

# AJR Information

Volume LIV No. 10  
October 1999

£3 (to non-members)

Don't miss ...

**Land of our brothers**  
Ronald Channing p9

**Science in the theatre**  
Prof Michael Spiro p12

**Tracing the Kinder**  
Hugh Levinson p16

## The Rupert and John show

**T**he media billionaire Rupert Murdoch kowtows to Beijing by saying the average Chinese is more concerned about his bowl of rice than about freedom. The historian John Charmley damns Churchill for fighting the Anglophile Hitler, thereby squandering British lives and the Empire.

Both the tycoon and the don propagate an outlook which places material self-interest above considerations of morality and human dignity. Sadly their cynical and deeply antihumanist message still finds an audience □

The background to the negotiations between German industrial firms and surviving slave workers

## Slavedrivers in suits

**T**hanks to what can only be described as inertia of the imagination, it has taken half a century for the full extent and horror of the Shoah to sink into the public's consciousness. It was only by the early eighties that the American TV series *Holocaust* reached a mass audience – and by the mid-nineties that cinemas worldwide showed Spielberg's *Schindler's List*.

This snailpaced spread of awareness helped countless individuals implicated in the misdeeds of the Nazi régime to blend into German postwar society with their prestige – or wealth – unimpaired. 'Untarnished' names included the rocket scientist Wernher von Braun, the bureaucrat Hans Globke and the philosopher Martin Heidegger. Among the super-rich beneficiaries of Nazism, the industrialists Friedrich Flick and Heinrich von Schnitzler and the banker, Hermann Abs, were prominent.

A related phenomenon was the ease with which Field-Marshal von Manstein, who bears a huge two-fold guilt – for ordering his troops to murder Jews and for sabotaging the 1944 Officers' Plot – could act as a respected advisor to the Bonn government on military matters.

But with the passage of time and thanks to homegrown democrats like the organisers of the *Crimes of the Wehrmacht* Exhibition, the postwar Germans' perception of their country's past is changing. However, this change for the better is distinctly patchy. For instance, in the economic sector, the crimes of the past still stain the present to a stomach-turning degree. Industrial firms like Siemens which are world leaders have neither purged themselves of the guilt incurred through the spoliation of an entire continent, nor disgorged the huge profits amassed by working slave labourers practically to death.

Many of these firms have engaged tame academics to produce anodyne company histories. Such manoeuvres deceive few. The world now knows that German industrialists, far from having slave workers foisted upon them by the SS, enthusiastically tapped into this well-nigh inexhaustible source of cheap labour.

An alerted public also knows that the Auschwitz gas suppliers IG Farben have flagrantly defied the Allied postwar decartelization directive for fifty (!) years. (At the same time former constituent companies of the IG Farben cartel – most notably Bayer, as well as Hoechst – have expanded hand over fist.)

If German industry wants to enter the new millennium with something other than whitened sepulchres to show the world, it will have to shed its image of unrepentant rapaciousness. But even if this happens – which cannot be taken for granted – an intractably bothersome problem will remain.

Should such useful objects as Bayer aspirins or Siemens mobile phones bear the names of firms which, had they had any shame, would have opted for postwar anonymity? Even as cosy an everyday object as the Volkswagen beetle – produced with wartime slave labour at Wolfenbüttel – harks back to the dual connotation of Volk in Hitler's mind. To him the term meant not merely 'people' but also 'race', as in *völkisch* (race-conscious) and *Volks-genosse* (race comrade).

Under the dispensation of the car's originator, Volkswagen ownership would have depended not on whether someone was fit to drive, but whether they were fit to live □

## NEW VENUE FOR AJR'S ANNUAL CONCERT

This year's AJR Concert is being held in the redecorated and easily accessible Great Hall of Imperial College in South Kensington. (Pre-booked coaches and parking available).

Soloists Raphael Wallfisch, cello, David Juritz, violin, and Diana Franklin, piano, play with the London Concertino Orchestra conducted by Richard Dickins in a well-chosen programme of Mozart, Vivaldi, Haydn and Holst.

Seats at £20, £15 & £10 include a cream tea. Box Office: 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognaal, NW3 6AL. Tel: 0171 431 6161.

## Profile

## Keeper of the flame

Ilse Tysh is proud of her forbears – and with good reason. Her orphaned grandmother had been adopted by Adele and Johann Strauss. Great-uncle Josef Simon was proprietor of the Theater an der Wien and a close friend of Johann Strauss; the actor Willy Eichberger belonged to her extended family.

By contrast Ilse's father was a university-trained chemical engineer who ran an industrial plant producing roofing felt and street asphalt at Aussig, N. Bohemia. Ilse had set her heart on studying medicine, but was persuaded to attend commercial college to prepare her for managing the family firm.

Then came the Nazi occupation of the Sudetenland. 23-year old Ilse and her (much younger) sister emigrated to the UK, never to see their parents again. In England Ilse worked as a domestic, first for an art historian and then for a senior official whose antisemitic wife starved her. She left to take up nursing but was disbarred as an alien, so she became a cook.

Through a mutual acquaintance she met her future husband. Fred Tysh had – literally – been to hell and back. A successful writer of Viennese song lyrics (*Sag zum Abschied leise Servus*) he had survived Dachau and Buchenwald, recovered from typhus and come to London on a transit visa to Costa Rica. The outbreak of war enabled him to stay on and he rapidly learnt English. Barely six months in the country he wrote the words for the song *Seven Sisters in Seven Sisters Road* which was duly published. To keep the wolf from the door he studied – and eventually practised – accountancy.

A reunion with Richard Tauber, an acquaintance from Vienna days, followed. Tauber, unhappy with his original collaborator on *Old Chelsea*, asked Tysh to write new lyrics at breakneck speed. (This commission resulted in the hugely successful *We're in love with you, my heart and I*).

For Hans May the bilingual wordsmith wrote the words of another hit, *Starlight Serenade*. But he also ventured into Third Programme territory, producing the libretto for Buxton Orr's opera *The Wager*.

Ilse had meanwhile borne a son who subsequently went to Oxford. While he was still at school she went to work for the publishing firm Oswald Wolff later



Ilse Tysh

Interbooks. She retired from that in 1977 and started a new career as a part-time carer. Fred Tysh died in 1981 and she does her best to keep his memory green. Recently aged 83, she went to Vienna – by train! – to speak at the Jewish Museum exhibition commemorating his work.

□ RG

## Austrian claims office

A Claims Office has been opened in Vienna to assist Jewish victims of the Nazi régime, or their heirs, to document claims and strengthen their cases for compensation or the restitution of property and assets seized under the Nazi régime.

The office has been opened by the Federation of Jewish Communities in Austria in response to many recent enquiries from Jewish Holocaust survivors in and from Austria. The significance to claimants of establishing an appropriate institutional framework to advise and support Holocaust survivors on restitution issues cannot be overstated.

Despite the fact that Austrian legislation does not provide for the recovery or compensation of Holocaust era assets, the Federation's Claims Office is committed to supporting claims for restitution. It could well provide Austria's Jewish victims of the Holocaust and their heirs, with a last opportunity to achieve justice.

*Enquiries are welcomed by the Claims Office for Jewish Nazi Victims in and from Austria, at Desider-Friedmann-Platz 1, A-1010 Vienna, Austria. Tel: 0043-1-53104-46 (Mon-Thurs 9am-12 noon). Fax: 0043-1-53104-30.*

□ Dr Ariel Muzicant

## NEW AJR APPOINTMENTS

The Chairman and Management Committee of the AJR have re-assigned the responsibilities of chief executive among three senior members of staff.

As Head of Finance Gordon Greenfield adds to his financial responsibilities the selection and installation of an entirely new computerised membership and accounting system, together with staff training. Carol Rossen, who has served AJR's members for the past 18 years in several capacities, takes on the many duties of Head of Administration and Personnel. Ronald Channing, while continuing to contribute to *AJR Information*, as Head of Media, Development and Communal Relations, will oversee the development of associated groups, membership and AJR's relations with Jewish and non-Jewish organisations.

All other departmental responsibilities remain unchanged.

On confirming these appointments AJR Chairman, Andrew Kaufman, expressed his confidence that, under the new arrangements, the AJR will continue to serve members as well in the future as in the past □

AJR Charitable Trust in aid of  
Self Aid of Refugees  
presents the

## London Concertino

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## What's in a name?

Ours is an age addicted to the worship of celebrity, with a new word – celebs – specially coined to denote the objects of that worship. There is nothing new in this, I hear you say: individuals strove to make a name for themselves as far back as ancient Greece. A certain Herostratus, having nothing positive to his credit, burnt down the Temple of Diana at Ephesus in quest of negative fame, i.e. notoriety.

Actually it is wrong to think that every age placed the same high value on fame. Medieval artists, for instance, had a view of themselves as working *Ad majorem gloriam Dei* (the greater glory of God) and are known to posterity by such near-anonymous appellations as the Master of Flemalle.

It was the Renaissance which initiated the modern cult of the individual – and alongside it, the pervasiveness of the printed word, i.e. publicity. America is not named after Columbus, who discovered it, but after Amerigo Vespucci, who wrote about the discovery.

