ELECTIONS IN ISRAEL

Netanyahu Must Reconcile

In the elections to the Knesset, nearly everyone came out a winner. First of all, the Israelis. For them, the elections were a welcome day off work. Most Israelis voted as usual for the well-known politicians and parties. However, the Labor Party was punished for its obvious incompetence. At the last moment, the liberal camp succeeded in setting its internal disputes aside, achieving a result under the leadership of former military chief Benny Gantz and former television host Yair Lapid. Nonetheless, they fell short. The true winner was Benjamin Netanyahu. Now in his tenth year in office, the Prime Minister even managed to improve upon the results of the previous election. The Likud leader is set to form a coalition of the right-wing parties under his helm. Bibi will soon be the longest-serving Prime Minister in Israel’s history. But Netanyahu still faces allegations of corruption. Attorney General Yahu still faces allegations of incompetence. At the last moment, the Prime Minister has proven himself a smart diplomat and an achiever. They grumble about Bibi, and yet millions lent him their vote. Their decision is a pragmatic one. Netanyahu has stabilized Israel’s economy. He helped pave the way for the country’s high-tech industry to join the ranks of the international elite. Netanyahu likes to tout his reputation as “Mr. Security.” Under his leadership, terrorism has turned into arrogance – a sentiment that has become especially common in the liberal economic powerhouse of Tel Aviv. Netanyahu received only 31 percent of the vote. Why do the lion’s share of Israelis continue to support the nearly 70-year-old Netanyahu? Apart from his loyal supporters, who celebrate Bibi as the “King of Israel”, the notoriously irrevocably resolute Israelis have few illusions about the faults and failings of their Prime Minister. They grumble about Bibi, and yet millions support him.

Frank-Walter Steinmeier always had something to say to this newspaper. In an exclusive interview with the Jewish Voice, the Federal President calls the German-Jewish partnership a great stroke of luck and emphasizes his connection with the Israeli democracy.

Thank You, הודות – Just for a Beginning

Goodbye, Auf Wiedersehen!, Le-hitraot. Thank you to our readers, advertisers, friends, advisory board and supporters. Since 2012, you have encouraged us with your energy, interest and advice. That made it possible for us to provide you with an informative and independent newspaper, and advocate for vibrant German-Jewish-Israeli cooperation and community. This work could only be accomplished with a highly motivated team of editors. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment. We have many qualified staff who would be able to revive a German-Jewish newspaper – either this one or a new one – in the future. Our budget is little more than a “flyspeck”, as a state secretary once told me. One would think that a German-Jewish publication that has been warmly received both in Germany and abroad would be worth such an investment.

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Stalemate or forward thinking?
Starting a family? Building a house? Or beginning a business? You need courage to do any of these. We support curious people like you reliably, knowledgeably and with financial backbone. Still going strong after 128 years.
FRANK-WALTER STEINMEIER

Jeans and Germans: A Vibrant Reality
The Federal President on democracy, populism, Israel and Iran

How can the liberal democracies assert themselves in a lasting way against the global populist offensive?

We should first ask ourselves what is meant by populism and what causes it. Although the center of the world take many different forms and pursue many different goals, they have one thing in common – they all purport to be the voice of the so-called “real people” against the representative institutions of the state and political sphere. That is precisely what defines populism’s opposition to liberal democracy, where the people always exist in the plural and equality before the law governs peaceful coexistence.

How will you make sure that that is precisely what defines populism’s opposition to liberal democracy, where the people always exist in the plural and equality before the law governs peaceful coexistence. I think that the upheavals in the middle classes, particularly as a result of the impact of globalisation, are one of the things currently feeding populism and the fascination with authoritarianism.

The liberal democracies face particular challenges. What is vital here is that the full authority of the state protects human and civil rights against any attack. I firmly believe that both talking with one another and solving problems together are important as regards fostering new cohesion in our societies.

Decreasing political stability means that the Federal President has a greater role to play. It is the task of the Federal President to uphold and strengthen unity in the country and cohesion in society. The growing political polarisation in Germany also poses a particular challenge to the Federal President. However, I do not see an acute crisis that threatens the very survival of democracy in Germany. I travel a lot throughout the country and meet many members of the public. I am deeply impressed by their engagement and energy. They get involved, be it online or in the traditional way on the ground. Some of them are very young; others are older. Some were born here, others immigrated to Germany. They stand for the strength and diversity of our country and democracy. They are a source of hope. And all of them have my full support. I want to encourage them.

How can Germans be encouraged to view Jews not only as victims of the Nazi, but as fellow Germans and fellow human beings? How can Jews in Germany be transformed from people who warn about the past to people who play an active role?

For a long time now, I have seen Jews living in Germany as people who self-confidently play an active role in shaping our country. And that is a great stroke of luck. Coexistence among Jews and non-Jews has become a vibrant reality. I am very grateful for that. The main thing is that we meet each other and stand together as equal citizens and that our encounters are free of distorted images, preconceptions or indeed hostility. My wish is that the focus in our coexistence be on what we have in common, not on what divides us. At the same time, we need to be vigilant. There are still anti-Semitism in Germany, and unfortunately there are many signs that it is increasing and even gaining ground in the heart of society, not just on the margins. It is our common civic duty to fight against anti-Semitism in all its forms, as none of us can live in safety. In other words, only if Jews in Germany feel completely at home will our country be completely itself.

Israel is an important partner for Germany. On a formal level, everything is excellent. How can relations between people be improved?

We should not forget that it was people who created the miracle of the reconciliation between Germans and Israelis across the profound rift in our history. This miracle is the result of the work, efforts and engagement of countless people in Israel and Germany over the course of several generations. It is always amazing to see how close and wide ranging the contacts are between Germany and Israel. This relationship can never be merely "formal". And each new generation must remain committed to remembrance of the past. At the same time, we can work closely together while focusing on the future, for example in joint projects in digital technologies, where Germany can learn a great deal from Israel.

It is true that political exchange at governmental level has not become easier in recent years. And alongside the close political, economic and security cooperation between our countries and governments, there is still a lot to do. For instance, we have been thinking for a while now about setting up a German Israeli youth office.

However, contacts between our civil societies have become more intensive and diverse. During my last visit to Israel, I was particularly impressed by the engagement of volunteers from Action Reconciliation - Service for Peace, who spend a year working in Israel with Holocaust survivors and on other social projects. This experience has a profound and lifelong effect on the young volunteers. Not only are they ambassadors for Germany in the best sense of the word, they will remain ambassadors for the very special relations between Germany and Israel for their whole lives.

The German-Israeli Future Forum Foundation is another good example. It is building up a network of young people from these two countries. It also supports innovative projects in the fields of culture, education, business, academia and the media. And even if they are not involved in a project, young Israelis love coming to Berlin, for example, to live, work or simply enjoy a holiday here. And conversely, many Germans regard Tel Aviv as an attractive, exciting, modern and simply wonderful city.

How can Berlin foster the peace process in the "wild" Middle East?

The situation in the Middle East is becoming increasingly complex. For Israel, that is more than a foreign policy challenge in a region which is already fragile, as there is growing polarisation on this issue in Israeli society itself. At the same time, I personally do not see any other peaceful solution to the conflict in the Middle East apart from the two-state solution. Can the status quo really be sustained? Can the search for a peaceful, democratic future for Israel? I am not asking these questions out of a desire to tell Israel what to do – we have no right to do that – but rather out of genuine concern. But naturally, a two-state solution necessitates a whole range of conditions that would need to be met by all those involved. Along with many European partners, Germany is thus working to make these prerequisites more realistic. For example, during my visit to Israel in the spring of 2017 I visited Givat Haviva, the largest and oldest Israeli organisation that works to foster Jewish-Arab understanding. The way that Jewish and Arab villages work together to tackle the challenges of daily life, infrastructure problems or education issues is a vivid example of how things can be achieved together in the midst of all the conflicts in the region. My wife and I were really profoundly impressed by Givat Haviva’s work.

