

# AJR *Information*

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Don't miss . . .

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Beethoven** p7

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## Piecemeal peace

The high hopes raised by the signing of the Israel-PLO Accord last September have not been fulfilled – but nor have they been entirely dashed. Now the Clinton-Assad summit at Geneva – another summit stronger on symbolism than on the nitty-gritty of actual peace-making – gives cause for renewed optimism. The Israeli leaders appear ready to take a calculated risk by handing back the Golan. May the gamble pay off; they are playing for high stakes. If it does Israel will again be a light to the nations (or at least to Yugoslavia, South Africa and Ireland). □

Parallels and divergences

## Weimar on the Volga?

The similarities between Germany and Russia are many and ominous. Both are predestined to political pre-eminence by virtue of their size – as well as location, with the German *Drang nach Osten* mirrored in Russia's expansion southward (*pace* Tsarist and Soviet thrusts into Afghanistan and Zhirinovskiy's talk of 'Russian soldiers washing their boots in the waters of the Indian Ocean').

The lure of geography is compounded by historical half-myths, with Germany as nucleus of the Europe-wide Holy Roman Empire and Russia as the 'Third Rome' of Pan-Slavist propaganda.

The overlap of Germans beyond the 1919 borders into Czechoslovakia and Poland is paralleled by Russians living in the 'near abroad' (the Baltic States, Moldavia, Kazakhstan etc).

Then there is the greatest trigger of Fascism: national(ist) humiliation. What the lost war and Versailles was for Germany, the lost Cold War and the unravelling Soviet Union is for the Russians. Social humiliation is the final ingredient in the poison

cocktail: German interwar inflation and unemployment parallel Russia's current crimewave and poverty.

In such a situation three lightning conductors for resentment are readily at hand: foreign powers, politicians and minorities. For the interwar Germans these were the victors of 1918, ministers of the Weimar Republic and the Jews. For the present-day Russians they are, respectively, the West (especially America), Gorbachev and Yeltsin, and the Jews plus Caucasians.

Both in 1930s Germany and 1990s Russia, Fascism profited from a divided opposition, Social Democrats *v* Communists in the former, fast and slow reformers in the latter. In both instances hardline communists targeted bourgeois democracy as enemy number one.

In Weimar Germany the old élites – judiciary, officer corps, clergy and professorate – were too reactionary to embrace democracy; present-day Russia has a like-minded military-industrial complex and ex-apparatchiks.

Despite these ominous and spine-chilling parallels, Russia's risky experiment with democracy does not inevitably presage disaster. In 1930 – Zhirinovskiy's present position closely resembles Hitler's in 1930 – Germany was still three years away from catastrophe, and the world still nine years away from Armageddon, so there is still a little time. Also, Yeltsin bears no resemblance whatsoever to Hindenburg, and the Russian intelligentsia has in the past had a better record than the German *Bildungsbürgertum*. Lastly, Americans are no longer isolationist and the Anglo-French have learned the lesson of Chamberlain.

In addition, we can derive some solace from differences in personality between pupil and teacher. Whereas Hitler was teetotal, apparently celibate, and possessed of *viehischer Ernst* (bestial seriousness), Zhirinovskiy is an unhappily married alcoholic with a penchant for macabre jokes. Zhirinovskiy's tendency to 'shoot from the lips' – recently displayed in Bulgaria – ought to give Russian democrats sufficient ammunition for puncturing his claim to the highest office in the country. And a final point that must, surely, affect 'Mad Vlad's' popularity rating: while Hitler had been a teenage school leaver, and decorated war veteran, Zhirinovskiy is a university graduate who has never heard a shot fired in anger. □



The sculpture of Love and Anguish, by Kenneth Triester, at the Holocaust Memorial, Miami Beach, Florida.

## Word-eaters and anorexics

In 1918 Ludendorff was trying to whip up enthusiasm among the fatigued Germans for one last big push that would win the war. His victory-at-any-price campaign received powerful support from Thomas Mann in the shape of *Reflections of an Unpolitical Man*, published in the same year. In a chapter of his book entitled 'Comments on the human condition' Mann talked of the 'merriment and freedom soldiers feel in the certain expectation of death'.

When the book was republished in 1922 Mann, whom the intervening events had converted from an Ultra-Conservative into a Liberal, excised this preposterous passage (which he also kept out of all subsequent editions).

In 1930, the year of Hitler's electoral breakthrough, Ernst Jünger published an essay on the Jewish Question in the *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* that purveyed unadulterated antisemitism in an 'intellectual' garb. He resembled Mann in later repenting of *this* aberration, among others. As literature lovers with the ability to read between the lines know, Jünger's 1939 futuristic novel *Auf den Marmorklippen* was a – necessarily coded – refutation of everything Nazism stood for.

*On The Marble Cliffs* formed only part of Jünger's penance. After the collapse of the Third Reich the officer-turned-author published Second World War diaries – and delivered a commemorative speech at Verdun – in which he expressed sorrow and contrition for his earlier glorification of war.

Some commentators have argued that the sentiments Mann and Jünger expressed before their change of heart were self-evidently repugnant – and who could gainsay them? But what verdicts would such critics pass on the likes of the poet Gottfried Benn or on Martin Heidegger – Germany's greatest 20th century philosopher – neither of whom had the good grace to repent and disavow their support for Nazism? It is better to eat one's, however indigestible, words than to remain anorexic in that regard. □ R.G.

### Profile

## Farmer's boy to FRS



Paul Cohn.

Photo: Newman.

Paul Cohn was born into a middleclass Hamburg family. His father earned a livelihood as a cigar importer, his mother as a teacher. In 1933, when he was 9, the mother suffered instant dismissal, and Nazi autarky caused the father's business to decline.

Paul attended the Talmud Torah until coming to England alone in 1939. Over here he worked as a trainee on a poultry farm near Dorking. The hours were long – 70 per week – but work in the open air, and nourishing food, turned him from a delicate child into a sturdy youngster.

Members of Dorking Refugee Committee (which was chaired by the composer Vaughan Williams) invited him to their homes. They also lent Paul books, making him aware of missed educational opportunities. In 1941 he moved to Croydon, took a Government training course and became a fitter in a war factory. Now that he worked only a 56-hour week he used his spare time to catch up on his education.

Single-minded application earned him an Exhibition to Trinity College, Cambridge, where – with financial assistance from the Dorking Committee – he read mathematics. After graduation, a Department of Scientific and Industrial Research grant enabled him to work for his Ph.D. A post-doctoral fellowship took him to Nancy, a university at the cutting-edge of mathematical research. Then came ten years at Manchester, where he met his wife, a psychology student. Since then, except for guest pro-

fessorships in the USA and Germany, and visits to universities in all five continents, he has worked in London, latterly as University College's Astor Professor of Mathematics.

Retirement a few years ago has not ended his involvement in mathematical research, contributions to which earned him the coveted title of Fellow of the Royal Society.

A guest professorship at Hamburg brought him into contact with post-war Germans. He found a refreshingly large number of them troubled about their country's past, and avid for information. He thinks it wrong to coldshoulder the representatives of this new, better Germany; he attended the unveiling of a memorial plaque to his mother at her old school, and was pleasantly moved to see a street named after her.

□ R.G.

### AJR

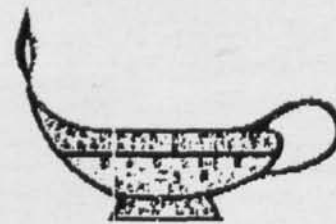
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## The Teddy Kollek I knew

Teddy Kollek and I come from similar middle-class backgrounds, both sons of bankers in capital cities, he in Vienna, I in London. Both of us can also boast of grandfathers who were teachers of Hebrew and Jewish studies. Similarly, we were both bitten by the Zionist 'bug' at an early age despite the misgivings, almost disapproval, of our respective parents.

Despite such similarities, there were great differences between us. Teddy had joined a Zionist youth movement when he was eleven; realising that he had to live up to the ideology which the Movement had been preaching, he left high school aged nineteen in 1930 and enrolled in an agricultural training farm. He joined *Hechalutz*, became a group leader and even attended a Zionist Congress, as orderly to Chaim Arlosoroff (who was later murdered on a Tel Aviv beach). In 1935 he received his immigration certificate, but before leaving for Palestine he spent some months in England where, incidentally, he met Moshe Dayan. In Palestine he took part in the dramatic establishment of the Austro-Czech kibbutz Ein Gev in 1937. The following year he was sent to England to work with the *Habonim* Youth movement.

That is where we met for I, too, had been a member of a kibbutz in Palestine and had

come back to England at the same time for a similar purpose. But the difference between us was my Zionism which was, so to speak, sentimental. I knew nothing of Zionist Congresses and certainly had never thought of attending one. While Teddy was deeply involved with Zionist work, I was sitting comfortably in Cambridge studying medicine.

