

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

My country, wrong or wrong



Since the 1980s Britain has sent its servicemen into five areas of conflict: the Falklands, the Gulf, Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan. In each instance, the government's actions were strenuously opposed by a vociferous anti-war lobby - which is par for the course in a democracy. Nonetheless, the uncomfortable truth that in so doing the 'peaceniks' played into the hands of Messrs Galtieri, Saddam Hussein, Karadzic, Milosevic, Mullah Omar and bin Laden ought not to be swept under the carpet.

In the 1920s a book called *The Treason of the Clerks* (Clerks: those capable of writing) charged intellectuals with dereliction of their duty to society. It is a moot point whether one can charge a journalist anti-war campaigner with treasonable malice aforethought, or only with deliberate misinformation. During the action against Serbia, for instance, some journalists drew a parallel between targeted NATO air strikes on Belgrade and what the Luftwaffe had done to that city in 1940.

In the current war on terror,

government critics have been spewing out serial misinformation: 'Afghanistan, graveyard of a British army in the nineteenth century, and of a Russian one in the twentieth century, is a rock-girt no-go-area'; 'Air raids on Kabul will only solidify popular support for the Taliban'; 'If you kill one terrorist a hundred will take his place'; 'Bombing Afghanistan will turn a billion Muslims into inveterate enemies of the West'; and so forth.

All these 'self-evident truths' turned out to be fallacious. The last-mentioned one is actually a half-truth. If most UK Muslims oppose the Afghan campaign, it is due to self-induced double myopia. They do not yet realise that Allied bombing freed a nation from the Taliban yoke. Nor do they appreciate that the allegedly Islamophobic USA intervened militarily on the Muslim side in Bosnia, Kosovo and Somalia!

As for the notion of global Muslim solidarity - that is also a highly questionable concept. Leaving aside periodic unifying spasms of anti-Western (and anti-Israeli) hysteria, Islam is riven by deep fissures. Blood-encrusted fault

lines separate tribes not only in Afghanistan but also in Syria, Algeria and elsewhere. Iraq and Iran fought the longest major war since 1945, while the millennial Sunni-Shi'a rift dwarfs all other inter-Islamic conflicts.

One wonders what it is that motivates the members of the current anti-war lobby - luminaries such as the Father of the House, two former editors of national newspapers, the UK's top feminist among others - to peddle their dire predictions. Could it be that the Taliban were right in one respect, at least - when they described the West as hopelessly decadent? Has our decadence reached such a pitch that an aggrieved Chelsea Clinton feels driven to disrupt an anti-war rally of hundreds of Oxford students wilfully blind to the threat of Islamic fanaticism? Could it be that the opinion-formers who peddled the above-mentioned misinformation are so sated with the offerings of Judeo-Christian civilisation that, in a rictus of masochism, they yearn to see the shadow of the barbarian fall across the pleasure gardens of the West?

Murderers, mullahs and mukhtars

While nothing that has happened since bears comparison with the horrors of the early 1940s, bin Laden's war does stir echoes of Hitler's. The fanatical Taliban are stand-ins for the SS, the Tora Bora mountains recall the 'Alpine redoubt' and North-West Pakistan replaces South America as a bolthole for fugitive murderers. In the same way Hitler youths chanted 'Wir steigen auf zu Kampfgehwittern, der Heldentod ist unser Recht' (We ascend to storms of battle, a hero's death is our right), Taliban prisoners triggered their own liquidation at Mazar-I-Sharif. An analogy can also be drawn between the wartime silence of the Vatican and the Muslim clergy's muted condemnation of the 11 September atrocity. Finally, the same antisemitism that fired the Nazis animates al-Qua'eda - and its clones (Hamas, for instance, incorporated *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in its charter).

Critics of Israel often accuse Jewish spokesmen of tarring them with the antisemitic brush. What are we to make of Mayor Livingstone, who, as a devotee of Marx, is surely immune to Judeophobia? He notoriously described the English treatment of Ireland as a "Final Solution spun out over seven centuries". More recently Red Ken pontificated on what to do with the UK Muslims who had joined the Taliban. They should not, he counselled, be charged with treason, since they had been fired by outrage at Israeli ill-treatment of their Palestinian cousins.

Thus did the mukhtar of London delineate the obligations UK citizenship confers, while at the same time reducing the intricacies of Middle East politics to the age-old formula *Wer ist schuld? Der Jud* (The Jews are to blame for everything). Red Ken may not be a card-carrying antisemite, but he is certainly a *terrible simplificateur*.

RG

Sabbath service marks AJR's 60th anniversary

Ronald Channing

AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman, left, and Belsize Square Synagogue Chairman Steven Bruck, right, greeting Mayor of Camden Roger Robinson at the Shabbat service marking the AJR's 60th anniversary



The early winter sun shone brightly through the windows as AJR members and friends, joined by the Mayor of Camden, Councillor Roger Robinson, celebrated the Association's 60th anniversary year at a specially arranged AJR Shabbat. The Mayor's presence gave public recognition to the refugee community's enhancement of the life and cultural activity of the borough for more than half a century. The service was hosted by Belsize Square Synagogue which, since its foundation, has been associated with the German Jewish refugee community which settled in London's Swiss Cottage and Hampstead areas prior to the outbreak of the Second World War.

As he is of the Jewish faith, Cllr Robinson was given the honour of being called up to a reading of the Torah, as were AJR founders Ludwig Spiro and Theo Marx, members Rolf Weinberg and Max Abraham, and AJR's community affairs head Ronald Channing who, with the synagogue's administrator Henny Levin, organised the service. Five grandchildren of refugees sang the *Anim Zmirot* prayers as a symbol of continuity. The service was delightfully accompanied throughout by the synagogue choir.

In his address Rabbi Rodney Mariner, who conducted the service with Cantor Rev Lawrence Fine, recalled the unfortunate circumstances under which most of those who filled the synagogue had arrived in this country, and commended them for having contributed both to the military struggle against Nazi Germany and to the commercial and cultural life of their adopted country.

At the *Kiddush* provided by the AJR, synagogue Chairman Steven Bruck welcomed the Mayor and offered his congratulations to the AJR. In response, Cllr Robinson recognised the contribution of the borough's Jewish refugee community and referred to the significance of Holocaust memorialisation. AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman responded on behalf of the Association, thanking Rabbi Mariner for having hosted this memorable service which, he pointed out, was being held on the anniversary of Kristallnacht, the event which most determined many German Jews to attempt emigration.

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Bradford: verdict on multiculturalism

Richard Grunberger

Throughout the nineteenth century the industrial north attracted immigrants - Irish, Germans, Jews - to this country. The absorption of these newcomers was often beset with difficulties. In *North and South* Mrs Gaskell describes the tension between Irish immigrants and striking Lancashire textile workers; over half a century later Louis Golding depicted the invisible iron curtain separating Jews and Gentiles living on opposite sides of *Magnolia Street*.

Notwithstanding all this, our northern cities were a melting pot. Liverpool, city of the 'Mersey Beat', is inconceivable without its Irish ingredient, while Manchester's Hallé Orchestra immortalises its German founder and Jews created Montague Burton, Marks and Spencer and ICI.

