

# **Kings We Are, with Wings of Dust**

## **Memories of the Shalom Salam Tour**

by Anis Hamadeh  
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## Introduction

"Kings We Are, with Wings of Dust" is my revised diary of the benefice tour "Shalom - Salam" (09 until 26 May 2004). The Jewish Israeli musical Duo Rubin had the idea to venture a concert and literary tour and I took the Palestinian and literary part. For the benefit of the bi-cultural communication center Givat Haviva we three artists appeared on stage in nine German cities, with classical music, poetry, and many encounters.

In seven chapters I let my memories pass in review and describe my impressions and perceptions. In the cooperation with the Duo Rubin there lies hope for the future. When more people think this way then there will be more constructive meetings, too. They are more urgent today than ever. I recount what happened on stage, introduce the Duo Rubin and their music, talk about the reactions on the tour, about views and the handling of the Middle East conflict, about meetings with the audience, with politicians, journalists, organizers, other artists, about Givat Haviva, about the historic places where we appeared, like the Gewandhaus in Leipzig and the Wallraf Richartz Museum in Cologne, the journeys and new experiences. On June 27, 2004, on the occasion of the Haviva Reik Peace Prize award to Maestro Daniel Barenboim we three appeared again, in the Sorat hotel in Berlin. With this highlight the first part of "Shalom - Salam" ended.

Embedded into the course of the diary are some literary and background texts, as well as reflections and reviews of some books which had played a role during the tour. There are three essays in the appendix: "What is Peace?", "Palestine, Israel and the Pictures" and "Palestine, Israel and Inhibition Thresholds" (all 2002), as is the article "The Schoolbook Project" (2003). These texts are available on the internet in German and English. Also in the appendix is a register of mentioned and reviewed books. The translation at hand I made myself into my pidgin English.

"Kings We Are, with Wings of Dust" is dedicated to everybody who participated in "Shalom - Salam" and contributed to a joint venture in a difficult time.

Anis Hamadeh,  
Kiel, August 16, 2004

# Chapter 1: Leipzig and Halle

## In the Gewandhaus

*(May 09, 2004)* The station in Leipzig was crammed with bawling soccer fans. Struggle of the sub-cultures. I pulled the suitcase which was rolling behind me and looked into the crowd of self-marked young people. At the gates the police, only routine work. I asked for the way to the Gewandhaus, but the policemen were no locals. Traffic jam. Olee, oleee oleee oleee. Group identity. Generally not a bad thing. Except you need an enemy for it.

It was not far. The wheather was nice. I knew Leipzig from an orientalist's conference shortly after the turning and liked the city. The Duo Rubin had booked hotel rooms, directly next to the Gewandhaus, which was practical. There in the hotel we met. They had Benny with them, a friend from Berlin, who was helping them with the transport of the beamer, the monitors and some other technical stuff. Especially at the beginning of the journey there were a lot of organisational things to do. We were in a positive stress situation, alert, concentrated. Would everything work out right? There had hardly been any of the posters distributed in the city, the advertising was not too good. This toned us down little. But now we wanted to start at last and make a couple of stage experiences together. After a short refreshment and a cup of coffee in the lobby we went over to the other building for the soundcheck.

To appear on stage in the Gewandhaus in Leipzig was a real adventure. It belongs to the landmarks of the city. Next to our dressing room there were some documents exhibited on the wall in the corridor, behind glass. The announcements of the very first concerts in the Gewandhaus. On the right half there was, among others, Max Reger and Otto Klemperer, then Wagner, then on the left side it went down to the eighteenth century. According to the document, the first concert ever took place in 1789, it was Mozart himself. The building consists of two parts, one could even say: two worlds. The representative outside, public world with its lobby, chandeliers, stairways and halls, and on the other side the extensive backstage area, functional, but not without charm. In the undecorated corridors, in the many corners of which there stood utensils, one would meet musicians, craftspeople and technicians. The friendly assistant, who supervised our performance technically and who had given us a hand with the preparation during the last hours, shortly before the show transformed into a suit-wearer with a tie: the time of preparation was over, now the elegant, public part of the evening began.

I stood next to the Gewandhaus assistant off the stage and watched the TV screen which was showing the hall and the current time. There was still half an hour to go. Meanwhile, Michael Krebs from Cologne and Alex Elsohn, the representative of Givat Haviva, had arrived, too. He is in charge of international relations and the director for Europe. There was also a friend of his, Stefan, whom we would see some more times in the course of the tour. Together we

had cared for the last preparations. The beamer did not work, so we could not show the film we had planned to show. But this did not embarrass us too much and we quickly decided that Alex should say some words instead. Michael Krebs had helped organizing the appearance from his place in Cologne. A photographer took pictures of us in the Gewandhaus ambience. The whole time he tried to talk to me in English, but he didn't know any English. I asked him if he was German and he said yes.

While the Duo Rubin was still in the dressing room I started a conversation with the man who has been working here since six and a half years. He was of calm, even temperament. He liked his work, there was an air of self-possession about him. I asked him how many halls there are in the Gewandhaus and he said two: the Mendelssohn Hall, in which we would soon appear on stage and where meanwhile the first visitors have arrived, as I was able to see on the monitor. And the big hall. He pressed a button and I saw on the monitor in front of me four or five people standing on another stage. Now he added the sound. A cappella! These folks sang a cappella, and I read in the folder on the table that it was a festival with many bands. I got enthusiastic about it as I had a faible for this sort of minimal art, both passively and actively. When I sang a cappella myself it was usually bass or baritone. Back then in Hamburg I had sung in a band for a short spell. Unfortunately, we never reached the stage of public appearances. We sang "Mister Sandman", the notes were available in the music library in Hamburg, near the Jungfernstieg. My favorite band were the early Flying Pickets from England, I also listened to the King Singers, Bobby McFarin, the Comedian Harmonists and some bands from the festival in New York ten or fifteen years ago of which Spike Lee made a TV documentary. Not to forget the harmonies of the Beach Boys and of the Beatles. Originally, I associate a cappella with black gospel music.

On the way to the dressing room I met a group of stage women. Hey, was that you singing a cappella out there right now, I asked. We exchanged some words in passing by. Then I saw the Duo Rubin and we went out on stage.

### **Duo Rubin live**

To have experienced the Duo Rubin so close on stage was something special. They play together in perfect harmony as they have known each other for a long time and have similar talents. Piano and cello sound well together, too, there is nothing missing. All in all, I listened to the program about twelve times live, not counting the rehearsals, and I never got bored or tired, although I am an impatient fellow. Maybe it is due to the fact that we like similar pieces and styles. Bach, for example, for all three of us is one of the, if not the most important composer. At the soundcheck in Düsseldorf Ithay once started to play the Musette out of the "Notenheft von Anna Magdalena". He showed me how to accompany the melody with a simple guitar rhythm. It is fun to play with a cello. My major part was literature, though. I read an excerpt from the current book for

young people: "We Both Want to Live Here" (edited by Sylke Tempel) and some poems from my poetry album "Loving Jay".

The Duo Rubin, like me, likes to try out new things. Thus they have an Israeli composer in their repertoire, Paul Ben Chaim, and an Arab one, the Egyptian Alberto Hemsí. As they recounted Hemsí is not a known composer. The two have rather found him in a private library and brought him to a world première. Their program is colorful, this is how I as a semi-layman would call it. They have serious as well as cheerful things, technically difficult pieces like the variations on one string by Paganini or Piazzolla's Grand Tango. There was also Chopin (Polonaise Brillante Op.3), as well as the fast and actually quite folkloristic pieces "Csárdás" (pronounced: Tshardash) by Monti and the "Fire Dance" by de Falla (pronounced: de Faiya) which I liked best. Later on Offenbach's "Sledging" ("Schlittenfahrt") was added. I liked all the compositions in one way or another, there was none which would have gotten on my nerves after a while. Sometimes during the tour I had the feeling that the couple would play more brilliant today than on average, but their own assessments mostly were totally different, so I refrained from comments of this kind.

I enjoyed it a lot altogether. During the rehearsal time in Berlin Ithay late one night started to practise cello for the next day. He plays first cello in the Staatsorchester in Halle. Ithay often practised during the night, in their house in Berlin this seemed to work. Gabriella had already gone to bed and I stood in the garden, drank red wine, smoked, watched the small white dog, which never seemed to sleep, be it day or be it night, and listened to the cello. Tired as I was I could make it to the living-room sofa where I ended up motionless in horizontal position. I drifted away whenever I heard this music, it makes one dream so fine. Some time later, when I got up and said goodbye, Ithay also finished rehearsing.

Maybe the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians and Germans can be looked at a bit closer from the outer periphery here. For politically, Ithay and me do in a way represent Israel, Palestine and Germany. What made the tour interesting and authentic was the fact that we had not solved the conflict before between us. Instead we did something completely different: new experiences. There are by all means Israelis and Jews who stand closer to me in political contexts than Ithay. Such different individuals as Felicia Langer, Uri Avnery, Abraham Melzer, Shraga Elam, Michel Warschawski, Moshe Zuckermann, Moshe Zimmermann, Uri Davis, Ilan Pappé, Paul Eisen, Avraham Burg, Noam Chomsky, Michael Neumann, Amira Hass or Tom Segev, to name a few examples. Ithay, of course, in the first place represents himself, yet he also comes from the kibbutz movement and insofar represents - under consideration of the fact that politics is not his major field - a part of the Israeli left. In the broadest sense Labor Party, not Likud. In favor of two sovereign states and against occupation. Against helicopter attacks, against terror assaults and in favor of the human rights. At the same time, the security of Israel is important to him and he is loyal to his country and to Judaism in the way he sees it. He was in the Israeli army, as a musician.

As the Duo Rubin, contrary to me, is not journalistically active and as they also have not followed the newspaper discourse for years, I did neither expect nor demand an intellectual approach. There certainly were some details in the political history about which we had to talk and about which we wanted to talk, too, as was the subject of violence. But all three of us realized early that the main point was to start with listening to the other and getting to know him and her. With their initiative the Duo Rubin had already signalled that they wanted this encounter. The kibbutz, in which Ithay grew up, is situated in the vicinity of Nazareth. When on a clear evening I watched from the terrace on the hill where my grandparents used to live over to the horizon I could see the lights of Nazareth. In-between there is the Green Line. In-between there is so much. In our shared action there was a chance, we quickly sensed that. There was something to it. Maybe simply because we all were tolerant in a similar way, peace-loving by nature, and musicians.

It was the end of the second part of the first night of Shalom-Salam. I woke up from a dream I had dreamed during the long sequence of the Duo Rubin. The audience was content to the same amount. They realized that we stood for a specific thing here on stage and they wanted this thing. After several applauses I came back onto the stage at the end and got the guitar out of the case, while Ithay was concentrating on the final piece which we would play together now. We did not need any microphones, the acoustics were perfect. Round about the end of the tour, when the routine had improved the words I used to say: "Ladies and Gentlemen, after that we have crossed one border now, namely the one between Palestine and Israel, we want at the end cross another border, and that is the one between serious music and entertaining music. It follows a piece, which I have written, with the title: *Wie oft wirst du es noch tun*". I loved to play this piece with Ithay. The reason that Gabriella did not participate in this song was that we did not have the time and the possibilities to elaborate a full score musical sheet for it. That means that there still is a potential and ways to improve and top what we did before. For example, if we thought about continuing with the tour. Only scarcely had I been able to achieve musical closeness recently. With Ithay I could play freely. He was tolerant, he just let me be. I did not have to have fear or inhibitions. It was the same the other way around.

I am not a virtuoso on the guitar and in singing. At least most of the times. I hardly practise, either, because while practising I find new pieces which I then rather like to finish composing instead of playing the old thing. Moreover, I remember times when my voice and guitar was at an optimum. Only that in these phases I made negative experiences which were still inhibiting me. For when I played well I needed an audience. And if there was no audience to find I would get real problems with my inner balance. I was happy that Ithay and Gabriella liked the song. A ballad, written in a tradition, which used to be German, too, but today mostly is associated with the French chanson.

The audience was most of all happy about the fact that we did this together, but also about the song I heard in the course of the tour from some people that it had touched them. There is nothing more an artist could wish. This is what the song was written for and it had proven its soundness when it was played for friends and in earlier appearances. Michael Krebs, whom I will introduce later on, was enthusiastic every time we played it. I add the lyrics of the piece, yet the message rather lies in the melody, and in this special case also in the playing together. You can listen to it on the internet:

## **WIE OFT WIRST DU ES NOCH TUN?**

*How often will you do it again?*

Anis 2000, Song # 82, C minor

1. So viele Leute, Jäger und Beute, wie oft wirst du es noch tun?  
*So many people, hunter and prey, how often will you do it again?*  
Ein Mal? Zwei Mal? Wie oft wirst du es noch tun?  
*One time, two times, how often will you do it again?*
2. Einmal vor langer Zeit, da reisten wir um die Welt.  
*One time, long ago, we two traveled around the world*  
Du warst so schön, ich war schön, es hat uns keiner gefehlt.  
*You were so beautiful, I was beautiful, we did not miss anybody*
3. Du hast gewonnen, du hast verloren, wie oft wirst du es noch tun?  
*You have won, you have lost, how often will you do it again?*  
Drei Mal? Vier Mal? Wie oft wirst du es noch tun?  
*Three times, four times, how often will you do it again?*  
Sleep my child, Daddy's here by your side.
4. *(instrumental)*
5. Du sagst ja, du sagst nein, wie oft wirst du es noch tun?  
*You say yes, you say no, how often will you do it again?*  
Ein Mal? Zwei Mal? Mit wem wirst du es noch tun?  
*One time, two times, with whom will you do it again?*  
Wir waren gefahren um die Welt, oh yeah.  
*We did ride around the world, oh yeah.*  
Die ganze Welt, ja, die ganze Welt  
*The whole wide world, the whole wide world*  
Sleep my child, Daddy's here by your side.

Gabriella reappeared on stage and the three of us turned to the audience. The people raised from their seats and applauded. I have never before experienced such a thing. That people stand up, I mean. So it was a success. We could go ahead.

