

INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN

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INTRODUCTION

For this issue of the International Bulletin most of the articles sent to me were written in German. That made it necessary to make (more or less summarizing) translations. I have Uta Allers and Erna Gille to thank for correcting them and for their help many times before. This issue will appear in two different versions, one in English and one in German. In this version I present to you the text of Alexander Latotzky in both languages.

Marcel Kemp, chairman of the Dutch Organisation of Children of German Soldiers visited a conference in Berlin, in October 2002. He wrote a report about his experiences.

At that same conference Alexander Latotzky told his audience about the children who were born in Soviet special camps after the war. As his lecture was rather long, he suggested to me that I should publish his presentation held at the Memorial in Berlin-Hohen-schönhausen, on October 24 2002, to commemorate the victims of these camps.

Teresa Howard is planning a workshop in Germany and she invites the readers to participate. Date: 11 - 13 July.

The Finnish Organisation of Children of War - most of them evacuees - organises an international conference in Oulu, Finland, from July 13 till 15. Details about the programme and some information about the activities of the organisation are published in this issue.

Jürgen and Ingeborg Müller-Hohagen founded the Dachau Institut. In their article they explain the motives for this initiative and the goals of the institute.

In 2002 some members of One by One Germany were involved in many activities which is evident from their Newsletter from which I will quote some paragraphs.

Maria Marchetta visited the annual Berliner Filmfestspiele and she shares her experiences with us.

The latest issue of the bulletin was returned to our office from seven addresses. Most likely the addressees moved. I can imagine that for people in the turmoil of a move sending a change of address to our office is no priority. Nevertheless, I would like to ask you to inform our office (and after December 2003 me) of any change of address, so that we can stay in contact.

Till January 2004 the organisation 'Herkenning' which has sponsored this bulletin until now, will receive subvention of our government as was agreed upon in 1995. Afterwards our office will be closed and we will continue as the volunteer organisation we were before. Consequently, however, I need to ask you a small

financial contribution from Spring 2004 on. Because of the high bank costs of transfer - even for small amounts - I suggest you send the requested amount (between 5 and 10 euros/dollars) by ordinary mail. In the next issue I will give you more information.

Most of the organisations which belong to the circle of readers of this bulletin, have an Internet website. You will find them listed in this issue.

I hope you will enjoy reading the articles presented to you and as always, comments and suggestions are welcome.

Best regards,

Gonda Scheffel-Baars

[This compilation does not include all the articles mentioned in the introduction]

CHILDREN OF WAR CONFERENCE OF HISTORIANS IN BERLIN

The Fantom e.V. (Verein zur Förderung von Kunst und Kultur und zur Schaffung eines historischen Bewusstseins) organised a 'Historikertreffen' (a meeting for historians) for the seventh time. The topic of this conference, held in Berlin on October 28 and 29, 2002, was 'Children of War'. We - four members of the Committee of Children of Germans soldiers in the Netherlands and the partner of one of them - participated in this seminar. It was held in the Landesarchiv (State-archives), near the WASt, die Deutsche Dienststelle. The WASt put millions of data about former German soldiers on microfiches and in its offices many of us started our search of our unknown fathers, often running aground

It was a special experience to be there, not only because we were so close to 'the lion's den', but especially because of the chance to meet so many children of German soldiers from all over Europe (Denmark, Norway, France). We also had the chance to come into contact with the representatives of organisations which help people to find lost relatives (the German Red Cross, the WASt and the Internationale Suchdienst Arolsen).

We listened to a lot of interesting and sometimes moving lectures. We were impressed by the story of Alexander Latotzky who spoke about 'Children behind Barbed Wire'. Ten years ago he discovered that his father was a Soviet soldier and that immediately after the war, his mother was sent to an internment camp in the former GDR with many other women. Many of them gave birth, but due to the disastrous circumstances many of the babies died shortly after their birth. At the end of the 1940's, the children who survived were taken away from their mothers under false pretenses, and placed in children's homes. In this way they were robbed of their identity. Latotzky made a reconstruction of the lives of these mothers (several hundreds) and their children and among them his mother and himself, giving them back their names and identities and bringing them back to life again. It is staggering to hear about these organised acts of inhumanity so shortly after the war.