I was deeply impressed with Teddy when we met in London in 1938. I admired his self-assurance and his intimate knowledge of matters of which I was totally ignorant. It was not until many years later that I realised that his stay in Palestine had only exceeded my own by a few months and that his agricultural experience was little greater than my own! But Teddy had then – and doubtless still has – an enormous aura of knowledge and experience which stood him in very good stead in all his dealings.

After a short while in London both Teddy and I gravitated to the area of greatest need: work amongst German Jewish refugees. We both found ourselves working for the Agricultural Committee of the German Refugee Committee which was then under the chairmanship of Colonel Waley-Cohen, an ex-Indian Army officer. He was charming and helpful, but had certain prejudices which strongly influenced the Committee's work. By agreement with the Home Office the Committee was allowed to have one thousand refugees for training in agriculture in England at any one time. As soon as the training of a person had been completed and their emigration to Palestine, the Argentine or elsewhere arranged, a new permit could be issued by the Committee to bring up the total number to one thousand.

Every Monday morning was set aside for the signing of fresh permits which had been prepared by Teddy and myself. The meet-

ings took place in the Colonel's office and the fresh permits were placed before him for signature. It was at that point that a violent, well-rehearsed argument took place over the Colonel's head, between Teddy and myself. The purpose was to distract and confuse the Colonel as he signed the certificates placed before him. The reasons for this charade were simple. The Colonel had decided that permits should not be given to girls, Orthodox Jews, or to those partially disabled. His reason for these exclusions was that such people would be difficult to place in agricultural employment. Teddy and I thought that 'life-saving' permits should not be denied to people for reasons such as these. Hence the charade! The Colonel became so interested in our arguments that he went on signing the permits 'blind', not looking at the details. He never did discover how so many 'unsuitable' people had managed to slip through the net – and we never told him.

Teddy went back to Palestine just before the outbreak of war and I was away for five years on military service. As is well-known, Teddy became more and more deeply involved in Zionist affairs and in the creation of the new State, eventually becoming Mayor of Jerusalem, a post which he held with enormous success and prestige for 28 years. We have not met since our joint activities in London in the late 'thirties, but from time to time do pass greetings through third parties. I am now retired and unlikely to accept high office, even in the unlikely event of it being offered. But, as for Teddy, he has stated that he may come back as Mayor of Jerusalem in five years time. Who knows, perhaps he may.

□ Walter Schwab

### 40 Years Ago this Month

#### KOESTLER ON GERMAN GUILT

In an article published in the Berlin Periodical 'Der Monat' Arthur Koestler under the heading 'Political Neurosis' deals with the psychological reaction of Germans to the atrocities committed during the Nazi régime. He takes the view that the psychological burden was so heavy that the individual German tried to evade it and that therefore many intelligent and benevolent Germans became silent as soon as the words 'Auschwitz' or 'Belsen' were mentioned. Others tried to contest the facts. This kind of reaction reveals a subconscious feeling of guilt, even among those who had no actual share in the crimes. Everybody tends to identify himself with the achievements of the Community to which he belongs, but not to its shortcomings. Thus every German is proud of 'our Goethe', as if he had contributed anything to Goethe's work. 'Our Goethe', 'our Beethoven', 'my Fatherland', are part of the individual make-up, but 'our Auschwitz', 'our Gas Chambers', 'our war of aggression' – all this has to be pushed in the background. It is up to the victors to forget, but the defeated have to learn to remember. Koestler says.

AJR Information, February 1954

### CLUB 1943

Anglo-German Cultural Forum  
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at the Communal Hall  
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Feb. 7th. Dr Carol Diethe (Principal Lecturer, Middlesex University) Nietzsche and the New Woman.

Feb. 14th. Dr Annette Stannett. A long way from dusty fossils. Education in Museums.

Feb. 21st. Dr M. Yudkin. S. Y. Agnon. The quest for wholeness in his writings.

Feb. 28th. Dr Habil. Hermann Hiery (German Historical Institute). The New Germany and its future.

Mar. 7th. Joint meeting with International P.E.N. Heimat in der Fremde. Exil in der Heimat. 60 Jahre PEN Zentrum deutschsprachiger Autoren im Exil/Ausland.

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## Reviews

## Inherit the Truth

B.B.C. Radio 3, 4th-8th October 1993

Anita Lasker-Wallfisch tells her remarkable and terrible story of life under the Nazis with astonishing clarity, as well as generosity towards the few decent Germans who tried to help her family before they were finally deported.

She was brought up in Breslau, the youngest of three daughters in a typical middle-class assimilated Jewish family. Their father was a well respected lawyer, their mother a talented violinist who encouraged their children to learn music. Jewishness took the form of synagogue visits on High Holydays; Pesach was spent at their maternal grandmother's house. Anita's first recollection that something was wrong was in 1933, when as an 8-year-old girl she was subjected to antisemitic abuse by a group of children. The deteriorating situation climaxed, of course, in the Kristallnacht orgy of violence.

Despite frantic attempts to get out of Germany, only the eldest daughter managed to escape to London. In 1942 their parents, and later their elderly grandmother, were deported to the east where they all perished. In September 1942 the Gestapo arrested Anita and her elder sister Renate attempting to flee to France; and after 5 months in a Breslau prison, Anita was sent to Auschwitz. She would almost certainly have ended up in the gas chambers but for her musical talent. She met Alma Rosé, the leader of the 'Women's Orchestra' in Auschwitz created by the camp commandant, music loving monster Kramer, and became their cellist. Alma Rosé was the daughter of Arnold Rosé, the leader of the Vienna Court Opera orchestra and brother-in-law of Gustav Mahler. Contrary to Fania Fénelon's memoirs *The Musicians of Auschwitz*, Lasker-Wallfisch refutes allegations of continuous vindictive squabbling and stealing within the orchestral group. In retrospect,

she praises the domineering and unpopular Alma Rosé's strict disciplinarian attitude to the musicians under her, because Rosé managed 'to focus their attention away from the utter misery of their lives in the camp to an F natural that should have been an F sharp'. One of Lasker-Wallfisch's most bizarre and humiliating experiences must have been the time when she had to play Schumann's *Träumerei* to Dr. Mengele. The members of the orchestra were later transferred to Belsen, where after suffering appalling conditions of starvation and illness, they were finally liberated on April 15th, 1945.

She told her extraordinary story with a quiet dignity, and I hope the B.B.C. will repeat her series of talks in the near future.

□ Nicholas Gotch

## A burdened relationship

Heiko Haumann and Hans Schadek (eds)  
*GESCHICHTE DER STADT FREIBURG. Band 3.*  
*Von der badischen Herrschaft bis zur*  
*Gegenwart. Theiss, Stuttgart. 902 pp*

When early Zionists first ventured to suggest that, while emancipation had succeeded, assimilation had failed, most Western Jews disagreed. A more recent argument (voiced in the 1992 *Yearbook of the Leo Baeck Institute*), that the achievement of a German-Jewish symbiosis was an illusion, is no doubt thought by many to be equally controversial. It may, therefore, be interesting to conduct what might be thought of as an empirical test of both these propositions by the (deliberately selective) study of a history within a history – that of the Jews of the South German university city of Freiburg im Breisgau.

With this, the third volume of the official history of the town, the editors have achieved an impressive example of modern historiography. Backed by painstaking research, with detailed acknowledgement of all sources and references and meticulous regard for impeccable scholarship, the book is a model of learning skilfully communicated. Thus, chapters in the first part, which deals chronologically with the events of the last 200 years, are expanded by the inclusion of additional information on specific topics – highlights (*Schlaglichter*) designed to stimulate the reader's curiosity and to

put into focus aspects of municipal life which would otherwise be less readily understandable. The second part of the book is devoted to an exposition of aspects of historical development which cannot be defined in terms of time alone. Both parts contain references to individual Jews associated in one way or another with the town. And in two major sections, the communal history of the Jews of Freiburg, their contribution to the town as citizens, their life and fate before and after 1933 and the postwar establishment of a new community, is related with sympathy made more convincing by scientific objectivity. There are no omissions, no excuses. It is made clear that the burden of the past lies upon Freiburg's non-Jewish citizens, albeit in a different way, as much as upon the Jews who saved themselves by timely emigration, the few who survived the camps or the still fewer who were helped by righteous men and women.