Before the journey goes on here is some general information about the project Shalom-Salam, about the project "Children teach children" by Givat Haviva, about the Duo Rubin and about me. No war has lasted forever. One day this war will be over, too, and we want to be ready for this day. The following press information is also online at [www.anis-online.de/1/orient-online/salam-shalom.htm](http://www.anis-online.de/1/orient-online/salam-shalom.htm):

***"Shalom - Salam", Benefice Concert Tour of the Duo Rubin and Anis Hamadeh for the benefit of the Jewish-Arab Peace Center Givat Haviva***

*On Sunday, May 9, in the Gewandhaus in Leipzig, starts a one month benefice tour to the benefit of the Jewish Arab communication project "Children teach children" of the peace center Givat Haviva. "Shalom - Salam", the Hebrew and the Arabic words for "peace" make up the title of the tour in the course of which the Israeli Hungarian Duo Rubin, who live in Berlin, and the German Palestinian writer Anis Hamadeh will appear in numerous German cities.*

*The project "Children teach children", which will benefit from the net proceeds of the concerts, often is the first chance for Jewish and Arab children to enter a dialogue by shared activities. As this peace basis constitutes a shimmer of hope in the Middle East conflict Federal President Johannes Rau took the patronage for the benefice tour, to appreciate the way Givat Haviva "engages in an exemplary way in peace and communication and understanding between Jews and Arabs." Givat Haviva was awarded in 2001 with the UNESCO peace award for its communication work.*

*Mutual understanding also is the concern of the artists who will dedicate the net proceeds of this tour to this project. The internationally renowned Duo Rubin - Ithay Khen, celebrated Israeli cellist and scholarship holder of the Berlin Philharmonisches Orchester and Gabriella Gonda-Khen, the successful Hungarian concert pianist - take their different origins for a reason to integrate the idea of mutual understanding between peoples into their work and to use music as an international instrument of communication. For Anis Hamadeh, the writer and musician who lives in Kiel, "there is no conflict which cannot be solved." The graduate of Islamic Studies has not only in prose texts dealt with the Middle East conflict, but also is tied to the region for family reasons, as his father was born in the Westbank.*

*In order to do justice to the cultural diversity of the region and to the manifold peace activities of Givat Haviva a colorful tour program was designed which is financially supported by DaimlerChrysler Services. In the program, rarely heard Arab and Israeli composers are presented. Among other pieces, classical highlights by Paganini, Chopin and Piazzolla are played. Anis Hamadeh recites, next to his own poetry, prose by Jewish and Arab authors. And as a visual pre-program excerpts are shown from "With the eyes of the Other" - a film which does not show the usual pictures that are dominated by violence, but which testifies the way Arab and Jewish young people overcome hate and prejudice.*



*In a workshop of the art center of Givat Haviva they learn together how to photograph and thus they make each other's acquaintance in their respective living worlds.*

*The Duo Rubin has initiated the German-wide peace tour, because "the permanently increasing loss of trust on both sides must be obviated - both on the political level and in everyday life; not only in the crisis zone, but everywhere in the world: on streets and squares, in schools, in theaters and in concert halls."*

### *Givat Haviva - Educational Institution*

*Givat Haviva is one of the biggest, oldest, and leading institutions which in Israel concern itself with Jewish Arab mutual understanding, which support cultural and religious pluralism, which work for democratic values and peace, and which bring the past of the Jewish people to the consciousness of the youth of today in its educational work.*

*Givat Haviva was founded in the year 1949 as the national educational center of the Kibbutz Artzi Association. The central campus of Givat Haviva comprises 15 ha and is situated in the Sharon Plateau, quite exactly half the way between Haifa and Tel Aviv.*

*Today Givat Haviva offers formal and non-formal educational programs to a heterogeneous population. Givat Haviva has gained the recognition of - among others - academics, teachers, pedagogues and social workers for the educational work which is done here. Givat Haviva is especially respected for the engagement of the assistants and their obligation to convey knowledge and cultural pluralism. Tens of thousands of individuals every year participate in the diverse seminars, courses and workshops which are held in Givat Haviva. Some stay only for a day, others remain for a full, intensive year of study.*

*The subjects of specialisation of the institute range from Jewish Arab co-existence, the history of the Middle East, the roots of Zionism, Arab language and culture, the history of the Holocaust and the Jewish resistance to the history of the kibbutz and workers' movement in Israel. In January 2001 the peace library was opened in Givat Haviva, it contains millions of documents and offers over 120.000 volumes in 5 languages. The archives and the library do not only serve students and teachers of the campus, but also researchers and PhD graduates from all over the world.*

### *Givat Haviva - a bridge between two peoples*

*Since the outbreak of the second Intifada in October 2000 many people have posed the question of how the peace process should continue. Israel and*

*Palestine today - and probably not for the last time - are stuck in a dead end. Nevertheless, the peace institutions like Givat Haviva agree that peace foremost has to grow bottom-up. Only when the people in the region will want to meet each other the process of mutual understanding and trust can slowly begin. For this a patient educational work is needed, this was also agreed upon in the Oslo B treaty. But: these demands must also be realized in practise if both sides are shooting, if the political climate worsens, and it seems that earlier attempts of approximation have not brought about any results.*

*Times of crisis sometimes can provide opportunities for better and more intensive cooperations. In this way, especially the longterm cooperation with the Israeli Palestinians in Givat Haviva has proven its soundness and has indicated that the daily peace work of strengthening the civil society in Israel and of building bridges between Jews and Arabs, is stronger than the altering political situation. In all of the 40 years since the founding of the Jewish Arab center for peace in Givat Haviva this cooperation has not ceased for one day and it continues today, too.*

### **About the Duo Rubin**

*The brilliant Israeli cellist Ithay Khen was scholarship holder of the famous Karajan Academy of the Berliner Philharmonisches Orchester and made music under the conductors Claudio Abbado, Georg Solti, Daniel Barenboim and Sir Simon Rattle. With the successful concert pianist Gabriella Gonda-Khen he ventured concert tours all over Europe, to the USA and to Asia. With this the Duo Rubin laid the foundation of its international reputation. The two artists take their different backgrounds for a reason to let the idea of mutual understanding between peoples flow into their work and to use music as an international instrument of communication. More about the Duo Rubin on the homepage [www.duorubin.de](http://www.duorubin.de).*

### **About Anis**

*Anis Hamadeh is a musician, literary writer and essayist and lives in Kiel. The Middle East is known to the German Palestinian graduate of Islamic Studies since many years, by way of intensive journeys and studies. In February he went on a literary reading tour through Egypt. Freedom and sovereignty of the Palestinians is an important issue for him which he also transforms into literature. He is engaged and does not escape arguments; for him there is no conflict which cannot be solved. Anis Hamadeh wrote about ten books and one hundred songs. He is the editor of the sites [www.anis-online.de](http://www.anis-online.de) and [www.virtual-palestine.net](http://www.virtual-palestine.net).*

### **We Do Have Different History Books, and Yet...**

When the Duo Rubin asked me half a year ago whether I was interested to take the Palestinian part for a concert tour to the benefit of Palestinian and Israeli kids in the framework of the peace and dialog work of Givat Haviva, I said yes, of course. For there are two things which - if really honestly wished - one must not refuse: peace and the wellbeing of the children. This was the way I first met Ithay Khen and Gabriella Gonda-Khen. Nermin Sharkawi from Berlin made the connexion.

In the time of the preparations and rehearsals we learned more about each other; I visited them some times in Berlin and also spent some nights in their house. Ithay is a born Israeli and has relatives in Israel, Gabriella is Jewish with Hungarian background. I am a German with a father who was born and raised in the Westbank near Jenin and I have been concerned with these roots in such a long-lasting and intensive way that I don't consider concepts wrong like "Palestinian German" or "Arab German". In Arab countries I am often identified as an Arab, and it is okay for me, too. I am also Arab. Citizen of the world, at any rate.

By way of my networking I have already made acquaintance with some Israelis and Jews (NB: As Jewish identity very often expresses itself in a confession to Israel, I see fuzzy edges in the distinction), nice ones and less nice ones, but this project is something new for me, too. In the beginning we hardly discussed politics at all. Rather, I trusted my instinct as Ithay had approached me in knowledge also of my critical writings. In the course of our encounter something extra-ordinary happened: on the one hand we realized that we can handle each other without much difficulty, on the other hand our political views appeared to be different in several points.

Our history books are not quite the same, neither are our respective attitudes towards the order and measures of a state - not only regarding Israel - congruent. In view of the extreme situation in Palestine/Israel and in the world this could lead to an unbridgeable distance. Which we don't feel, as a matter of fact. It is rather as if there was something which separates us, but this something does not belong to us, so we don't have to place it in the center of our relationship.

The music of the Duo Rubin I find marvellous, just as they also respect and appreciate my art. We share many, vital points in our personal lives concerning our motivations. Cultural differences are not a problem for any of us, often they are regarded as enriching. Uniting us is the will for peace and dialog.

Nevertheless, we do not ignore the political circumstances by any means, the talk about it does not stop. I am a little familiar with the attitudes of the scope of the Israeli left and know the difference to other areas of the Israeli society. In a way, Ithay and Gabriella bring me some calm and hope, as they are open-

minded, creative and free. Some of the things I heard from them also hurt me, as I have and get different information, this might be similar vice versa. I could at this point present a detailed and pointed analysis of the matter, but I don't feel a need to. This here is about something else. If we had such a common history book, then these grey zones would be vanished. One day there will be such a book. And one day there will be peace.

### **Introduction of the Duo Rubin:**

*"Israel - Vadi Ara - September 2000, we are on the road to visit relatives. A violent view reveals itself to us: burnt car-tyres all over the place, bus stops and street lanterns are destroyed, the road is damaged, the valley is unpassable. We are shocked, this track has been familiar to us for years, we know the Vadi Ara as a calm, peaceful, even idyllic area. Never would we have thought that the here prevailing Arab population could have such an anger which - as an expression of their solidarity with the Palestinians - could evoke such an extend of destruction.*

*The shock is deep, the impressions do not leave us anymore, even when back in Berlin. We know for certain: the permanently increasing loss of trust on both sides must be obviated - and this worldwide: both on the political level and in everyday life. It suggests itself that we use our music as a means of communication. Therefore we initiate the German-wide peace tour Shalom-Salam. We are glad to have won the German Palestinian writer Anis Hamadeh for our project. Happy we also are about the patronage of Federal President Johannes Rau."*

### **Round Table Dinner**

After the première concert reading we went through the pedestrian zone in the city center, there hung huge pictures showing Daniel Barenboim who would play here in July. I said hello to the maestro. Ithay and Gabriella had already played with him, they knew him. I realized that he constituted an overall frame for us, as we all held him in high esteem. Georg Meggle guided us to a historic inn. Professor Meggle was the only one in the circle who joined the group from my side, so to speak. The others, Alex Elsohn, Stefan, Benny and Michael Krebs, they all came from the side of the Duo Rubin, in the broadest sense. Meggle teaches philosophy at the uni in Leipzig and works, among other things, on the subject "terror" which will be mentioned later on in more detail. I was glad that this first bigger circle during the tour was together in such a harmony. In the course of the weeks I have noticed this fact again and again: we got along well with the people of the respective other.

At a round wooden table we sat in a Medieval atmosphere, chatting about the concert and Making each other's acquaintance. Alex told us about his current

journeys between Switzerland, Tel Aviv and Germany. He is responsible for the whole European sector and organizes meetings, finds sponsors, makes Givat Haviva more known. There is a certain distrust vis-à-vis participants of the conflict I have, even concerning myself, and especially with Givat Haviva I was in the beginning not able to assess the whole thing properly. They did not get any money from the current Israeli government, this in my view was an important point. During the government period of the Labor Party it was supported by the state. From networking circles I once or twice heard that Givat Haviva was an Israeli thing and not a Palestinian one. Indeed do most of the participants come from the 48 area, that is the current territory of Israel. Yet there are contacts to Palestinians in the Westbank. I had studied the newsletters and info sheets, which I had at my disposal, from the press file and was willed to contribute to the thing in a constructive way, in order to find out whether a cooperation was meaningful here. Such a thing you cannot learn from books or texts. Give it a try. So far everything went fine.

Georg Meggle told us about Leipzig and what happened in 1989. The gatherings in the church next to us, and that this mentality would still be detectable in Leipzig. "Then they came out of the church and probably sat down at this very table, this round table, to resume the talks." To breathe history. To smell the revolution. It was two o'clock in the morning when I fell asleep in the hotel bed.

### **At Noon in Halle**

*(May 10, 2004)* After breakfast Michael drove me the short distance over to Halle. He was going on to another, parallel reading at which the memories of the chairman of the Central Council of the Jews in Germany, Paul Spiegel, were recited. On our way we picked up a professional actress who would read out the text. The Duo Rubin would also join the event and play there, I renounced and took a rest for some hours in the hotel. There were a lot of impressions to digest. For a late lunch we met in the hotel restaurant and analyzed the situation. We were feeling well, only a bit exhausted. We agreed to leave out the excerpt from the youth novel "Samir and Jonathan" by Daniella Carmi (Hansa Publishing House, 1994) and substitute it in the second half of the program, because one long text was enough. In the first half I read excerpts from: "We Both Want to Live Here. A Difficult Friendship in Jerusalem" by Amal Rifa'i and Odelia Ainbinder (with Sylke Tempel, Rowohlt Berlin, 2003), the collection of an authentic letter exchange between a young Israeli and a young Palestinian, both from Jerusalem. This text had impressed many people in the audience and it shows the conflict to the settlement of which we wanted to contribute. The press sometimes unfortunately wrote that this book was by myself. This is not the case, I only read out of it, but I had made that point clear on stage.

As I was the one with the verbal part of the performance I pondered about responsibilities. It is true that Gabriella started with a few words, but Ithay, for example, did not really say anything, he just wanted to present himself as a

musician and as part of the project, which was completely legitimate. Thus I did not want and was not allowed to speak in a way which reflected my individual opinion, but our opinion. Sometimes this was like walking on an edge. But it worked out and there never had been an argument about the words. I was proud of that, because I never had to deny myself.

The Duo Rubin today had two appearances, that was tiring. Live musicians must be more concentrated than recitators, they must know more things by heart, the fingers got to be activated. The only nervousness I felt from time to time was because of the song in the end. Everything else was easy. Therefore I was considerate when the two had a nervous moment sometimes. They had a lot of work with the whole preparation and I had less work in total. The whole thing had been their idea, this was something always to be remembered. In respect of this fact I helped where I could, in my field, created, for example, a webpage with all the infos of the tour. I had also informed the internet community, yet was not always completely satisfied with the results concerning public relations. There were too few people from Palestinian and Arab circles involved, I should have done a better preparation and could have called more people telephonically. On the other hand it is always problematic to advertise the own projects. The reactions, anyway, which I received via emails, for instance, were all in all positive. The impulse had gotten through.

Gabriella and Ithay shared an ice-cream for desert. Maybe I should read "Curfew for Feelings", my current poem which had been a success in Egypt and which was out in three languages. Why not, the two said, do you have it with you? No, I didn't, actually. Maybe you can print it out here in the hotel from the internet, Gabriella suggested. Ah! Long live the internet! At the reception I learnt that only the hotel manager had an internet access and a printer, but she was called straight away and a couple of minutes later she came down the stairs. I explained to her in few words what was the matter, that I needed a page printed, and she reacted friendly. In her office I clicked on my homepage and she said: "Oh, this is you", when she saw my photograph. When I printed out the poem she said: "But this is not a usual poem, is it?" I grinned. She was an attractive woman. So little time and so many beautiful women... But I was rather shy, anyway, and so the story ended here.