Very interesting was the lecture of journalist Ebba Drolshagen speaking about the

prejudices against women who 'fraternised' with the enemy, entitled 'Wer die Mutter verachtet, schikaniert ihr Kind' (who despises the mother, punishes the child). After the war the prejudices led to violence in all the occupied countries.

The WASt had invited a French woman and her German 'family' to tell their stories, as an illustration of the Dienststelle's activities. It was a success story in that she found her German relatives, who accepted her enthusiastically and spoke candidly about their feelings. For the most part, however, it is far more difficult to find relatives, especially if the name of the father is rather common in Germany. In the above-mentioned case the name was rather rare - Rosentreter. I put this forward in the discussions and hoped that the representatives would take these remarks to heart, although there is no simple solution. And at least there is the financial aspect which hampers so many efforts. If the microfiches of the WASt and the other offices were digitalised, it would probably be easier to find lost relatives for people called Müller, Schmidt or Pieper. This is a dream yet to be realised.

We arrived on Saturday already and had time for some sight-seeing in Berlin. We admired the new Potsdamer Platz and the Brandenburger Tor. We visited the new Jewish Museum, which impressed us a lot. The architecture itself expresses redundantly what can never be expressed in words because of the incomparable atrocity of what was done to the Jews.

On Wednesday morning we met the Secretary of the Dutch Ambassador, Mr. A.L.M. van Zeeland. He showed a sincere interest in our case and was the antithesis of the typical official. This historian and archivist would be of great help to us in future.

In the afternoon we visited the WASt and one of the officials showed us several of the departments of this office. One is impressed by the millions of microfiches, but at the same time one becomes aware of the need to make them more accessible to all those people in search of lost relatives and to link the data base of this office with that of the Red Cross and the Suchdienst Arolsen. So often the search is hampered by privacy and competence issues, and sometimes unwillingness...

The contacts with people from other countries, with Arne Oeland of the Danish Organisation of Children of War for instance, convinced us of the need to set up a European platform where children of German soldiers can meet. It is of great importance to make an inventory of all the difficulties people meet on their way, in order to improve the diffuse system and give suggestions for eliminating obstacles.

In short: it was good to have been there. We came back home with a suitcase full of new ideas and plans.

Marcel Kemp

Alexander Latotzky

**Discourse at the occasion of the commemoration day for the victims of the
Sovjet Speziallager # 3 at the 'Denkort' in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, October
24, 2002.**

First of all I would like to thank the pupils of the Sonderpädagogischen Förderzentrum and their teachers on behalf of the victims of the Soviet Speziallager for their care for this 'Denkort', a task they adopted from the set-up of this memorial. Their care honours the victims. This way of dialogue with the past is until now not a matter of course and in this form it is a model for others, adults as well.

To-day we commemorate the victims of the Soviet Speziallager, not only those who were imprisoned in this camp, but those of other camps as well. The official final report of the Department of the Speziallager of 1950 gives a number of 42.889 deceased people. That means a death rate of 36 per cent. The inmates simply died from starvation or from illnesses they could not overcome because of their weak condition.

In this hell there was a group of prisoners which until now hardly is spoken of. Everybody raised in the former DDR knows the story of Jerzy Zweig, the 'child of Buchenwald'. The roman 'Nackt unter Wölfen' (Naked amidst Wolfs), written by Bruno Apitz was obligatory lecture on the DDR schools. Who knows, however, that there were also children after the war in Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen and other camps. These children were born there, lived there and many of them died there. They were as innocent as Jerzy Zweig and others in the Nazi concentration camps. To-day I would like to commemorate especially these children.

For more than 10 years I am engaged in research about the fate of these children. This is a difficult enterprise (or: venture?) because of the scarcity of documents. These children did not exist in the bureaucracy of the camps and since they did not appear in the statistics they did not receive food, clothes, diapers, shoes or toys. Especially in the first years the mothers had to share their own small food rations with their children and they sewed clothes from the attires left behind by the dead. In Sachsenhausen the camp leader made only in 1947 one bottle of milk available for five children, that's to say: from Monday till Saturday.

It is not surprising that many babies and young children died. In the Spring of 1949 the last leader of the camps, Ziklajev, asked Moscow the permission to release the children and to send them to relatives. He did not receive an answer.

In my research I found enough data and I got enough information from witnesses to be able to make a reconstruction of the fate of 70 children and their mothers. I would like to present here one story as a representation of the stories of all the others.