When, in 1806, Freiburg became a part of the new Grand Duchy of Baden, no Jew was permitted to take up residence within its limits. Only in the second half of the 19th century were Jews able to apply for limited civil rights, and full citizenship was not granted until 1861 – and then against the open opposition of certain local interests. By 1864 there were about 100 Jewish

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residents and a community with proper legal status was established. However, it remained beset for some time yet by arguments with the municipal authorities in respect of such matters as burial sites, religious education and, in 1869/70, the construction of a synagogue. In his consecration sermon, Rabbi Lewin (himself a historian of Baden Jewry) declared that his congregants no longer felt themselves to be strangers, and were not regarded as such, for 'one sentiment of love enfolds us all, ourselves and our fellow-citizens whose faith is different from ours . . .'. The hope that the belated integration of Freiburg Jews into their civic and social environment would endure was not, so states the author of this chapter, to be disappointed for at least a few of the following decades.

During those years Jews played a role in commerce, banking, industry and the professions, in politics, in education and in municipal affairs. They 'did their bit' in the 1914/18 War. But already in 1885, Jews were encouraged by Jews to become manual workers and technicians, or to engage in agriculture, in order to avoid recriminations for alleged preponderance in socially more 'acceptable' occupations. Well before 1914 organisations were set up to combat anti-semitism. Zionism found early adherents, particularly at the University, where a Jewish duelling fraternity – visual evidence of German-Jewish symbiosis – was ostracized by other groups and forced to give up its ambitions. 'Ostjuden' were the ostensible target of much anti-Jewish sentiment. The belief that it was only 'comers-in' and not the respectable indigenous population who

propagated – and were hit by – anti-semitism was proved false – demonstrably so when Kristallnacht came and with it the end of the Jewish community. 'The acts of destruction were . . . not popular with many people. They were not in line with their ideas of common decency. Thus what was represented as a legal action against the Jews was shown up to be a pretext. But, admittedly, there was no wave of protest; no one tried to save the Jews'.

In fact, there was some marginal resistance to the Nazis and it included laudable examples of courageous altruism. So where does all this leave our 'table top experiment' to check a proposition postulated in one work of academic worth against the facts provided by another? It seems that the question as to whether the supposed integration of Freiburg's Jews (and hence those of the other towns and cities in the German provinces) was an illusion will, on the evidence of *Geschichte der Stadt Freiburg*, have to be left open. There is no doubt, however, that their history is very much a part of that of their onetime home town.

□ David Maier

## Future imperfect

Robert Harris, *FATHERLAND*, Hutchinson, £14.99

This is an important book despite the author's attempts, in the service of readability and saleability, to make it appear less so.

Harris fictionalises the German tragedy, but he does it in a startling manner by postulating the year 1964 in a Fatherland which has won the war. Hitler is still the Führer and Chancellor, about to celebrate his seventy-fifth birthday. The country is in the throes of partly enforced and partly genuine ecstasy. Berlin, rebuilt according to

Albert Speer's plans, is one mass of enormous, out-of-scale buildings and monuments. Heydrich is Reichsführer SS (Himmler has perished in a plane crash), Goering is also dead (of fatty degeneration perhaps), Goebbels is still alive, an ancient satyr living in a lake fortress. Britain, having sued for peace, is ruled over by Edward VIII and Queen Wallis. Kennedy is still US President and seeks detente from the atomic stand-off with Germany through a visit to Berlin while at the same time supporting the remnants of Russian bandits/freedom fighters holding out in the Urals.

## Bogus normality

There is a normality about it all; the world has accepted the outcome of the war. Things are not unlike the way they were recently and are even now. Europe has been organised in a kind of EEC with Germany paramount and the Mark triumphant.

And then a Kripo (criminal police) investigator puts his foot into a hornets' nest: while investigating a drowning in the Wannsee he bares the underbelly of the glittering, victorious Nazi beast. He 'discovers' the Holocaust step by step, without intending to; the Jews are no part of his milieu. A former Hitler youth and U-boat veteran, he accepted that the few Jewish people who once lived near him had been relocated. He has his own troubles: his ex-wife who hates him, a son estranged, and an unhappy feeling that he does not like the state he serves despite, or perhaps because of, his enforced, *ex-officio* membership of the SS.

He teams up with an American woman journalist who is only allowed to function because of *detente* noises. About this and the other thriller elements I will say no more; but the book is to be recommended for its sound futurology and psychology as well as use of some of the authenticated Wannsee Conference documents. □ J.R.

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# Letters to the Editor



## CZECH RESTITUTION

Sir - Unlike the German and Austrian Governments, the Czech Republic obstructs restitution. Yours is the only journal that binds together thousands of Czech Jews all over the world. The purpose of my letter is to form a Committee of Czechs more adept than myself to exert pressure on the Czech Government.

Garden Flat  
32 Ferry Road  
London SW13

H. J. Korda

## HUNGARIAN DEPORTATIONS

Sir - With the 50th anniversary of the deportations coming up you might be interested in something my late mother, an Auschwitz survivor, wrote: I have always felt, and still nurture, resentment against the people of my native land, those who peeped through the curtain when we were led into the ghetto at Szekesfehervar and herded into the cattle wagons which took us to our terrible fate. The 'friends' and 'good neighbours' could not act quickly enough to confiscate our worldly possessions after we were out of the way.

I made the wisest decision in my life when I refused to be repatriated after the war.

Greenbrook Ave  
Barnet Herts

Philip Dent

## UNENGLISH WINDSORS

Sir - Many countries have had foreign sovereigns for long periods; here are just a few examples:

From 1072 for almost 800 years Sicily successively had Norman, German Hohenstaufen, French Angevins, Aragonese and French Bourbon kings.

Denmark has been ruled by Oldenburg counts from Germany since the fifteenth century, our own Duke of Edinburgh being from the same stock.

Norway has not had a native king since the fourteenth century; most of them were shared with Denmark.

Sweden since the seventeenth century has successively had German kings from Pfalz-Zweibrücken, Hessen-Kassel, and Holstein-Gottorp and since 1818 the French Bernadottes.

During the periods when Spain has been a monarchy her kings from 1516 were Austrian Habsburgs and French Bourbons with a brief interruption of Corsican Joseph Buonaparte, who had previously been King of Naples and Sicily.

The Portuguese kingdom was founded by a count of Burgundy, whose line reigned for 300 years to 1385. Later there were three Habsburg kings from Spain. Its kings from 1864 to the abolition of the monarchy in 1910 came from Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, as have the Belgian kings from the time of the country's independence in 1830.

The German Nassau dynasty has reigned in Holland and, subsequently, the Netherlands and in Luxemburg since the sixteenth century.

When in the nineteenth century kings were sought for various Balkan countries emerging from Turkish hegemony, the choice fell on scions of a number of German minor dynasties. These included princes from Bavaria, then from Denmark-Oldenburg, for Greece; Battenberg and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha for Bulgaria; Hohenzollern for Romania; and a short reign in 1912 of a prince of Wied in Albania.

Barn Hill  
Wembley

C. T. Marx

## DIABOLICAL FOLLICLES

Sir - Beards have, throughout history, been a matter of fashion as well as a symbol of manliness; they have to my knowledge, never been regarded as an outward expression of a man's mentality or character.

If Bismarck, Wilhelm I, Friedrich III, Wilhelm II and Hindenburg had beards, so did the Prince Consort, Edward VII, George V, Gladstone and Disraeli, not to mention Theodor Herzl, Chaim Weizmann, Leo Pinsker and many other Zionist leaders. Such villainous characters as Goering, Goebbels, Heydrich and Eichmann, on the other hand, were clean-shaven.

Your simplistic, superficial assessment also overlooks the fact that in many cases beards have religious connotations, as for

example in the case of clergy of the Armenian, Russian and Greek Orthodox churches. Orthodox Jews also have beards, as do Moslem fundamentalists, and the latter would no doubt have fitted your stereotype much better than 19th-century Germans whose beards [and aspirations] were, after all, not much different from those of their British contemporaries.

East Hill,

Ruth Willers

Wembley Park

*I only wish my serious articles were taken as seriously as my humorous ones* Ed

## FRIENDLY FIRE CASUALTY

Sir - 'Ouergh!' again, I'm afraid! Mr Needham surely must concede that there is a difference in kind, not merely in degree, between Jews voluntarily giving up their Jewishness - whatever that may be taken to mean, race, religion, language, tradition, food, common suffering, attitude to others - and Jews and other victims of Nazism being murdered by the million.

His metaphor of the grains of sand - Jews - thrown on the beach and lost, surely rather suggests that all the grains of sand are the same: Christians, Jews, Moslems, atheists . . . sounds a good recipe for peace!

Romilly Street  
London W1

Peter Zander

## FUNERAL RITES AND WRONGS

Sir - I have been reading *AJR Information* for many years and still experience nostalgia for the days of W. R. Rosenstock and C. C. Aronsfeld.

The majority of readers must be getting rather old now and may have sad recollections of the funerals of loved ones.