### **Concert Hall, Ulrich Church, Halle**

Ithay was a bit under tension, because some of his colleagues from the orchestra in Halle were sitting in the audience. But it went all well. The film worked this time, too. Gabriella entered the stage and announced it. It only lasted for some minutes and showed the work of Givat Haviva. You could see young people taking pictures of one another. It was not really possible to say who of them was Israeli, no: Jewish, and who originally spoke Arabic, being Palestinian. They were only young people meeting each other. There was more

interest than tension. They also crossed the border into the homes of the respective other. Took a look around, taking pictures of the contents of the refrigerator and the wardrobe, all relaxed.

I have seen this film several times. One day I will go and visit them, I thought. Wanted to see this from a shorter distance. How would they be? How did they deal with the conflict? It was impossible to tell that from the few minutes of the film. Moreover, the short stage version was only with music, without words and quotes. In the long version you could hear them talk. Later in Bocholt we once had the long version with us by mistake. I realized that all the people there talked in Hebrew. I found that a bit problematic, because it meant a certain hegemony. Yet I transformed this feeling constructively insofar as I intended to bring in the Arabic, which I sensed to be missing, by way of my own participation. When finally, at the end of the tour in Berlin, I met the Palestinian spokesman of Givat Haviva, Mohammad Darawshe, as well as Sarah Ozacky-Lazar, the head of the research department of Givat Haviva, a Jewish Israeli historian, who speaks Arabic very well, my reservations were dispersed. Those by all means were people with whom one could talk. Including Alex Elsohn, of course, who was with us in Halle today for the last time until Berlin.

This second appearance still was part of the brandnew experience. There was a routine only much later, actually only at the very end. A Palestinian student approached us after the show backstage and we talked for a while. He was like many: he wanted to engage himself more, but did not exactly know how. There was a lot of potential in the society which we could reach. The organizer in the Ulrich Church, Dr. Haupt, had given a short welcome speech and also told us some details about the history of the church which today was only used as a concert hall. The flags on the walls, for example, he explained, are mere phantasy flags. Their only purpose is to provide proper acoustics.

With Michael Krebs we had a late evening meal. After that he even drove back all the way to Cologne. He was in a good constitution. We would soon meet again. The Duo Rubin and me drove on to Vreden in Westfalia, close to the Dutch border, early in the following day, for the second stage of the tour.

## **Chapter 2: Vreden and Wesel**

### **Vreden**

(May 11, 2004) It was quite cosy in the parsonage of Vreden. We had half of the upper flight for our disposal, so we could take a rest before two hours later the performance would begin. I was sitting on the balcony, the sun was shining, birds were chirping, and from somewhere behind the trees one could hear a

murmuring water. On the square between the parsonage and the Stifts Church, in which we would be soon, there were children playing. We had come over from the town-hall where we had a meeting with local politicians, five minutes from here.

Vreden is an old city. There was a beautiful contrast between the many children on the one side and the church from the tenth century on the other. At the meeting, each of us received a book and an info file about Vreden. Two seniors from the German Israeli Society (DIG) attended this conversation as well as the clergyman, a woman from the city council and a woman who took some photos for the website of Vreden and who later on in the church gave us a hand with the installation of the DVD player. In the church then we met the verger and a piano tuner at work.

The woman from the city council had been the first to welcome us in the city, she took us to her place for coffee, sandwiches and cake. The cake was made by the lady from the DIG. Apple. Quite delicious. The woman from the city council had guided us to her place with her car. On the rear window of her car there was a big script saying: "Give Nazi's no chance". I found this parole of deterrance a little alienating. Everytime one looked on the sign one unintentionally thought of Nazis. What if someone wrote on his car: "Give killers no chance". Sounds a bit odd, doesn't it? But alright, we have a freedom of opinion and I didn't find it reprehensible, either. It just gave me something to think about. When Ithay discovered the sign he said that so we are "with the right people". This I also found a bit strange then. Apparantly he had connected this testimony with a different message and recognized it as a sign.

Even before we proceeded to the laid table the woman said that she was pro-Israeli. I did not ask her what she meant by that, because I was not interested to know. But then she emphasized that she was not indifferent to the fate of the Pals. It was a little uneasy for the Duo Rubin that she had said "pro-Israeli" and they said something which made the concept appear more vague, later also had a short talk about it with me. Again remarkable, for again we had different interpretations of the situation. I realized that this woman with her testimonies was living a kind of rebellion which must have been related to her own surroundings, for her testimonies were meant for these surroundings. Next to some Jewish symbols there were many Christian symbols in her apartment, also a fish on her car and the cross on her necklace. Among her numerous books there also was a translation of the Qur'an. I could imagine that the Christian Jewish dialogue in her clerical and other surroundings had not always been without conflict and that this "pro-Israeli" thing (which did interest me, as it seemed) had to do with it. Had to do with Germany.

A pros pos pro-Israeli: I don't know what happened and has happened in Vreden. But I know how the situation of my family in the Westbank is. Most of the boys and girls do not have a proper job. They sit there and care for the estate and they are quite disillusioned. My father has seven siblings, most of them live



with their families together on one area, in a village near Jenin, and they work the land - heritage of my late grandparents. They have simple houses and it is not far from house to house. The next generation has also built homes there, just like my father and my uncle, who lives in Hamburg, built houses there, some years ago, out of a feeling of longing to return to the origins. The outer walls even of these new houses have cracks from the vibrations of the tanks. When my cousin Modar writes me a mail (I don't even know from where he manages to send emails) then often I don't know what to tell him. So I listen to him. His English is quite good. He writes about the hopelessness and complains about the occupation. Then again he is full of plans and ideas. His basic tone is amazingly positive, he does not let anything get him down. From the family he writes little, but I know that meanwhile they appreciate my work and support it. When Modar writes that sometimes he finds me "more Palestinian than the Palestinians", then I like it. He means that I am engaged in working for the freedom of the Palestinians. But I like it only when my family says that, because it has a personal meaning to me. If it came from other people I would probably rather get suspicious about it. My cousin can follow my internet news and he was proud when the Egyptian press recently wrote about me. I have the feeling to be able to give my Arab family something with my work. I don't know what else I could give to them.

### **Performance in the Stifts Church**

The appearance and all the circumstances in Vreden were excellent, with the exception of this one thing. At the beginning of the second part of the performance one of the organizers spoke a word, this was how it usually went. Thereafter came my part, a longer literary block, comprising now also the piece "Curfew for Feelings" as well as a couple of further poems out of "Loving Jay". It gave me a better feeling when I recited my own stuff, I felt more at home and it was more authentic. Yet during the reading in the room with the reverberating sounds I already sensed a strange distance coming from the audience. Strange, because it was not genuine. There was a wall, Gabriella later varified that when we had dinner together. The thing was, when I had finished the reading, there was dead silence. My stomach contracted, but I did not show it. At the end I had deliberately said "thank you" for the audience to know that it was finito, there also had not been any applause in between. What should I have done? Later I thought I maybe should have looked at them more intensely, even stared at them so that only the applause could have saved them from my gaze. A carpet of lead spaciouly sunk down on me as I left the small stage, which was mainly filled with the piano, in an unconsapicuous way. The Duo Rubin entered at the same time to continue. They could tell by the look on my face that there was something wrong. Carefully I proceeded to my waiting place, hoping that the Duo Rubin was not welcomed with an applause, because this would probably have made it impossible for me to not take it personally. At the same time I had the predicament that I did not perceive the whole reality here, that instead I was

relapsing into an atavism, for I got massively reminded of earlier situations in my life...

It was the memorial day for Professor Ulrich Haarmann, the Islamic Studies professor and Mamluk expert at the University of Kiel. I was asked by the professor for Chinese Studies if I wanted to play something on the guitar on this occasion and I played the "Aphasic Nights", an instrumental jazz piece which I wrote in 1994. The memorial took place in the large seminar room of the institute. I then taught Arabic, but my building-up creativity together with the conflict, which I had to go through with the German society, led to my dismissal. I had to obey or go. I had reproached the society with its looking away and hearing away in cases of conflict and that in this way oppression is not persecuted. That this mentality is magisterial and authoritarian. I had clearly formulated and confirmed over years that this has been an important concern for me. But the society has not listened. Like I said. Quod erat demonstrandum. At this so far only performance of the "Aphasic Nights" there were mainly teachers from the Uni Kiel in the audience. In the introduction I said that it had been Mister Haarmann's endeavour to combine the Orient and the Occident and the "Aphasic Nights" consist of parts in which rhythms and melodies from the Orient and the Occident were combined, too. The piece was liked, I sensed how they received it, but it ended up in this heavy and unbearable silence. I assumed that the people did not want to profane the solemnity of the memorial day with an applause. You can always find a reason if you need one. But after the event hardly anybody talked with me about it and it was basically visible even at that time that I had to leave these surroundings if I wanted to develop. It is paradoxical that one must leave the university in order to remain creative and open for learning processes, isn't it?

And there were more situations I was reminded of, more earlier ones, a seam ripped open to the old pain. For a moment. In the Stifts Church in Vreden. I controlled myself. Tried not to think of the applause with which we (or the Duo Rubin, respectively, as I had already left the stage) were accompanied into the break. Even the man from the DIG, who had talked before me, got an applause. I sat on my waiting seat in a way that the audience in the front rows could see me. The Stifts Church is a cross church, i.e. a church on cruciform plan. In the front area were most of the benches. Some also in the short lateral parts which served us as a backstage area. Most of it was not visible for those sitting in the long front area of the church. The look on my face was not specifically merry when the Duo Rubin played its four pieces, an enjoyment like always, despite everything. But I did not applaud this time, had basically enough of the whole thing and even wondered if I should do without the final song, "Wie oft wirst du es noch tun". Before there had been a kind of ending, when the Duo Rubin left and entered the stage several times for the bow. Normally I was happy for them, but this time I was afraid of it. To be lonely in the crowd belongs to the worst things I can imagine at all. I did in the end play the song, anyway, but I kept my look away from the audience, did not play for them, either, only for myself.

The amazing thing was that on this very evening ten Loving Jay books were sold. Interesting, how differently one apparently could interpret moods and situations. Not only that. The padre from Vreden, a huge, bearded man, at the leave-taking asked me about the poem "Kinds of Love (2)" from Loving Jay: "To rule wants human love. To heal wants divine love. Kings we are, with wings of dust." He said he wanted to integrate this into his next Sunday sermon. That made me happy.

After these events I critically analyzed my program. Of course, music stimulates the audience more physically than poetry, therefore the applause after the musical contributions was more normal. The applause neutralizes the tension which is in the air after the presentation of a piece of art. It has a liberating effect on all participants, it dissolves the trance, ends the journey. I decided to end my sequence at the beginning of the second half with the kings' poem. That was pointed and exactly the right thing for the finish. Gabriella, too, advised me to do so. And indeed, this turned out to be successful.

### **Curfew for Feelings**

Now I had changed the literary program and read "Curfew for Feelings", the piece which I had written in January and read in Egypt in February. Meanwhile, the literary magazine "Akhbar al-Adab" published the Arabic translation. It was well fit for the show, because it is a kind of "Loving Jay" in short version. The reason why the poetry album "Loving Jay" was adequate for the readings was that it deals with principle feelings and principle questions of humanity. Also with the emancipation of all oppressing, even of the own love, when it oppresses someone. This seemed to me to be the right level. Here is the wording of the poem:

#### **CURFEW FOR FEELINGS**

*bamboo # 232 - anis 26 jan 04*

*there was an alarm call - the checkpoints of her heart - are all closed - security squads at the gates - not unfriendly - but strict - no one can get any further - without the valid papers -- there had been days - when i was several kilometers deep - in her territory - i found traces of my dream there - and was looking for the ear - today since dawn - all the roads are blocked - no intrudors can - get through the wall - words, gestures, they rebound - not to think of touches - curfew for feelings - no infiltration - for the sake of calm - more she has not demanded - only calm - but was there not something that you wanted? - i asked - and she said - actually she already has it - but did you not tell about a dream - right at the start? - and she said that - this may well be the case - yet she is looking way ahead - if there was anything not alright? - she asked and i replied: - no no - it is not that - only this wall - it is very high - and the security measures - before there had been a little meadow here - only for us - at that she left me alone - for a moment -- i drove up and down the hill-streets - and tried at several spots - to*

*find an entrance - i wanted to speak to her herself - but there was no way anymore - there was no space - this time she would have had to listen - and i would have had to listen, too -- the only remaining possibility - to reach her now - was the affect - the extreme - the deed out of despair - to drive straight into this checkpoint - accelerating - until the bang - because when there is a bang - then there has to be something important behind it - something you would think about - something where you ask yourself - why it happened - this is how i used to do it - with some of her sisters - only that it never worked out - in the end there was always only - a field of broken pieces - where before there was - the meadow - there were bad dreams - and cochroaches - that was all - nothing remained of the respective us -- so now the boarder is closed - i am standing here in the ice-cold day - smoking a cigarette - say goodbye to her - and stretch my bones - three tanks have rolled over me - on the way - by accident - collaterally - i had taken that into account - for i wanted to know - what was behind all that - and now i know - it was there - and i'll survive the rest -- security alarm - few words in the cinema - we stared onto the screen - and i behaved in an un conspicuous way - found myself in the undesired role - of an under-cover agent - we smiled - while she was busy - working on the separation device - she was always beautiful - with eyes shining - in the occident - i could only watch - for i came in from the wrong side - right at the start -- for a short moment only - had i today been the other - the stranger - saw myself in the mirror of the mirror woman - there he was again - i had known him for long - he had his place - and seemed to be a bit wretched - i did not like him - he used to talk in confusion - and was boundless - in a clumsy way - i understood - that she did not want to listen to him - i did not want to listen to him either - thus in the end - we almost agreed - and i did not have to let myself go - but only her*

In Berlin I wrote it, in Mahmoud's apartment. It was my farewell from Blume, a sad situation. I would have had to start it in a completely different way, if at all. Without this poem, anyway, I would not have gotten out of this thing safely. Just as I would not have gotten out of another thing without "Loving Jay". I put "Curfew" online, shortly after our last encounter in Berlin. She surely read it. It was only later that I recognized the complexity of the text. Maybe only when I was sitting in the Azhar University in Cairo, in the German class of Dr. Siegfried Steinmann, reading out the poem and subsequently listening to the discussion of the students about it. If Blume knew about all that :-)

I often have problems with the assignments of roles. As the artist who I am I, for example, sometimes get into conflicts with the male role which is expected here and there. This has led to some inhibitions with time. It is no accident that since 1998, since the beginning of my new life as an artist, I am not exactly surrounded by women. Or by people in general, for that matter. Maybe on the internet. Likewise, it can be supposed that this state will alter as soon as I earn more money. Assignments of roles, they limit the process of unfolding in an illegitimate way. I have nothing at all against roles, they can on the contrary be exquisitely attracting, but I am against stereotype assignments where you can't say "stop!". It is nice to be dominant, also to be dominated, to give and to receive devotion.

