tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 1

Perhaps the immobility of the things that surround us is forced upon them by our conviction that they are themselves and not anything else, by the immobility of our conception of them. For it always happened that when I awoke like this, and my mind struggled in an unsuccessful way to discover where I was, everything revolved around me through the darkness: things, places, years.

Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past,
p. 6, translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff
and Terence Kilmartin

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 2

Things. Places. Years.

The Knowledge of Jewish Women

Klub Zwei

Things. Places. Years.

Limited edition, (3 copies)
© Klub Zwei, Vienna 2002

Editors:
Klub Zwei
Simone Bader, Jo Schmeiser
Severingasse 13/16
A-1090 Vienna
+43/1/319 05 61
vor.red@sil.at
www.klubzwei.at

Graphic Design:
Jo Schmeiser

Thanks to:
Anthony Auerbach
Richard Ferkl
Anita Makris
and all interview partners

Financial support:
Anthony Auerbach
Hildegund Amanshauser
Hedwig Saxenhuber

Preface 7 Vorwort 9

London 12 Arrival 28 Emigration 32
Family 44 Holocaust 56 Things 68
Work 84 Generations 112
Languages 130 Books 144 Music 156
Austria, Germany 166 Poland* 184
Vienna 190 Politics 206
Racism, Anti-semitism 214 Identities 224
Gender 246 Idea of Place 258 Israel 264
Politics in Israel* 280 Restitution* 304
Holocaust Memorial Day* 314

* These chapters were added in 2003

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 6

Things. Places. Years. Jewish Women in London and Vienna. Directed by Klub Zwei. Produced by Amour Fou. Documentation, 70 min, 2004

"Things.Places.Years." comprises interviews with Jewish Women of the first, second and third generation after the Holocaust. The film's protagonists are not only Women who escaped from Nazi Austria as young children, but also their daughters and granddaughters who were born and brought up in the U.K. The film shall show that experiences of emigration, diaspora and genocide are passed on from generation to generation. And it will investigate the meaning of these experiences in the present, the effects they have on the following generations – until today.

When talking about presence and absence, about lack and loss, this means entirely different things – according to who is speaking. Thus descendants of survivors of the Holocaust speak of "The Presence of the Absence" (Katherine Klinger) and thereby mean the presence of the loss of their whole family, the loss of their parents's mother tongue, the loss of places their parents loved, places that still exist in Vienna – unchanged until today. But what does "The Presence of the Absence" signify for us,

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 8

as decendants of the perpetrator society? It means to deal with "The Past in the Present" (Ulf Wuggenig), to work against the old and new anti-semitism and racism that Jews and Migrants are confronted with in Austria today.

What is this book then, you might ask, if the film is yet to be produced? It is a kind of preview for what, in the film, will be articulated differently. The book consists of statements that our protagonists have made in 2000 and 2001*, when we did our first research and interviews in London. All their statements seemed so important to us. Yet it was clear that, for technical reasons, we would not be able to include this first research material into the film. So, this was reason number one to make this book. Reason number two was the idea to make the book a protagonist of the film, to use it for titles and credits. Through the book's appearance in the film, the viewers can 'see' information on the women's histories, curricula and on the cultural institutions they have founded, are interested in or associated to.

* The chapters Poland, Politics in Israel, Restitution and Holocaust Memorial Day were added in 2003.

Klub Zwei, September 2002

Things. Places.Years. Jüdische Frauen in Wien und London. Regie: Klub Zwei. Produktion: Amour Fou. Dokumentation, 70 min, 2004

Die Dokumentation "Things. Places. Years" versammelt Interviews mit Jüdischen Frauen, die als Kinder oder Jugendliche aus dem nationalsozialistischen Wien nach London flüchten konnten. Im Film zu Wort kommen auch ihre Töchter und Enkeltöchter. Zentrales Thema ist die Erfahrung von Vertreibung, Emigration und Holocaust. Es soll gezeigt werden, dass diese Erfahrung von Generation zu Generation weitergegeben wird und wie sie im Leben junger Jüdischer Frauen – bis heute – nachwirkt.

Wenn von Präsenz und Absenz die Rede ist, so bedeutet dies, je nach dem wer davon spricht, Unterschiedliches. So sprechen die Nachkommen von Überlebenden des Holocaust von "The Presence of the Absence" (Katherine Klinger) und meinen damit die Präsenz des Verlusts ganzer Familien, des Verlusts der Muttersprache ihrer Eltern, des Verlusts von Orten, die ihre Eltern geliebt haben und die heute noch, unverändert, in Wien existieren. Was aber bedeutet "The Presence of the Absence" für uns, als Nachkommen der

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 10

TäterInnen- und MitläuferInnengesellschaft? Es meint die Auseinandersetzung mit der ”Vergangenheit in der Gegenwart” (Ulf Wuggenig), das heißt, die Arbeit gegen den aktuellen, alten und neuen Antisemitismus und Rassismus, mit dem JüdInnen und MigrantInnen in Österreich heute zunehmend konfrontiert sind.

Was ist dann dieses Buch, ließe sich fragen, wenn der Film doch erst gedreht wird? Es ist eine Art Vorschau dafür, was im Film auf ganz andere Weise artikuliert werden wird. Das Buch besteht aus Aussagen, die unsere Protagonistinnen 2000 und 2001* gemacht haben, als wir unsere ersten Recherchen und Interviews in London begannen. All ihre Aussagen waren uns enorm wichtig. Doch wussten wir bereits, dass wir dieses erste Recherchematerial aus technischen Gründen nicht in den Film integrieren würden können. Das war der erste Grund für die Entscheidung, dieses Buch zu machen.

Der zweite Grund war die Idee, im Film ein Buch für die Titel und Credits einzusetzen. Durch das ‘Erscheinen’ des Buchs im Film ‘sehen’ die ZuschauerInnen Informationen zur Geschichte der Frauen, zu ihren Curricula und zu den kulturellen Institutionen, die sie gegründet haben, die sie interessieren, oder denen sie sich verbunden fühlen.

* Die Kapitel Poland, Politics in Israel, Restitution and Holocaust Memorial Day wurden 2003 hinzugefügt.

Klub Zwei, September 2002

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 12

London

I don’t think places are important to me. If I have to generalise, it has to be somewhere very cosmopolitan, where I am not the only different one.

Ruth Sands

Ich glaube, Orte sind mir nicht wichtig. Wenn ich allgemein darauf antworten soll, dann müssten diese Orte sehr kosmopolitische sein: Orte, wo ich nicht als einzige anders bin.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 14

I love London. I love wandering round London. I love it when it's smelly, I love it when it's dirty, I love it when it's foggy. I probably love it more, because I don't actually believe it's mine. I can't believe my luck. I love it. I love the little holes round the back. I love the fact that a lot of it is hidden. I don't think there's anything on earth that is as beautiful as that view from Waterloo bridge. And that's absurd, of course there are beautiful things – but it is just wonderful.

In connection with places to do with the work that I'm doing, I guess the area is perhaps rather predictably the area around Hampstead, Swiss Cottage, in other words very much North-West London. And I think there is no particular place as such. It's more what those places contain as some kind of an absent memory, of an imprint of the people of my parents' generation who came to this country and inhabited those places. But it's nothing specific, it's more an atmosphere or a knowledge that they were there.

For people like myself, from my background, the sense of place and memory is quite complicated. Because these places, they're not firmly established, because there isn't a long term history associated with any of these places. It doesn't go back more than at most 50 years. I mean, there is nothing generational in terms of these places as having any significance or meaning. And so the history associated with them is quite limited.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 16

I like where I live in Hampstead Garden Suburb. It's a very beautiful area of North London and has an interesting history. It was created in 1905 as a social experiment by an aristocratic lady from the East End of London who wanted to create a neighbourhood with all sections of society living together. And that's how it used to be. Now only wealthy people can afford to live here.

I don't think places are very important to me. I moved so many times in my life. But I've never really got attached to a place. If I have to generalise, I like to be, it doesn't matter where, but it has to be somewhere very cosmopolitan, where I am not the only different one. Which is why I chose Belsize Park 35 years ago. I had to find a part of London, which is full of people like me, mixed like me, and different to me, but very mixed. And that's the only new circumstance where I am totally comfortable. When it's not typically French, not typically English, not typically anything, but when it's a mixture of all types and all kinds of society. Basically the places are not important to me. It's to be part of, not to be singled out as something different to other people. That to me has always been very important.

If I have to think of a space, it would have to be an empty space. So that I'm not disturbed by external influence. I prefer empty spaces so that I'm much more with myself, rather than going somewhere and being entertained by the exterior. If I have to choose a place, and I have had to in the past many times, it's an empty place which is why I like Belsize Park very much. Because I can walk to Hampstead Heath. And it's not a park, it's been left like

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 18

nature started it, you know, with lots of hills. Although I'm not a country person, I'm a city person, but I need to get out.

Klub Zwei
When do you go to Hampstead Heath?

I go quite often, usually when I have got to work out something and I can't do it at home, because again I'm distracted by too much here, you know. But when I need to be by myself, with myself, for myself, having to work out something, then I go to Hampstead Heath. Or Primrose Hill which is even nearer. I've done it hundreds of times in my life.

Nitza Spiro

The place I like in London is the Heath, Hampstead Heath. I think it's one of the most incredible places where it's still wild and I can go there and I can think. In the kind of work that I am doing, there is so much pressure, meeting with people. I deliberately don't have a mobile phone, because I feel that from time to time it's quite nice to be with myself and to have this ability to re-think, to re-evaluate relationships, thoughts, ideas. You know, even my longings to Israel, to my family, to my children, part of them are in this country and part of them are away. It all needs time to be with. And when I'm in the run of things I haven't got time to detach myself and to think. And I think that it's good for my work, my life, my friends, my family, it does me good.

Lisbeth Fischer-Leicht

Well, I think, the places that mean most to me in this country, in England, are in the South-West, because they are the places I first visited with my husband when we were very young. They are the places where I first felt I wasn't a refugee any longer. It was in a sense opening new avenues, a new life. So in this country those are the places that I love the most, in the South-West. But since we have travelled more I found that mediterranean places have a particular charm. Places one has visited in Southern Spain, in Sicily, of course in Israel, too. They have a warmth in every sense, that perhaps one never gets in Northern European Places, Northern European Parts. But other than that, I think, I can be happy in a most forbidding place if I'm with people I love and feel at ease.

Klub Zwei

And what about places in London?

Certainly one of the places I enjoy being at very much is the National Gallery. And apart from enjoying the pictures and the exhibitions now, I do always remember the occasions during the last war, when we went to concerts at the National Gallery. And you got entrance for one Shilling and it was standing only, but it was absolute bliss! So that is a place I remember and I enjoy being at. And of course there are other places. I enjoy going to the Royal Academy of Music if there is a concert given by students. I enjoy going, of course, to the Coliseum where my son's opera company performs. And I find London a marvellous place, provided you are fortunate enough not to have to go to the inner city parts which are deprived and where people live in unsatisfactory housing and have no particular share in the life of the more privileged members of society. But yes, I enjoy going to London!

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 22

I'm an internationalist, so I wouldn't know where my home was. My home is everywhere. My home is really in my heart, I think. And wherever you go you take your heart with you.

My mother came and visited me in London. And my father came. And then all the young people in my family. They love London, my nephews and nieces and everybody. My place is like Hauptbahnhof. That's what they call it. It's very busy with all sorts of people, all sorts of nationalities.

My church, St. Martin's in the Fields, is very important for me. They tried to get me involved there, but I just can't, I feel I can't. I have to go to various churches, to various different churches. I'm like a Gypsy! Even in my private life. I go to St. James's at Piccadilly, they do a lot of work with the down and outs. And St. Martin's does a lot of work with down and outs. And I like it there because there are all kinds of different characters and nationalities, everything comes there. So I feel at home there.

When I was away from London I would think of South Kensington, where my school was and where we lived at first. The white Victorian buildings of London and the grey sky against the white buildings was always very impressive. And I like the squares. I also like St. Paul's Cathedral as a huge, huge space and the echo in it.

And the other thing I really like about London is going around so many different areas that are completely different, with completely different people. The fact that you can be in a different environment, a different culture. Even though the bricks, the houses may be the same, the whole area is completely different according to which culture lives there. I really love that aspect of it!

And in England I really enjoy the East coast. I love the expanse of nothingness of the sea and the huge skies and the sandy ground and the strong wind. And I like the contrast between that empty, open landscape and the density of urban living in London, the centre of London.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 24

Anni Reich

Places I love. Oh, I love travelling.

Klub Zwei
And places in London?

Oh, well, I like historical places, old places. Don't like the city now because it's all glass. I like the little small churches which are just hidden. I'm not terribly keen on the Tower of London, well, one takes one's children there. But it's not my favourite. Buckingham Palace neither. What else? I love London, but if you give me a list and I see them all...

Elly Miller

Well, I certainly like the museums, I love the British Museum. It's fantastic.

I love Oxford, because I went to school there. And then my parents came back to London after the war and I went back to university there, so I love everything about Oxford. It is always very nice to go there.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 26

The sort of way that I relate to place is probably in my own home. Now, I think, what I've surrounded myself with, is place. I mean, if you lived in Africa, Africa is very strong. There is a magnetism about Africa. And you can see that I have filled my house with African motifs, chairs, sculptures, figures that they make, materials and I'm very attached to Africa. And because I don't feel safe there or that I belong in Africa I've brought Africa to belong to me. And I've brought my Africa here. I think, that's what I've done, things that are important to me I have around me. The best place I feel comfortable in is in my house.

This is the Freud Museum London and it's the home of Sigmund Freud and his family when they left Vienna because of the Nazi persecution in 1938. And they settled in this house in June 1939. Freud lived here just one year, but his daughter, Anna Freud, continued to live here until her death in 1981. And the Freud Museum now is the house of Sigmund and Anna Freud which is shown to the public. His study room and library, all the furniture, all the books, all his antiquities he brought from Vienna to London and that is the core of the museum. But the museum is not just a shrine to a famous person, but tries to look at Freud's work in various ways and a contemporary light. And to open the doors to artists, to writers.

The museum also represents the emigration of German and Austrian Jews. Many of them did settle in this area of London. It became a particular area. And as that first generation is now dying out, I think, this museum will stand as a testimony to them. And to the huge contribution they made to the arts and to the sciences and culture in its broader sense in the United Kingdom.

Arrival

The position my mother went into was not exactly easy. But we had escaped from Nazi Austria. And that was the most important aspect of the whole thing.

Lisbeth Fischer-Leicht

Die Position, in die sich meine Mutter begab, war nicht gerade einfach. Aber wir waren aus Nazi-Österreich entkommen. Und das war wichtiger als alles andere.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 30

Klub Zwei
Do you remember the day when you arrived in Britain?

Oh yes, I remember that quite well. Well, I had been very seasick. We landed in Harwich having caught the boat from Hoek van Holland and proceeded from Harwich after the immigration authorities had checked our papers to London, to Liverpool Street Station. And from there I went on to Surrey where my mother had her job waiting for her. The position that my mother went into was not exactly easy. But from my point of view we had escaped from Nazi Austria and that was the most important aspect of the whole thing.

Yes, I do. I remember my first impression of Trafalgar Square. For some reason we came up through Trafalgar Square, I don't know why, because we would have arrived at Victoria, I can't quite see how we got to Trafalgar Square, but I do remember the buses and it was very impressive. My brother was already here, so he could already tell me stories. We were very close at that time, two years between a brother and sister, and having travelled together, that made you very close. And he could explain, what was going on. That helped a lot.

But London struck me as being very big. And we knew a little English, because the weeks in Belgium we had an English tutor who had taught us a little bit of English. So, it helped, although we didn't speak fluently. We did know a little bit of English. I remember arriving and I remember that, but I don't think I can give you more impact of London.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 32

Emigration

I don’t know if you can call it emigration at the time of a ten-year-old. You are not aware of emigrating as a child. So, it’s a completely different story!

Elly Miller

Ich weiß nicht, ob du das als Zehnjährige schon Emigration nennen kannst. Als Kind ist dir nicht bewusst, dass du emigrierst. Da ist das für dich eine ganz andere Geschichte.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 34

Klub Zwei
When and how did you come to England?

Well, I came to this country in March 1939 from Holland. I had been originally on a children's transport to Holland which left Vienna in December '38. I left in the children's transport by myself and my mother collected me from Holland on her way to England early the following year. Because I had written to her and said that I was not very happy to stay in Holland. I sensed there was imminent danger, I sensed that this was not a permanent refuge for me. So, that's how I came to England. With her. My father already had died in 1937 and my brother was hoping to come soon afterwards. Which he did, in fact. Yes.

My husband was very fond of England which I wasn't at that time. They had three shoe factories, called Mirus in Vienna and he started working with contacts in England and went to England quite frequently. Just before Hitler he went once or twice and I said: "This time I come with you." He said: "No, we haven't got the money." I said: "I pay it myself!" And I went with him. Here I got stuck because while we were here Hitler marched into Austria. So, in the first place I was refugee, but, and that is what I wanted to tell you, I didn't go through all the suffering others had to go through. Like my mother did. She stayed behind, but she came, we got her out. So, I'm not really sure that I'm the "victim" you are looking for.

Well, we spent most of the time in the news department of *The Times.* Because our friend, Peter Smolka, worked at *The Times* office. He was also from Vienna. He came before Hitler. He also worked for Reuters. We heard it on the ticker. As the ticker went round we heard every bit of news, what was going on. So it was a very exciting time and you can imagine how we felt. We saved our lives but we had all our loved-ones in Vienna. So it was not easy. It was difficult. And, of course, we had only a restricted amount of money. You were

only allowed to take I don't know exactly how much with you. And I know I had more, but my husband said "I don't allow it." I see myself still giving it to my mother, what I was not supposed to take. So we were really stranded after a fortnight.

I come from Bohemia, from the German part, from the Sudeten German part. My father was a doctor. And I studied in Prague. It's quite simple. I came several times to London. I came first in 1939 as a student. I had a permit to come here to work as a nurse, train as a nurse. And then I studied medicine and finished my studies and was a doctor during the war. Then I—we—went back to Czechoslovakia, to Prague, and later on we came back here again. And when we came back here in 1947, the first of January 1947, we moved to this area, Hampstead Garden Suburb, and lived here since. At the start of this emigration we had no work permits and two small children.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 38

I don't know if you can call it emigration at the time of a ten-year-old. It's not a conscious emigration. It's just not being at home, where you were used to be, but going somewhere else. You are not aware of emigrating as a child. So, it's a completely different story! I wasn't aware that I wasn't going to go back until we were actually in London for a while. Then I realised that we weren't going back.

When we left Vienna – schools closed for the week after the Anschluss, there were special school holidays – I was still in the Volksschule and my brother was at the Akademisches Gymnasium in Vienna. I presume it was my grandparents who said to our nanny that we were going on a holiday because schools were closed. She, incidentally, was a member of the Nazi party and was very pro-Hitler. We lived on the Park Ring in Vienna. I remember the parade from the Schwarzenbergplatz, when Hitler entered Vienna. Our nanny was waving, she put out Swastika flags, out from our apartment, because it was important to her. She was a marvellous caring nanny for us, but she certainly welcomed Hitler.

And they asked several schools to send children to march in the parade. And most of my class from the Volksschule, I was in the Johannesgasse, marched. I saw them marching. And a week before that, they'd been at my birthday party and the next day they wouldn't speak to you.

I still remember hearing the abdication of Schuschnigg on the radio as a child. And I have never forgotten that. It was very odd. Well, what upset me as a child, a ten-year-old, was that his voice broke into a kind of sigh at the end when he abdicated. And I thought to myself, how could a man who is actually the head of a country cry? I was terribly upset, I remember it very vividly.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 40

My parents came to England in 1940, and I was born here in 1942. So, essentially I'm a child of England. I was born and I was brought up in England. But my parents were immigrants, they were refugees and we were brought up as orthodox Jews.
So there was immigration, there was a host society. We were talking about this recently, it was a very determined host society. It was an Anglican, Church of England, white society to which – if you behaved well – you joined and you were admitted. But you were never quite absorbed, because if you practiced another religion, or you spoke with an accent, you felt that you were an outsider. I don't think this obtains today. My children are much more secure in who they are and what they are, because they don't have to feel that they have to be absorbed.

My father was born in Austria-Hungary, then it became part of Czechoslovakia, then after that Hungary, then part of the Soviet Union and is now the Ukraine. So his town has been five different countries in his lifetime. But I guess he's essentially of Czech-Hungarian origin. And he came to London in 1939 with only a solid gold ring that he wore on his finger and he still wears to this day. Which was the only way he could smuggle out something of value – that in case he needed something he would have this gold ring on his finger and that he could use that. And he came here as a young student. He was a student in Prague at that time and just managed to get out when the Germans invaded Prague.

My mother is Viennese-born and she was sent by her parents in 1938, after the Anschluss, to London or to England. She came on a domestic servant's visa and she was 17 at that time. She joined her elder brother who was already here, who'd managed to get a permission for her to come here. And then later on, after "Kristallnacht", her younger brother, who was ten years younger than her, was also permitted to join, but not her parents, who then perished in 1942, so they remained in Vienna until 1942.

I was just born in Vienna, in July 1938. And I left when I was six or seven months old, and I didn't meet my mother until I was five. I'm saying those words because I've been told. But I personally have no memories at all. But, apparently it was very hard because my mother only spoke German, I only spoke French. We could not communicate.

My father had left Vienna in November 1938. He had settled in Paris, he was in the army and he had organised for my mother and myself, for his mother and her mother, and for his sister who had a little girl of two and a half to come to France. But the two grandmothers did not want to leave Vienna and the two young mothers did not want to leave their mothers. There were two or three organisations of mostly women, who did the journey Paris – Berlin, Paris – Vienna to take one or two babies, children who were too small to go on the Kindertransport. So my father organised, from Paris, a woman to travel all the way to Vienna, take the two little girls, me and the other little girl of two and a half, and bring them back to Paris. And apparently, these two young women went with their little girls, me in my mother's arms and her sister-in-law with her little girl. And the woman from Paris arrived in Vienna. It was well organised,

but apparently, at the last moment, my father's sister could not hand over her daughter. But my mother could. My mother handed me over, that other young woman could not hand over that little girl of two and a half. As a result of it, I'm alive, that little girl is not.

So this is how I came to France. And I was in hiding all the time, because I couldn't live with my father. He told me that I was treated like a parcel, taken from one place to another and to another. And my father used to come to visit me, he says, as often as he could. That was fine until I was talking. And when I was talking there were lots of problems, because I changed my name. I couldn't be called Ruth Buchholz, it was impossible, so my name was Josine Tevé. And when somebody asked, you know: “Comment tu t'apelles”, “What's your name?”, apparently I used to say: “Well, it depends, when my daddy comes, my name is so and so, and when my daddy is not here, my name is so and so.” And my father said: “Every time I had to find another place for you. I couldn't tell you: 'You can't tell them'.” So, it was apparently very very difficult. But it was okay, obviously it was okay. But again, I have no memory. All I'm telling you is what my father told me.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 44

Family

My father came from Mora-
via. My mother's mother
came from the Waldviertel.
From Austria. Well, that
was all K-K, kaiser-königlich.
K und K auf Deutsch.