The main tide of post-Second World War immigration into the area has been from the Indian subcontinent, with Pakistanis (of whom there are 75,000 in Bradford) much to the fore. Their absorption into British society leaves a lot to be desired. The responsibility for this unsatisfactory state of affairs rests partly with the Muslim establishment and partly with its British counterpart. By the latter we do not mean that the powers-that-be in the UK suffer from post-imperial withdrawal symptoms. The very opposite applies. Out of retroactive shame at the misdeeds of the Raj - the Irish famine, the Amritsar massacre - the educational establishment has thrown the baby out with the bathwater. Ultra-liberal windbags have laid down a smokescreen of multiculturalism in which all cultures - including the Judeo-Christian, Muslim and Hindu ones - are accorded equal value.

On the surface, this attitude appears wonderfully colour-blind and anticolonialist - but in reality it is based on a profound fallacy. A religious culture which pigeonholes individuals from birth as high-caste, low-caste or 'untouchable' conflicts with the democratic principles of British public

life. The same applies to a faith-based culture that sanctions polygamy, arranged marriages, female circumcision and the subjugation of women in general. By denying that 'British is best' - an ever-so-liberal 'admission' - the multiculturalists are in effect signalling that, for instance, Ali Jinnah, the autocratic 'father' of Pakistan, deserves as much respect as Winston Churchill, and that Shari'a law (with its Stone Age punishments) is equal to Westminster statutes.

If self-deluded multiculturalism is one part of the problem, Muslim isolationism is the other part. In Islam, the woman's sphere is exclusively the home, and therefore many UK-resident Muslim women cannot speak English. The young are pressured into marriages with partners from Pakistan, which further weakens their links to this country. The Western way of life is presented to the faithful in mosques and to pupils in Muslim schools not as desirably democratic but as repulsively decadent due to alcohol and drug addiction, family breakdown, prostitution and crime.

Well might one ask: if Britain is so steeped in degeneracy, why live here at all? Ultra-liberal leaders may jibe at this and counter-quote the Mosleyite cry 'Go back to Palestine!' But the UN-approved return of the Jews to Palestine is something else that sticks in the UK Muslims' craw as much as Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* did a decade ago (remember the Bradford book-burners?). The Muslim Society of Great Britain has dubbed Israel - which contains a million enfranchised Muslim citizens - racist, and has instigated a boycott of Israeli goods. Now they are crying wolf in the face of nonexistent Islamophobia.

But the boot seems to be on the other foot entirely. The recent massacre of Christians in Pakistan has not prompted attacks on UK mosques, but a Muslim attack on a Catholic church in Bradford. Moderate Muslims and self-deluded liberals - wake up!

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An earlier refugee community

Ronald Channing



PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

Kenneth Rubins, left, Jewish Museum Chairman, joins Rabbi Abraham Levy in launching the exhibition on England's Sephardi community.

Three hundred years ago the magnificent synagogue of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish community, with its hard wooden benches and massive brass candelabras, was consecrated at Bevis Marks in the City of London, the finest prayer-house and community centre of a Jewish community readmitted into England by Oliver Cromwell. By the 1690s London's Sephardi Jewish community had prospered sufficiently to commission the building of a new synagogue, modelled on the synagogue in Amsterdam, which was opened in 1701 and remains the oldest surviving synagogue in continuous use in Britain.

In celebration of this anniversary, the Jewish Museum, Camden, is presenting an exhibition on the colourful story of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish community in England, provocatively entitled *Gentlemen, Scholars and Scoundrels*. Presumed to be among the former are Sir Moses Montefiore and Benjamin Disraeli, both at one time congregants of Bevis Marks. Surely not among the latter is the still-admired prize-fighter Daniel Mendoza. The

exhibition also tells a broader story of less illustrious folk, and displays beautiful textiles and rare prints.

The exhibition was opened by one of today's media personalities, Gaby Roslin, whose family have a long association with Lauderdale Road Synagogue, in the presence of the

Sephardi community's spiritual leader, Rabbi Abraham Levy, and Kenneth Rubins, Chairman of the Jewish Museum.

A full programme of events for both adults and children will take place from now until April. Further details and opening times may be obtained from The Jewish Museum, Raymond Burton House, 129-131 Albert Street, Camden Town, London NW1 7NB Tel 020 7284 1997.

'Britain and the Holocaust' Memorial Day 2002

Ronald Channing

Manchester will provide the main national focus with an event commemorating Britain's second Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

Mark of respect

Holocaust Memorial Day is intended to provide a national mark of respect for all victims of Nazi persecution, to ensure that the crimes against humanity committed during the Holocaust are never forgotten and that the Holocaust's relevance for each new generation is understood. Last year, when a national event was held in London, the AJR sponsored a one-day educational programme based on film and memory at the University of Sussex, and a memorial concert at Imperial College.

At a preparatory meeting for representatives of local bodies in Manchester town hall, Home Office Minister Keith Bradley announced plans for this year on the theme 'Britain and the Holocaust'. New educational materials were published and a local activities pack, which drew on the first year's experience, was introduced. Once again, commemorative services and events will be held throughout the country.

Britain against Nazism

Thousands of Jews found refuge in Britain during the 1930s and several hundred survivors of the death camps came to Britain after the war. Most refugees and survivors became British citizens and raised their families in this country. Many ordinary British people helped the refugees and some were subsequently recognised as Righteous Gentiles for saving Jews from danger. Britain fought Nazi Germany for six years and British soldiers helped to rescue the remnant of European Jewry. British troops liberated Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and saved tens of thousands of lives.

David Arnold, Chairman of Manchester Jewish Representative Council, and Martin Pagel, Deputy Leader of Manchester City Council, were among those who signed a declaration of commitment. Werner Lachs, Chairman of Manchester AJR, represented AJR members in the north of England.

Former refugees and survivors in the north can obtain further details from AJR's Northern Region Co-ordinator Susanne Green on 0151 291 5734.

Susi Bechhöfer: lost identity

Ronald Channing



PHOTO: RONALD CHANNING

Susi Bechhöfer pondering her experiences as a young Kindertransportee with Bertha Leverton and other Kinder at a KT-AJR lunch meeting.

At just three years of age, Susi Bechhöfer and her twin sister Lotte were sent to Britain on the Kindertransport from the Jewish children's home in Munich, where their unmarried mother lived. Soon after their arrival at Liverpool Street Station in May 1939, they were packed off to the home of a childless Baptist minister and his wife in North Wales and contact with their Jewish origins was lost for the next half-century. The twins were provided with a new Christian identity: Susi became Grace and Lotte became Eunice. They were still known as 'the German girls' and may have retained traces of a continental accent.

Rediscovery

At a well attended KT-AJR lunch meeting, Susi Bechhöfer spoke of her journey of rediscovery. "I am one of you," she began, keen to compare her

experiences with those of other Kinder. She had always felt a "deep void" within her, not knowing who she really was. As time passed, her memory faded and the twins' origins were never discussed. However, when registering for GCE examinations at the age of 16, she was told her real name for the first time, and became determined to hold on to it.

