

AJR journal

Association of Jewish Refugees

The psychopathology of politics

CND posters on myriads of hoardings demand 'Don't attack Iraq' and couple this with 'Freedom for Palestine'. Such slogans hardly square with the organisation's professed aim, which is nuclear disarmament. How can an attempt to prevent a state like Iraq with a record of serial aggression against neighbouring countries - Iran, Kuwait, Israel - from going nuclear earn the censure of opponents of nuclear proliferation? Nor does another favourite CND mantra, 'Jaw-Jaw not War-War', chime with an *intifada*-bred battle cry like 'Freedom for Palestine'. Jaw-Jaw showed signs of prevailing over War-War in Israeli-Palestinian relations for most of the 1990s until Arafat's obduracy hoisted Sharon into power.

It is an undeniable fact that the most intractable proponents of the *intifada* - Hamas, the Al-Aksa Brigade, Islamic Jihad - think that they will only have achieved 'Freedom for Palestine' when Israel has been wiped off the map. It is the same hardliners, utterly deaf to any appeal to reason or humanity, who glory in resorting to the revolting butchery wrought by suicide bombers. And let us not forget that it was so-called Palestinian men and women in the street who cheered when Saddam's scud missiles hit residential districts of Tel Aviv, and ululated with joy at news of the attack on the twin towers in Manhattan.

Why do proponents of the Palestinian cause, who deck themselves out in the accoutrements of moral superiority, parrot bellicose battle cries instead of strengthening the human bond between both sides - as exemplified by the Hadassah Hospital's implantation of a Jewish bomb victim's kidney into a desperately sick Arab girl?



Afghan President Hamid Karzai

The psychological mainsprings behind such self-contradictory, not to say perverse, attitudes were laid bare by the seventeenth-century commentator who wrote: 'The Puritans ban bear-baiting not because it inflicts pain on the animals but because it gives pleasure to the spectators.' Applying this insight to the present situation, one can say that those who put up the 'Don't attack Iraq - Freedom for Palestine' posters were not so much motivated by concern for ordinary Iraqis, who, anyway, would love to be rid of Saddam, or for Palestinians, as by sheer hatred of America or Israel. The explanation for the depth of anti-US feeling throughout Western Europe can also be found in psychopathology. It is simply that people - and peoples - bear a grudge against those to whom they are obligated.

Britain, which stood alone in 1940 while America was still mired in the slough of isolationism, has least reason to feel so obligated. Even so, it ought to be grateful for the fact that after the attack on Pearl Harbour, President Roosevelt gave priority to the war

against Germany over fighting the actual Japanese attackers. France occupies a totally different sphere in the indebtedness stakes. All its sophistication and assumption of cultural superiority over the cowboys on the other side of the Atlantic cannot still a sense of unease engendered by the nation's past. Today's French wince at the recollection of their wartime conduct and hate to be reminded that they largely owe their liberation from the Nazi yoke to the Americans.

However great France's indebtedness to America, it is dwarfed by that of Germany. The United States restored their democracy and - via the Marshall Plan - their economy. Moreover, in 1948 the US organised the Berlin airlift, which kept Germany's historic capital from being starved into submission and total incorporation into Stalin's empire. For the next 40 years the Americans pursued a policy of strenuous military, economic and cultural competition with the Soviet Bloc, which eventually caused it to disintegrate. The most visible element of this disintegration was the collapse of the Berlin Wall - and alongside it the reunification of Germany.

Given all these facts, the mind boggles at a German minister's assertion that Bush, like Hitler, indulges in foreign adventures to divert attention from internal problems. Now President Bush, admittedly, has worries over corporate failures and rising oil prices, but they are as nothing compared to those of Chancellor Schröder. The (jack)boot is very much on the other foot. Contrary to Frau Däubler's *canard*, it was Schröder who, to divert attention from pressing internal problems - stubbornly high

continued page 16

Freudian slippage

Richard Grunberger

One day in September the *Daily Telegraph* reported an American scientist's discovery of a gene that renders Jews averse to consuming alcohol in large quantities. It didn't seem a particularly world-shaking discovery since we are widely known to have a greater propensity for *fressing* than *shickering* (a term which incidentally has entered Australian slang). However, embedded in the text of the report lurked a hideously inept malapropism. This was the description of European Jews as *ashkenazis*. ASHKENAZIS!

Had the reporter responsible for this lapse, I wondered, ever heard that in Hebrew male nouns take the suffix *im* in the plural. There are, after all, quite a few words with that ending in current usage - *kibbutzim*, *chassidim*, *Bank Hapoalim* - that any fully-pledged member of the journalistic profession ought to be familiar with. Besides, anyone with a nodding acquaintance with the Bible, or with Milton's *Paradise Lost*, ought surely to have heard of *cherubim* and *seraphim*.

Having pondered the matter for several days, I am inclined to blame this slip of the word-processing tongue less on ignorance than on 'Freudian slippage' due to brain-washing. If one hears constantly that members of the Israeli Defence Force behave like Nazis - an allegation shouted from the rooftops by tub-thumpers like John Pilger and Will Self, and echoed by Establishment figures like Chris Patten - it insidiously worms its way into the collective subconscious. (Didn't a delegate to the TUC conference at Blackpool shout out 'Sharon!' when Tony Blair asserted that Saddam Hussein was the worst dictator in power in the world today?)

On second thoughts, maybe Tom Paulin is moonlighting as a *Daily Telegraph* journalist under an assumed name. Stranger things have happened in Fleet Street, also known as the Street of Shame.

C. C. Aronsfeld: Passionate scholar of the Holocaust

Cesar (he preferred the initials C.C.) Aronsfeld, who has died at the age of 92, was a major scholar, researcher and historian of the Holocaust, playing a key role in the establishment and running of the Wiener Library. In his later years, he became the temporary editor of *AJR Information*, the forerunner of the *AJR Journal*.

Born in 1910 the oldest of four children of an Orthodox wine merchant in Exin in eastern Germany (now Kcynia in Poland), Aronsfeld left Germany for England soon after Hitler gained power. In London he met Alfred Wiener, who was at the time seeking an English translator for an archive he was assembling on National Socialism. He was to become Wiener's principal assistant for the next quarter-century. The Jewish Central Information Office, as it was known before it was renamed the Wiener Library, played a key role in information and propaganda aspects of the Second World War. After the war, Aronsfeld edited the *Wiener Library Bulletin*, which was perhaps his greatest contribution in the postwar years. When Wiener retired in 1961, Aronsfeld took over as acting director of the Library. Following Wiener's death in 1964, Walter Laqueur was appointed director. In 1966 Aronsfeld left the Wiener Library for the position of Senior Research Officer at the Institute of Jewish Affairs. Here he edited the scholarly journals *Patterns of Prejudice* and *Christian-Jewish Relations*.

Aronsfeld was a prolific letter-writer and one of the journals to which he frequently wrote, and to which he made a regular contribution on themes relating to world Jewish history, Anglo-Jewish history and Christian-



Cesar Aronsfeld and his wife Helga

Jewish relations was the *AJR Information*. Having retired from the Institute of Jewish Affairs in the mid-1980s at the age of 75, he was invited to become the temporary editor of *AJR Information*, which he did for two years, handing over the editorship to Richard Grunberger in spring 1988. Following his departure, the *AJR Information* noted that 'we have since received many letters indicating appreciation of the lively debate he has introduced' and that the publication's 'contents and layout soon showed the marks of his professional experience, a deep knowledge of Jewish affairs, and a feeling for the interests of our readership.'

Cesar Aronsfeld held characteristically strong views on major Jewish issues of the day, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, on which he was inclined to take a doveish stance. A strong polemical element informed many of his writings, which were not seldom imbued with a somewhat apocalyptic warning about a possible recrudescence in the UK or elsewhere of Nazi-style antisemitism. He was very much a private man, deeply sensitive, modest, and friendly with people whom he respected, yet he could be unexpectedly abrupt towards those for whom he had little respect or who, as he believed, wished to interfere in his closely guarded independence.

