

AUFBAU

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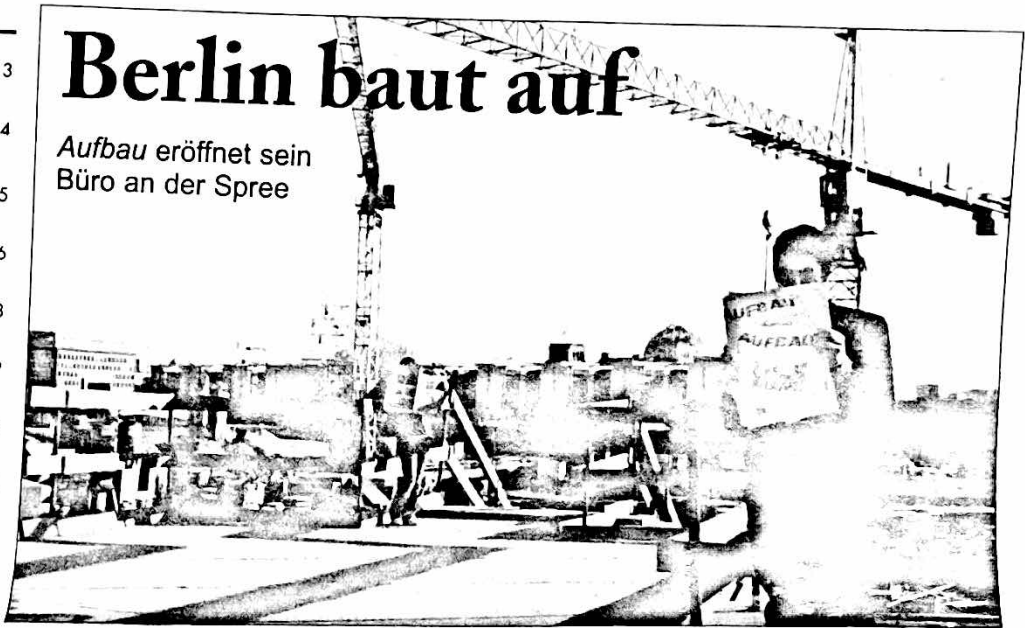
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Americans and the German Jews

Kein Fleisch mehr in der Schweiz?

Für die Schweizer Juden könnten harte Zeiten anbrechen. Eine Tierschutzorganisation fordert eine Volksabstimmung über ein völliges Verbot für den Einfuhr von geschächtem Fleisch. Falls dieses Begehren in der Volksabstimmung gutgeheißen wurde, müssten Juden, die die traditionellen Speisegesetze befolgen, völlig auf den Genuss von Fleisch verzichten. Das Schächten ist in der Schweiz seit rund 100 Jahren bereits verboten, erlaubt war bisher aber der Import von solchem Fleisch. Das meiste Fleisch wurde aus Frankreich eingeführt. Gemäß einer Umfrage würden 76 Prozent der Schweizer Wähler sich in einer Volksabstimmung für ein Totalverbot von geschächtem Fleisch aussprechen. Die jüdischen Organisationen in der Schweiz haben Widerstand angemeldet. Es gehe nicht an, die Juden quasi auf diesem Weg aus der Schweiz zu vertreiben oder sie zwingen, Vegetarier zu werden. **LW**



Das ideale Blatt für das neue Berlin: Aufbau-Leser zwischen Gerüst und Kran am Lehrter Stadtbahnhof.

Foto: Mathias Königshulte

Die größten Baugruben sind geschlossen, die hitzigsten Diskussionen um Architektur und ihre Wirkung abgeklungen – aber Berlin baut weiter. Der neue, riesige Lehrter Stadtbahnhof wächst noch. Kommissionen beraten, ob das Berliner Schloss wieder aufgebaut werden soll und beim Holocaust-Mahnmal wurde erst letzte Woche entschieden, dass die Stelen nun aus Beton und doch nicht aus Schiefer sein sollen. Genauso heftig baut Berlin aber an seiner Identität: Wie viel soll noch an die Reichshauptstadt erinnern, oder besser gesagt an die Gräueltaten, die von

ihm ausgingen? Das sind Fragen, die auch *Aufbau* beschäftigen, immer schon beschäftigt haben.