Susi-Grace trained as a nurse, married and had a son, but it was not until the mid-1980s, when the media were taking an interest in the Kindertransport, that she began her research. In 1988 she heard Bertha Leverton on BBC Radio's *Woman's Hour* and wrote to her in the belief that she was one of the Kinder. Bertha Leverton used all her contacts to try to establish Susi's family ties and eventually a broadcast on Kol Israel radio led to the discovery of orthodox cousins in New York. The cousins knew of 'the twins' and had to tell her that her mother Rosa had died in Auschwitz. An article in the *Jewish Chronicle*, a BBC film, and a visit to New York on the 60th anniversary of her arrival in Britain followed. In 1996 a book co-authored with Jeremy Josephs related her experiences.

Liberation

The death of her foster parents last year (their treatment of the twins had left much to be desired), Susi confessed, had proved liberating. Guided by Bertha and the members of her family in New York, Susi was re-introduced to the traditions and practices of Jewish life and religion - but she continues to play the organ at the local church.

Jewish life in Leipzig

Hanna Tomkins

In 1933 Leipzig had Germany's sixth-largest Jewish community. Now the Jews' contribution to the economic, cultural and social development of Leipzig has been largely forgotten. In particular, the younger generation is unaware of the city's Jewish history, but there is a significant and growing interest in this subject.

The Leipzig City Museum, which is keen to present the Jewish contribution as an integral part of the city's history, is in the process of establishing a collection illustrating Jewish life in Leipzig and is currently seeking documentation and information. In particular, the museum asks Kindertransportees from Leipzig to contact Dr Volker Rodecamp (Director) or Dr Andrea Lorz, Stadtgeschichtliches Museum Leipzig, Altes Rathaus, Markt 1, D-04109 Leipzig tel 0341 965130 fax 0341 9651352 email Stadtmuseum.Leipzig@t-online.de.

Birthday Celebration



Max Abraham celebrating his 88th birthday during AJR's holiday in Bournemouth. Max was a teacher at the ORT School in Berlin which was transferred to Leeds with most of its students, teachers and equipment before the Second World War.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

PURIFICATION BY FIRE

Sir - Your November editorial, written so one-sidedly as to border on the perverse, left me intensely depressed. Must it always be 'my country right or wrong' when it comes to Israel? After all, it isn't strictly speaking even *your* country, for you, like the rest of us, have evidently chosen *not* to make it yours. Your apparent inability to comprehend another side to the conflict in the Middle East and your (and the Jewish community's) unwillingness to criticise evil deeds committed by 'one's own side' have, for me, extremely discomfiting echoes from the past. Nor could I find comfort in the report of the rally in central London. In condemning 'the campaign of terror' the Chief Rabbi has once again missed an opportunity to call for restraint by Israel. Whether you like it or not, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict *is* a factor in the deplorable events of 11 September, which even the Bush administration and our own government are beginning to acknowledge.

*L Baruch Brent, Emeritus Professor
London N19*

Sir - It is sad that you criticise Islam as 'a faith constitutionally incapable of adapting to modernity' and 'inimical to all progress' at a time when Muslims and their mosques are under attack in this country. As Jews, we ought to express our sympathy, instead of finding fault with their religion. It would be more appropriate if you attacked our fundamentalist co-religionists in Israel who seem to be incapable of adapting to modernity. They hold the balance in the Knesset and wield tremendous influence in every government, left or right. They have to a large extent contributed to the stalemate in the Middle East peace process.

*Peter Prager
Ilford*

Sir - Peter Prager (November issue) is deluding himself if he believes that in 1993 Arafat made a 'historic compromise' by giving up his claim to 78 per cent of the former Mandate. A few hours after signing the Declaration of Principles in Washington on 13 September of that year, he addressed 'his people' on Jordan TV and reminded them of the 1974 'phased plan' for the destruction of Israel in stages. The speech was recorded by BBC Monitoring, but otherwise ignored. When Arafat turned down the Labour leader's more than generous offer, and instead started the second intifada, operating the 'revolving door' practice for Hamas terrorists, he only confirmed his intention announced in 1993.

*R Willers
Wembley Park*

Sir - The November editorial is another of your often brilliant articles. It is thoughtful and wide-ranging. Such articles make taking the *AJR Journal* a must.

*Eva Trent
London N6*

Sir - In early November 1938 Hershel Grynspan, a Jewish teenager from Poland whose parents had been deported by the Nazis, gunned down the German diplomat vom Rath in Paris, whereupon the Nazis unleashed the Kristallnacht pogrom. Hundreds were tortured and killed in 'rightful revenge' for the Jewish boy's assassination of vom Rath. In October 2001 a Palestinian terrorist killed the Israeli tourist minister Rehavam Ze'evi, a racist who called all Palestinians 'vermin' - just as the Nazis called all of us. In 'revenge', Israeli tanks entered Palestinian areas, killing civilians and flattening their homes. So far, over 40 Palestinians have been killed. At the risk of being called a 'self-hating Jewess' I am asking: am I the only one

to see some similarities here?

*Inge Trott
Cheam, Surrey*

GOD BASH AMERICA

Sir - Your editorial is far too good and pertinent to be restricted to AJR readers. It should be published in the letters column of one of the national newspapers. If you are reluctant or too busy, I would be glad to make the necessary arrangements.

*Erwin Brecher
London NW8*

Sir - The reaction to 11 September reveals the moral confusion of many opinion-formers. For Martin Amis, 'Terror is political communication by other means.' An editorial in *The Statesman* declares: 'The victims of the World Trade Centre had less of a right to live than an Arab because they failed to vote for Ralph Nader', thus emulating those who defended Stalin's crimes. Motivated by an anti-Americanism almost as deep-seated as that of the terrorists, they perform intellectual gymnastics in defence of the indefensible.

*Jussi Brainin
Oxfordshire*

LET'S HEAR IT FOR UNCLE JOE!

Sir - Further to your editorial on Trotsky (September issue), I do not have to remind readers of this journal what would have happened to us had Russia been defeated. It was Stalin's unwavering policy of rearmament, despite all requests for consumer products, that was responsible for Hitler's rout and the continuation of Jewish life in Europe.

*AW Freud
Oxted*

CONVERGENCE?

Sir - Am I the only reader who has noticed the common trait of received tradition between Islam and Judaism as a requirement for collaboration of sources? Professor Firestone (November issue) notes the following: 'Sawda [Tirmidhi's grandfather] reported that he heard from Abdullah, who received from Rishdin b. Sa'd, who

in turn learned from amr b. al-Harith, from Darraj, from Abul-Haytham, from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, who received it from the Apostle of God [Muhammad]. In the *Ethics of the Fathers* we note a similar pattern: 'Moses received the Torah on Sinai ... handed it to Joshua ... Joshua to the elders ... the elders to the prophets ... the prophets to the men of the Great Synagogue ... the men of the Great Synagogue to Simon the Just ... then to Antigonus of Socho.' Maybe in this strange world it would be constructive to identify further areas of similarity between Islam and Judaism.