Howard Spier

AJR Journal

Richard Grunberger Editor-in-Chief
Ronald Channing Executive Editor
Howard Spier Editorial and Production
AJR Journal, 1 Hampstead Gate,
1a Froggnal, London NW3 6AL
Tel: 020 7431 6161 Fax: 020 7431 8454
e-mail: editorial@ajr.org.uk
www.ajr.org.uk

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A two-way bet on Haider

Richard Grunberger

National character is far from immutable. The Irish, once considered feckless, currently operate one of the most successful economies in Western Europe. Poland, now a staunchly Catholic nation, flirted with Protestantism in the seventeenth century. England, the so-called *Land ohne Musik*, gave the world the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. Sweden, whose armies once stormed through half of Europe, has not fired a shot in anger for nigh on two centuries.

But the greatest change has surely occurred in Germany. In the eighteenth century Count Mirabeau quipped: 'Whereas other countries have an army, in Prussia the army has the country.' In the nineteenth century Bismarck launched three wars on the trot, and in the twentieth the Kaiser and Hitler ignited two global conflagrations.

And now, breaking the habit of several lifetimes, the Germans have embraced pacifism. For the first decades after 1945 such a Damascene conversion was to be welcomed, not least because of the Wehrmacht's co-responsibility for Nazi crimes. Gradually, however, as the country, in its new incarnation as the *Bundesrepublik*, re-entered the comity of nations, it also incurred certain military obligations specified by NATO.

It was the military strength of the West, underpinned by economic muscle, which caused Soviet power to implode in 1989, and Germany to be reunited. Not that the end of the Cold War inaugurated a period of global peace. Bloody conflicts flared up in the Balkans, the Gulf and Africa. Many of these conflicts were ended, or at least defused, by the despatch of troops from NATO countries. As a member of NATO Germany participated in the Kosovo campaign, enabling Serb propagandists to claim that German pilots were dropping bombs on Belgrade - just as their Luftwaffe predecessors had done in 1940. Running alongside Germany's participation in NATO was a counter current: the rise of the Greens, a party voicing neo-Luddite sentiments in tandem with equally unrealistic pacifist notions.

The current crisis over Iraq has seen German politicians - from Social Democrat cabinet ministers to flimsily disguised communists - manipulate anti-American pacifism for electoral advantage. In an effort to cling to power, even if it is only by his fingertips, Chancellor Schröder has recklessly undermined the international order. He has pledged his country to permanent neutrality over Iraq, not merely in defiance of Washington, but also with flagrant regard to whatever joint policy the United Nations - or his own EU partners - might eventually arrive at. Worse still, by giving aid and comfort to Saddam Hussein, he has disadvantaged Israel, to which Germany owes an infeasible moral obligation.

Thanks to Schröder and the Greens, German electors still pay heed to the cosily archaic Biedermeier injunction 'Put on your nightcaps, crawl into your feather beds and pull the blanket over your heads!'

Schröder's name will go down in infamy. In the manner of the American isolationists of the 1930s, he has counselled voters to contract out of world affairs and offload on to others the burden of dismantling the ticking timebomb that is Iraq. But we live in an interdependent world, and a country of 80 million which is the economic powerhouse of Europe is light years away from the Goethean backwater whose burghers enjoyed the distant 'Kriegsgeschrei, wenn irgendwo in der Türkei die Völker aneinander schlagen' (the sound of war when somewhere in the back-of-beyond nations clash).

It is a sad story. The only crumb of comfort to be derived from it is that an election victory by Edmund Stoiber, the Catholic conservative who banged the anti-immigrant drum, would have been marginally even worse. Since Schröder, however indirectly, sustains Haider's buddy Saddam, and Stoiber employed Haider-style xenophobic rhetoric, the Austrian would-be Führer can actually be declared the winner of the German election.

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Bitter sweet Israel

Ronald Channing

On the eve of the 9/11 anniversary, my wife and I arrived at Ben-Gurion Airport and were soon on the road to her parents' *moshav* where they first settled in a *mabara* camp 51 years before. Every visit witnesses the building of more superb houses on the *moshav's* former agricultural plots, white walls and cool ceramic interiors echoing Bauhaus living. A drive through the main thoroughfare of neighbouring Rehovot reveals the construction of massive apartment blocks extending the town into a conurbation serving a greatly expanded population. The road was full of cars and local shops were busy with customers.

A cautious evening stroll along Tel Aviv's sea front belied the obscene violence and indiscriminate death perpetrated on youngsters gathered for an evening at the nearby aquarium disco. Now all restaurants and bars have security checks and, although foreign tourists were few, no one seemed unduly hurried. People were just getting on with their lives.

The bombing of a Tel Aviv bus on Allenby Street cost six innocent people their lives, including a Scottish Jewish boy who was to study medicine at Oxford, and the bus driver, who was trying to protect his passengers. Many more were seriously injured and will be scarred for life. Should any civilised society be faced with such a bestial attack, orchestrated and provisioned by those seeking nothing less than the destruction of the Jewish state and its people?

Following good main highways, the drive north, broken only by a picnic breakfast in a JNF forest, passed some of Israel's oldest *kibbutzim*. South of the Galilee the road abruptly plunged across the Jordan Valley's gorge onto the stark, rock moonscape of the east bank to travel south along the 1949 armistice line. Improbably, the Hamat Gedera nature reserve appears, famed for its alligators and crocodiles. The warm sulphur springs, once prized by the



View from Moshav Beth Hillel across Galilee orchards to the Lebanese border

Romans, are captured in a large pool enjoyed by many human patrons.

We proceeded through the crusader town named after Emperor Tiberius on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, through the rich and abundant agriculture of the magnificent Huleh Valley towards Kiryat Shemona and then onto Moshav Beth Hillel and a guest house, with its exquisitely designed rooms. From the balcony the hills which separate this demi-Eden from a threatening Hizbollah in Lebanon appear so close.

A sad early-morning visit to the memorial to 40 young soldiers whose helicopters collided on a night mission to Lebanon, then on to the Tel Dan nature reserve, crossed by the ice-cold waters of a significant source of the River Jordan from Mount Herman. The site also contains the fortress of the Tribe of Dan who, after defeating the Philistines, settled there. Kibbutz Dan's extensive fish-farming pools were the source of an appropriately chosen lunch.

Climbing out of the Huleh Valley with views over the Sea of Galilee, past Rosh Pinah and on to Safad, a city in which Jews have lived continuously since before the destruction of the Temple and the dispersion, we passed through the forests up the winding roads of Mount Meron. People continue to pray at the tomb of the ancient Jewish sage, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yachai. Along the border to Ma'alot, whose children were massacred by an early PLO attack, and onto once vibrant, now uninspiring Nahariah. A stop on the road through Haifa for *falafel* at an Arab restaurant from where the magnificent, floodlit

B'hai Temple could be seen on the slopes of Mount Carmel, and then a straight run home.

On the 29th anniversary of the loss of my soldier brother-in-law in the Yom Kippur War of 1973, an army rabbi, gun at the holster, led a moving remembrance service at the grave site in the presence of his widow, parents and other close relatives. In the military section of the town's cemetery I counted the graves of more than 40 young soldiers taken in the succeeding 29 years, a dreadful toll of youth no doubt replicated in towns throughout this country.

On the evening of *Kol Nidre* I joined my father-in-law in the *moshav* synagogue and, with a little help, was able to follow the service. The sight of the male congregation all wearing the traditional *talith* (prayer shawl), and the passion with which this generation of Israeli Jews comprehended and recited the ancient prayers for a good life in the coming year, turned my thoughts over the intervening 2,000 years. Our ancestors were dispersed over much of the Mediterranean and Europe to suffer two millennia of persecution and pogrom until they began reconstituting Jewish life in our ancient homeland in the mid-nineteenth century. Paradoxically, the Jewish settlers' development of the land brought prospects of employment to tens of thousands of Arabs in uncontrolled immigration (unlike the Jews) from the surrounding countries and from far beyond. Today many call themselves Palestinians.