Anni Reich

Mein Vater war aus Mähren.
Die Mutter von meiner
Mutter kam aus dem Wald-
viertel. Aus Österreich.
Das war ja damals alles K-K,
kaiser-königlich. K und K
auf Deutsch.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 46

My family: My father came from Moravia of a so-called good family. There is also a book *The Jews of Moravia* where there are pages about him and his family, his father. His father was a member of the synagogue and he sang every Sunday in a Church. My father.

My mother! Mother's parents came also from Moravia. Her mother came from the Waldviertel. From Austria. Well, that was all K-K, kaiser-königlich. K und K auf Deutsch. And my father came to Vienna. He was an artisan and he specialised later on in jewellery. So he became a jeweller, but he made the things by himself, also rings for the Pope. And my mother's father came from Moravia to Vienna and was a baker and had a few "Konditoreien" in Vienna. And that's them. My father married in his second marriage my mother, who was born in Vienna. And he had a son who later on lived in America.

And here am I who was born in 1912 and went to school in Vienna. First Elementary School and then to Realgymnasium Albertgasse. Does it still exist? RG8? It was a good school! But then I switched over to Schwarzwaldschule, where I went into the Frauenoberschule. That meant we had the same subjects as in Realgymnasium plus Kindergarten, Kochen, Säuglingspflege and Schneidern and whatever. And I took my Matura, Abitur in Vienna, and then went to England to study the language. And I said I would never like to go back to England. Because at that time, in November, which is a terrible time to come to England, we had nothing but fog.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 48

My father, who was a publisher, was aware all the time. The Phaidon Press was a quite well-known press at that time. Phaidon books were banned in Germany because they were published by a Jewish publisher. My father went to America, to arrange distribution for Phaidon books in the States, so that there was a contact for him in case he had to go to the States. And in 1936 he made an arrangement with an English publisher for English editions of the Phaidon books. In 1937 he made an agreement with that publisher that in the event of Germany marching into Austria the English publisher would become the owner of the Phaidon Press and there would be no, how can I say, no taking over of the German authorities of the Phaidon Press. And this is in fact what happened. My father managed to bring his entire office material and books over, into England, because this particular firm owned officially the Phaidon Press and there could be no possibility of the things remaining in German hands. So, my father was well aware.

My mother was always concerned for our well-being. And I can't really remember how she felt at that time. I think she was more concerned with her baby, Hannah, who was about 18 months then. My mother very rarely spoke about her feelings to us, I must tell you. Sometimes she expressed fear. She always had certain rules and conventions in her life. Whatever the circumstances, my mother was very adaptable! She would adapt to any sort of situation, which she did. When war broke out and we moved to a small guest house, she managed to cook and this and that, so she was very adaptable. She had quite a difficult childhood. She was born in Poland and they moved, constantly moved. But she was more concerned to preserve the routine of her life in whatever circumstances she found herself than to express worries as to what was one going to do. And she found means to actually keep to her conventions in a funny way. I call them conventions because she had a very strong sense of conventional lifestyle and upbringing.

My father was, I think, the stronger influence, certainly on me. My mother was a strong woman. But I think he had greater influence on us. And he was easily content with the situation. He was very thoughtful and whatever went wrong he would say: “Don't worry, wait!” The word “wait” was one of his sort of words that always entered into his philosophy. Don't jump into situations, whatever is bad, don't worry, it's not the worst. He

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 50

was very sensible about these things, very thoughtful, but he also had lot of forethought. You could see that from the way he had actually acted. And whatever situation you put him in, he was happy. So I think, that probably influenced us all that we just accepted whatever situation. That we all recognised our good fortune in whatever circumstance we found ourselves.

My mother was in Vienna till 1943 and the story that I have been told is that she, one day, arrived in Paris. She had done the journey from Vienna to Paris by train and she apparently arrived with the yellow star, so she was on the train from Vienna to Paris in 1943 with the yellow star.

My father left Vienna in November 1938. My mother had a younger brother, I think, unless she was the last one. And that younger brother disappeared within one or two weeks after the Anschluss. He just disappeared as if he'd never existed. And my father decided he was going to find out where his brother-in-law had disappeared. How, where, what. And I've been told that my father was caught three times by the Gestapo in Vienna. Three times he was helped out by a non-Jewish friend in Vienna and when he got him out the third time he told him: "Look, I won't be able to help you again, you are now on your own." And that's when my father left Vienna by himself. And when his mother said goodbye to him she gave him a scarf that she was wearing which many years later my father gave me. And when my father died three years ago I put the scarf in the coffin. And my father's mother gave him two things. She gave him that scarf and she

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 52

gave him her wedding ring which I'm wearing. So that's my grandmother's wedding ring. And that's how my father left Vienna in November 1938.

After the war my parents had a very hard time for many years. Financially and personally, I mean, of that I have memories, too. Life was very hard for them. We lived in one room, all three of us. And then my little brother was born, of that I have lots of memories, yes. I was seven or eight, I have no memories before. Nothing. And eventually my parents had a reasonable life, I think. But I went to London. As soon as I could I left Paris. It was the best thing I could have done not knowing it, I'm very glad that I did leave.

I was born and grew up in South Africa. My father's family came from Lithuania. My mother's family from Latvia. My mother's father came as a diamond buyer at the end of the 19th century, settling near Kimberley. My father's father set out for South Africa in 1899 and by the time he arrived there, the Boer War had broken out. All the Lithuanians – Yiddish speaking, with beards, and no money, you know – they were prepared to get on the train and go to Johannesburg where there was gold.And what happened instead was that – because war had broken out – the trains were coming back from Johannesburg with all the Jews coming back to Cape Town. And Cape Town was getting bigger and bigger with a lot of Jews who had no jobs. So they had to find ways of making a living and my grandfather started selling eggs and carrying bottles. Eventually he settled down as a glazier. Because he didn't have to carry too much, he could just cut the glass. And he always believed that God would provide and some day something good would happen.

South Africa was a wonderful place to grow up and I was born in 1940. I was vaguely aware of the war. My parents were involved in sending food parcels. My uncle went up to North Africa to fight

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 54

with the allies, but one was saved from the horrors. One wasn't restricted. We could eat, we had food, we weren't obviously affected in the way that people in countries where the war was going on were. So, we were spared that.

From the 1940s onwards, Jews were emigrating from South Africa. They were not happy with the regime. It's very interesting that the Jews from Germany who were able to come to South Africa felt very uncomfortable. They recognised too much the restrictions and the racial separateness and oppression and terrible conditions that they were so much more aware of than other white South Africans. And you will find that many Jews were in the forefront of the movement to get rid of apartheid.

Rosemarie Nief

I was born in Rumania. I'm of Rumanian-German origin and my family moved to Germany in 1974. And then I had to start all over again. My A-levels were not recognised. I was already at Bucharest University and then I had to do everything again. So it was a struggle!

To London I came in 1985. I studied at university. I studied Spanish and English and then I wanted to practice my English after university, so I came to London for a year and then I never went back, which my mother didn't like at that time.

Klub Zwei
But now she's got used to it.

Yes, she's used to it in heaven. She died about seven years ago.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 56

Holocaust

My mother's story was also intermingled with bits of dreadful stories that could not really be talked about. The knowledge of genocide, I think, colours everything.

Tamar Wang

Mutters Geschichte war mit Bruchstücken grauenhafter Geschichten vermischt, über die nicht wirklich geredet werden konnte. Das Wissen über den Genozid bestimmt einfach alles, glaube ich.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 58

My mother lost her permit. Just before the war she got another permit and so she came to London. And with her came all our luggage and our furniture. And I can still hear it. We lived in a house in Hampstead at that time. And when the people came and brought the cases, everything was broken inside. I still hear it! All this broken glass. But that was nothing of course!

So, then my mother was with us. My husband's mother, she thought she'd make it. She had a very good friend who was non-Jewish and she thought he would be able to help her but he didn't, or he couldn't, rather. And she went to Poland and a concentration camp. So, I had my mother. My husband had not.

I don't think I ever tell the whole sequence of the story to anybody, because what one remembers in one's life are instances, you know, incidents and memories and particular experiences on the way.

The whole emigration was a matter of months and months. My aunt, who had taken us out of Vienna, was married to a Pole and then they thought, with a baby, of going to Poland. They did in fact go to Poland in 1938. But they decided to leave Poland and went to Holland. And this aunt's mother, my grandmother, went to stay with them in Holland. And my grandmother then came to us, to England in 1938. The aunt stayed in Holland, stayed there when war broke out and eventually was taken, with her husband and her child, a little boy, to a concentration camp in Holland and ended up in Bergen-Belsen. And the three of them actually, all three survived, the child, the father and the mother. And my aunt is still alive and lives in New York now, at the age of 96. I mean, this is quite an interesting story. How people migrated from one place to another and it's not often that you hear of a whole family surviving Belsen.

And my mother's parents left Vienna much later. My grandmother, in 1939, walked with a friend

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 60

from Antwerp to Dunkerque and got picked up by the English boats at the Dunkerque landings, you know, who took the English soldiers over, back into England. It took her about three or four days on the Channel, to cross the Channel, she landed in Southampton, was put into prison as suspected fifth column Nazi and ended up in another prison in London. And through a rabbi who visited the prison my mother heard that her mother was in a prison in London in 1940. And she was in several other prisons which was quite funny because when I first met my husband and we went through London I used to stop at every prison and say: "My grandmother was in here!" He thought it was very odd. But they all, everybody in the family, I mean, we are a very lucky family actually, because the close family survived.

Well, the only family we had in London, were Ruth Rosenfelder's parents. Her mother was my mother's first cousin. And we, my parents, my brother and sister and I, had no family in England at all. Except for those cousins who came much later, in 1940. But, I mean, now, we are a big family with my husband's family. He was born here and so it's very different.

My parents who had been living in Belgium when war broke out never suffered in the way their families suffered. My father was one of eight, my mother was one of eight and all but one brother of my father were killed in the war with their families. So when war ended in 1945 my parents discovered the extent of the loss. It was something which they had to carry, their survival. These are things that have been recorded in other areas and so, I won't go on about it. But in fact it touched them obviously for the rest of their lives.

Several years after my parents died I decided that I would go back to Poland for a long weekend with my husband. And we were there for five days. And I don't think I will ever go back again. It was winter, it was cold, it was bleak and it was probably one of the most difficult times I have ever spent.

But somehow I felt I had a duty to my parents to go back. My mother had gone back in 1946 – I think quite illicitly – to see if she could find relatives and had come back in a worse state than when she'd left. And in fact she had erected, in 1946, a headstone. She'd discovered where her father had been buried. Because he'd been buried

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 62

in the Ghetto. She then erected a headstone to as many of the people as she knew had been killed in the war.

When we went in 1989, that headstone had disappeared. So that even post-war there had been either vandalism or neglect. So it just simply re-enforced the sort of attitudes that we had to that whole era.

Tamar Wang
Were you worried about other people in the family? I mean, your close family?

Elly Miller
Well, by the time war broke out in 1939, we knew where people were. But of course my mother had a very large family in Poland. I don’t think that we discussed that at all, at that time. But I do know that after 1940, there were lots of fears where everybody was. Because we knew that people had been taken in Belgium, Holland and so on. Then we were very worried.

And the most worrying thing throughout the war was my aunt who was sent to a concentration camp. And my father was trying to find out where his sister was, through the Red Cross. I think I am very concerned for Bertha, for this particular aunt who is 96. Her son had a heart attack, the one who survived. He suffered enormously in later life from having been in the camps. Depressions and to the point of thinking that he doesn’t want to be a victim. He wanted to be like the German Soldiers. But this son died. So, I am to this day concerned about that aunt.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 64

We knew where my grandmother was, she was interned, although she was in England she was interned in an internment camp. And my uncles and grandfather – for months we didn't know where they were – but by 1941 they had got to the United States.

So, it was a worry all the time. But one knew nothing of the real Holocaust at that point. One knew that there were concentration camps and one knew there were killings, and "Kristallnacht". But one didn't realise that there were these horrendous murders, gas chambers and so on. That was a terrible revelation. That certainly affected us all.

Klub Zwei
How is that for you, listening to what your mother says?

Tamar Wang
I think, the main difference is the way that she tells it now, the way that we're talking about it. The knowledge of genocide and the concentration camps, I think, colours everything. To me her story was also always intermingled with bits of dreadful, dreadful stories that couldn't really be talked about. So it's good to hear it again now, isolated

from all the rest. Because as a child I was brought up to think that if you do well, you're rewarded and if you're bad you get punished. And alongside that kind of basic morality were all these awful things that had happened to our family, so my logic was: "There must have been something terribly wrong with us." And I really wanted to know what was terribly wrong with us.

Elly Miller
I think the discovery of the horror did colour one's memory of what actually happened at that time. I mean we also had fun on the way to England. In Zürich we were waiting to go to the train. My brother and I were rather naughty and my father was very cross with us and he said: "Kinder, mit euch flücht ich nie mehr!"

I mean, it's funny, this was serious for him and we were children playing around. But when you think, in retrospect, why – warum man flüchten musste. Es war eine Flucht, ganz klar! Unsere Flucht war nicht so arg, aber es war eine Flucht. And if you think about it, it's funny, but in retrospect it's terrible.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 66

After the war my father was so grateful that they'd survived, that for the first two years after the war he worked for a Jewish organisation helping survivors from concentration camps. And that I'm beginning to remember, there I have memories again. So, on Friday nights my father always brought some people. We had nothing, that was in the end of 1945, 1946, and they were sharing whatever there was to eat. And almost every Friday there was always a group of people coming and they were so grateful. I never forget this chap, who whenever he came used to kiss my mother's hands. At the end he used to say: "Frau Buchholz, das war ausgezeichnet." Many years later I talked about these times to my father. And I said: "I remember that man," and then I said: "I remember that there was also a very pretty young woman with long hair." And my father said: "You still remember all this?" I said: "Yes, and there was that man, funny looking, ginger hair." And my father kept on saying: "You still remember all this?" I said: "Yes." And three times out of four, whenever I asked: "What happened to that person?," he said: "He, she committed suicide." And that was in 1945, 1946. So many of them committed suicide afterwards. They found no way to start again.

My mother went back to Vienna after the war, because her sister was virtually the only survivor of the family. And at that time it was impossible to get my aunt to come to this country because there was no way unless you were in direct line of relationship. In other words, if you weren't a parent or a child you could not get permission for entry into this country.

And so my mother reluctantly decided she would go back to Austria. It was very difficult for her, but she and my aunt, her sister, were so close, having both of them been widowed, that there followed a period of a relative, relative happiness which was punctuated by regular visits to this country, to us, the young family. So, that was my link back with Austria. We all thought all the bad things had gone and only the good things stayed. But that's not really the way life is.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 68

Things

One of the problems with this subject, is to express something that is no longer here. And yet we are searching for something that we feel or we have a sense of.

Katherine Klinger

Ein Problem dieses Themas ist, dass wir über etwas sprechen, das nicht mehr da ist. Und doch suchen wir nach etwas, das wir empfinden oder von dem wir eine Vorstellung haben.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 70

My mother, who loved beautiful things, dinned into us that you are not to get attached to things: "Things don't matter." And she told stories that there were people who'd lost their lives by going back to pick up something of sentimental value. Because they left France in the cold, end of the day, boarded a boat, and I think it was my father who probably wanted to go back for a cardigan for my sister and my mother said no.

I never felt – ever – a sense of continuity or inheritance, because anything that my parents possessed, that we had at home, had been acquired during the war or post war. There was never a sense of handing anything down. So, when my parents died, I felt very uneasy about taking any of their things. I felt that I was actually stealing them, that they didn't belong to me. And it took me about ten years to get a sense of curatorship. This lamp behind me was my parents'. And I'm pleased to have it. But it took me a while.

One of the things, one of the problems with this whole subject, is to try to express and articulate about something that is no longer here. And yet we are searching for something that we feel, or we have a sense of. And at the same time there is the paradox of also not being able to express what it is that we are looking for, because it is not here, it has been destroyed. I think one is constantly grappling with the paradox of presence and absence, which was the title of the conference we held in Vienna in 1998. Which was actually the title I liked most of anything I've ever done. "The Presence of the Absence" – because in a way it doesn't make any sense, and yet it makes perfect sense.

This is a postcard by an American artist, Melissa Gould. She's the daughter of an Austrian survivor and I think her work is quite remarkable, because it connects to the past in a way that is highly critical and has a sort of a wit and a charm about it that I think is also quite Austrian. It shows a scrubbing brush which is a souvenir from 1938. I think that that cannot fail to hit one right in the stomach in seeing it. This everyday object, a scrubbing brush, that most of us just regard as a thing to clean dirt up with and it has got no significance

whatsoever. Of course we know that in 1938 it became not only a metaphor but a practical way for a deeply humiliating experience in which – certainly from famous photographs that we have of this time – the good, ordinary, bystander population of Vienna participated with this ”very innocent” scrubbing brush. They participated in watching certainly my grandfather amongst thousands of other grandfathers bent on their knees in the streets just cleaning with these scrubbing brushes and in other cases with tooth brushes. And it isn't about trying to recreate that experience, to imagine – what must it be like to be down on my knees in the city where I have spent my life and that I love, and here I am scrubbing the streets, whilst not only the police, but all the people are just laughing and jeering at me. It has a kind of immediacy in the present that I think is not gimmicky, it's very, very profound. Given the amnesiac response of the Austrians to what happened, one has to hit one's punches as low as this in order to create some kind of response. Because clearly, on the whole, Austria, Vienna has been able to think that its past is of no consequence or meaning. And so, one has to come up with these very clever, simple statements, which is what I like so much about this postcard.

When my father died, three and a half years ago, I wanted straight away to get something, to have something to do with my father's death. So I bought a piano. And I said the piano will always be open when my grandchildren come. I've got five grandchildren, and they all, when they come here, will spend some time sitting by the piano.

And actually there's one who now wants me to show him the notes. And I'm taking piano lessons as well, because I thought if it's already here I must really learn a bit. So I'm learning piano, I'll never become a pianist, but I enjoy it. And I can play all the children's songs, and they think I'm so clever, you know, because I can play: ”Humpty dumpty sat on the wall” or ”Frère Jacques”.

And, why did I do that? I don't know. But this is what I did straight away and everybody said: ”What's this?” My father died in November and there was the piano here, I think, in January. And I'm so pleased I did it, so, so pleased. All my grandchildren go there, all of them. And I have a little bit the feeling, maybe they go to my father. You know, each one, as they gravitate over there for five minutes, ten minutes. I don't know.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 74

These albums are like graves for me, you know, they are like memorials for the communities which were wiped out by the Holocaust. But as soon as you open them, it's very vibrant, there is an interaction between the images and you and the picture changes.

We have images here in the archive which were taken by the Nazis and also images which were taken by the Allied Forces. They live together in one album! They had a contrasting purpose and this gets lost.

This is the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and it's like an icon of the Holocaust. Some pictures are used and over-used. And this is one of them. I think, the French News Agency identified the boy as Arthur Schmörntak. And they claim that he was living in a kibbutz in Israel. But then the Schmörntaks' relatives say that he didn't survive, that he died. So there is a lot of controversy about some pictures. Some images don't have captions or the caption is used wrongly. Or they are used out of context. You see, then they loose their power. The meaning is always created by the context in which the picture finds itself. Sometimes television companies and film producers and the survivors use images just to authenticate an event. It's very difficult when you come to memorise, to include it into the memory of the Holocaust what you really remember. Because the picture is not the survivors who talk about their experience, it's not him or her in the picture, it's just an event, part of the Holocaust. Sometimes this meaning which is created is fictitious. So, what do you remember? What sort of meaning do you create?

And this I recently found in the archive, it's a coffee cup with the Star of David and the Swastika and the title was "Difference of Opinion around a Cup of Coffee". But then there was a letter: "This coffee cup was recently found among a collection of 200 year old Vienna porcelain. So it was 200 years before the Holocaust.

Klub Zwei
Where do the photographs come from? Are they donations?

They were here, in the Wiener Library. They were part of the original archive. Some of them were donated later.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 76

Klub Zwei
Does it happen that people come by and bring photographs to be included in the archive?

Not so much now, but it used to happen. We don't have a programme whereby we go out and encourage people to donate us the pictures. We don't have the money for that. But we always welcome donations.

I'm interested in Jewish history, how the Jewish people has survived and evolved. When you study history there is hardly any talk of Jews except where it's really grim. If you learn Jewish history, you discover that in every civilisation, in every aspect the Jews are there. And you wonder why Jews are still here, why they're still vibrant, why they're still contributing to life in Britain, in America, in the world? Even in the places where they were almost trampled to death. What is the purpose of the Jews? And what is the miracle that has actually kept them together and kept them wanting to be Jews? And wanting to contribute. There is this feeling as
Jews that you have to do something that is not just about yourself. And, I think, Jews are driven by something more than normal people are driven. I may be wrong, but that's my conception about the way I see things.

As a visual person I like photographs. I have walls full of pictures and images that mean something. Places I've been to, or pictures of my garden. I take lots of pictures of my garden and I grow things in the garden. And, all the pictures in this room, for instance, are painted and drawn by my son Anthony. You know, those are the things that mean

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 78

most to me. I don't want to go to someone else's gallery and look at things. I do it, from time to time, if there is an exhibition on Africa or an exhibition on Jewish things. But the things that I really enjoy I've been able to bring to me. Those are probably the most exciting things.

Klub Zwei
Machen Sie beide viele Dinge gemeinsam?

Josephine Bruegel
Ja, wir gehen in den Club, in den 1943 Club. Ich würde schon gerne etwas mit ihr gemeinsam unternehmen, aber ich kann nicht, weil sie steht so spät auf. Weil, wir hätten Gelegenheit zusammen, sagen wir, ins Britische Museum zu gehen, aber das beginnt um ein Uhr fünfzehn und da ist sie noch nicht auf!

Anni Reich
Da bin ich schon auf, aber noch nicht aufgestanden. Ich stehe gewöhnlich um zwölf Uhr auf, aber ich gehe erst um vier Uhr schlafen!

Josephine Bruegel
Gut, wenn du möchtest, um elf Uhr dreißig aufstehen und das Auto kommt um zwölf Uhr fünfzehn.

Anni Reich
Nein, das kann ich nicht. In einer halben Stunde soll ich aufstehen und mich anziehen? Das kann ich nicht. Ich brauch' zwei Stunden.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 80

Josephine Bruegel
Ah, das nicht. Ich brauch' Maximum eine drei-viertel Stunde.