Arthur Oppenheimer
Hove

WITNESS TESTIMONY

Sir - When I knew that I would be teaching a course on Great Britain and the Holocaust to a group of American students from Mid-West, I wanted to ensure direct contact with individuals whose testimonials would reveal the story of what happened between 1933 and 1945. On arrival, I contacted the AJR, and David Jedwab supplied me with texts and films and arranged our luncheon with the Kinder. My students, none of whom are Jewish and for whom the story of the Holocaust is clouded by a confusion of fact and fiction, were excited by this prospect. When we arrived, the Kinder immediately disarmed the hesitancy of many of the students, proving that warmth and conversation can overcome wariness. The latter have hailed this as one of the most rewarding experiences of their time here.

Prof David Frolick
Illinois

SPEAK, MEMORY!

Sir - Can any reader help me complete or correct a rhyme which goes 'Urahne, Grossmutter, Mutter und Kind/ Alle im (in?) ... zusammen (versammelt?) sind.' What are the missing words? Does it go on? We have often made interesting connections arising out of the *AJR Journal* correspondence columns. Of course, we enjoy reading it for many other reasons as well!

Dorothy Fleming
Sheffield

Secure future for Eleanor Rathbone House residents

Tenants of Eleanor Rathbone House in Highgate, London, which provides sheltered accommodation for members of the Jewish refugee community, are to be re-housed in alternative accommodation over the next two years. The decision was announced at a meeting with the tenants by Sara Clarke, Chief Executive of Bnai Brith JBG Housing Association, which manages the property, after consultation with the AJR and Otto Schiff Housing Association (OSHA).

The main reasons for running down the occupation of Eleanor Rathbone House were the relative unpopularity of the house's studio flats (several of which were vacant), its location off bus routes and away from train stations, and the one million pounds which would be needed to refurbish the building and bring its accommodation up to current standards.

Each of the tenants would be invited individually to a meeting with staff from the AJR and Bnai Brith to establish their particular requirements and to offer help with the practical aspects of any contemplated move. Tenants were assured that suitable accommodation would be found within the Jewish community; it was anticipated that many of them would find new homes in other Bnai Brith JBG sheltered accommodation. "We appreciate that Eleanor Rathbone House is 'home' to our tenants", said Sara Clarke, "and we will do everything that we can to reassure and to support them."

Eleanor Rathbone House is jointly owned by OSHA and the AJR, who work in partnership with Jewish Care. The day-to-day management of the block was taken over by the Bnai Brith JBG Housing Association in June last year.

RDC

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ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

Exposed: The Victorian Nude at Tate Britain seems a contradiction in terms. The Victorians exposed nothing except their innate desire to conceal. This is what makes so much of their work voyeuristic and titillating. Revelation and prudery compete for attention.

Yet to many, this period saw an unprecedented dawning of innovative art. There is a hidden agenda of sexual violence, bondage and slavery, such as **Normand's** narrative painting featuring a proud black female slave and two cowering white girls. There is **Leighton's** ardent mermaid, based on Goethe's poem *Der Fischer*, in which she entraps her prey, or **Burne-Jones's Phyllis and Demophoon**, where Phyllis emerges from a tree to reclaim her rejecting lover. Much of Victorian mythology evokes an almost body-fascist art in which glacial perfection framed by billowing hair is valued at the expense of any human qualities. An exception is **George Frederick Watts's** painting of *Love*, being led up the craggy path of human experience by an angel, and a most famous



Love Locked Out by Anna Lea Merritt.
By kind permission of the Tate

painting of its time, *Love Locked Out* by **Anna Lea Merritt**, once vilified as an example of child pornography, has a tragic derivation. The small boy depicted outside the door represents the love which vanished when the artist's husband of only one year died. The door is the coffin, and scattered autumn leaves suggest the scattering of happiness.

Singer Sargent's Reclining Male Nude is more impressionist, and there are a few works by the Jewish artist **Simeon Solomon** implying both the fragility and androgyny of his male subjects. Most affecting is his line drawing **Bride, Bridegroom and Sad Love** in which the young spouse caresses both his bride and, more secretly, the young boy. By the turn of the century, artistic conventions became more fluid and naturalistic. **Theodore Rousset's The Reading Girl** suggests the subject's intellectual life, in contrast to the anodyne beauties of the previous era.

The **Ben Uri Gallery** joins the **Friends of the Hebrew University** in presenting the **Jewish Artists of the Year Awards** at Islington's **Candid Gallery**. Overall winner is **Nelly Agassi** for *Unstitching the Light*. **Heather Libson** won the Painting and Drawing Award, **Nelly Agassi** the New Media and Installations Award, **Anna Pinchas** the Sculpture and 3D Award. In the 17-22 section, **David Huglin** was the winner of the Painting and Drawing section, **Susie Darvish** in the Sculpture and 3D section and **Eitan Buchalter** in the New Media and Installations section.

I felt that one of the most outstanding exhibits was **Jonathan Green's Black Dog**, a series of animals he has created in welded steel. Leading stained glass specialist **Ruth Taylor Jacobson's The Wicked Haman** is a fiery contrast of reds and oranges. Other paintings include Jewish themes of exile like **Edori Fertig's Memory Train**, and Jewish shopaholics will be amused by **Leon Kuhn's Market Madness**, which depicts a surge of humanity rushing towards their merchandise like crazed insects. I rather liked **Elka Braun's** appealing depiction of a Chassidic boy's first day at school. In the 17-22 age group, **Georgina Sidley's In the Garden** is a figurative contrast of reflective characters, very reminiscent of Stanley Spencer.

RG's INTERFACE

Two literary 'Young' Turks

Berlin. The 54-year-old writer Rafael Seligmann has observed, and participated in, a noteworthy literary development. His thesis is that postwar German Jewish writers suppressed their feelings of rage and hatred against Germany so as not to alienate a readership who wanted nothing to disturb the surface post-Holocaust harmony in German-Jewish relations. At the same time, the Jewish minority domiciled in Germany basked in the reassurance derived from the philosemitic writings of such luminaries as Günther Grass and Heinrich Böll. Seligmann tried to destroy this falsely idyllic picture with his *Der Musterjude* (The Model Jew) in 1983, but found no publisher willing to print this work - while Jewish community leaders accused him of *Nestbeschmutzung* (soiling his own nest). He resorted to self-publishing, but the book sank without trace. However, three years later Jurek Becker, the internationally renowned author of *Jacob the Liar*, brought out the novel *Bronsteins Kinder*, which spoke of the rage of young German Jews against neighbours who had been complicit in Nazi crimes. In Seligmann's view, Becker's book broke a taboo and for the last 15 years Jews have appeared in German fiction that are not clones of Nathan the Wise, but flesh-and-blood human beings filled with rage against neighbours whose past would not bear examination.

Vienna. Two years ago the then 45-year-old essayist Robert Menasse achieved a measure of prominence outside Austria as leader of the protest against the inclusion of Haider in the government. Menasse claims descent from the Dutch rabbi Menasseh-ben-Israel whose negotiations with Oliver Cromwell in 1656 secured the readmission of the Jews to England. He has just published *Die Vertreibung aus der Hölle* (Expulsion from Hell), which features his illustrious ancestor as one of the protagonists. Interestingly, Menasse views the Catholic conservative Chancellor Schüssel, whom he dubs 'heir to the traditions of Lueger and Dollfuss', as a greater threat to Austrian democracy than Jörg Haider.