CONTINENTAL BRITONS

From marginal to mainstream

German refugee art was given a 'very bumpy ride' in Britain at the start, a packed audience at the Jewish Museum in Camden Town was told. Speaking on the subject 'The Welcome of Strangers: British Responses to Émigré Art and Artists in the 1930s and 1940s', a lecture held in association with the Ben Uri Gallery, Monica Bohm-Duchen said that in the early days Expressionist art was generally regarded in Britain as inferior to the French tradition - it was seen as 'too nervy and angst-ridden'.



Oskar Kokoschka

Ms Bohm-Duchen, an art historian, writer and curator, described the 1937 'Degenerate Art' exhibition in Germany when the Nazis ridiculed the work of Max Beckman, Emil Nolde, Oskar Kokoschka and over 200 other contemporary artists. Those included in the show, many of whom are now recognized as modern masters, were depicted as deranged and subhuman. The following year saw the staging of a 'riposte' anti-Nazi art exhibition in London, and in 1939 the left-wing Free German League of Culture in Great Britain put on an exhibition supported by numerous prominent British people such as Dame Sybil Thorndike. During the war years a number of highly political exhibitions, including one on art in internment camps, was held in Britain. How far Expressionist art in this country had come from the early days, Monica Bohm-Duchen said: now it was mainstream - as witnessed by the Lucian Freud exhibition at Tate Britain.

HS

Aspects of Anglo-Jewry



Lord Jakobovits

The dispute over the *eruv*, the device which enables Orthodox Jews in a particular geographical area to carry items and push baby carriages on the Sabbath, is a 'wholly artificial' one, Judge Israel Finestein told a packed audience at the Jewish Museum in London's Camden Town. Speaking at one of a number of events held to mark the Jewish Museum's 70th anniversary year, he said that a

'liberal approach' dictated that 'We should let people do as they wish' in this matter.

The subject of Judge Finestein's talk, and of his latest book, was 'Scenes and Personalities in Anglo-Jewry 1800-2000'. Israel Finestein, a former President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and the Jewish Historical Society of England, and former Chairman of the Jewish Museum, devoted much of his talk to what he described as a central feature of Anglo-Jewry in the twentieth century: the priority it had given to the Jewish day school system begun in the 1960s. The then Chief Rabbi, Lord Jakobovits, he said, had understood that the future of Jewish identity lay with Jewish education. Within just four years he had designed and launched his greatest contribution to Anglo-Jewry, the Jewish Educational Development Trust. In place of the slogan then driving the campaign for Soviet Jewry, 'Let My People Go', he had written: 'Let My People Know.'

Scenes and Personalities in Anglo-Jewry 1800-2000 is published by Vallentine Mitchell at £17.50 paperback or £35.00 cloth.

HS

Continental Britons Exhibition and Arts and Events Diary - November

Mon 4 Prof Norbert Frei (University of Bochum), 'The Nazi Elite in Postwar Germany'. Wiener Library. 6.30 pm

Mon 4 Ralph Blumenau MA, 'The 1920s'. Club 43

Tues 5 Ian Menzies (formerly Hans Menzinger), 'Re-acculturation - the Road Back'. Centre for German-Jewish Studies (CGJS)

Sun 10 Hannah Arendt - Politics and Responsibility'. One-day conference, 10 am-5 pm at University of London. Wiener Library with New York University in London *et al.* Tel 020 7636 7247

Mon 11 Dr Malcolm Miller, 'From Emigré to Sabra: Three Generations of Israeli Composers'. Club 43

Tues 12 Renee Goddard, 'Reni and the Brownshirts'. CGJS

Wed 13 Prof Robert Skloot (University of Wisconsin-Madison), 'A Multitude of Annes - the Image of Anne Frank on Stage'. Institute of Jewish Studies, UCL. Reception 6.00, lecture 6.30 pm, Gustave Tuck Theatre, UCL main entrance, Gower Street, WCI (admission free). Tel 020 7679 3520

Mon 18 Mary Shakeshaft MA (Middlesex University), 'Lewis Carroll's Adventures in

Wonderland'. Club 43

Tues 19 Sir Hans Singer will talk about his experiences as a refugee based on family papers. CGJS

Mon 25 Richard Grunberger, 'The Problem of Dual Allegiance'. Club 43

Tues 26 Hanno Fry, 'A Young Refugee on the Isle of Man'. CGJS

Wed 27 'Beethoven and Suppressed Composers' (composers who suffered or died as a result of Nazi or Soviet oppression). Wu Qian, piano: Schedrin, Schnittke, Skryabin. St James' Piccadilly. 1.00 pm (admission free)

Tues 3 December Open discussion chaired by Professor Edward Timms followed by a reception. CGJS

ORGANISATION CONTACTS

Centre for German-Jewish Studies (CGJS), University of Sussex, Brighton. Seminars 4.30-6.00 pm in A155. Contact Dr Eric Jacobson tel 01273 877169

Club 43 Belsize Square Synagogue. Meetings 7.45 pm. Contact Hans Seelig tel 01442 254360

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right
to shorten correspondence
submitted for publication

KEFFIYEH-CLAD HEIRS OF STREICHER

Sir - Your editorial strikes me as unadulterated racism, however 'thoroughly researched' it may be. What was its purpose? All civilised people, without exception, abhor the loss of life, the misery and the hopelessness in and around Israel. Does your piece do anything to help? Do you, who are highly articulate, say anything about what the Palestinians should or should not do, or what the Israelis should or should not do? You do not. Rather, you belittle those who seek solutions rather than apportion blame, and are content with venting your justified anger.

I too am angry: at the intransigence of both sides; at the mindset of people who will not countenance the possibility that the other side has a point; at human beings who would die and see others die rather than cede an inch; and particularly angry at intellectuals who incite hatred and, having seen the evident failure of the tit-for-tat approach, do not understand that, unless there is some diplomacy, some meeting of minds, there is no future for Israel.

Marc Schatzberger
York

I totally refute the charge of racism. The Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz is among my favourite authors, while the statement 'Not one Muslim leader is doing what the Chief Rabbi has just done' by the Muslim journalist Yasmin Alibhai-Brown (The Independent, 9.9.02) bears out the point I have made in many editorials - Ed.

Sir - I have searched and searched - without success. Surely you have told us somewhere that some of your best friends are Muslims.

Ernie Manson
Edgware, Middx

BRICKBAT

Sir - I am deeply troubled by the Editor's denigrating and vitriolic attitude towards anyone who does not fully support his view of the situation in Israel and the occupied territories.

Miss A Kramer
Cumbria

FIN-DE-SIECLE TEMPLATE

Sir - Jews have hated deviant Jews since Babylonian times. Not restricting himself to Vienna of about 1900, your editor could have added to his list of pet hates the prophets, Spinoza, Freud and many others. He misses the one quality that has enabled Jews to survive millennia of persecution and hate without losing belief in their ability to contribute with all persons of good will - whether Jews, deviant Jews, or non-Jews - towards the good of individual humans and of mankind: generosity of heart and mind.

Max L Meyer
London

MESSAGE FROM HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

Sir - Mr Kaufman MP and others like him, who profess to be Jews, inflict mental torture on our own people on TV, radio and newspapers. Their motive is to brainwash and make people believe in lies in order to destroy our love for Israel. These few people, who have been privileged with a good education and pampered lives, are starved of one thing: knowledge of Israel's past and present. May we bring to their attention that they do not have to be Jews - they can convert to whatever is best for their political orientation and ambitions. But they should not disguise themselves as wolves in sheep's clothing with their anti-Israeli poison. We already have most of the world doing just that. Israel was, is and always will be.

Hedi Frankl and Jess Salmon
(Forced labour camp survivors)
Clare Parker (Camp survivor)

HALS- UND BEINBRUCH

Sir - The expression *Hals- und Beinbruch* is a homophonic adaptation of the Yiddish/Hebrew *mazel un broche*. It meets a theatrical superstition that to wish someone 'good luck' may attract its opposite.