Shouldn’t the nuclear agreement with Iran contain an undertaking to safeguard all countries’ right to exist, including Israel’s?

Iran itself and in the region give us many reasons for concern. And in this regard, the JCPOA, is to curb a possible threat to Israel’s survival and to do so in a very concrete way, not through words or promises, but rather by actually restricting Iran’s nuclear capabilities. That was and is the main point of the agreement. What was achieved here remains as valuable as ever. I can’t see that terminating the nuclear agreement would make Iran’s existence safer.

Other hopes that Iran would become a more constructive player in the Middle East have not come to pass so far. The actions of the Iranian leadership both in Iran itself and in the region give us many grounds for concern. And in this regard, I also want to state that Germany firmly opposes any denial or disparagement of the victims of the Holocaust. Israel’s existence and the security of the State of Israel are non-negotiable for our country.

I also want to state that Germany firmly opposes any denial or disparagement of the victims of the Holocaust. Israel’s existence and the security of the State of Israel are non-negotiable for our country.
German-Jewish relations have something in common with the topics of love and hate: the subject matter has been studied extensively, we know nearly everything there is to know about it, and countless books have been published on the subject. But still, we do not understand it completely. Ouer and over again, we find ourselves surprised by the violent intensity as well as the intimacy of this relationship.

My entire adult life, including as editor of the Jewish Voice, has been spent in engagement with this topic. Jewish-German relations have become a central theme of my life. In this final issue of our newspaper I would like to share it with you.

Duration. Jews have lived in Germany for at least 500 years longer than the nation has existed. Jews are an inextricable part of German society, economic, culture and language.

Language. The Yiddish language is the integral component and symbol of the German-Jewish symbiosis. Yiddish is comprised mainly of German vernacular with a smattering of Hebrew. It is written in Hebrew script and follows the rules of German grammar. In return, the German language, including what is called “high German”, includes many smatterings of Hebrew.

Hatred of Jews. Initially, Jews lived largely undisturbed in Germany. After the beginning of the Crusades in the 13th century, hostility against Jews spread from France to Germany, where it combined with animosity, prejudice, aggression and a desire to form a powerful hatred that found its culmination under the Nazi dictatorship.

Persecution and achievement. Until 1871, Jews were denied legal equality in Germany. Neverthelss, Jews were extremely successful. Half of private banks were owned by Jews, as were 80 percent of department stores.

Reparations and evasions. The majority of Germans did not actively support the genocide of the Jews. But they followed the maxim: “see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.” This continued even after 1945 and Germany’s defeat. Most Germans preferred to believe the country had made a final break with the past. As a result, most Germans thought it unnecessary to bring the perpetrators to justice, or to provide material compensation to Jewish survivors. Despite opposition from within his party, Konrad Adenauer, the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, was determined to provide material compensation to the Jews and the State of Israel.

To achieve this goal, Adenauer was even prepared to ally himself with the Social Democratic opposition. In the Luxembourg Agreement of 1952, West Germany agreed to provide material compensation and payments to surviving Jews in the amount of nearly two billion deutschmarks.

Over the years, the amount of compensation totaled many times that amount. Former Nazis dominated the West German judicial system. This was what allowed most of those who had participated in the Jewish genocide to escape unscathed.

The idea of Europe would go on to enjoy unprecedented success. Borders were toppled. Germany reunited under peaceful and democratic terms. The European Union grew to encompass 28 states and more than 500 million people, becoming a leading global economic power.

Many people suffering from poverty and persecution sought refuge here. Of course, there were problems – as there always are and must be. But rather than mastering these challenges, some in Europe began to revert to old habits of egotism, the very attitudes that brought us so much suffering and destruction in the past.

The fact that populism has also taken hold of the reins in the United States is one of our current situations. The US will remain united – but Europe is beginning to break apart. Britain voted to leave the European Union. It is past time for Britain to acknowledge that this decision will do damage both to their own country and Europe as a whole. Yet rather than reversing course, they are backing themselves into a corner. In an unappragmatic and wholly un-British fashion, they have chosen to become the “party of No”.

Europe is simply watching and standing by. This is a mistake. Instead we must persist, and extend Britain our hand. Britain must be allowed to save face, and Europe must find a way to open the door to their return. If we fail, we will be the speed to the path to the dissolution of a unified and peaceful Europe. That would be a terrible mistake.

Hope Moves Slowly

Hope remains. Over and over again, we find ourselves surprised by the violent intensity as well as the intimacy of this relationship.

JEWISH-GERMAN COEXISTENCE

Hope Moves Slowly

By Rafael Seligmann

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EUROPE

Extend a Helping Hand to Britain

By Elisabeth Neu

Germany is called the Jews a “German tribe”. Politician Walther Rathenau was even prepared to ally himself with the Social Democratic opposition. In the Luxembourg Agreement of 1952, West Germany agreed to provide material compensation and payments to surviving Jews in the amount of nearly two billion deutschmarks.

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The greater the connections, the smaller the world. Discover over 500 destinations worldwide.
Time for Something New
But in the end the Israelis chose what they know

By Sarah Fantl

It’s best to avoid talking about politics and religion – otherwise there will be arguments. This is a general consensus. While in Germany people like to stick to the assumption that it is basically nobody’s business who one votes for and why, it is handled quite differently in Israel. After all, as is well known, arguing is the favorite pastime in the Jewish state. And much louder, more frequently and more openly than elsewhere. This has been especially noticeable in the past weeks. A carelessly stuck piece of paper in the elevator of a multi-storey car park makes it clear: the election of the new (or old) prime minister is a topic everywhere. Whether you get together with friends in Tel Aviv for a nice meal, with acquaintances at yoga in Jerusalem, with the family on the beach of Netanya or with strangers horse riding in the desert, at some point the question arises: who are you voting for? Mostly very direct and suddenly. And the reactions to the answer are similarly direct. Arguments are quickly shut back and forth as to why one should not vote for A but not for B either... When you’re through with arguing, you move on to the next topic in a relaxed manner. Never mind!

Ask your shawarma salesman

And even if you’ve not quite made up your mind or are simply curious, you can also have this conversation with your shawarma salesman or greengrocer at the shuk. Because apart from the very young Israelis, who are allowed to vote for the first time and to whom everything in life seems to be more important than politics, basically everyone has an answer ready. But as so often in Jewish life, there are two people and three opinions. There is only one thing everyone agrees on – but more on this later.

If you talk to students in bigger cities like Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Beersheba, you will find many Benny Gantz supporters. Above all, however, you come across people who essentially love justice, who want everything but Benjamin Netanyahu. “He is more interested in himself and his personal advantage than in our country,” Alon (24), student of Political Sciences, shouts during a Shabbat meal, alluding to the allegations of corruption that could lead to prosecution. Basically, everyone at the table agrees with him, even if not all of them are Gantz voters. One yearns in principle for a change in the country’s leadership. If you listen around, the name Gantz is dropped frequently, which could be due to the fact that Bibi’s biggest rival has already proven himself as an unagitated army chief and also he, just like his namesake, oozes Hollywood charm.

What his party, which was stomped out of the ground at short notice, stands for and above all how it plans to lead the country into the future, isn’t quite clear yet. But according to some Tel Avivis Gantz is “a nice guy” and they served in the army in his time. That connects them. Apparently enough to trust him to lead this country. There seems to be more of a feeling here - and again the fundamental desire for a new beginning, as Dor (26) confirms: “Bibi hasn’t done a bad job, but he’s been there too long. It’s time for something new.”