As long as it is conscious. But not, if, for example, the respective persons basically are ashamed of their wishes and feelings and thus need a dominance and a force from the outside in order to realize their true wishes, or, as a counter-part, if they feel urged to dominate and punish others in an inconsiderate manner. This leads to guilt and suffering which in turn blocks any kind of creativity. For me this is the Middle Ages. Important is only the human, and this is totally the same for both man and woman. Both are responsible and entitled to the same amount. All these dichotomies, right and left, man and woman, Israeli and Palestinian, this is getting on my nerves completely.

### **Bettina Oehmen**

*(May 12, 2004)* On the next day I met Bettina Oehmen, the wife of cellist Christoph who had organized the concerts in Vreden, Wesel and Bocholt and who is a friend of the Duo Rubin's. Bettina is a versatile, energetic woman with four children. She composes, writes, draws, produces blossom extracts for health, cooks and is always in action. On her and Christoph's homepage [www.oehmen-art.de](http://www.oehmen-art.de) one can get an idea about these activities. I regarded the encounter with Bettina as important, because we were similar in many things, for example concerning our spiritual mentality. Also, she expresses herself publically in word, picture and sound, similar to me. Surely there also were some differences between us, maybe even grave ones, but I just had to take a look at her and Christoph's library to find orientation. There I discovered at least four of my top 10 books, among them *The Celestine Prophecies* by James Redfield, *Secrets of Shamanism* by Jose and Lena Stevens, *The Dream Catcher* by Marlo Morgan. It may be that I also saw the *Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* by Sogyal Rinpoche there. This meant that I was not an alien here.

I came over from the neighbors, Annette and Willy, two very nice people, at whose place I was put up for the time of our stay in the region. Although we had never met before and although I had arrived in sleeping night, guided by Christoph to the guest room in the bottom flight, the next morning I came for breakfast as if I had done that ten times before. It was easy for us to find things to talk about. Around noon I went over to see the others. Christoph was out teaching, the Duo Rubin still in their room and I chatted in the kitchen with Bettina while she was frying pieces of lamb and her children were running to and fro through the rooms. Kitchen talk. She played me something out of her new CD, among it a Bossa Nova. We did not talk about "the thing". Maybe it would have kept us from learning more about each other from out of concrete life. I could approximately imagine how she thought. It was more important to look at her humanism and to keep away from abstractions and clichés.

On the sitting-room table there was her new book, "Variations about Love (or what we make of it)", a literary work. Soon I had read fifty pages and noticed that Bettina confronted herself with the subjects of love and violence, too, and with the question of energies and the building of identities. She is a narrator, she

tells about relationships without running away from every taboo in an uncritical way. She is a searcher. Her poetry is more anarchic, more rebellious in form. The poem "School" might not be too representative, but it reminded me of something. It reads: "Today I go again / to the think factory. / The teacher said / I'll get a high degree, / if I don't move / think only when he wants it so / open my mouth only / when he says so / and close it / when he had said / what I am to say. // I do all these things, too, / because I don't want to end up / as a robot." When I saw it - Bettina and me had exchanged our products - I thought of "On Making and Doing" from Loving Jay, which I did not read on stage: "When they led me to the bank / to take out / my heart / they asked me / for my last wish. / I pondered. They asked: / Is there anything left / that you want to make / or do? / But there wasn't. / I pondered / and posed some questions. / They answered them. / Then I posed some accusations. / They pardoned them. / Then I had said everything / and done / and they took out / my heart."

## Wesel

"The thing" was omnipresent, but on a low level. After Vreden we went on to Wesel where we would appear in the music school. Again a beautiful building, from 1809, re-arranged former barracks, a widely stretched brick building with a meadow in front of it. But at first we drove to the city hall for a meeting. I had overheard that the people in Wesel had gathered some information from the people in Vreden concerning the status of the official welcome. That was somehow sweet. They (especially in Vreden) highly appreciated that they stood in one line with the Gewandhaus Leipzig. Plus, of course, Shalom-Salam. There was, in fact, an honest interest, this is how I received it, at any rate. The mayor from Wesel was not there, due to a health treatment, so we were welcomed by the vice mayor. Also attending were some representatives of the city in official clothing.

The atmosphere was nice, interested, exciting. In the course of the conversation someone from the German Israeli Society, who at the same time was very much supporting our tour, said something about anti-Semitism and that he in view of the increasing anti-Semitism has launched whatever activity. I could observe how my blood started to boil, in an escalating phase of about ten seconds within which I took a deep breath several times reminding myself of my meditational abilities. I couldn't avoid a whispered, pressed "terrible", though. I have to work on that, it was not precise. The vice mayor in this situation showed greatness, because he did not ignore it - which would have been possible due to my lack of precision -, but calmly asked me about what I had to say.

I said it. That Islamophobia is just as bad as anti-Semitism. That I had read what the press wrote about the recent OSCE conference on the subject and that I have my thoughts about it. It remained within the limits, especially as I felt respected here. Two people from the DIG thereafter uttered their opinion in

deliberately chosen words. This was acceptable. I knew that we had political differences, anyway, so we better had them openly.

About 5 o'clock p.m. we arrived at the music school and met the company. Among them were Mister Merschhemke from the DIG, the schoolmaster, Christoph of course, who had organized the whole event and who teaches cello at this place, as well as two gentlemen from the police. They had insisted on it, from the part of the police, not from the part of the organisation or the artists.

So far I had not troubled myself with questions of security, for I felt secure. I wouldn't know who I ought to be afraid of. Even my political opponents I took seriously and I lived nonviolence. Therefore I felt quite safe. I also did not worry about the Duo Rubin. I don't support the thesis that Jews have to be protected in a special way. All people need security. A problem is that the official Israel talks in the name of "the Jews", so that the official Israeli policy, which, as is well known, chiefly utilizes repressive means, is brought into a connection with Judaism. This I regard as being extremely irresponsible from the state of Israel. Racism against Jews is bad, just as any other racism.

Ithay and Gabriella, at any rate, also found the police presence superfluous in this case. While they had been confronted in their surroundings with the question whether this tour could also be dangerous, they felt secure, as they said. Of course, there can always be crazy people or those who misunderstand the venture. Also, I am not principally against security escorts. They make sense where they make sense. I don't think that it made any sense in Wesel, but what should I have said? It was an experience. The gentlemen wore civil clothing and the leader of the parole gave the impression of being a serious, official bodyguard. With his charisma and his telegenic looks, so I thought, he could also be the bodyguard of the chancellor. He remained discreet, and as I heard after the concert he allegedly even was emotionally touched by the performance. When shortly before the appearance I had withdrawn to the meadow in front of the building, in order to write some words into the diary, I again saw children play in the yard, like in Vreden. This time I wondered if they could be well-disguised terrorists, attempting to sabotage our peace thing...

## **Chapter 3: Books and Press Meetings**

### **Books**

This was not only a journey from concert reading to concert reading, with integrated reflections and documents. There also were some books related to the subject, they were deposited in my suitcase. For example Georg Meggle (ed.) (2003): "Terror and the War Against it. Public Reflections" (Mentis Publishing House), Sophia Deeg (2004): "I have Come as a Human. International Activists for a Bottom-up Peace" (Aufbau Publishing House), Paul Spiegel (2001): "Home Again? Memories" (Ullstein), Rifa'i, Ainbinder, Tempel (2003): "We Both Want to Live Here. A Difficult Friendship in Jerusalem" (Rowohlt-Berlin).



From the last of these mentioned books I read out a part on stage. Concerning the autobiography of Paul Spiegel, chairman of the Central Council of the Jews in Germany, I saw it at a press meeting in Halle for the first time. As Mr. Spiegel represents a very different political opinion than me it was interesting to read his memories. About the release of the new book of the journalist Sophia Deeg I had heard via info emails. She had participated in the Attac Council in Aachen and I knew that she was writing on something. In the Easter time of 2002 she and her daughter Julia traveled to Palestine and Israel. There they had a lot of talks and the book reports about them. The Aufbau Publishing House was so friendly as to provide me a copy for review at short sight which I was able to read parallel to the journey.

The title of the book is from a quote by Daniel Barenboim, the known pianist and conductor of an Israeli Palestian orchestra, spoken on the occasion of a concert in Ramallah. The whole quote is (I translate): "I have come as a human being who is aware of the lessons of the twentieth century - namely that each of us must think about their responsibility and that the people should act as individuals and not wait for the politicians." This statement, reads the cover of Sophia Deeg's report, brings the attitude of many international activists to the point.

Then there is the collection of articles: "Terror and the War Against it" which was edited by Professor Georg Meggle. In 2002/2003 there had been a chain of lessons on that subject at the University of Leipzig and theorists as well as practisioners from all over the world described their views on the concept of terror. In this collection these - about two dozen - contributions are gathered and supplemented by artistic works in the form of illustrations in the appendix. Among the authors is Johan Galtung, a pioneer of social science. He developed the concepts of "structural violence" and "cultural violence" which are global standard today - in the universities, but not in jurisdiction.

As a feedback on my "Philo Forum" on the internet, where the concept of violence is analysed, I received a reader's mail referring to Meggle's work. So I found the article "Terror and Counter-Terror", which is included in the mentioned collection, and also wrote an online review about it. Georg Meggle systematically approaches the concept of terror. His work stands out, because since September 11 we hear about terror and the fighting of terror on every corner, we even go through wars because of this terror, and still we hardly think about what "terror" really means and what the concept denotes. In the newspapers this is only very rarely an issue and the politicians, too, are little innovative here. The most intelligent thing I heard was from Federal President Johannes Rau, shortly after September 11. To cut the ground of terror - this was his creed. This would only be possible through justice and thus contentment of the involved players. Yet this direction was not pursued in a consequent way, instead, a lot of money is invested in armament, control, and deterrance. This is the opposite of what we actually want.

The reason for this probably is grounded in the fact that this policy of deterrence through violence and the threat of violence - be it right or wrong - is our tradition. This, at any rate, is what Professor Glenn D. Paige from [www.globalnonviolence.org](http://www.globalnonviolence.org) in Hawaii concludes and he calls it a "lethal philosophical tradition", in his book "Nonkilling Global Political Science" (Xlibris 2002, available online as a PDF file), which is being translated into sixteen languages now. Paige is a practitioner, just like Meggle. One is a political scientist, the other a philosopher. Both see the responsibility of acting within the society in their professions. For Glenn Paige it had been the experiences of the Korean War which had led him to the conviction that violence, and especially killing violence, is to be rejected consequently. He posed a question to many of his colleagues all over the world asking whether they can imagine a nonkilling society. Most of the questioned people admitted to never seriously have dealt with the issue. So Glenn Paige developed the nonkilling theses with the intention to provide possibilities, arguments and inspiration for both politicians and political scientists. Glenn Paige's book I have read and reviewed some time ago. I regard it as important to make the nonkilling idea more known, in Germany and elsewhere.

### **Meggle, Terror, Wittgenstein**

*(May 4, Flashback)* On Wednesday before the first performance the Duo Rubin and I had press meetings in Leipzig and Halle. This was an opportunity to meet Georg Meggle personally at last. On Tuesday at 8 p.m. I arrived in Leipzig with a huge suitcase and my guitar. Georg Meggle lives only a couple of bus stops away from the station in a cosy flat with a high ceiling. We had enough to talk about. Since our first contact we had mailed here and there, sometimes I had written a new article or he had news from seminars and the academic world. Meggle analyses social controversies. Where else, if not in the university, shall people discuss such things? For him the issue is straightforward: "The subject **TERROR & THE WAR AGAINST IT** is shouting not only since September 11, 2001, but since that day with a louder voice, and also in the West, for more rationality. The more the other public opinion-building institutions (...) fail the more responsible is the institution of the university. It belongs to its major tasks to provide orientational support for a perplexed, desinformed public which is increasingly blocked by the fear of terror & counter-terror. This is a payoff which a democracy by right demands from its universities. What is the use of universities, anyway?" (on page 12 of his book).

Before we went to have a sparagus dinner in a bistro opposite his apartment he showed me his office in the new building of the uni. The interior of the building reminded me remotely of the new Library of Alexandria where I had read parts of my upcoming novel "Omega 5" in February. Metal and glass, high ceiling. Yet the library in Alex is more beautiful, more spacy and less angular. Also more woodwork, the architect for the interior came from northern Europe. Because of the grid structure on the sides of the stairway the new university building in

Leipzig rather had the touch of a custody kind of place. Georg Meggle fetched some photocopies from his office, among them his introductory speech from his appointment, about the "Meaning of Life". And the draft of a planned chain seminar on Palestine Israel. Meggle originally is from the south of Germany and had already taught in Saarbrücken and in Münster. He is an analytical philosopher concerned with practical ethics. His master thesis he wrote about the later works of Ludwig Wittgenstein, who had been important for me, too. I sensed Wittgenstein rather as an artist and was influenced by him formally, by the way he was thinking, his systematic mind and his style. Regarding the content I rather come from a hermeneutical and cognitive philosophy. Where Wittgenstein says: "The world is everything that is the case", my understanding is: "The world is everything that is conscious or not conscious." Georg Meggle had been a friend of Wittgenstein's disciple and successor on the Cambridge Chair, Georg Henrik von Wright, who had for long years been the president of the Academy of the Sciences in Helsinki and who passed away in March 2003. He was several times on the island of his family, on Valö, near Ingöo, an hour away from Helsinki to the west. For Georg Meggle the most beautiful place on earth, as he says.

### **Press Meetings in Berlin, Leipzig and Halle**

*(May 5, 2004)* On it went on the next morning to the public library of Leipzig where we were set to meet for talks with the local press. The Duo Rubin was already there when I entered. I heard the piano from a distance. Michael Krebs from Cologne had already arrived, too. With him I would spend the next two days. Concerning the press meetings in general one can say that some people had really done a lot of work in the preparation, like the journalist Martin Forberg and also Michael Krebs. I went there without any expectations. This is what I had told myself right from the start: no expectations except good concerts, good peace work and support for Givat Haviva. I had no intention of convincing anybody from anything, except maybe the possibility of a peaceful future and the fact that Palestinians are human beings like all human beings.

In Berlin we had had another press meeting a couple of days earlier, where I met Ms. Schmidt for the first time. Dagmar Schmidt is from the Social Democratic Party and member of the German parliament, she is the chairwoman of Givat Haviva Germany and active in several committees which deal with Middle East affairs. She showed me a poem by Nazim Hikmet which she carries in her wallet. She talked well and was of the opinion that this work is not like a drop in the ocean, which hardly has any meaning, but part of a method to contribute to a reconciliation. She did not say this as a quote, but I had the impression that we were quite similar in this question. It just cannot go on like this politically. The meeting took place in the Northrhine Westfalia representational building in Berlin, exactly next to the new embassy of the United Arab Emirates, the expensive construction of which just had been finished. On the day before I had read an interview with the ambassador in one

of the Berlin newspapers. There were not many at the press meeting, mainly because the OSCE conference on anti-Semitism, on which I wrote an article, took place simultaneously. The press files were sent, at any rate, so it was a success in any case. Gesine Strempel was there, we had a long radio interview with her at the Broadcast Berlin Brandenburg (RBB) later on, and some other journalists.