S S Praver
Queen's College, Oxford

AN INEXPLICABLE VOID

Sir - Mr Grunberger finds the absence of signs of their Jewish refugee origins in Lucian Freud's paintings and in Tom Stoppard's plays inexplicable. Would he expect to find such signs in the scientific writings of Bondi or Perutz, or the performances of the Amadeus Quartet? Surprisingly, the answer may well be a qualified 'yes'. But instead of looking at the subject of the pictures, plays, writings or performances as such, he may perhaps find what he is looking for in an approach to their work which in some indefinable way embodies Jewish characteristics handed down from generation to generation and which perhaps does something to fill Mr Grunberger's 'inexplicable void'.

Professor Walter Elkan
London NW8

Sir - Richard Grunberger is obsessed with being Jewish. Why should Lucian Freud and Tom Stoppard be equally obsessed? One is a great painter, the other a great playwright. The fact that their works are, seemingly, not influenced by their Jewish Continental backgrounds is entirely irrelevant. Richard called his article 'an inexplicable void'. Why 'inexplicable'? Why 'void'? Thankfully, we don't all have a chip on our shoulder about being Jewish.

Peter Phillips
Loudwater, Herts

MUNICH NEWSLETTER

Sir - The *AJR Journal* is among recent recipients of two emails from Dr A Heusler of the Stadtarchiv in Munich. The second of these emails, headed 'Newsletter des Stadtarchivs Muenchen 01/2002' and dated 13 August 2002, contains much interesting information for Jewish people now living in the UK who were mostly Munich-born teenagers in the 1930s. The initial concept of

producing this kind of newsletter was mine and was strongly supported by Dr Heusler in his subsequent discussions with the city's Kulturreferat. I had previously expressed concern to Dr Heusler that Munich, compared with other towns and villages in Germany, appeared to be doing next to nothing to maintain any form of contact with the relatively few remaining survivors of its Jewish refugees and their descendents. I hope you will find it opportune to give the contents of Dr Heusler's present and future periodic newsletters much-needed publicity.

H Peter Sinclair
Pinner, Middx

HOLOCAUST CHRONICLE

Sir - The volume reviewed and recommended by Martin Hasseck in the September issue is a most impressive read. It describes many events that occurred during my youth and early adulthood, such as Walter Rathenau's murder and the flight of the assassins. An important event not mentioned in the book, however, is the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg in Berlin on 15 January 1919. This removed the Spartakist opposition to the Weimar Republic which Scheidemann had proclaimed on 9 November 1918.

Edwin Rosenstiel
London SW15

CHILD CAMP SURVIVORS

Sir - With regard to the letter from Clare Parker (September issue), a documentary was made recently by a German film crew entitled *Children of Bulldogs Bank*. A copy is held at Shalvata in Hendon. Also, the book *Love Despite Hate*, written by Sarah Moscovitch about 20 years ago, documents the experiences of child survivors. It is no longer in print as far as is known.

Jacky Young
London N2

CONTRADICTION

Sir - At a time when our Chief Rabbi sees fit to make highly controversial anti-Israel statements, thereby contradicting his own pro-Israel stance so recently voiced at the

Trafalgar Square rally, it is indeed heart-warming to find the *AJR Journal* as always a solid rock of loyalty and integrity. Your hard-hitting and eruditely researched editorial speaks for itself.

Fred Rosner
Chigwell, Essex

UPSTAIRS/DOWNSTAIRS

My husband, who came to England aged 18 on a £50 guarantee from a relative, could not find a job at all. He lost three stone in weight during that period. Thanks to his sister, who was four years older and slaved in domestic service, he was helped with nourishment, whenever possible. A marvellous single woman took me and my sisters into her humble home. However, after her unfortunate death seven months later, we three girls went through the rough and tumble of so many others. Domestic service for me, aged 16, and my two younger sisters meant looking after children in unregistered children's homes where we were all exploited. My middle sister, now Professor Emeritus at the University of Minnesota, was forced to work 16 hours, sleep with the children in their communal room, and beaten into the bargain (aged 14). Luckily she was eventually rescued by the Quakers.

Laura Selo
London NW11

THANK YOU

Sir - On behalf of my husband, my son and myself, I wish to record our appreciation of the AJR's effort to give us such a wonderful day when we visited the Day Centre for lunch and went on to the Continental Britons exhibition. It will live long in our memory.

Sarah Goldsmith
Newcastle

It has been pointed out to us that Elizabeth Spencer (October issue) is mistaken in stating that the Blue Danube Club is omitted from the Continental Britons exhibition. In fact, the Club appears on the map of the Finchley Road at the centre of the exhibition, and its director, Peter Herz, is among those listed on the 'roll of honour' above the exhibit (Ed.).

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ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

How do you react to a huge canvas of sheer colour divided by a vertical slit of black paint? The Polish-American-Jewish artist **Barnett Newman** threw away everything he painted up to the age of 40, and I am tempted to say what a pity! The progress of an artist is as important to later generations as the work itself, and Newman's reductionism had a tortured development absent from his exhibition **Who's Afraid of Red Yellow and Blue**, at **Tate Modern** until January 2003. I would have liked to have seen the creative and intellectual process that brought the work into such fervent being.



Barnett Newman

Newman became an artist at the point where mythology meets surrealism. The issue facing artists of the 1930-40s was, of course, the war, to which he was a conscientious objector, and the contemporary struggle for the meaning of painting at a time when formal art was challenged by movements like Abstraction and Cubism and by German Expressionism which was banned as degenerate by the Nazis. While his early work eludes us, his questions do not. 'What is painting?', he asked. 'Is it really circles? Is it really nature? What are we going to paint? Surrealism? Cubism? I

was drifting away - involved in a search for myself and my subject?'

The Holocaust was a subject he confronted obliquely through his paintings on biblical themes. 'When Hitler was ravaging Europe - could we express ourselves by having a beautiful girl lying naked on a divan?', he asked. In 1960 he began work on his famous series *The Stations of the Cross*, which opened six years later at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Three years before, he contributed to the exhibition **Recent American Synagogue Architecture** at the Jewish Museum in New York. His Cabalistic sculpture *Zim Zum* evokes the moment of creation, which perhaps gives a clue to Newman's thinking.

When war broke out, Newman's family had long been established in New York. His father Abraham was a secular Jew and a leading Zionist. Newman was a polymath, as interested in botany, geology, ornithology and music as in art. He wanted to paint but was urged, like a good Jewish boy, to support his studies by working in the family business. Among those he befriended were Mark Rothko, a far more diverse and interesting painter, and Jackson Pollock.

The problem with Newman is that he verbalises what in his paintings is dramatically simple. They are not an arrangement of objects, spaces or graphic elements, he insists, but evoke his belief in an open society. He considers that he has freed art from artistic convention. What has been preserved from the 1940s shows a sense of order flying through the colours, but the later work, with the ragged, vertical stripe, contains the question that breaks up the monotony of colour. Newman was laughed at by the art critics, who later fawned on him. That is not an unusual story. His admirers speak of losing themselves in his huge blocks of colour. He himself says it all when he admits: 'I am beguiled by what colour does for me.' The lack of progress in this exhibition does little for me, I'm afraid.

RG's INTERFACE

Hollywood. Kevin Brownlow's documentary on the making of Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* was premiered in October. It reveals that, as work on the film progressed, Chaplin was asked to abandon the project, lest it further spur Hitler's aggressiveness. He countered that Hitler could not be worse than he already was. However, Chaplin subsequently stated that had he known the extent of Nazi atrocities, he would not have made the film.

London. (a) Covent Garden is staging the premiere of *Sophie's Choice*, an opera by Nicholas Maw based on William Styron's Holocaust novel of the same name; (b) One of the four couples in the foreground of Zadie Smith's bestselling debut novel *White Teeth* is Jewish. Her new novel, *The Autograph Man*, predominantly features Jews. Smith seems intent on outdoing Iris Murdoch, who also had a *penchant* for Jewish characters.