In 1946 Ursula Hoffmann took the risk to lodge a complaint against 'persons who wore Soviet uniforms' who raped and murdered her mother. She was 21 years old then and lived here in Berlin. Shortly after the registration of her complaint she was arrested and accused of being an agent for a foreign intelligence service. The military court gave her a 15 years sentence to be spent in a camp for forced labour. She

was placed in Lager #8 in Torgau, where one of the Russian guards fell in love with her. He was her age and was brought to Germany at the age of 17 as a forced labour hand. After Liberationday he escaped the fate of so many others who were shot as 'traitors of the fatherland'. Instead, he was incorporated in the Army, as a guard. His name was Wladimir Brjutschkowski.

Their forbidden relationship came to light when Ursula became pregnant. Ursula was sent to Lager # 4 in Bautzen, whereas Wladimir was deported, after trial before a military court, to one of the correction camps of the Gulag Archipelago. He left Germany one day before the birth of his child. In Bautzen Ursula gave birth to a son, a boy whom everybody called Sascha. Some ten weeks later the mother and her child were transported to the camp in Sachsenhausen where they stayed till 1950.

Ursula and her child were not the exception. In Sachsenhausen alone there lived more than 40 mothers and their children. The youngest of them was 20 years old, the eldest 42. Both of them had a daughter baby of 3 months old, when the mother of 42 died. Witnesses told me that her child was given to a woman who lost her baby a short time before. This was a procedure in other camps as well according to former camp inmates.

When the last camp was closed in 1950 there lived in Sachsenhausen still 40 children, some of whom were deported to the Soviet Union and some of whom were released together with their mothers. 1,119 condemned women and about 30 children were handed to the DDR authorities to have them serve the rest of their sentences. A new period of suffering laid before them, now within the framework of the DDR. The women and their children, among them Ursula Hoffmann and her son, were placed in the StA Hoheneck in Stollberg.

In the detention system of the DDR there was no place for children. Instead of sending them to relatives, according to the repeated requests of the mothers, the authorities took the children away from their mothers and brought them first to Leipzig, as the so-called 'children of the State'. They were considered to be orphans without names or birthdate, recorded only with a number. In the Spring of 1950 they were scattered to several childrens' homes, where they were inscribed in the registers with their own name. For all the children Leipzig was recorded as their place of birth. The authorities could, of course, never admit that they were born in Soviet camps.

In March 1956 Ursula Hoffmann received pardon and was released. She was very ill and decided to go immediately to West Berlin. From that free city she started her search of her son. With the help of other women she found him and after many requests the DDR authorities allowed him to travel to the West. Without any papers he arrived in West Berlin. The reunion of the mother and her son was unbalanced. Whereas the mother yearned for all those years for his son, she was for him a stranger. He addressed her with the German formal 'Sie', instead of the intimate 'Du'. Only 10 years later Ursula Hoffmann died at the age of 41 after a long illness. She never saw Wladimir Brjutschkowski, the father of her child, again.

On April 10, 1995, Ursula Hoffmann was rehabilitated by the Russian military Governor. In the letter from Moscow, written 28 after her death, was stated 'that

there had not been in the past any justification for her imprisonment.' About 80 per cent of the condemned camp inmates received in that period a similar declaration from Moscow. That means that 80 per cent of the condemned women were innocent according to the contemporary Russian laws.

Ursula Hoffmann was my mother and I am the boy whom everybody called Sascha. That's why I would like to commemorate at this place all the mothers and their children of the former Soviet camps who are not present to-day.

My father managed to survive the Gulag Archipelago. He is living now in a small village in the vicinity of Kaliningrad. With the help of the Red Cross I found him and in 1999 we met for the first time, more than 50 years after my birth.

To-day I wanted to tell about the Soviet camps, about one of the until now neglected issues of the German history after 1945, about the history of the DDR. About innocent people who became victims of a political system that intended to build up a new, a better and a more just world. The exact number of the victims is unknown until now. Only a small number of the former prisoners are still alive and soon all of them will be dead. That is the way of life and we have to accept it.

But we never will accept that these people will be forgotten again. Commemorating the victims is vital also for ourselves, as a warning to the world in which we live. So often people say nowadays: 'It was not that bad' - but believe me, it was for us, the victims, even worse. That is why it is of the highest importance that the pupils of the Doberauer Straße take care of this 'Denkort'.

Thank you for your attention.