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A. W. MYTZE

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I am surprised, therefore, that you chose to compose and print such a tactless and irrelevant piece in December. The practicalities of other people's funeral experiences may have a personal significance as one gets older – do you have to rub their noses in it?

Come on, R.G.! If you really have so much space to fill, draw your readers' attention to love and beauty. The sweet, fresh air of Hampstead is rejuvenating and better for their spirits than the poisoned air of religious intolerance in the cemetery.

Mount Park Road  
Ealing

Mrs A. Rosney

#### PLAIN ENGLISH, PLEASE

Sir – I read Mrs G. Finkeltaub's letter with amazement. She is asking to clip the wings of eagles because they can soar and sparrows cannot. Please make no changes as far our very good magazine is concerned.

Melvin Close

Mrs Renée Obbard

Laverstock  
Salisbury

Sir – I fully endorse Mrs G. Finkeltaub's comments as regards letters and articles in *AJR Information* which are not written in plain English. I have very often been wondering myself why it should be necessary to demonstrate, or even to emphasize, how well our refugee community has been able to integrate by adopting such sophisticated language.

Chilton Green

H. White

Welwyn Garden City

#### ANTI-AUSTRIAN

Sir – The front page illustration in your December issue came from the *Thora and Crown Exhibition* at Vienna's *Kunsthistorische Museum*. You reproduced it without even mentioning the praiseworthy initiative of the museum in staging the exhibition. Do I detect your traditional anti-Austrian stance?

Shrublands West

Herbert Anderson

Pottergate, Norwich

#### CARL VON OSSIETZKY

Sir – Your article does not state whether this journalist was a Jew. If he was, the article is of great interest to readers of *AJR*. If he was not a Jew, why devote a whole page to this case of a pacifist journalist condemned, possibly unjustly, for disclosing military secrets in 1929?

Bishops Close

G. Schmerling

Old Coulsdon, Surrey

*Von Ossietzky was not a Jew, but an upholder of Weimar democracy* Ed

## Bushido and Beethoven

In 1937 I secured a contract enabling me to leave Europe for a destination on the other side of the globe. Alas, my parents in Budapest could not join me in Java, where, safely among the Dutch, I only learnt through the media of ever more unsettling world events. War broke out in Autumn 1939. Spring 1940 brought the occupation of Holland. In the colonies, Nazis and known sympathizers were arrested and sent to British India. (Alas, not all of them.)

The government commissioned me to compose music for three anti-Nazi films. In Bandung, the pleasant West Java hill-town where I settled, musical life was unexpectedly enriched by the presence of violin virtuoso Szymon Goldberg, the war having abruptly ended his world tour. Goldberg, leader of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra until 1933, had later founded the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra. Until December 1941, when Japan entered the war, Szymon Goldberg regularly gave Bandung music lovers Beethoven and Bach, in recitals and chamber music. He even created a chamber orchestra I was privileged to participate in.

After the fall of Singapore, everybody knew that our turn would come. Jew and gentile, we all awaited our fate in unnerving uncertainty. For several months, to our immense relief, Jews were not singled out for special treatment. However, Nazis 'liberated' from Dutch prisons made great efforts to convince the Japanese that all enemies of Adolf represented a danger to Emperor Hirohito. Finally came the most dramatic moment in my life. In the dead of night I was arrested, and had my hands tied behind my back. When I saw that the open truck was heading for Kempei Taj, the Japanese Gestapo building from which nobody was known to have returned, I tremblingly resigned myself to the end.

As it turned out, I was made to join 17 other people, a mixed gathering of various ages and origins. Szymon Goldberg too, was gracing the ensemble. (By the way, his Stradivarius was kept in safety by Swiss

friends – as were my anti-Nazi scores.) Now the chance that our small group should also include a person with fluent command of Japanese, due to his long Tokyo residence, was surely one in a million. When at last locked up on our own, we started by introducing ourselves. Our interpreter stated that, although Jewish, his name was Julius Streicher. Given our miserable circumstances – cooped up half dressed in a small store room with crumbling cement floor – everybody thought this was a bad joke by an utter crank. So we responded in kind, proffering hands as Heinrich Himmler, Josef Goebbels, even Adolf Hitler. No, he protested, Streicher was his real name. To cut short a long and unpleasant episode – in the course of which the two oldest members of our group died – Julius Streicher managed to convince our captors of the invalidity of groundless accusations. The happy outcome was for us to be sent to an internment camp. (Except for our saviour Streicher, who was kept to serve as interpreter.)

I said happy outcome, because compared to our incarceration, the camp seemed like heaven. Convinced of their ultimate victory, the Japanese had at first extended quite tolerable treatment to their internees, who were in a position to donate clothing and other essentials to us half naked arrivals. The camp not only possessed a library, but even some musical instruments were brought in. Szymon Goldberg started practising and I could organize concerts – by permission of the Camp Commander. As the war progressed, I gradually had to say goodbye to my friends, including Szymon Goldberg. Random batches of men were transferred at short notice to other camps with invariably worse, harsher conditions. Losing battle after battle made our captors embittered. My last camp (of six) in July 1945 was meant to kill us inmates, with hard physical labour and severely rationed drinking water! Without the atomic bomb I wouldn't be here to write these lines. It brought the Emperor himself to the radio microphone, *commanding* all Japanese to assist us in staying alive. The author of his broadcast-script was General Douglas MacArthur. □ George Krausz

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# The AJR at Work

## Youth Choir hits the spot

Having a regular programme of events which includes daily musical entertainment from professional performers has ensured that most members of the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre have developed an ear, an eye, for what constitutes a good show. Visitors to the Day Centre can tell how an act is being received within minutes by scanning the faces in the audience. The crowd is always polite to its guest artists, but if the show isn't 'hitting the spot' a certain *geistesabwesend* expression is common. However, this was, most emphatically, not the case when the Belsize Square Synagogue Youth Choir visited Cleve Road on a rainy Sunday afternoon to present a Chanukah programme.

The children in the choir are aged from eight to fifteen years. Their audience on this



Belsize Square Synagogue Youth Choir at work.

Photo: Newman.

## 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, Agi 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.

occasion ranged from seventy-five upwards. The elderly seem to have a greater affinity with the very young than those who are in between the two stages. Before the choir even started to sing the audience began to enjoy themselves. All present were touched

by the simple beauty of the *beracha* performed by two of the children and when all the thirty-four unbroken voices performed *Maos Tzur* there was hardly a dry eye in the house. By the time the traditional song finished the children had the audience in the palm of their (collective) hand. With hardly a pause for breath the choristers launched into a selection of Israeli music, followed by some old favourites and classics.

The Belsize Square Synagogue Youth Choir was formed almost forty years ago. The conductor, Sue Strauss, has been charged with training the young singers for almost 18 years. They perform at various synagogue functions with occasional outings such as the one described here. At the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre these delightful and well-behaved children proved to be a credit to Mrs Strauss' talents as a teacher and to themselves.

□ M.N.

## AJR MEALS ON WHEELS

A wide variety of high quality kosher frozen food is available, ready made and delivered to your door, via the AJR meals on wheels service. The food is cooked in our own kitchens in Cleve Road, NW6, by our experienced staff.

This service is available to those members with mobility problems or other difficulties.

The cost for a kosher 3 course meal is £3.00. Delivery charge 50p. Payment for meals to be made to the Driver.

If you live in North or North West London and wish to take advantage of this service phone Mrs Ruth Finestone on 071-328 0208 for details and an assessment interview.

Meals can still be collected from 15 Cleve Road on weekdays (Mondays-Thursdays) for £3.00 per meal.

## THANK YOU NOTE

Sir – We, the volunteers of the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre, Cleve Road, would like to thank everyone who was involved in the organising and arranging of the lovely brunch on Sunday 19 December. It really was a most enjoyable gathering.

The Day Centre Volunteers

## Voluntary options

The AJR Volunteers Co-ordinator, Laura Howe, addressed a 150-strong audience of JACS (Jewish Association of Cultural Societies) members in the Florence Michaels Hall of St John's Wood Synagogue recently. The main thrust of the address, in addition to giving an overview of the work done by the AJR, was an appeal for volunteers to come forward and offer a little of their time to help others.

The audience were very receptive to Mrs Howe's message. This is unsurprising in the light of the knowledge that a number of those present, including JACS Co-Vice Chairman Sally Feldman, already do some voluntary work on our Association's behalf.

As Laura spoke about the beginnings of the organisation, and its subsequent growth, the refugee influence on St John's Wood was evidenced by the many nods of assent and agreement when she touched upon aspects of life in the area which residents now take for granted. This cosmopolitan influence on the ambience of the

North London suburbs is felt by everyone who lives there. It is apparent in the continental coffee-shops of Swiss Cottage, the bakeries of Belsize Park and Golders Green and, not quite so overtly, a rhythm of life which revolves around Saturday, as opposed to Sunday morning worship.