Berlin. The Theodor Wolff prize for journalistic excellence was instituted 40 years ago. Wolff, editor of the *Berliner Tagesblatt*, the most prestigious newspaper of the Weimar Republic, fell victim to Nazi persecution in Nice in 1943.

Vienna. (a) The Kammerspiele Theatre is mounting a full-length programme of linked sketches the late Karl Farkas originally devised for his *Simplicissimus* cabaret; (b) Fritz Muliari, the (non-Jewish) remarkably proficient Yiddish-speaker - he was the foster-child of a Jewish couple deported to Auschwitz - has retired from the stage. His last appearance was in Joe Orton's *Entertaining Mr Sloane*; (c) Robert Schindel, the wartime offspring of (subsequently deported) Jewish slave workers, who grew up in a children's home, achieved literary fame with *Gebürtig*, a work whose fractured structure reflects his own experiences. The novel, adapted for the screen by Stefan Troller, the writer-director of the trilogy *The Emigrants*, is currently being filmed.

Unsatisfactory account of internment

**WE BUILT UP OUR LIVES:
EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY
AMONG JEWISH REFUGEES
INTERNEED BY BRITAIN IN WORLD
WAR II**

Maxine Schwartz Seller

Westport, CT/London: Greenwood
Press, £53.95

The story that Maxine Schwartz Seller has to tell is certainly worth the telling. Professor Schwartz Seller first sets out the context - the arrival of German-speaking refugees in Britain in the 1930s, the outbreak of war, the tribunals and, as Britain began to fear imminent invasion, the mounting public pressure for the mass internment of 'enemy aliens' - before moving on to the book's chief concern, the organisation of everyday life in the internment camps. Here the net is drawn widely, to include both men's and women's internment camps in Britain, particularly though not exclusively on the Isle of Man, and the camps in Canada and Australia to which thousands of unfortunate internees were transported in 1940.

While drawing on the individual accounts and experiences of former internees, the author aims above all to examine community life in internment, as manifested in, for instance, forms of self-government, religious life and the cultural activities that flourished in the camps. Two chapters are devoted to education in internment. The first considers the men's camps with their extraordinary wealth of educational opportunities, including the popular universities. The second describes educational provision in the Rushen Women's Camp, both for the women themselves and for the children (the indomitable Minna Specht played a crucial role here, of course). A final chapter examines both the end of internment and life for former internees in post-war Britain, while endeavouring also to put the internment experience into some kind of historical perspective.

Given the inherent interest of the subject matter of this study, it is regrettable that the author did not take greater care to ensure the book's

REVIEWS

accuracy and completeness. The problems begin with the inexact subtitle and with the failure to distinguish clearly, both from within Schwartz Seller's own sample of interviewees and in general, between the Jewish and non-Jewish internees (while acknowledging in a footnote the existence of a substantial minority of the latter). There are also numerous irritating errors in the rendering of names and places: Agnes Walstein rather than Waldstein, Mary rather than Marie Neurath, Friedenbergl rather than (Richard) Friedenthal, a reference to a later career spent at 'Moreley College and Kingston Polytechnical'. These are, of course, relatively minor points, though the conflation of Anna Freud with her great-niece Emma (!) and the rendering of Dora Diamant, friend of Kafka and a significant cultural figure in Rushen, as Dora Dumont are examples of the more serious lapses to which this book is prone.

There is a problem, too, in the manner in which Schwartz Seiler assembles and presents her basic - and extremely interesting - range of oral history interviews: 'my respondents', an expression employed repeatedly, refers not only to those former internees whom she herself has recently interviewed, but also to interviews carried out by others, years ago, on behalf of the Imperial War Museum. And if this, while irksome, may be said not fundamentally to affect the overall picture of internee life presented, the book's omissions are certainly of considerable significance. These are the failure to consider the first-hand internment accounts - surely standard fare for scholars of internment - of Livia Laurent, Alfred Lomnitz, Fred Uhlman and the like; the failure to include, either under the heading of community or of education, the activities of the political exiles in the camp and the youth work they promoted; and the failure to consider any of the German-language sources on the subject,

including Michael Seyfert's seminal work on culture in internment, *Deutsche Exilliteratur in britischer Internierung* (1984). Schwartz Seiler's book would have been better informed on the subject of newspapers in the women's camp, for instance, and on other things besides, had Seyfert's findings been taken into account.

All in all, then, despite the promising topic and the undoubted interest of much of Schwartz Seiler's material, this book remains a not entirely satisfactory account of the internment experience. It is a pity that her opportunity to produce an English-language work of similar standing to Seyfert's German-language account has not been more wholeheartedly grasped.

Charmian Brinson

Evocation of an English childhood

WAR GAMES

Jenny Koralek

Egmont Books Limited, £4.99

Winter, 1938-39. A Jewish family in Prague, expecting an invasion by Hitler, are desperately, vainly, trying to emigrate. And then - a sudden miracle. An Englishman, the dazzling Miles Nash, is prepared to take their young son, Hugo, on one of his children's transports to England. Moreover, by a happy arrangement, his own parents, who run the family prep school, are willing to act as his sponsors.

This is a children's story of wartime England seen through the eyes of a small English girl, herself an exile from South Africa. Holly, shy, sensitive, ardent, bestows her loyalty and friendship on Hugo, her new playfellow and 'forever friend'. Hugo's relationship with the adults is somewhat more complex. Splendidly irrational, Holly's mother has some trouble with the fact that the little refugee boy is actually Jewish. (For his part, Hugo is equally ill at ease in the hymn-singing C of E chapel service.) But then there's his sponsor's anxious wish that the boy should be accepted by the other boys in the school. And, when Hugo falls ill with pneumonia, the vicar asks the congregation to spare some of their precious coal

ration to keep his room warm.

All in all, this is a happy time for Holly and Hugo - almost a childhood idyll. And yet war obtrudes (evacuation, black-outs, sirens, gasmasks) and then casts its inevitable darker shadows. Holly's father returns from Dunkirk, exhausted and distressed. The glamorous Miles dies at sea. At the end of the war, Holly and Hugo (by now ten-year-olds or so) accidentally, horrifyingly, see a newsreel of Belsen.

Perhaps one should never confuse authors with their story. Yet it needs to be mentioned that Jenny Koralek, married to the architect Paul Koralek, is the niece of 'the dashing Trevor Chadwick' - see April 2002 issue of *AJR Journal* - who, together with Nicholas Winton, rescued the children from Prague. The Chadwick clan alone sponsored three of the children (myself included).

So, although a work of fiction, the book contains much autobiography.

As for me, it is not only a story of war and refugees, but an intense evocation of an English childhood.

Gerda Mayer

Hole-in-the-heart historian

INTERESTING TIMES

Eric Hobsbawm

Allen Lane: The Penguin Press, £20

Back in 1948 I was a baisting hand and found there weren't enough hours in the day. From 8 am till 6 pm, with half an hour off for lunch, I toiled in a workshop south of Oxford Street, spending most evenings at Birkbeck College where lectures were arranged in three-hour blocks. The problem was that 6 pm, when I was supposed to lay down my tailor's scissors in Soho, was the precise moment when the first of the evening's Birkbeck lecturers mounted the podium in Bloomsbury.

In those days, being newly married, I was still of gaunt appearance, with figure to match, and could sprint like a latter-day Pheidippides - which was just as well because I had to complete a thrice-weekly marathon between Soho and Bloomsbury. I would fly out of the workshop at five minutes to six - any earlier departure would have cost me the job - and steam, sweating and breathless, into the lecture hall at ten minutes past six. At this point, Eric Hobsbawm would briefly turn his bespectacled gaze from the lectern to the door before continuing his peroration without a pause. At first I was grateful to him for ignoring my persistently late arrival, but eventually my take on the situation changed.