Things carried on in a similar fashion until the twentieth century and the invention of the 'blacklist'. In our time the inescapable pressure of politics made it advisable for blacklisted writers to take on a fake identity and slip into anonymity. A prime example of this is B Traven, the mysterious author of *The Treasure of Sierra Madre*. The best guesstimate of Traven's true identity is that he was Rex Maruth, a survivor of the bloodily suppressed Munich *Räterepublik* of 1919, who subsequently went to ground in Mexico. Here Traven wrapped himself in such anonymity that not even his literary agent knew his precise whereabouts or anything else about him.

In the 1930s Heinrich Heine had anonymity thrust upon him by the Nazis' official reclassification of *Die Lorelei* as a traditional German folksong. At the same time Austrian film executives were so eager to keep supplying the German market that they substituted named Aryans for the Jews who had actually worked on their movies. On the credits of *Burgtheater*, for instance, the authorship of the lyrics of *Sag zum Abschied leise Servus* was ascribed to Harry Helm instead of to the real writers Siegfried Tisch and Hans Lenksfelder.

In 1943 the Ufa film company marked its silver jubilee with *Münchhausen*, a technicolour spectacular. The script was

credited to Berthold Bürger, a name snatched out of thin air to hide the identity of Erich Kästner (whose books the Nazis had burnt, but who had stayed on in Germany to be near his mother).

A few years later Hollywood became acquainted with similar stratagems. A handful of writers on McCarthy's blacklist eked out a living by handing in scripts signed by obscure real-life individuals whom they paid a commission for using their name. (This was the subject of the film *The Front* made in the 1970s.)

When, a little later, Milos Forman embarked on the filming of *Amadeus* he announced that he wanted little known actors in the lead part. Flying off for an audition Simon Callow confided to a friend: 'I wonder if I am unknown enough!'

Which only goes to show celebrity can also have drawbacks other than the unwelcome attention of inquisitors or paparazzi.

□ RG

## Beth Shalom's 4th anniversary



Prof Richard Rubenstein

Professor Richard L Rubenstein, distinguished President of the University of Bridgeport, Connecticut, delivered the fourth anniversary lecture at Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre in Nottinghamshire. Making his first visit to Beth Shalom, he complimented founder-director Stephen Smith and his family for creating such a jewel.

Thanks to funding from both the AJR and the Claims Conference, Beth Shalom has designed and built an entirely new research suite within its premises. A comprehensive library of Holocaust literature is complemented by a bank of computer workstations at which researchers can either surf the Internet or study Beth Shalom's own excellent CD Roms on the Third Reich.

□ RDC

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## Literary and theatrical reviews

## The myth of integration

David Vital, *A PEOPLE APART, THE JEWS IN EUROPE, 1789 to 1939*. Oxford University Press, 1999, £30.

Can a one-volume history of the Jews in modern times add anything significantly new to the many similar books that have already been published? This book certainly does. In the first place, it contains quite a number of facts that I had not found in any other history. The footnotes show that Professor Vital, who has lived for most of his life in Israel, has drawn extensively on research published in Hebrew and not yet translated into English. In the second place, although the book has a narrative framework, it is infused by a consistent vision and interpretation of the history of that time which is as powerful and all-embracing as it is depressing.

As the title implies, Vital's view is that the Jews have throughout this time been a people apart, not only in Eastern and Central Europe, but even in the liberal West. The emancipation project throughout Europe is presented as one that was never primarily motivated by a feeling of justice, but by the perception that the states granting emancipation would benefit thereby. Everywhere Jews laboured under the feeling that what the State had granted, it could take away; everywhere therefore the Jews felt that they had to ingratiate themselves with the State – even the Zionists often felt this; and perhaps the only exception was the Bund, which specifically opposed the State as Jews and as Socialists. Vital explains the escalation in Russia from state harassment to the state-inspired murderous ferocity after 1906, to the perception of the Right that the Jews had at last dared to organize themselves to fight back against the Autocracy.

In Vital's interpretation, the Jews of England and France were terrified of crossing their governments on behalf of Jews elsewhere. When, as in the Damascus Case, they seem to have been an effective pressure group for their co-religionists, it was largely because their interests and the interests of their governments coincided. Once governments felt that they had done "enough" in protesting to antisemitic régimes about their

illiberal policies, Jewish representative organisations became cautious in pressing them to do more, lest their own patriotism were called into question. Typically, in France Jewish congregations offered up prayers for the health of Alexander III while that Tsar, allied to France, was presiding over the harassment of their co-religionists through the May Laws. In 1933 the British Board of Deputies and the French Consistoire even refused to be identified with the campaign to boycott goods from Nazi Germany: a hint from the Home Secretary that the British Government regarded the boycott as undesirable was quite sufficient. When the World Jewish Congress was being prepared in September 1933, the Board of Deputies, the *Alliance* and the *Hilfsverein* all refused to attend in case they gave "substance" to the antisemites' claim that there was such a thing as powerful International Jewry. All this bespeaks an awareness that, far from there being a "symbiosis", the Jews throughout Europe felt insecure as a people apart. The book ends with the impotence of the Jews at the Evian Conference of July 1938: the liberal democracies refused to accept significant numbers of refugees from Nazi Germany. The Evian Conference "confirmed the general disposition to edge the Jews out of the international political arena into which they had so very recently (historically speaking) gained admission. Evian signalled the onset of the final stage of the process by which the long march of the Jews of Europe to legal emancipation and social acceptance had first been arrested and was now, corners of the western world apart, being rapidly reversed."

There is of course an extensive treatment of the sufferings of the Jews in Russia and in the successor states after the First World War. The gloom of this book is unrelieved. Vital obviously felt that the enormous achievements of the Jews once they had been emancipated had so little bearing on his theme that they do not figure in his book at all.

One must also add that Vital's editors at the OUP should have taken more trouble: the index, though long, is inadequate; footnotes referring back to earlier passages give chapters but not page numbers. Above all the style of the book is quite dreadful: immensely long and ponderous sentences and sententiously

expressed reflections made this reviewer feel that sometimes he was wading through treacle. But the effort is worth it.

□ Ralph Blumenau

## Not quite Formula One

Ronald Harwood, *QUARTET*, Richmond Theatre

In Greek mythology Oedipus has a fatal encounter with his father at a point where three paths converge. In the process of writing *Quartet*, Ronald Harwood had a fatal encounter with the muse of drama at a point where three streams converge.

The first stream is the acquisition of charisma via the donning of costume. Brecht used this to good effect in the scene of the robing of the Pope in *Galileo*. Likewise Jean-Claude Grumberg's *Dreyfus* features a nervous Polish-Jewish actor drawing courage from the French officer's uniform (which he dons in the play-within-a-play) to defy the antisemitic louts come to wreck the performance.

The second stream has to do with standing on the shoulders of giants. A favourite giant whose shoulders subsequent playwrights have long stood on is, of course, Shakespeare. Impious English critics who do not share our inbuilt veneration for Schiller have even dared describe his *Don Carlos* as a pale shadow of *Hamlet*.

But worse – far worse – than plagiarism is, of course, cannibalisation. Ronald Harwood's *The Dresser*, a prentice piece which established his fame thirty years ago has an upbeat finale, where the fully made-up Donald Wolfitt lookalike goes on stage spouting glorious lines from *King Lear*. Even more flagrant cannibalisation occurred when Tom Stoppard incorporated the lovers' enchanting exchanges from *Romeo and Juliet* into his film script for *Shakespeare in Love*.

The third stream converging into Harwood's latest piece is good old-fashioned smut. I will spare my readers' blushes by only quoting one example of the genre. When a male inmate of the opera singers' retirement home, which is the setting of the play, confesses to a female colleague that he is impotent, she comments: 'All you've got to do, dear, is think of the Eiffel Tower'.

continued next page, col. 1

## Literary and theatrical reviews

continued from previous page

However, after making the audience sit through one and a half acts of this sort of thing the playwright at last hits his stride in the final scene, where he puts his four characters into opera costume and harnesses Verdi's music (the eponymous *Ob, bella figlia del amore* from *Rigoletto*) to his purpose.

Clearly Ronald Harwood likes going back to the tried formula that made his first play such a hit (though I don't recall having to sit through such an overload of smut when watching *The Dresser* thirty years ago).

□ RG

## Orphaned forever

Lotte Kramer, *'HEIMWEH, HOMESICK'*, Brandes & Aspel 1999, £8.50.

Many tributaries meet in this powerful collection, drawn from the author's previous volumes of poetry, *Ice-Break*, *Family Arrivals*, *A Life-Long House*, *The Shoe-Maker's Wife*, *The Desecration of Trees* and *Earthquake*. German-born, Kramer came to England on a Kindertransport and much of her work springs from homesickness, 'that permanent claw in the blood'. She has gathered into this book all her current poetry on this theme, with a final section of new work.

Bilingual readers will have an advantage. She writes in English and the German translation is given on the facing page. Speaking of her feeling about her mother tongue and her adopted language she says: 'Myself, I'm uneasy in both'. Sometimes this lends to the poems an especial grace, like a chord played in the left hand, always there. She says that for her 'pain is buttoned to the German language', so that writing in English allows her the necessary distance. Occasionally her syntax seems almost too orderly, which can hold up the flow, as in *Barricades*:-

'Her room is my prison/My shame is my fear/Of her ordered world/I refuse to enter.'