Back to Leipzig: when I sat down at the table in the library, having a look at the tour flyer, pouring in coffee and looking forward to the things which were to happen, a couple of people installed TV projectors near the piano. The Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk (MDR) had come, a TV station, to make a feature. Gabriella, Ithay, Michael, the librarian and me were chatting. A good basis in the cooperation of the Duo Rubin and me was that we could rely on each other in the substantial things. Before the final rehearsal in Berlin we had spotted the potential conflicts, carried out some of them, and afterwards all went very well, because we all have agreed on the fundamental things. It all was about the children and the future of a region which is shaken with crises.

The journalist from the MDR joined us when the Duo Rubin and I were standing together and when the thing was going to start. She began to talk and only looked at Gabriella and Ithay. "First I want you to play a piece, then I make an interview with the two of you." I thought there was something wrong with my ears. But there wasn't. She treated me like air. Suddenly I woke up completely. What to do? Should I start a scene here? No. Write it down later, I thought to myself, that is better. So I withdrew while the three went in the direction of the stage. The interview subsequent to the music was also held at this place and it was loud enough that I could hear Ithay's answers. He deliberately talked a lot about me. I had sensed right from the beginning that the Duo Rubin was also insulted by this behavior. For a second time this would probably not even happen, because we would reject such splittings altogether. This time we were taken by surprise. Who would expect such a thing? The journalist from the Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk even had the nerve to step up to me after the whole thing, saying: "I will of course also say something about you." I guess she wanted to provoke me. Didn't work, though. "You do what you want", I said, without looking at her. I wanted her to go.

Shortly after the TV gang had departed Michael noticed such a strange leather case, as heavy as lead. We asked the friendly librarian, but she had never before seen the thing. Maybe a bomb, someone said. The librarian got pale. Suddenly nobody said anything anymore. I withdrew cautiously to the ground floor. This thing really did look somewhat suspicious. We almost called the police when somebody called the TV guys before. Alright, they had forgotten it. It really is amazing how forgetful the German media is.

In the press echo of the tour - about 20 articles and features - there were two groups: some people understood that the Duo Rubin and me were doing something TOGETHER in order to bring positive impulses to the camps of

Israelis and Palestinians. Other people put Shalom-Salam under the rubric Israel and thus did not need any Palestinians. Rather extreme in this respect was the Jüdische Allgemeine which published the longest article about Shalom-Salam, on page three. That was on May 6. Title: "Shalom, Salam. The Israeli Hungarian Duo Rubin goes on tour through Germany for peace in the Middle East." Nix Palestinians. The Jüdische Allgemeine apparently was of the opinion it can make peace alone :-). This was, anyway, not the fault of Ayala Goldmann, the journalist, who had made a two-hours telephone interview with me. She was fair enough. True, the first time I appeared at all was in the middle of the article, but then she characterizes my attitude in an appropriate way and also brought the poem "Amphibians" from the reading. The two colored photos, with which the article was rounded, show Ithay and Gabriella. Nix Palestinians. Again the editor, not Ayala. I saw the journalist at the press conference of the peace award to Mister Barenboim in the Sorat hotel six weeks later. She is half-Israeli and half-German, as she told me, so we had something in common. In the hotel we exchanged some words, but it was quite hectic in the hall. Moreover, I did not want to comment on the article in front of her that time.

## **The Press**

Michael Krebs after the tour made a file for us with all the newspaper articles, many photos of the events and the speakers, the supporting address of Federal President Rau, the tour dates, infos on the program etc. He had the whole time been enthusiastic about the project, has traveled thousands of kilometers, found sponsors, wrote letters, sent invitations, made press contacts. Most of the things I read in the press were alright. The nicest one for me was the article "Plea for the mutual understanding between peoples. Duo Rubin and Anis Hamadeh present music and poetry in a concert" by Vera Timotijevic in the Bocholter Zeitung on May 17, 2004. On the photo we are standing together on stage after the concert. The mini-article "Three artists for peace" in the B.Z. (on May 26, with small colored photo of us three) was also nice, because on the same page there was an interview with Yoko Ono and a huge picture with John at the Amsterdam Bed Peace.

Other things in my opinion and the one of the Duo Rubin were doubtful. The two understood what it was that got on my nerves. It got on their nerves themselves that most of the newspapers only had them on the photo. It was meant to be a joint project. I didn't have anything against them being in the newspaper with their photo, on the contrary, may they appear often, but this number was about the togetherness. In this issue we agreed. Even though the Duo Rubin had initiated the whole thing and made a lot of preparations even before they met me. An unprecision, which we had committed ourselves, surely was the fact that we did not have a press photo of the three of us. I would have thought about that earlier, but for a long time it had not been clear to me that we would have organized press meetings at all.

Apart from that I regarded the press work simply as a part of the project and just did it. Normally I enter a discussion without prejudice and have a look first, but of course I am aware of the danger which the German press and the press in general can generate. When they don't like you they can harm you a big deal. I had a long talk with Jamal Karsli after having followed his story. He has nothing in common with the monster image that was painted of him for some time. He showed me a photo where he is together with the Israeli intellectuals Uri Davis and Ilan Pappé. Apart from that I have studied the press for years. From the analysis of about 400 newspaper articles mainly from the year 2003 a 108 pages study came into being six months ago, called "The Reproach of anti-Semitism in Critical Reflection". My critique of the press as a bearer of public action is manifold and described in detail elsewhere, for example in the online essays and in the online book: "Rock'n'Roll. Message from Ozzy Balou".

### **On the Road with Michael Krebs**

On we rode to Halle, a second press meeting was scheduled in the Ulrich Church where we would appear one week later. Some journalists attended, I remember having spoken into a cassette recorder also. When we entered the room there was a huge pile with wrapped books on the table. I had a look and saw that it was the autobiography of Paul Spiegel. This man would come across our way some more times during the tour, yet not personally. As it happened, Michael Krebs knew Mister Spiegel by way of the Heinrich Heine Society in Düsseldorf which was also supporting our project.

With Michael Krebs from Cologne I got along well right from the beginning, like with most of the people who I met on tour. They were mostly hearty, to a wide extend tolerant people. This had to do with the magic of Ithay and Gabi, that was clear. After that Michael and me had lunch at a Chinese take-away in the pedestrian zone in Halle we dropped by a newspaper, which had not attended the meeting, and delivered a press file. At those things Michael is rather good. He is an open, merry, energetic character which brings him to his goal quickly. He is an original. We laughed together quite some times.

We drove in his Rover to Düsseldorf. His main occupation is hyperthermy research, or to make PR for it, respectively. Hyperthermy means to overheat the human body for about one hour as a therapy against cancer. Later in the Stefan's in Berlin he showed me a docu film on his laptop. (That was an almost artistic contrast, such a subject matter in a fine café.) As it seems, it is about an alternative therapy which from the part of school medicine has recently been gaining more ground of acceptance. It would not be a magic therapy, Michael said on the highway, but sometimes it heals and often it eases the pain or delays the illness. He combines this work under the name MedicinePaintingMusic (MedizinMalereiMusik) with artistic performances. In this way he brings people together, like the painter Bernd Schwarzer, whom we would see later on, the Duo Rubin and the conductor Julius Ruedell from the Ensemble Ars Millennium.

In those days Michael enthusiastically talked about the Grönemeyer Institute, which he obviously highly appreciated. Herbert, the famous singer? I asked. No, his brother. The professor of medicine. Ah, I see.

On such a long journey in the car you have time to exchange thoughts. Michael is not really a political individual, he is attracted by art much more. This is how he says it himself and it is no deficiency of his, because in my estimation he was doing something good for society and this is political enough. We both knew that we might have different views concerning Israel etc. But right from the beginning there had been respect and interest between us and we both lived spiritual values. Later I heard that he had seen people in the process of dying. He beyond doubt has developed a life-affirming mentality out of these experiences.

We talked about expulsions and Michael said that this is a bad thing, yet the German expelled people also have to accommodate with the facts. I answered that the Palestinians neither have committed the Shoah, nor have they invaded Poland. Michael said this was exactly what another Palestinian had told him in the same issue. He had a good laugh. I said: of course he told you the same. What else should he have told you?

### **Paul Spiegel**

Many people in Germany regard Paul Spiegel rather as an enlightener and someone in whose fate the German history is showing. Someone who talks about the injustice of the Nazi period in an emancipated way and who stands for the kind of tolerance which former Germany was lacking, which had led to terrible consequences. Others notice that Paul Spiegel regularly advocates repressive and violent conflict solutions whenever Jews or Israel are in question, be it against "the anti-Semites", "the terrorists" or the Iraqis. In the current internal conflict between the Central Council of the Jews in Germany and the liberal Jews in Germany he has also predominantly reacted in a repressive way. More than once he deterred me with his utterances. In a speech which he held in Berlin on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the riot in the Warsaw Ghetto and which the newspaper "Die Welt" printed in abridged form on April 30, 2003, Paul Spiegel speaks about a re-interpretation of the ten commandments and a "divine mission" of the Jews to guard human dignity even in darkest times and to put up a resistance, "if necessary even with armed force". The title already has a martial character: "Those who are fighting for death". Here is a quote:

*"(...) The young Israeli pioneer who, with tanned, muscular, and pride-swollen breast, is cultivating his land and defending it with his gun - this is what had been the ideal which Zionism created in order to build up a counter-world to the one of the pale ghetto Jew who is bowing over the holy scripts, bearing patiently every strike of fate. (...) In the ghetto riot a very old Jewish motif shows. To talk in religious terms: in the sinking chaos of the Warsaw Ghetto of Jews the mission from the Sinai Mountain in a modern shape becomes visible again: It is us Jews*

*who have to preserve the word of God and the dignity of man even in the darkest times. The resistance fighters from Warsaw have consciously or unconsciously re-interpreted God's moral commandment from the Sinai Mountain in their way and have poured it into a new form, which for the non-Jewish surroundings, in which he have lived ever since, probably is the only understandable answer to an ancient problem: by being valiant with all our might, if necessary even with armed force, we cling to our divine mission, to our destiny. "*

What is this talk about a "divine mission" and an armed force? I did not intend to go through this again, but it seemed that in the framework of our tour I could not escape it, was confronted with it. So I asked Michael if he could organize me a copy of this book by Paul Spiegel to have a look at what he was writing there. This is how it happened.

It was only after the tour that I found the time to read the book. It was interesting for me, because Spiegel's hometown Warendorf is situated not far from Neubeckum, where I grew up and where the cars have a WAF for Warendorf on the plates. (Quite nearer though is Beckum, the town where Uri Avnery comes from.) Paul Spiegel, "Home again? Memories" (Ullstein 2003) was published in 2001 for the first time. The paperback comprises about 300 pages and several photographs. While this man's fate is recounted here in a way which is relevant as an historic document, one can also trace some irritations emitting from Spiegel.

It appears, for example, to be plausible and right, if Paul Spiegel because of the persecution of Jews in the Nazi dictatorship devotes himself to Jewish identity and that he promotes Judaism in Germany. Doubtful is, on the other hand, that this identity he found and writes about in his autobiography, mainly consists of clichès and generalisations like: "The Jews want to be accepted." (p. 170) or: "We Jews are no obtrusive guests or even cadgers." (p. 276) or: "We Jews have trust in Germany and its people despite anti-Semitism." (p. 248) or: "What can it be that has let us Jews unperturbedly strive after Germany? What do we love in this country and in its people?" (p. 84 f) or: "We Jews are a democratic little people" (p. 184). He writes about "a power which has fascinated and concerned me more and more: Judaism" (p. 110), "the Jewish cause" (pp. 269 and 271). Spiegel quotes individuals who do not fit the "clichè of the slim fearful Jew" (p. 185) and says: "Some people reproach us Jews with hysteria or persecution mania. (...) I believe that we Jews react sensitively and this is what the function of a good seismograph is." (p. 251) In whose name does Paul Spiegel speak here? It is conspicuous that almost all of these clichès are passive: the Jews react upon something, they don't act. But as soon as awkward situations occur "we Jews" suddenly no longer exist: "I do not participate in these shows of the vanities, neither in pseudo-religious discussions like the one about the attitude of 'the Jews' towards homosexuality. I assume that the attitude of 'the' Jews will differ here from individual to individual just like everywhere in the society." (p. 278).



This fixation on Jews and Jewish substance sometimes reaches limits. Should Russian Jews be brought to Germany in order to increase the number of Jews in the German communities? Should Jews for reasons of... (I cannot even say this) marry among each other? "We must not reduce our Judaism to the formality of the descent from a Jewish mother. This would be a late victory for the Nazis. (...) And there is another point: to make Jews it needs Jews. (...) The purpose of my work in the community was, in short, to give the opportunity to our youth - like Gisèle and me had experienced it before -, to make other Jews' acquaintance: with the known happy results." (p. 150 f).

About Israel Paul Spiegel talks only in clichés, too. He calls Israel the "life insurance of the Jewish people." (p. 47 and 279). In view of the violence in Israel and Palestine this obviously is a glorification of reality. "We owed our support to the state, because Israel is the ancient home and the asylum for all Jews." (p. 219) - a glorification of the state. This conditionless loyalty is fictitiously shown in relativity in a few passages like: "This does not mean that I accept every political measure of Israel's" (p. 279). Yet such flourish is not filled with substance or examples in the whole book. There is nothing said about real policies and real political circumstances in the real Israel. A similar, unlimited loyal pathos showed in chiefs at work: the editor of the *Allgemeine Wochenzeitung*, Karl Marx, who employed Spiegel, asked him "one single question: 'Are you prepared to subordinate everything else to journalism?' My enthusiastic 'Certainly!' he commented laconically: 'I did not expect anything else.'" (p. 123).

Maybe all this would not be so bad, if it was not for the latent aggressions which are not questioned. "My father has taught me: do not take anything. By nobody. We Jews have taken enough. We must energetically and on time be valiant." (p. 96). When his father returned to Warendorf from the concentration camp and somebody said: "Ah, the Jew is back in town", the following thing happened: "My father did not even care for the usual flourish (...). Instead he gave a good thrashing to the anti-Semitic slanderer. The bystanders called the British MP, the patrol leader had them explain to him what happened and subsequently he asked my father laconically: 'Why did you not beat this guy to death?'" (p. 97). This is how the paragraph ends and the issue is closed, which suggests that the killing of a human being, who says "Ah, the Jew is back in town", is acceptable.