Nun sind wir selber in Berlin mit einem eigenen Korrespondentenbüro vertreten. Ein historisches Ereignis in der Geschichte unseres Blattes. 1934 von deutschen Immigranten in New York gegründet, wurde es lange Zeit maßgeblich von Berliner Journalisten geprägt. Junge Schreiber und Fotografen werden für den *Aufbau* auf der Baustelle Berlin herumklettern, Amerikaner und Deutsche unterschiedlichster Herkunft. Zusammen mit

der Redaktion in New York werden sie eine transatlantische Zeitung machen. Eine Brücke schlagen zwischen New York und Berlin, aber vor allem auch eine Brücke zwischen den Religionen, Kulturen und Generationen.

In dieser Nummer werfen wir einen speziellen Blick auf Berlin. Aber nicht nur auf das Berlin an der Spree, sondern auch auf das Berlin, das sich am Hudson niedergelassen hat. Das ist eben eine transatlantische Geschichte.

Irene Armbruster/
Lorenz Wolffers

How to Sell a "Defective" Cow or What Enron Really Means

An Interview with Moses L. Pava, Professor of Business Ethics

By NATALJA KURZ

The Enron case might have a larger long-term impact on the United States than the war on terrorism is going to have," Moses L. Pava, who is Professor of Accounting at New York's Yeshiva University and holds the Alvin H. Einbender Chair in Business Ethics, hopes that the demise of Enron will leave Americans thinking about how to improve capitalism, the goose that still lays the golden egg. "People will now have a much more active interest in seeing how the rules are applied," Pava holds, "and they might want to take more responsibility for it. The lesson here is that people need to be more aware and take greater responsibility through the democratic system."

Professor Pava has been concerned with business ethics since he conducted a study

to measure the cost of social awareness. The results, he says, were surprising: "There was almost no evidence to suggest a negative relationship between corporate social responsibility and traditional performance."

The professor attributes his concern with business ethics to Judaism, which has traditionally concerned itself with the way in which the well-being of one person can improve life for the society at large. "There are a lot of unique laws and stories in Judaism that provide helpful ways of framing a question of business ethics," Pava explains. "The first that comes to mind is that there is a notion in Talmudic law: stealing knowledge." It is prohibited in Jewish law. And it's applied in many cases in the Talmud to economic and business transactions. "If you are selling something, let's say a cow and you know that

there is a defect, you are not allowed to pretend that the defect doesn't exist. In the Enron case, destroying documents, something like that boggles your mind. That's stealing knowledge. It's not a questionable issue."

But the consequences of unethical behavior in business are not only economic. "When I talk about business ethics," Pava holds "it's a question of identity, of who you want to be. Business ethics is seeing that your decisions do not only affect how assets are allocated, it is going to affect who you are in the future. I would hope that people will begin to see that business is part of life and who we are, who our children see and what they read about us."

Continued on page 2





The Surprising Revelations of German-Jewish History

Two Young Americans Inspired by the Jewish Museum Berlin

By ADAM J. SACKS and BEN KEMPLER

The oft-rumored, yet seldom openly revealed, American-Jewish suspicion of and aversion to Germany and things German expresses itself in the refusal to visit the country or even buy German-made products. Many an American-Jewish youth, three generations after the Holocaust, grows up with this one last acceptable prejudice. Needless to say, this attitude differs from other prejudices in that it is rooted in a real historical grievance, and not based merely on an irrational hatred. For at one point in its history, Germany was synonymous with the killing of Jews, and designated a land upon which Jews should never settle again.

For many American Jews, who were themselves rather recent immigrants, this perspective on Germany serves to express a fear of what could have been had they remained in Europe. It also camouflages the guilt of why "we didn't do enough." The historical origins of this attitude, with its burden of sorrow, makes it particularly difficult to dislodge. To some contemporary German observers, it appears as simply "another" racism.