However, she never wastes words and takes the reader unerringly to the heart of the matter. I was moved by the simplicity of *The Red Cross Telegram*, quoting her father's farewell:-

'We have to move/Our residence will

not/Remain this town/Farewell beloved child.'

From her new poems I particularly liked *Warsaw Vigil 1940* which describes how some of the few Jews who existed outside the Ghetto hid themselves on Yom Kippur amongst the Catholic congregation in Warsaw Cathedral and how they lingered afterwards when it emptied:-

'Only ventured out/As written in the law/With the first star'.

This poem drags in its wake the huge machinery of oppression and, hiding in the shadows, the starving, threatened remnants of the Warsaw Jews.

Lotte Kramer still speaks for them, understands their suffering and expresses for all survivors now their continuing sense of outrage and loss. It strikes me as amazing that this is her first book to be published in Germany. I hope it will be widely read in this year leading up to the Millennium and that its lessons will be carried into the next century.

□ Jill Bamber

## The monster that defies analysis

Ron Rosenbaum, *EXPLAINING HITLER*, Papermac, 1999, £10.

One has to admit that at the end of the author's weighing of all the available evidence readers get no closer to comprehending what the subtitle of the book describes as *The Origins of His Evil*. But they need not fear that they will be short-changed, for they will learn a great deal on the way and the author's stylishly written summaries and comments are cleverly presented.

At stake are the questions: Was Hitler mad? Was he totally, irredeemably evil? Was he the sole architect of mass murder? Do the origins lie in his past? Did he believe himself to be righteous? Did he really not mind losing the war so long as all the Jews perished?

The authorities Rosenbaum cites guarantee the level of debate. They include the like of Hugh Trevor-Roper (Lord Dacre) who battled it out with Lord Bullock; the savant George Steiner, the notorious Daniel 'The Germans were all guilty' Goldhagen and Claude of *Sboah* fame Lanzmann. There is also the Israeli Jehuda 'no Hitler, no Holocaust' Bauer

and the incomparable Primo Levi.

Rosenbaum deals not only with the great and awful events but also the scandals which always surrounded this creature whom one analyst described as a 'nebbish god'. He may have murdered his niece in a fit of jealousy; he may have been driven by dreams of glory or by nightmares of bloodlust; invincible childhood Jew-hatred or the sight of Chassidim on sacred German (albeit Austrian) streets. Some hold that the idea of total annihilation was always in his mind and some say it was inculcated by the many European advocates of anti-semitism. Some say his war service, some say his mother's death of cancer (Jewish doctor) were among the causes that triggered his madness.

Readers may remain wondering, or plump for one judgment or another. But they will, if not enjoy, appreciate the skill and balance with which Rosenbaum, a very superior journalist and social scientist, presents an overview of this terrible phenomenon.

□ John Rossall

## Threatened by oblivion

Grete Beck-Klein, *WAS SONST VERGESSEN WIRD*, Hartung Gorre Verlag Konstanz.

The author wrote this book as a memorial to her family and at the same time hoped that use would be made of it, particularly in schools in her native Vienna.

She first gives the background of her family life in pre-Anschluss Vienna, 'the good old times' and then relates what happened to each member of her family. She and her sister emigrated to England and both subsequently went to Israel. Her parents and brother were not so lucky. Father and brother got to Shanghai and her mother was deported in 1942.

She quotes from very moving letters between her parents, her father and brother and herself, the mother forever hoping that she would be able to join her husband in Shanghai and neither of them really believing what could happen to them.

Grete Beck-Klein painstakingly researched the details of the deportation and asks the unanswerable pertinent question 'How could it have happened?'

□ Eva Frea

# Letters to the Editor



## CLAIMS AGAINST SWISS BANKS

Sir – It is unbelievable to read your editorial advice to claim against Swiss Banks, etc., 'even if the claimants had no connection whatever with a Swiss bank account'. If this is not an invitation to commit fraud, what is?

New Barnet, Herts

KG Speyer

This is a wilful misreading of what appeared on page 2 of the September issue. The advice was addressed to potential claimants who may have had assets looted by the Nazi regime, but **may not know** whether those assets were disposed of through a Swiss bank. Ed. (See item p.13)

## VARIETIES OF XENOPHOBIA

Sir – A unified Europe may seem desirable but such a structure would be riven by deep fault lines.

There must be elements in Germany deeply resentful of the defeat and the lost territories who are quietly working underground in the hope of bringing about a reversal.

A common currency and Central Bank will inhibit freedom of action in all departments of government, including the capacity to preserve a totally independent British defence capability.

The open borders of a unified Europe could create a mood of violent racist nationalism in this country.

British independence so valiantly defended in the past, should not be bartered away in the unrealistic hope of a prosperous Never-Never-Land. We, the beneficiaries of that defence, should help uphold it.

Stamford

Eric Alexander

Sir – Your September editorial is by far the sanest published for many years on the envy-inspired anti-German and anti-American attitudes of so much of the British press.

Unregrettably Dr Goebbels has been dead for a very long time, but his techniques – alas – are not.

May I be allowed to thank and congratulate *AJR Information* on this outstanding achievement.

Dalham, Newmarket

George Clare

Sir – Some of the assumptions in your September leader flounder in choppy waters. The mundane but tested theory of the leopard not changing his spots, finds a ready home with many Jewish refugees and millions of veterans of WWII. A writer expressing this sentiment is not necessarily an anti-German demagogue. Replacing sterling with an untried bureaucratic compendium requires long and careful consideration. It is also wrong to suggest that people with unimpaired memories are anti-German.

The majority of Germans and Austrians (especially the latter) guilty of heinous crimes during the Nazi era have never been brought to justice. The ranks of apologists for the past should not be joined by the influential Jewish refugee intelligentsia.

London N3

Eric Donner

## CHAMBERLAIN'S CLONES

Appeasement runs high in the British Government, from ex-Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and ex-Ambassador Sir Neville Henderson, to Mo Mowlam and Tony Blair in their latest relationship with the IRA.

Even the former Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, a moderate politician and one-time Secretary of NATO states quite categorically that NATO was wrong in bombing Serbia, which only exacerbated the hatred.

Were Clinton and Blair not thinking of self-aggrandizement when they decided on this undertaking? Anything to take the mind of the public off the Lewinski scandal and the troubles in Ireland and elsewhere! A not unusual stratagem of politicians!

We Jews should think of the resistance the Chetniks put up against the Nazis as opposed to the co-operation by the Ustashes of Pavelić. Tudjman forcibly cleared out 200,000 Serbs out of Krajina and NATO did not bat an eyelid. This surely, smells of appeasement.

Wembley, Middx

A Goldsmith

Sir – None are so blind as those who won't see.

A closer look at the facts and the background to the situation might benefit

Otto Fleming. In 1974 Tito granted autonomy to Kosovo. In 1989 Milosevic withdrew it. His 'Greater Serbian Manifesto' was a programme to include some two million Serbs living mainly in Croatia and Bosnia in an expanded Serbia.

In 1991 Milosevic began his expansion wars with Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia, in which ethnic cleansing was the declared aim. The rest of Europe looked on, seeing it as an 'internal matter', like Hitler's concentration camps. When, at last, the EEC recognised Croatia, Vukovar had already been reduced to a rubble by the Serbs and Dubrovnik had been bombarded for almost three months. In 1993 Milosevic paramilitaries set about dismembering multi-ethnic Bosnia. They established a gulag of camps across northern Bosnia in which rape, terror and murder were a daily routine. In the summer of 1995 thousands of Muslims were massacred at Srebrenica in the most grievous atrocity on European soil since the Nazis.

Towards the end of 1998 it was the turn of Kosovo. Diplomatic efforts lasted almost half a year during which Milosevic proceeded with the preparations for his scorched earth policy. Mr Fleming refers to 'unacceptable demands in Rambouillet'. How relevant is that? Before the NATO campaign some seventy resolutions had been passed by the United Nations and totally disregarded by Milosevic.

London W12

Eric Sanders

## SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

Sir – The bulk of Jews came to Austria from Galicia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Antisemitism was rife in Austria, more so than in Germany, long before the Anschluss. It was simply legalised by the Nazis.

To compare Austria with Britain is an insult to the tolerance shown by HM government and its people over many decades.

To quote Fräulein Amalie Schoner as to the goodness of the Austrian people surely stretches one's credulity to the limit.

London N12

D Cohn

Sir – My father's parents, grandfather, great-grandfather came from that Austro-Hungarian bulwark city and home of a great yeshiva – Pressburg. My mother's ancestors lie under tombstones dating

back to the 17th century in a small Sudeten town. Austrian citizens all, they did not have to flee to Vienna. Only I had the misfortune to be born a Viennese. As far as I can recall they were petty bourgeois and not necessarily uneducated – although had they been, this would not have been a crime.

Fräulein Schoner together with others I can remember behaving decently, belong to the 2% of non-perpetrators in Germany and Austria. They would not be enough to make me change my opinion to write off these on the whole dreadful countries, their dreadful peoples and their even more awful history.