Anni Reich
Im Badezimmer brauch' ich eine dreiviertel Stunde. Das hab ich mir allmählich angewöhnt! Ich mein', je weniger im Haus waren. Wie ich dann allein war, na, da konnt' ich machen was ich wollt'. Früher natürlich, wie ich nicht allein war, musste ich so um zwölf, halb eins schlafen gehen. Aber es ist immer später geworden, ich weiß nicht. Und jetzt ist es so, dass ich den Tag ganz verschoben hab. Und ich bemüh' mich immer aufs Gleiche zu kommen. Es gelingt mir nicht, es wird immer wieder spät! Und ich brauch' meine acht Stunden, die brauch' ich. Wieviel brauchst du?

Josephine Bruegel
Sieben Stunden genügen mir. Um elf Uhr bin ich gern im Bett.

Anni Reich
Angebrochener Abend für mich!

Klub Zwei
How come that your book is called "The Unsung Years"?

Well, I thought it was a title that would mean that those years had not been celebrated, sung in a sense of celebrated and yet they were years that were crucial to me. And it was crucial for my children and the next generation to understand that these were not years that were celebrated but they were full of meaning for me. And there was a musical element to the title which I thought was appropriate.

Klub Zwei
You said you wrote the book as a dedication to your children?

Yes. But also as a kind of a tribute to my family who had suffered and some of whom had perished in those years. So that it was partly a tribute to those that had died and partly an attempt to make my children and also my friends understand the circumstances which perhaps from official sources and historical documents are not so easily understood or accessible. I felt it was almost like a moral obligation to set down on paper what

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 82

one's experiences were. Even though I know they are not nearly as dramatic or as tragic or as important as so many other documents that have been written.

Klub Zwei
What reactions did you get to your book?

Amongst my own large circle of friends it was wonderfully well received and encouraged. Amongst the family, of course, it was welcomed and found to be moving, because when I was younger I don't think I wanted particularly to dwell on the subject. Also, I think one of my chief reasons for not going into great detail with my own children about things was that I did not want them to grow up with any kind of – what shall I say – any kind of prejudice or hostility towards those that had in our opinion sinned against us. I really wanted them to grow up free from all kinds of sadness and horror that we had lived through and not come up against it until they were mature enough and informed enough to make their own judgement about the past.

Work

In England I lived in an environment where there were a few women artists. So I decided to pick up my musical studies that had been terminated in Vienna.

Lisbeth Fischer-Leicht

In England wohnte ich in einer Gegend, wo es viele Künstlerinnen gab. Und so entschied ich mich, mein Musikstudium wiederaufzunehmen, das ich in Wien hatte abbrechen müssen.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 86

I'm the director of the Freud museum and I started to work here in 1988. I came from a large national museum, the National Maritime Museum. But I wanted to work in a museum which showed a collection in context. And I felt that this museum was such an important survival and that it was going to be an extraordinarily interesting place to work in which it has turned out to be. And with the worldwide interest there is in Freud. Possibly a greater worldwide interest than there is in the U.K., we sometimes feel. And there are great opportunities for showing this collection in many different contexts.

I was looking for a job. So, that's how I came to the Wiener Library. I didn't search deliberately for a Holocaust Library job. I was in the situation where I was looking for a job. But now it has become more than a job for me, because it gives meaning to my life. Working in this Library you get drawn into, more and more, into the personal experiences of the survivors. You get to know their stories and it's a very emotional experience.

I've done all the jobs here, from chief librarian to–, everything I've done here. At the moment I'm in charge of the photo archive and of the special collections. I also do the German book ordering and I'm in charge of the readers' advisory service in the Library, the enquiry desk.

The Wiener Library was founded in 1933 in Amsterdam by Dr. Alfred Wiener. He was an official of the Zentralverein, an association of Jews in Berlin, and he fled to Holland, where he started this archive in the back room of a hotel. A mass of leaflets and pamphlets and books and pictures and press cuttings just to document the menace of the Nazi regime. The uniqueness of this collection is that it grew up alongside the events themselves. In 1939 it became difficult for Wiener to keep the

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 88

collection in Amsterdam and he moved it over to England. And first we were in Manchester Square and then moved over here.

Currently I am working at the Institute of Contemporary History and Wiener Library, which is the oldest and probably the most comprehensive Holocaust archive in the world which is housed in London.

In the last five years I've also been running a charity called Second Generation Trust which looks at the generational consequences of history. In other words, in what ways National Socialism has affected the generations and quite specifically my own generation, born post-Holocaust, but born into a world in which that was part of an unseen and unexpressed trauma. How have we, the generations born into that world, processed, interpreted and worked through the consequences of that massive rupture in society and also in our families? The special focus of Second Generation Trust was not only to look at how that rupture has affected the descendants of victims, but also my own peer-group from the other side which would include the children of perpetrators, collaborators and so-called bystanders. So I simply formed this charity group Second Generation Trust as a way of being able to develop certain projects, to hold a number of public meetings particularly in the countries where the events took place, in which the descen-

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 90

dants from both sides could come together and see what kind of communication might be possible between us. And I am always working together with colleagues, mainly in Germany, but then in Austria as well. We set up a series of conferences, for about 500 people, in London, in Berlin and in Vienna.

I also have just recently, with a colleague and friend in the States, started another organisation called the Foundation Trust. It aims to build on the communication process that we have developed between children of survivors and children of perpetrators. Specifically linking it with people that come from other backgrounds of genocide. To see what similarities there are between those of us that come from a Holocaust background, or a background in which the family has been affected by the genocide in Armenia or of later genocides like Rwanda. And we will develop a network with people that come from other backgrounds that are similar in terms of the mass-violence that has taken place. As a way of really starting the discussion and the communication process to see what points of similarity are there between us, what differences, what we can learn from one another and what we can gain from one another.

What matters to me – and that is what I've always tried to do in the work that I've done – is to try to create and organise events in which the past is very, very connected to the present. That it is not seen as some dead historical event. What I'm interested in is how we bring the past into the present, what we do with it in the present and how we might be able to transform it into something else. But absolutely stay with it in the present.

And I think that the way in which we do that is by meeting with other people and by talking with other people and in establishing that kind of contact and dialogue. I think then a kind of transformation takes place and some kind of genuine communication in which we are aware of what the past is. That by meeting in the present we're working through that past and transforming it into something. And that's what I've always tried to achieve. And it is not predictable what the result is. And I'm not interested in prescribing what will happen. It's up to every individual to decide for him- or herself what's going to happen, what they want to happen. I am just facilitating the happening and that's what I'm interested in. I might have started originally with some sort of belief of "Oh, well, if you get 500 people together, and you get

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 92

hundreds of press reporters and you get people talking." But I don't believe in that any longer. I do believe in individuals being able to do exactly what they want to do, if they really care enough about it. I mean, everybody that I've spoken with has said the conferences and meetings have had a very, very powerful effect on them. And I just feel, well, that's a fantastic thing and the rest is up to that person, as to what they then want to do with it. Whether they want to take it forward or leave it.

And I'm certainly not going to be the one that's forever carrying it. I mean, everything that I've created and organised has come out of my own need to do something, which has happened then to touch other people. I've seen it as an internal process that I've been able to externalise in such a way that then other people have wanted to do whatever they want to do with it. But I feel it very strongly, there is nothing that I've done that any other person couldn't have done. Anybody could have done it. Depending on how driven or motivated or how desperate that person is or was. But there is nothing special about what I've done. I've simply done what I needed to do for myself.

For about fourteen years I was an antiquarian, an antiquarian bookseller. And, I'm not quite sure how I got into it, because I married very young, I was eighteen when I came to London and I hadn't done anything except going to school. But first of all I was very lonely and it took me a long, long time to make friends. And when my first son was born, I used to take him in the car to go out to the country for the day. And I started looking into all bookshops, because I've always liked books. And I started buying children's books. I went into libraries, started a bit studying about the history of children's books. This went on for a few years. And then I met someone who was also interested in children's books. And we decided to put our two heads together and see what we could do. And this is how we started. And the business we both were learning at the same time as buying and starting to sell and we became antiquarian booksellers and we specialised in early children's books. By "early" I mean really early, 17th and 18th century. With a few exceptions we stopped at first world war. Nothing printed after first world war.

Why I went into it, I don't know. I had to do something, I'm not the type of person who joins groups, I'm not a loner but I do not like groups.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 94

And I couldn't work for anyone. I had to find something which I had total control of. I think that's one of my deficiencies in life: I have to have control. And, I've never really worked out why I went into it, for twenty-five, thirty years I really enjoyed it. And what was also wonderful was that my children joined in, during school holidays they used to go to auctions with me, to buy books. So they were part of it as well. And they started collecting books as well. And whether it has anything to do with my past, I don't know, I really don't know. There are certain things about life, as it is, I think, I've done too much thinking in my life, so there is no need to find a reason for it.

Klub Zwei
Do you still collect books today?

No, no more, finished.

Klub Zwei
When did you stop? Or why did you stop?

Well, a few years ago I decided that I have to reverse the process and start getting rid of possessions rather than accumulating. And this is actually what I have been doing for the last few years. I still like living in a nice home, I mean, and all this. But I never buy anything anymore. Never, never, never. And that I have stopped quite a few years ago.

I don't know if you've noticed. But the statistics show that people who were born in my year or the year before, in 1937, 1938, did not have any brothers or sisters after the war. They remained the only child, whether the parents were still together, whether the parents remarried.I was not an only child. After the war when my parents got together again, they decided to have another child, which was wonderful. As far as I know this is very rare And in 1989 there was an enormous tragedy. My brother and his two children died in a car crash. Without sounding dramatic, that is what I would call my second Holocaust. I had no family and thanks to my parents who decided to have another child, we started being a family again. I became not just a daughter, I was a sister, then I became a sister-in-law, then I had nephews, we had some sort of a normal life together, and the whole thing's gone and back to where I was before.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 96

The first person I met after that, and she probably doesn't even know it, was Nitza. She's a wonderful woman, and she asked me whether I wanted to help to do some work at Spiro Ark. And I said: "No," because I'm not part of a group and I never have been and secondly I'm not part of any Jewish thing. It's not me, religion doesn't interest me. So she said to me: "But what we do has nothing to do with religion. It is a history, we are interested in the culture and the history of the Jews, not the religious aspect of it, not the political side of it." So I said: "Well, if there's no religion in it, if there's no politics in it, then maybe I could be interested." And I was. And that led to me meeting Katherine and the moment we met, although there is a big difference in age, there was an instant rapport. And we get on very well. And she's the one who's been pushing me into doing this and doing that. And, I think it's a two way thing. I have helped her as well. And I think had the tragedy not occurred I don't think I would be doing all that, I don't think so, I doubt it very much.

My husband who could take a year off from business decided to go back to university, to Oxford. It was a totally new course which was called Modern Jewish Studies. It was fascinating. And I was encouraged by the university to join him after a year. And studied also Modern Jewish Studies which included history and sociology and literature. At that time one of my lecturers died and they needed a replacement and I got the post of teaching Hebrew and Hebrew literature there.

When my husband finished his studies, he was like a man possessed. He felt that he found something that he was deprived of. You know, you are craving for something, you want something really hard, but you don't know what it is. And all of a sudden, you take it and it fills this gap in you. And this drive – to tell the tale, or to make sense of the long history in the past – it's something that you feel in a lot of Jewish people and for some reason particularly in women.

My husband felt that he had to pass it on to other people rather than just being enriched by himself. And he started an organisation called the Spiro Institute which started with teaching Jewish history in schools. And then one needed to have teachers

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 98

for these schools. Because there weren't so many faculties of Jewish history, today you've got faculties in Oxford, in Cambridge, in London and in all kinds of other organisations. But at the time when we started nobody knew. So you had to, A, teach Jewish history and B, you had to teach people how to be teachers. And the Hebrew University in Jerusalem sent the first teacher who was professor at the university to train the new teachers here. And they were housewives, solicitors, dentists, you name it, who just wanted to learn something and to teach it. That was our first class. It wasn't even called The Spiro. It was called – just as a working title – Jewish Studies Organisation. And somebody who was then the editor of the Jewish Chronicle said: "Such a boring name. Why don't you give it a little bit of personality? Why don't you call it after your own name?" And so it became the Spiro Institute and it was for 20 years.

Now, we are the Spiro Ark. I'm glad that the name Spiro is acknowledged, not only in this country, but internationally as the pioneers that have opened up Jewish education to other people as well who are not Jewish. Because it's not for Jewish people only. And it's a place where people from all over the world can come and feel at home. And this is

something that we have also pioneered. We do things which are beyond the Jewish community, whether these are seminars of people who have been through different kinds of experiences, similar kinds of experiences. So, things to do with Gypsies and Jews or Armenians and Jews talking to each other and this is of prime importance. It's not identical experience, but it's minority experience.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 100

In 1992 they opened a Jewish music department in City University which was really quite an extraordinary event, because this was something that could never been thought of 20 years before. And I joined it. I happened to see it by sheer chance, an advert, and I joined it. I did an MA there and I'm now still at City University. Once I'd completed the MA, I then withdrew for a bit and rethought what I was going to do next. I'd given up teaching at the girls' school as well, where I taught piano for many years. And now I hope to complete my doctoral thesis on Chassidic women. I'm examining two sects in London which I've chosen.

Klub Zwei
Can you tell us about your work on the woman's voice?

Part of the tradition in Judaism, and it's a Judaic-Christian tradition, is that women don't sing in church. We don't have women's choirs. We have boys' choirs, rather than women sopranos. And it comes from the Jewish tradition where women don't sing in public. It was a form of modesty. Women were not to serve in the temple, women were not to have public service. Based on a discussion in the Talmud, there's also the notion that a woman's voice as such is seductive and will lead men astray. It's actually based on men in private prayer, you know, what actually constitutes disruption of prayer. And it is agreed by the rabbis that a woman's voice is totally disruptive, upon which has been based an enormous raft of social behavioural patterns. And the ultra-orthodox today will not allow men to hear women singing in any circumstances.

And there is an interesting dynamic in the community. It is the women who have chosen to stop singing. Although the problem is actually: the man shouldn't be listening, so that, in effect, the women can sing. And in one of the sects that I'm examining, I was told a lovely story of a subversive 14 year old – who is occasionally taught Hebrew and Jewish studies by certain rabbis. And there is one man who she particularly dislikes. So as soon as he enters the classroom she starts humming and he has to leave. Now, you know, that's taking the problem and turning it on its head. And actually that is how it should be.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 102

Tamar Wang
Well, I suppose by training and background I'm a book editor and I've worked for a number of different publishing houses, both large and small. And what else have I done? A few years ago, I edited a translation of a biography of Primo Levi and I've also been much more involved in Jewish education. I'm now spending most of my time writing a colloquial Hebrew course, I'm working on a series of Hebrew literature and I teach Hebrew to people who are converting to Judaism. I now find myself spending most of my time concerned with the Jewish world in this way or to do with Hebrew. But I began as a commissioning editor for books on literary criticism and books on the media generally.

Elly Miller
Which is really funny, if I can interrupt, because I am veering more and more to Christian art, you see, because I edit books of medieval art and I am much more involved in medieval history which is all Christian.

Tamar Wang
I wanted to get a job and earn some money. So publishing was the obvious thing. I have always liked books and I like reading, but I didn't like the art books and the art world. I found it very stuffy, all of these great art historians and honourable people who knew what great taste was and what it meant. I didn't like this authority. But then, of course, I ended up by going into academic publishing, literary criticism. I do like editing and I do like discussing ideas and having the opportunity to discuss ideas with all sorts of people and not be restricted by academia.

Elly Miller
Well, I'm working in the field my father started. Because he was a publisher and I always wanted to go into publishing, although for a little while, when I finished studying, I didn't do it, but I always wanted to be a publisher. But I work with art history books and Tamar also went into publishing. But she thought our books are boring. So she never became an editor for us.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 104

I think that growing up in South Africa was very important to what I've done subsequently. I really don't think I'd have been able to do what I've done for bringing Jewish culture into the mainstream of British cultural life, British multi-cultural life, had I grown up in this country.

In 1983 there was the opportunity to do a Jewish Music Festival. It wasn't my idea, but at the time, we all felt that Jewishness was being equated with Israeli politics. Israel had just marched into Lebanon and every time you switched on the radio, it was always something very harsh about politics and war. And we felt there is much more to Jewish life and to Jewish culture and to Jewish history than that. There must be another area opened up. So we sat down around a big table to see how to make a Jewish music festival. And there were various models that were tried and they all came to nothing. Somebody had made bookings at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Purcell Room and the Wigmore Hall. And they made a decision to cancel that. And I said to the president: "Look, if you cancel the bookings, you never have a Jewish music festival. Give me three weeks."

And in that time I went to the people who make Jewish music, to the Zemel Choir, to the London Jewish Male Choir, to Bevis Marks Synagogue to see if we could do a concert there. Somebody brought me Shostakovich's Jewish Song Cycle in Yiddish. Somebody told me about a Yiddish opera that was written in the East End of London in 1912 and had a première and reviews in the Sunday Times and never been heard of again. Somebody was bringing some American clarinettists to perform American Jewish music that had never been heard of here. And in three weeks we had a really exciting festival. There I was, you know, and then having done it, people wanted to know more.

And so we have become the Jewish Music Institute. We have programmes in education at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London University, where we're developing programmes for primary schools. We've performance programmes and we also do concerts in collaboration with many other organisations. And the new thing we're able to do now that we're at London University is set up the first Jewish music library in the UK.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 106

In 1938, 1939 all these people from Germany and Austria and Czechoslovakia came here and there was a school of languages called the Natley School of Languages. The owner, who later on went to America and worked with UNICEF, took me on as a teacher for these refugees. So, with my English, I could teach the refugees, very nice people. And I was then 28. And this is how we managed and we managed in comparison fantastically well.

Klub Zwei
What did you do after the teaching?

I lost my husband when I was 50. Until then I was a spoiled wife, I mean, between teaching and the next episode after my husband's death, I was a housewife, I led a good life. I think, we were rather fortunate, I must say. The children went to good schools and I had my mother with me all the time and we travelled. And when my husband died I had to start all over again from the very beginning. The elder daughter was just finishing her studies at London University and my other one was just taking Abitur at the French Lycée. There I was! I really didn't know what to do. I actually wanted to work in a travel agency. It wasn't so good. Then I thought, no, I want a secure job.

So, I went to the department of education and science and they took me straight away. I worked as a PA, personal assistant, with a professor, we worked on a book about children at primary schools. When this was finished I became PA to the various HMI. You know what an HMI is? They are inspectors, school inspectors. There I was, in different locations in London.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 108

My husband was a journalist, he was a writer, he was a member of the PEN club, he was president of the PEN club for a time, for the writers who wrote in German or in any other language. Yes, and these PEN club people were very active.

Klub Zwei
And what was your occupation?

I was a doctor, a medical doctor.

My occupation? Well, I suppose the thing that influenced me to take up music again was that I was fortunate to live in an environment where there were quite a few women artists, visual artists, painters, people who were interested in visual art. And one of my neighbours, who was an artist herself, said: "Well, you should do something with your life!" You know, I was a Hausfrau, I had little children and I had never thought that I was ever able to do anything purely for myself again. Because I had got married when I was twenty and in the circumstances of our lives I had been unable to carry on with further education. So I thought about things and by and by decided I would try and pick up my musical studies that had been terminated when I was twelve years old in Vienna.

I got an introduction to the organist of Gloucester Cathedral, who was a brilliant organist and a composer and who did a certain amount of teaching. So I started studying with him, just in my spare time really, still doing all the things that were necessary for the family. And I went from there gradually taking examinations and then going to London to a professor at the Royal college whenever I could afford to pay for a lesson and for the train fares and all that. And at the same time I

started teaching the piano to my two little girls. That was my first experience of teaching and subsequently I took my diploma and then I started teaching in schools and privately in my home. And gradually I got into other musical activities, I had a group of chamber players and all the time I tried to encourage my children's musical activities. And that's how it took shape, it was not separate from my family life, it was very much integrated into my family life.

And two of the children became musicians. My son is a cellist, he is cellist with the English National Opera company and so that is a very meaningful part in our lives, because we enjoy going to the opera and we enjoy hearing him and occasionally hearing him in a solo concert. And our younger daughter is also a musician, but she is primarily engaged now with her young family, so music has to take a back seat. She is a pianist and a clarinettist. She has done some teaching and performing, but I think perhaps later on in life there'll be a return to music.

If there had been no Hitler and no emigration it may never even have been possible to study singing, but that is what I would have liked much better than just piano. You know, we used to sing, my brother and I, around the piano and I would play for him and he would play for me. And I would listen to arias on the radio and try and repeat them, but you know, that was just a childish activity. Who knew what would happen? Who knows? Life takes one into all kinds of different areas and you don't know. Also you have to be a very determined person. And up to a point you have to be ruthless and selfish if you want to pursue your own inclinations and perhaps I would never have been ruthless enough, even if there had been other opportunities, who knows?

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 112

Generations

It’s wonderful o be a grand-
mother. But initially I was
very frightened. I thought:
What is a grandmother?
My friends all had grand-
parents. I didn’t have any.

Ruth Sands

Großmutter zu sein ist
wunderbar. Aber zuerst hatte
ich große Angst davor. Ich
dachte: Was ist überhaupt
eine Großmutter? Meine
Freunde hatten alle Groß-
eltern. Ich hatte keine.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 114

Klub Zwei
Do your daughters want to know things and ask questions?

Tamar Wang
Well, they're aware of being Jewish. They are Jewish and that is part of their heritage. And, I suppose, to them it is a sort of language, a cultural language, a literary language and something that will help them to understand their experience of living. They have that Jewish cultural background. But in order to give them something positive to use and go along with them, I needed to find out about it and I needed to be able to help them to find out about it. So I suppose that was the aim really.

Since I've been from South Africa, I've never found a community in England, a Jewish community that I feel actually comfortable with, you know. Or, there isn't a synagogue, where I feel at home here. So I had to make my Jewish environment what does give me satisfaction and pleasure. It's not an environment that I found outside, it's one that I've made and I brought people into to be involved with me.

That's maybe quite interesting that I don't feel I fit in with this synagogue or this community or this group. And I can also see that from my children's point of view. They feel very Jewish inside, but they don't feel they have to express themselves as Jews. You know, it's not what they're about. They're interested in the tenets of Jewish life, but in a much more open way. Their Jewishness comes out in a wider thing. It's not corralled in a little patch.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 116

Klub Zwei
Did you talk with your sons, about your history, your parents' history?

Ruth Sands
No, not very much. I think that both have been very affected by it. It's difficult for me to talk for them, but I think, they've both been very affected in different ways. I have one son – the one you saw here today – who was very close to my father. And I know that they spoke a lot, the two of them. But again, that's his history, you know. So, I know they have been affected, but how? They didn't really talk to me about it, no.