For 41-year-old Yaniv it is clear that he will vote for the conservative right to protect the Jewish state, but even for him the acting prime minister is out of the question: “He is corrupt, you simply can’t accept that any longer.” Gantz would have been his first choice, but now out of the question due to his cooperation with the liberal Tair Lapid. So he now switches to the national-religious Naftali Bennett. If you meet civil servants, the answer is: Likud. You try to get a little out of the line of fire and don’t have to start defending Bibi’s behavior (or that of his family), after all it’s about the party’s values, not Netanya- hu’s. Yet his followers are sure that it’s just a big conspiracy, as he asserted in a television speech a few months ago. And some simply don’t care about his private advantages as long as he protects the Jewish state – and at least that’s what he does in any aspect. And the confidence with which he handles this aggravating situation only confirms his followers in their choice. As already indicated, however, everyone agrees on one point: it is time for something new. There is disagreement as to who can take responsibility for this complicated country, which is constantly in danger, and agreement that Bibi’s behavior is no longer acceptable - yet the current prime minister could still win the election. Wait, what?

Stay relaxed

The reason for this are medium-sized cities like Ashkelon, Ashdod and Ash- kov with a majority of Likud supporters. Moreover, in purely mathematical terms, Netanya is the only one who can form a coalition with one of the right-wing religious parties, which he will do because he wants to remain in office at all costs. In Israel, one finds oneself in the elevator of a multi-storey car park and confronted with the question of whom to vote for. And people argue. Louder. More often. More openly. You discuss and worry. You stay relaxed because you trust yourself and your fellow human beings. Because you know that this country is strong, that you will survive. You don’t like Bibi and know that he will probably win again. You think this is not good, but that he will not lead the country into ruin (hopefully). And then you continue to enjoy the food, the togetherness, the sport, the sun and toast to life with Arak. In the end you agree that you disagree. That’s constructive debate for you.
Our Vision of a World Without Waste

Closing the reusable material cycle

For years there has been a rumor in the media that Coca-Cola Germany is becoming increasingly less involved in filling and offering reusable bottles. However, the truth is that reusable packaging is and remains an important part of our range. By introducing the first small 200ml Coca-Cola glass bottle 90 years ago, the company created the reusable bottle deposit system for soft drinks in Germany. Coca-Cola also developed the first reusable plastic bottle, actually in Germany, and introduced it to the German market as well. Currently, alongside the one liter PET reusable bottle, we also have reusable glass bottles in 200ml, 250ml, 330ml, 500ml, 700ml and 750ml sizes. If you count all of our beverages in all of their various sizes, we offer 64 products in reusable packaging.

Coca-Cola’s share of refillable packages significantly higher than industry average

Today, we are the largest provider of soft drinks in reusable packaging in Germany. In the last three years alone, Coca-Cola European Partners Deutschland GmbH (CCEP DE) has invested over €200 million in the renewal and expansion of our reusable bottle pool and in new reusable crates. In 2018, our volume share of reusable bottles was still 39.9 percent. This places Coca-Cola clearly higher than the industry average for soft drinks.

We believe in a mixture of single use and reusable packaging

Consumers make pragmatic purchase decisions depending on life circumstances and the particular occasion. That is why we rely on a mixture of single use deposit bottles and reusable packaging in a variety of sizes. This way we can offer our consumers a selection – not only in terms of our products, but also in terms of packaging.

Making sure that none of our packaging ends up in the ocean or the countryside

This year, we will also be bringing two new production lines for reusable packages online. With the one liter glass bottle for Coca-Cola Classic and Coca-Cola Zero Sugar, we are currently introducing a new reusable bottle to the German market.

Presently, however, there is not enough high-quality PET recyclate available for food packaging. The demand for this single-origin recyclate is very high. That is why we have invested in an innovative recycling process:

Creating food-safe packaging from different kinds of plastics

Through our cooperation with Ioniqa Technologies and Loop Industries, we are working on manufacturing food-safe packaging from plastics with different characteristics, colors and qualities. There is no silver bullet, but there are many paths leading in the right direction. We are investing further in reusable bottles, increasing the proportion of recycled PET in single use bottles and closing the reusable material cycle in our production.
REMARKABLE DISCOVERY

It’s the Fuhrer’s Wish You Be Treated Considerately

How an article by JVG editor Susanne Mauss caused a sensation worldwide

By Stephanie Weber

F

om the very beginning, Susanne Mauss (1962–2016) was at the heart of the Jewish Voice from Germany. When Rafael Seligmann published a letter regarding the Jewish Voice, Susanne was unstinting in her encouragement: “We need an independent venue that will further the cause of German-Jewish relations.” Consequently, she worked as an editor for contemporary history at the JVG right from the start. And the newspaper owed its first great scoop to her. Already as a student at the Geschwister Scholl Institute at the University of Munich, Susanne Krömer stood out. Her lecturer Rafael Seligmann could not but help notice her bright and critical mind as well as her perseverance. She was especially interested in Israel and the German past: “Any German interested in contemporary history knows where their responsibility must lie.”

Alongside raising her three children, Susanne Mauss completed her doctoral thesis: “The Jewish New York Weekly-Aufbahn and Policies of Reparations in the Federal Republic of Germany.” Part of her research consisted in analyzing, compiling and cataloguing the journal’s archival collection which until then had been largely neglected.

Lawyers without rights

In 2011, Susanne Mauss organized an exhibition in her home town: “Lawyers Without Rights” about Jewish lawyers in Düsseldorf between 1933 and 1945. The show and later the book published by Susanne Mauss documented the fate of these lawyers and legal clerks, restoring them to their rightful place in our memory. During the course of her research, Susanne came across some intriguing documents. In the summer of 2012, she published her findings in the JVG. Her article resonated around the world – it was picked up by more than 2600 media venues worldwide.

The historian had unearthed papers which documented that Hitler’s chancellor in the Fuhrer that … you should be treated considerately.” All this would have been possible without Hitler’s knowledge.

Susanne Mauss wrote in her JVG article: “One irony of this dark story is that Hitler could on occasion bestow on his personal protection to a person otherwise marked for death.” For example, Eduard Bloch, the “noble Jew” from Linz. It is well known that the family physician who treated Hitler’s mother enjoyed the Fuhrer’s personal protection. But Susanne Mauss found out that there were others, too.

Already in 1936, after being forced to retire as a judge and being beaten up by SS thugs, Hess had sent a petition to Hitler: He requested the Fuhrer as an officer from the family never saw the original copy of the Life of the Fuhrer. He had given his family to the “Aryanization Office” in Munich. There, the Hess family was forced to return to Italy after World War II. Hess was told that the protection order had been revoked. The document was taken from him. Hess was informed that the protection order had been revoked.

Previously entirely unknown case has now been published in the Jewish Voice from Germany
Mike Pence, the American vice president, assumed the role of his boss at the celebrations for the 70th birthday of the military alliance NATO. Pence raved for minutes that Germany was doing too little for Europe’s security and had become dangerously dependent on Russia through the construction of the Nordstream2 gas pipeline. Donald Trump will have followed the speech with a smile, while German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas in Washington had to take harsh criticism from the US administration. Later, Maas set about defending Germany’s position, but this will hardly have met with any understanding in the White House.

The discussion is not new and the opposing positions are well known. Each NATO member is to spend two percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) on defense. This is a goal the NATO countries set themselves together – long before Trump – for the NATO summit in Prague in 2002. At that time, the Baltic states, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia were invited states that currently meet the target include Germany. The two percent target was set again in 2014 at the NATO summit in Wales. That was after the annexation of the Crimea and the outbreak of war in Ukraine. The SPD politician Frank-Walter Steinmeier, today’s Federal President, was present as Federal Foreign Minister.