Having established that the lives of all present had been touched in some way by the refugee experience, whether consciously or not, Laura asked the JACS members to reciprocate now and give of themselves by helping those emigrés who had brought that exotic touch to London with them when fleeing Nazi Europe.

When questioned about what needed to be done, and what demands such tasks would place on volunteers, Mrs Howe stressed the need for drivers to take people to and from the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre in Cleve Road. One or two hours a week spent transporting even one person would make a worthwhile contribution. Visiting the housebound also requires very little in terms of time, but visitors need great reserves of patience, in addition to com-

passion. Those people who felt that they may enjoy doing more structured work at the Day Centre were informed that this means a regular commitment in order to allow the construction of regulated timetables around people who can be depended upon.

The JACS members made Laura Howe very welcome and expressed interest in the work of the AJR. After the speech some came forward to take brochures with a view to considering the options open to those wishing to join our volunteer force.

If you would like to find out more about the voluntary positions available within the AJR, contact Laura Howe on: 071-431 6161 during office hours from Tuesday to Friday. □ M.N.

### AJR

Our address is:  
1 HAMPSTEAD GATE,  
1A FROGNAL, LONDON NW3 6AL.

Our phone number is:

071-431 6161

Our Fax number is:

071-431 8454

## PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

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BACK IN TIME –  
Geoffrey Strum  
accompanied by Johnny  
Walton (Piano)

*Wednesday 2* MUSICAL HARMONY –  
Jack Harris accompanied  
by Happy Branston (Piano)

*Thursday 3* TRINITY QUARTET –  
Vasiliki Fikaris (Soprano)  
Domenico Colonna  
(Tenor) Devon Harrison  
(Bass) accompanied by  
Tony Papano (Piano)

*Sunday 6* PASTICHE –Polly  
Robinson (Soprano) &  
David Child (Bass)  
accompanied by Hilary  
Morgan (Piano)

*Monday 7* MEMORIES IN MUSIC –  
Edward Lee (Banjo)  
Sergio Biseo (Double Bass  
& Guitar) Jan North  
(Vocal)

*Tuesday 8* THE ORCHARD TRIO  
(Piano – Flute & Oboe)

*Wednesday 9* THE OXFORD PIANO  
TRIO – Catherine Martin  
(Violin) Aidan Eardley  
(Cello) Anne Bolt (Piano)

*Thursday 10* GREEN THOUGHTS –  
Rona Israel (Soprano)  
accompanied by Bela  
Hartmann (Piano)

*Sunday 13* THE TWO R's CABARET –  
Richard Moody (Tenor)  
accompanied by Robert  
Douglas (Piano)

*Monday 14* HEARTS & VALENTINES  
– Valerie Hewitt (Soprano)  
accompanied by Anne  
Berryman (Piano)

*Tuesday 15* (a) Outing to Mayor's  
Parlour  
(b) OPERETTA & SONGS  
FROM THE SHOWS –  
Lena & Leslie Phillip

*Wednesday 16* AN AFTERNOON OF  
HAPPY MUSIC – Pauline  
Palmer (Piano)

*Thursday 17* HEARTS & FLOWERS –  
Tamsin Coombs & Yvette  
Cummings (Soprano)  
accompanied by Graham  
Slack (Piano)

*Sunday 20* WINTERTIME SERENADE  
– Debbie O'Brien at the  
piano

### PURIM WEEK

*Monday 21* VIENNESE WHIRLS –  
Miriam Gilbert & Kathleen  
Gilbert accompanied by  
Bridget Marshall (Piano)

*Tuesday 22* WE CELEBRATE PURIM –  
Lucy White (Violin) & Juliet  
Davey (Piano)

*Wednesday 23* HAMANTASCHEN – A  
Purim Concert by Ronnie  
Goldberg (Songs & Guitar)

*Thursday 24* TONIGHT IS PURIM –  
Sheila Kominsky (Piano &  
Piano Accordion) with  
Laurie Fedder (Tenor)

*Sunday 27* THE JOYS OF PURIM –  
Geoffrey Strum & Johnny  
Walton

*Monday 28* CAMERATA TRIO –  
Maureen Lawton (Soprano)  
Stephen Paisley (Baritone)  
accompanied by Stephen  
Salter (Piano)

MARCH

*Tuesday 1* Demonstration by Members  
of Irma Mayer's Keep-Fit  
Class from Sobel House

*Wednesday 2* ROMANTIC JOURNEY  
TO FOREIGN LANDS  
THROUGH MUSIC –  
Marian Wilson (Violin)  
accompanied by Robert  
Wilson (Piano)

*Thursday 3* THE SINGING DUO – Jack  
& Rita Davis

*Sunday 6* A SPECTRUM OF  
MELODIES – Robert Brody  
(Tenor) accompanied by  
Daphne Lewis (Piano)

**FAMILY EVENTS**

**Birthday**

**Gould** Katia Gould celebrated her 75th birthday on 29 January. Best wishes go to her from all the staff at AJR who are only a few amongst her many friends and admirers.

**Deaths**

**Beal** Edith Beal (Bialostotzky, née Arzt), born Berlin 1900, died peacefully in London, 12 December 1993. Always remembered with deep gratitude by her family and friends.

**Blum** My dearest beloved friend Hugo Blum left me on January 2, 1994. He will be forever mourned, never to be forgotten, Ruth Kraus.

**Cooper** Albert Cooper (Cohen), born Vienna November 10, 1909. Darling daddy passed peacefully away on December 10. At last his courageous fight is over. He is at peace and reunited with mummy. A wonderful man, generous, loving and sweet. We will always love him. Daughter Jacqueline, son-in-law Robert Goymour and sister-in-law Alice.

**Klompus** Mr Ison Klompus, born 1906 in Königsberg, died December 25, 1993 after a long and cruel illness borne with great courage and dignity. He will be deeply mourned

by his brother George, his devoted friend Helga and all other friends who loved and respected him. He was very special, an inspiration to us all and will be remembered for his kindness and compassion. He was a real gentleman, may he rest in peace. Shalom.

**Krone** Kate Krone died on November 25, 1993. Very sadly missed by all her many friends – young and old.

**Liebeschutz** Dr Rachel Liebeschutz (formerly of Hamburg), née Plaut, widow of Hans, on December 22, peacefully at home in her 100th year. Mother of Wolfgang, Hugo and Elisabeth, grandmother and great grandmother.

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**NOTICE**

The wording in the Irene Fashions advert in the January issue should have read **Sale now on**. Apologies to Irene and her customers for any confusion this error may have caused.

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Alice Schwab

## Art Notes

A special exhibition to celebrate the 70th birthday of *Anthony Caro*, Britain's foremost sculptor, is being held by Annelly Juda (7 March–7 May). From there the exhibition will travel in June to Galerie Hans Mayer, Düsseldorf.

The new Raymond and Beverly Sackler gallery of Early Egypt at the British Museum has now been opened and traces an exciting but relatively neglected period of Egypt when the embryonic Egyptian civilisation emerged in the Nile Valley. The results of the British Museum excavations at Tel es-Sa'idiyeh (the Biblical Zareth an) are being shown in the British Museum's exhibition *Digging in Jordan* (until 13 March).

*Pots from the eNZ of the Earth* is the title of an exhibition at the Commonwealth Institute (until 4 March) of ceramics and mixed media by two New Zealand artists Peter and Julie Collis. A varied and interesting collection of pictures and other works of art is being assembled by the Ben Uri Art Society for its Annual Picture Fair to be held at the Gallery on Sunday, 27 February at 8 p.m. (viewing Sunday, 20 February 2–5 p.m.; Monday–Thursday 21–24 February 10–5 p.m.). Tickets for the Picture Fair are now available from the Gallery (£55 for members, £65 for non-members). In March the Ben Uri will be showing works on paper by Henry Edion.

*The Silence of a Look* – the work of Luis Gonzalez Palma, is at the Royal Festival Hall Foyer Galleries, Level 2 (until 27 February). Palma is a Guatemalan artist who portrays images of the Mayan people (85% of the population) whose religion and culture has been suppressed since the Spanish Conquest.

The first major exhibition in Britain of the work of the Italian sculptor Medardo Rosso (1858–1928) is being held at the Whitechapel Art Gallery (until 24 April). In his time Rosso's place as a sculptor was reckoned only second to that of Rodin. Also at the Whitechapel Art Gallery at the same time is an exhibition *Mudanzas*, comprising the work of six young Spanish artists. The exhibition is part of the Spanish Art Festival and includes paintings, sculpture and performances.