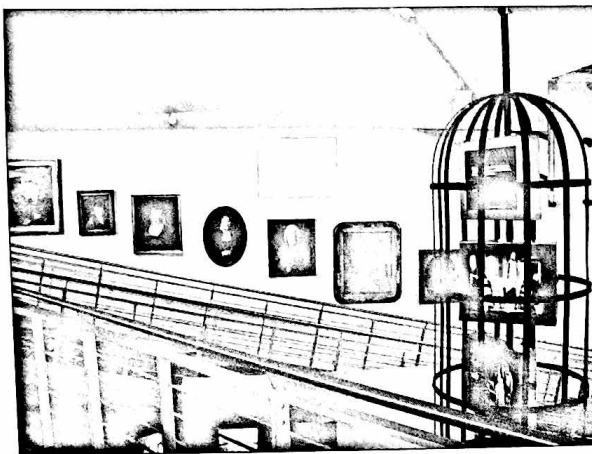
It must be said that this American-Jewish predisposition is coupled with a willful ignorance of contemporary Germany. Proponents *shun all that might have been the great cultural and political strides made in German society, they will be surprised, and thus given a reason for reconsideration, by the development and opening of an institution such as the Jewish Museum.*

The media coverage of the September 11th opening, unfortunately, had to be severely reduced, and the news of what the museum has to offer—worlds basically unknown to American Jews and yet reflecting many of their values—has not been adequately covered. These worlds are, at the same time, the eclipsed world of German-Jewish achievement and the contemporary German culture of self-examination and recollection. In a negative, and unforeseen sense, the shadowy chapters of the history narrated in the exhibition, as well as represented in Daniel Liebeskind's architecture, reflect the results of fanatic hatred similar to that recently visited upon America. Seen in this light, the museum's message that there can be peace in diversity takes on a new urgency.

When we, as authors and observers, reflect upon the experience of a visit to the Jewish Museum, we do so as descendants of German-speaking Jewish families from Central Europe, members of which barely escaped with their lives or not at all. Yet we also look upon it from our national perspective and present point of view as Americans. As such, we tried to see how the museum could be considered a national museum for Germany.

The plans for this museum coincided with the (re) establishment of Berlin as the nation's capital, and its completion embodies, in an exemplary way, the new spirit created in the new capital. For instance, the cosmopolitan, diverse and internationally open Berlin of the "roaring twenties," which the Nazis set out to destroy, is richly presented in the museum. Outside the museum's doors, there is a new culture of multiplicity and openness capable of translating the museum's messages, examples, and memories for a new generation.

The section of the exhibition dedicated to the post-war world dramatizes this development in the hope that there will be



Traditional portraiture and contemporary media share the spotlight at the Jewish Museum Berlin. Photo: Jewish Museum Berlin

a rebirth of Jewish life in Germany. We are aware of America's role in democratizing Germany, while the memory of persecution in Germany brings to mind the freedom and security enjoyed by Jews throughout America's history. Cynical observers may interpret the museum as Germany's "gift to the Jews," or a house of "Wiedergutmachung." Many American Jews may see it as part of a renaissance of "Jewish life" taking the place of what was lost and thereby providing the sought after "happy ending" to the Holocaust. But what was lost can never be recovered. Nevertheless, by demonstrating what was lost, rather than emphasizing the Holocaust, we come to learn how truly terrible that event actually was.

This museum is a gift from Germany to itself. Ignorance and inherited misinformation abounds in German discourse about Jews and Judaism. At the same time, though, topics with Jewish associations, such as reparations for slave labor, contemporary right-wing extremism, confrontations with the Nazi past, or the status of German-Israeli relations, are almost daily fare in Germany. Reaching an informed position on such issues is complicated by the fact that most Germans have not grown up with, or had the opportunity to befriend Jews, and, in fact, they may never even have met a Jew!

We have both lived in Berlin for about two years, and have consistently noted instances of ignorance and fixed stereotypes. Many people do not know what Hanukkah is, or that the Torah is the Old Testament, or how many influential Germans in history were Jews. Conspiracy theories and prejudices still exist, and lack of knowledge does not deter many from speaking authoritatively of the role of Jews in history and the contemporary world. The Jewish Museum has taken on a great challenge in undertaking to present the 2000-year history of Jews in Germany. Despite its focus on only one aspect of the history of the Jewish people, it is the largest Jewish Museum in the world. In fact, in comparison with Jewish museums in New York, it covers in greater depth and detail, the material it assigns itself. Rather than one-dimensional portraits of victims or embodiments of stereotypes, German Jews are shown as members of self-sufficient communities, working as rural traders, court Jews, innovative scientists, writers, philosophers, or playing other roles in German society.