Chancellor Angela Merkel promised that Germany would at least gradually move closer to this goal. In fact, however, defense spending is currently only around 1.23% of economic output. And the goal of increasing this figure to 1.5% by 2024 will probably not be reached, especially since Federal Finance Minister Olaf Scholz even wants to cut defense spending from 2024 on. The balance sheet would only turn out better if Germany were to fall into recession – but this would cause other problems for the German economy. The two percent mark is therefore repeatedly criticized because it is only a relative target but does not take the absolute sums into account. Greece, for example, can be proud of having even exceeded the two percent mark. However, this is only due to the weak economic performance of the southern European country. Alongside the US and Greece, the NATO states that currently meet the target include Great Britain, Poland and Estonia, as well as Lithuania, Latvia and Romania for the first time in 2018.

At 38.5 billion euros, defense spending is currently the second largest item in the federal budget. It accounts for about ten percent of total expenditure. This amount also includes payments to retired civilian and military personnel who are not expected to be involved in peacekeeping or peacekeeping measures. In addition, a distinction is made between operating expenses, operator solutions and defense-intensive expenses. Wage and salary payments to civilian and military personnel account for the largest share of operating expenses. In addition, there are expenses for the maintenance of materials and equipment as well as rental and leasing payments for real estate. Operator solutions include expenditure in connection with the privatization of sub-areas such as fleet management, which is made available to the Bundeswehr. Defense-intensive expenditures are for defense projects such as the Eurofighter or new frigates. The state of the Bundeswehr has also been under discussion for some time, despite these billions.

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Investments in Times of Economic Slowdown

Devising a profitable investment strategy has become increasingly challenging in the current market environment. During the past year, most equity and bond markets recorded significant price declines – as did a number of commodities, including gold. As a result, investors are rightfully wary of these asset classes. Even for experts, it has become increasingly difficult to predict the trajectory of prices over the short- and medium term. Nonetheless, stocks continue to play an important role in any long-term investment strategy. However, careful portfolio allocation and strategic allocation monitoring are increasingly important.

Real estate requires a similar investment approach. As part of an overall investment portfolio, real estate remains a solid performer. However, historically high valuations mean that selecting new real estate investments with care has become more important than ever.

So which investments are best suited to a phase of economic slowdown? Direct investment in tangible assets is a wise choice under current market conditions, and it can offer attractive yields. To maximize returns, potential investors should keep a number of important factors in mind. First, a high level of market expertise is the basis for professional investment selection. Many potentially lucrative markets are very complex, and require a high level of expert knowledge. This is true, for example, of investments in the areas of digitalization, medical technology and artificial intelligence. Potential investors are well advised to draw on the expertise of partners who enjoy access to a wide network of industry experts.

Another important consideration is access to asset classes that deliver consistent outperformance. These include, for example, large private equity funds. Finally, potential investors are well advised to seek out independent financial advisors and investment managers who offer high-quality, detailed digital asset reporting and asset controlling services which provide investors with a maximum of transparency and control.

To ensure success in today’s market, a solid partnership with a wealth management provider who can provide future-oriented, innovative and sustainable investment services is more important than ever.

Jens Spudy is executive partner of Spudy Family Office

German business representatives see closer cooperation with NATO partners as a contribution to strengthening the Alliance in arms projects

German business representatives see closer cooperation with NATO partners as a contribution to strengthening the Alliance in arms projects. German business representatives see closer cooperation with NATO partners, in particular France, as a contribution to strengthening the Alliance in arms projects. However, cooperation is made more difficult by Germany’s strict controls on arms exports, in the opinion of the BDI. France’s President Emmanuel Macron and Chancellor Merkel announced last year that they would jointly develop and procure two major military projects: the Future Combat Air System (FCAS) and the Main Ground Combat System (MGCS). Representative of the industry’s umbrella organization, German business representatives see closer cooperation with NATO partners as a contribution to strengthening the Alliance in arms projects. German business representatives see closer cooperation with NATO partners as a contribution to strengthening the Alliance in arms projects. German business representatives see closer cooperation with NATO partners as a contribution to strengthening the Alliance in arms projects. German business representatives see closer cooperation with NATO partners as a contribution to strengthening the Alliance in arms projects. German business representatives see closer cooperation with NATO partners as a contribution to strengthening the Alliance in arms projects. German business representatives see closer cooperation with NATO partners as a contribution to strengthening the Alliance in arms projects. German business representatives see closer cooperation with NATO partners as a contribution to strengthening the Alliance in arms projects. German business representatives see closer cooperation with NATO partners as a contribution to strengthening the Alliance in arms projects.
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The Indispensable Ones

The Jewish Voice could only be born and remain in operation with the help of many idealistic friends, who supported us in word and deed over the years. With irresistible strength and charm, Gerd Schulte-Hil- len encouraged me to bring to fruition my idea for a Jewish newspaper for and from Germany, and continued to believe in our work.

Carola Piegert was so taken with the help of many idealistic volunteers his labor – the success of his efforts meant more to him than any material reward.

Ilka Maria Gräfin Beust was and continues to be the heart and soul of the Jewish Voice. She was always happy to carry out whatever tasks came her way and handled them reliably and with good cheer.

Carola Piegert began as our “girl Fri-day”. A trained engineer, she decided to familiarize herself with the world of newspapers, and soon took charge of our entire logistics operation. Later she also came her way and handled them reliably and with good cheer.

August Jagdfeld is a loyal friend, advisor and source of encouragement. In his China Club, I often met with members of the board and with business associates. This work brought me great pleasure.

Hildegard Müller served as a politician and association officer, and is now a business executive. Above all, Hilde- gard is a good friend who provides encouragement, establishes contacts, and also offers constructive criticism. From the begin- ning, she has provided us with various forms of support.

Brigitte Zypries is a committed friend of Israel who promotes the relationship between our two countries. Ms. Zypries became a good friend to the Jewish Voice, and continues to champion our cause with great energy and charm.

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Christian Schmidt has been a friend for many years and a critical companion.

Gerd Merke has long been my best friend. A professor of law, he also acquired discipline, a committed and creative managing editor with also finishing his university studies. For our international edition, we relied on a team of translators, in which Patricia Szobar and Nico- las Kumanoff deserve special mention.

Steven Althaus, a business manager from the world of finance, established our initial contact to Allianz, which became a loyal advertising customer over the years.

My friend Johannes Beer- mann established contact with the state government of Saxony which also became an advertising customer over the years. In addition, Jo- hannes provided me with his unceasing advice and support.

From the beginning, Louis Hagen supported the Jewish Voice with ideas and positive results. To celebrate his 60th birthday, he asked his business partners for an advertisement in the Jewish Voice as a gift. The successful banker's chutzpah and solidarity was a help to us.

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Remarkable Interviews

An interview is far more than a game of chess. It is a mixture between an interrogation, a love act and a corrida. Whereby it is not always clear who the torero is and who the bull.

Halfway through our interview Chancellor Angela Merkel became impatient. Where were the Jewish questions, she wanted to know. “I ask what interests me and our readers. And that is much more than the German-Jewish canon.” This is true of all our interviews. Automatically a mix of seriousness and humor arises during these conversations.

Sigmar Gabriel was plagued by the flue during our interview. But his intellect and charm were unscathed by it. The then SPD leader and Vice-Chancellor spoke about the last Jews in his hometown Goslar and the Jewish cemetery. “Can we come to the living Jews and the state of Israel?” I asked. Gabriel smiled. What followed was a lively discussion.