One of my sons went for work to Vienna a few years ago. He went a few times, and he said he found it quite weird, odd, he was uncomfortable. We talked a little bit about it, not much. When you have all that story, that history, you want to give to your children as little as possible. Because it's difficult. I think my kind of family have enormous difficulties. And you don't quite know how far you can go. And it makes me think every time: "You don't go far enough" or: "You go too far." I don't think you do it right, I don't think so, but I hope they will understand that. But you do what you can and you know it's not right, but that's the best you can do. And one day my son came, I think it was the second time he went to Vienna, and brought me a lovely record; with a song in Viennese dialect: "Meine Mutter war eine Wienerin". And obviously I was very upset and touched. And he found the record I don't know where.
He must have spoken a lot with my father. I think so, it's been a very powerful relationship between those two. My older son and his grandfather.
But we don't talk about it.

One day a friend of mine in Paris, a psychoanalyst who knew my parents very well, said to me: "You know, you're a very lucky mother". And I said: "Why?" And he said: "That you didn't have a daughter. Because with a daughter you probably would have carried on a similar relationship to the one that you had with your mother. And it was good that there was a break." And I thought a lot about it and I think he was right. I believe, rightly or wrongly, that I have been a better mother with sons than I would have been with daughters. I would have been much more demanding with a daughter than with boys and then men. With a daughter I may have wanted to – I don't know the word at the moment – maybe to live her life a bit.

And then, obviously, making lots of mistakes. You know, wanting to make sure that she would not have all the shit that I had and by doing that giving her even more. I'm very glad that I didn't have any daughters, I have two granddaughters anyway, so it's lucky.

Klub Zwei
How is it to be a grandmother?

Ruth Sands
Oh, it's wonderful. It's absolutely extraordinary. Initially I was very frightened, when it first happened, I was very frightened because I kept on saying: "What is a grandmother? What role does it have in a family? What is it?" And my little friends in Paris, when I was at school, they all had grandparents. And I vaguely knew. I didn't have any grandparents, but when you're a child, you accept: that's what you are, that's it. But when it was time for me to be a grandmother for the first time I was so frightened as if anything was going to be demanded of me. Because you suddenly go one step behind, you're not on the forefront of the stage anymore, you know, you go behind the stage. But it's a wonderful thing and I'm going to make the best of it, once they're little. Because like everyone knows when they grow its different. And I'm still youngish and I'm enjoying it and they all love coming here. They all think I'm wonderful.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 120

I am not a direct second generation. Although I think that we are all second generation in many ways. Even those who are just members of the Jewish people. The trauma of a people which looks upon itself as a collective is the trauma of each individual. And you cannot escape it.

Both my parents came from Galicia. They have come to Israel just before the war, but they have left all their families behind. And so we were a generation – I was not the only one at school – which didn't have uncles or grandparents or cousins, all of that was gone. And if somebody came with a grandparent to school, we all looked upon it as if it was some animal in the zoo, because we didn't know how it feels.

So, although my parents were not in the camps, they came just before the war and didn't have any war experience, in a way, the war experience did have effect. Because we lived with albums, always, you know. And we recognised our families – that it has gone – through albums, and through tears of my mother in particular who could look at whatever the pictures were and see how much of her loving family has gone. And that must have a tremendous effect – subliminal, subconscious effect – on someone that is growing up. So, in this way perhaps my experience is as a second generation, if you want, although it's probably much less direct than most people's you do meet.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 122

Klub Zwei
Was your and your parents' history of emigration discussed in your family?

Never discussed. Never, never, never. Every now and then my father tried to talk about something in the past in Vienna. And he used to start all the sentences with: "Bei uns in Wien". And whenever my father said "Bei uns in Wien" my mother got terribly annoyed, terribly angry. And she said always the same thing: "Why do you have to say this? Why do you have to talk about this?" Whatever 'this' was. So he used to stop straight away. And my mother never, never spoke about Vienna. She left Vienna and she was, I think, 33 and it was as if her life started when she was 33.

And when I had my first child I started tackling her very boldly. I was very young and I was holding my first baby, very proud and all this. I remember that very well. My mother was here in London helping me with the new baby. And I said to her: "How could you leave me when I was just a baby. I would never, never do that. How could you?" And the only thing she used to say was either: "There is no point in talking about it, you can't understand." That was when she was in a good mood. And when she was in a bad mood it was: "I don't want to talk about it. I don't want to talk about it. I don't want to talk about it."

And I must have tackled her a few times and that was the only response. Later on I was a bit more clever. So I tried to do it differently. And she just always, always refused to talk about Vienna. And strangely enough, whenever I wanted to talk about it, she always used to say the same sentence, and in German: "Es gibt nichts zu sagen." And then back into French, because we spoke French with each other.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 124

My parents never talked about their own immediate families. So this was something that we had to carry very privately within the family. It wasn't expressed, it was never talked about. I never knew.

Anything I knew, I knew from my sister, because she's eight years older than I am and she still remembered pre-war visits to various members of the family. But I became a person without a history in many ways. Which is quite interesting and I got used to it.

Klub Zwei
When did your children ask you for the first time about what happened?

I don't think they ever asked. They were aware from a very young age, that I was not English, their father was English, is English. And mother was just a little bit different to other children's mums. And by and by they got a picture of the background. Also there were the regular visits from my mother, their grandmother, who had returned to Austria after the war and granny's visits played a very important part in their young lives. They probably learned more from my mother, their grandmother, than they did from me. I don't think that they were ever deeply troubled about my background and I never wanted them to know some of the horrors until they were more mature. I wanted them to grow up as happy children.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 126

I have two daughters. One lives in England and one in Singen, in Germany.

Klub Zwei
Did they ask you about how it was to come here?

Well, they never asked. But of course gradually as they grew up they heard about it all. And especially the one in Germany who married a German non-Jew whom she met at university in Grenoble. And of course my husband was not very happy and I wasn't happy, because he was German and I heard that his parents were Nazis. His father lost his job as a teacher afterwards and his mother was a nurse in the war.

But the son was the new generation and he went to London. He studied in Heidelberg and Mannheim and went to the School of Economics in London afterwards. And I told my husband not to say anything, because it's never good to interfere and well, it worked out.

My son-in-law is very much interested in Judaism. If I want to know anything, I have to go to him. And he is also very much interested in my family. He makes a family tree and travels to every place where they lived and where they died and if one doesn't know it, he goes to the "Kultusgemeinde" and tries to find out. So, that's him!

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 128

I think obviously depending on the historical context of each country the educational and the private and the political discussions are an important barometer of the development of each country in terms of its relationship to this subject.

In a country such as the States, one could say that the second generation issues are more advanced, in other words it's been on a more public agenda and discussion. Whereas in a country such as this, in England, there is much more the tendency for people to be quiet and to not express themselves too openly. As far as I know, no one has ever actually sat down and written about that in terms of comparison of the different countries.

I think that in countries where there was clear perpetration – and that is principally Germany – it was much more difficult to avoid confrontation and that confrontation started very early! Already with the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials. Whereas in Austria recognition only was publicly acknowledged in the early 90s. It starts at the top level from a government and then it filters down through let's say university and then secondary education and so on. That's a very long and complex process, and Austria only started eight years ago with the top layer! You have a very long way to go in my view before you going to shift anything in terms of the other layers in society. And I think that that is really one of the differences between Germany and Austria.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 130

Languages

After my parents died and
even today, if I hear a piece
of vernacular in Yiddish,
it's like a melody or a smell
that suddenly gets right to
the heart of the matter.

Ruth Rosenfelder

Nach dem Tod der Eltern,
oder sogar heute noch,
wenn ich ein Wort in Jiddi-
schem Dialekt höre, das
ist wie eine Melodie oder
ein Geruch, der sofort den
Kern des Problems trifft.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 132

Josephine Bruegel
Ich spreche gerne Deutsch. Wenn man es mir erlaubt. Ich ziehe vor, Deutsch zu sprechen, wenn ich die Gelegenheit hab'. Aber viele Leute wollen nicht mit mir Deutsch sprechen. Ich hab' eine Freundin, die kenn' ich seit–, die hab ich im Jahr 1940 aufgeklaubt. Die kommt aus der selben Gegend wie ich. Spricht nicht ein Wort Deutsch. Das ist nicht fein genug.

Anni Reich
Die will nicht daran erinnert werden. Das ist es. Also mit euch spreche ich ja Englisch, weil ich weiß, dass ihr Englisch sprechen wollt.

Josephine Bruegel
Ja, ich kann auch Englisch sprechen.

Anni Reich
So, let's continue in English.

Josephine Bruegel
Jetzt wollen wir Englisch sprechen.

Anni Reich
Kannst du umdrehen?

Josephine Bruegel
Oh, sure. Quickly! I used to be able to speak in four languages.

Anni Reich
But not simultaneously.

Josephine Bruegel
Quite a lot, ja. We sometimes were in France. I used to speak in French and German with my husband. English with the children. I mean, I used to when I was young. Today I only speak Czech and German. French I can't, it's very difficult.

Anni Reich
Well, I also loved languages. As a child I had French at school, I had English, then later I learned Spanish. No, no, first Italian. I was very good at Italian. Then I learned Spanish, while I was working in the Department of Education and Science. We had all very good opportunities. And when I went to Russia, I learned Russian.

Josephine Bruegel
You learned Russian? It's very difficult! You are very gifted.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 134

Anni Reich
Ja, Darling. And in French I was absolutely fluent, so that my French teacher – I took refresher courses – asked me: “Are you sure you aren’t from Paris?”

Josephine Bruegel
Wonderful. Marvellous. Well, I’m not gifted at all. Because yesterday morning a lady rang me up from France in French and I had difficulties in the morning to speak fluently. Well, you are very gifted, I’m not.

Anni Reich
I was gifted, but now I’ve forgotten it already. You have to keep it up.

Tamar Wang
I mean, the fact that your father said ”wait” and that your mother could adapt very quickly and keep the routine. Do you think that that gave you a sense of security?

Elly Miller
Yes.

Tamar Wang
And therefore you didn’t have all the worries of the new place. You could accept that you were just somewhere else, that everything would be okay, that there was a normality about it?

Elly Miller
Yes, I think so. I mean, the fears one had, was new schools, when one didn’t know the language well. And funnily enough, the experience, the worries were outside the home rather than inside the home. When war broke out, certainly we worried, for instance I was terribly worried about speaking German. I was terribly upset if my parents spoke German. Because people would turn round when they heard German.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 136

I love languages and I have loved the English language in particular, because I have felt that there are shades and nuances in the English language which are almost impossible to arrive at in, for instance, the German language. Although having said that, I'm obviously much more at home in the English language than I am in the German. But I love language altogether and a few years ago I started learning Italian and that I think is the most beautiful language. Because, well, it's a language of music also. And that has brought me a tremendous joy. I think language and music are the two means of communication between people, so that they really go together.

My parents spoke Yiddish to each other. This was the lingua franca. I cannot remember what language we responded in, but I'm convinced it was English. And that was because my father said that we spoke such poor Yiddish. But I think he wanted us to speak English. And to become good English women. My mother spoke a very good Polish. My father didn't, he was brought up perhaps in a more typically Jewish way, where his first language was Yiddish and he had a great love of Yiddish.

There are a lot of Yiddish jokes, and Yiddish humour. And spoken Yiddish is something I look for and I enjoy, even more today. Possibly because I know my children don't understand it. And their children certainly won't understand it. So that's my love affair with Yiddish at the moment. Essentially it's a lost language and a lost civilisation. But I don't know why one minds. It was after all only a sort of conversing in a society where German was the main language. It was a dialect. So, I don't know why we should necessarily regret its passing?

In Poland and in Russia Yiddish was a second language. And there was Yiddish theatre. There were well-known Yiddish players. But you didn't sort of rejoice in going to the Yiddish theatre. And

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 138

today they talk about it. There are institutes now for Jewish studies and Jewish research where they teach Yiddish. Spiro Ark teaches Yiddish. The ultra-orthodox today are actually using it as a language. They intersperse it with bits of English. So it's a sort of combination. Increasingly people are taking it up, because it's an interesting language. But partly because it represents something that really no longer exists. Once you start worrying about the syntax, you've actually lost the spirit of Yiddish.

Yiddish was a street language, that's really where it started. And what it always was. It wasn't Hochdeutsch and it wasn't a posh English literature. After my parents died and even today, if I hear certain phrases, it's like a melody or a smell that suddenly gets right to the heart of the matter, a piece of vernacular in Yiddish. And in fact it happened to me recently and I told my sister. I mentioned the word and it was like two children with a toy that they'd rediscovered.

It's a matter of resonance. There is something that resonates within the body. I've got two young people who are doing the library of the Jewish Music Institute for me. One is a young woman in Cambridge who is doing a PhD on Yiddish song. She's not even Jewish as far as she knows. The other person on this library is a young man. I said to him: "What is it about this library that you think is important? Why are you so interested?" He said: "This was almost destroyed, the whole of Yiddish life was destroyed during the Holocaust. The language has disappeared. Even though Israel grew up, the language was Hebrew, the culture was different. This is a culture that my ancestors have had for nearly 1000 years. I need this to know who I am."

And these are young people, they've like fallen out of the skies to me. And I find this, you know, quite extraordinary that you can't destroy these things. They're living in these young people and they don't know it until they know there is somewhere they can come.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 140

You think you know English and when you come here you realise that your English is not as perfect as you would have liked it to be. So, that when you open your mouth, until this day, you don't express yourself in the way that you would have liked to. And sometimes what you say, your choice of words – if you don't have this vast and detailed knowledge of the language and the feel for the language to chose the exact right word, not just the just about the word – makes you feel that you're not part of this place.

When you open your mouth after many years that you've been in a place – and this is a question of any foreigner, I think – and people say: "Oh, where are you from?" it immediately tells you that you're not from here, that you've got a dimension, which is not so strongly rooted here. And it's always the "there" that comes up somehow. And although you live your daily life here, there is something that always pulls you towards your roots there.

You are only a chain, a link in a chain of history. You know, something interesting is in the Hebrew language. In biblical Hebrew language which is the source of Jewish philosophy you do not have present tense. You have either past or future, and it actually comes to tell you something: that you being here in the present is you are just in between past and future. And so, once you understand it, you have a totally different philosophy of life. Because you understand that you have got a duty to be this link in a chain which doesn't break. The moment you break this chain, then the past remains somewhere else and you don't lead to any particular future.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 142

I don't speak one language perfectly. And I have an accent whatever I speak, which inhibits me very much. I have very few regrets, but one regret I have is that when I arrived in England, when I was eighteen, I didn't go to school. I spoke English like a French girl who has done five years of English. I should have gone to school. I would have liked to.

I hate my accent, I hate it. It's awful. And when I go to Paris now people tell me: "You now have an English accent." Maybe because of my parents as well, I've never been with no accents, you know. So I hate it. I was ashamed of my parents' accent when I was a little girl. And I'm ashamed of my accent, because it's horrible. I mean, now it doesn't matter any more because I'm much older. But I used to hate it when I was young. Because the English, they "love" the French, they think the French are wonderful, or whatever it is. I don't know if they really mean it, but they're always attracted by the French, always.

First of all I'm not French, I'm only French on a piece of paper. The French were wonderful to give me a French nationality. And I don't want to be attractive, and I don't mean attractive in a physical way. I don't want people to find me interesting because I'm French. And, as soon as I open my mouth I'm French. I want people to find me interesting, attractive for other reasons, not because I'm French. It seems it's enough: "Oh, she's French! So she must be wonderful." Well, you don't know! Find out a bit about me. And as soon as I open my mouth I have a stamp that's being put on me and I don't like it.

And there's been a few people who have ignored it, or given me the impression that they have ignored it. And these are the people I like.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 144

Books

I like various things in different languages. I like Čapek in Czech, in French, Proust. In English I like George Eliot best and Virginia Woolf. In German I like Fontane, Böll.

Josephine Bruegel

Ich mag vieles in verschiedenen Sprachen. Čapek auf Tschechisch, auf Französisch Proust. Auf Englisch mag ich George Eliot am liebsten und Virginia Woolf, auf Deutsch Fontane und Böll.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 146

Klub Zwei
Is there a specific book, film or music that you like?

That's a very difficult question to answer just like that. When it comes to books I enjoy reading very much. I do read a lot. I'm not particularly interested in adventure, detective story. I'm happy to read novels where nothing much happens except in the mind of people. Then I can go on for a three-hundred, four-hundred page book where basically nothing very much happens.

I'm always taken with the last project I do, the books that are connected with it, I give you an example. I'm teaching at the moment the book of Ecclesiastes. It's a biblical book, but it's as modern as if he would have written it today. It's a man who writes from a perspective of a man who is aging, what life is all about.

Although people think that it is a pessimistic book, I think it has a lot of of optimistic ways of looking at it. And I'm delighted to look at something which is pessimistic and turn it on its back and make it optimistic. Because I suppose it fits the way I look at things that I never let things pull me down. I try to start again and to see that there is a value. Because the question that this book asks is: "Is there a value in life?" You know, you live and you die, so what's the point of actually striving? But in it, within the book, there are links that you have to dig out.

I think that it's a lesson that all of us should learn, that we are born without choice and we die without choice. So the question is: Do we despair or do we remember that and we make something worthwhile out of our way?

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 148

And I suppose, because you're asking this minute,
and I'm all involved in that, this is the book
that I very much like.

Klub Zwei
Is there a certain book, image or musical piece
that you like, that has to do with your history
as a Jewish woman?

I tried to give it some thought. It will probably come to me tomorrow. Nothing. Oh, yes, of course. I think it's the lack of images that I find quite difficult to deal with. As I said my parents came to England with nothing. So, that there are no photographs. There's no imagery of anything. So I had no way of identifying either places or people. Now, bit by bit there are more images being built, and people are finding archives of photographs. As I said, it's occasionally, you know, a word, or a melody.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 150

I like Proust. I like various things in different languages. I like Čapek in Czech, Karel Čapek. I like in French Proust. In English I like, I think I like George Eliot best and next Virginia Woolf. I like English literature very much. In German I like old ones and new ones, I think I like Fontane and of the modern ones I like Böll.

The interesting thing is, you know, you asked me about one book. Well, I 'm interested in books about people. I don't like reading novels, that's a waste of time for me. I like to see books about how people developed, about history.

And I found this amazing book that actually brings together all the things I'm really interested in: Africa, Jews and the School of Oriental and African Studies where the Jewish Music Institute is. And it's a book by Dr. Tudor Parfitt about a group of black people living in Soweto and in the Northern Transvaal in South Africa where I come from who say they are Jews. And the Jews in South Africa said: "Oh, this is nonsense" and they would never talk to them, because you didn't talk to Blacks. You know, they're Blacks and you're whites and you would do your own thing. But this English academic said: "Now, okay, let's look at this." And he went to talk to them in Soweto and it's just such a wonderful adventure story. It's called "Journey to the Vanished City: The Search for the Lost Tribe of Israel."

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 152

Elly Miller
I can't think of a Jewish book that has really influenced me. Although, for instance, I'm a great reader of Bashevis Singer. He wrote in Yiddish, but it was all translated into English. He lives in America. I think it's because I love the picture that he gives, which is of Polish Jewry, about which I know very little.

My parents certainly had an émigré culture in their home, furniture, you know. So it looked very different from an English home. Food. And the books around us. Certainly I grew up with all the German literature around me, because my father's books were mostly in German. Dickens, my father published it auf Deutsch, in German. I read Dickens in German, that was very funny.

Tamar Wang
We had Struwwelpeter.

Elly Miller
Struwwelpeter every English child had as well. The thing is that also I'd translated a lot of Wilhelm Busch into English verse and for you, but more so even for our grandchildren.

Tamar Wang
We didn't like it. You did, but we didn't like it at all.

Elly Miller
I'm a great Busch fan. Now Busch is the worst anti-semitic writer you can think of. I don't know whether you know that, but Wilhelm Busch was a great anti-semite. And for some reason I loved Wilhelm Busch.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 154

The most important book here in the Library for me is the Memorial book, you know where they list all the victims and people who died in the camps. And there are a lot of families who come here and do research, family history research and they are using those Memorial books to see what happened to their families. That is the most important book for me and I'm always pleased to help them tracing their families. But it's very sad, even if you find a name there, then it means that the person died. At least they know that the person died there. Otherwise they wouldn't know what happened. There is the word "verschollen". It comes up in the Memorial book, you know, "verschollen", which means "disappeared without trace."

The Memorial book was done by the International Tracing Service in Arolsen and I think, the Bundesanstalt in Koblenz compiled it. And there are the Auschwitz Bücher which are not complete, because the records of the inmates in Auschwitz were burned by the SS, were burned by the Nazis, just before the liberation of the camp.

Well, books, it is almost impossible to say what has meant an awful lot. Every time I read a good book I think it's that one, it's always the last one, it's always the last one.

Music

I asked, “would you become a patron of the Jewish Music Festival?” “No,” he said, “there’s good music, there’s bad music. I can’t see that there’s Jewish music.”

Geraldine Auerbach

Ich fragte: “Würden Sie den Ehrenschutz des Jewish Music Festival übernehmen?” “Nein,” sagte er, “es gibt gute Musik, es gibt schlechte Musik. Jüdische Musik sehe ich keine.”

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 158

When it comes to music, I'm quite ignorant. My knowledge of music is very limited. I don't like Jazz. Without very much thinking about it, when it comes to classical music I like the very early music, baroque music or the 17th, early 18th century and that's about it. Of course I go to concerts and, yes, I do enjoy music, and it's been a very useful thing for me to do when I was grieving. Because for about two years, two and a half years I did not go out at all, except to concerts. I didn't want to talk, I didn't want to go to the cinema, I didn't want to go to the theatre, I didn't want to have dinner parties, I didn't want to have dinner with anybody. But I went to a lot of concerts. And that did me a lot of good. Otherwise I'm really quite ignorant when it comes to music. Well, I think I am, and I know I am. That's why I use music, I use music to soothe me, I think music has that role for me, rather than to entertain.

And I like silence best. People are always very surprised that I put very little music on here. I'm very happy with total silence. I will listen to music if there's something I want to listen to. I will listen to the radio if there's something I want to listen to. But I don't need sound. Total silence is fine, always has been, always. And I don't know why people find it very odd, very weird. I could be a whole day, for instance here, doing something or whatever it is, literally in total silence. I don't need a radio, I don't need music, I don't need background. No, I don't.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 160

Klub Zwei
Is there a musical piece that relates to your personal history and background that is important for you?

Lisbeth Fischer-Leicht
Oh, there are so many, it's difficult to make a choice really. I think as far as opera is concerned I have a special softness for The Barber of Seville, because it was the first opera I saw in Vienna in the company of my brother and his school friends. And I love the music and I thought it was so charming and I hummed some of the arias afterwards. And when I hear it now, I still think, although my musical taste has widened a lot since then, that it is lovely and it conjures up a happy memory.