OULUN SEUNDUN SOTALAPSET

Inaugurial meeting in September 1996.

Official members: Those evacuated to Sweden and Denmark as chidren of the war.
Supporting members: Those orphaned during the War, those who experienced the War in their childhood, evacuees from Carelia and Lapland, and all those interested in our case.

Members' meetings in Aleksinkulma.

Membership reports: 4 - 5 times a year, and if necessary, in OULU newspaper.

Our association is a member of the 'Union of Finnish War Children's Associations', an union of fourteen war-child-associations in Finland.

Our organsation is also member of the 'INTERVIEW', the International Federation of Evacuees and War Children, founded in May 2002 by Finnish, Swedish and English war child unions. The chairman is Martin L.Parsons, chairman of the English 'Evacuees Reunion Association'.

Briefly about our activity:

We collect memories and experiences from the members for scientists, historians and authorities. We try to help those members who have had traumatic experiences in their childhood during the war.

We help our members in seeking knowledge about their lost relatives.

We organize recreation, such as trips, tours and evening get-togethers. Our aim is to organize respite with therapeutic and keep-fit activities.

We have contacts with corresponding associations in Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Great Britain.

We arrange war-child material, such as literature, studies, War-Child magazine (Finland), Medlems Nytt magazine (Sweden), pins etc.

We participate annually in the war-child meetings, e.g. in Gävle Sweden (May 2002) and Kotka Finland (August 2002).

Our scheme is based on the prospects and propositions of our members.

From 13 till 15 June 2003 the Conference of European War-children is held in Oulu.

The programme in short:

Friday June 13 5,00 p.m. City Hall Reception

Sightseeing

Evening Entertainment

Saturday June 14 10,00 a.m. Symposium

12 -2,00 Lunch

3,00 p.m. Main Celebration

7,30 p.m. Banquet

Sunday June 15 9,00 a.m. Wreath laying at the War Memorial

10,00 a.m. Service at Cathedral of Oulu

11,30 a.m. Meetings

2,00 p.m. Farewell

Registration fees before March 31, 2003:

Friday 20,00 euros

Saturday 15,00 euros after March 31 + 20 %

Lunch 15,00 euros

Banquet 40,00 euros

Bank Account: Fi 21 800018 - 7083 1238/Oulun Seudun Sotalapset

Registration: Veikko Meriläinen

Possible enquiries:

Rauni Kemi (Finnish/English) +358 8 345505/ +358 40 5248128

More information at the website:

www.ouka.fi/yhdistykset/sotalapset

DACHAU INSTITUT PSYCHOLOGIE UND PÄDAGOGIK -
www.dachau-institut.de

For more than twenty years Jürgen Müller-Hohagen and his family are living in Dachau. The move from München to Dachau, this village well-known all over the world because of its concentration camp, at a distance of only 18 km from München, intensified in his family the dialogue with the NS-past and its aftereffects.

Jürgen's wife Ingeborg is a teacher in primary and secondary schools. In 1987 she started to teach in a great Montessori school in München and since 1994 she is director of a Montessori school in Wertingen in the vicinity of Augsburg. In all those years she discussed political topics with her pupils and especially those concerning National Socialism. She invited regularly survivors to tell their stories and share their experiences with the children, who sometimes stayed in contact with them through correspondance.

Jürgen's contacts with survivors of the Dachau camp and with historians doing research in contemporary history opened his eyes for the psychological after-effects of the Nazi period. Gradually he became aware of the importance of the conditions in which he was born himself. His family belonged to the bystanders and lived in a little town. After the war they 'did not know anything'. Jürgen was born in 1946 and national socialism was never a theme during his education in school, university and therapeutical formation. Only after their move to Dachau the war got an important place in the discussions in the family.

In his work as a psychologist in an Institute for Education and Familytherapy in München and in its own little practice as psychotherapeutist in Dachau, he discovered in the contacts with many different families how the past influenced their actual conditions, like he discovered this for his own life. Not only the war generation, also the second and even the third are influenced by what happened there and then. This influence is not only obvious in the families of the persecuted people, but also in those who lived through war events or experienced the hardship of a flight. In the families of the perpetrators and the bystanders the influence of the war is often neglected or denied, but is nevertheless easily to track.