Thuringia’s Prime Minister Bodo Ramelow was my most spirited interview partner. He is very serious about reprocessing the German-Jewish past. Our conversation took place in front of an audience at Berlin’s China Club. I carefully enquired the politician from Die Linke about his attitude towards Vladimir Putin and his expansive politics: “But you must call a despot a despot…” “Call him whatever you like,” Ramelow exploded. Afterwards, we had a spirited conversation with August Jagdfeld about all the world and his wife over Berlin’s rooftops.

In the sweltering summer heat I spoke with SPD general secretary Katarina Barley. But, an infection made me shiver. Ms. Barley noticed it and immediately jumped up to turn off the air conditioning. A man would have been focused on the conversation, Ms. Barley felt the person.

His successor Martin Schulz could not find the time for a personal interview during the European Parliament election campaign. Initially, So we conducted our interview by telephone. Two days later, my wife and I visited a bookstore. And there, by chance, we met the bibliophilic Martin Schulz. Without much ado a short live interview ensued.

Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer was under political and time pressure. Nonetheless the then CDU general secretary took the time for an extensive conversation at 8 o’clock in the morning before an executive committee meeting of her party. I unwillingly noticed a little menorah in her office. The connection to Judeo-Christian values was evident throughout our conversation.

I Will Miss the Jewish Voice

Dear Readers,

In this last edition of the Jewish Voice from Germany, I would like to congratulate Dr Rafael Seligmann and Dr Elisabeth Seligmann and to thank them and their team for publishing the Jewish Voice from Germany over the past seven years. It was only through their vision and commitment that this fine paper was created and published. In print and online, the Jewish Voice from Germany has reached readers all over the world, particularly in Germany, Israel and North America.

“JVG” reported on Jewish-German topics, combining them with exquisite journalistic work on Germany in its political, economic and cultural dimensions.

I will miss this Voice. Mazel tov and thank you, Elisabeth and Rafael Seligmann!

Mazel tov and thank you, Elisabeth and Rafael Seligmann!

Heiko Maas
Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany

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The Blank Spot
Efficient restitution procedures required

By Karin Prien

The National Socialist tyranny becomes increasingly a part of the past for most people in Germany. In everyday life, at home, there are fewer reminders of the period and its injustices. However, the victims and their families feel quite different. Many victims are among those who are affected in the present day, in the third or even fourth generation – still have the proverbial blank spot on the wall or an empty spot on the shelf. A painting belongs in this blank spot, a picture with meaning, a picture with history.

A work of art, which once belonged to the family, maybe with great economic and non-material value. The arts do form our society. This applies not only to the big picture, but also to the small one. The painting on the wall that tells the story of the family. The statue, which was the most valuable treasure of the family. The Nazis robbed the Jews of their cultural assets and enriched themselves with them.

More than 70 years after the Nazis were defeated, families and their relatives are still struggling to reduce these injustices.

The return, the so-called restitution of artworks, is rarely easy to achieve.

Too often the decision be legally enforced. An additional problem is that both parties have agreed to compromise. This is not possible for just the descendants to call on the commission to reach an amicable settlement. An easier course over a stolen work of art. On the commission's website you can see that since its first meeting in 2003, the Limbach Commission has only decided 15 cases. This is partly because the commission's members are volunteers. High-ranking personalities from politics and society who have many other commitments. At the same time, the commission has few resources and no staff of its own to investigate the history of a work of art.

With the Washington Principles of 1998, an extensive discussion on a Restitution Act, such as the one in Austria, has existed in Germany. I have a wonderful reputation of legal, procedural and moral-ethical limits of this commission lie. The Limbach Commission is only binding in its decision if both parties have agreed to this binding effect in advance. There is thus no binding legal basis for the commission's work. Nor can a commission decision be legally enforced. An additional problem is that both parties have agreed to compromise. This is not possible for just the descendants to call on the commission to reach an amicable settlement. An easier course over a stolen work of art. On the commission's website you can see that since its first meeting in 2003, the Limbach Commission has only decided 15 cases. This is partly because the commission's members are volunteers. High-ranking personalities from politics and society who have many other commitments. At the same time, the commission has few resources and no staff of its own to investigate the history of a work of art.

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Thank you for your valuable contribution to Jewish life in Germany.

In recent years, the 'Jewish Voice from Germany' has succeeded, in a remarkable way, in illustrating Jewish life in Germany in a journalistically well-founded and sensitive manner and in communicating it internationally. We would like to express our sincere thanks for our open and trusting working relationship.
Panofsky's Nose

In an exclusive piece for the JVG (2013), Gerda Panofsky brought to our attention pervading anti-Semitic prejudices in literature and academia about her late husband Erwin

Less than a century later, the stereotype of the Jew as small in stature and long of nose was expanded with another epithet — “old.” George L. Mosse (The Jews and the German War Experience 1914-1918) has demonstrated how in WWI the youthful hero of Apollonian beauty and manliness was being propounded as a German cult image. This Siegfried archetype was steely, radiant, and muscular for whom the modern representatives of the Jews served as a perfect foil.

In German literature from this period, even young Jews usually have “old” faces. For example, “Look at that ugly dwarf! What a long nose he has, and how his head is buried in his shoulders, and the swarthy ugly hands!” [...]. Jacob has been transformed into a hideous midget.” His nose appeared even more grotesque in relation to his shrunken body. Since the 1820s, obnoxious caricatures of Jews as wrinkled creatures with abnormally long noses had been flourishing.

In a twist of fate, Günther was not only an ex-act contemporary of the art historian Er- win Panofsky (1892-1968) and – like the latter – earned his doctorate in 1924, but Günther too hailed from Freiburg im Brei-sigau where he held a professorship at Pan-ofsky’s alma mater from 1940-45. In fact, such anti-Semitic clichés are still in circulation today. With astonishment one read the Emirius Professor of Art His-tory at the University of Hamburg Wolfgang Kemp’s (born in 1946) comments in his review of Vol. 5 of Erwin Panofsky Kor-respon-denz 1962-1968 released in 1997. His review, entitled “Bernhardi für die Ordensgemeinschaft” (“Letters Dedicated for the Order”, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, No. 133, Thur. June 9, 2001), once again trotted out the hollow metaphor of the “old Jew,” Ein alstomatischer König der Kunstgeschichte” (“An age-mel-lowed king of art history”; a headline for which the FAZ editors were responsible) and “In diesen Band ist Panofsky alt geworden” (“In this volume, Panofsky has grown old”). Yet, objectively speaking, the year 1962 had ushered in the eighth decade of this Jew- ish scholar’s life. Subjectively speaking, how-ever, someone who up until the very end of his life was teaching graduate semi-nars at the prestigious universities of Munich and New York, who delivered series of public lec-tures, who embarked on re-search trips to Spain, Italy, Sweden, the Netherlands, France and who, in addition to more than a dozen articles, wrote such substan-tial books as Tomb Sculpture (1964) and Prob- leme in Titian (1969), could hardly be dis-missed as “old.”

Yet in the context of the other attributes superimposed on “old” Jews of something supremely disagree-able, “We sollten damals also zu Panofsky wal dern [...]. Wir fanden einen kleinen, gnomenhaften Mann mit großen Augen und großer Nase” (“Thus at that time [in 1957] we were supposed to make a pilgrimage to Munich in order to see Panofsky [...] We found a short, gnome-like man with large eyes and a large nose”). There it is again, the stereotype of the Jew with the disproportionate nose and eyes, rendered doubly contemptible by the pleonasm “short, gnome-like.” In German, gnome is a synonym for dwarf (see Hauff). Accord-ing to Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm’s German Dictionary “gnomenhaft” (“gnome-like”) means ‘small, evil, rude, skittish, old, wrinkled, and oldish’”. Hence Kemp’s ridicule of Panofsky matches the defama-tory propaganda which depicts the Jews as a race of senile and dwarfish people with big noses. In truth, Panofsky had luminous eyes and a perfectly normal nose.