I once approached a distinguished composer of Viennese-Jewish origin, well-known in the UK, and I asked him, "would you like to become a patron of the Jewish Music Festival?" "No," he said, "there's good music and there's bad music, I can't see that there's Jewish music." About five or six years ago he phoned me up, he said: "Geraldine, I just wanted to mention something to you, I've written a string quartet. And it's about the 'Anschluss'. And I just wondered if you perhaps were interested in having it performed as part of the music festival." And I thought, well, you know, this is interesting. Here is this very man saying to me he has written Jewish music.

I interpret Jewish music as music that has Jewish intent. It's nothing to do with whether you're a Jewish composer or not. We don't promote musicians because they're Jewish. We're looking at the content. And there may be non-Jewish musicians or non-Jewish composers that come or partly Jewish composers, you know what I mean? It doesn't matter who the composer or the performer is as long as the intent in his music is Jewish, the text is Jewish, he's grappled with expressing a Jewish thought. That gets into the festival that we're doing and into all our work really,

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 162

that's what's interesting to us. It's about Jewish culture for everybody. What I'm doing is not something for Jews. It's something from Jews for everybody. That's how I see what we're doing. I want the world to see what the Jews have contributed, what they can contribute, what they are contributing.

Many composers, like Bernstein, for example, use Hebrew text. Well, they could have used Latin text, they could have used English text. They're using Hebrew text. Whether that's a function of the existence of an Israeli society that speaks Hebrew or whether they're going back – and this is what I think was their intention – to go back to the original text and be more aware of their Jewishness. Whether that is an effect of the war I don't know. They're politicising Judaism.

They're politicising music. So, I would have thought this has something to do with living in the latter part of the 20th century into the 21st century. How you address a major upheaval in the life of European mankind, womankind. How we perceive ourselves as victims, as perpetrators, as victim becoming the perpetrator.

The music in Israel very often has a Holocaust subtext or a Holocaust interest, because it's part of the history and there's a lot of work being done on the concert platform. I think, by performers as much as by composers in trying to reconcile what was always considered highest art, the German music high art form which was taken to Israel by a lot of the people who came out of the camps. So

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 164

you had a politicisation of music which was extra-ordinary. And I think it may continue as long as people are examining who they are and where they are and what has made them or what is making them what they are.

Well, I love Yiddish songs. I like traditional melodies. I suppose a lot of them are actually mixed with any Eastern European melody. I'm very influenced by Viennese music. I mean, I left as a child, I still play a lot of Viennese songs, I sing with Viennese dialect. I play the piano and I have, I can play Viennese music. And the curious thing is, that my son, Malcolm, who has never been to Vienna, who is a very good musician, has a natural feel for Viennese music.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 166

Austria
Germany

In Austria I don't think there is an understanding, a sense of what has been lost. Which is why I called the conference in Vienna "The Presence of the Absence".

Katherine Klinger

Ich denke, es gibt in Österreich kein Bewusstsein oder Gefühl für das, was unwiederbringlich verloren ist. Daher habe ich die Konferenz in Wien "The Presence of the Absence" genannt.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 168

This whole Austria-Vienna-part is one that probably puts my aggression levels up to their maximum, because that's a very large part of my family background. And having had the experience of developing and doing work in Vienna I came away deeply disappointed by this lack of connection between the individuals that I met, between how they were processing what went on in their country and what goes on between us today in the present.

Just two weeks before the big conference we held in Vienna was about to take place, one of the German lecturers sent through the title of his lecture. And the title was: "Wie spricht man über den Strick im Haus des Henkers?" And my Austrian colleagues sent me through their translation which was "How does one speak about the rope in the house of the hanged?" And I thought to myself, oh, that's really interesting, because actually the translation of that is: "How does one speak about the rope in the house of the hangman?" And to me that really showed where the perception still is, amongst too many people. If one still thinks in Austria one is speaking about the rope in the house of the hanged, then one is forever identifying or still identifying with the victim.

One of the differences between Austria and Germany is that in Germany it's really worth it to try to make that kind of contact and communication with Germans of my age. Because there's some kind of a dialogue there and it's possible. And I came away from Austria feeling that ultimately – although of course there are individuals just as there are always individuals anywhere and everywhere – it isn't terribly worth it. And I find that very upsetting. But I think it also explains to me a lot of things about Austria, Vienna. Both in terms of the political situation today and what went on in the post war period.

I think that part of the difference between Germany and Austria is that I don't think there is an understanding and a feeling, a sense of what has been lost. Which is why I called the conference in Vienna "The Presence of the Absence" and was trying to communicate that. Because from my perspective I have such a sense of loss and what has been lost for all of us. And I think in Germany my colleagues and friends, they have a very profound sense of what has been lost in their country by this expulsion, this extermination, this huge scar that has just wrecked their landscape.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 170

You mentioned Germany. I haven't been to Germany. And I haven't been to Austria. I can't foresee myself going there, interestingly enough. There's no need. Poland I felt I had to and that was only after my parents died. Had I gone in their lifetime, I think, that would have been a sort of betrayal to them, because they had felt, certainly my father had felt that the Poles had massacred his family. And I think, he felt as much anger towards Poland as anybody else. I knew, for example, my mother's house, the house in which she was brought up, is still there. So I wanted some vision, in order to root her, of what it was like.

But Germany and Austria, there's no need to go there and it's really quite interesting. And if I went, what I would find if I dug around. I'm not sure that I would be best pleased. So I don't want to take the risk. I have a very good friend, an old friend from school who now lives in Munich. She comes regularly to London. And she's stopped asking me to come to visit.

I'm not doing it for any reason other than it just makes me feel uncomfortable. You know, the world is big enough. I don't have to go to places I feel uncomfortable in. As I say, I'm not going back to Poland. Not unless there's a reason. If there's a really important reason to go, then I will go back. But so far nothing important enough has arisen for me to have to go.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 172

I went back three and a half years ago. Very reluctantly, you know, because I was part of the organisation which was doing the conference "The Presence of the Absence" in Vienna. That was the first time, and, I know, one must never say: "never", but I will never go again. It was good, it was very good. At least I went, but there's no need, I will never go again.

After my father died, two and a half years ago, I went back to Paris to take whatever I wanted to bring back with me and there were loads and loads of papers, which I knew existed, but which I had never seen. And don't forget that I left Paris when I was eighteen. I went back many, many times, but I've never looked in my parents' papers. And I came back with all the papers, with a suitcase full of things and inside amongst many many things were a few addresses.

And, so I spent one whole day in Vienna going from one address to another address and took some pictures as well. And it was a very odd day, because the conference was in September, and the day I decided to do it, it was raining, it was unbelievable how much it was raining. I spoiled shoes, umbrella, everything, but it didn't stop. And I went where my father's factory was. I went where I think my mother lived before she got married. I didn't go inside, just outside. And then I saw, what was left – which was nothing – the place where my parents got married. Because I still have their wedding invitation, so I went there. And I think, somewhere, where I probably lived for this first few months of my life.

At the conference I was interviewed by somebody, some newspaper who asked me why did I come now, since I had never been before. And I said – I didn't know what I was saying – but I think it was true then and it is still true now, I felt that I could never go back to Vienna until both my parents were dead. I don't know why I had to wait for that, but I'm convinced this was the reason.

Klub Zwei
Ruth Rosenfelder said the same.

Really? Said the same? Really, I don't know if it has something to do with betraying them. I don't know, certainly betraying my mother. That definitely, yes. When I mentioned it was raining, but so much, the whole day, it didn't stop, it was like the skies had opened up and just pouring,

pouring with rain. And because I was walking most of the time, and many, many times my mother was in my mind and she was saying to me: "I told you so, what was the point in coming here? I told you so, I told you so." It was quite funny, you know, in retrospect.

I had always said that I would never go to Germany in my life. Never, never and I did. And the first time I went to Berlin I absolutely loved it. It really was wonderful. From a personal point of view, I enjoyed it. I did a lot of sightseeing, I met a lot of people. I went three, four times and every time I enjoyed Berlin very much. Vienna: No, I did NOT enjoy Vienna, no.

I think with Berlin I was able to relate without being emotionally involved. I could have lived there. In the same way that I could have lived in Vienna too, of course. But it seems, and it's totally logical, Berlin didn't affect me, not at all, I just enjoyed it. Yes, I enjoyed it every single time. I have to say also one thing. In Berlin we were invited a lot to German homes and it was very nice. In Austria, in Vienna, never! I mean, I only went once. But Katherine used to go to Vienna once a month. We were never invited to anybody's home.

Not once. And in Berlin I've been to so many homes the few times. It didn't happen once in Vienna. To me in Vienna it was like we were doing a job and that's it. And in Berlin – at the end of the day, sometimes it was even very late, eleven o'clock at night, midnight – we always used to go out afterwards or just have a drink when the day was over, because everybody was emotionally involved. Everyone was very tired, but we never just said: "Good bye, see you tomorrow," never! In Vienna it was like this every day, all the days. I found it –

Klub Zwei
– unpleasant.

I don't know if "unpleasant" is the right word. To me it was treated like a job. It was a job. Whereas the people we worked with in Germany, there was an added dimension, you could feel it. All the time you could feel it. I mean they weren't particularly nice to us, because Katherine and I were Jewish. But you could feel that they had a problem. That we have a problem is the one story. But you could feel that the Germans had a problem, too. And they didn't quite know how to go about it and they did what they could. In Vienna they

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 176

seemed very sure of themselves, they didn't have any problems, we worked, it was very nice, very friendly and afterwards everybody went their own way. And Katherine and I always ended up eating by ourselves. Always.

Nitza Spiro

I should say that I never bought any German goods when I was in Israel. Because at that time, you knew what was from Germany. Today it's very difficult to locate, you know, parts are done here and parts there. But at the time and it's interesting because – as I said – I'm not first generation, and I'm not second generation and my parents are not and yet the idea of driving a Volkswagen or a Mercedes was a total anathema. And there are others, why do we need to do that? And so, this was at the back of my mind for many years.

Klub Zwei
Have you ever been to Austria or Germany?

The world is full of interesting things – and I avoided going there. I don't quite know what happened to my family. I know they were killed, but exactly who killed them and where? And I was thinking, maybe I would sit in the bus and next to me will sit somebody who actually was involved in killing my own family. You know, you're suspicious. And I felt that they didn't deserve either my friendship or my non-friendship.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 178

In 1996 we were approached by the director of the Austrian Cultural Institute, Dr. Emil Brix. He wanted to do a festival of Austrian-Jewish culture in London. He's a historian and, I think, he wanted to show Austrians as well as to show British people and to show Jews that there was a very vibrant new emerging Jewish life in Austria. And he wanted to show the rich tapestry of previous Jewish cultural life in Austria.

I was a little bit concerned to know whether the Jewish community in Vienna would be happy about this. Because it was quite clear that there were plenty of Austrians who didn't want anything to do with Jews and equally there were Jews, particularly in this country, who wanted nothing to do with Austria. With the history of Austrians not wanting to face up to their past in the Holocaust.

So I decided to go and talk to the Jewish community in Vienna. And we met with the leaders of the community and they were very happy that this should happen on the whole. You know, with reservations. Because at that time there was a lot of controversy about the Holocaust memorial in the Judenplatz. But they felt that it was positive to

open the subject for scrutiny and discussion. And that's what I felt as well. And that's what, I think, Dr. Emil Brix was aiming at.

And so the festival covered every aspect. There was a seminar on fin de siécle Vienna and the Jewish contribution; whether fin de siécle Vienna was a Jewish phenomenon. And we had people like Ernst Gombrich talking and very well known figures, people who were part of Viennese society but also had come to Britain. And many groups, performers in Jewish music from Austria came to London. And I was surprised to see that there were actually more groups and performers looking at and performing Jewish music in Austria than there were in England. And that was interesting to think: What is the difference between the two communities, you know, one that had been through the Holocaust, one that had been decimated was much more now actively seeking to present Jewish culture than a place like England where Jews had melted into the fabric of society and were not showing themselves as Jews and were not interested in showing themselves as Jews.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 180

I didn’t like Austria after the war.

Klub Zwei
You have been there?

Yes, I have been there, yes. Oh, I’ve been there several times, but I preferred Germany.

Klub Zwei
When have you first been back to Vienna? How did you feel about the places and people?

After the war? I think the first time I went back, my husband came with me and that made it very much easier for me. Because in a sense I felt more like a tourist visiting a lovely place. Had I gone by myself my feelings would have been rather different. But I was able to share his pleasure at being there. We were both very young and had lived through the war. It was his first visit to continental Europe and it was tremendously exciting for him and so I was able to somehow share in that.

As regards the more serious aspect of things I had no personal hostility. But I felt somehow that I could not quite trust people, I could not quite take people at face value. I mean, everybody was very nice, very pleasant, you know, and I could not quite believe in people. But I felt very much that one ought to try at least to turn over a page and not be completely living in the past. Although I must say that if I saw someone in a uniform, I almost felt that it was an enemy uniform. It was just little feelings like that that crept into one’s consciousness.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 182

Klub Zwei
Have you ever been back to Vienna?

Oh, I used to go every year to Vienna until my husband's death, because we got the factory back!

Klub Zwei
And when was the first time?

Well, after the war. Right after the war.

Klub Zwei
And how did you feel about that?

I'm not a person who keeps being angry. I try to forget, but of course, where I know the people were Nazis, then I don't try to forget. But you mustn't generalise. That's the trouble! We had very good, good friends. We left them behind. Ja. Who helped us as much as they could. I know so many cases who were untergetaucht and so on by lovely people. It's difficult to generalise, but these people who behaved like that I certainly felt very badly about them. Of course after the war there were no Nazis anymore. Nobody was a Nazi!

Of course, the Austrians have been and will always be anti-semites. That's in their mother's milk. Always been anti-semites. But there again I mustn't generalise, because we had very good friends who were not!

Klub Zwei
Now you have the Prime Minister again talking about Austria being the first victim. Now in 2001 and you think, how is that possible?

Exactly! But I think it is common knowledge that the Austrians have been worse than the Germans.

Poland

My husband took photographs. And when they were developed there was colour. And I don’t remember any colour whilst we were there. It was totally monochrome as far as I was concerned.

Ruth Rosenfelder

Mein Mann hatte Fotos gemacht. Und als wir sie entwickeln ließen, war da auf einmal farbe. Doch ich erinnere mich an keine einzige Farbe. Für mich war alles völlig eintönig.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 186

Going back to Poland was really quite horrid. And we found that we kept having to travel by train, which was not particularly pleasant, because we kept seeing cattle trucks. We also found that we were constantly being importuned, constantly being asked if we wanted to go to various sites: camp sites, museums, places of massacre, which I found totally unacceptable.

I — we didn't want to go to Auschwitz, which was interesting, because most of my family perished in Auschwitz. And I felt it was a violation of them to go to a sanitised, you know, museum. So we went as far as the gates, because somebody said to me: "You have a duty to them to go." So we did and we went as far as the gates and we spent fifteen minutes at the gates. And, as I say, this is a family I don't know. But I knew that something had happened to them, something horrendous had happened to them at this particular point.

So that was my feeling with Poland. Again something distant and yet in a way relevant to me. It's complex but there's really not a lot there. So when I try to describe it, it's not very deep, but it's very complex. And I hated it, I hated Poland, from beginning to end. We were there for a long weekend and what was very interesting was, we were there in February, so it was quite wintery, and my husband took photographs. And when they were developed there was colour. And I don't remember any colour whilst we were there. It was totally monochrome as far as I was concerned. And some of the photos were really very nice. But it's not what I remembered. I had obviously imposed my anger, my resistance. But I felt it was something we ought to do. This was about ten years after my parents had died. I would have never gone in their lifetimes.

And I need never go back. We saw my mother's family home, which was one of the reasons we went. Done that. Finished! So, no sense of continuity, no sense of history, I just want to leave it. And I don't want any associations with them, which is also perhaps wrong. And perhaps my children will be healthier than I am in these relationships. I don't think it's healthy actually. But it's my problem.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 188

Nitza Spiro

If my parents wouldn’t have come to Israel just
before the war, I would have been born in Poland
and I wouldn’t be here today.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 190

Vienna

This is a synagogue in Vienna, in Eitelbergergasse, do you think it's still there? Do you recognise any of these? Seitenstettengasse, Tempelgasse?

Rosemarie Nief

Das ist eine Wiener Synagoge, in der Eitelbergergasse. Meint ihr, es gibt sie noch? Erkennt ihr irgendeine davon? Seitenstettengasse, Tempelgasse?

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 192

When we did this festival of Austrian-Jewish culture in London we showed “Die Stadt ohne Juden” in our film season. In the film, the Jews are expelled from the city. Then the authorities realise how much poorer the city is after the loss of this population and invite the Jews to come back. That film, incredibly, was made in Austria in 1924.
I wonder who saw it then, and what have they learned from it. I mean both, in the terrible part of the century and today.

I very often had that image of the city of Vienna and you make a 150,000 people just disappear. And that 150,000 who had an important influence on the way in which the city ran – economically, culturally – I mean, all sorts of ways. If you removed that ten per cent – which is what it was – from a city, they may disappear into a black hole as far as you’re concerned. But you can’t just expect that the place will carry on as if nothing has happened.

And that was the image I kept thinking about when I was over there. It’s as if people are pretending nothing has happened. But actually something very significant has happened. And you just can’t go on as before. And that’s again the bit where it seems to me there is very little recognition or understanding of what’s been just put into that black hole.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 194

I remember being struck by the size of Trafalgar Square as a child. I think it's the size of London that rather struck me. And the funny thing is that the first time I went back to Vienna in the 70s, the first thing that struck me was how small Vienna was. Even the path from my home to the school and also the Stadtpark, for instance, where we had played. There were two playgrounds in the Stadtpark, der große Spielplatz und der kleine Spielplatz. We used to play on the kleine Spielplatz. When I went to look at this, der kleine Spielplatz, you know, it was nothing, it was just tiny. And der große Spielplatz was just a little, a little square, you know, it was so small compared to London. Everything! The distances!

When I first went to Austria I was really shocked at how familiar the food was. I mean, the food was just much more familiar than English food in a way.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 196

One of the problems I have is that I love Vienna as a city. It's a beautiful stunning incredible city. And I feel very comfortable there, as a place. It's almost sort of perfect as a city. It's got a large number of people, but not like London with its eight or ten million. London is so totally overcrowded and crazy and everybody is wanting to kill one another if you don't cross the road in time. Vienna has so many good things. It's got a great transport system and it's got wonderful restaurants and it's got the most fantastic cafés and the cost of living is not so high. It's got so many things that make it to me a perfect city in many ways. I feel really comfortable there. I respond to its beauty and all these kinds of things, its architecture and part of its history and style and everything like that.

I feel horribly comfortable there. And yet, I mean, so far, there is no one with whom I feel a strong connection. And I am on edge when I'm there and I never feel relaxed. And yet in Germany I know a lot of people with whom I feel really close but I find it really difficult to be in the country. I don't think it's a coincidence. In some ways it would be much more problematic if Vienna had people and it had this wonderful city. Because it's a horribly beautiful city.

We went and visited Vienna, well, it must have been eleven or twelve years ago perhaps, that the Austrian Presidential elections were in full swing. And we visited with English friends of ours and I was in a very good frame of mind and I was not looking back too much into the past until I saw the placards of the contenders for the Presidency. One was Waldheim and the other main contender was the Socialist and I can't remember his name. But I was totally disenchanted when I saw the Socialist's placard defaced and full of graffiti. On the other hand Waldheim's picture was left in pristine condition. And I thought, well, whatever one would like to believe, perhaps things have not changed all that much. One always hoped that Austria was different to what it had been in my experience as a youngster.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 198

Klub Zwei
The photo archive of the Wiener Library is also published on the internet?

We haven't done it yet. I'm just in the process of scanning the images and creating a digital catalogue. Later we will go on the internet. We don't have the copyright for all the images. We will have to do a lot of investigation and to find out who the copyright-holders are. Only then we can provide the images on the internet. It's a whole new world which is opening. On one hand it's very good because the archive gets known and used. It can be used simultaneously, here and at the other end of the world. But then you always have to think about the dangers to which it can lead, especially in terms of Holocaust denial and right wing movements.

Let me show you some of the images in my computer: This is a synagogue in Vienna, how it used to be. I don't know if it's still there, you would know, Synagogue in Bezirk sechs, do you know if it's still there? So this is another one in Eitelbergergasse, you think it's still there? Do you recognise any of these? Seitenstettengasse, would that be there? Tempelgasse? This is in the middle of the town, maybe the Central Synagogue, which was destroyed during "Kristallnacht".

If I have to talk about the overall feeling about Vienna: I had a lot of pain. Not pain for me, pain for my parents. One of the things that struck me was how similar Paris and Vienna are. And I could then understand for the first time why in many ways it was very easy for my parents to settle in Paris. It was really a similar life style. Café Society, beautiful, white streets, concentrating on food, concentrating on the sort of physical aspects of life, which certainly you don't have in London. And I've met many people who also left Vienna for London and they found it very difficult to settle and to adjust. From that aspect, as far as daily life is concerned my parents settled beautifully well in Paris. And I realised then why: it was just so similar.

There were times when I was in bits of Vienna where I could have been in Paris. It was extraordinary. And the more I felt that way the more it pained me. Yes, if I think of Vienna there is only one emotion which is pain. And yet it's not pain for me, it's much more: "What would I be today if ...?" You know, that's what I very often used to think: "If nothing would have happened, what would I be today?" I certainly wouldn't be here. Vienna is pain. Berlin was wonderful, Vienna is pain.

Actually the history of this particular city is one of murder and theft, destruction. And it seems very strange that a city should maintain so much of the past, when that is, certainly for me, what the past contains. So it has almost a grotesque quality to me, some of these places in Vienna.

One of the first places that sort of pops into my mind is the sandwich bar on the Graben, the Russian Trzesniewski. Which I now view with a sort of bemused absurdity that a sandwich bar can still be serving exactly the same sandwiches after 50 or 60 years. I mean, there is something quite absurd about that. At the same time it is also rather charming, it depends. I suppose it doesn't feel terribly charming because it's Vienna.

Maybe in another city it would have a charm and a tradition, that would feel more appropriate. But there is something that seems particularly strange about a city which has such a history that continues to serve the same cakes, the same coffee, the same sandwiches more or less on the same plates with more or less the same people probably serving them. You get the feeling in some of these places in Vienna that an awful lot of people haven't really changed. And there is

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 202

something quite grotesque about that, because the rest of the world has changed.

I wouldn't say that my mother had ever told me in any kind of detail or with any kind of continuity about any place in Vienna. I suppose some places have some kind of significance, because I've been to them now a number of times. I think the first time I went to Vienna I was 13, and then again when I was 14. So, almost 30 years ago was the first time. And the only place that I ever knew of was a name, but I have no picture of it, the Praterstraße, which is where I knew that my mother had lived. But I think that was really the only place. And then with subsequent visiting I started to get to know a few other places, that I suppose I would associate with her.