After a day in the sweatshop and lacking time for a clean-up, I usually arrived at Birkbeck with the insignia of my craft - bits of sewing thread, traces of chalk, etc - still visible on my clothes. From conversation with my fellow alumni I discovered that they followed middle-class professions - civil service, teaching, local government - to a man, and that I was the only worker among the student body. Why, I asked myself, did the Marxist Hobsbawm, who saw all history as a prelude to the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', not evince any personal interest in the only

proletarian present in the lecture hall? After three terms of assiduous attendance and persistent late-coming, he must surely have noticed my work-worn appearance!

Eventually I concluded that Socialism - which reputedly means love for one's fellow-men - was for Hobsbawm an affair of the head, and not the heart. This impression is fully corroborated in his autobiography *Interesting Times*. In it he doesn't shy away from Jesuitical logic-chopping to justify his culpable silence in the face of Soviet atrocities. He doesn't scruple to compare the millions of famine victims resulting from Stalin's collectivisation programme with the 50 million dead of the Second World War, and writes sententiously: 'Was the sacrifice worthwhile? I frankly cannot face the idea that it was not. I cannot say it would have been better if the world was run by Adolf Hitler.'

• What blatantly disingenuous conflation of two totally disparate phenomena! It insults readers' intelligence to liken the totally arbitrary deaths of Stalin's famine victims to the carnage forced upon the world by its refusal to surrender to Hitler and Hirohito! Something else that sticks in the craw - though to a lesser degree - is Hobsbawm's self-definition as a 'non-refugee'. (His Berlin-based Jewish family regrouped in London in March 1933, barely two months after Hitler's accession to power.)

Non-refugee or not, he had close contacts with the coterie of Hampstead émigrés, especially Erich Fried and Jacov Lind. I have it on the latter's authority that Hobsbawm was at one with Fried in his vehement opposition to Zionism. It is therefore hardly surprising that he has been faulted for paying insufficient attention to the impact of nationalism on world affairs.

What I do find surprising is his choice of title for this book. After all, if the twentieth century was the most 'interesting' - i.e. disturbed and bloody - in human history, the blame rests largely with the Kaiser, Hitler, Stalin and Mao. And the two last-mentioned of those four monsters were, like Hobsbawm himself, undeviating Marxists.

Richard Grunberger

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PROFILE

Richard Grunberger

Renaissance man on the Mersey



Fritz Spiegl

Readers may remember the list of my most prominent profilees (see September issue, p. 2), whom I sought out in such elevated locations as the Palace of Westminster and Cambridge colleges. Even so, I was not prepared for the Georgian splendour of the house Fritz Spiegl inhabits in Liverpool. Fortunately, being aesthetically untrained, I am absolved from the chore of describing his miniature *palazzo* - since it serves as the setting of Granada TV's ongoing *Forsyte Saga* series. All I can do is to state prosaically that it houses a veritable Aladdin's cave of bibelots, old musical instruments, pictures, antiques and books.

A *propos* of books, as I mounted the stairs to the first floor, I faced rows of bookshelves that took up the width of the landing. The spines of the volumes in the middle section, I discovered, all bore jokey titles: Richard Wagner's *Kol Nidrei*, 1985 by George Orwell, *The Goyhood* of Arnold Schoenberg (NB: Schoenberg had turned Catholic, and then Protestant, before reverting to Judaism in 1933). It took me some time to realise that I was looking at the dummy spines of non-existent books. The whole *trompe l'oeil* concealed a secret door (a feature found in many country houses).

Fritz Spiegl has not always lived like this. He was born in a fly-blown village in Burgenland, close to the Austro-Hungarian border. From the age of ten he attended a Catholic *Konvikt*, where 'the teachers were either priests, or Nazis - or both'. His father distilled soda water, and several uncles followed similarly humdrum trades. However, Fritz had a Viennese cousin whose employment by Reuter's agency gave him foreign contacts (as well as the *News Chronicle* proprietor, Lord Layton, as a father-in-law).

Thanks to this cousin, who was as solicitous as he was well-connected, 12-year-old Fritz got taken into the Northamptonshire home of Captain Margesson MP, a minister in the Chamberlain government. Here the

newcomer shared a snug berth with a fellow refugee by the name of Walter Neurath (subsequently founder of the art publishing house Thames and Hudson). What makes this episode in Fritz's early life read like a page torn from *Who's Who* is the fact that the Margessons employed Marjory Strachey (sister of Lytton, the Bloomsbury literary lion) as their boys' home tutor, and the father of the actor Peter Bowles as their chauffeur.

Fritz was sent to a minor public school, where he learned little beyond 'rugger, plane-spotting and a bit of Latin'. Eventually he went to London to work in the design department of an advertising agency. From art he switched to music, taught himself the flute, enrolled at the Royal Academy of Music and, within a short time, became Principal Flautist with the Liverpool Philharmonic.

Fritz stayed in that post for 15 years, during which time he increasingly branched out into extra-mural, though still music-related, activities. He formed a wind ensemble, gave talks on the BBC's Third Programme, and co-composed the signature tune of *Z Cars*, which sold 150,000 records. In addition, he turned the Royal Albert Hall into the venue for performing a *Concerto for Motor-car and Orchestra*, at

the climax of which Lord Montague of Beaulieu drove his vintage car onto the stage. In Liverpool he organised annual 'Nuts in May' concerts, featuring a *Liszt Twist* and other parody items. This approach helped draw new young audiences into concert halls. But though Fritz is a popularizer of music, he has a strong, not to say visceral, aversion to Pop. He called the Beatles phenomenon 'the greatest confidence trick since the Virgin Birth' - a judgment bound to rouse the ire of all Liverpudlians (half of whom are Catholics, and the rest 'Fab Four' addicts). On the other hand, Fritz mollified at least some of his Scouse neighbours by tracking down the apparently lost score of the only opera set in their native city: Donizetti's *Emilia di Liverpool*. He then went on to have this musical rarity broadcast by the BBC Home Service with Joan Sutherland in the lead.

Fritz's association with the BBC has also yielded such worthwhile series as 'Music for Pleasure'; later he was a regular on 'Start the Week'. In the interim he had turned to authorship, producing a string of books linked to this profession, including *Music through the Looking Glass*, *Musical Blunders*, and *The Lives, Wives and Loves of the Great Composers*. Impelled by his impish humour, he then cast his net wider with such titles as *A Bedside Book for English Lovers*, *Lern Yourself Scouse*, *A Game of Two Halves*, *Brian* (about football), *Grave Humour* (about tombstone inscriptions), and *Keep Taking the Tabloids* (an attack on newspaper jargon and clichés). He also homed in on the last-mentioned target in his 'Usage and Abuse' column in the *Daily Telegraph*.

Right now Fritz is at work on a related book to be entitled *Contradictionary*. Given that he is an ever-vigilant guardian of the purity and stylishness of English, I am happy to report that *AJR Journal* has passed the Spiegl test. And, what is more, he has recently taken out a subscription.

INSIDE the AJR

South London: '150 Years of Moss Bros'

Monty Moss gave a most interesting talk on the history of Moss Brothers. The firm was founded in 1860 by his great-grandfather Moses Moses, who sold men's clothes out of a barrow, offering good material, good styles and good value. Over the years other members of the family joined the business and shops were opened in London and the provinces. Customers unable to pay outright were given credit - a look at their shoes decided the amount of credit allowed! By 1982 there were 35 shops in England. The firm is still going strong.

Anne Poloway

Next meeting: Thursday 14 November.
Guest speaker: a representative of the Israel Embassy

West Midlands: 'Once Upon a Time'

Three members - Hertha Linden, Paul Oppenheimer and Heinz Shire - each gave a 15-minute talk on their experiences on first arriving in this country. The 30 members present looked as though they really enjoyed the stories presented to them. A delicious array of home-made cakes added to a most cordial get-together and it was felt that everyone was looking forward to our next meeting.