London N6 Hugh Fisher

Sir – It is right to point out the helpful attitude shown by the Austrian Government during the last few years. I have visited Vienna regularly and found a thriving Jewish community.

There are several synagogues, nurseries and play schools. Yeshivas and youth groups flourish and the retirement home is well appointed. The *Gemeinde Blatt* is full of activities covering all aspects of Jewish life. The Jewish Museums of Vienna and Eisenstadt (Burgenland) are fascinating. Without the Austrian Government's support the above would not have been possible.

On reflection it would appear prudent to appreciate the authorities' dealing with the Jewish community and encourage them to continue in the future.

London NW2 A Dutch

Sir – AW Freud would have us believe that the poor pre-war Austrians "were unhinged and believed in a false prophet". He does not mention that the most beastly of the SS and SA were in fact Austrian; there must still be a lot of "unhinged" Austrians around as the success of rightwing parties shows.

Greenford, Middx Ernest Kolman

**SNOBBERY IN ARCADIA**

Sir – You should not discuss the class system here. We belong to an ethnic minority and are excluded in every way.

From the recent Channel 4 documentary on the Second World War one thing came out clearly: there has never been any interest in us. For the people here we do not exist.

London NW4 EJ Freyhan

**AJR WITHOUT THE R**

Sir – I find Mr Guttman's letter (September issue) rather insulting: I object to having my past referred to as "dirty linen". He appears to be one of those ex-refugees who now wants to be seen as a "true Britisher" – which we will never be!

On the other hand, I agree, with suggestions that an "F" (for former) be inserted before the "R".

London NW9 Marion Smith

**THANK YOU BRITAIN FUND**

Sir – Anne Pisker presumably does not know that I was interned for a while at Donaldson School, Edinburgh, in a room with a communicating door to a room with Gestapo agents who closed the door saying "At least, we don't have to breathe the same air". When we complained to the Commanding Officer he assured us he would keep order but when we insisted on being moved he remarked "The Jews are always causing trouble".

London NW6 Dr W Levy

**EXPRESSIONS OF REMORSE**

Sir – The final item in Newsround (August issue) reminds me of a most moving entry in the visitors' book at a French Holocaust exhibition in Paris a few years ago:

*"Catholique practicante, je demande à Dieu chaque jour de nous pardonner le mal que nous avons fait au peuple Juif".*

Gt Bookham, Surrey Robert Miller

**HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY**

Sir – You report (August issue) that an annual remembrance day for the victims of the Holocaust has been proposed.

I and quite a lot of my friends who grieve daily for our loved ones who perished in the camps, feel very strongly against an enforced, organised memorial day.

The world must never forget what happened. It has to be taught in schools and the awareness must continue to come from the media through documentaries and plays and through 'Beth Shalom'.

Please, no set date in England – it would backfire and hurt!

Elston, Newark, Notts Margret Grundmann

**NO RESTING PLACE**

Sir – I have just returned from a visit to Poland in search of my roots.

I had hoped to visit my grandparents' graves in Gross Wartenberg, now Sycow,

near Breslau, now Wroclaw, Poland. I was shocked and upset to find that the small Jewish cemetery no longer existed and that new houses had been built on the land. My father had visited his parents' graves in the 1950s.

Can anyone shed light on this? What has happened to the graves and headstones?

London NW11 Jennifer Langer (née Striem)

**CABARET IN PURGATORY**

Sir – Kurt Gerron did not play the proprietor of *The Blue Angel* in the film of that name. He played a stage magician who managed an itinerant troupe whose star



Charlotta Buresova's portrait of Kurt Gerron, Terezin, 1944

was Lola-Lola (Marlene Dietrich). The proprietor was played by Karl Huszar-Puffy, who had already partnered Dietrich in the 1928 film *Ich küsse Ihre Hand, Madame*.

You are equally mistaken in thinking that Gerron wrote the song *Das Nachtgespenst*. Its text was by Friedrich Holländer and its music by Rudolf Nelson. Gerron sang it, first in Nelson's revue *Der rote Faden* and then on a famous gramophone recording, with Nelson himself as piano accompanist, made in Berlin in 1929.

The Queen's College, Oxford Prof SS Prawer

**CLAIMS AGAINST POLAND**

If anyone would like to contact Mr P Koppenheim (letter September issue) his address is as follows:- 5 Granville Avenue, Salford M7 4GD.

**AUTHOR!**

Sir – Do any readers know the author of the German nonsense verse which begins with:- *"Finster war's, der Mond schien belle?"*

London NW2 ST Deutsch

**THANKYOU**

Sir – I should like to express my sincere thanks to all at the AJR Day Centre and Head Office who have so unceasingly supported me in their individual way. Their kindness is very much appreciated by me now and was of the greatest help then.

London NW6 Eva Peach

# AJR Reports

## KAFFEE, KINDNESS, KOMPANY, KONTENTMENT AND KONCERT

*AJR's coffee set enjoying a Kaffee Klatch at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre in West Hampstead*



*The Day Centre's warm welcome, good company and a lot of good talk, with tea and coffee served with delicate sandwiches and delicious pastries, helped to make everyone relax. Jack Davidoff on violin playing all-time popular melodies with ever-young Jules Ruben at the piano and Monty Samuel singing old favourites completed a very enjoyable afternoon. Winner of first prize in the draw, carried out by AJR's Chairman Andrew Kaufman, Melanie Lobel sensibly chose a warm tweed blanket to keep at bay those coming cold winter nights.*

## NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

### Pinner

The sun shone on Pinner Group's first garden party, held in the beautiful and spacious garden of Vera and Robert Gellman. Forty members enjoyed good company as well as a superb strawberry and cream tea which would have done Buckingham Palace proud! Thanks go to Vera, Elizabeth Feldman and the other hardworking volunteers who made the afternoon such a success.

□ George Vulkan

In a talk to the members, AJR Outreach Worker Myrna Glass recalled how, with admirable courage, she had volunteered for a month with the Israeli Defence Forces. The sparse conditions at base camp and tough work in the bitter cold making bunker reinforcements were compensated by her enthusiasm for doing a good job and setting younger volunteers a good example. Her rewards included two splendid certificates and sightseeing trips.

□ Walter Weg

*Gaby Glassman, a member of AJR's Management Committee, will speak on 'What have we told our children about our*

*experiences?' at the group's next meeting on 7th October, 2pm at Pinner Synagogue. Sons and daughters of Holocaust survivors are particularly welcome* □

### Brighton & Hove

Jacqueline Gill of the Jewish Genealogical Society and a member of the editorial committee of its publication *Shemot* (names), was the guest speaker of 'Sarid'.

In 1992, both experienced researchers and enthusiastic beginners had joined forces to establish the Society. Its aims were to help members learn more about genealogy, to encourage research, to share information and to promote the preservation of Jewish genealogical records and resources.

Many British Jews have a real thirst for knowledge of their background, not least among the younger generation. Well aware of the difficulties faced by European survivors of the Holocaust when seeking out their origins, Jacqueline revealed that many records had indeed been preserved in archives and could still be examined on payment of a fee – a useful source of income for some. Her research into her own family background

in this country had taken her back to the eighteenth century!

During the discussion which followed, many members described what they already knew of their continental families, but wanted to discover more. Jacqueline Gill was pleased to offer them useful guidance. Sarid has an interesting programme booked until the year's end with meetings to be held at the Ralli Hall in Hove.

□ Rudi Simmonds

### AJR 'Drop in' Advice Centre at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre

15 Cleve Road, London NW6 3RL  
between 10am and 12 noon on the  
following dates:

Tuesday	5	October
Wednesday	13	October
Thursday	21	October
Tuesday	26	October
Wednesday	3	November

and every Thursday from  
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**AJR, 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognal,  
London NW3 6AL**

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

## Volunteers 'r' reading for us

Dear AJR Information,  
 Many thanks to your volunteers who read AJR Information onto tape every month for those of us who can no longer see so well. I can assure you that it is a great success listening to your performances which are so easy on the ear.

My best wishes and thanks,

□ Walter Salomonson



Walter recently took part in a two-hour marathon walk for charity through Hadley Woods despite a total hip replacement and being completely blind. He was greeted and congratulated by the Mayor and Mayoress of Barnet. At the age of 96 he is an example to us all.

## Third Great Season

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### AJR LUNCHEON CLUB

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## ... Viewpoint ...

### Land of our brothers

**D**oes the signing of the rejuvenated Wye Accord by the Israeli Government and Palestinian representatives mark the end of the century-old conflict between Arabs and Jews as to just who inherits the territories of the former Ottoman-Turkish Empire, conquered by the British in World War I and ruled under its League of Nations mandate?

Few question the territorial integrity of Jordan, fashioned and artificially maintained by the British out of the Palestinian territories as the puppet state of Trans-Jordan for a dispossessed Hashemite sheikh, yet whose subjects are predominantly 'Palestinian' in origin.

Prior to the declaration of the State of Israel in 1948, paradoxically, 'Palestinian' passports and identification were a prerogative of its Jewish residents. One of the Arabs' major propaganda successes has been the purloining of this title and the forging of a consensus for its recognition in the West. The name originates, of course, from the Philistines – not the Arabs.