My mother who was a teacher and whose family was wiped out, had an opportunity to go with colleagues from her teaching profession on a cheap holiday to Austria. And I was shocked that she accepted it. But that made me think that it's absolutely stupid, that my reaction is something emotional and totally irrational. If my mother can do it, I shouldn't get this attitude, I should get it out of my system. And my mother went to Austria, to a spa to have a good time there. And she begged of us to come to visit her. And I had this conflict within my soul. At the end I said, unless I do it I will never do it and I must do it. And I went.

This spa was a beautiful place and it had a swimming pool amongst other things. In the middle of the swimming pool, there was a jacuzzi and you could swim to the middle of the swimming pool and climb into the jacuzzi and sit there. It was a hexagon with an internal stone bench, and you can sit on this bench and next to you, there would be other people that come here. And you would sit and have a wonderful jacuzzi, better than I've ever experienced before. And I went there and I sat there and all of a sudden a man came and sat next to me and he was missing one leg. He was

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 204

Austrian and he was at the age that he could have been part of the war, must have been part of the war. And the physical closeness there was so close that his non-leg rubbed against my leg and I felt, you know, that might have been just that person, and here I am in the most intimate kind of environment with him. He without the leg, I without any clothes on, and I felt totally sick, physically, and I had to leave. And when I left, I hardly got to the end of the pool, because I felt so sick out of that.

Klub Zwei
Where do you see the difference between the Freud Museum in London and in Vienna?

Well, I suppose there are different sets of problems, really, in a very different cultural context. Freud is always associated with Vienna. So they've always been much more visited than we are in the sense that people immediately know about Freud in Vienna. And they get many, many visitors. They represent, I suppose, Freud in his Viennese context and we have a difficult situation, because we are a museum to an exile. And that's a great rarity in the United Kingdom. We represent that great emigration of people to Britain. And Vienna represents an absence.

I suppose I've been to Vienna about five or six times. Usually to do something with the Sigmund Freud House in Vienna. I've not got friends in Vienna. I suppose two times ago, that was when the new government first came into power and there were lots of demonstrations. That was an interesting time.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 206

Politics

The best thing to say about Haider’s rise to power is probably that it focused an awareness that Austria has a very unrecognised, unacknowledged past.

Katherine Klinger

Das beste, was sich über Haiders Aufstieg sagen lässt, ist wahrscheinlich, dass ein Bewusstsein über die verdrängte und verleugnete Vergangenheit Österreichs dadurch verstärkt wurde.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 208

Probably the best thing that one could say about Haider's rise to power is that it focused an awareness that Austria actually has a very unrecognised, unacknowledged past. And that this is a continuum of that past which doesn't mean that Austria is a Nazi-country. But there is a connection, because the country has not been confronted with its past. So, one could say that actually there are some very positive things that have come from the election results in Austria in 1999.

One thought that it was a new world and the bad times perhaps would by and by be put behind one. And perhaps people would have a greater understanding for what happened. Now the clock has gone full circle and one wonders whether things ever change. But one must believe in some kind of hope or else life wouldn't be worth living.

I think, if there was never any news about Austria – I'm not saying that Austria should disappear – but if I never heard any news about Austria, I would not have that weird feeling. It doesn't last, it's only a second. And I will never allow it to last. But that's always the first thing that I feel. Every time there's something about Austria, whether it's a good thing or a bad thing.

I suppose, there were times, soon after the elections in Austria in 1999, where I probably reacted like my father would have, saying: "Well, so what's new? Why are you so surprised? You know, things don't change." And this is what my father used to say: "Things don't change, human nature doesn't change. So, things will be different for ten years, 15 years, 100 years, but it doesn't change, it will come out from another angle, from somewhere else." And I hope he was wrong. And my children tell me that he was wrong, my children tell me that things are better. And I hope it's true.

And I was told last week that there's nothing to worry about. Because last week the ambassador of Austria invited a few people to talk about what they're going to do in Austria for compensation and restitution. And we'll see. I went because Katherine wanted me to go. They vaguely, vaguely, very briefly mentioned the Haider business and things, that it wasn't going anywhere, I don't know.

But, I'm not surprised, maybe I'm getting too old now, so what's new? As long as I don't put that paranoia onto my children, because they mustn't live like this, they must not. That's my problem. That's not their problem.

What was interesting about our discussion of the political situation in Austria, I think, was that there was the feeling that what has happened has just been waiting to happen for a long time. That it's not a new, radical movement. But that it is something that has been simmering, and waiting. I think that was the conclusion. I don't know much about this, but the fact is, it's happening. It's been said by many people many times that you don't need Jews to have anti-semitism. It's just a feeling, it's a notion almost, we have racism in England. And there are reasons for it. And I think, probably given the correct economic climate, you do need to blame somebody. But I don't think it needs a reason, I think it's just there. And it's actually quite frightening that it has re-emerged, because what does it then say about the psyche of a nation?

And the other thing that emerged from our discussion, the view that you offered, was that with proper education and proper discussion one can change the thinking of the people, but you had to actually get them to acknowledge that there is a problem. Which gave me hope actually. Because otherwise, it's quite ghastly, and it gets replicated throughout the world.

Racism Anti-semitism

The society is suspicious of somebody who comes and looks like you, but is not you. In some way, it's easier to deal with an Indian or a Black immigrant.

Nitza Spiro

Die Gesellschaft ist skeptisch gegenüber Menschen, die aussehen wie sie, aber nicht sie sind. Gewissermaßen tun sie sich mit Indischen oder Schwarzen MigrantInnen leichter.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 216

There was also quite a lot of anti-semitism in England. We're talking about anti-semitism in Austria, but there was quite a lot of anti-semitism at the beginning of the war. I think England did open its doors, but there was a lot of resentment, especially outside London, where you were a complete stranger.

When war broke out in September 1939, my parents moved to Bath in Somerset. Because there was a whole group of Viennese, including people like Stefan Zweig, whom my father knew quite well. And they moved to Bath. They thought that was a fairly safe area. My brother and I also joined my parents and we actually went to school in Bath. I was the only Jewish child in that school, at Bath High School. And people, I mean, they did make a lot of remarks, one of the things was: "You haven't got black hair, you can't be Jewish, I don't believe you're Jewish." You know, I haven't got black hair. So, the concept was every Jew had black hair.

Klub Zwei
I read something about the hostility from the English Jewish community towards Jewish immigrants from the East that came to England.

You're right. It wasn't only in England, England was a very typical example. The aristocratic Jews in this country, they were cultured, they were integrated into the society and they felt that they had made it. And when this Eastern European Jews came after the pogroms – end of the 19th century, beginning of the 20th century – it was an embarrassment to have them around, because they spoiled the image of the aristocratic Jew. But today this image is no longer, because we had a century in between, so that soon they turned to be the minority, those aristocratic Jews. And the influx of this riff-raff, if you want, they were professional people, they were learned people, but in their own fields, they lived in the East End ghetto and they carried on with their Yiddish theatres and with their food and with their Yiddish spoken in the street. And their children weren't embarrassed about it. So, when they came, they were poor and East End, but they moved to the centre and into the professions that were more lucrative and were more rewarding in terms of money.

And I think that the society from the outside is suspicious of somebody who comes and looks like you and is not you. In some way, it's easier to deal with an Indian or a Black person. Because you know who s/he is and s/he knows. You know who the other side is as an immigrant.

But if you come and you are perceived by the other person – looks like you, talks like you, but is not you – you've got a mixed feeling because of your baggage, the Christian baggage, that has been inherited as well. And all that, I think, creates suspicion and fear on both sides. And until you feel that you are really established and you're part of society and you feel confident, then you subdue your identity.

Elly Miller
One of your questions asks about people who hid the fact that they were Jewish?

Klub Zwei
Ruth Rosenfelder told us that her parents would tell them, when they were children, not to say that they are Jewish.

Elly Miller
Well, I know why it came from her parents. This is a very peculiarly strong Ghetto attitude of Jews. You know, don't present yourself as Jew, don't show off, because they were used to pogroms in Germany, in Poland and in Russia. Ruth's parents were Polish and I think that attitude is what one would call a Ghetto Jew attitude, which is long gone, I think.

Tamar Wang
I don't think it's gone.

Elly Miller
There are people who hide their Jewishness of course. There are quite a lot of people in England, who don't want to be known as Jews. Partly it might be for pragmatic reasons – that people

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 220

might not want to employ Jews. They might have problems as Jews, when they enter. I don't think it's like that now, but it certainly has been over the past years.

Tamar Wang

I belong to a discussion group in a synagogue. We meet every Sunday morning. There is a kind of insecurity in English Jewish identity. English Jews are still slightly shy about their Jewishness. They wouldn't deny it, but they find it difficult to promote it in a lot of situations. By comparison with their Jewish friends in America or wherever.

Klub Zwei

Why do you think that is?

Tamar Wang

Well, I think that England as a society is actually quite a closed society. A lot of foreigners who come here, who are not Jews, find it very hard to integrate. They find that most of their friends are also foreigners. English people tend to stick to themselves. They are not that open. But London is different from the rest of England in a way, much more open.

Elly Miller

England never liked foreigners. And yet it's a country that always had immigrant communities. I mean, the Huguenots came over and there were very big waves of immigration that have made England what it is. But at every stage the English have tried to resist the influx of new immigrants. They are a closed society, it's also very class-ridden and certainly the Jews that came – the 19th century and early 20th century Jews – they were a poor economic class. So, the English were used to Jews coming in, who were poor, and you didn't mix with poor people anyway. The middle and the upper class didn't mix with the lower classes. When you had German and Austrian Jewish refugees coming to England, who were not poor – a different, an educated cultured class – the people who at first resented them the most were the English established Jews. That's the very interesting thing. It was very difficult for the refugees from Germany and Austria to enter into English Jewish society. The English Jews didn't like them, because they were more cultured, more educated and often had more money. A lot of the German Jews brought their belongings with them at that time. Until very much later, when you had the Kindertransports and refugees coming without anything.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 222

But coming back to your point about hiding one's Jewishness: I still have the feeling here, and I don't know whether I would have the feeling in America, that there is a point at which one as a Jew should not be too much in the limelight. Because there are always people who will resent it, that you are clever or that you've got there. And there was a point, for instance, in the English government. I felt very uncomfortable, because I could see the press picking on the defects of particular policies and pinpointing it to the Jews. I'm very sensitive on that point and I think my generation is probably sensitive on the point of showing one's Jewishness too blatantly. This is not denying it and, in any circumstance, I am very positively Jewish. But if you're out in the limelight, there is a point in which you shouldn't have too many Jews in the limelight, because it again reflects back onto the society.

I think, the Jews have not learned – as a result of their experiences – to really understand the issues of racism in such a way that it has made us feel particularly sensitive to those who are other victims of racism. And of course there are exceptions and there is a fairly strong left wing Jewish intellectual group in this country, for example, that do make the connection between anti-semitism and racism towards other minorities. But my experience of it is that the majority of people or far too many people don't make that connection. And I think that's very disturbing.

Maybe I am naive, but if you have yourself been persecuted, why should you then become this highly evolved group or individual, that therefore understands the dangers of racism and prejudice and does not feel that towards other people? I think, I sort of hope that that's how it'll be, but it isn't in practice.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 224

Identities

I feel, I should say I'm an economic migrant, because that might be a good campaign to start in London as many of us live here and come from elsewhere.

Erica Davies

Ich finde, ich sollte mich als Wirtschaftsmigrantin bezeichnen. Das wäre doch eine gute Kampagne für London. Denn so viele von uns leben hier und kommen von ganz woanders.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 226

Klub Zwei
Do you have a Jewish background yourself?

No, but I feel, in some ways I should say I'm an economic migrant, because I feel that might be a good campaign to start in London or in Britain as many of us certainly live in London and come from elsewhere. I came from Wales, from South Wales. So like many people from Wales I'm an economic migrant to England. And so many people are. I feel that one should stand up a bit as an economic migrant. Because very often, persons might be migrants themselves, economically, or their parents will have been. Because this distinction is now made between asylum seekers and economic migrants. But it seems to me that the world is full of economic migrants.

In Germany I was recognised as something else. I couldn't just carry on living my life. The first question was always: "From where do you come?" So, I was sensitive to that. Only, I felt a bit claustrophobic, because I was brought up in an environment where there were a lot of different nationalities around. I was missing that in Germany. All my friends I had, all sorts of different friends, Gypsies, Hungarians, Russians ...

I felt I was a German, but being asked this question "From where do you come and what are you doing here?" I felt that I was not recognised as a German.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 228

You know, working in the Jewish world, or doing Jewish things, that's only of minority interest. In other words, it's not considered quite legitimate. I've shifted my own work towards doing quite a lot with the Jewish world. And Jewish friends have that feeling: "Well, shouldn't you be doing something a bit more proper, more for the mainstream, of general interest?" Non-Jewish friends actually consider it perfectly legitimate. But in the Jewish world, for those who are not quite sure where they stand, it's a slight problem. It's a feeling that it's not of equal value – matters of Jewish interest, of Jewish culture, of anything Jewish.

I was thinking about your question about racism. I work in an organisation, a charity, which is very concerned with racism awareness. And I've been involved in various discussion groups and courses and I remember one particular discussion when I mentioned something about the difficulty of being a minority and feeling actually a bit insecure, because of anti-semitism. And it was very difficult for the black woman I was talking to, to accept the fact that I could have any of these feelings. Because when she walks into a room, everybody sees she's black. When I walk into the room, some people can see that I am Jewish, but not everybody. You know, it is not the same as coming there and being black. So I don't encounter it in the same way she does. And she couldn't take that on board. So, from her point of view, I was part of the establishment.

It's more complicated. You couldn't stand up as a Jewish woman as you could do as a black woman. I think it's harder to have a political platform in that way because being Jewish is somewhere between a community and a religion. It's not one thing or the other. So, I think it's slightly different.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 230

Klub Zwei
How do you define being a Jewish woman today? Is it important for you?

Anni Reich
Not at all. I'm more a humanist. I will never deny my Jewishness, never! But it's just as I'm white, I'm Jewish. I mean, it doesn't make any difference to me. Religion doesn't. Ethics yes, but religion not!

Josephine Bruegel
I mean, at least half of our acquaintances were non-Jewish. I've got a lot of Jewish friends, but I don't belong to any synagogue or any Jewish kind of organisation.

Anni Reich
I don't belong to synagogue either.

Somebody has said: "I'm only Jewish, because other people remind me that I'm Jewish. I don't think of myself as Jewish, I'm Jewish from the exterior, from without." I have changed, I have now become Jewish from within. But I didn't used to. So I think – no, I don't think, I know – that is why I got involved in the work at Spiro Ark and Wiener Library.

I had never felt that I'm part of a minority. Something quite interesting happened some years ago in Berlin. On my first or second visit, one evening. We were preparing this conference, "Die Gegenwart der Geschichte des Holocaust" and went out for dinner after work. And it was very pleasant. There were a couple of people from former East Germany and we were talking about the conference. And one of these young men from former Eastern Germany was trying to explain a particular point between "them" and "us". And he, obviously, didn't quite know how to do it and he said to Katherine and me: "Ah, well, you see, you, the victims–." And I got up, so angry, the whole table was totally shut up, and I said to him: "You never call me a victim, if anybody is a victim it's you, not me. Never, never use that word to try to describe me, because the last thing I am is a victim. If any-

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 232

body is a victim, it's you." And I sat down. There was a long silence and slowly you got back.
Still, up to today, I don't know, what came upon me to react in that way. Because usually I just keep quiet when I don't like something.

Klub Zwei
Maybe he learned something...

I hope so. But it wasn't done for that. I'm not here to teach people. I just reacted so powerfully.

So, I don't see myself as a migrant, I don't see myself as a victim, I don't see myself as a minority. But I do have to say that when people ask me what I am: I am first and foremost Jewish. When people say to me you're so typically French, I don't say anything, but there's nothing French about me, nothing.

If I am something, if I have to say what am: I'm Jewish. That's the first thing I am. And it's the only thing I am. Because everything else I can change. This I can't change. History has made me that. I could have been anything else. But because I'm Jewish I am what I am today. And it's only because I'm Jewish. If I wouldn't have been Jewish, I would have been something else. But because I'm Jewish, and this is what I am today. I'm not saying I like it, but it's a fact for me.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 234

Tamar Wang
Well, my theory is that it's easier to be a Jew in a non-Jewish world. Then you don't have to look too much into the whole Jewish bit. In the Jewish world you really have to work out where you fit in and how much you take on of this and that. That's a very complicated process. Quite difficult! So, I think one of the ways out would be just to say: "Right, okay, I know I'm Jewish, but I now go out into the mainstream world and I'm not going to look at that."

Elly Miller
What is interesting is that these are not issues that bother me. I am so intrinsically Jewish that I don't question it. I go about my thoughts and my work without considering: "Am I? What am I? What sort of a Jew am I?" I don't consider it, I just accept it, you know. I follow the tradition and I don't question it. Now, the next generation have these questions of: "What sort of Jews are we?" "What does it really mean to be Jewish in this world?"

I had my Jewishness confirmed by having to leave Vienna. Sounds funny, but I mean, that actually gave me the sort of "fore-confirmation" of my Jewishness. Perhaps I'm not as curious, intellectually, as I think you are and my husband is. But I have the feeling that your generation asks itself: "What does it mean to be Jewish in this post-Holocaust world? What am I giving to it?" I think this is really the essence why you all come together and you ask yourself these questions. I don't have that problem.

Tamar Wang
I think, the thing is that you actually carry it on because it survived. Because all these people died for you to be able to carry this religion and this culture on. And the next generation carry it on, because all these people survived for you to carry it on. In a way that's not a good enough answer! It's a very important answer, but it doesn't give you an essence of what it is. And that's why I want to know and learn more about it. It has got to have something positive, it can't be: You've got to take this thing forward because you don't want it to die out and it almost did. It's got to have a value in itself and that's what makes me interested in it. It's also a question of heritage.

The Spiro Institute organised a series of lectures about European cities called "Before the Lights went out" and it was about pre-war European

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 236

culture. And this was supposed to be of interest to people who left Germany and to their children as well. Now, the younger generation didn't come, they didn't want to know really. And I think it's because they feel that that culture, say, what life in Vienna was like when you were a child – that they don't connect to it particularly. But they do connect to the Jewish heritage, because that's still there for them.

I think that there are three major things that have made Jewishness more open now. Or perhaps four. First of all a certain knowledge. Because if you perceive Jews only with the black hat and the curls and a way of life which is not necessarily your own, and if you have no nostalgia to your great-grandparents who lived like that, then you feel quite embarrassed with it. You think, I don't want to be associated with that thing. But through learning, you will see that great personalities in the world – musicians, composers, writers, film makers, play writers, etc. – are Jewish and that the world recognises them as Jewish.

If you feel proud of the Jewish contribution to civilisation, you will learn that it's not only being the victim, and not only being part of the Holocaust. I think that there must be a positive message in education. And I think, it's a sense of pride and a sense of identification. We can say: "Well, Heine was Jewish and Mendelssohn was Jewish, Arthur Miller is Jewish, Freud was Jewish, etc." And if we can see that these are people who have done something good in the world, then we can say: "We are so few in numbers and yet we have contributed something. I'm delighted, or I'm honoured or I'm proud to belong to that club." You

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 238

know, this is the kind of thing that encourages you to want to belong and not to be embarrassed to be part of this club – if you want – that is called Jewish.

And if you don't know, – the thing you don't know you don't long for. I think that America and Israel are two important issues in the confidence that Jews have now. America is because it is full of Jews. American Jews have got impact on the political world, on the cultural world as well. And in America you're not embarrassed to say that you are Jewish. You go to New York, which is like a Jewish town and you see people with stars of David and you see people with all kinds of Jewish symbols without being embarrassed about it.

In fact I'm sometimes embarrassed by the size, because you don't need to have that big size of a symbol to show who you are. But there is a kind of bravado about it, people say: "Yes, we are Jewish and we are proud of it and we are influential and we are doing well economically." So, all that gives them a sense of spine, of not being hidden. And I think that this attitude has a lot to do with the confidence that world Jewry feels about themselves.

I'm not involved with people who belong specifically to Jewish groups. I have in a way become separated from Jewish groups, because my husband is not Jewish and we have always agreed that our lives are probably non-religious in the sense of not practicing either religion. Neither of us has been brought up to be firmly linked to their religious background. And I think we have felt a much greater freedom not to be involved. So that whilst I'm tremendously interested in what is going on in Jewish affairs, I am a little bit separate from them and that is partly to do with the fact that we have never lived in London and that our connections are not centred on Jewish life at all.

Klub Zwei
But there is also a cultural aspect of it.

Yes, but as far as I'm concerned, I'm interested in the arts, not specifically because they are Jewish. I'm interested in people and quite frankly it's not of major importance what particular religious background people have. Of course I'm very pleased to find that there's a lot of Jewish talent about. But, until the full truth of the Holocaust became known, until all the dreadful terrible things that have happened, became known totally, one's

feelings were not orientated according to whether one was Jewish or non-Jewish. I've always tried to see people as human beings without any labels, without any identification marks and I've always hoped that I would likewise appear to them as a human being first and foremost and secondly and thirdly as who I am as far as my background is concerned.

You see, with my friends and the people I care about, there's absolutely no doubt that I am a Jewish woman. None at all, because they know about my life, they know about me. And friends who really are friends – in a sense that they are not just social acquaintances – they care about who you are and what you are. And so my Jewishness such as it is, is very openly communicated. It has never arisen that I would have a friendship where people did not know exactly who I was and what I was. But I can imagine that in Austria or in Germany people are still almost afraid of saying they are Jewish. Perhaps because there is still that perception of being unwanted or laying oneself open to some hostility, which in my experience here has never been the case, although I'm sure there is anti-semitism here in England also.

I think being Jewish has given me certain standards, even though there is no particular Jewish observance in my life. It has not been the overriding factor in my life until perhaps lately in my old age when I have known so much more about Jewish history, when I have read a lot and learned a lot and at which point one realises that perhaps it has been the most important thing in one's life, even though one hasn't known about it. I don't know, I don't know for sure.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 242

Klub Zwei
Can I ask you one question about identity. You already touched it, but, how do you personally define being a Jewish woman today?

I can perhaps talk about what I don't define it as. I don't define it as being religious. I define it as being something instinctively that one feels is a cultural thing that one belongs to, a long line of learned people, righteous people, people who are striving to do good, who feel some sort of–, not necessarily obligation, but feel one is here on this earth not just to suck it out and do things that are satisfying to you.