Werner Abrahams

Next meeting: Sunday 12 January 2003 at the Progressive Synagogue. Rabbi Tann: 'The Lighter Side of Judaism'

Pinner basks in nostalgia

In a nostalgic return to the 'swinging 30s and 40s' on superbly recorded discs, Bill Phillip paraded a wealth of music beginning with, among others, Al Jolson singing 'Rockaby Baby' and the (pre-Hitler Berlin) Comedian Harmonists rendering *Die ganze Welt ist wunderschön*. He included gems such as a Perry Como recording of the Rogers and Hart number 'With a Song in my Heart' - before a break for apples and honey to usher in the New Year.

Walter Weg

Next meeting: Thursday 7 November at 2 pm: Laszlo Eckstein, 'Antiques for Fun'. Also please bring your own unusual items

Brighton & Hove Sarid: the Brighton Jewish Film Festival

We were given a most interesting talk by Judith Ironside, Director of the Brighton Jewish Film Festival, the only one of its kind in the UK - though it is 'exported' in reduced format to London. Every year Judith attends the Berlin International Film Festival, where she selects the films that will eventually be shown in Brighton. The festival's audiences are 55 per cent non-Jewish and there is growing interest among the younger generation.

Fausta Shelton

Next meeting: Monday 18 November at 10.45 am. Group members will discuss their contribution to this country

Harrogate's sociable afternoon

For the third time this year, Susanne Green, AJR's Northern Group Co-ordinator, gathered together members from Harrogate, York, Leeds and other surrounding areas to spend a sociable afternoon. Given the presence of three gentlemen who joined us for the first time, Susanne asked us to regale each other with mini-biographies so that nobody should feel left out. By this means we are all getting to know one another a little better. Susanne also reported on recent AJR meetings and 'advertised' those that will take place in the near future.

Inge Little

Next meeting: Monday 3 February

North London: the Leitz family of Wetzlar

In yet another successful gathering we were addressed by Rabbi Frank Dabba-Smith on the Leitz family, whose guiding words during the Nazi period were allegedly 'altruism and pragmatism'. The family owned the factory in Wetzlar which manufactured the famous Leica camera and other optical equipment. Their value to the Nazis was incalculable. Like a number of so-called *Mittelstand*, the family harboured a profound aversion to Nazi behaviour.

Herbert Haberberg

Next meeting: Thursday 28 November at 10.30 am: Alf Keiles, 'The Jewish Influence on Jazz and Pop Music (with Musical Illustrations)'

Essex: Report on the Jewish district of Kazimierz

Our guest speaker Alex Rosenzweig told us of his recent visit to the district of Kazimierz, once the heartbeat of Jewish life in Cracow. Today the houses, synagogues and *yeshivot* still stand but are empty. About 100 elderly Jews form a community; their rabbi is Moishe Isserlis. Many Poles have retained their hostility to the Jews. What is left of this once-flourishing Jewish district has become an attraction for foreign tourists.

Julie Franks

Next meeting: Tuesday 12 November. Otto and Emil will bring videos to inform and entertain us

Nottingham (East Midlands)

Next meeting: Wednesday 13 November. Contact Bob Norton for details

The report 'Brighton & Hove Sarid free-for-all' which appeared in our October issue was not written by F Goldberg as stated. Our apologies to him for this error - Ed.

AJR GROUP CONTACTS

North London

Jenny Zundel 020 8882 4033

South London

Ken Ambrose 020 8852 0262

Pinner (HA Postal District)

Vera Gellman 020 8866 4833

Surrey

Edmée Barta 01372 727 412

Brighton & Hove (Sussex Region)

Fausta Shelton 01273 734 648

Wessex (Bournemouth)

Mark Goldfinger 01202 552 434

East Midlands (Nottingham)

Bob Norton 01159 212 494

West Midlands (Birmingham)

Henny Rednall 0121 373 5603

North (Manchester)

Werner Lachs 0161 773 4091

Leeds HSFA

Trude Silman 0113 225 1628

Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool

Newcastle

Susanne Green 0151 291 5734

Essex (Westcliff)

Larry Lisner 01702 300812

A happy retirement for Agi Alexander



Agi with husband Simon and son Michael

At a farewell party in honour of Agi Alexander, Marcia Goodman, Head of the AJR's Social Services Department, expressed gratitude to her predecessor for the excellent work she had done for the AJR and wished her well for the future.

Agi was born in the Hungarian city of Debrecen. Following the Nazi occupation of the country, her father was murdered by Hungarian Nazis but her Slovak-born mother was taken to Ravensbrück. After the war she and her mother were repatriated to Eastern Czechoslovakia.

In 1949 mother and daughter arrived in Israel where Agi met a South African tourist who was eventually to become her husband. Having moved to South Africa, Agi finished school and attended a secretarial college. The couple, concerned with political events in the country, subsequently left for the UK.

During her first years in London, Agi was busy raising a family, but in the early 1970s she became a voluntary worker at Harlesden's Advice Centre. She also studied for a diploma at Ealing Technical College. In 1989 she was appointed head of the AJR's Social Services Department, relinquishing the post in 1997 to specialise in Welfare Benefits Advice.

Linda Kasmir, previously a volunteer for the Citizens Advice Bureaux, has taken over as the AJR's Welfare Benefits Adviser.

HS

Amanda Shaw, AJR's Volunteers Co-ordinator for the past five years, has left to take up a career in teaching. Carol Hart, who has wide experience as a Jewish community volunteer, has taken over the post.

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KT-AJR

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'DROP IN' ADVICE SERVICE NEW ARRANGEMENTS

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NW3 6AL

Paul Balint AJR Day Centre 15 Cleve Road, West Hampstead, NW6
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Tue	12	Michael Heaton entertains
Wed	13	Rosemary Wiseman entertains
Thur	14	Hounslow Community Opera
Sun	17	DAY CENTRE OPEN - No Entertainment
Mon	18	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	19	Jenny Kossew - Accordionist
Wed	20	LUNCHEON CLUB
Thur	21	Francoise and Friends
Sun	24	DAY CENTRE OPEN - AJR/FJR
Mon	25	Kards & Games Klub
Tue	26	Nicola Smedley - La Diva
Wed	27	Yakov Paul entertains
Thur	28	Margaret Gibbs - Opera Pops

Birth

Robinson. To Caroline and Jonathan, 28 August, Amelia Abigail - Kurt and Renate Treitel's second granddaughter.

Deaths

Trent. Eva. An obituary will appear in the December issue.

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Day Centre

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Chiropodist. Trevor Goldman at the Paul Balint AJR Day Centre **Wednesday 6 November 10-11.30 am.**

Shoe Sale - Bob of Home Comfort will be at the **Paul Balint AJR Day Centre** **Thursday 7 and Wednesday 27 November 9.45-11.45 am.**

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Obituary Nicolai Rubinstein

Professor Nicolai Rubinstein, who has died at the age of 91, was one of the twentieth century's most outstanding scholars of renaissance Italy. He was born in Berlin into a cosmopolitan Jewish family. His upbringing in Weimar Germany, a partly French-speaking education, a lengthy stay in Switzerland, a period of research in Italy and an academic career in England - all combined to provide him with a profoundly international outlook.

As a student in Berlin, Nicolai Rubinstein attended the seminar of Erich Caspar, the celebrated historian of the papacy, and he was introduced to renaissance Florence by Hans Baron. Following the rise of Hitler, he moved to the UK. After freelance teaching in Oxford, he became a lecturer at what is now Southampton University and, from

1945, a lecturer at London University's Westfield College (now merged with Queen Mary College). Here, his special contribution was to inspire and run the joint course in history and the history of art which he established with Christopher Brooke in collaboration with the history of art department at University College London, where it still flourishes.

In his later life, he and his wife Ruth, herself a distinguished art historian of the Italian renaissance, commuted between London and Florence, where he was made an honorary citizen. In London, he divided his time between Westfield and the Warburg Institute. In the Warburg after 1978 Nicolai Rubinstein collected the materials for his great collaborative edition of the letters of Lorenzo de Medici.

