Metzger, a soprano, he formed the Children's Choir of the Belsize Square Synagogue and the Kol Rinah Choir.

His pupils remember Paul with great affection. He enjoyed teaching and instilled in them a lasting love of music. He also taught liturgical music at the Belsize Square Synagogue, where he was the organist for many years.

Paul Lichtenstern's death saddens all who knew him. □

40 Years Ago
this Month

OUR COMMON WAY

The High Festivals are bound to make us think in wider spaces of time. We remember how we spent these holy days in our former home towns. We realise that our outlook has changed since, but we also know that the heritage of several generations has left its mark on us once and for all. Therefore, our common past is bound to create common problems and common tasks.

This issue reveals again that we have to safeguard our interests in questions of restitution and compensation, and 'post-restitution' problems, such as transfer and double taxation, are coming more and more into the foreground. By taking up these and many other questions and by reporting on current developments in 'AJR Information', the AJR renders its services to every member of the community whatever his personal position may be.

The efforts of securing an adequate share in the heirless, unclaimed and communal German Jewish property for the needs of emigrated Jews present another urgent task.

With the help of those who have built up their lives anew in this country we also have to look after the less fortunate ones in our midst.

If, as before, all our friends strengthen the organisation which works on their behalf, and if they readily respond to the appeal attached to this issue, they will not only give us practical assistance but also encourage us in the performance of our widespread duties.

AJR Information October 1951.

HANS CASPARIUS

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Austria's moment of truth

The following is part of the statement Chancellor Vranitzky made to the Austrian Parliament during a debate on the Yugoslav crisis on 6 July 1991:

We must recall that a substantial number of Austrians inflicted great suffering on others in the name of the National Socialist régime and took part in the persecutions and the crimes of the Third Reich. Because we are proposing to contribute our own, painful experience to the new Europe, because the last few days have brought such a poignant reminder of how much independence and national identity, freedom and human rights mean to a nation – precisely for these reasons we must face up to the other side of our history, to our shared responsibility for the suffering that was inflicted on other

peoples and nations, not by Austria as a state but by citizens of this country.

It is an incontrovertible fact that in March 1938 Austria fell victim to military aggression with horrendous consequences. In the wave of persecution which immediately ensued hundreds of thousands of Austrians were interned in prisons and concentration camps, were killed in the Nazi death camps or were forced to seek refuge in exile. Hundreds of thousands died at the front and in air raids. Jews, gypsies, the physically and mentally handicapped, homosexuals, members of ethnic minorities, and adherents of political or religious groups whose views ran contrary to the doctrines of National Socialism – they all became the victims of a perverted ideology and its assertion of totalitarian power.

Nevertheless, many Austrians hailed the *Anschluss*, supported the National Socialist régime and served it at various levels of the Nazi hierarchy. Many Austrians were involved in the oppression and persecution of the Third Reich, some as holders of high office.

Even today we cannot sidestep our share of the moral responsibility for the deeds of our fellow countrymen. Much has been done in past years as far as possible to make

amends for the damage which was inflicted and to alleviate the suffering which was caused. Yet much remains to be done, and the Austrian Federal Government will make every effort to help those who have received too little or no assistance from the measures implemented to date or whose moral or material claims have so far been overlooked.

We openly avow all the facts of our history and the deeds – both good and evil – of every member of the Austrian population. Just as we lay claim to the good deeds, so we must ask forgiveness for the evil committed, from the survivors and from the descendants of the dead. □

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