Today's life seems to be so much for the moment, you know, life that you see reflected on television today. People are very brutal, there is a lot of nastiness. Just look at the soap operas and computer games. What are children learning today? They're not learning to think. There is no sitting down at a game where you have to interact with each other. You have to learn how to lose, you have to learn how to be gracious. In winning you have to learn some caring. Today many children have got no interpersonal skills. They don't know how to relate to each other. They only know to relate to a box. And the box teaches you wrong relationships. So, I think that we are bringing up a generation of monsters really. And I think that, thank god I'm Jewish, because Jewish education, the way Jews deal with their children is they do make them strive for something better, they do offer them a set of rules which are on a higher level. They do make sure that their children go to the Hebrew classes or religion school. You know, they go through their bar mitzvah. They still do, however assimilated. And I feel, we have something to offer, to say just stop with this barbarity.

So, I don't know whether that is a reflection on Jewish identity today, but it's perhaps a reflection of identity today and what people are given as role models. There are no role models, it's now Mortal Combat, that is the name of the greatest programme for children. And tell me that you want a Holocaust Memorial Day! How do the two fit together?

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 244

Ultimately the kind of identity that has meaning for me is having a Jewish cultural identity, which I think is very bound up with probably a sort of German Jewish cultural identity. A central European rather wide ranging identity to do with writing, music, literature. But I don't feel a religious identity.

I'm born in this country. This is my first language. This is probably the country that I will spend the greatest part of my life in and I feel a mixture of different identities. And part of me of course is connected to my identity of growing up in an urban city with one of the biggest populations of the world and all the richness and diversity that that means. And at the same time I feel a very strong affinity to my roots and my past that is a sort of destroyed, ruptured past.

Maybe it's more difficult if you – like me – appear on the surface to be white and middle class. It's much more difficult to label me, to put an identity on me as being British or Jewish or whatever. I mean none of it fits. So actually I've stopped caring about what my identity is, because I know it's not really definable. And that is fine with me.

If I was in Austria, I would speak as the daughter of an Austrian born mother whose family were murdered by the Austrians. And I'd sort of throw that out as well and now you can see what you do with that identity. How do you feel about being in the same room with me. But if I was in Germany I might do something else.

It just shifts around and I quite like that shifting at this point. Ten years ago, I think, it caused me a lot of anguish, because it shifted and I didn't feel very secure with that shifting. Now I feel much more secure with it.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 246

Gender

If I need funding, if I need people to take me seriously, I have to go and see them with a man. And not only a man, preferably with a man who is not Jewish.

Geraldine Auerbach

Wenn ich Gelder brauche, wenn Leute mich ernst nehmen sollen, dann muss ich zum Treffen einen Mann mitbringen. Und nicht nur einen Mann, am liebsten einen, der nicht Jüdisch ist.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 248

Yesterday I was looking back at the scholarly works written on the Holocaust. Most of these works focus on men's experiences. Only recently, in the last 20 years, has this started to change – that women also write about their experiences. I think that they have destroyed the pre-war image of women's vulnerability, passivity and powerlessness. By writing about their struggle, they display qualities like flexibility, determination, intelligence. This struggle, this success and this contribution that they make to society is an inspiration to all of us women. Especially to the refugee women.

Elly Miller
Certain professions are still not open to women, which I think is shocking. I think gender issues are general issues. But I don't know how they relate to Judaism.

Tamar Wang
Well, I think they do. I mean, the gender issue is that in your secular life you can fight the battles for women and say: "Okay, women, get your education, go and get the jobs". And yet you can still sit in a service, where the men take all the roles and do everything, and say: "Okay, I'll sit here, alright, I won't get up and read from the Torah, because they don't like it."

Elly Miller
Well, I tried. We belong to United Synagogue in Chelsea, which is an orthodox community. And at the joyous Torah festival after New Year, I took one of the scrolls. It's a particular festival and there is an occasion where men actually take all the scrolls and they walk round and they sing. And women do not take the scrolls, they are not allowed to. Well, I picked one up, because there weren't enough men going round. Somebody said: "Alright, the women can go." And it was the

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 250

first time I've actually held the holy scrolls and it was a very elevating experience for me. I thought, it's ridiculous that we aren't allowed to touch the Torah. So, we had a marvellous time. But afterwards, a couple of weeks later, the chairman of the synagogue got a letter from the secretary of United Synagogue, they'd heard what had happened: This is never to happen again, otherwise the synagogue would be excommunicated.

Tamar Wang
You did try and they said no and that was it. But there's a choice, you can go and join an egalitarian community, where there is complete equality between men and women in a service, in terms of how they take part. So, the paradox is that in your secular life you do certain things and in your religious life you step back a century and allow yourself to behave in a way you would never allow yourself to in your secular life.

Elly Miller
Are you talking to me?

Tamar Wang
You, me, a lot of people. In a way it's very comfortable to say: "I was just in a very Ultra-Orthodox

service." I can go in and I'll say: "This isn't my community, that's fine, I will do as the host community and I will wear a hat and do this and do whatever." But, you know, what am I doing? I accepted to join a community which is not egalitarian. How related is that to my other ways of living? I can see that these things confront me as issues. They are issues within the observance of the religion. They are not issues about taking the culture forward. I actually want to look at things not only through a male rabbi, I'd like to follow the feminist Orthodox who see things not only through the male rabbi's view point, but engage in a discussion and maybe bring in something that a woman might have seen affecting her that this male rabbi might not have seen.

Elly Miller
Yes, I think, you're right, I think I do step back when I'm going to synagogue.

Tamar Wang
But there is still a choice and we don't make that choice. Because what do you lose with it? If I go into a liberal synagogue it is different. It's a bit like mountain climbing. Each generation has got a sort of rope that goes to the next person and they're

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 252

all climbing around this world and they've got a link that goes through everything. And part of that link is the way that people lived, you might not agree with it politically, but there is that link and understanding it and experiencing it, there is some value in that. And when do you cut it? How strong is your view? But if you want to step somewhere else, is there a restriction, can you bring the rope with you? You know, there are still all those questions. So, I think, it's quite complicated just saying, right okay, I don't believe in this.

Klub Zwei
What about gender issues in the Jewish Music Institute?

In the institute, in Jewish music, gender issues are quite interesting, because there is this idea that a man mustn't hear a woman sing in the synagogue. Put it this way: I feel women are very lucky in Jewish life. They don't have to go to synagogue. You know, there are so many commitments in prayer that a man has to make. Now, I'm quite happy that women are absolved from having to do that. Now, this tells me a couple of things. It tells me that Jews acknowledge that the woman is the boss, that the man is useless except that he needs to do the prayers. So let him do the prayers. And the women are the strongest people, they are the ones who make all the decisions.

Now, in my working life there isn't a gender issue. It' just very interesting to me that most of the people that I've worked with on the Jewish music festivals are all women. But, the lecturer is a man. And he is wonderful. And we work with people according to what they can offer. And it's never an issue whether they're a man or a woman.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 254

But there is a gender issue actually. And the gender issue is this: That if I need funding, if I need people to take me seriously, I have to go and see them with a man. And not only a man, preferably with a man who is not Jewish. Because then a Jewish man with money sits up and says: “Well it’s not only Geraldine’s madness, maybe there’s something to it.”

Tamar Wang
Something else came up from your question about Jewish women. I think that it’s much easier and more usual first to think in terms of the Jewish side rather than the woman side. For me it’s both. For you, I know, the Jewish side is a question, but the concept of where you stand as a woman, is another issue. And in fact we have been speaking as Jews as opposed to Jewish women.

Elly Miller
That’s interesting. I mean, I regard myself as a woman working in a particular field, making a certain contribution, and as Jewish.

Tamar Wang
In that order?

Elly Miller
In that order, I don’t know, whether it’s in that order. I mean I can also start by saying I’m Jewish and a woman and I do this. Oh no, perhaps the woman comes first, because I’m a woman.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 256

Tamar Wang
I actually think of myself as a human being first,
very strongly, more than any of the other labels
I'm most concerned about being a human being.

Elly Miller
I must say I do, too.

Idea of Place

When you’re young, you cling to places, you cling to friends. But when you are older you don’t need to grasp these places. They are alive in you.

Rosemarie Nief

Wenn du jung bist, hängst du an Orten. Du hängst an FreundInnen. Aber wenn du älter wirst, brauchst du dich nicht mehr an die Orte klammern. Sie leben in dir weiter.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 260

When we moved to Germany, it took a time to get adjusted. But then you have inner resources and you are surprised what you can do in situations like that. So, I sort of adapted to the culture, I could speak the language, but I had an accent and then people would realise that I don't belong to them, that I came from outside. And that was a problem for me at the beginning. But now, I think, in diversity is richness. But I was young and, you know, you cling to places, you cling to friends. But when you are older you carry these memories and it's very alive, it's alive in your heart. You don't need to grasp these places, you don't need to get hold of them. They are alive in you.

Elly Miller

Possibly the result of the emigration meant that I had no sense of roots at all. There was no one place that I was particularly attached to. I make the most of any place I am in. I want to contribute to the place and the time I am in. I want to contribute something that is of myself and I usually want to improve what ever I find. And that is again a very personal thing. I don't want to do things best, but I would like to do things better and I try and improve place, space and time that I am in. But I am not rooted to it. If I move on, I will do the same in another place, in another spot.

Tamar Wang

The idea of place is important, it does have an effect. But one of the things that has changed about my Judaism is actually not focusing on place. It is exactly moving away from that. When I came back from Israel and I felt being in England wasn't really the right thing, various friends said: "You know, everybody has their Israel. Everybody has the place they want to be, that they feel best in, that they relate to, that opens them up." And I used to think about that a lot. Because you can invest so much in a place. How can I say, your own journey is about opening up to whatever you are

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 262

as your potential and so your place is your space wherever you are really. I think we often put onto a particular place certain feelings, certain hopes, certain ideas and we invest the place with certain things and then we want it to give us back exactly that, you know, which is actually what we've given to it. What we're looking for is beyond the place itself, it's the space surrounding it. Yes, everyone has their Israel. Everyone has what they're longing for, what they're looking for or what their potential is, really.

Elly Miller
I always thought you felt rooted!

Tamar Wang
Well, maybe I'm being a bit critical of the idea that it doesn't matter that we're not rooted. I mean, that's the ideal. I think the fact is – given all the wars about territory – that we are not really able to be emotionally independent from things and places.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 264

Israel

I'm not going into the politics of the middle east. But there are terrible things that go on and people deny it. It's not overt denial. They simply don't recognise it.

Ruth Rosenfelder

Ich will jetzt nicht in die Nahost-Politik ausschweifen. Aber es geschehen dort grauenhafte Dinge und die Leute leugnen das. Nicht offen, sie wollen es ganz einfach nicht sehen.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 266

Well, what does it mean to have a Jewish identity? I find that a really difficult question to answer. On a certain level it doesn't mean anything to me. And the whole question about identity is such a difficult one. Of course, I know this is an integral part of me, but I don't identify with Anglo-Jewry at all. And as a religion it means virtually nothing to me.

As a political position it also doesn't mean very much to me. And if there is an identification with Israel, that is also very problematic because of the kind of politics in Israel. And I don't particularly feel that I support Israel just because it exists. I think it has to uphold a kind of ethical and moral integrity for me to feel that I can identify with it closely. And as I don't believe that it's doing that at the moment, nor has it done for some time, it feels very difficult to identify with it. And I guess then we come back to a cultural identity which is the only aspect of my Jewish identity that I feel proud to be part of and to associate myself with.

Tamar Wang

I was interested why you were asking us about place. Are you asking about Israel? You had a question about Israeli politics, too, and we talked about how distressed we were about the current political situation for both Israelis and Palestinians. So, I suppose the places question was more about how we respond as Jews to Israel as a Jewish place. Well for me, Israel meant solving the Jewish problem – it meant we could be a people in a land like any other people and that as a result there would be no anti-Semitism. Because you could be Jews in a land like the French in their land. But now I don't feel that the land is the answer to understanding everything about Judaism.

Elly Miller

The funny thing is that what the world resents, is in fact that the people, the Jews in Israel, in other words the Israelis, are behaving like every other nation and nobody likes that. They expected Jews to behave differently when they became citizens of Israel. And the fact that the Israelis are behaving like the French, the Swiss, the Germans, the Bolivians, the Equadorians etc., they can't accept that. This is an interesting phenomenon.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 268

Josephine Bruegel
I mean, apart from the Holocaust, which is a great problem with the time for me, I really have certain difficulties to come to terms with Israel.

Anni Reich
The same with me.

Josephine Bruegel
It's very difficult even to talk about it, because I realise what's going on there, the tortures and so on. And it's absolutely clear and I'm ashamed of this, I don't like and never liked it, that people settled on the West Bank.

I mean, I was once with my husband, for a PEN Club congress in Jerusalem and there was a very posh hotel. And when my husband asked: "Is it on occupied territory?" and they said: "Yes," we moved out of the place. Because we didn't agree with the settlement on the occupied territories. There were quite a number of people at this congress, you know, there was Böll there and very famous writers. There was a big discussion about the occupied territories.

Anni Reich
I was never for the state of Israel. I never liked the idea. I'm not a nationalist. I'm too international, so I didn't like the idea. So, what's going on now, of course, is also dreadful.

Josephine Bruegel
But on the other hand you must consider that the good million people, Jews, were saved there.

Anni Reich
Yes, but we didn't know that this was coming, when the state was created.

Josephine Bruegel
I realised it. I mean, it was a thing to be considered. And I have got a family who were Zionists. They are the only ones of my family who survived. The sons of my cousin who went to a kibbutz in 1923 are my only relatives.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 270

Anni Reich
I like the idea of a kibbutz.

Josephine Bruegel
And they live in a kibbutz. Very nice people, we visited them, very lovely. And my grandchildren, my granddaughter was very enthusiastic. But they are against the occupation of the West Bank and against the excesses of the Israeli Nationalists.

Elly Miller
When I went to Israel for the first time, it was a most exhilarating experience. I've been several times and every time I go I curiously feel more alien to Israel than I did the first time. That's an interesting phenomenon. Either I'm too old for young society anywhere, or it's because things are just changed, that I felt at home the first time I went there and I feel very strange when I go now. What about you?

Tamar Wang
In Israel I loved living in Jerusalem and I loved the earth and the stones and the colour and the strong blue sky and the sun and the contrasts. And I also felt amazingly elated coming up to Jerusalem which was tremendously exciting, but also a tremendous burden. A burden which you didn't actually feel when you were there. But when you leave Jerusalem, when you come down to the plains towards Tel Aviv, suddenly this burden of Jerusalem and the intensity of it leaves you.

Elly Miller
I think Jerusalem is very exhilarating. You do feel very 'up'. But I had a very similar experience the first time I was in Athens, when you go up to the

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 272

Acropolis and you've got this holy, this sacred light which is very strange. In Israel there is a certain light and a certain sky and you realise why Judaism and Christianity and everything grew out of that light. And you could have the same feeling in Greece. Why they suddenly felt the gods were there, you know. Whether it's because I know that's where it arose and impose my knowledge on the scene or whether it's the other way round, I can't tell. It is very often the case. You impose your knowledge on the event. And it hits back at you, boomerangs and you think that's where it comes from. Because you know too much.

I always saw my place in Israel. I remember, when we were little and my parents spoke German, or Polish, or Yiddish, we didn't want to hear it. And we said: "Now we are in Israel, we don't want to be a minority, and we want to organise our lives not according to what other people feel like, but according to what we want." I was a member of the Socialist Youth Movement and we were brought up to think that after the Holocaust there was only one place which was safe for the Jewish people or at least they could be masters of their own fate. I think that today, probably, people are less confident. But after the war, when people started to come, it was an impossibility to live anywhere else but in Israel. And I was very determined, also to bring up my children – if and when I had them – to certain values, to a certain confidence, to not to look behind their shoulders if somebody does like them or not, or if there are any laws which are going to persecute them.

In Israel, we unfortunately had a lot of derogatory expressions about the people who came as a result of the Holocaust. Because after the war of Independence and even before the state of Israel, in our minds, if they come against you, you do something against them first to protect yourself. And so

there was this quotation that they went ”like sheep to the slaughter.” Later on you learned history and you knew that they had not much chance of rebelling. But at that time you were under the impression that people who were brought up in the diaspora didn’t have this mentality of standing up for themselves. They looked as if they were weak, and even children who came to Israel after the Holocaust were looked upon as products of diasporism, if you want, a mentality which was not compatible with the frame of mind that Israelis had. This, of course, changed – at least for me – and I’m sure for everybody later on. But there were the very first impressions after the war when people started to come to Israel and this is the formative years of my childhood. And so I grew up with this idea to bring up my children in a way that would be compatible with my thinking of a personality which is not bending but standing upright.

When you live in Israel there is a very closely knit community which is good and bad at the same time. When your neighbours are inside your kitchen and pots and they know what you are cooking and what you are wearing and where you’re going and who are your friends. And if they need

something, if they ran out of eggs and bread they come to you and you come to them for similar things. Then you feel you live within your own family. And, I suppose that the Holocaust had this effect on people, that you need this closeness, you need this support and people feel very united. Whenever they are in need, there is always somebody who will do something for them. And in the house that you live in, if it’s a block of flats, it’s like a community. Everybody talks to each other, everybody knows every last detail of one’s life.

Klub Zwei
And how come that you came to London?

I hate all these ”nevers” that one says, you know: ”I will never marry anybody who is not Israeli; I will never live anywhere else but in Israel; I would never speak any other language but Hebrew.” Well, I met my husband, he was English and he came to settle in Israel, but circumstances called him back to England and the rest basically is history. One starts to get involved in things and all the ”nevers” have turned into ”evers” and I’m still here after 30 years, since I came here.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 276

That's going to sound unbelievably sentimental, at the end of the 70s we bought a little house in Jerusalem. It's a one-storey-house. But it's a house. And it overlooks the old city of Jerusalem, the main building that you see straight ahead is the Church of Dormition. But it's also got the Mosque of Omar, so you see the old city walls. That is very important to me. And when we bought it, I remember thinking: "One day I will get used to this and I won't notice it." Well, this is now 22 years on, and I still haven't got used to it. As you know, we were told that things do not matter and this was constantly dinned into us. So, I never felt an affection for places as such, buildings as such, except for that little house. I just love it. And sometimes it drives me mad, it's leaking, we have moths and land up there and it's just horrible. And I love it.

I remember being in Israel in 1961 during the Eichmann trial. And that was a major watershed in the Israeli psyche. People were saying, you know: "Why didn't you Jews of Europe stand up and fight? We would fight." And these were Israeli young men. I said: "You've got something to fight for. You've actually got what is normally considered land, territory, space." And these were people who felt that they were being allowed to live in Poland, Russia, even Germany. In Germany and Hungary they were much more settled. But therefore, if you were being thrown out of Poland, you went. You went to Germany or in the early days they went from Germany to Poland, and were given their future there. But these were always refugees seeking refuge.

I'm not going into the politics of the middle east. But there are terrible things that go on and people deny it. It's not overt denial. They simply don't recognise it. And it actually frightens me. And if you try to speak to the deniers, you might become a traitor. And it depends when, there are times when you actually are traitorous. At other times, I think, it's important to actually show them that they were moving in the wrong direction.

So these are lessons to be learned. And I think there are lessons to be learned all the time. I think we have as many lessons to learn as anybody else. We are as human as anybody else. I think, Jews generally, we are very bad as controllers, we don't know what to do with power. We're wonderful in opposition, you know, we had 2000 years of diaspora, we're the excellent ginger groups. I can

see all the holes. But I'm not quite sure what to do when I'm actually sitting in an authority, because it needs a very different set of skills. And I think we've still got to learn them. What is frightening when you have a country – well, Germany more than Austria – a country of such power and majesty and civilisation and you know that it can be corrupted. That's what's frightening, I think. And this once set European civilisation in the 20th century on its ears. We always talked about savages. You know, "I'm going off to far distant lands to calm savages and civilise them". That's quite frightening.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 280

Politics in Israel

There was a great openness to Jewish culture here. This was very encouraging to us. Now it’s imperceptibly different in that there are hardening attitudes.

Geraldine Auerbach

Es gab hier eine große Offenheit gegenüber Jüdischer Kultur. Das war sehr ermutigend für uns. Jetzt ist es zwar nicht deutlich anders. Aber es verhärten sich die Fronten.

You had two questions; you had one about Israel and one about Israeli politics. And you see the two as together? I mean, I would make a distinction.

Klub Zwei
We would leave it to you to define that.

Tamar Wang
My relationship with Israel is a very close one and for me it is an important country. But I see the existence of Israel and the day-to-day reality of middle-eastern politics as separate issues. If you ask me "do you think Israel should exist?" then, I think, yes, it should, and yes, it does; there are millions of Israelis who live there and have nowhere else to go.

But if you ask me whether I support the current Israeli government and their policies, then I would say no. I do think that the Palestinians have an equal right to self-determination, and I don't think Israel is doing all it can to bring that about. Sometimes I wish the discussion could go back to the first question because then we would all know where we stand and we could then move on to the 'how's – how can we make it work and what kind of state.

Mixing the two issues is dangerous and is literally leading to a dead end; we need to build from the situation now, as it is today.

Even though I am happy that Israel exists, I am not nationalistic, and I don't like nationalism. But I think that, emotionally, people haven't really learned to do without it. I'll give you an example: if a French person comes to live in England and keeps to all sorts of French ways of living and being, aspects of their French culture, everyone respects it – to some degree because France exists. Because if France didn't exist, after a while people would say "why do you keep all these customs? France is gone, you're here now". Of course there may be many reasons to maintain the culture, but they wouldn't be quite so obvious and the French in England would be in a more vulnerable position. So I think that's one effect having a state, and Israel's existence certainly does support many Jews in that way. And apart from that, nationhood also gives a more secure sense of self-determination; that there is somewhere you can live in the way you want, where you can be free to express your culture, without being a potentially vulnerable minority.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 284

Ruth Sands

For me Israel is very important. But I do not agree one percent with the political situation today. I think it's absolutely appalling! It makes me very sad. But as a Jew, I am very grateful that Israel exists. I need Israel, because I feel as long as Israel exists, I am secure. The moment Israel will stop existing, which can happen, I don't think within my lifetime or even my children's lifetime, but I think as long as Israel exists the Jews of the diaspora should be very grateful and they should know why they are feeling so secure. That's maybe a hint of paranoia, but that's the way I feel. And I really hope, from the deepest of my heart, that the political situation will change in Israel. I hope they will change it quite soon, because in the moment it is their downfall. But I will still support Israel, even if it's from a selfish point of view, for my own survival. Even if I don't agree at all with their politics at the moment. I'm very grateful that Israel exists, yes.

Klub Zwei

And Israel as a place? Have you been there quite a lot?