If the ruthless but ailing Assad of Syria, no longer a cold-war client of Soviet policy in the Middle East, can

toy with the desirability of a rapprochement with his principal enemy in a process to secure his lineage on the Damascus throne, Lebanon's extremist factions will also be brought to heel.

Any Near Eastern settlement may well reflect a common fear of the unleashing of weapons of mass destruction by fundamentalist Iran (with an Islamic atomic bomb), or an unstable Iraq whose leader would prefer an apocalypse now, rather than the overthrow of his Takriti clan.

Ehud Barak, like his late mentor Yitzhak Rabin, is a former Chief of Staff and highly unlikely to compromise Israel's security. The accommodation of two Jerusalems – one each for the Jews and the Palestinians by extension of boundaries to the east – may secure one element in the final status negotiations. Any return of a Palestinian diaspora presents a far more overwhelming problem, not least for a Palestinian administration whose democratic institutions have already failed, exposing a traditional reliance on the caprice of another old man, Israel's former implacable enemy, now partner in peace.

□ Ronald Channing

## PAUL BALINT AJR DAY CENTRE

15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6  
 Mon., Tues. & Weds. 9.30am-3.30pm. Thurs. 9.30am-6.30pm. Suns. 2pm-6.30pm

Afternoon entertainment programme –  
**OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1999**

- Sun 3 CLOSED – SIMCHAT TORAH
- Mon 4 KARD & GAMES KLUB
- Tue 5 Katinka Seiner & Laszlo Easton, accompanied by Peter Gellhorn, piano
- Wed 6 Robert Broday accompanied by Daphne Lewis, piano
- Thur 7 THE GEOFFREY STRUM & HELEN BLAKE DUO
- Sun 10 CLOSED – AJR ANNUAL CONCERT
- Mon 11 KARD & GAMES KLUB
- Tue 12 THE VALERIE HEWITT SHOW
- Wed 13 Shirley Gurevitz accompanied by Daphne Lewis, piano
- Thur 14 THE WIZO CHOIR
- Sun 17 THE NEW HORIZONS
- Mon 18 KARD & GAMES KLUB
- Tue 19 MAREK DABROWSKI ENTERTAINS ON THE PIANO

- Wed 20 LUNCHEON CLUB
- Thur 21 Tricia Dina, soprano & Gordon Chochran accompanied by Margeret Gibbs, piano
- Sun 24 DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT
- Mon 25 KARD & GAMES KLUB
- Tue 26 Ilya Ushakov, violin accompanied by Yaron Shavit, piano
- Wed 27 THE EDDY SIMMONS DUO
- Thur 28 THE DULCET TONES
- Sun 31 DAY CENTRE OPEN – NO ENTERTAINMENT
- November**
- Mon 1 KARD & GAMES KLUB
- Tue 2 Amanda Palmer, soprano
- Wed 3 Sue Kennett, soprano accompanied by Gordon Weaver, piano
- Thur 4 Nicola Smedley accompanied by Jan Cunningham, piano

## FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Birthdays

**Gee.** Ruth Gee. Remember, remember my sister Ruth Gee was 85 years young on the 20 September. With love from your brother John.

### Golden Wedding

The founder of THE HYPHEN and members of IFL Ealing and Hampstead Branch and six survivors of HMT Dunera wish Hilde and Ken Ambrose as the second couple after Gaggy and Teddy all the best for their 50th wedding anniversary.

### Deaths

**Böhm.** Herta Böhm born in Vienna passed away on 20 August. Deeply mourned by her closest friend Lisel Eisner, her cousin Trude Meaney of London, her niece Daphne Bar Noach and her sister-in-law Cecille Böhm, both of Israel and her many friends from the Cambridge Jewish community. May she rest in peace.

**Heim.** Hedy Heim born Vienna, died on 4 September aged 94. Greatly mourned by her family and all who knew her.

### In Memoriam

On 6 September 1999 our mother Golda Landau née Strum would have been 100 years old. Born in Przemysl, then Habsburg Galicia, the daughter of Hermann Strum, later owner of Strum Mazoth of Vienna and Amalia née Baumann. Married Dr Adolph Heinrich Landau a barrister of Wiener Neustadt. Died in Vienna just before her 80th birthday.

Her children remember her with love! Fredi und Silvie.

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### Day Centre

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### Societies

**Association of Jewish Ex-Berliners.** Please contact Peter Sinclair 0181 882 1638 for information.

## AJR MEALS ON WHEELS

Variety of high quality kosher frozen food is available, ready made and delivered to your door via the AJR Meals on Wheels service.

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for details and assessment interview.

Meals can also be collected from 15 Cleve Road, Mondays-Thursdays.

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## AJR INFORMATION is available on tape

If anyone would like to take advantage of this service please contact Amanda Clark at AJR 0171-431-6161 Mon-Thur 9.30am - 5pm

## LINK Psychotherapy Centre

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## AJR GROUP CONTACTS

Leeds HSFA:	Heinz Skyte 0113 268 5739
West Midlands: (Birmingham)	Edgar Glaser 0121 777 6537
North: (Manchester)	Werner Lachs 0161 773 4091
East Midlands (Nottingham)	Bob Norton 01159 212 494
Pinner: (HA Postal District)	Vera Gellman 0181 866 4833
S. London:	Ken Ambrose 0181 852 0262
Surrey:	Ernest Simon 01737 643 900
Brighton & Hove (Sussex Region)	Fausta Shelton 01273 688 226
Wessex: (Bournemouth)	Ralph Dale 01202 762 270

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS OCTOBER 1999

- Mon 4 **Robin McEwan:** The Illuminations of the Ethiopian Miracles of Mary in 17th & 18th centuries (with slides). Club 43, 8pm
- Mon 11 **Michael Faulkner:** Nazism, Revolution or Counterrevolution? Club 43, 8pm
- Sun 17 **'The Last Days'**, Oscar-winning Steven Spielberg film story of Hungarian Jewry. Screen on the Hill, NW3, 7pm. Tickets £12.50 from Shaare Zedek, 766 Finchley Road, NW11. Tel: 0181 201 8933
- Mon 18 **Goethe Abend. Zum 250. Geburtstag:** Clement Krysler & Hans Seelig. Einleitung, Sprüche, Gedichte. (In German). Club 43, 8pm
- Tue 19 **Akiva Segan (Seattle):** Holocaust Education Through Art (illustrated). Sussex University, 5.15pm
- Mon 25 **A Wassener, Director of the Goethe Institute, London:** Germany, My Germany - a personal view of 50 years of the Federal Republic. Club 43, 8pm
- Tue 26 **Prof Edward Timms:** Karl Kraus & the Crisis of Musical Culture in Vienna. Sussex University, 5.15pm
- Wed 27 **The Silence of Pius XII:** Jonathan Gorsky. Spiro Institute, Kidderpore Avenue, NW3, 8pm, £6

### November

- Mon 1 **Prof Dr Leon Yudkin:** Life & Death of Yiddish Literature in the USSR. The Case of Peretz Markish. Club 43, 8pm
- Tue 2 **Antony Lerman (Director JPR):** Antisemitism at the End of the 20th Century - An Old Prejudice in a New Context. Sussex University, 5.15pm

**ORGANISATION CONTACTS**  
Club 43, at Belsize Square Synagogue. Hans Seelig 01442 254 360

**Sussex University Centre for German-Jewish Studies.**  
David Groiser Tel/Fax: 01273 877 169

## Art Notes

I spent the summer eclipse in Cornwall where performance art, New Ageism, mystery and magic vied for attention with the phenomenon itself. Totality for me turned out to be, alas, total cloudiness. Not so for the local artists.

**Yuko Shiraishi's** *Eclipse/Blue Deference* (at the Cornwall Tate Gallery until the end of the month) is described as an experiment with oil on canvas to create several sculptural images of the eclipse, a series of oblong three dimensional canvases painted on all sides, perhaps to convey the formulaic windows through which we view life's mysteries – such as the eclipse.

Georgian-born **Gia Edzgeradze** responds to the eclipse with two contrasting gallery spaces devoted to his views on light and darkness. The only thing clear about that is the artist's tongue-in-cheek imagination. The first installation features a room full of carrots lying on the floor in a grid system divided by the repetition of the word, "hope", while two videos, vertical and horizontal, portray a swimmer struggling to reach the surface. The second room is a gilded and gorgeous garden. I overheard a curator suggesting that the artist was recalling his grassroots struggle in the Soviet Union where the swimmer was always swimming against the tide and the carrots would eventually decay in the absence of light, while the golden room represented his "arrival".

At the Tate Gallery, St Ives, **Alexander Cresswell** is currently showing *South-Western Approaches* – The Cornish Sublime. He concentrates on the effect of light on the Cornish landscape in an exhibition of 40 watercolours focused entirely on the Cornish vista – its storms, seascapes and the drama of its environment. Cresswell tries to capture the very spirit borne on the gale-swept air.