About his father Spiegel writes: "My father had always been himself completely. He did not need to make a show of his feelings. (...) Father was content with shaking my hand." (p. 90 f). This episode confused me more than any other. The father had survived Auschwitz, had come back to Warendorf and saw wife and boy for the first time after years. That such extreme situations can cause physical distances or other aggravations, seems plausible. And yet someone in such a situation would wish to take in the arm and to be taken in the arm, to touch and be touched. They were alive! The family reunited after years of highest pain and huge losses! Is it necessary there to re-interpret the weaknesses of the father (after whom by right a street in Warendorf was named)

to inner greatness? To make a show of his feelings, to be himself completely. This was obviously not quite so. For what the glorification? You just move away from the thing and don't get closer to it.

Spiegel writes that he does not hold the hatred of Jews to be the primary cause of the fanatical support for Hitler, but a deep feeling of insecurity and need for protection and safety. He calls Hitlerism a fear movement (p. 171). Yet he cannot recognize the feeling of insecurity and the strong need of protection and safety in Israel and also in German Jews as a source of ideologisation. He writes that the looking away of the population was the presupposition for the unfolding of criminal energy (p. 30), and this very looking away is what human rights activists are criticizing, when for example the frontal media selects the news about Israel and when happenings by routine are presented in a way that "the existence of Israel" is not endangered, which automatically de-values the existence of others.

### **What is the Cause of Terror?**

*(May 11, 2004)* "What is the Cause of Terror?" This question divides two worlds. In the car from Halle to Vreden, circa 470 kilometers, I talked with Ithay about it, after having discussed "the thing" for a while. I told him my thesis: there are people who think that terror originates in situations of oppression and there are other people who suppose a multitude of causes for terror. Radicalisation, for instance, could lead to terror, or hostility. The longing for power, maybe. Exaggerated religiosity or ideology. Supporting the thesis that generally terror is caused by oppression is, for example, the fact that suicide attacks empirically visible and regularly spring from situations of oppression, like occupation. In Palestine, in Iraq, in Chechenia. Such assaults are meant to draw the attention to a hopeless situation. This does not justify them, but one cannot ignore this aspect if one wants to understand the situation. Even Paul Spiegel writes this, certainly referring to the own group: concerning the assault of Herschel Grynszpan on November 7, 1938, on the occasion of the deportation of the Polish Jews Spiegel analyses that Grynszpan attempted "to draw the attention to the fate of the deported with a spectacular assault. (...) The Nazis had only waited (...) for such a pretext." (Home again, p. 28).

Is there a justification to terror? This provocative question has been posed publically by Georg Meggle, in his mentioned article and in the discussion with Ted Honderich in the "Leipzig Sunday Talks". A shocking question, some may think on first glance. Yet behind it there is the problem of the just war. Meggle questions the justification of, for instance, UN (also US) interventions. For wars partly are subsumed under his concept of terror. In this concept there are several elements: the act (e.g. activation of a bomb), an actor (terrorist), a violence addressee (e.g. visitor of a café), a terror addressee (e.g. civil population), a final addressee (government) and a purposeful effect (e.g. release of prisoners) (See the essay "Terror& Counter-Terror, p. 34). Meggle writes: "The ethics of terror are a special case of the ethics of violence and of

war." (p. 35). Usually one would think of terror in terms of certain constellations: exaggerated violence, addressed to innocents, in the end against a stately order. It is battled by the state who owns the monopoly on violence. The concept of "state terrorism", which in the international discourse does have a justification, makes clear that an exaggerated violence and one which is (also) addressed to innocents can also spring from stately orders. But do states also get oppressed, so that they make terror? I think so. It is a different kind of oppression, a lack of freedom in the powerful by reason of their fears of loss.

All this is theory. Not grey theory, but theory. We surely need it to elaborate the universal values of the twenty-first century. The Duo Rubin and me did not immediately need it for the Shalom-Salam tour. We made our work of mutual understanding in a practical way. Spontaneously I asked Ithay: "What do you think: if you were the president of Israel and I were the president of Palestine, would there be peace?" Not that we had any real ambitions in this department, this was surely not the case. I meant something different, something principal. Ithay thought about it for a while, not long, then he said yes. Without further comments. Just yes. I looked out of the car window into the landscape and thought that he was right. Actually, the whole tour would have been no use had it been otherwise.

## **Chapter 4: Düsseldorf and Bocholt**

### **Thomas Church Düsseldorf**

*(May 13, 2004)* It was no trouble to get to Düsseldorf. While the area around Bocholt, close to the Dutch border, is something completely different from the capitol of Northrhine Westfalia, Düsseldorf, another civilisation almost, the two cities are not far apart from each other geographically. Relaxed we arrived at the Thomas Church in the afternoon and we had time. As the technician was not there yet we were invited to a cup of tea in a church shop right at the church where we overheard the chats of the ladies who ran the shop. Esoteric, tea-house kind of atmosphere. Meditational, almost inspiring. Cookies were offered. The technician appeared and took us to see the hall. He told us that Elton John made recordings in this concert hall. It was quite a huge hall the spacious front part of which consisted of the stage which at the same time served as an altar. On the opposite side there was a room where we could dress. Our mood was quite good.

Michael Krebs came in, but he had to talk with many people and I hardly saw him. The beamer again made problems, but there still was time. The painter Bernd Schwarzer exhibited some of his paintings, I liked them. Shortly before the performance it turned out that the film could not be shown due to technical problems. Also, the introductory speeches by the organizers and sponsors were rather superficial, and droll, too. So it could happen that people just went to the microphone, whether this disturbed our performance or not. I mean, we did have

an idea about the way the program should be. Moreover, there had been agreements before the performance which spontaneously were forgotten by some people. In this respect I did have better days on stage before.

The hall was not completely filled, but there were quite some people who attended. Maybe two hundred. An American, who is married to a Palestinian, talked to me after the performance. There was an "afterglow" party in the same hall, with drinks of different kind and sandwiches. The party was a good idea and it was also nice that the Heinrich Heine Society participated in it. Kerstin was there, a woman I know in Düsseldorf, she is a baroque singer and could relate to the music of the Duo Rubin a big deal. She also has some knowledge about the Middle East conflict. And there was somebody else I met again: Britta from [www.marhaba.de](http://www.marhaba.de) and her husband Khalid. She had heard about the event at short sight and they did not live far away, so they dropped by spontaneously. The last time I saw them was about one or two years ago, also in Düsseldorf, when I had helped organize the foundation party of Kulturattac in the ZAKK. I was sorry that I had forgotten to inform Britta.

We drank wine, ate sandwiches, talked about politics and culture, smoked, well, the things which people do in a church. Then I met Bernd Schwarzer, the painter. He is extraordinary. At first he gave a ca. twelve kilograms heavy album/book of his' to each of us artists as a present. It is a brilliant work, the pictures and collages by Schwarzer are genialic. Sometimes with van Gogh-like mash technique, dots, waves, lobes reaching out of some pictures in yellow and blue. Engaged in his topics: Europe, Israel, world peace. Active. An eccentric artist, too. He wanted autographs of us in his book. I have never experienced such a thing before. So I signed his book. He wanted it so. Why should I object? He also talked, but the communication was somewhat surreal. He seemed to be far away with his thoughts. He was nice, that was important. Immensely creative.

Michael could talk with him better, I guess. He had to, because he also pursued agent activities for Bernd Schwarzer. This is one of Michael's virtues that he can deal with unusual situations and people. Afterwards we went to his home in Cologne where we stayed overnight. Michael told us many stories and was like electric all the time. We did not have enough time to talk more detailed with him and Petra and their son and so Michael suggested that in the following week we could organize a barbecue or something like that, when the concert in Cologne took place.

### **Before in Düsseldorf**

*(Flashback May 6, 2004)* It was the second time that I entered the starry hotel in Düsseldorf in which the Heinrich Heine Society gathers. This time I was there together with the Duo Rubin. Another press meeting for Shalom-Salam in one of the conference rooms. I talked with Stephan Lorsbach who was helping us with the preparations in Düsseldorf and who also is a musician. Some

journalists came, more than before in other meetings of this kind. The local press, but also someone from the newspaper "Die Welt" was there. Outside in the garden we took some photos. It was relaxed, we felt a certain routine in the meantime. On the occasion of the tour I had compiled a CD with six of my songs. I made 10 copies, only for the participants of the tour. One I gave to Mister Theisen from the Society, one to Stephan and to Michael. After the journalistic part we planned the impending concert in Düsseldorf.

On the day before I had come from Halle with Michael Krebs. He took me with him to a meeting of the Society, including a sparagus meal in a solemn hall. An impressing scene: about 100 people - exceptionlessly men - were sitting at tables listening to a secretary from the government who was talking about different political subject matters connected with the region. Education, economics and other issues. There were interpolated questions, comments and discussions. This was completely new for me. When the talk was over I was even publically introduced, as a representative of Shalom-Salam which the Heinrich Heine Society supported. A friendly gesture.

### **In the Historic Town-Hall**

*(May 14, 2004)* On the next day we went back to Bocholt. Again there was a meeting in the town-hall, we got photo books of the city and its surroundings. The mayor was there and she made clear in her speech that indeed she supported the mutual understanding. The speech was not a flourish speech, it was genuine. Regrettably I did not write down anything of it. It was shortly before the concert on the floor underneath the hall we would play in. We sat at a long antique table with about ten people. Bettina Oehmen had also come, and the German Israeli Society (DIG). Between the DIG and me there had been smaller tensions, but I did not consider them to be destructive. Maybe a little exhausting for all parties. But we were not on wellness tour, our tour was about approximations. One should not escape real conflicts, it is no use. In this way we learned what to think about the respective other and which the more constructive starting-points were and which the more destructive ones.

On the walls of the room there were photos of the mayors of Bocholt in a row. It started in the Kaiser's time and went up to date. I looked into the (male) faces, one after the other. There I noticed a gap between 1933 and 1945. The Nazi mayors were missing. This gave me something to think about. Of course, it is a time one does not like to be reminded of. The picture of Hitler, for example, normally is not shown together with earlier and later German governmental heads, either. Also, this phenomenon is known from history: when a brandnew civilisation starts the earlier one is discarded. Yet were the mayors of the Nazi period shown here, then this could also be understood as a reminder. In the sense of: watch out, this has also happened in our society. These are the faces behind it. They are real. It was real. An explaining text could be attached to the

photo. Why was this an issue for me at all? I guess, because otherwise one can easily forget that the Nazis were not some stories from the media, or extra-terrestrials.

The performance started on time. Our Bocholt hosts were sitting in the audience, and also my parents for whom Bocholt was the nearest of our concert places. This was something special for me. I think they never really had seen me on a stage before. I was not especially nervous for that matter, it was just nice. Also that they made Ithay's and Gabriella's acquaintance. It was surely one of the best performances. Only when I took a look out of the window I got a funny feeling. Directly in front of the building, in the middle of the pedestrian zone, there was a police car. I think they were even two. I asked myself whether the people in Bocholt had committed some kind of weird thing which made them show themselves so frightened. At least there were no tanks or anti-aircraft defense cannons, as far as I could see.

My parents liked it a lot. Afterwards we had dinner together, Dad invited everybody. (He wanted, but the city had already scheduled an amount, so my father donated the same amount.) Mister Merschhemke from the DIG told us some jokes. But the ones by Ithay were better. It would be quite interesting to repeat them here, but rather not. You have to experience this live, sorry. Maybe a viola joke. Ithay told me that the viola (or tenor violin) is the one musical instrument about which people in musical circles crack jokes. What is the difference between a violin and a viola? The viola burns longer. Concerning my Dad I noticed that he was honestly appreciating the Shalom Salam thing. This was not a matter of course, because he grew up in Palestine and he knows the Israelis from completely different contexts. And yet it makes a difference whether you ponder about people in an abstract way, or whether you concretely meet people and talk with them.

My father told me that contacts between Palestinians and Israelis today are not such a taboo anymore in the Palestinian society as they used to be in former times. In the early nineties there had even been a phase in which a factual relaxation would have been possible. Many Palestinians then had been optimistic. I had to think of a documentary film by Spiegel TV for which I translated the Arabic in 1992. It was about collaborators on the one side and the "Black Panthers" on the other, an armed guerilla which had its center around Jenin. I had about two and a half hours of video material and translated it together with a native speaker from the same students' hostel at the Berliner Tor in Hamburg where I was living at the time. Spiegel TV had then just moved into the famous Chile Haus. It was an informative film. About extremists of the Israeli side I have never seen a film on TV, though. A couple of months later I read in the Jerusalem Post that the main character of the film, Ahmad, the Black Panther, who I had witnessed for several hours on video, was killed. It shocked me when I first read it, but I felt no pity. The world of the men with their guns is too alien to me.

## **In the Garden**

*(May 16, 2004)* Silence. In front of me a lawn, behind me the house of Annette and Willy and their children Aino and Till as well as diverse pets, among them an elegant black cat. I had withdrawn onto the terrace with my rucksack. It was before noon and I was alone. Willy taught mathematics and Dutch, Annette history. A teacher family like from a picture book. They are neighbors of Bettina and Christoph. The Duo Rubin stayed with them and I with the neighbors. A feeling of "everything is ok" came over me here, a friendly normality of people. More I do not need, I thought. I breathed the garden in front of me while writing the diary. I wanted it to become beautiful. Could I make this? If I thought of Willy and Annette maybe I could make it. They accepted me the way I am, even liked me. That I am a writer and musician, and critical, too, was completely normal here. Of course, it is always important through which door one is coming in. Were the circumstances different we might have missed each other. Problems mostly don't happen because of the people, but because of the situations in which they meet. Through which door are you coming in? How are you introduced?

Here in the garden I could relax a little. Why was that a problem? Where was my problem? Relax from what, from the stress of the performances? It was not so bad after all. No, it was not this stress. It was the other one. Rafah at the moment was like hell. The stress consisted of the question what we could achieve with this tour and of the worry that I might not be able to do justice to my responsibility without offending people. How should I behave? Did I have to hide? Why did I have to hide? What exactly did I have to hide?

When I rode with Christoph late in the evening in his car from Vreden to Bocholt, we talked. I had the impression to get along with him quite well. When we talked about "the thing" Christoph mentioned the familiar view that the Palestinians had had all possibilities to get to peace with Oslo and Camp David, with Barak and Clinton that is. There I noticed that we came from two different worlds. And yet Christoph, like Ithay, did not seem to be a really political individual to me. Not in the intellectual sense, I mean. Of course he was political when he supported the Shalom Salam project and he did that in an engaged way. But a political discussion about Oslo/Camp David was not the point here. Christoph had learned about Israel in the context of German history. Maybe I was the first Palestinian, or of Palestinian origin or whatever, I mean from the other side, whom he learned more about.