Contentious scholarship

DIVIDED JERUSALEM

Bernard Wasserstein

Profile Books, 2001

Can scholarship be used to further a contentious presupposition? This question comes to mind when assessing Bernard Wasserstein's *Divided Jerusalem*. The product of two decades of research, the book was completed in the early months of the 'al-Aqsa intifada' and came out in the heat of the fray. Topical though the title and underlying hypothesis may be, the essence of the book is best encapsulated in the subtitle 'The Struggle for the Holy City'.

This is an exhaustively documented, highly informative record of the millennial struggle for Jerusalem. Early on, the spotlight is thrown on the interminable feuds between various Christian churches and the consuls from the various powers that backed them. The struggle for Jerusalem and the holy places served as a pretext for the Crimean war, a dramatic example of the politicisation of a seemingly religious conflict. This politicisation was as manifest in Islam as in Christianity, but Wasserstein deals with this more sparingly.

The struggle between Muslims and Jews occupies the major part of the book. Wasserstein waxes eloquent over Muslim claims to the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount, claims which extend even to the Western Wall, referred to as al-Buraq, after Mohamed's horse, which was apparently tethered to the wall. His attitude to Jewish sensibilities appears, at best, ambivalent. He is clearly riled by the declaration, first made after Israel's takeover of the holy city during the 1967 war, that Jerusalem was Israel's 'eternal indivisible capital' and has used his scholarship and skills as an observer to undermine this claim. In defence of his argument he has

REVIEWS

commandeered a variety of maps, demographic statistics and results of soundings taken among both Israelis and Palestinians.

Much attention, previously, was devoted to the infructuous negotiations between Jordan's King Abdullah and the Israelis after 1948, the one time a divided Jerusalem acceptable to both sides seemed a real possibility. While the claim of a united Jerusalem may well be unrealistic, it was surely provoked by the trauma of the destruction of the Jewish quarter of the old city in 1948 and the denial to Israelis of access to the Western Wall between 1948 and 1967. Wasserstein acknowledges these matters with extreme brevity.

He also omits to mention the help given to the British by Jews in the NILY grouping during the Great War, before the Mandate. In contrast, his 'even-handedness' extends to the bald statement, in his final chapter, that 'both Israel and Palestine are seriously flawed democracies'. Without wishing to take anything away from Wasserstein's undoubted achievement, he appears more interested in promoting his agenda than providing a comprehensive appraisal.

Emma Klein

A Jewish Eisteddfod

PASSIONATE RENEWAL - JEWISH POETRY IN BRITAIN SINCE 1945

Peter Lawson (ed.), *Five Leaves Publications*, 2001, £14.99

Having previously crossed swords with Professor Gombrich, who denied a specific Jewish input into Austrian culture, I naturally welcome a book whose very title bespeaks an identifiable Jewish strand within English literature. My pleasure at

being vindicated is, however, as nothing to my delight at the riches on offer in this anthology.

To start with though, I was somewhat disappointed by the absence of any poetic evocation of the pre-war East End which I got to know on arriving in London. To me, its essence is summed up in the dimly remembered opening lines of a 1930s poem: 'Where I was born/In Stepney Green/They work all day on a sewing-machine/Live on tuppence/Marry on less/And bring up their children on watercress. Where I was born on Stepney Green/Some have heard of Lenin, but none of Racine...'

However, now that Golders Green constitutes the warmly glowing core of planet Anglo-Jewry, it also plays a central role in the Jewish poetic imagination. In Dannie Abse's *Street Scene* a husband standing outside a grocer's shop in Golders Green Road bombards his wife with talmudic quotations and she retaliates by hurling carrots at his beard. Jonathan Treitel's *The Golem of Golders Green* has Rabbi Yehuda Loew's mud-formed creation saunter through Golders Hill Park admiring "the brilliance of daffodils and the impertinence of snow drops", after which he "drops into Grodzinski's for a kilo of Israeli couscous in a cellophane bag."

Such tropes are part of the vocabulary of what literary critics call "magic realism". However, at times the poetic imagination is capable of shedding the constraints of reality altogether and soaring away into an alternative universe magicked in Chagall's paintings. George Szirtes's *The Green Mare's Advice to the Cows* insouciantly states that "Cows will run the government/Cows have a delightful scent/Cows produce their Testament. You watch the carnival proceed/Down muddy streets the cows will lead/The moujiks home while altars bleed."

Bernard Kops conjures up a

similarly logic-defying picture in the poem *Shalom Bomb*, whose very title is self-contradictory. Kops, a deliberately naïve poet of celebration, has broad humour ("Nietzsche said God is dead. I'm not feeling too well myself") but is trumped in his comic endeavours by a female colleague, Joanne Limburg. Her deceptively light-hearted *The Nose in My Face* will prompt a simultaneously amused and uncomfortable *frisson* of recognition: "What was it about my nose? Did it/Have a pushy way of forcing/itself into a room ... Did it mark/its owner as a fleshy, suburban/princess condemned to a life of shopping/and eating and smothering sons?"

This way of internalising antisemitic stereotypes is raised to a memorable level in *To TS Eliot* - a poem East End-born Emanuel Litvinoff read out in the presence of the Anglo-Catholic Panjandrum of English poesy himself: "I am not one accepted in your parish/Bleistein is my relative and I share/the protozoic slime of Shylock, a page/in Der Stürmer."

The perceived protozoic sliminess of the Jews was part of the genocidal Nazi mindset - and it is not surprising that a third of the poets in this anthology were 'collateral' victims of Nazism. The most famous German-born English poet is Michael Hamburger, whose *At Staufen* includes the lapidary quatrain "Desert is our history/Termites with their pincers/Write it/On sand", which long echoes in the mind.

Like Hamburger, Lotte Kramer, Gerda Mayer and the late Karen Gershon were child refugees. Kramer creates memorable metaphors, as in *At Dover Harbour*: "Beyond this rough sleeve of water/there lies the heart's island." (The "heart's island" is a beautiful epithet for Britain; at a more prosaic level, I wonder if the "sleeve of water" is a transliteration of *Ärmelkanal*.)

Looking at this hugely varied,

treasure-filled volume as a whole, I feel I must award the palm to Gerda Mayer, consummate practitioner of the tough-tender response to our shared nightmare experience. Her *Carve Me Up When I Die* has this heart-wrenching stanza: "Bury my tongue and my ears/well away from each other/so that my ears/need not be afflicted/by the tale of my life/told over by my tongue." The poem ends: "As for the rest of me/let the sea have it/Let it enjoy the sea/Except for my feet/Send them back into childhood/Bury them in the garden there."