The exhibition is presented in such a way that even the most basic questions of

gentiles are answered: How often does one go to the synagogue? Do those attending wear special clothes? Who leads the services? We recognize that the target audiences of the museum are German gentiles and their families, and this is laudable. The museum offers them the chance to learn more about the Jews, Judaism and their history in Germany far beyond the Holocaust. As a corrective measure against the formation of stereotypes, this museum compliments Germany's position within a more united Europe. It contributes to the moral legitimacy required for participation in the battle for human rights around the world. The Museum could even be said to set an international standard for confronting the past that could be instructive for the U.S. in regard to the history of Native- and African-Americans.

In narrating the history and demonstrating the influence of German Jewry, the Museum brings American Jews into contact with parts of their heritage they may have never examined before. Reform, Conservative, Modern Orthodox Judaism,

Zionism, as well as the origins of atonal music, advertising, psychoanalysis, the department store—even jeans—can all be traced to the life of German Jewry. Their combined achievement was the introduction of modernity. The early "reformers" in Germany, it turns out, also managed to have a decisive influence on American Jewry. The museum offers an opportunity for American Jews to identify with the German-Jewish influences upon their heritage. Too often, German-Jewish history is spoken of disparagingly in America as a case of failed or wanton assimilation, and is sometimes even identified with having had a certain degree of responsibility for the growth of anti-Semitism itself. Here this history is represented free of reproach and judgmental back-shadowing.

The critique of the museum has centered upon the widespread use (or over-use) of multimedia and interactive exhibits—the creation of a kind of Jewish Disneyland. Yet in order for a museum to achieve its goals, it does not have to limit itself to artifacts. The use of multimedia can help bring history to life and in no way reduces the significance or diminishes the authenticity of the material. Various sound and video stations in the exhibits, such as Albert Einstein reading his personal creed, excerpts of Mahler's piano playing, or home movies of German Jews from the 20's, bridge the gap of time that separates the visitor from the history. These techniques are more revealing than just displaying a photocopy of Einstein's manuscript, a film poster featuring Peter Lorre, or an album cover of a Mahler recording. The didactic approach that relies exclusively on text explanations leaves the visitor uninspired and sends the message "tell, don't show." The form of the exhibition parallels the expressivity of the architecture and reflects an innovative and creative approach to the material. These viewers experience the exhibition as both educational and alive, and in no way a visit to some "stuffy old museum."

Any criticism aside, it should be possible to say how great it is that such a museum came into being at all. The fact that it declares itself not a Holocaust museum, is in tune with the desire of many American Jews, ourselves included, to develop a more positive identity beyond victimization. In the eyes of the world, Jews and Germans, whether they like it or not, will always be connected to each other through twentieth-century history.

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... seiner Familie und ein Jahr später konnte. Auch er darauf vorbereitete gehobenen jüdischen Dienstmädchen Kartoffeln zu stopfen. Außerdem wichtig. „Wir soll- Garten gehen und sehen. Das war natürlich Werner Stein aus

... Jährige sieht seine sichtlich nüchternere. „Das war eine , sagt er entschieden auch nicht anders. ulen. Und diese gan- bereitung auf die tion war eigentlich schwendung.“ Er 40 über Umwege in A. Dort betrieb Stein 52 sehr erfolgreich uckerei und war über re lang im Vorstand bau.

... schwärmen gerät al- s auch er, wenn er an hrer denk. Außerdem r sie sich gerne an die -ntreffen, die seit 1960 näbig von Inge Forst- organisiert wurden. herrschte immer eine esprochen freund- liche und herzliche iosphäre“, erzählt er. m Treffen im Berliner , das am 25. April 1993 des Bestwert Servais statt- the lang konnten die ehe- ihre alte Schule und ihre chtigen. Es war das letzte Kl aller bisherigen Klas- es zum 70-jährigen Ju- ist nicht geplant, denn Kaliski.

... it am 9. November der Schule den End- Nacht war an dieser so wie vorher“, sagt Kinder mussten mit and verlassen. Inzwi- mehr viel an die Pri- iski an der Straße Im ute das Deutsche Ar- t untergebracht, doch ist ein Schild auf die eit der Villa hin.



ches Museum Berlin