Gerda S. Panofsky is an art historian. She lives and works in Princeton. This is an abridged version of her original article

A Gift to Us Germans

In remembrance of Guido Westerwelle

On January 30th 2012, Guido Westerwelle (1961- 2016) presented the first issue of his newspaper to the public at a press conference. “Thank you for gifting us with this German-Jewish newspaper”, the then Minister for Foreign Affairs emphasized.

I have had the privilege of knowing and valuing Guido Westerwelle as a politician and person. The first time I met him was as a guest at a panel discussion I was hosting. I noticed that he seemed to take every one of my questions as a political attack. He was virtually biting back with a ven-geance. So I asked him, “Why have you as a sensitive person chosen politics as a profession, where personal attacks are part of the game?” Slightly surprised Westerwelle retorted, “That makes you think I’m sens-itive!” I answered, “Be-cause you have the eyes of a child.”

At first, he was per-pissed. But we had broken the ice. From then on, his answers were open and re-laxed. At the end, Westerwelle turned again to the audi-en-cer and said, “This was the first public discussion in years where I have been treated fairly. No covered attacks, no half-truths and no twisting of my words.” That may have been one reason why he open-ly welcomed the “Jewish Voice from the start. But to Guido Westerwelle it was decisive that Jews should belong to Germa-ny again. That was a mat-ter dear to his heart.

Michelle Müntefering

Maloche and Pragmatic Solidarity

Michele Müntefering was born in Munich in 1960. In this city in the heart of the industrial Ruhr region, “maloche” is a way of life. The word “maloche” comes from Hebrew and means “hard work.” “Malochen” also signi-fies a tradition of pragmatism and solidar-ity, which ensures that all the hard work will not have been in vain. In Michelle’s case, it also stands for a deeply grounded nature and genuine sense of humor. Always a pragmatist, Michelle Münte-fering completed vocational training as a childcare worker during high school. During these years, she also began her longstanding engagement with Social Democratic politics and jour-nalism. At 24, she began serving the people of Herne as a mem-ber of the city council. She was evidently very good at her job, since she soon won a record-breaking direct mandate to the German Bundestag as a member of the Social Democratic Par-

ty. In parliament, she served on com-mittes on foreign affairs and cultural relations. In 2018, Michelle Müntefering became state minister of the Foreign Af-fairs Sub-Committee on Cultural Rela-tions and Education Policy in Angela Merkel’s coalition government.

For the Jewish Voice, Michelle Münte-fering has been a true champion of the Jews, and has been an open advocate for Jewish causes. She has been tireless in her efforts to nurture a renewed and flourishing relationship with the Jewish community. She has been a strong advocate for the rights of the Jewish people, and has been a vocal supporter of Jewish causes. Her dedication to the Jewish community has been a source of inspiration for many, and she has been a true friend to the Jewish community.
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The Repressed Past

Eintracht Frankfurt soccer club likes to talk about its Jewish roots, but brushes more unpleasant topics under the carpet.

By Dieter Sattler

Alongside Bayern Munich and Ajax Amsterdam, Eintracht Frankfurt was considered a “Jewish club.” Some 25,000 Jews lived in the Weimar Republic and more than a handful of them were fans and even played on the squad. Many were killed by the Nazis.

With the help of the Fritz Bauer Institute, Eintracht is now trying to discover more about the fate of its Jewish members. Public interest is strong, and tours of the city demonstrate the subject’s abiding popularity. Not long ago, an audience of nearly a hundred people listened to a talk held by Helmut “Sonny” Sonneberg on the topic. Born in 1931, the longtime Eintracht fan and soccer player was only able to join the club after the war. As a young son, Sonneberg watched with his own eyes as Jews lost their lives and witnessed the Kristallnacht pogrom in Frankfurt in 1938.

Although it was not a secret, this unsavory fact only became more widely known last year when incriminating documentation was found in the German Federal Archives. Indeed, shortly after the end of the war, the US occupation forces had identified Gramlich as a “major offender”. Gramlich was interrogated but released again in 1947 for lack of evidence. He was then re-classified to a lesser category of offender: Gramlich would go on to serve as president of Eintracht Frankfurt from 1955 to 1970.

Helmut Sonneberg and his siblings, 1945

The fact that the club remained idle so long, failing to revisit the history of one of its members, does not easily mesh with the club’s self-styled image as a “Jewish club” and hotbed resistance to the Nazis.

Now that Rudi Gramlich’s history has become more widely known, Eintracht has been forced to take a public position. A year ago, Eintracht President Peter Fischer announced that in honor of the club’s “Jewish traditions”, it would not accept any members who had voted for the far-right AfD. Eintracht also pledged to have Rudi Gramlich’s past re-examined by a team of external experts.

All Men Become Brothers?

Schiller’s Ode to Joy: A leitmotif of Jewish Modernity

By Hartmut Bonhoff

Always just before midnight, Beethoven’s prelude to the “Ode to Joy” is heard on Deutschlandfunk, the German national broadcaster, and it is increasingly played to tune us into the forthcoming European election. However, it is the instrumental version which serves as the European anthem, not the choral movement with Friedrich Schiller’s poem “An die Freude” (1786), as it was suggested by Richard von Ondrejka-Kalergi in 1955. Count Coudenhove-Kalergi, the founder of the Pan-European Movement, was aware of the electrifying effect of Schiller’s celebration of the brotherhood of man. Already in the early 19th century, this poem had hit the nerve of European Jewry. The ideals of the Weimar poet, playwright and philosopher – freedom and brotherhood, education and human dignity – were understood as a program that no longer excluded Judaism but promised its integration in society at large.

Friedrich Schiller was a fervent in their religious devotion. While he raised the “Hebrew nation” as important for “universal history” in his treatise “Ueber die Sendung Moses” (1790), he also adopted a number of anti-Jewish stereotypes in his works. This ambivalent attitude was hardly noticed by his Jewish followers. It was the poet’s quest for physical and spiritual freedom that resonated with all factions of German Jewry. The liberal Gabriel Rieser observed in 1842 that “the Jewish youth turns to Schiller, with whom they learn to read, to think and to feel”, while Rabbi Samuel Raphael Hirsch, a founding father of modern Orthodoxy, praised Schiller as “the dawning light of an aurora that will make men stand up and fight”. While the Jewish Enlightenment movement, Schiller’s poems and plays were published in Galicia and later in Russian Poland. Traditional Jewish homes which banned secular literature made an exception: “Schiller’s works were among those books that were allowed to be read without hindrance at least,” recalled Samuel Meisel in 1922. “The day had to be dedicated to Torah studies. The writings of Mendelssohn were dismissed, many Hebrew books were on the index, but Schiller was free.” Through out Central and Eastern Europe, Schiller’s writings and his lofty ideals were identified with German culture.

Jitzchak Leib Peretz’s Yiddish version of Schiller’s “To Joy” does not speak of people becoming brothers, but of the fact that they already are: the equality of man is not a goal to be achieved, but an accepted fact. However, Perez died in 1915 and did not witness the atrocities of the Great War, the sweeping disappearance of individual freedoms under the Nazis, and eventually the destruction of European Jewry. In the aftermath of World War II and the Shoah, Gershom Scholem reasoned: “Schiller was the most visible, most impressive and most resonant cause for the idealistic self-delinqu of which the relationship of the Jews to the Germans led.”