Ingeborg and Jürgen discussed their experiences with pupils and clients and got acquainted with people, some even living in South-America, who became very important for them because of their own experiences with political violence. They receive often letters from people who read their publications and learned to see the impact of the war in their lives, giving them a chance to come to an insight and opening new perspectives. Many of them need and ask for more information and Jürgen threw out the idea to write more books and publish his deepening insight in the effects of war. This was, however, not so easily to carry into effect. In the late eighties publishers showed an interest in publications about the psychological consequences of National Socialism, but after the reunification of Germany this interest flagged. Moreover, the many radical changes in the bookmarket reduced the possibilities of editing books about psychological themes related to the Nazi period.

That is why they got the idea to do a different thing. In December 2001 they founded the Dachau Institut Psychologie und Pädagogik. Since their jobs takes most of their time they could invest until now less energy than they intended. At least their

website is now operational presenting several articles written by themselves or colleagues and friends and they are preparing more. They planned to publish books and started with the re-edition of Jürgen's book 'Geschichte in uns' (History in ourselves).

The main aims of the Institut are:

- exchange of ideas and mutual support
- setting up a forum for people who lack possibilities in their circles to discuss war related topics
- giving information about important and interesting after-effects of the Nazi period
- organising manifestations in Ort Dachau and publicity about them
- editing books and articles about psychological and educational questions
- alertness to actual events and experiences with political violence in the world at large

The Institute tries to work in the spirit of those who resisted the Nazi ideology and those who after 1945 found the courage to start a dialogue with the past. The central point of research is the influence of the past on the psychological situation of individuals and society. The Institute tries to find ways in which people can cope with the past at a different level than that of the official commemoration ceremonies. The experiences of the survivors form the framework of its activities.

The work is founded in the following insights:

- the Nazi period is not over yet because of its many influences in society and the lives of individuals
- the influence is often neglected which is illustrative for the denial of the impact of the past and the continuing 'conspiracy of silence'
- the way in which individuals and society at large cope or not cope with the past influences thoroughly life in families, schools and community
- influences can be tracked even in the third and fourth generation
- the educational practice - from pre-school to university - is linked to these influences
- it is important to take into account what happened at both sides, to the victims and the perpetrators/collaborators/followers/bystanders and their children, recognizing the striking differences in the fate of both groups
- the Institute recognizes the importance of exchange of insights and experiences between people of different countries as an instrument to study the impact of political violence. This exchange is not aimed at minimizing the atrocity of the Nazi period
- we need a deeper and better insight to enable us to get rid of the grip of political violence of the past

Jürgen and Ingeborg hope that many readers of the International Bulletin will find their way to the website of the Institute and will participate in the discussions.

GSB

ONE BY ONE GERMANY EVENTS, 2002, GERMANY

One of the most important events of this year was the bi-annual conference of One by One which took place for the first time in Berlin, Germany. The Board of One by One Germany wanted to develop its own style, although the U.S. One by One chapter had some input into the programme. The conference was held at the Wannsee Forum from June 17 till 21. Fifty-seven people participated, forty of them members of the organisation. Thirty-nine people came from Germany, eleven from the USA, three from Poland, two from Italy and each one person from the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. The conference proved to be a success.

In this year's dialogue group in Haus Schwanenwerder, in Berlin-Wannsee, fifteen persons participated, among them two elderly Jewish women living in Berlin and one Polish woman. In an open meeting at the end of the seminars, they talked about their experiences in this group.

In June members of One by One, organised a birthday party for a Jewish woman who had participated in a dialogue group one year before. Until then she had not been back to the city where she was born and had lived in her childhood. The woman, now living in Rome, enjoyed the party for her 75th birthday at which many showed up. In the Dorotheenstadt Bookshop she read parts of her un-edited memoirs.

Each month an open meeting is organised on Sundays. People get the chance to become acquainted with the work of One by One and to tell a part of their own story and that of their families, and about their own experiences with the Holocaust. This year we welcomed 123 people.

Some of our members regularly visit schools to tell their stories and speak about the activities of One by One. In 2002 Jewish members from the United Kingdom, Italy and the Netherlands formed mixed teams with German members. One of our members was involved in the Waffen SS in his adolescence and is now often invited to visit schools and to speak to young people in the Neo-Nazi scene. On the activity day of the State Vocational School for Social Education, One by One led three workshops.