The Lane Bequest consists of thirty-nine pictures belonging to Sir Hugh Lane who was drowned in the Lusitania in 1915. After protracted negotiations about the terms of his will, a substantial part of the collection will remain permanently in Dublin, but certain important pictures, will rotate between the National Gallery in London and



*Rosas*: by Luis Gonzalez Palma. (Royal Festival Hall until 27 February). Photo: Fotofeis.

Dublin, thus giving more viewers an opportunity to see them. As part of the Spanish Arts Festival the National Gallery is showing a little-known series *Jacob and his Twelve Sons* by the great 17th century Spanish painter Francisco de Zurbarán.

To celebrate the opening of their street-level gallery at 24 Dering Street, Anthony d'Offay has arranged an exhibition of major new works by gallery artists, including Baselitz, Clemente, Hamilton, Kiefer, Koons, Kounellis, Long, Weiner and others (until 11 March).

The Artists Book Fair arranged by Marcus Campbell, held in May last year, was a great success, so the next Artists Book Fair will be held at the Royal Festival Hall on 22 April 1994 with specially extended opening times and a Collectors' Evening Preview. More information about this exhibition can be obtained from Marcus Campbell at 15 Piccadilly Arcade, SW1 (Telephone 071 495 6487).

The National Portrait Gallery is the final venue of the highly successful touring exhibition *Holbein and the Court of Henry VIII: Drawings and Miniatures from the Royal Library, Windsor Castle* (until 17 April). The exhibition has previously been on show at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh and at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

Works on Paper by *Alejandro Xul Solar* (1887–1963) are on show at the Courtauld Institute Galleries (until 27 February). Solar was one of the leading avant-gard artists working in Buenos Aires from the mid-1920s. A catalogue is available at the exhibition introducing Xul Solar's work, especially his architectural drawings, in the context of Argentinian cultural history. □

## SB's Column

**60** Years ago. Max Pallenberg, one of this century's greatest comedians who amused audiences with his indefatigable sense of humour in parts that ranged from Molière to Molnar, was killed in an air crash. 1934 also saw Franz Lehár's last operetta *Giuditta* premiered at the Vienna State Opera, starring Richard Tauber and Vera Schwarz. In the field of musical comedy Ralph Benatzky enjoyed a fairy-tale success with *Das kleine Café* which soon made the round of German-speaking theatres, with Max Hansen and Lizzi Waldmüller named as *show couple of the year*.

The Vienna *Ringstrassencafé* with its century-old reputation has had to go with the times. Café numbers are so reduced that the occasional concert sessions when pianists enliven the *Old Vienna* atmosphere, are now limited to the Imperial, Bristol, Prückl and Schwarzenberg. Concerts are also held at the Kursalon (mainly to please foreign tourists) and Dommayer's in Hietzing.

**Birthday.** 90th birthday honours for Dutch-born Johannes Heesters, ever the charming *bonvivant*, who established something of a record playing Danilo in the *Merry Widow* at the age of 80. When Heesters toured Holland with a Jewish ensemble in 1938, he was upbraided by Goebbels who forbade him to appear in Germany for a period. Recently remarried to an old fan half his age and asked about a honeymoon, Heesters replied: 'Not yet, there is plenty of time'.

**Obituary.** Film actress Anna Sten has died in Los Angeles at the age of 84. She was born in Kiev and first starred in silent films. From the Thirties onwards she appeared in numerous American movies but before that, during a short spell with UFA in Germany, she took the lead in *Bomben auf Monte Carlo* (1931). The film's catchy tune *Das ist die Liebe der Matrosen* made her name at the time.

Simon P. Rhodes M.Ch.S.

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## A HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING LANDS

## Part 17: Reflections on German antisemitism

It is not my intention in this final article to narrate the rise of Nazism after the Great Depression; to rehearse the role that antisemitism played in their programme or the terrible way in which that programme was put into practice after 1933: the readership of *AJR Information* is only too familiar with that story. The History of Germany and of Austria is indelibly stained with the evils that were perpetrated during the Third Reich. The explanation of this catastrophe is still a matter of intense debate; and it is perhaps appropriate for me to conclude the series with my own reflections on this subject. If these arouse some controversy, as I expect they might, I am sure the Editor will welcome reactions from the readers.

Antisemitism was of course not unique to Germany or to Austria in the period 1880 to 1945. On a scale of danger – running from the murderous state-sponsored pogroms in Russia at the top, through the hysteria of the Dreyfus Affaire in France, to some *salon* prejudice in Britain at the bottom – German and Austrian antisemitism came relatively low at the end of the 19th century. That it was still present, after centuries of anti-Jewish teaching by church and state, was perhaps not surprising; but one would have expected it to diminish considerably during the Ages of Enlightenment and then of

Liberalism; and indeed it appeared to wane, as Jews were allowed out of the ghettos, were emancipated, became widely acculturated, and began to make a respected place for themselves in society.

**Antisemitism and Modernisation**

All this appeared to be part of economic and social modernisation; and with this modernisation the Jews, especially in Germany and in Austria, were closely identified. Economic modernisation meant the development first of capitalism (and the political philosophy of liberalism which initially went with it) and then of an organised working class (with the associated political philosophy of socialism) as a response to capitalism. Those sections of society which could not keep up with modernisation and were threatened by it – either from capitalism above or from socialism below – were therefore ready to vent their rage on the Jews. There was thus even a certain logic in the paranoia which blamed both capitalism and socialism on the Jews. In the meantime, with the advance of secularism, it became increasingly unfashionable to demand theological uniformity from the citizens of a state, and hostility towards the Jews mutated, throughout Europe, from theological anti-Judaism into racial antisemitism.

But Jews could reasonably expect that history was on the side of modernisation, and that therefore resistance to it, and the antisemitism to which it gave rise, were a rearguard action which would become steadily weaker even as its expression became more desperately strident and virulent. The great majority of the Jews of Germany (except perhaps Ostjuden with their recent bitter experiences) certainly did not expect antisemitism, nasty as it was, to become a real threat. They were confident in the successes of acculturation. Only the Zionists either despaired of the possibility of real acculturation or considered it undesirable; and they were very weak in Germany and Austria.

So was there something in German society that the Jews were overlooking? Were modernisation and the resulting discontents more acute in Germany than elsewhere? Some historians think so, though one could scarcely assume that such discontents in Germany would be more acute than, say, the suffering of the victims of the Industrial Revolution in England. Were the Jews in Germany and Austria more visibly involved in modernisation in Germany than in England? Possibly so: their explosion out of the ghettos and their upward mobility were so much more sudden than in England. Where the progress of Jews was even more sudden, in France, antisemitism was also very vocal.

At least in France the emancipation of the Jews had been brought about by the French people themselves; whereas in Germany the opening of the ghettos was imposed by a foreign invader, and therefore all the more resented by the nationalist response to the French invasion. From that time onwards antisemitism was an integral part of German *völkisch* nationalism.

**The traumata of the Weimar Republic**

But what I think did most to make German antisemitism such a deadly force were the traumata which Germany experienced after the First World War. There was the disgrace of a lost war and a partial occupation; the shattering of traditional institutions and the creation of a multi-party, unstable and weak parliamentary democracy; the impoverishment through reparations and galloping inflation; the near-disintegration of the state between 1918 and 1923. These five years saw a proliferation of groups with antisemitic programmes. But then followed a short period of stabilisation at home and abroad; the frenzied antisemitism drew less and less support, until in the 1928 elections the Nazis could garner a mere 2½% of the votes.

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The following year, however, saw the beginning of the Great Depression which by the winter of 1932/3 had created six million unemployed in Germany, and which brought with it a polarization of politics with which the weak institutions of the Weimar Republic could not cope. At this point the Nazis offered a wide-ranging programme of great appeal: that they would give to Germany a strong and authoritarian government; would restore her strength abroad; would refuse to continue with reparation payments which were to continue until 1988; would save Germany from the Communists (whose vote had also risen sharply during the crisis); would combat unemployment with a massive public works programme; and would purge the Jews from public life.

### The personality of Hitler

There can be no doubt that this programme under those circumstances accounted for the steep increase in the Nazi vote (from 2½% in 1928 to 18½% in 1930 and to 38% in 1932). What we cannot know is how important antisemitism was in garnering that vote. A voter could well find the antisemitism distasteful and yet vote for all the other policies at this time. And even the antisemites among those who voted Nazi might not have envisaged or approved of anything like the drastic measures that were to follow. Even among Jews there were many who believed that Hitler's antisemitism was little more than a populist device to win some more votes, but that once in power he would be much more moderate and 'sensible' than he sounded in opposition – perhaps rather like the Austrian Social Christians who, as we have seen, made antisemitic pronouncements but never translated them into legislation.