Richard Grunberger

THE TIMEKEEPERS

Dan Clancy

The Old Red Lion

What attracts people to set their plays and films in Nazi concentration camps when they themselves have never been in one? I can only guess that it is the fascination of witnessing life on a knife's edge. Dan Clancy is Irish, and *The Timekeepers* is more concerned with the position of homosexuals in contemporary society than with life in the camps but, to illustrate the hypocrisy of discrimination, he chose to set his play in Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

Hershfeld, the 'best horologist in Berlin', is engaged in repairing the watches of Jews killed in Auschwitz. Hans, a young and attractive homosexual, pretends that he too is an expert watchmaker in order to escape work in a cement factory - where he would last only a few months - but his plan depends on Hershfeld's teaching him the trade. In return for the horologist's co-operation, Hans arranges for his homosexual *Kapo* friend to find out where the Jew's family is kept. When Hershfeld, who has to sell his skills to stay alive, evinces contempt for Hans, who sells his body, Hans reminds him that there is no fundamental difference between the two sales. The plot is built on equating Jew with

homosexual, because both are imprisoned by the Nazis.

Although Clancy records Hans's initial antisemitism and Hershfeld's homophobia, he also traces, with humour and compassion, the growing sympathy between the two men. The play is, however, vitiated by the identification of Jew with homosexual. A homosexual, knowing Nazi laws, could abstain and be left unmolested, but the Jew who abstained from attending synagogue was still deported to Auschwitz. Homosexuals were indeed imprisoned in camps, but they were, after all, Aryan Germans and held important posts such as those of *Kapo*, *Blockältester*, *Vorarbeiter*, *Schreiber* and cook, that ensured decent clothing, leather boots that fitted, and sufficient food, while Jews rarely held privileged jobs: they were in camps to be worked to death.

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PROFILE

Ronald Channing

Henny Rednall



Music has always played a large part in Henriette Helene - always called Henny - Spier's life, not least because she was the daughter of the *Chasan* in the village of Abterode; perhaps her mother's insistence on playing the piano in her parents' house in Kassel almost immediately before Henny's birth in 1925, has had a lasting and joyful influence.

Henny and her younger sister Bernie enjoyed a happy childhood within a friendly village and as part of a well integrated and close Jewish community in which their father was well respected both as *Chasan*, usually deputising for the non-resident rabbi, and as the teacher at the local Jewish school which the girls attended. (Henny is still grateful for being taught all the capitals of the world to do her crossword puzzles.) Her mother worked tirelessly for the welfare of everyone and was a much-loved figure.

A Nazi government edict brought about the closure of the school in 1935. Henny retains clear memories of the melted glass windows of the synagogue in Hildesheim, the morning after Kristallnacht, where they attended school and where their father taught. The girls' mother having tragically died earlier in 1938, it did not take their father long to realise that there was no future for his daughters in Germany and, through contacts in Berlin, he enrolled them on the Kindertransport. So Henny and her sister left Germany on 5 January 1939 and embarked for Britain, where they were first accommodated at Dovercourt camp near Harwich. Most of her family perished in the Holocaust. Her father was sent to the Warsaw Ghetto and in July 1943 was last heard of in Treblinka.

Selsea camp was followed by a spell in a magnificent manor house in Tunbridge Wells and then work, looking after the disabled husband of a Jewish couple from Riga in Chester. At little more than 15 years of age, Henny was eventually sent as housekeeper to a Christian family in Birmingham where

her diligence was much more appreciated. On reaching the age of adulthood at 21, however, Henny turned to Ruth Simmons of Birmingham's Jewish refugee committee and was placed in a hostel with other working refugees. Independent for the first time in her life, she recalled that the experience was "quite wonderful" and took on the job of housekeeper to the Lewis's, a German Jewish refugee family who brought Henny into their family fold. Their daughter Inge contacts her regularly to this day.

As she was by now a very personable and capable young woman, proposals of marriage came a-plenty but, unbeknown to her, Peter, the young son of neighbours, had been swept off his feet and had determined to marry her - though he did not then reveal his intent. First he had to defeat the Germans and so he joined up just before his 18th birthday to serve in the army. When, after the war, he learned that Henny and her sister were to continue their broken journey to distant cousins in New York, Peter proposed. They were married in 1950 and shared a close and

loving relationship, having a son and a daughter.

After years of study, Peter set up practice as a chartered surveyor and Henny went to work with her husband. She continued to work in an estate agency when Peter joined British Rail as a senior surveyor in 1972, even opening her own branch office in Sutton Coldfield in 1977, collecting rents, assisting in surveys and selling houses - the ones she liked anyway.

In 1981 Henny 'retired' to look after her elderly mother-in-law and, when Peter joined her on his retirement in 1994, together they took on the local meals-on-wheels service, then opened a trolley shop at the local hospital, the hospital, incidently, that had successfully treated Henny for a life-threatening illness. Unfortunately, Peter passed away three years later. Henny still spends a most rewarding two days a week arranging flowers in four of the hospital's wards and, no doubt, bringing comforting words and good cheer to all the patients.

When she takes the bus, or wherever else she goes for that matter, Henny is soon engaged in conversation. Her warm and open personality shines through as she has a genuine interest in others and believes her own turbulent adolescence hardly worth mentioning. Having found the AJR group in Birmingham, she was delighted to attend meetings with Peter. Now she is a most energetic and conscientious chairman of AJR's highly successful West Midlands Group, and also makes the trip to London most months to enjoy the special Kindertransport lunches at the AJR Day Centre in West Hampstead and to listen to an interesting guest speaker.

Getting on with everyone is her forté, but, when they enquire where she comes from Henny first replies "Erdington", then feels impelled to go on to tell them with justifiable pride that she was a German-Jewish refugee: "I am more than grateful to Britain for making me so at home."

INSIDE the AJR

Newcastle AJR's first meeting

Michael Newman of the Central Office for Holocaust Claims gave the new group a fascinating talk. He explained that each of the claim categories could be taken further, and, if details were submitted, his office was best suited to follow these up. It was very interesting to listen to the various claims with which individuals had been trying to deal on their own. The speaker dealt with each of these in turn and gave a clear and informative account of the up-to-date position. Although details varied enormously, it was enlightening to realise that problems were often similar.

Walter Knoblauch

Edinburgh takes a taste of the past

'A Taste of the Past' was the theme of the meeting held at the home of Françoise and Graham Robertson. Sixteen people arrived with mouth-watering 'dishes of nostalgia' and each guest gave a résumé of their particular contribution, its country of origin, ingredients and the story behind their choice. An animated discussion followed: one dish having been identified as a German recipe, someone else could remember as having come from Poland or Czechoslovakia, albeit in a slightly different form. Every dish passed with flying colours and was greatly enjoyed.

Judy Gilbert

South London: Leitz family history

The Leitz family, who owned one of Germany's largest companies manufacturing the Leica camera, microscopes, and medical and photographic equipment, were the subject of a most interesting talk by Rabbi Frank Dabba Smith. Following Hitler's accession to power, they trained Jewish workers and then employed them in their factories in the USA. Later they also helped Ukrainians and other slave workers. After his talk Rabbi Dabba Smith showed a

number of photographs of various communities during the war.

Anne Poloway

Next meeting: Thursday 10 January.
Speaker: Lord Moser (See ad below)

North London: England's Jewry

Speaking on the subject of 'The Jews of England', Susannah Alexander of the imposing Jewish Museum, which is situated in the Camden Town area of London, gave members of this recently formed group an interesting overview of the history of the settlement of Jewish communities in this country.