An important event was the publication of the research by Inge Franken about the Jewish children's home in the Fehrbelliner Straße 92 in Berlin-Prenzlauerberg. Inge, who is a member of the coordinating team and is responsible for the school speakers bureau, collected materials and lots of information about the children's home and even interviewed people who had spent some years in it. At the party organised for the editing of the book some of the former children were present.

Since the end of 2001, one of our members represents One by One in the 'Bündnis für Demokratie' (Alliance for Democracy). On May 27, the Day of the Constitution, One by One had an information stand at the Breitscheid Platz along with other groups.

Four members represented the organisation at a meeting in Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf organised by the Bezirksamt (District Office) where youngsters from

Israel and Berlin-Brandenburg met.

We started this year with a newsletter for our members in Germany and for those interested in our activities. The letter is edited twice or three times a year.

On Januar 31 we founded a 'Förderverein', (a not-profit organisation) a committee which will be active in the field of fund raising because our grant from the Senate will end this year.

At the June conference five women whose mother, father or grandparents belonged to the resistance fighters met. The ways in which their (grand)parents acted varied, the effects on their lives varied as well. Some of their problems are similar to those of other children of war, but other problems are typical of their background. Therefore they decided to form their own small group. They met on Ocober 25 and 26 and exchanged their experiences. With Eva Madelung they focused on these problems through Hellinger's 'Aufstellungsmodell' (Family constellation model).

One by One received an invitation to attend the annual conference of the United Nations from September 9 till 11 in New-York City. Dr. Anie Kalayian, who gave a workshop entitled 'Transforming Terror into Healing: The Role of Psychospiritual and Educational Dialogue', had sent the invitation. Martina Emme from Germany and some U.S. members participated and they presented the One by One activities. The theme of the conference was, 'Rebuilding Societies Emerging from Conflict; a Shared Responsibility' and was organised by the Department of Public Information of the U.N. More than 2400 people from 81 countries attended this conference.

In Cambridge, Massachusetts, Gottfried Leich and Mary Rotschild spoke about the experiences of One by One at a meeting of the issue 'Compassion and Social Healing'. They were invited by Judith Thompson, a member of the One by One advisory team.

For the Compassionate Listening Projects, our members Ingrid Rabe, Lilo Clemens and Otto Duscheleit were interviewed.

We look back on a year full of activities which stimulate us to continue the work.

[translated paragraphs of the One by One Newsletter]

(One by One is a non-profit organisation, founded by those deeply affected by the Holocaust. It is dedicated to transforming the legacies of conflict, war and genocide through dialogue. The membership is multigenerational, consisting of Holocaust survivors and their descendants; perpetrators, bystanders, resisters and their descendants).

Ein Rückblick auf die Berliner Filmfestspiele 2003

Während ich meinen Bericht über die Berliner Filmfestspiele von 1999 noch unter den Titel "dem Holocaust steht ein besonderes Kapitel zu" stellen und in ihm von der Präsenz der Vergangenheit in den Filmen der späten 90er Jahren berichten konnte, scheint die Shoah die FilmemacherInnen am Beginn des neuen Jahrtausends kaum mehr zu beschäftigen. Die zum Supergedenkjahr 1995 bereits befürchtete Historisierung des Holocausts scheint, zumindest wenn man den fast 200 für die Berlinale ausgewählten Langfilmen Glauben schenken darf, Tatsache geworden zu sein.

An dieser Stelle jedoch sollen die wenigen neuen Filme zur Auseinandersetzung mit der nationalsozialistischen Vergangenheit vorgestellt und den LeserInnen nahegelegt, und nicht das Fehlen solcher Filme reflektiert werden.

Im *Internationalen Forum des jungen Films* wurden zwei Dokumentarfilme und in den schwer zugänglichen Sondervorführungen zwei Spielfilme gezeigt, die sich in unterschiedlichen Weisen mit Erinnerungen an das Leben und Sterben im Nationalsozialismus beschäftigten. Während die beiden Spielfilme quasi die beiden äußersten Extreme in der Darstellung des nationalsozialistischen Mordens einnehmen, werden in den beiden Dokumentarfilmen zwei jüdische Mütter durch die Augen ihrer Kinder porträtiert. Bei aller thematischen Nähe sind in den beiden Dokumenten dennoch zwei völlig unterschiedliche Filme entstanden.

Der ungarischstämmige Schweizer Miklós Gimes zeigt in seinem Film *MUTTER* nicht nur eine starke, selbstreflektierte Frau, sondern lässt eine ganze Epoche kommunistischer, jüdischer, ungarischer Nachkriegsgeschichte aufleben.