The marriage of politics and art reached its zenith in 15th century Florence when the power of the Medici was largely influenced and consolidated by their penetration of the visual arts. The National Gallery launches its first major exhibition for over a decade of **Renaissance Florence** (from 20 October until mid January 2000). Works by such Florentine artists as del Verrocchio, Antonio and Piero del Pollaiuolo, Botti-



*Lord Digby and Lord Russell, by Anthony Van Dyck, c1637, at the Royal Academy of Arts, London.*

celli and Lippi will be prominent in an exhibition which comprises sculpture, manuscript illumination, engravings and drawings, including some by the young Leonardo da Vinci.

It is not too late to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the birth of **Anthony Van Dyck**. The Royal Academy of Arts joins forces with the City of Antwerp in a major retrospective of the artist's work which includes paintings from all over the world as well as those from Britain's major private and public collections. The exhibition continues until 16 December 1999.

Art lovers who bemoan the fact they will never be able to achieve collector status can now think again. **The Affordable Art Fair** invites art fairs, galleries and dealers to exhibit works at a cost of under £2,000 each in a bid to price contemporary art within the market. The Fair will be held in two marquees in *Battersea Park* from October 27-31. A wide variety of affordable works are offered, enabling purchasers to pay in instalments.

The eternal charm of the still-life is celebrated this month at the **Osborne Studio Gallery**, 13 Motcomb Street, London SW1, from October 13-29, in an exhibition of recent work by **Elizabeth Parsons**. The works are the result of garden and wild flower studies which evolved from a floral calendar commission by the Medici Society.

□ Gloria Tessler

## SB's Column

**Seventy-five years ago.** It was 1924 when excerpts of Alban Berg's opera *Wozzeck* were first heard in Frankfurt. Although the opera was performed in Berlin the following year, political controversy ensued; timid attempts at revivals followed in Berlin in 1928 and in Vienna 1930. However, general appreciation only came in 1951 with a performance at the Salzburg Festival.

**Fifty years ago.** Coinciding with the death of Edmund Eysler (one of the last operetta composers) the Anglo-American musical finally conquered the international light music scene. Whilst Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific* triumphed in the States and in Europe, Britain contributed Novello's *King's Rhapsody*. A new era had begun.

**Birthdays.** The Hungarian-born Israeli humorist and author **Ephraim Kishon** had his 75th birthday. **Trude Haefelin**, German actress, now retired, is receiving respectful acclaim at the occasion of her 85th birthday. During her heyday she filmed with Heinrich George and partnered Hans Albers in the famous *Münchhausen* film. Vienna audiences are looking forward to celebrating the 80th birthday of **Fritz Muliar**, the ubiquitous comedian who will mark the event by appearing at Josefstadt's Rabenhof in the comedy *Visiting Mr Green*. Muliar, whose Jewish stepfather acquainted him with customs and language of the shtetl, was so taken by the traditions that he specialised in the idiom, issuing successful records *Bochtes and Lozelach*, *Schmonzes à la carte* and others. As a comedian his numerous rôles have ranged from Nestroy to Frosch in *Die Fledermaus*.

**Obituaries.** Austrian-born stage, film and (lately) TV actress **Hilde Krahl** has died, aged 82. **Paul Sacher**, the Swiss conductor who sponsored works by Bartok, Stravinsky and Hindemith and who helped many composers to survive artistically as well as financially during the last war, has died in Basel at the age of 93 □

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CONTEMPORARY PAINTING  
AND SCULPTURE

## SCIENCE NOTEBOOK

## Science in the theatre

Plays about science have become very fashionable. The oldest English play in this category, *The Alchemist*, was most recently revived in 1996 at the National Theatre. In it, Ben Jonson pokes fun at gullible people taken in by an alchemist who promises them the philosophers' stone which would turn base metals into gold. Another 1996 revival, presented in German at the Rudolf Steiner Theatre, was Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *Die Physiker* (1962) whose main characters are patients in a mental hospital calling themselves Newton, Einstein and Möbius. Despite their scientific titles, these two plays are essentially entertainments with an undercurrent of fraudulent dealing in the plots. This also affects the third science play, *Blinded by the Sun*, newly written by Stephen Poliakov and performed at the National Theatre. It is set in the chemistry department of a British university where an ambitious lecturer suddenly announces a startling discovery. All the academic staff are portrayed as deeply flawed personalities and indeed the playwright's brother, a professor of chemistry, repudiated any resemblance to his own university.

In contrast, Bertolt Brecht's *The Life of Galileo* (1939), is a more serious and thoughtful play which dramatically illustrates the difficulties faced by scientists who develop new ways of looking at nature. Galileo was unable to persuade the 17th Century religious authorities that the earth is not the centre of the universe while 200 years later Charles Darwin, in propounding the theory of evolution, had to contend also with upsetting the deeply held beliefs of ordinary people. This formed the subject of the first of three new science plays in 1998, *After Darwin* by Timberlake Wertenbaker. Both this play and *An Experiment with an Air-Pump* by Shelagh Stephenson, received their London premières at the Hampstead Theatre. Stephenson explores the conflict between our curiosity drive and the excitement of new discoveries on the one hand and, on the other, the ethical basis of human society and the uncertain effects of new genetic research.

The latest science-based play, *Copenhagen* by Michael Frayn, is still continuing at the Duchess Theatre after a sell-out 1998 season at the National. It deals with the mysterious visit paid by Werner Heisenberg (Nobel Prize for

Physics, 1932) to his former mentor and colleague Niels Bohr (Nobel Prize for Physics, 1922) in Nazi-occupied Copenhagen in 1941. Heisenberg had been put in charge of Germany's war-time atomic research and his visit to the half Jewish scientist was a surprise. It is known that the two men went for a walk together but returned shortly afterwards, with Bohr in an angry mood. What might the consequences for the world have been of a longer conversation? Bohr subsequently fled to Sweden and then to America where he contributed to the US atomic bomb programme. Germany, fortunately, failed to develop an atomic weapon and Heisenberg's post-war reputation was badly tarnished. If you go to Frayn's play, do arrive in time to read the informative programme which provides much interesting background material.

□ Prof Michael Spiro

### 'When schools were turned into prisons'

This is the name of an exhibition in the basement of Karajangasse School in Vienna's Twentieth district. It served as a prison on Kristallnacht. Among the prisoners were Fritz Grünbaum, the cabaret artist, and Bruno Kreisky, later to become Austria's Chancellor. (My father was also imprisoned there.)

On display are pictures of the persecution of the Jews by the Nazis, the scrubbing of pavements and cheering spectators as well as of Austrian resistance fighters executed by the Nazis. A substantial section is devoted to the role of the Jewish population in the cultural and economic life of the area which was called the *Mazzesinsel*. (I don't consider this term as in any way derogatory.) Materials displayed refer to the first antisemitic riots in 1919 at the Gaussplatz, and show the different treatment given by the police to the Jewish defenders and the antisemitic attackers.

The whole project was undertaken by pupils. I couldn't help wondering what the feelings of the youngsters who did all this work were about their grandparents or parents. All in all I found the exhibition an encouraging sign that some Austrians were beginning to come to terms with the past.

It is open on Thursdays from 16.00 to 20.00 hrs. Karajangasse is a short street near the Augarten. □ Shlomo Kesten

## HOMECARE SERVICE

The AJR is pleased to offer members the benefit of a Homecare Service scheme

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## CLAIMS CONFERENCE RELAXES 'GOODWILL FUND' RULES

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany has agreed to a new, more generous set of rules for those claiming to be the inheritors of previously heirless property in the territories of the former East Germany and East Berlin.

Originally the German Government had set 31st December 1992 as a time limit up to which such claims would be recognised. If heirs failed to register a claim with the appropriate German authorities by that date, under German law the Claims Conference was recognised as the legal inheritor of unclaimed Jewish-owned property. (The Claims Conference itself had time limits imposed on its procedures).

Potential claimants, many having no knowledge of their family's former possessions, failed to make their claims to the German Government within the specified time limit. Only subsequently did they discover that the Claims Conference owned, or was the sole claimant recognised under German law, to what they regarded as their family property.

Approaches made to the Claims Conference for compensation initially brought the response that all individual rights had been forfeited, but following considerable public criticism, in 1994 the Claims Conference established a 'Goodwill Fund'. This operated on a sliding scale to pay a smaller percentage to larger claims. However, its terms of reference excluded charities and non-family members; the Fund was insufficiently publicised and a cut-off date of 30th June 1996 was applied.

These terms failed to dispel the complaints, so the Conference then agreed to accept claims from the Goodwill Fund up to 31st December 1998. Under the newly agreed rules four principles have been established:

1. Reaffirmation of the Claims Conference's right to retain property it had already recovered.
2. The deadline for making claims to the Goodwill Fund of 31st December 1998 was declared as final.
3. The definition of those entitled to payment from the Goodwill Fund was extended to include charities (and all those recognisable as legal heirs by the German courts).

4. Qualifying claimants, while entitled to 100% of what would have been their share of the property, were subject to a charge of 20% to cover the Claims Conference's costs in researching and recovering the property.

In addition, the Inland Revenue has confirmed that payments received from the Goodwill Fund will be treated in exactly the same way as would payments made directly to individuals had they made their claim prior to the end of 1992.

These rules are not to be applied to works of art which the Claims Conference is entitled to recover as the legal inheritor of heirless property in Germany. It is understood that such objects are returned without any deduction or fee.