At least I handed him a copy of Uri's article "Twelve conventional lies" which I had originally printed out for Ithay, because this issue was part of our problem bundle. Avnery wrote there that Oslo and Camp David could not at all have led to Palestinian sovereignty, because, for example, the Jerusalem question remained excluded, because there was no return to the border of 1967, because 80 percent of the settlers were to remain where they are, no return of a single

refugee to Israel, no abolition of the checkpoints, and a bantustanisation of the state territory, meaning a splintering in a way unable to survive. Oslo and Camp David were no realistic, no acceptable options. It is not even necessary to get lost in details here, for the Israeli offers have always and exceptionless implied the control over the Palestinians, this is hardly ever denied. "We have to control them, because they constitute a danger for us." As long as this mentality - not policy - prevails I do not see any change. After all, the Israelis - the officials, i.e. politicians, officers, soldiers - surely constitute a danger for the Palestinian population, see Rafah and every other place where Palestinians have to live under arbitrary Israeli command. But nobody for this reason would grant the Palestinians to control or punish the Jewish population. Helicopter attacks by the official Palestinian side on Israeli extremists are unthinkable. Or custody of kin. Oh yes, I remember what my problem was on this tour and with the writing of these chapters. This thing.

### **On the Train to Berlin**

(Sunday, May 16, 2004) The weekend I had spent with my parents. They had stayed overnight in Bocholt and we drove off the highway to their place. Half of the way I drove. This wonderful Westfalian landscape! We listened to Bettina Oehmen's CDs in the car. A couple of hours earlier we had sat together at the table. She had even spontaneously mixed her blossom extracts for all of us and gave it to us. Now I was on the train again. The next official appearance was only on Tuesday, in Oldenburg. But we had an extra concert in Berlin on Monday, in the school of Ithay's and Gabriella's son, therefore I took this roundabout way.

It is often really nicer to ride the train than to take a car. You can use the time for reading. For example the letter from Karl Merschhemke, the gentleman from the DIG. It had not been a hundred percent easy between us, rather like porcelain. In his letter, which he wrote after the concert in Bocholt, he gives us some advise concerning the program. Much more interesting are the two episodes of his book which he attached as an illustration of his political convictions and which I want to represent here as they are meant for a wider audience and as they can explain, almost settle, a lot. The title of the book is not mentioned in the letter, but it is about war memories. Karl Merschhemke writes:

*Episode 1: In the domain of our working area (as a student on labor supply vacation) there were also Russian assistants, civilians and prisoners of war. The Russian war prisoners were strictly kept in custody; they looked debilitated and must have had a gruesome hunger, as they picked up from the ground everything that was eatable and immediately put it greedily into their mouths without washing. They were not allowed to pause while working. We were not allowed to approach them. Different from this especially harshly treated group were the Russian civil forces. One day I spent a couple of minutes with a young Russian woman who spoke passable German. She told me that she - viewing*



*the German soldiers as liberators from the violent Communist reign - had reported to voluntary service in Germany. She had trusted that her work would serve the battle against the power of Stalin. When she had reached Germany she was arrested, put up scantily in mass barracks and forced to do service in the ammunition factory with the worst of food-supply. There was no way to help either the captured soldiers, or the deceived and disappointed civil forces. The general surveillance and the menace of punishments deterred everybody.*

*Even worse than these encounters and experiences of complete helplessness was the following event. From the freight train, where I did my service, I observed a guard when the train made a stop. He was keeping a small group of Russians in custody, with a primed and loaded gun. A young Russian, apparently in a moment of uncontrollable weakness, leaned for a short moment on the tip of his spade. The guide saw it, had him approach, put his gun aside, made the Russian put his hands on the seams of his trousers and started hitting him hard, until he dropped and rolled down the railway embankment. I could not believe that this, which I had witnessed here with my own eyes, could be reality. It was, at any rate, more than I could cope with or more than I was ready to tolerate despite all danger. During the next working break, which we were allowed to take, I strolled, as if without intention, to the guard, a man of about 45 years and involved him, among other things, in a harmless discussion about his family, asking also whether he had children. He spoke frankly and enthusiastically about his relatives and readily and proudly showed me a picture of his 15 year-old son. When I held it in my hand I said with a low voice: 'I wished he could have watched you 15 minutes ago.' The guard got pale; with a voice that was trembling with anger it rattled out of him that he even did other things, he had done service in the concentration camp, there he even had to guard Catholic and Protestant clerics. Those he would also have brought down, every morning he made them appear for report and stand at attention along the wall of the room, then he 'hit them one in the gob' in a row, then they became 'very nice the whole day through', and he continued: 'And people like you we will also get down, if you continue to involve yourself in things which you do not understand and which are not your business.' For the rest of the day my thoughts turned in tiny little circles, I felt utterly helpless, could neither integrate this experience into my hitherto existing world, nor did I know what could have been done. This world would probably not be overcome with scout-like games. I felt dirty, in a way, was depressed and sad. - This immediate encounter with the rough brutality, the apparently real evil, which the human being seemed to be capable of, had made me brood for days and has been concerning me for a long time, actually a whole life long. I was 18 years old. So far I would have sworn that human beings could not be capable of absolute, personally committed and wanted cruelty. Now we became witnesses of injustice and cruelties which we were confronted with in complete helplessness. The more harmless part of our lives, childhood, adolescence and the protected school days, times which had not seemed to us to be so protected, would probably remain past forever, irretrievable years for which we unexpectedly soon would begin to long back.*

*It appears to be important to me to note that I never, be it after the event, be it at the time of the experience, wanted to or even could give the impression of myself having been an active, or even heroic, anti-Nazi. According to the heritage of our birth, the many influences of childhood and the whole education we just were unable to participate in violence and cruelty. They disgusted us, but it did not make any revolutionaries out of us. We had been saved from active cruelty without own merits. It is impossible for me to say how I would have behaved or proven myself if accident or providence had brought me into a situation like the one of the sisters Scholl who had thrown copies of anti-Hitler pamphlets into the hall of the University of Munich and only because of a silly accident were being watched by the caretaker. I have, at any rate, never been a hero, even if I, with trick and ruse, but also with caution, had tried again and again to strew sand into the clockwork of regional and super-regional history, without remotely being able to understand wider contexts. It was actually never more than the attempt of the child to be valiant against the power of the big ones as far as possible, without - at the end of the phase of adolescence - having the overview that would have been necessary in order to see the core of things. For a senior it is difficult to reconstruct and recall things...*

*Episode 2: Our train (I was a soldier on the way to the barracks) moved forward only very slowly. In the total darkness (due to the war) of the late evening it stopped on the remote side track of a Berlin station. We were in a state of sleepy carelessness, like in the nocturnal Garden of Eden. We were expelled from it suddenly and without warning. The unescapable hardness of the times confronted and shook us. On a side track, only three meters away from us, a freight train stopped immediately next to our waggon. On the lateral wall of the closed waggon, the huge sliding door of which was nailed with crossed planks, it read in white script: '8 horses or 40 people.' The planks were broke open by men in black uniforms, one of them yelled: 'kaput ones out!' Some bundles of cloth flew out of the widely opened door of the waggon. - What I was forced to witness went far beyond my hitherto existing capacity which had still been stamped by the protected life of the childhood. Only a couple of seconds later I realized that they were corpses which landed on the cold ballast of the railway ground. Laying in the luggage net above in the compartment I simultaneously noticed that my head was in the latitude of a small peep-hole in the freight waggon. And suddenly I noticed in the darkness of this peep-hole three or four faces looking at me with eyes deep and black in the sockets, in a despaired expressionlessness. It must have been Jews or other NS victims who surely knew that they were on the way 'into the gas' and who certainly assumed that we belonged to the armed enemies sending them into a violent death while being safe themselves. They could not know that I, in fact, at the moment of the encounter of our eyes did in a flash think about what one could do, but as quickly knew that one was completely powerless. Then our train jolted, we rode on. I can and will never forget those apathetic looks of deepest helplessness. The expulsion from the paradise of our childhood and youth had become horrible reality.*

*Of course I could integrate those terrible moments only very limitedly into my hitherto existing life, during this short moment. Only with time, long after our train had resumed its course, I realized what unbelievable roughness and inhumanity I accidentally had to witness, and it took another long time until I comprehended that the things, which we had occasionally heard of in our hometown only as highly indefinite rumors, had taken place as an unescapable manifestation of evil right in front of my eyes. All of it, especially the aspect of the fatefully unescapable, was gruesome; I guess I have never again experienced and sensed anything similarly bad like that and this moment has never left me anymore. The experience of total powerlessness in front of the unlimited evil was benumbing. There was nothing at all, really nothing at all, we could do against it. Where was this god who "endlessly gently holds this falling in his hands" (R.M.Rilke)?"*

Mister Merschhemke also writes in his letter that he feels deeply connected to our cause to bring more humanity into a world that is coined by inhumanity. He is hoping that younger forces like us three would take the invisible flag of humanitas and carry it on. OK. That was a good contribution. I stretched my neck and looked through the train window into the dark evening. Merschhemke... What else might this man have gone through? What he writes and the way he writes it is not alien to me. A different generation, sure, but this could be considered, it did not change the meaning of what he said. Humanitas, that even is enough. There was nothing in these excerpts of his book which would have disturbed me. Well, maybe the repetitive references to "evil" and the inescapability of the events, but to measure the text against these details would mean using scales for weighing gold, as we say in German. It would not be adequate. This man made experiences which have never left him. Which are concerning him until today. I wish my granddad would have written like this, then we would have come closer to each other. He would have come closer to people in general.

Funny how close Mister Merschhemke suddenly had come, after reading his text. There had been slight aggressions due to political contexts, but here? What was he doing here other than what I am doing myself? Not to take the train. No, to write about the things that happen, the things one finds relevant, one wants to share, to convey, searching. To find the inner balance by reflected writing. And if we were even connected by humanitas, why then was not everything alright?

To explain this I could insert a poem by Erich Fried here. I could also mention that I get emails from Palestine/Israel every day and in them find reports on ferocities like the murder of civilians, custody of kin, destruction of private homes, brutalities at the checkpoints, theft of land via building of the wall, theft of olives, racist marriage laws and things I do not even dare to tell, because... The tone of despair and urgency, at any rate, is very similar to the one from the memories of Mister Merschhemke. When my father reads this above he also will

think about Palestine, many people do that. Even Lapid from the Israeli government associated this way when he saw the image of his grandmother behind an old Palestinian woman who was in deep pain. This is not about a comparison with the heaviness of the Nazi dictatorship, but about regularities of feelings in victims of oppressive situations. When will the human right be valid for all human beings at last? Right because I feel obliged to humanism I cannot ignore this. I can hardly tolerate when others ignore it. And the mainstream does ignore it. This is the conflict in which I live. I must not be silent, but I also cannot really talk.

## **Chapter 5: Oldenburg, RBB, Cologne**

### **Oldenburg**

*(May 18, 2004)* The performance in Oldenburg was a little combersome. We did a couple of times experience on tour that it is not easy to activate people. But this time there was hardly any advertisement. The biggest part of the posters we saw on a pile, they had not been used. Also at the main entrance of the concert hall in Oldenburg there was none, only a single poster was attached lonely in the hall. The organizer, the Jewish community there, said that the city would not allow them to stick posters at the main entrance. The respective people, however, would know about the concert and would find it. This surprised me. I could not imagine that the city of Oldenburg would not have supported Shalom-Salam if it had known about it. We could not adequately have our table with books and CDs placed, either, because the organizers had a sales table themselves, with a - quite nice - two-dimensional harlekin figure out of painted metal which also had to do with Givat Haviva and which was sold to its benefit. The situation was accordingly not completely relaxed and we artists reminded each other of the fact that we have come for the audience and that the audience had nothing to do with these irritations. And there were indeed people attending and they listened to us, too.

We had arrived in the city early. I went for a stroll. Gabriella and Ithay always liked to have about an hour for checking the instruments and the acoustics and to warm up the fingers. I normally was prepared more quickly: I used to test the microphone, put the texts for the reading down at the desk and went through the final song one time with Ithay, that was quickly done. Thus I enjoyed the afternoon sun. It was a beautiful day. Oldenburg does have something nice about it. I only knew it vaguely, because at the university there there are a couple

of progressive scientists, as I remembered darkly. There was an Oldenburg Series or something like that, I forgot. A city in between the rivers Ems and Weser with a population of about 160.000 inhabitants. I think we have all in all only appeared in really old cities - very charming -, because Oldenburg, too, has a superlong tradition which reaches back to the year 1108.

Shortly before the show the usual scene in the dressing room: Gabriella and me walking up and down the room, Ithay liberating himself by playing some extra squeaky sounds on the cello. We talked little. Suddenly a knock on the door. At first we thought that we are called to the performance, but two people stood before me who I did not know: a friendly looking lady, who unintentionally reminded me of the detective Miss Marple, and a young Arab in her company. She introduced herself as Ellen Rohlf. I see!! I knew her from the internet, was glad to see her. Ellen Rohlf regularly translates the texts of Uri Avnery into German and she has also for many years been writing herself, both journalistically and literary. Often she had been to Palestine and Israel.

We talked a little outside where I could smoke. She lived not far away and came to visit our concert reading. It was a pity that her escort had to leave early, otherwise he could have joined us when we went to the restaurant after the performance. We chose a Greek restaurant, the four of us, the Duo Rubin and us two. It was a pleasant evening. Of course we talked politics, but not only. It was also about travels, memories and music. Ellen Rohlf had visited Givat Haviva in Israel already. I liked it a lot that we could be together in this constellation. It did become clear that not everybody at the table had the same views about everything, but with a shared humanism one can have a good time together in a Greek restaurant.

### **Ellen Rohlf's Texte**

Next to numerous articles, translations and poems there are two books which Ellen Rohlf wrote and compiled (in German), "The Children of Bethlehem. Documentation" (with Muna Hamzeh-Muhaisen, 2000) and: "Say Mother, what does Peace Look Like? Reflective and Questionable Issues of the Israel Palestine Conflict" (Dura Publishing House 1993). Both are compilations. In the first book you can find many Palestinian voices. They talk about memories and everyday life. "What does Peace Look Like?" is made of texts concerning Palestinian history and present, both by Ellen Rohlf and from sources she collected. "What does Peace Look Like?" is especially important to her. On the internet you can find a lot about her. A recent poem of Ellen Rohlf's is dedicated to Daniel Barenboim:

### **GIVE them Violins!**

*Do not take away from them the bread and the water!*  
The land, the olive trees, streets, houses, schools and places of work!

Do not take away from them dignity, freedom, hope and the courage to live,  
But *take away* the checkpoints and road-blocks  
The sharp tone of orders, the humiliating movement,  
the under-cover squads, the collaborators,  
the prison camps with their torturers,  
the tanks, snipers, helicopters, bulldozers,  
the tear gas, the noise of the engines,  
the monster which the apartheid wall is.  
Take all this away! and  
Stop the arresting, destroying, injuring, the targeted killing!

Otherwise they take not only stones into their hands, but Kalashnikows  
They smuggle weapons and construct missiles,  
hide mines on the side of the road -  
Yes, they will wear explosive belts around their bodies ....  
- Do they have anything left to lose  
- Except the fear of death?  
and so they pull innocents into their own ones.  
Who are they? Terrorists, freedom fighters?  
Who sows wind - will harvest storm.  
Who sows violence will be confronted with terror.