Ganz anders Angelika Levi. In ihrem essayistischen Film *MEIN LEBEN, TEIL 2* versucht die Tochter nicht nur sich selbst durch das Leben ihrer jüdischen Mutter zu verstehen, sondern lässt die Isolation der Mutter in einer jüdisch-christlichen Familie beklemmend deutlich werden.

Wie sehr Geschichte in das persönliche Leben von Menschen eingreift wird in diesen beiden ausdrucksstarken und künstlerisch gestalteten Porträts besonders spürbar. Während es Frau Gimes gelang, Geschichte auch mitzugestalten, hat Ursula Levi Geschichte vornehmlich erlitten und ist wohl auch an ihr zugrunde gegangen.

Es sei nicht verschwiegen, dass ich Marceline Loridan-Ivens autobiographischen Spielfilm *LA PETITE PRAIRIE AUX BOULEAUX (BIRKENAU UND ROSENFELD / A BIRCH TREE MEADOW)* mit Spannung erwartet hatte. Kurz vor Vorführungsbeginn noch sass ich hoffend, der Film möge gut werden und fürchtend, er könne schlecht sein, im dunklen Kinosaal. Ich wollte einfach, dass ich den ersten Spielfilm von Marceline Loridan-Ivens, der 75 jährigen Witwe des bekannten und von mir sehr geschätzten Dokumentarfilmers Joris Ivens, mögen würde. Vorneweg. Meine Befürchtungen, sie könnte bei der Verfilmung ihrer Jugenderfahrungen im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz der Versuchung erlegen sein, einen historischen Kostümfilm zu verwirklichen, waren unbegründet.

Anouk Aimée, der an der diesjährigen Berlinale auch die Hommage gewidmet war, mimt in Loridan-Ivens Film *Myriam*, das alter Ego Marcelines selbst. Nach anfänglichem Zögern und Widerwillen tritt Myriam, die bei einem Treffen von

Auschwitz-Überlebenden in Paris gewonnene Reise nach Krakow doch an. Anouk Aimee, für die es laut Marceline Loridan-Ivens äusserst schwierig war, an der Seite der überlebenden Regisseurin als Schauspielerin am Ort der ehemaligen Vernichtung eine Überlebende zu spielen, gelang es überzeugend und sensibel zugleich Myriams Suche nach ihrer unerträglichen und unaussprechlichen Erinnerung zu vermitteln. Myriams Aufenthalt in der Gedenkstätte des ehemaligen Konzentrationslagers wird so zur Reise in ihr eigenes Herz und ihre eigene private Dunkelheit. Wenn die Regisseurin sich als Myriam auf Pritschen steigen und auf Latrinen sitzen lässt, ist es vor allem Anouk Aimees Umsetzung, deren Stärke und Zerbrechlichkeit sich in ihrem Gesicht spiegelt, die dem Film seine ganze Tiefe gibt. Allein in Aimees Bewegungen und Gesten drückt sich der ganze verborgene Schmerz aus. Der Film kommt ohne jede Rekonstruktion aus. Insofern ist er für mich der gelungenste Film zum Thema Erinnerung. Dadurch dass Loridan-Ivens Myriam in der Gedenkstätte auf einen jungen Deutschen Fotografen treffen lässt, der als Nachkomme der Täterseite seinerseits im Sichtbaren eine unsichtbare Spur des Naziterrors sucht, thematisiert sie die dritte Generationenproblematik aus deutscher Täterseite mit, trägt aber damit nicht zu einer noch tieferen Dimension des Films bei. Stärker ist der Film, wo er bei Myriam bleibt. Überwältigt von ihrem früheren Schmerz, begreift Myriam, dass sie nach sechzig Jahren zurückkommen musste um das Geheimnis, das sie quält, zu lösen. Eine ehemalige Mitgefängene erwähnte, dass Myriam ihnen immer Geschichten erzählt habe und dass sie zusammen im Rahmen eines "Sonderkommandos" an der Kremierung eines riesigen Leichenberges beteiligt gewesen seien. Weder an das eine noch an das andere kann sich Myriam erinnern. So sucht sie in den Überbleibseln "ihres" Lagers nach diesen beiden Ereignissen. Als ein Hinweis auf ein Massengrab ihre unerträgliche und uneingestehbare lauernde Erinnerung zu bestätigen scheint, beharrt sie auf dem Recht, auch als Überlebende vergessen zu dürfen. Ein sensibler, ein starker und eindrücklicher Doku-Spielfilm. Es bleibt zu hoffen, dass er einen Verleih finden und in die Kinos kommen wird.