David Rothenberg, AJR's Vice-Chairman and Hon Treasurer, represented the AJR and World Jewish Relief at the Claims Conference meeting in New York. He welcomed the decision as "the right solution to a long-standing problem". The Conference uses proceeds from heirless Jewish property for education and the support of Holocaust survivors □

## HOLOCAUST VICTIMS' ASSETS LITIGATION

### The Swiss connection

Some members have queried the advice given in the August and September issues of *AJR Information* which urged those who suffered any of the losses or injustices listed (or their heirs) to complete the questionnaire, even though no obvious 'Swiss connection' may be apparent.

This is in no way meant to encourage wrongful claims. The US lawyers handling the litigation have researched into Swiss-German financial dealings during and immediately after, World War II. They have verified that, unbeknown to the victims, much of the proceeds derived from confiscated Jewish property, in addition to bank accounts, jewellery and gold, eventually found its way to Switzerland; some German banks and industrial firms, which made huge profits from the

exploitation of slave labour, had close ties with their Swiss counterparts and found safe havens for their gains in Switzerland.

You need have no compunction about completing the form and entering any losses or other injustices inflicted on you or your family, whether or not you have any knowledge of a specific Swiss connection. It will be up to the lawyers to establish such a connection, if any □

## 50 YEARS AGO

### IT HAPPENED IN AUSTRIA

London producer Viktor Skutezky, on holiday in Ischl, visited the house in which Franz Lehar had lived, now a museum. A guide explained to the visitors "This writing desk was given to Lehar by the King of England". Skutezky asked, "By which one - George or Edward?". "I think both of them", answered the guide. Later the visitor discovered an inscription on the desk: 'To my best friend F.L. from George Edwards' (the famous London theatrical producer of Lehar's *Merry Widow*).

□ *AJR Information*, October 1949

### A writer remembered

Else Ury, author of *Nestbäckchen*, perished in Auschwitz (see 'Germany's Enid Blyton', Jan 1998 issue). Now a street adjacent to 'S-Bahn' Station Savigny-Platz, Berlin-Charlottenburg, where she had lived for over thirty years, has been named after her. The naming ceremony, attended by the Burgomaster of Charlottenburg, was televised on regional TV □

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## Charisma or razzmatazz

The original use of the word *charismatic* conveyed some ineffable sense of mysticism in a person. Charismatics had a way with magic; they were poets rather than philosophers, blessed with an ability to make things happen. They were spoken of in hushed tones as though they may have zipped off another planet or time-zone far from the earth's orbit.

But on the eve of the Millennium let's use the word *charisma* in its strictly modern sense. Charisma today can mean anything from a glittery empathy to soul-friendly opportunism. Often it is that 50's term, sex-appeal, in a 90's incarnation. We demand charisma of politicians and religious leaders and yet in the most serious of these – the ones with real gravitas – that enigmatic, winsome quality is often in short supply. Few of today's spiritual leaders possess it and in an era of religious decline what passes in some for personal charisma is more often an obdurate fanaticism edged with menace. We have heard it for years in the rhetoric of the Rev Ian Paisley and we have sensed it more subtly and dangerously in the slow-burning idealism of Islamic fundamentalists. But is it charisma exactly that they possess?

For me, charisma requires some tacit acknowledgement of the vulnerable or even faintly ridiculous in its possessor. Our own glib-tongued, cigar-smoking Rabbi Shmuel Boteach, whose original Oxford-based L'Chaim Society is now being investigated by the Charities Commission, is, whatever he is not, a rare example of charisma in a Jewish leader. I once shared a blanket with Shmuel in Jerusalem. It happened during Israel's 50th anniversary celebrations at Givat Ram. In place of religious feeling a huge white plastic dove was floated in the air pulled by a small boy. It became very cold and there was only one blanket between three of us. Shmuel watched the celebrations and put his head in his hands in despair. He sounded genuinely upset by the lack of true Jewish values in the proceedings. He groaned as though in pain. A showman, I thought. Famously he missed his vodka. Then I asked him what messianism meant to him. Less glibly he replied: "the merging of opposites."

In London, just before the publication of his book, *Kosher Sex*, he invited me and my family to attend one of his regu-

lar Erev Shabbat dinners at his home in Brondesbury. Shmuel played host with a blend of tense largesse and *shtetl* homeliness. There was also the touch of the godfather about him. Everyone seemed to wait on his words, even when he had no intention of saying anything. There were at least 30 people present, many of whom were invited to make a *l'chaim*. Mine was to the late Rabbi Hugo Gryn. This most unorthodox of orthodox rabbis seemed pleased and touched by my irreverent gesture in a Chassidic home. In the same rather guileless way he sees nothing wrong with using the media machine to push his ideas on love and sex within marriage. In order to attract huge crowds of any faith to his Oxford L'Chaim Society, he crossed swords with the long-established Jewish Society, which had to manage without his flamboyant style and American management techniques or without recourse to the huge funds available to the Chassidic-backed movement. Prominent Oxford academics there feared that such techniques might have an insidious agenda, beguiling students whose lack of Jewish experience could make them vulnerable to right-wing persuasion.

That the Charities Commission are investigating L'Chaim's accounts is almost inevitable given the vast amounts of publicity Boteach's every move brings down on his head and the amount of opposition from those whose Judaism is steeped in discretion rather than boldness.

And yet – whether the investigations will expose a dirty tricks department in the body politic of the L'Chaim Society, or whether, as Boteach's supporters claim, he is simply the victim of a witchhunt inspired by personal jealousy, there is something engaging and absurd about this eccentric 32-year-old with his lack of rabbinic restraint.

He parties with the likes of Peter Stringfellow at his book launches; he wheels out Professor Stephen Hawking – whose scientific views on the universe will scarcely reflect Orthodox Jewish thinking – and sends you tickets for which no seats are available. His conversation is sharp as gunfire and his blue gaze is so penetrating that it is hard to avoid it.

Yet the author of *Kosher Sex* and the *Jewish Guide to Adultery* has that type of charisma in which you can't tell whether he is deadly serious or laughing at himself. It is a kind of innocence and a kind of ruthless self-motivation at the same

time. A poser, a career-mover, or a deeply-committed rabbi desperately trying to make Judaism work for the thousands who are alienated from it by atheism, secularism or materialism. Time will tell. Meanwhile Boteach is the joker in the pack who survives by sheer imagination. And that alone is a big enough concept. While many dread the antisemitism which they fear will follow his antics, you must admit that to go so boldly shakes everyone out of their apathy and lends Judaism a sense of humour which it badly needs. Can we really be offended?

□ Gloria Tessler

## SEARCH NOTICES

**Sergeant Arthur Stapler**, Viennese impresario, joined British Army and broadcast to Austria from Algiers, Bari and Rome. Granddaughter seeks contact with anyone who knew him. Also, requests *literary* reflections (in German or English) on the experiences of Austrian and German emigrants for an anthology (poetry, stories, diary extracts & biographical notes). Please contact Mag. Heidelinde Prüger, Ortsplatz 5, A-2650 Payerbach, Austria.

**Isle of Man internees' artwork**. Examples of a series of panel paintings of marine life, by Mrs M Sussmann and miniatures by other women internees in Port Erin and Port St Mary camps, are being sought by Liverpool University doctoral student Mrs RS Moroney, Ballaharry, Crosby, Isle of Man IM44BX. Tel: 01624 851 888.

**Ellen Milewski**, daughter of Anton Milewski, left Berlin around 1939 (perhaps via kindertransport) aged 16 and settled in England. Ellen or information about her is being sought by relative Rachel Eskin Fisher, 106 Garfield Place, Brooklyn, NY 11215, USA. Tel: (718) 499 7408. Fax: (978) 383 5579.

**'Killed in action'**. Jewish refugee members of No. 3 Troop, 10 Commando: MG Frank, Eugen Von Kegerer-Stein, Kurt Glaser, Eli W Nathan, Max Lewinsky, GA Barth & EG Weinberger. Relatives sought to confirm Jewish ancestry to replace crosses on their graves with Stars of David. Contact Martin Sugarman, AJEX House, Stamford Hill, London N16 5RT.

**Güstrow residents from Mecklenburg, Germany**, require help! A team in Güstrow is seeking Jewish ex-residents in order to compile a history of the Jews in our town. People whose families were born in the town, or who lived there. Is there anyone who knows such people or has their addresses? Please write to us at Förderverein Region Güstrow e.V., Rövertannen 12, 18273 Güstrow, Germany □

## Obituaries

## Ignatz Bubis

He had been born in Breslau in 1927, the child of *Ostjuden*. In the mid-thirties the Nazis drove the family back to Poland. A few years later, as occupiers of the country, they rounded them up for gassing at Treblinka. Ignatz alone, a strong lad, survived years of slave labour and was eventually liberated by the Russians.

Astonishingly, he opted to go back to Germany and settled in Frankfurt. Here he built up a property empire and was elected leader of the Jewish Community in 1983. In 1992 he became national leader of German Jewry with the aim of achieving final German-Jewish reconciliation. His decision to be buried in Israel indicates how far short he felt he had fallen of that aim. □ RG

## Aspiration of a visionary leader

You have got me all wrong", he once said to me, when I asked him why he would go headfirst into another potentially risky development scheme without any apparent need, having achieved wealth and respect long ago. "Money does not interest me, but I love to move things along". I did not quite believe him then, but found out with time that making money was not a sufficient outlet for his sheer endless energy.