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: Thursday 31 January.
Speaker: Richard Grunberger, 'How the Issue of "Dual Allegiance" Affected Jews in the Past and Muslims Today'

Pinner: Looted art

In her talk 'Looted Art - Truth or Travesty', Eva Kurtz presented an intriguing insight into the unending complications her researches entailed. Despite a number of unhelpful governments, some art treasure had been restored to its rightful owners. Eva, of Czech and German origin, studied at Oxford and practised law before attempting to determine the rightful owners of works of art, now hanging in private collections or museums, which were taken by the Nazis, often confiscated from Jews or sold to Hitler by cash-strapped aristocrats, during the Second World War.

Walter Weg

Next meeting: Thursday 3 January
Bill Smith shows his stunning slides of Greenland (postponed from September)

Brighton and Hove Sarid: Racism in the area

Aubrey Milstein, a member of the Brighton and Hove Representative Council and chairman of the Interfaith Contact Group, spoke to the group on the incidence of racism in the area and on the representative groups which were working to combat it. Among them were the Racism Harassment Council and the Racial Equality Service. He recalled his

youth in London's East End, his activities in the Jewish underground in Palestine and in Israel's War of Independence, and experience of racism in London after the war.

Rudi Simmonds

Next meeting: Monday 21 January.
Speaker: Professor T. Scarlett Epstein

Surrey

Next meeting: Wednesday 30 January.
Social get-together in Dorking postponed from November

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YOUR CHANCE TO HEAR LORD MOSER

Lord (Claus) Moser, one of the most respected and best known members of the German-Jewish refugee community, has accepted our invitation to speak to

South London AJR
on

'Being a Jewish Refugee'

South London Liberal Synagogue,
Prentis Road, Streatham.

Thursday 10 January 2002
from 2-4 pm

Visitors welcome £1.50
Members £1, incl refreshments.

Further details from Ken Ambrose
Tel: 020 8852 0262

Central Office For Holocaust Claims

Michael Newman

German pension increase

All those recognised as victims of Nazi persecution under the provisions of the German compensation law - known as BEG - may now be entitled to an increase in their German retirement pension (Altersrente). This follows a change in the way social security laws are interpreted in Germany as a result of growing pressures in recent years. The new ruling has resulted in most cases in considerable increases to existing pensions.

Qualification is subject to the decision of the relevant pension authority. Those interested should forward copies of the original pension notice (Rentenbescheid) and we will examine whether your particular case meets the new criteria.

DSS benefits

Compensation payments to Holocaust survivors will be disregarded as capital when calculating housing and income-related benefits following an extension to Social Security regulations.

The changes have been introduced to coincide with the recent and the imminent dispersal of payments from a number of Holocaust-era compensation programmes including the Austrian National Fund and the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and the Future (Slave Labour Fund). The new legislation will come into effect on 19 November.

Holocaust survivors in receipt of, or in the process of claiming, Income Support including Minimum Income Guarantee, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Jobseeker's Allowance should inform the local authority office dealing with their claim when a compensation payment has been received.

Advice meetings

Two sessions in Newcastle and Gateshead concluded the nationwide tour of groups addressed on Holocaust-era claims. Seven meetings were convened in northern England and Scotland over a four-month period with more than 200 people benefiting from advice and assistance.

Further help

Written enquiries should be sent to Central Office for Holocaust Claims (UK), 1 Hampstead Gate, 1a Froggnal, London NW3 6AL. For assistance with the completion of application forms please telephone 020 7431 6161 for an appointment.

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Wednesday 23 January
Tuesday 29 January
Wednesday 6 February

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

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

JANUARY		Afternoon entertainment
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Thur	3	Bill Moses on keyboard
Sun	6	DAY CENTRE OPEN - No Entertainment
Mon	7	KT LUNCH. - Kard & Games Klub
Tue	8	Katinka Seiner and Laszlo Easton
Wed	9	Tricia Dibb, Mike Francis and Michael Heaton
Thur	10	Jack Davidoff
Sun	13	DAY CENTRE OPEN - No Entertainment
Mon	14	Kard & Games Klub
Tue	15	Jenny Kossew - Accordionist
Wed	16	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur	17	Amanda Palmer
Sun	20	DAY CENTRE OPEN - No Entertainment
Mon	21	Kard & Games Klub
Tue	22	Eddie Simmons Entertains with Bill Bradley at Piano
Wed	23	Geoffrey Whitworth
Thur	24	Melanie Mehta & Martin Sharpe
Sun	27	DAY CENTRE OPEN - No Entertainment
Mon	28	Kard & Games Klub
Tue	29	Curtain Up - Maire Halliday
Wed	30	Amanda Palmer
Thur	31	Daphne Lewis, Vivienne Trenner & David Rose

Announcements

Deaths

Kriss. Eric Kriss, born Vienna in 1910, passed away suddenly on 18 November aged 91. Greatly missed by his wife Lily, children, grandchildren and family and friends in the UK, US, Australia and Peru. May he rest in peace.

Meyer. Lotte Meyer (née Horner), born 06.08.1919 Vienna, died 31.07.2001 London, and Otto David Meyer, born 09.05.1915 Cologne, died 12.11.2001 London. Mourned by Antony and Michael May, London; Klaus M. Brenner, Munich; Volker Friedrichs, Augsburg; and Henry G. Richter-Hallgarten, London/Munich.

Rosenak. Stella Rosenak, late of 111 Copse Hill, Wimbledon, London SW20 ONT died on 24 October at St George's Hospital after many years of severe disability.

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Day Centre

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AJR GROUP CONTACTS

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South London

Ken Ambrose 020 8852 0262

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Vera Gellman 020 8866 4833

Surrey

Edmée Barta 01372 727 412

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Fausta Shelton 01273 688 226

Wessex (Bournemouth)

Mark Goldfinger 01202 552 434

East Midlands (Nottingham)

Bob Norton 01159 212 494

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Henny Rednall 0121 373 5603

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Obituary

Kurt Sekules

Kurt Sekules, who established a world-class knitwear company in Northern Ireland, was born in Vienna in 1907. He escaped from Austria with his wife Edith and daughter Ruth to Estonia in 1938, but in 1941 the local authorities classed the family as enemy aliens and sent them to an internment camp in Kazakhstan.

They were liberated only in 1947, when they joined members of their family in Londonderry. In 1950 Kurt and Edith started a knitwear business in the small fishing port of Kilkeel and achieved much success, selling high-class merchandise worldwide. Kurt continued to work to the end of his life. He is survived by his wife, son and three daughters.

Fraenkel prizewinners

The winners of the annual Fraenkel Prize for new historical works have been announced by the Wiener Library.

The prize for contemporary history has been given to Dr Karel Berkhoff of the Netherlands for his work *Hitler's Clean Slate: Soviet Ukraine under Nazi Rule 1941-1944*. The prize for entrants who have yet to publish a major work was awarded jointly to Alon Rachamimov (Israel) for his manuscript *Austro-Hungarian POWs in Russia 1914-1918*, and to Dr Nikolaus Wachsmann (Germany/Great Britain) for *Reform and Repression: Prisons and Penal Policy in Germany 1918-1939*.

Entrants are invited to apply for this year's Fraenkel prize in both the above categories. Further details may be obtained from The Administrative Co-ordinator, Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, London W1W 5BH.