Such beliefs, of course, showed an ignorance of how absolutely central antisemitism was to Hitler personally and to his inner circle. Once Hitler had made himself absolute master of the state (and even here we

cannot be sure that those who voted for him in 1932 hoped for quite such a totalitarian dictatorship), this personal antisemitism could not be checked and could be given full scope. Moreover, he could use his control of education and of the media to create florid antisemitism where it had either not existed at all, or where it had been recognised as a private prejudice which one should not allow to affect one's public actions. As for the henchmen who carried out the unspeakable atrocities of the Holocaust, we know that once any state (not only Germany) gives licence to savagery, it will have no problems in finding enough savages to carry out its policies.

I am not a determinist. I do not believe that antisemitism was so essential a part of the German people that they were bound under stress to embrace the enormities of Nazi persecution. The rise of a 'saviour' figure was perhaps inevitable in the circumstances of 1929 to 1932; but such a figure did not need to be a Jew-hater in order to come to power. He could have been a man with a personality closer to that of Bismarck or even that of Mussolini: authoritarian, dictatorial even, but not antisemitic. It is the tragedy of history that the only strong man who presented himself to the Germans at that time – who won enough support to seize absolute power by force and then give unfettered rein to his nightmarish ideas first in Germany, then in Austria, and then on most of continental Europe – was a pathological Jew-hater. He found enough scum of his own sort in all the countries he occupied (except in Denmark and in Bulgaria) to collaborate in the Holocaust.

### The failure of constitutionalism

And yet . . . is there nothing in German history that contributed to this situation? Can so monstrous an event as the Holocaust really be explained so largely, almost obscenely, in terms of the accident in one man's personality? What do we think of the citizenship of a nation that ever allowed a

man like Hitler to seize supreme power? We like to think, and surely correctly so, that the British would never have tolerated the establishment of any absolutism, let alone of such a vicious one. Britain's long established parliamentary constitution would have prevented it. This line of argument claims that Germany never had a sound parliamentary tradition. The constitution that Bismarck gave to Germany has been labelled *Scheinkonstitutionalismus*; the Weimar parliamentary system was fundamentally flawed not merely by its only reluctant acceptance among the so-called *Vernunftsrepublikaner* but even more fatally by the extreme proportional representation system which brought parliament into contempt and gave scope to extremist and anti-parliamentary groups. Among constitutional states it is said that Germany followed a *Sonderweg*. Such democratic instincts as the Germans had were, it is alleged, dampened down by *Obrigkeitsgefühl*, a respect for orders and a reluctance to offer more than at the most verbal opposition if the authorities trespassed on civil rights. All these views are contested; but even if they are accepted, they merely go to show what peculiar characteristics made Germany succumb to dictatorship; and that this was fatal for the Jews when that dictatorship decided to destroy them. It does not, however, prove that this destruction was the logical outcome of an antisemitism that can indeed be traced in the history of Germany, but also in that of many other European countries.

### Genocide in the 20th century

Finally: there is no doubt that the Holocaust was, in its scale, in the meticulous bureaucratic thoroughness of its sadism, organised by Germany; or that as such it was an event unique in the history of the Jews. But genocide is not associated uniquely with Germany or uniquely with the Jews. There is a demonic element in 20th century history which has permitted the slaughter, sometimes of even greater numbers, by other governments and of other groups of people. The Holocaust is a terrible and haunting example, but not a unique one, of the depths of unbridled barbarism and unspeakable suffering to which mankind can sink.

□ *Ralph Blumenau*

*Regular readers who have enjoyed Mr Blumenau's engrossing history may have noticed that there was no Part 12. This oversight was not due to omission, but to a proof-reading error. Our apologies go to those who have searched in vain for the lost chapter.*

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## Cooking with Gretel Beer



### Cheese Biscuits

These biscuits are marvellous on their own, but if you sandwich two together with any preferred filling – anchovy butter or Liptauer cheese or just butter into which some chopped chives or grated cheese has been folded – they make a very filling and delicious snack.

#### Ingredients:

3½ oz (100 g) plain flour  
salt  
paprika

2 generous oz (60 g) grated Parmesan cheese  
1½ oz (40 g) ground almonds or walnuts  
2 generous oz (60 g) butter  
eggwhite for brushing over pastry  
butter and flour for baking sheet  
grated Parmesan cheese for sprinkling  
halved almonds or walnuts for decoration  
anchovy butter or Liptauer cheese (optional)

Sift together flour, salt and paprika, then mix with other dry ingredients and work to a stiff paste with the butter. Roll out to ¼ inch thickness and cut into shapes with a biscuit cutter. Brush with egg white, sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese and place a halved walnut or almond on top. Bake at Gas Mark 5, 375°F, 190°C until golden brown. Or sprinkle only half the biscuits with Parmesan cheese and when baked, sandwich two together with anchovy butter or Liptauer cheese. It seems only fair to add that one of my perfectionist aunts insisted on using only a scant 3 oz (80 g) flour. Using slightly more flour makes for a firmer – and in her opinion less elegant – biscuit. □

## Search Notices

**Graduate researching PhD** entitled *IG Auschwitz: The Primacy of Racial Politics*, which partly concerns contacts between British prisoners of war and Auschwitz-Monowitz camp inmates, needs additional eyewitness accounts to test findings. Please contact: Joseph Robert White, University of Nebraska, Department of History, 612 Oldfather, PO Box 8803427, Lincoln, NE 68588-0327, USA.

**German Journalists** researching a new book on the East Berlin suburb of Lichtenberg wish to speak to ex-residents, their descendants, neighbours and friends who have reminiscences about everyday life in the area. Anyone who wishes to help should contact: Kulturbund e V, Project Lichtenberg, Friedrichstrasse 120, D-10117 Berlin.

**Irma Birnbaum**, formerly of Berlin, worked in London 1947–1948. She also worked in Manchester for some years, later on working for a doctor. Please contact Mrs B. Strom, 3/3 Wande Grove, Melbourne, Australia 3183.

**Calling all Old Roughians!** Were you ever a pupil at Stotley Rough? The sixtieth anniversary of the school's founding is in May 1994. Former pupils are planning a Grand Reunion over the weekend of 28–30 May. If you would like further details please contact: Franceska Rapkin, Eaglewood, Oxhey Lane, Hatch End, Middx HA5 4AL.

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## COMPENSATION CLAIMS GERMANY

Under a new Agreement regular hardship payments will be made to victims of the Holocaust who were hitherto unable to apply for or received only inadequate compensation payments.

Claims may be filed by persecutees who were held in concentration camps for at least six months. Those who were confined in ghettos or lived in hiding for at least eighteen months are also entitled to claim.

On instructions our Office will assist you to prepare your Application and pursue the matter with the authorities.

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## Short Story

## The room

I dreamt of a room, – a small room in a flat, – a large groundfloor flat in an old-fashioned apartment block with mirrors on both sides of the lobby, mirrors that go on into infinity.

I was asleep but I could hear my mother move about in the other rooms. I heard my mother tell the dog to wake me. My door crashed open, I was pinned down by four paws, and a wet slurpy tongue made sure I was awake.

My room bade me 'Good Morning', hugging me in its familiar womblike warmth. My white-painted wardrobe smiled back at me. An airship sailed stationarily on a piece of string. Its passengers looked down on an old-fashioned white-painted bedside cabinet topped by a small murky fish tank. The bedside cabinet was important – repository of my table-tennis bat, spiked running-shoes and ice-hockey skates. I loved skating, and it broke my heart when the ice-rink displayed a *Juden verboten* sign.

My bed was a couch during the day. It was also a submarine because I could crawl inside, lower the top and use the tubular metal bed-end as a periscope. Or by sliding the top forward and sitting behind it, it could also be a big racing car. Earphones held against a small electric motor could create a most realistic vroom vroom. Naturally the couch was also a raft on which I was tossed about in a shark-infested sea until I managed to swim to a steep cliff which I scaled to the top of the chest of drawers. That was also the ideal jumping-off point across the room on to the bed. If I was caught doing that, I got into trouble.

Between my bed and the window was a small cupboard housing all my sophisticated craft equipment: worn out electric torches, bits of coloured glass, knives, screw-drivers and odd lengths of wire. My radio was on top. It was beautiful with a cat's whisker in a small glass tube. Its earphones left my ears black till my mother made earphone covers out of some tartan material. I used to listen under the bed-covers at night and give myself away when comedians made me giggle.

In front of the window was an old kitchen table, the top of which swivelled so that I could keep my school books inside it. I sat at that table to do my home-work but instead dreamt of heroic deeds in far-away places. The world was going to be proud of me.

Outside the window was our yard backing on to houses in the next street. Since those houses were on a hill, their backyards were four feet higher than ours.