HS

Search Notices

Carl Brod, born Vienna 10.3.1879 and **Marie Brod née Tritsch**, born Vienna 25.11.1885. Their last Vienna address was Wien 9, Glasergasse 4a. My uncle and aunt, they fled Austria for England 30 or 31 May 1939. Information, Lea Okouneff, 6452 McLynn Ave., Montreal, Quebec H3X 2R4 Canada, dofilm@sprint.ca.

Edith Maybaum from Hannover, probably emigrated to England in 1935. Worked in Hannoveranische Knopffabrik Gompertz & Meinrath. The owners also left for London in 1935 and founded a button factory there. Is Ludwig Meinrath still alive and does the factory still exist? Information, Monica Wittib at monicawittib@hotmail.com.

Department of English at Vienna University is seeking former students. If you were a student there or know of a student there during or before the Nazi period, please contact Mag Barbara Olsson, Institut fuer Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Uni-Campus AAKH, Hof 8, Spitalgasse 2-4, 1909 Vienna, barbara.olsson@univie.ac.at.

Gotthold Gumprecht, violinist and director of Ziskoven Conservatory of Music in Bonn. Born Hamburg, arrived England 28.04.39, died aged 58 in War Memorial Hospital at Edenbridge, Seven Oaks, Kent 11.01.40. Last known residence: Garston Place, Godstone RD. I seek information on his time in England, and/or when and where he was incarcerated in Germany before his emigration. Married Anna Ziskoven, pianist. His Aryan wife stayed in Bonn and committed suicide after hearing of her husband's death. Information, Karen Gumprecht Komar, his grandniece, at kaykay9936@aol.com.

Prof Harry Obermayer. For biography by Prof Julian Levinson. Whoever knew him in 1930-32 or studied with him in Praeparandenschule Hochberg near Wurzburg, please contact Gila Maor, Israel tel 972-3-5242206, j-ronen@zahav.net.il.

Phillip/Philip Veit Came to UK on Kindertransport from Munich. His parents were Herman Veit and Cilla Zinn. Information, oberman@ozemail.com.au.

Central Office For Holocaust Claims

Michael Newman

Frankfurt forced labour compensation

Victims of Nazi persecution used as forced labourers in the city of Frankfurt are entitled to claim an extra compensation award under the terms of a reparation programme introduced by the city's government. Eligible applicants will receive a one-time payment of DM 2,000 (approximately £650).

The compensation is in addition to any monies received, or due to be received, from the German Foundation Slave and Forced Labour Programme.

Together with confirmation of their name, address and date of birth, applicants are advised to write direct to the Frankfurt city department handling these claims with copies of any supporting documents.

Applications and further enquiries should be addressed to Mr Andrej Bodek, Stadt Frankfurt-am-Main, Dezernat Kultur und Freizeit, Brückenstrasse 3-7, D-60594 Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany. Mr Bodek can also be contacted by telephone on 0049 69 212 369 41 or by email at andrzej.bodek@stadt-frankfurt.de.

Insurance tax exemption

The Capital Taxes Technical Group of the Inland Revenue has confirmed that compensation awards made in respect of unpaid Holocaust-era insurance policies will not attract Capital Gains Tax.

Insurance deadline extension

A further extension to the filing period for applications to the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims has been announced. Claims can now be submitted up to 30 March 2003. The extra time will allow potential claimants to review the list of identified unpaid insurance policies, which now runs to some 49,000 names and continues to be updated. A list of outstanding claims is available on line at www.icheic.org.

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.

Women and the Nobel Prize

Michael Spiro

The first Nobel Prizes were awarded in 1901. A century later, only 11 women scientists have received this distinction. Of course, we remember Marie Sklodowska Curie, who won the 1903 Nobel Prize in Physics (jointly with her husband Pierre and Henri Becquerel), for her pioneering work on radioactivity, as well as the 1911 Nobel Prize in chemistry for her discovery of radium and polonium. But not all women scientists who deserved Nobel recognition received it.

One such was Lise Meitner, a nuclear physicist who, because of her Jewish descent, had to flee from Berlin to Sweden in 1938. There she and her refugee nephew Otto Frisch explained that the totally unexpected experimental results obtained by her former co-worker Otto Hahn in Berlin on bombarding uranium with slow neutrons were due to the splitting of the uranium nucleus. But it was Otto Hahn alone who won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1944, although Meitner later received other honours.

Another woman denied proper recognition was Rosalind Franklin, described as the 'Dark Lady of DNA' by Brenda Maddox in a book recently serialised on Radio 4. She was the attractive daughter of a successful Anglo-Jewish family. Her fine X-ray photographs at King's College London

revealed that DNA had the form of a helix and this contributed much to establishing its structure. Sadly, she died in 1958 at the age of 38, and the resulting Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 1962 was shared by Francis Crick, James Watson and Maurice Wilkins.

It is not only Jewish women scientists who failed to obtain deserved Nobel honours. A well-known example is Jocelyn Bell, who, as a research student in Cambridge, discovered unusual and regular radio signals from space which were subsequently shown to be produced by rapidly rotating neutron stars named pulsars. This discovery helped her supervisor, Antony Hewish, to win the 1974 Nobel Prize for Physics jointly with the radio astronomer Sir Martin Ryle. Jocelyn became Bell Burnell on marriage and has had a distinguished career in astronomy.

A Jewish woman scientist who did succeed in winning a Nobel Prize was the Italian cell biologist Rita Levi-Montalcini. She was forced to hide in various places during the war and in 1947 emigrated to the USA, returning to Italy only in the 1970s. Her discovery of nerve growth factors advanced our understanding of the development of embryo tissue and gained her the 1986 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, jointly with the American biochemist Stanley Cohen.

The psychopathology of politics *continued from page 1*

unemployment levels - latched on to foreign affairs in the shape of Iraq. But Frau Däubler has now gone - so let's not be beastly to the Germans. Let us hope that the Free Democrats will likewise consign their deputy leader, Jürgen Möllermann, whose Jew-baiting antics divided the party and cost them votes, to the political wilderness.

Lastly, what of our own counterpart to the FDP? It was strange to hear Charles Kennedy tell Lib-Dem Conference

delegates that he doubted the legitimacy of US-desired regime change in Iraq. If the civilised world has learned anything from the Second World War it is surely that regimes which threaten peace must be removed.

And it can be done - as the recent examples of Serbia and Afghanistan prove. What's more, would even George Galloway or Harold Pinter claim that Presidents Kostunica and Karzai are US stooges?

Newsround

German media firm lied about its Nazi past

The German media giant Bertelsmann has admitted that it lied about its Nazi past and that it made huge profits through the use of Jewish slave labour. A commission set up by the firm found that, in the Nazi period, Bertelsmann transformed itself from a religious and school book publisher into a supplier of millions of anti-Semitic texts.

Nazi loot claim 'compelling'

The British Museum says there is 'compelling' evidence that four drawings in its collection were looted by the Nazis between 1935 and 1945 from a collection owned by Dr Arthur Feldmann of Brno in the Czech Republic. Dr Carol Homden, from the British Museum, stressed that there was still some way to go before the matter was fully resolved.

Vatican urged to open archives on Nazi era

Cardinal Karl Lehmann, the Bishop of Mainz, has called on the Vatican to open all its Nazi-era archives to help defuse criticism that the Roman Catholic Church, in particular Pope Pius XII, failed to speak out against the Holocaust.

90th anniversary of birth of Raoul Wallenberg commemorated

To mark the 90th anniversary of the birth of Raoul Wallenberg, the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation has held a series of special events in several capital cities. In one such event, a commemorative medal was presented to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Holocaust denier ordered to remove material from web

In a landmark case in the Australian Federal Court, Dr Frederick Toben has been ordered to remove all material denying the Holocaust from his Adelaide Institute website. According to a report in the *Jewish Chronicle*, in 1999 Dr Toben was found guilty in Germany of incitement, disparagement and insulting the memory of the dead, for which he served a seven-month term of imprisonment.