Arts and Events Diary January

Until April 2002 Programme of lectures and events in Leeds in commemoration of one-time inmates, victims and survivors of concentration camps and their families, under the aegis of *Arbeitskreis der NS-Gedenkstätten in Nordrhein-Westfalen*. John Chillag 01937 844353 (evenings).

Extended to 31 March 2002 Exhibition focusing on the Blechners, the fate of a Jewish family during the Holocaust. Munich Jewish Museum

Mon 7 William Kaczynski, 'Stamps Go to War'. Club 43. 7.45pm

Mon 14 Dr Carol Diethe, 'Elisabeth Foerster-Nietzsche'. Club 43. 7.45pm

Mon 21 Dr E. M. Batley, 'Human Rights and the Masonic Legacy in Germany and Austria, 1646-1792'. Club 43. 7.45pm

Sat & Sun 26-27 'Generations of Genocide', a conference by the Wiener Library on National Holocaust Memorial Day focusing on the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide, and genocide in the Balkans and Rwanda. Registration £45/\$65; concs £30/35 Tel: 020 7636 7247

Mon 28 Michael Faulkner, 'Kaethe Kollwitz (with illustrations)'. Club 43. 7.45pm

Mon 4 Feb, Dr Christine Pullen, 'Life & Works of Amy Levy 1861-1889'. Club 43. 7.45pm

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

Club 43 Belsize Square Synagogue. Hans Seelig 01442 254360

Wiener Library 4 Devonshire Street, London W1W 5BH Tel: 020 7636 7247

Search Notices

From January 2002, Search Notices will appear on AJR's website www.ajr.org.uk unless otherwise requested.

Lucie Freud, born Berlin 02.03.1896. Resident in St John's Wood Terrace London NW8 in 1958. Tel 020 8908 0582.

Maximilian Glaser born 11.08.1886 in Saaz. Lived in Vienna at 19 Reithleg. 6/2/3 from 31.12.1928 to 8.9.1938. Office at 1 Schullerg. 5. Married to Anna Glaser (née Sachs) born 24.7.1901. Children: Lisa, born 1.2.1929 and Franz born 1.10.1933. In 1938 Dr Glaser apparently emigrated to England. Please contact Professor Joseph J. Kohn tel 001 609 258 4217 fax 001 609 258 1367 email kohn@princeton.edu.

Morgenbesser brothers. Fritz born 12.05.1912 probably called Frederick Morgan, and Hans born 29.10.1913, both born in Brünn (Brno), said to have emigrated to England in 1939. Sons of Josef and Eugenie

(née Rosenfeld). Tel 0208 908 0582.

Papier. My family originally came from Vienna. Anyone of this name please contact Ben Godfrey, 52 Upcroft Avenue, Edgware, Middx HA8 9RB tel 020 8959 2412.

Franz Paul and sister Stephanie (Steffi) Paul, both born in Kolberg (today Kolobrzeg, Poland). In 1939 they came to England by Kindertransport from Hamburg, where they had lived with their parents, who died in the Holocaust. Please contact Rodolfo Jacobi, Sucre 2600, Buenos Aires, Argentina, tel 0054 11 4784 6506 or 4782 3687.

František Steiner, born Czechoslovakia (date unknown). Last known address 15 Staverton Road, Oxford. His brother, Karel Steiner, died in Auschwitz, as did his cousin Felix Steiner, who was a lawyer in Sušice. Please contact Ivana Klinderová, Embassy of the Czech Republic, London, tel 020 7234 7988.

Berlin to Auschwitz by pedal power

Ronald Channing



Erich Reich, left, at the Brandenburg Gate with his nephew and great-niece preparing to cycle to Auschwitz in aid of Ukrainian Jewish children and a Kinder memorial statue in London.

Erich Reich, a Kindertransportee and a member of AJR's Management Committee, organised and participated in a sponsored bicycle ride from Berlin to Auschwitz with 20 others, many of them children of survivors, including his nephew and grand-niece.

The £70,000 the group raised has been directed to two projects of the former Central British Fund (now World Jewish Relief), which was responsible for German Jewish refugee immigrants into Britain before the Second World War. Ongoing projects to help disadvantaged and disabled Jewish children in Ukraine have been complemented with support for the siting of a Kindertransport memorial sculpture at London's Liverpool Street

Station, the entry point for nearly all the Kinder. The AJR Charitable Trust has also given considerable financial support to this permanent reminder of the arrival in Britain of child refugees, sadly without their parents, from Nazi persecution, which it is planned to dedicate later this year.

Although he was only four when he arrived in this country, Erich Reich had long wanted to travel the route his parents had taken from Berlin to Auschwitz, seeking to create something constructive out of this most difficult of journeys. Flor Kent, the sculptor of the Liverpool Street statue, joined Erich Reich at a Kinder lunch at the AJR Day Centre to relate the story of the bike ride and the statue.

'CONTINENTAL BRITONS'

Exhibition on German Jewish refugees

Continental Britons - an entirely new exhibition relating the story of Jewish refugees from Nazi Europe in Britain - is to open at the Jewish Museum in Camden Town later this year. Sponsored by the Association of Jewish Refugees, in collaboration with the Wiener Library and the Jewish Museum, the exhibition was conceived by the AJR as an appropriate climax to the celebration of its 60th anniversary year and has been extensively researched, written and organised by a special AJR Project Development Group. Further details of **Continental Britons**, and an extensive programme of talks and events associated with it, will appear in future editions of *AJR Journal*.

Newsround

Terror attacks in Israel

In suicide bomb attacks in Jerusalem and Haifa in early December, 25 people, many of them teenagers, were killed and hundreds injured.

Neo-Nazis march in Berlin

Protesting against an exhibition which demonstrates that ordinary German soldiers committed atrocities in the Second World War, the National Democratic Party has held the biggest postwar demonstration of its kind. Several thousand supporters of the far-right party attempted to march through the old Jewish quarter in Berlin.

Project to honour Jewish heroism

Holocaust survivor Haim Roth believes that insufficient recognition has been given to Jews who risked, and sometimes lost, their lives in the effort to save other Jews. He has told Israeli President Moshe Katsav that it is important to research and document what Jews did to save their co-religionists.

Swiss diplomat who saved Hungarian Jews

Hungarian Holocaust survivors who owe their lives to Carl Lutz, Chief of the Department of Foreign Interests at the Swiss Legation in Budapest in 1942-45, have attended the opening of an exhibition at Tel Aviv University honouring his memory. Lutz provided 62,000 Hungarian Jews with protective documents.

Russian neo-Nazis profiled

According to the newspaper *Gazeta*, the average age of contemporary Nazis in Russia is 20. They are teenagers from the outer suburbs, school students and the unemployed. The two largest extremist groups in Moscow have 1,000 regular members and an unspecified number of additional sympathisers.

Slovakia makes Holocaust denial a punishable offence

The Slovak parliament has passed an amendment to the Penal Code making the denial of the Holocaust and the belittling of its crimes a punishable offence. Justice Ministry official Daniel Lipsic argued against the amendment, saying that a free society should not punish people for expressing opinions, even if those opinions are extremist.

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