Am anderen Ende der Darstellung des Holocaust bewegt sich die unter deutsch-belorussischer Beteiligung entstandene Produktion BABIJ JAR. Der amerikanische Regisseur Jeff Kanew fasst mit neorealitschen schwarz-weissen Bildern den 24 Stunden dauernden pausenlosen Mord an den ukrainischen Juden in der Schlucht von *Babij Jar* zusammen. Der Film hält sich sehr genau an die historischen Fakten, berührt aber gerade durch die kleinen Geschichten, Gesten und Schicksale, die Menschen im Angesicht einer Tragödie durchleben. Seit mehr als 20 Jahren leben zwei Familien in tiefer Freundschaft zusammen. Juden, Russen und Ukrainer. Mit dem Überfall Hitlerdeutschlands auf die Sowjetunion und der bevorstehenden Einnahme von Kiew keimt mit der eigenen Angst und Eigenbevorteilung auch der latente Antisemitismus wieder auf; aus Freundschaft wird Feindschaft, Denunziation und Verrat. Am Morgen des 30. Septembers 1941 liegen über 33'000 von Deutschen und Ukrainern ermordete Juden in der dem Massaker und dem Film Titel gebenden Schlucht von BABIJ JAR. 12 Angehörige des Produzenten Arthur Brauner sind unter diesen Opfern. Brauner, der selbst aus dem Ghetto fliehen konnte und nur knapp dem Tod entkam, bezeichnet denn auch seinen 20. Holocaustfilm als "die Krönung meines Lebens. (...) Das ist der Film aller Filme und mein persönlichster Film. Damit habe ich mein Gewissen, meine Verpflichtung, meinen Lebenstraum verwirklicht", so Brauner in einem Interview. Der mit internationaler Besetzung auf deutsch und italienisch gedrehte Film - mit einer grandiosen Barbara de Rossi als junge jüdische Mutter - leistet darüberhinaus einen

Beitrag, die Verstrickung der Wehrmacht in die Verbrechen des NS-Regimes zu bestätigen. Denn gemeinsam mit den deutschen und ukrainischen SS-Truppen war die 6. Armee der Wehrmacht an der Liquidation der Kiewer Juden am 29. und 30. September 1941 in der Schlucht von *Babij Jar* beteiligt.

BABIJ JAR ist mit seinen schnörkellosen Bildern der blanken Gewalt vielleicht der radikalste Film über die Shoah. Nach Jahren der Beschäftigung mit dem Holocaust hätte ich nicht gedacht, dass mich ein Film noch so mitnehmen könnte. **BABIJ JAR** wird in Deutschland im Mai 2003 in die Kinos kommen und ich kann ihm nur viele ZuschauerInnen wünschen.

Credits:

MUTTER

CH 2002 95 Min

R.: Miklós Gimes

Weltvertrieb: T&C Edition, Seestrasse 41a, CH-8002 Zürich, www.tcfilm.ch

MEIN LEBEN TEIL 2

D 2003 85 Min

R.: Angelika Levi

Weltvertrieb: Celestefilm / Angelika Levi, Metzer Strasse 20, D-10405 Berlin, Fax 0049 30 / 44 22 009

LA PETITE PRAIRIE AUX BOULEAUX

Frankreich / Deutschland / Polen 2002 90 Min

R.: Marceline Loridan-Ivens

D.: Anouk Aimée, August Diehl

Weltvertrieb: Studio Canal Distribution, 5/13 bld. de la Republique, F-92514 Boulogne cedex, Fax.: 1 71 75 89 73, cghazarian@studiocanal.com

BABIJ JAR

Deutschland / Weissrussland 2002 108 Min

R.: Jeff Kanew

D.: Michael Degen, Barbara de Rossi, Katrin Saß, Axel Milberg, Anatolij Guriev

Weltvertrieb: noch offen

Produktion: CCC-Filmkunst GmbH, Kleine Eiswerderstrasse 14, D-13599 Berlin, Fax.: 0049 30 / 334 04 18