A few tired shrubs made lovely hide-outs for tough gun-fighters of the West, provided brave knights were not passing the afternoon slaying dragons. The yellow clay could also be shaped into splendid tracks for toy racing cars. A fortress that looked like an old-fashioned ice-box had, of course, to be defended against all kinds of hostile armies, except in hot weather when the ice-man came with his horse and cart and put big chunks of ice into a special compartment.

But the best piece of furniture was my book-case. It held the key to the entire world – present and past. I flew the length of Sweden with the wild geese. I retreated with the Imperial French Army from the gates of Moscow or fought with the Boers on Spion Kop. From the Pampas to the Arctic, I took part in daring deeds and heroic adventures. And all that on cold winter afternoons stretched on my couch in a warm friendly room.

Then came the day when I had to leave the room that had kept me safe and secure. When I had to leave the flat in the apartment block and looked into the infinity mirrors

for the last time. When I had to leave my family and as a fifteen-year-old, had to go out into the big cold hostile world, the world I had read about but could not close at will, like the covers of a book.

Six years later, three days before the end of the war, I came back. The room had disappeared under huge piles of rubble in the firestorm of 1943. The clock across the street said quarter to the hour hand that stuck out at right angles and could no longer tell the time. My room had died.

As I get older, I long more and more for that room. Is there such a thing as reincarnation? If there is I want to come back to the room. I want to come home.

□ Clive Teddern

## VERSE AND WORSE

ROBERT FISK

'The Prophet's half moon is a scythe  
That cuts down every infidel'  
How can he plead with diction blithe  
For Hamas, Hezbollah and hell?

ZHIRINOVSKY

There is nothing high-falutin'  
About the Fuehrer-cloned Rasputin  
'Nuke' the Balts, sell Vodka cheap  
And make the flesh of Liberals creep

## Obituary

## Ethel Mahler

Ethel Mahler has died at Heinrich Stahl House in her ninety-second year. She was born near Bratislava (Slovakia) but moved to Vienna as a child. In the inter-war years she worked as a medical secretary, arriving in England as a domestic after Kristallnacht. In mid-1939 she married, enabling her husband, who had been stranded in Belgium, to come to the U.K. as well.

They were together for thirty-five years. The marriage remained childless because Ethel suspected the strain of abnormality in her husband's overly gifted family – Gustav Mahler was a second cousin – which she did not want to perpetuate.

After wartime internment Mr Mahler found permanent work in the catering trade. Ethel, by contrast, did a bewildering variety of jobs – charlady, stringer of pearls, knitter of hats, secretary of a book-club. In 1956, a turning point in her life, she joined the United Restitution Office as principal assistant to Dr Brassloff. After the latter's

move to Geneva to head the Legal Office of the World Jewish Congress she, though lacking any legal qualifications, took charge of the Austrian Desk at URO. In this capacity she dealt with literally thousands of applicants to the Austrian Assistance Fund for Emigrants and the Property Restitution Fund; in addition she proffered advice on questions concerning social security payments from Austria.

Her Sundays were devoted to visiting residents in the Old Age Homes (and in mental homes in London and the Home Counties) to gather particulars needed for their pensions applications. In recognition of this work the Austrian government awarded her the Silver Insignia of Merit.

In 1988 Mrs Mahler retired from URO at the goodly age of eighty-six. For years thereafter occasional telephone callers to her flat in Golders Green were still making enquiries about Austrian pensions. She did not mind, since she always wanted to be of service. □

## Vienna – History, Reality, Fantasy

I had not been to Vienna for 7 years, but taking friends who had never been there at all, afforded me an opportunity to have a close look at many things outside the range of the usual tourist sights. There was much that I had never seen before.

The new glass palace of the Haas Haus facing the Stefansdom gave me an idea of how Franz Josef felt about the 'house without eyebrows' opposite the Hofburg. Whatever merits it has, it's in the wrong place. I was very impressed by the Victims' Memorial at the Albertina Platz. Plain, dignified and very moving.

The Hundertwasser Haus, in 3<sup>rd</sup> district – now there's something quite different. It's a block of flats, with colour, curves, individuality. The architect, Friedrich Hundertwasser, tried to build something people could relate to, not the usual concrete slabs. Surprisingly the municipality was prepared to back him and the result is quite stunning. The effect in the 1990s must be similar to that achieved 100 years ago by the *Jugendstil* movement.

Every Viennese citizen knows about the Turkish siege of 1683 when the Turks were beaten, never to return, leaving behind only *kipferl* and coffee for future generations to enjoy. Now, the Turks are back, no longer

at the walls but right in the centre. Vienna could not function without them – they clean the streets, they drive the taxis, they staff the hotels. Who has taken revenge on whom?

*Fremdworte sind Glücksache*: things which sound fine in German don't always translate quite so well. Example from the guide at Schönbrunn, in German and English, '... *Die Kaiserin, die Sissi* ...' sounds fine but '... the Empress, the Sissy ...' definitely does not.

I went to the synagogue in Seitenstettengasse. Security is tight. There is an armed guard at the end of the street, at the door I was asked for identification, why was I in Vienna, why did I want to come in. Sad that it's necessary. For me, it was a sentimental journey, as that's where my parents were married. My only memory of the synagogue is of being taken there as a small boy. It was a dark evening and there was a service, confusing and frightening for a 6 year old: now the inside is light and airy, with a spherical ceiling in skyblue. Was it always like this? Upstairs there is a small museum, with an exhibition of paintings by Broncia Koller-Pinnels (1863–1934). She was an accomplished painter, a friend of Klimt and other contemporary artists. The Vienna snow scenes are very atmospheric; there's a charming picture of her daughter looking at a birdcage and several others. Definitely worth a visit.

My reading list before going had included

Ilsa Barea's *Vienna, Legend and Reality* and Joseph Roth's *Radetzky March*. Ilsa Barea's book is packed with information. The rose coloured view that many have of the city is pulled aside, to show what really happened, and the long-lasting influence of the past – not merely on architecture (much of which is late 19<sup>th</sup> century, anyway). Among other things she charts the rise of Vienna's own brand of antisemitism in the 1880s, following the spectacular financial crashes of the building industry constructing the Ring, much of which was financed by Jews. At the same time, there is the growth of 'Red Vienna', led by Franz Schuhmeier and Adelheid Popp, charismatic figures both. She traces the mental ossification of the ruling classes, which is also the theme of Roth's entertaining book. It's all well summed up by Barea's witty quotation from the correspondence of Consuelo Vanderbilt Balsan, in the early 1900s: '... a pity that they could express their thoughts in so many different languages when they had so few thoughts to express.' As one of the principal industries of Vienna, indeed of Austria as a whole, is the manufacture of nostalgia, it is good to be shown that this presents a false, albeit very beguiling, image.

Lastly, it was nice to see that our own Gretel Beer's book *Austrian Cooking* was on sale at the Opera Bookshop. You know where you read the recipes first!

□ Paul Samet

## History misread

In December the *Daily Telegraph* published a cartoon commenting on the intercommunal violence sweeping India in the wake of the destruction of the mosque at Ayodhya. The cartoon was uncaptioned, making its point by purely visual means. It showed an array of corpses with identification tags attached to their toes. The tags all bore the identical inscription 'victim of religious fundamentalism' – the only differentiating mark being the place name on each: India, N. Ireland, Beirut, Bosnia, and so forth. Alas, the cartoonist, who was doubtless motivated by deep humanitarian outrage, muddled his message by putting the place name Auschwitz on one of the body tags.

Now, while it is an undeniable fact that Europe's Christian culture, permeated with the notion of Jews as Christ-killers, created the *potential* preconditions for Auschwitz, ascribing the *actual* guilt for the *Shoah* to religion (or religious fundamentalism) distorts modern history.

According to the tenets of fundamentalist

Christianity Jews were damned in all eternity, yet were to be suffered to eke out a wretched existence beyond the pale of society to demonstrate the providential punishment meted out to Christ-deniers. Admittedly fundamentalism of every religious stripe is fuelled by monopoly claims to divine revelation and fanatical hatred of other faiths; even so it stops somewhat short of the total evil incarnate in Nazism (and gulag – as distinct from goulash – Communism). Protestant Ulster Freedom Fighters entertain sanguine, and sanguinary, fantasies about a Belfast

cleansed of Catholics – they do not do so about Dublin. By the same token Ayatollah Khomeini, the current spiritual leader of Iran, was enough of a pragmatist not to preach an anti-Hindu *jihad* after the razing of the mosque at Ayodhya. Any number of further examples could be adduced to substantiate the thesis that religious fundamentalism, though horrible enough in all conscience, still falls several degrees short of the total horror of Nazism and Stalinism, the chief 'secular religions' of the 20th century.

□ Richard Grunberger

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