Yes, I've been there twice and it's not for me. I am European. And I do not identify at all with Israelis. That they are Jews is totally irrelevant for me. I enjoyed going there and visiting and siteseeing. But it's not for me, no. My father had three nieces who were sent as young people to Palestine and one of them actually said to me that, coming from Vienna, she was so, so sorry that her parents sent her to Palestine. Their parents died in the Holocaust, but they sent their three daughters to Palestine, and she said: "It's not a country for me and I wish it would have been somewhere else." But they survived. She felt totally out of place there, all her life, a young woman about fifteen or sixteen, when she got there. But she made her life there. So, I think Israel is very important even though I have no affinities with the land, the people, but it's very important for me. It makes me feel very, very secure.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 286

One is much freer about showing one's Jewishness, not in Israel, but around the world, because there is an Israel, a country. I think that the confidence that Jews have generally in the world has a lot to do with the fact that they know they have a country. If they are expelled, which they used to be, they feel that Israel is their safeguard. I also believe that Israel must exist. And I think it has its historical right to be where it is. I similarly think that the Palestinians also have a right to have a country. And I tend to think that the majority of thinking people in Israel will agree that the Palestinians have to have a state.

I think, Israel has given the Jewish people a lot of, how can I call it, a back-up for their confidence, the fact that it's there. After all the Judaic dream of Jerusalem which has really kept them going throughout thousands of years is something that has actually helped sustain it. And I call them the Jewish people, you can call them what you will: "nation", "race", "religion", but they are the Jewish people. And I believe in being part of the Jewish people.

Klub Zwei
What is your relationship to Israel?

Anni Reich
I never liked it. I don't like nationalism.

Josephine Bruegel
Mhm.

Anni Reich
I was against it from the very beginning. The country is a beautiful country and everything, but that's all. And then, as I said, I don't like any extremism. No.

Klub Zwei
And what about you, Josephine?

Josephine Bruegel
I'd rather not talk about it.
[Anni laughs.]

Klub Zwei
You don't want to talk about it?

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 288

Josephine Bruegel
No, no. It's a painful subject. I have relatives who went to Israel in 1921 and built up one of the first kibbutzim. And there is a third generation now. They went for idealism, because they wanted to build up a kibbutz and socialism and all this, yes. I had a brother who was also an outstanding Zionist. His family and related families, they all lived in the kibbutz. He became quite well known. My brother died in 1963 as Israeli ambassador in Prague. They were very much on the left, all of them. My husband was against Zionism. He was very much against the occupation of the West Bank.

We were once in Jerusalem with the PEN Club, my husband was a representative of the PEN Club. There was an international congress in Jerusalem, we were put into a hotel on the occupied area of Jerusalem and he walked out and said: "This is illegal and we will not stay in a place on occupied territory." So, several delegates walked out. And he never thought it was legal, the occupation of the West Bank. My daughter now is very active in organising Jews to oppose the occupation and I have a great attachment to these people who are still in the kibbutz or who are living outside, so I'm in between. Such splits in families are nothing new. They occurred in the 1930s in German and Austrian families quite frequently. It seems a long time ago now, but there was a time when Israel was not only the middle East's only democracy, but a source of liberal-social liberation.

Klub Zwei
What do you think about Israeli politics at the moment?

Anni Reich
Oh, I hate it. It's all I can say: I hate it.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 290

lly Miller

I think there is a lack of, if you like, Israeli propaganda as opposed to Arab propaganda in making clear to the world what the facts are. I think one judges the present situation with a very right-wing government in Israel without actually knowing the historical facts of what has gone on. I don't agree with the present politics at all. I think there is something militaristic and very aggressive in the present attitude Sharon, not necessarily Sharon, but the militant Israelis, have in the situation. So I don't agree with that. But I do think that the world tends to judge victims and aggressors, you know, without full knowledge of the facts.

Tamar Wang

The full knowledge of the facts is something I don't think anybody can have. I don't think the focus should be on past facts, but much more on aims for the future. I don't agree with the Israeli government as it is at the present time. And I agree that there should be a Palestinian state. But just as much as the Palestinians have a right to their own state, I think, the Jews have a right to their own state. It's a matter of going on from the present to find a way to solve the conflict.

Elly Miller

Well, I agree with you. But it's for the solution that one has to look at what actually brought them to this particular situation, at what went on before.
I think, Israel is in a very vulnerable state. But what you must also remember is that Israel has now become, in many ways, a normal state. It's no longer a young nation, just everybody being a pioneer and doing the good. It has all the elements of a state that has been established for a while, of the good and the bad. And their internal problems, you can see this from the way the government runs, the Labour Party and even the factions in the Labour Party. These are normal problems that every state has. And they come to the fore every time something actually happens. And the trouble at the moment is that all these factions don't actually agree into how to keep the pure existence of Israel going. It's a terrible problem.

Tamar Wang

It's also about how to be secure. And what you do about terror, how you fight against suicide bombers? It's a difficult problem!

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 292

Klub Zwei
How do you relate to Israel?

Well, Israel is my home, it is where I was born, I grew up, where my first memories have been, where the smells in the streets are familiar, where the language is my own. When I speak my language in England, people ask me: “Excuse me, where do you come from?” When I come to Israel, my heart palpitation goes wild when the aeroplane goes over Israel. And when we drive to Jerusalem, where I was born, I feel like the horse that goes back to the stable. I just can’t wait to get there. And the streets and the language and the people and the warmth of people. Israel is a very special country: problematic, but special.

I think people who came from all over the world and found haven in Israel, they relate to each other in a way that you will relate in your family. And I like that, I feel the warmth and I feel the sense of responsibility, that we have towards one another. When something bad happens to you, the neighbours, the whole street will know. It’s not like here, where you close your door and “my home is my castle.” Everybody knows, everybody cares. If you are in trouble then everybody will offer to help you. And, you know, I can’t wait for occasions that I can go to Israel and to visit my family and my friends for many years. And it’s not because it’s easy and it’s all good, but it’s mine.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 294

Klub Zwei
Last time you spoke about Israel and place.

Tamar Wang
We might have been talking about a place where you belong. Israel was a place where I felt I belonged. And there are various aspects to a place – you may think of it quite differently when you're away from it, from when you're there. Sometimes you can describe it very succinctly when you're away, whereas, very often, you can't do that when you're there.

Elly Miller
I mean, if you ask: "Do you respond to architecture or landscape?" "Yes, certainly." There are certain buildings I love and certain landscapes. If I find myself in a beautiful area, I respond to that beauty. I feel good in it, but I don't feel attached to a particular place. Also, if you go back, it's just a place, it's never the same. Your expectation may not occur the next time. That's why I don't attach myself to it. [laughs]

Tamar Wang
But it's also about fitting in, isn't it? You say you can like something and respond to it, but then you may not feel attached to it. You don't feel you have a special connection. You don't feel you have any other connection than your immediate response to it.

Elly Miller
The first time I went to Israel I thought it was absolutely where I fitted in. It was the place for me, I think, because I came with certain expectations, I don't think I ever had the same feeling again on later visits to Israel. I think I was too aware of the reality of the place. That was only the illusionary sort of feeling about place.

Tamar Wang
Well, I think, I had very different feelings. I mean, in Israel I felt I could definitely attach myself. I could enjoy being somewhere with a huge history and that this history also contained my history. And also being with people where being Jewish was not an issue – it was just so relaxing that I felt I could fit in socially.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 296

Israel is a very important part of Jewish Life. There was a great openness to receiving Jewish culture in Britain and to understanding it, because of what we share. This was very encouraging to us. Now it's not perceptibly different, but it's imperceptibly different in that there are hardening attitudes and maybe people are not so open in understanding Jewish culture, because there are other issues, about what Israel is doing in the Palestinian territories and the blowing up of Israelis by suicide bombers.

Some people are more frightened today about being associated with Jews and say: "I don't want to come to your concert." Somebody even said: "You can't be too careful, can you take my name off your mailing list?" It's also making it much easier for people to be anti-Jewish and we have seen incidents of anti-Semitic violence: people are stoning buses of Jewish kids going to school, they're beating up people outside the shops, and these are things that one doesn't expect to happen here. I think that politicians in Israel should actually think about the world opinion of Jews, because this very hard line of Israeli politics has turned people against Jews in the diaspora. We've had a wonderful fifty years where people were coming closer and now they're retreating again. It's very sad to see what's happening. We try through music to bridge that gap. We have a forum of understanding through music, Israeli-Palestinian understanding through music and we've had workshops of middle-eastern music. We have ensembles where there are Palestinian and Israeli Jewish people performing together and really making an effort to try and say: "Look, we can do it." And we will continue to do our little bit in that way.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 298

Things have changed since we first spoke. In the last two or three years there has been a dramatic change in England that I would never ever have believed possible as far as being a Jew is concerned. I never ever encountered overt anti-Semitism in England in all my life. I knew it was there, I knew there was a sense of a Jew being a foreigner. And certainly as I grew up English society was very homogenous. But it was an incredibly tolerant society. Today it may still be tolerant, but not of Jews at the moment. It's cool to be anti-Jewish and certainly anti-Zionist.

It's all wrapped up together. And it's quite scary. And it's something we'd never ever, I have never ever experienced before. Nobody has actually beaten me up in the street, but one hears of people who are in organized Jewish groups being beaten up, people who are obviously Jews, because they are wearing obviously Jewish clothing.

I think probably one of the biggest changes in the last two years, since we met and spoke in terms of this whole Jewish identity business, if we can call it that, is that I definitely have seen in the last year the presence of anti-Semitism, not in a direct personal way, but in a sort of collective tribal way. I don't feel personally threatened by it, but it definitely is there in our society.

Other people would say: "Well, it has always been there, you've just buried your head in the sand or been fortunate not to see it." And it's not just in things like vandalism of synagogues. I think it's much more amongst left-wing circles where there has always been an anti-Israeli, pro-Palestinian tendency, but it's been much more suppressed. Or perhaps it hasn't been suppressed, I just haven't seen it.

And that is directly connected to Israel and the Palestinian situation giving people a feeling that they have a right to be not only anti-Israel, which I think is one thing, but not very thinly disguised in it is anti-Semitism. And I do think the two things are different. You can be against Israeli policy but that doesn't mean you're anti-Semitic. But it gets very muddled and caught up in the way it comes

out. And for the first time, as I say in the last year, I have felt that feeling of people's anti-Semitism.

I think that certainly makes me feel more strongly conscious of my Jewish identity and of the importance of my Jewish identity. I think it makes me and probably lot of other Jews extremely confused about Israel, because on the one hand of course I'm very worried, appalled, concerned about policies of the government in Israel, treatment of Palestinians and what's going on there. And at the same time if that becomes part of a general expression of anti-Semitism, then I don't want to be part of that. So one is left as a Jew feeling very much: Well, if I don't support them who on earth is going to support them? Because if their own fellow Jews don't support them there really, they are completely isolated.

In the last year or year and a half, Israeli academics have been publicly boycotted in this country and elsewhere. This has a direct impact on Israeli academic and intellectual life.

Klub Zwei
How do you relate to Israel or to Israeli politics – what do you think about it?

Well, it's a sad business, isn't it? I've always had great admiration for the way the country was developed from the earliest times, when there was this wonderful pioneering spirit and the business of making the desert bloom. But sadly in the last few years things have not gone well and one is desperately sorry that the relationship between Israelis and the Arab world is so bad. But it's easy to criticise when one is living here. Jews in the diaspora can see both sides more clearly. We can see very clearly both sides of the question.

Klub Zwei
Other interview partners told us that now for the first time they feel anti-Semitism in England, and that people in this country respond to Israeli politics with aggression and violence against Jews. One interview partner said that there was anti-Semitism in England before, but that maybe she didn't see it, that it comes out now more openly.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 302

I should be very sad to hear that the Israeli politics cause anti-Semitism, but it's again very likely that that does happen. Although I think anti-Semitism is usually irrational rather than based on hard facts. I think it's far more an emotive reaction. If people want to find a reason for their anti-Semitism they usually can find it, in different ways: "the Jews do this", or "the Jews do that", or "they have too much money" or "they ...", you know. If you want to be anti-Semitic, I'm sure you can find plenty of reasons.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 304

Restitution

It would have been much harder for the Austrians to have done it 30 years ago. But for some of the old people it would have been a better end of their lives.

Ruth Sands

Für die ÖsterreicherInnen wäre es viel härter gewesen, hätten sie das schon vor 30 Jahren getan. Aber einige der alten Menschen hätten es am Ende ihres Lebens besser gehabt.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 306

You asked about reparations. I think, the Austrians really are trying to be correct about it. But talking to people there is something much more bureaucratic about the Austrian way of going about this than the Germans'. Although you would expect the Germans to be more bureaucratic. But the way the Austrians go about it, you have to fill in countless forms. The same questions are asked again and again.

And I get a lot of letters, because I'm one of those people. For pensions you have to produce school reports from your school in England and things like that which are completely irrelevant to the fact that I am in my 70s and should get a pension.

It's very sad, a lot of people couldn't even find their school reports. I had to produce a copy of my Oxford degree, I didn't have a piece of paper, I had to write back and ask for my degree. They now ask again, there are lots of forms to fill in for property, and apartments and houses and things which we certainly lost.

I've done my best on behalf of my mother who should be the recipient of the reparations. Because it was her apartment and she has no memory exactly of what she has. So it is very difficult to do this. Although I think they are attempting to do this properly. But they make it quite difficult for people to give the answers they want to hear. And which are the basis for reparations.

I don't know whether the same is true for Germany. I know that people have had reparations for less work on behalf of the victim.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 308

My feeling is that they have been forced to do what they are doing and I think now they have done what was due to be done. It does make me very, very sad that it was so, so, so late, because people like my parents – those are the people who should have benefited.

OK, the descendants benefit to some extent, but it doesn't feel right. It just doesn't feel right. My parents struggled very badly and they never got anything. And I think I'm now getting too old to be angry, but would I be a bit younger, yes, I would be, because there has been a lot of anger in my life. Today I find it just very, very sad.

And obviously, it would have been much harder for the Austrians to have done it 20, 30 years ago. But at least for some of the old people it would have been a better end of their lives. My parents would have had a better end of their lives. And I feel very sad that it didn't happen to either of them.

Klub Zwei
Do you feel that there is a difference in how Austria and Germany came to terms with their past? What do you think, for example, about Austria's restitution policy?

I still feel very firmly that Germany has dealt with her past in a very different way to Austria, in a more complex and profound way. A small number of people really tried to work through some of the ramifications and meaning of the past, in a way that in Austria it hasn't begun and it's not going to get any further. I mean, if it hasn't begun now, it's not really going to get anywhere.

There is no doubt, that in the last two or three years, Austria's restitution has been very—, I don't want to say generous, but Austria has taken, on that level, its restitution issues very seriously and offers now probably some of the best restitution in financial and material terms than any other country that treated its former citizens in this way.
But of course one could say, well, it can afford to offer that level of restitution, because 75% of those who fled are now dead.

And in Germany the process started much earlier, those who are able to qualify from state provision were able to do so much earlier. And therefore, although it's not as generous as the Austrian provision, it had a much greater impact on people. Because it's pointless to have good restitution offers if most people are dead!

I know, it must be very frustrating to hear, when something comes along and it's actually very good, to hear always these words: "It's too little, too late!" And I can imagine from the Austrian side: "Well, what do you want us to do?" So I think one is forever caught in this paradox of whatever one does it's not going to be enough.

Klub Zwei
Elly Miller told us that restitution is rather bureaucratic.

There was this initial payment, 7,000 Dollars, a few years ago and then they brought in another raft of laws. The provision for old age and illness is very good, particularly in a country like this one, where provision for old age and illness is very poor. But, as you say, when you need that help and actually the bureaucracy is really difficult, I mean, not only is it going to stir up all sorts of feelings about having to deal with that bureaucracy anyway, but if it is just complicated in the way that bureaucracy so often is, then, I think, an awful lot of people are going to just give up or die before they get anything.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 312

I think up to the mid 1980s, the political establishment in Austria portrayed Austria as a victim. But then chancellor Franz Vranitzky went on a historic state trip to Israel and apologized on behalf of Austria for the atrocities that had been committed by Austria during the Holocaust. And I think from this point Austria's attitude to the past has changed. And they have now taken moral and material responsibility towards the victims of the Holocaust. Not without some pressure from the United States, an agreement was signed in 2000 in Washington covering all major issues of restitution.

And with Germany it is different, because shortly after the war Germany took responsibility for what has happened and it acknowledged itself as a successor state of the Third Reich and payments were made to the state of Israel.

What both, Austria and Germany maybe should be doing more, is to concentrate on the individual survivors. I think both haven't concentrated too much on them, although there are some positive developments in Germany where claims can be made by individual survivors in the German courts.

Klub Zwei
Do you hear about Austria's restitution policy in the media, here in Britain?

Very little indeed. I just know from what I hear from people, that it is too late and too little. This is the phrase which is used for it.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 314

Holocaust Memorial Day

It would be important to have a day everywhere. The date should be the same. Because it was a world event.

Elly Miller

Es wäre wichtig überall einen Gedenktag zu haben. Das Datum sollte dasselbe sein. Denn der Holocaust geht die ganze Welt an.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 316

Ruth Rosenfelder

I don't understand why England has to commemorate the Holocaust. England fought a very honourable war. Had it perhaps not been the Americans, England might have lost the war, but I thought it was a honourable war – seen from the English point of view. I don't know why they're doing it?

And I think they've run into trouble. They set it up as a piece of Blairite spin. And that was fine except then he had to decide what he was going to do with this Holocaust Memorial Day? He couldn't just memorialise one set of tragedies. He then had to open it up. Where do you end? Whom do you memorialise?

Anni Reich

It should be remembered, definitely. This is not anything which we can just sweep under the carpet. No, no, it has to be – for the next generations!

Klub Zwei

Do you think many countries should have such a day?

Yes, because there is enough cruelty in the world anyway. Whatever is mentioned is good.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 318

Tamar Wang
I was dubious about Holocaust Day at first, and in two minds about it. The Synagogue I belong to was formed by German Jewish refugees and 'Kristallnacht' is commemorated every year with a special service. It is a personal memory for a lot of people. So I was concerned that the institution of another day would undermine the impact of the Kristallnacht commemoration, that people would consider it less important and simply join in with a more anonymous experience.

On the other hand, Holocaust Day is probably a very good idea. Because if you're not directly involved, it does mean that there is a time when you do have to involve yourself and remember that these things happened (and are still happening in parts of the world). And in fact it ought to be an international day.

Elly Miller
I think it would be important to have a day everywhere. The date should be the same. Because it was a world event. It is something that concerns the whole world.

Klub Zwei
Do you think Germany and Austria should have such a day?

Should they have one? They must decide what they want to do. That's up to them.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 320

Klub Zwei
What does Holocaust Memorial Day mean to you? And what do you think of it as an institutionalised event?

In this country, I think, it's very debatable, because 27th of January, the Liberation of Auschwitz, has no particular meaning or echo over here. Probably the only connection that this country has in such a direct way with the liberation of the camps would be the liberation of Bergen Belsen, which was later. So that maybe would be a more appropriate day.

On a personal level, Holocaust Memorial Day doesn't have very much meaning for me. I see it as a strange vehicle that has been constructed on an official government level to think about the Holocaust and maybe related genocides on a particular day of the year. It is a politicisation of something that started a couple of years ago and has a lot of inherent problems in it. And nobody has really thought through what will happen in five, ten or twenty years time. So I think it will become increasingly difficult to remember why it is that it was ever started in the first place.

In Britain it was first introduced in 2000 and they chose this day because of the liberation of Auschwitz. In Germany this day is also Holocaust Memorial Day. I don't know in Austria – have you?

Klub Zwei
No.

But in Germany they introduced it in 1996, I think, so the British have come with a timelag, but better late than never.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 322

I think it's in some ways a miracle that the British government have come so wholeheartedly to actually declare a Holocaust Memorial Day. We were invited to the first event in 2000 to recommend music for the occasion.

And this year we did something very interesting. I chair a group of Jewish cultural providers in London and we were approached by Tower Hamlets, the council of the Jewish East End, where Jews used to live. Oona King, the MP for that area, is a very interesting MP, because she is both: Jewish and Black. And she said: "Why is Tower Hamlets not doing anything to commemorate this day?" So all the cultural providers came together with the Tower Hamlets Arts and Education authorities to see what we could do.

And we actually had a wonderful occasion last Monday. There was an exhibition about the Kindertransports, we planted a tree and one of the survivors spoke to school children. We had Klezmer musicians teach the children a Yiddish song: 'Spiel mir a Liddele', a song about peace and love. And there were these Black and Asian children – some wearing veils, some wearing baseball caps – singing a Yiddish song.

It was a very mixed audience, different age-ranges and cultures and I think it was really a wonderful opportunity to promote Jewish culture and Jewish values, and values of not developing these racial relationships that we saw in the Holocaust.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 324

I have contradicting feelings inside me, you know. Most people have got set ideas and they know what to think about it and I don't. Because on the one hand I feel it's important to have a national memorial day, as the Holocaust is not a Jewish tragedy, it's a universal tragedy.

On the personal level, I'm so struggling with this question, that I think my answer is not satisfactory for you. Because there is no particular, definite answer in my head. I know what is ideal, you know, people learn history and everything, but I think that those things can't be learned as a subject. We are talking about something which is a change of heart, a change of mind that people would respond in the right way, not through the channel of their intellect, but that something will tell them from their guts: "It's wrong and we can't agree to it and we will do something to avoid it."

So I'm not sure if we have put the right content into Holocaust Day. I think it's right, but I don't know if we found the way yet to cope with that idea. When I see what is happening I feel that it is not enough.

This morning I was teaching in a synagogue and we talked about Holocaust Day in assembly. We discussed various aspects of it, but basically explained that the institution of Holocaust Day in Britain was to remember all people who suffered in the Holocaust.

I think it is quite important for Jewish children to realise that while huge numbers of Jews were killed, many others also lost their lives; and in bringing everybody together, they can also see that Holocaust Day is an important memorial day for humanity and not only for the Jewish people.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 326

I would prefer it if it took in other Holocausts, if we thought about Rwanda, Cambodia, anywhere where one set of people have tried to eliminate another set of people. I know that they all differ, but I think it's very important always to remember that human beings given the right circumstances can do terrible things to each other. And that it isn't just restricted to the Holocaust of the second world war. And it's still happening in places. That's how I'd prefer it to be marked.

I haven't quite made up my mind about this Holocaust Memorial. Sometimes I think, it's a very good idea. Sometimes I think, what's the point of it? What's this day about? We can't take on board all the other genocides. Some people seem to say that we have taken priority on our genocide. I don't understand. I think every genocide is absolutely dreadful and I don't think we're making any progress. I think it's as bad today as it was fifty, sixty, seventy years ago.

tpy.RZ_englisch_plusneuekap 21.04.2007 17:39 Uhr Seite 328

As an institutionalised event I think, yes, it is good and it is necessary to remind people. For me myself it is not necessary to have one day set aside. I think of people and I think of the situation, as it was, throughout the year, many, many times, some days more than others. It’s a recurring theme in my life, in my thinking.

Without sounding gruesome – I have a Holocaust Memorial every day of my life.