Working with him and for him for almost 20 years, I was again and again impressed by his cool intellect, untainted by any formal education, coupled with an eidetic memory and aptitude to charm people of all origins, if need be by applying his working knowledge of at least six languages. What made him stand out, however, in my opinion, was his absolute integrity: once he had agreed to something, formally or casually, he stuck to it, whether it was in his interest or not. This explains also an unusual degree of respect he enjoyed in the – occasionally somewhat shady – world of property wheeling and dealing.

Being elected head of the German Jewish community, he poured his formidable personal resources almost exclusively into his lifelong, but seemingly unachievable, goal of reconciliation between Jews and non-Jews in Ger-

many. His tireless efforts won him unique personal public respect and admiration, bordering sometimes on adulation. But did he succeed in furthering his all-important goal? He himself did not seem to think so, according to an interview weeks before his death; a view certainly overpessimistic, because he measured it against his grand aspirations. For there were successes, not only in the increased public awareness but in the perception of hundreds of thousands of young people in schools and universities, to whom he tirelessly explained almost every day over the seven years of his tenure, why it is necessary to learn from the past. This is his unique contribution towards a better future.

□ Ferdinand Dillmann

## Alan Clark

Though a long-serving Member of Parliament, Alan Clark had a weakness for dictators even greater than that for women. His book *Operation Barbarossa* omits Stalin's disastrous refusal to heed any warnings of the impending German attack in spring 1941. Clark also opposed Western protests about Brezhnev's treatment of dissidents.

But the dictator he esteemed most highly was Hitler. In his eyes the Waffen SS had 'physical splendour' and he named his favourite dog – Clark was a besotted dog lover – Eva Braun. Above all he belaboured Churchill for having denied Hitler a separate peace in autumn 1941, when the latter had difficulties on

the Eastern Front. He viewed Churchill as a warmonger who had lost the Empire (many of whose constituent countries he notoriously dubbed Bongo-Bongo-Land). Maybe his most fitting epitaph is the fact that MI5 once bugged his phone, suspecting him of contacts with the National Front. □ RG

## Ilse Knopf

Berlin born Ilse Knopf, who has died aged 84, was a dedicated AJR volunteer for a dozen years.

Orphaned as a child she was brought up by relatives. She emigrated to England before the war and worked for Mr Anderman, a fellow refugee. When he joined up Ilse transferred to a bank. Postwar she went back to her first employer with whom she remained till her retirement. Ilse was alone in the world, except for one cousin in Zimbabwe who paid her annual, eagerly anticipated, visits.

At AJR, she originally helped with concert preparations and then took on the responsibility for invoicing the advertisers in *AJR Information*. A conscientious and methodical worker, she was popular with all. She celebrated her eightieth birthday at our office, as the AJR was her second home.

Her great sparetime interest was music. For years we attended Sunday morning chamber concerts at the Wigmore Hall together.

I have lost a dear friend and colleague.

□ Marianne Herz

### THE WIENER LIBRARY Memorial Plaques

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Wiener Library in London. As part of our commemoration it has been decided to issue a limited number of 50 memorial plaques for mounting in the Reading Room and Memorial Hall. Users of the Library have often remarked that the existing plaques are among the most moving features of the Wiener Library.

We hope that you will wish to join us in commemorating those who perished in the Holocaust as well as those members of the refugee community who have given so much to Britain. Each plaque will be accompanied by a certificate, one copy of which will be preserved permanently at the Library.

The Library offers two plaques to bear your personalised inscription:

- a rectangular brass plaque (125mm x 95mm) mounted on one of our bookcases at £250,
- a circular plaque (130mm diameter) mounted in a more prominent position at £1,000.

For more information please contact Ben Barkow, Deputy Director, at:  
4, Devonshire Street, London W1N 2BH Tel: 0171 636 7247

## NEWSROUND

**Post-war Polish property**

Poland's cabinet has agreed to return 50% of the value of property seized by the state under Communism, reports the *Jewish Chronicle*. Negotiations are continuing with the Union of Jewish Communities in Poland and the World Jewish Restitution Organisation to maintain Jewish sites and over 1,000 cemeteries.

**Past remembered in Vienna**

The Second Generation Trust, started by Katherine Klinger, played a major part in organising an international conference in Vienna focusing on the aftermath of Nazism and the Holocaust in contemporary Europe, and their effects on succeeding generations. Participants discussed how best the memory of the Holocaust should be retained.

**Austrian bank agreement**

Bank Austria and Creditanstalt have agreed to compensate 70,000 holders of 'lost' accounts (and a possible further 24,000 around the world) in a \$40 million settlement. Critics suggested that the deal would allow many other Austrian firms off the hook.

**Slave labour compensation**

The former German industrial giant IG Farben, which was split up by the wartime allies in 1953, has proposed offering some £1 million compensation to surviving slave workers, thousands having been worked to death during WWII. Protestors regard the fund as entirely inadequate.

**South Africa's Holocaust centre**

A Holocaust Centre has opened in Cape Town. Its founders have been advised by Stephen Smith who established the Beth Shalom Centre in Nottinghamshire. In the presence of Judge Richard Goldstone, formerly of the International Court of Human Rights in the Hague, Smith said that not to remember the victims would be "to commit them to a second death, that of oblivion".

**UN posting**

Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke has been appointed US Ambassador to the UN. He is the son of German-Jewish refugees and a former ambassador to Germany.

RDC

**Tracing the Kinder**

It came in a green cardboard envelope. I gingerly picked the album out of the office in-tray, slid out the heavy vinyl disc and gazed at the grooves. I knew I was looking at virtual living history: a radio programme made by the BBC in 1939 about the *Kindertransport*.

It had stayed, almost forgotten, in the BBC archive in Broadcasting House for 60 years. Now I had been commissioned to produce an hour-long programme for Radio 4, to be presented by Dr David Cesarani, Director of the Wiener Library. The brief was simple: to trace the stories of the children interviewed all those years ago. Carrying out the brief was not so simple.

I started by listening to the 1939 programme, *Children in Flight*. Producer Robert Kemp and his team had travelled to Dovercourt, a newly built holiday camp in Essex, in the bitter winter of 1938-39 to interview the children who had just arrived in the country. Only 13 minutes of the original half-hour programme had survived, but those few precious minutes told the stories of the children in their own words.

Brigitte, Henrietta, Käthe, Lothar, Marianne and Irene read from scripts about their experiences in the camp. These were simple stories, heartbreaking in their optimism and innocence. "I knew this was the only way to help my parents," said Käthe, "and I don't regret it." Most of the children never saw their parents again.

We knew the identity of one of the children already. Lothar is now Leslie Brent, a respected professor of immunology and one of the most eloquent and thoughtful of the former *kinder*. The others were more elusive. All we knew were the children's first names and their hometowns. We later discovered that the BBC had advised the children not to use their surnames on the programme in case it endangered their parents who were still under Nazi control.

There was a good lead for another name: Marianne had played piano on the 1939 programme, accompanying her brother on the violin. He turned out to be the late virtuoso, Jurgen Hess. With the help of the Kindertransport Association of America, we found Marianne - now Marion Hess - living in Seattle and still playing piano. I arranged for a colleague there to interview her.

We placed adverts in publications all

over the world looking for the remaining children, but the trail went cold. In the meantime Dr Cesarani interviewed other former *kinder* about their experiences, recreating those years of danger, hope and loss.

Less than a fortnight before recording the programme, there was a message on my answerphone. The voice was a woman's. A tentative, South African-accented voice. "My name is Gitta Rossi-Zalmos," she said. "I believe you may be looking for me." Indeed I was. Mrs Rossi-Zalmos was the girl Brigitte, recorded in 1939. By a stroke of luck she had seen a sign I had taped on a noticeboard at the huge *kindertransport* reunion in London, organised by Bertha Leverton and Bea Green.

We interviewed Mrs Rossi-Zalmos in her hotel room on the last day of her trip to England. She remembered that her parents had heard her broadcast in Germany and wrote to her to say they were proud of her. And she told us of how she honoured her mother, who had the courage to send her children out into the world alone.

For me, the experience of hearing the voices of these children, 60 years apart, was a profoundly moving one. As for Henrietta, Käthe and Irene, perhaps one day they will come forward too and tell the world their stories again.

□ Hugh Levinson

**AJR STAFF VACANCIES**

**As a consequence of internal re-organisation the following part-time (2/3 days per week) members of staff are being sought:**

**SECRETARY** Audio secretary with knowledge of MS Word & experience of working for senior executives.

**BOOKKEEPER** With sound technical experience & knowledge of Windows, Sage & Excel to record purchase, bank & nominal entries & maintain spreadsheets.

**JOURNALIST**, reporter & sub-editor for *AJR Information*. Suit graduate with good English. DTP & magazine layout experience advantageous. Some evening & weekend reporting required.

*Salaries negotiable according to experience*

**Send CV to:**

**Carol Rossen,**

**AJR | Hampstead Gate, 1a Frognal,  
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