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Schiller’s Ode to Joy: A leitmotif of Jewish Modernity

By Hartmut Bonhoff

Always just before midnight, Beethoven’s prelude to the “Ode to Joy” is heard on Deutschlandfunk, the German national broadcaster, and it is increasingly played to tune us into the forthcoming European election. However, it is the instrumental version which serves as the European anthem, not the choral movement with Friedrich Schiller’s poem “An die Freude” (1786), as it was suggested by Richard von Ondrejka-Kalergi in 1955. Count Coudenhove-Kalergi, the founder of the Pan-European Movement, was aware of the electrifying effect of Schiller’s celebration of the brotherhood of man. Already in the early 19th century, this poem had hit the nerve of European Jewry. The ideals of the Weimar poet, playwright and philosopher – freedom and brotherhood, education and human dignity – were understood as a program that no longer excluded Judaism but promised its integration in society at large.

Friedrich Schiller was a fervent in their religious devotion. While he raised the “Hebrew nation” as important for “universal history” in his treatise “Ueber die Sendung Moses” (1790), he also adopted a number of anti-Jewish stereotypes in his works. This ambivalent attitude was hardly noticed by his Jewish followers. It was the poet’s quest for physical and spiritual freedom that resonated with all factions of German Jewry. The liberal Gabriel Rieser observed in 1842 that “the Jewish youth turns to Schiller, with whom they learn to read, to think and to feel”, while Rabbi Samuel Raphael Hirsch, a founding father of modern Orthodoxy, praised Schiller as “the dawning light of an aurora that will make men stand up and fight”. While the Jewish Enlightenment movement, Schiller’s poems and plays were published in Galicia and later in Russian Poland. Traditional Jewish homes which banned secular literature made an exception: “Schiller’s works were among those books that were allowed to be read without hindrance at least,” recalled Samuel Meisel in 1922. “The day had to be dedicated to Torah studies. The writings of Mendelssohn were dismissed, many Hebrew books were on the index, but Schiller was free.” Through out Central and Eastern Europe, Schiller’s writings and his lofty ideals were identified with German culture.

Jitzchak Leib Peretz’s Yiddish version of Schiller’s “To Joy” does not speak of people becoming brothers, but of the fact that they already are: the equality of man is not a goal to be achieved, but an accepted fact. However, Perez died in 1915 and did not witness the atrocities of the Great War, the sweeping disappearance of individual freedoms under the Nazis, and eventually the destruction of European Jewry. In the aftermath of World War II and the Shoah, Gershom Scholem reasoned: “Schiller was the most visible, most impressive and most resonant cause for the idealistic self-delinqu of which the relationship of the Jews to the Germans led.”
He proudly called it his “Schloss am See”, his palace on the lake: the villa Max Liebermann (1847–1935) had built for himself by the shores of Lake Wannsee in 1909 provided a summer retreat for the Liebermann family until the artist’s death in 1935. Its garden was an important source of inspiration for the painter, who completed over 200 oil paintings exploring its many facets. Thanks to the efforts of the Max Liebermann Society, in 2006, the reconstructed house opened to the public as a museum. This summer, the Liebermann Villa will premier a contrasting juxtaposition of works by its name sake and his contemporary Lesser Ury (1861–1931).

While the latter is best known for his Impressionistic depictions of city life, Liebermann was sought out by Berlin’s elite to have their portrait painted; in his cityscapes, he focused on his love for the green, the Tiergarten and the parks of the capital. The exhibition “Zweimal Großstadt Berlin”, or “Impressions of Berlin,” promises to match these different perspectives, presenting around 45 paintings and paper works of the two artists who left a special bond of sympathy for their city, and addressing their competitive relationship. Lesser Ury would have hardly received an invitation to Liebermann’s “Schloss am See”. Born in Birnbaum in Western Prussia, Ury grew up in Berlin and spent a decade of travels visiting several art schools throughout Europe. In 1887, he finally returned to the German capital where he began a friendly relationship with Liebermann, who – like Adolph von Menzel – immediately recognized the younger colleague’s talent and initially supported him. Ury became known for capturing Berlin’s city life in many street and cafe scenes, his trademark being visually arresting light reflections on wet surfaces. An anecdote has it that Ury claimed that the lighting effects in Liebermann’s masterpiece “Flax Scouring in Laren” (1887) had in fact been painted by him, Ury. Liebermann responded in a letter to the journalist Maximilian Harden in 1907: “I would not call the prosecutor until he claimed that I had painted his pictures.” From that point, Liebermann, in his capacity as the president of the Berlin Secession, obstructed Ury’s career wherever he could and effectively barred his work from exhibition until 1915. Thanks to artist Louis Corinth, the Berlin Secession exhibition of 1916 featured works by Ury to great acclaim. He was soon credited for being the first painter who made Berlin the major subject of his work. Nollendorfplatz Station at Night (1925) for example is a masterly oil sketch showing this busy railway station to the south of the Tiergarten capturing the essence of Berlin’s nightly street life. “Lesser Ury was the born outsider and remained so for the rest of his life”, noted the critic Franz Seraes in 1933. The disparity between his life and renown and Max Liebermann’s, who was the dominant figure in German art until the emergence of avant-garde and who served as president of the Prussian Academy of the Arts from 1920 until 1932, must have vexed him considerably. However, in 1921, Ury became an honorary member of the Berlin Secession and in 1922 had a great exposition there featuring 150 paintings. Upon his 60th birthday in 1921, the Mayor of Berlin honored Ury as “the artistic glorifier of the capital.” In combining the works of Max Liebermann and Lesser Ury, the forthcoming exhibition at the Liebermann Villa (in cooperation with the Stadtmuseum Berlin Foundation) offers a differentiated view of the art scene of cosmopolitan Berlin at the turn of the 20th century.

Zweimal Großstadt Berlin is on show from 19 May–26 August 2019.

For more information, see https://www.liebermann-villa.de/en
Humanity is an expression of the willingness to provide support, of lived solidarity. Here, it is not words that matter most but deeds. As a business executive, Jan Bayer works together with his colleagues to oversee organizational matters at his company and ensure its prosperity. However, administrative activities and maximization of profits cannot be the only goal. From start to finish, it is the wellbeing of people that matters most, as every conscientious businessperson knows.

In the summer of 2013, almost a year after we had founded the Jewish Voice, we were informed that our printing company was closing. We had to find another printer, and so I turned to the Axel Springer publishing company. Its CEO, Mathias Döpfner, referred me to Jan Bayer, a fellow member of the managing board. During our first meeting, I described the Jewish Voice, our goals, and our operational principles. Jan Bayer listened attentively and without any further discussion of technical or financial details asked if I could imagine producing a German edition of Jewish Voice as a supplement to the daily newspaper DIE WELT. I immediately agreed.

At that moment, I postponed any thought of the technical, editorial and organizational considerations such a partnership would entail. For the Jewish Voice, this was a unique opportunity. At the time, we were a team of six to eight volunteers who operated out of my apartment, working on a repurposed ping-pong table. Axel Springer is a global company with 14,000 employees. But I was familiar with the company’s guiding principles, which include a commitment to the reconciliation between Germany and the Jewish people and the State of Israel. This was and remains the impetus behind the Jewish Voice. And so I thought to myself: “Let us venture a tango between our wisp of a newspaper and this publishing giant.”

In 2013, Jewish Voice was a small English-language publication, produced in Berlin for a readership in North America and elsewhere in the world. Jan Bayer’s proposal opened the door to our becoming a recognized and respected publication in Germany as well. This would also require us to expand our journalistic scope. As an independent quarterly, it was our mission to report, analyze and comment upon all matters pertaining to German-Jewish relations. Our voice and our advocacy, our reports and interviews of politicians, artists, academics and economists, now gained a new audience across Germany. Our clear and at times controversial views did not always meet with universal approval, but our independence and originality was acknowledged by all.

At our first meeting, Jan Bayer impressed me with his openness and his generous willingness to provide me and our publication with an unusual opportunity. At the time, I had no idea of the many obstacles that would need to be overcome, even with the surfeit of goodwill on all sides. But fortunately, we had also found our own guardian angel, a man of immense foresight, organizational acumen, and good will. He held fast to his original idea – not simply as a matter of principle, but out of sheer humanity. Jan Bayer is not just a manager. He has stood by me, offering support and reassurance in times of need. And most of all, he has provided us all with generous and unstinting encouragement.
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A Battle Won with Peaceful Means

Jewish women activists’ struggle for voting rights

By Fanny Schlesinger

The major legal reform of the Weimar Republic consisted in its progressive electoral law, which gave women the right to vote at the age of 20. Although allowing female suffrage came into effect on November 30, 1918, women were therefore allowed to participate in the first elections of the Weimar Republic in January 1919. Female voter turnout exceeded 80%. Around 300 women stood for election and 37 women won a seat in the 423-member National Assembly. On February 10, 1919, representative Marie Juchacz from the Social Democratic Party (SPD) took the floor: “This is the first time that in Germany a woman has been called on to herself as a ‘dissident’ already in her teenage years. In 1917, she was among the most prominent of them was Tony Sender (1885-1964). Born to orthodox parents in Biebrich in the Rhineland, she referred to herself as a ‘dissident’ already in her teenage years. In 1917, she was among the founding members of the USPD, the Independent Social Democratic Party in Germany, which had split off from the SPD. In 1920, Sender was elected to the German Reichstag (first as a representative of the USPD and then, after the party’s reunification in 1922, of the SPD), holding office until January 1933. She became one of the most outspoken parliamentary opponents of National Socialism. On March 5, 1933, she fled Germany for the United States.

In German Jewry, the introduction of religious affiliation triggered a controversial debate about Jewish women’s right to vote – and in some cases even to stand for election – in their congregations. In general, women had been barred from membership in a congregation or in religious associations during the Kaiserreich. In spring 1919, writer Else Dornmitzer (1877-1958) published her “Demands of the Jewish Woman”, asking for the participation of women in all Jewish community affairs. Dornmitzer played a key role in rallying women to become active members of the Central Verein, the Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith. In 1922, she was the first woman elected to the administrative board of the Jewish Community of Nuremberg which numbered about 10,000 members. While the predominantly liberal Israeli tische Kultusgemeinde of Munich granted women the right to vote in community elections and also to run for office as early as 1919, the Jewish communities in Prussia had little means to advance the cause of Jewish women. Due to Prussia’s Jewish Faith can no longer be naïve, direct and unchallenged. In the wake of the Enlightenment, an important secular element has made its way into faith: free choice. This is in contrast to many pluralistic societies, faith requires a decision. De- cision is a secular element because it requires subjectivity: a person chooses religion as a mature, autonomous sub ject. We choose a faith instead of it being handed down to us. We select a personal affiliation; instead of being incor porated in a tradition, we appropri ate traditions ourselves. The focus is on self-chosen ties. In our diversified soci ety, the paradigmatic figure of the be liever is now the convert – as a person who has chosen a faith. To conclude with Isolde Charim: “Today, all who are faithful are converts, even within their own religion.”
NEW NOVEL

Run, Ludwig, Run!

German country Jews before the Holocaust

detected Papa and ran in his direction. But I was faster al-
though I was smaller than my brother. Father looked enor-
mous to me in his open grey military coat, the stiff uniform
jacket and his rough jackboots. His eyes behind his glasses
looked lovingly upon us as he put his hands on Heiner’s
and mine shoulders. “Thank God, children.” Now, he turned to
walk towards Mother who still stood rooted to the ground. He
stopped in front of her and put his luggage down. He spoke
softly to her but so clearly that I could hear him: “Blessed be
the Eternal!”

Heinrich grabbed the satchel which lay on the ground and
heaved it up. “That’s an offi cer’s satchel, Father”, he cried,
his voice breaking with excitement. “You got out of the offi-
cer’s car... Are you now an offi cer? “Yes, I am a lieutenant
sergeant major.” was the calm answer. As we crossed the sta-
tion concourse everyone saluted him, the only offi cer. Father re-
sponded to the honors curtly.

On the vestibule of the train station we got into our semi-
covered chaise. “Giddy up!” Instantly, our horse Fritz pulled
and swiftly fell into a trot. The cold wind blew against my face. Father. My father
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The novel will be published in the summer of 2019 by Langen Müller publishers
Defining the One and Only
How we may speak in meaningful terms of God

By Rabbi Walter Homolka

Oth in Jewish life is more hal lowed than the saying of the Shema: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.” But how do we define the monotheism that is at the core of Judaism? It was Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972) who reminded us that the concept of One God is still one beyond the grasp of most people: “Polytheism seems to be more compatible with emotional moods and imagination than uncompromising monotheism. ... Ask an average Jew what the adjective ‘one’ means, and he will tell you its negative meaning—it denies the existence of many deities.” What could be the meaning of this when applied to God? In the “Guide of the Perplexed” the medieval scholar Moses Maimonides (1135-1204) asks how we can designate Him by a number since God is not in time nor space. Therefore, the term “one” is just as inapplicable to God as time and corporeality; 4. the eternity of God; and 5. that He alone should be the object of worship; to which we must add his ninth, divine Providence. Jewish Neoplatonism is best represented by Solomon ibn Gabirol (1020–1058), and his poem Keret Malkhut (A Crown of Kingship).

For God to be One, and for monotheism to mean “unique,” “one” means “only,” “one” means “the same,” “one” means “all everywhere.”

Maimonides proposed thirteen articles of faith which became very popular in Judaism and even found access into both Judaism and Islam. Early medieval Jewish thinkers found the kalām (speculative theology) of the Muslim rationalistic school congenial, especially its uncompromising definitions of God’s unity. During the mid-tenth to mid-twelfth centuries the example of Islam influenced first Karaites and then Rabbanite teachers to elaborate the Jewish doctrine of One and Only God into a philosophic creed. Abraham ben David (Ibn Daud) of Toledo (1130-1180) presented in his “Sublime Faith” six essentials of the Jewish faith: the existence, the unity, the incorporeality and the omnipotence of God (to this he subjoins the existence of angelic beings), revelation and the immutability of the Law, and divine Providence.

To God there applies only the question “whether” He is; the questions “what”, “how”, “why” or “where” can expect no answer. This speculative form of faith, however, has been most severely denounced by Samuel David Luzzatto (1800–1865) as “Atticism”; that is the Hellenistic or philosophic tendency to consider religion as a purely intellectual system, instead of the great dynamic force for man’s moral and spiritual elevation. He holds that Judaism, as the faith transmitted to us from Abraham, our ancestor, must be considered not as a mere speculative form of faith, however, has been most severely denounced by Samuel David Luzzatto (1800–1865) as “Atticism”; that is the Hellenistic or philosophic tendency to consider religion as a purely intellectual system, instead of the great dynamic force for man’s moral and spiritual elevation. He holds that Judaism, as the faith transmitted to us from Abraham, our ancestor, must be considered not as a mere speculative mode of reasoning, but as a moral life force, manifested in the practice of righteousness and brotherly love. Indeed, this view is supported by modern Biblical research, which brings out as the salient point in Biblical teaching the ethical character of the God taught by the prophets. This suggests that the essential truth of revelation is not to be found in a metaphysical but in an ethical monotheism.

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