**So: Give them violins**, trumpets, celli and drums into their hands -  
Dignity and respect of the other  
will make them catch enthusiasm  
give them love, understanding  
and true meaning for a life in rewarding future.

Thus Ramzi the stone thrower became - Ramzi the violinist.  
Samir the Intifada boy became - Samir the architect.  
Majid the frustrated became - Majid the doctor.  
Nazmi the beaten became - Nazmi the archaeologist.  
Mahmud the robbed became - Mahmud the poet.  
Sliman the humiliated became - Sliman the painter.  
Noah the traumatized became --- Noah the fighter for peace.  
Ahmed the tortured - will hopefully become just a normal family dad.

**Yes, give them violins** into their hands, the brush, the book or a tool,  
Give back human dignity, hope and a goal for the eyes.  
And of course the bread and the water,  
The house, the land with its crops,  
Give back pride to the individual and the families,  
Freedom and security in the own country!

**Give them violins into the hands!** - then they will prove  
their genes\* are not different from the ones of normal people.  
They will live in peace with themselves and their Jewish neighbors.

After Martin Buber, Yeshayahu Leibowitz and Yehudi Menuhin  
It would never have been different.  
But now the spirit of reconciliation and forgiving is to grow.  
**So give them violins into the hands and hope into the hearts!**

*(\* An Israeli general claimed in 2003 that the Palestinians have genes of violence and therefore would be terrorists.)*

The assessment of Ellen Rohlf in the Jewish Israeli public is probably similar to the assessment of Uri Avnery who wrote the preface of "What does Peace Look Like?" This man is a phenomenon. It is true that he has sharp critics, but his deeds have brought him respect on all sides. Recently he became 80 and he still is active like a young man, this is absolutely remarkable. He could withdraw, lean back a little without so much stress, but this man is breaking all records. Not in all points I agree with him, he favors two states, I don't believe in the two-states solution, he is a Zionist, I don't believe in Zionism, but I like his mentality and also most of the things he writes. His vision is the reconciliation of the children of Abraham. In this point we completely agree. I even say: Judaism, Christianity and Islam are basically the same thing. It is the same thing.

Later on I asked someone from the (so-called) left Israeli spectrum after Ellen Rohlf. Yes, she would be known, he said. Yet she would sometimes write a bit too emotional. This thing about emotionality is remarkable, because it is about the question whether or not feelings have a place in public life. Objectivity is often demanded. Not always without a right, not always by right. In the end, the whole catalogue of the human rights is about feelings. This, in any case, is how one can see it. I think it is important to not lose the ground contact, to not become abstract. This is a danger I see in the "objectivity" of war. The counter-danger is that the emotionality of journalistic texts may associate the support for specific groups, even if in reality it might be about the support of the human rights. Of Ellen Rohlf, at any rate, I had the best memories in Oldenburg, also objectively.

### **A Short Break**

*(Wednesday, May 19, 2004)* Eight performances were now behind us. Actually nine, if one took the last rehearsal in the Jewish High School into account. For two weeks we had been on the road together. When I woke up in the hotel the next morning or noon I was rather groggy. We said goodbye now for the time being, the Duo Rubin and I. They went back to Berlin, we had five days off until the performance in Cologne. Yet first we had to get back home, and moreover we had a radio interview at the Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg (RBB) on the Cologne day at noon. So the free time melted to three days only. At the breakfast buffet I was the last one, subsequently I made my way to the station nearby. The guitar I had left with the Duo Rubin. It is not too far from Oldenburg to Kiel, sometime at noon I finally fell into my bed at home and wanted to sleep for four weeks.

But I didn't. In my mind I recalled all the things which happened and I took out Sophia's book again, "I have come as a Human", which by now I had almost finished reading. The whole time through I had carried it in my rucksack. We traveled parallel and on different time levels. While I was touring Germany in 2004 with the Duo Rubin, at the periphery of the Middle East conflict, she in the year 2002 traveled through Palestine and Israel together with her daughter Julia, in the center of the conflict. Last year Julia sat next to me at a conference in Berlin. She had two dogs with her which were as big as elephants. I had to pay attention when she turned her head, because she wore a mighty feather in her hair. There is an article of hers in the book of her mother. In it she reports about an adventurous journey in a Palestinian ambulance car.

I could almost feel the mud under the feet of the peace activists who were rallying through the occupied Ramallah, close to each other, approaching the soldiers and tanks. I imagined the faces like in a film, saw them in their quarters, standing on a chair and talking into a mobile phone, in complicated positions - because of the phone connexion. These people were not against Israel, on the contrary. If there was anybody working for the security of the real Israel, then it was them. The advocates of the human rights. Rachel Corrie died for it. A tank rolled over her and killed her when she was demonstrating against violence. Later I read a letter of her parents who had come to Israel from the USA to trace Rachel's last experiences. Their letter had deeply touched me. It was completely without any feelings of hatred or revenge, it was compassionate and constructive. I admired Rachel Corrie's parents.

Sophia Deeg also is a progressive and courageous woman to me and I take an example from her. She does not escape the conflict, but she does her best to support the global network for an equal peace between all people. This is an attitude she also showed in her TV appearance at Alfred Biolek's, the famous German talkshow host. I was looking forward to meeting her in October during the Frankfurt book fair.

But first the tour had to be finished. Cologne and Berlin were still ahead of us. Both events in a bigger framework. I was especially curious about Berlin, the finale. How would it be in the DaimlerChrysler building? I had already heard from the Duo Rubin that DC would make a big effort. For me it was the first time to participate in such a sponsored performance.

### **Radio Meeting in Berlin**

*(May 23, 2004)* In the building of the Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg we met Dagmar Schmidt again, the legislator, as well as the journalist Gesine Stempel. We sat around a round table, in a small recording room. The discussion was broadcast a few hours later. Barbara Fuchs, an acquaintance from Attac circles, who is also doing public work, later wrote to me that she heard it on the radio. We had hardly talked about it before, the Duo Rubin and me, we just spoke



about the central message for a moment. We already knew each other and were able to assess what would happen. There has to be space left for spontaneity, too. With Dagmar Schmidt we did not talk at all before the interview, all this actually did not pose a problem. I emphasize this, because it is not a matter of course. Here is the wording of the conversation in English translation:

**Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg:  
Conversation with the Duo Rubin, Anis and Dagmar Schmidt  
about the Benefice Tour "Shalom-Salam" for the benefit of Givat Haviva**

*Program: "Zeitpunkte" on May 23, 2004, 05.05-06.00 p.m.*

*Editor: Birgit Ludwig, Host: Gesine Stempel, Technician: Annette Kruschke*

*Intro music: "Schlittenfahrt" ("Sled") by Jaques Offenbach (Duorubin)*

GS: ...and at the microphone welcoming you today is Gesine Stempel. Day by day new terrifying news about worldwide violence, day by day news from the conflict between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, and again and again new suicide and killing assaults in Israel. The confrontations between Israeli soldiers and armed Palestinians have been escalating in the last days in the Gaza Strip. Therefore the subject of the "Zeitpunkte" today is of sad current significance. "Shalom-Salam" is the name of the benefice tour under the patronage of Johannes Rau, it is on stage at the moment in German cities. A beneficiary tour for the benefit of the Jewish Arab peace center Givat Haviva. We will introduce the Duo Rubin for you, they are Ithay Khen and Gabriella Gonda-Khen, and the essayist Anis Hamadeh as well as the legislator Dagmar Schmidt, four people who are working with the means of art and of politics for the peace between Jews and Palestinians, against hate and violence, for the mutual understanding of the peoples. No war lasts forever, they say, peace must grow bottom-up. We invest in the future.

*(Musical contribution: "Schlittenfahrt")*

GS: This was the Duo Rubin with the "Sled" by Jaques Offenbach, Cello: Ithay Khen, Piano: Gabriella Gonda-Khen. "Who has no power for dreaming has no power for living", wrote Ernst Toller, German playwright and pacifist, who exactly 65 years ago died in the New York exile. "Shalom-Salam", the Hebrew and the Arabic words for "peace", form the title of your benefice tour through Germany. On May 26 it will end in Berlin. How did the engagement for Givat Haviva, the Jewish Arab peace center in Israel, about the work of which we have already reported in the "Zeitpunkte", come about? And the question at first is for the Duo Rubin, for Ithay Khen and Gabriella Gonda-Khen. Ithay Khen is a decorated Israeli cellist, scholarship holder of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, and his wife Gabriella Gonda is also decorated with awards and she is a pianist. So how did you get to this project? What has motivated you, as it were?

GGK: In 2000 we visited Israel. We go there every year... On this morning we did not hear the news. We did not turn on the radio and we rode through a valley which is called Vadi Ara. Suddenly we saw utterly frightening pictures. We found ourselves in a situation in which - one could say - we were afraid for our lives. And we saw shattered cars, burnt-out car-tyres, pulled-out traffic lights, and it was a shocking picture. When you live in Germany and only watch the news and don't experience it yourself, what it means to be in a war situation, then maybe you cannot really understand how burning this problem is in Israel. You know, these pictures have so much shocked us... That even the Israeli Arabs have expressed (their solidarity) to the Palestinians... that there is something not in order. Something must be done. We came back to Berlin and we had the feeling: what is going on here? The politicians negotiate and negotiate, but the civil population is suffering, on both sides. And we artists, what can we as artists do to help in this suffering? In Berlin we made a big research, phone calls, writing letters, asking friends... We asked a number of questions: where is such an institution where we can help? Our friend from the Jewish High School, Ms. Otterbach, helped us along. She said: there is such an institution, it is called Givat Haviva, where both peoples have the opportunity to make each other's acquaintance, to overcome their prejudice, to smell and touch each other, and there was one project

which has specifically moved us: "Children Teach Children", because we have a son ourselves, Giora, and this has really moved us that in children there is a chance to overcome prejudice, in the education. So there is a future. And this is how we got to Givat Haviva.

GS: This was Gabriella Gonda-Khen, the pianist, she comes from Hungary, now lives in Berlin and is married to the Israeli Ithay Khen. And you, have you supported the idea right away, that urgently something has to be done for the mutual understanding of these two groups?

IK: Of course. We did that together, the whole research and afterwards also the contact with Anis Hamadeh and with Givat Haviva. In this thing we were both active in the same way and also enthusiastic about the idea that you can really do something yourself.

GS: And how did you meet the two now, Anis Hamadeh?

AH: Ithay and Gabriella found me via internet, my homepage, because I am very active, too, and know several people by way of the internet. I thought about the idea and soon thought, if it is for peace and the children... and as Ithay had also read my critical texts on the subject I joined them. I am very happy and glad about it now as in the course of the time we spent together I learnt more about them and our relationship actually has developed increasingly hearty...

GS: You have been on tour since the ninth of May...

AH: We have been on the road together for a while, that's right. On the other hand I sometimes also sense a deep inner strife, especially now in the past days there have been terrible things going on in Gaza and in Rafah most of all. Forty up to fifty dead is what they say, and this really shakes me and it is always present.

GS: Do tell us something about your roots, Anis.

AH: My father comes from a small town near Jenin in the Westbank. I myself was born in Germany, in Hamburg. My mother originally is from East Prussia. My parents met in Germany and I have studied Islamic Studies and increasingly have dealt with the subject as an artist, too. Once I also was Arabic teacher at the University of Kiel, but now I am mainly active in this border area between journalism, art and politics.

GS: Thank you so far, Anis. The conflicts between the three of you on stage maybe, and the tensions which spring from that, also from the current political situation, this is something I would want to talk about later on. Now I would like to ask Dagmar Schmidt to introduce herself. She is a politician from the Social Democratic Party (SPD), she is engaged for Israel, for the Middle East, she is a member of the German Israeli Society, she is chairwoman of Givat Haviva Germany and she is speaker of the Israel Discussion Circle in her parliamentary party. How does this engagement come about, Ms. Schmidt?

DS: Maybe it was an accident, maybe also it was a providence, I don't know. In any case there were some key experiences which let me stay with this issue, with these two countries, and maybe I can name these key experiences: the first was when we had a meeting in the Gaza Strip together with the former chairman of the parliamentary party, Rudolf Scharping, and an Auschwitz survivor, Max Mannheimer, who today lives in Bavaria, said to the Palestinians there: "I wish you all the freedom which you wish and you may believe me: I know what freedom is." At that I felt a cold shiver running down my spine. It was, at any rate, a significant journey, because we had talks with Rabin, two days before he was killed, and then two days later in Germany I heard about this terrible murder. And fact is, afterwards I had been an election observer in the Gaza Strip, in Khan Yunis, and I experienced the Palestinians as human beings who really have voted with a huge pleasure of anticipation of "Now it is starting" and "Now this state will come into being", and with dignity they stood in rows and waited until finally they could vote with their crosses... And I also would like to fully engage in that this mutual understanding from human to human also takes place in those times when dialogues do not seem to be possible anymore.

GS: You also are chairwoman of Givat Haviva Germany. Please tell us in short what kind of center this is. Now, I don't mean single projects, but Givat Haviva as such.

DS: In short this is hardly possible, but the center has next to the historical awareness and the analysis of Jewish resistance given itself a name which springs from the kibbuz movement, and that is the name "Givat Haviva", which means as much as "Hill of Haviva". Haviva is a women's name, and this woman, Haviva Reik, was a resistance fighter who in front of the enemy lines had let herself be dropped with a parachute and tried to support the partisan fighters in this way. Later she got arrested and killed, murdered by the Nazis. In remembrance of this courageous, great woman this center gave itself the name. Yet today in the first place they work for a mutual understanding between the two ethnic groups.

*Musical contribution: Arabic song "Ya 'Uud" by Amal Murkus*

GS: This was Amal Murkus singing about the Ud. Amal Murkus works together with Palestinian and Israeli musicians in Israel. My guests in the studio are the Duo Rubin, Ithay Khen, decorated Israeli cellist and scholarship holder - I said that before - of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as Gabriella Gonda-Khen, Dagmar Schmidt from the SPD and Anis Hamadeh. And Anis, you I would like to ask... as you are here in your capacity as an essayist, a poet, absolver of Islamic Studies, born in Germany, mother originally from East Prussia, father from the West Jordan Land... You I would like to ask: what is an Ud, the thing which Amal Murkus just sang about?

AH: The Ud is an old Arabian lute instrument, and the word "lute" (in German "Laute") is derived from the Arabic "al-Ud", the "l" being included in the new German word, so it is a forerunner of the guitar, basically, with the typical melon belly and it is very popular in the Orient, not only in the Arab cultures, but also in the Orient in general.

GS: Let us talk about the project now which you are in the middle of right now, the beneficiary tour for Givat Haviva, "Shalom-Salam", and I would like to know what is going on on stage when you appear. What are you doing, for example? Well, I mean music is international - we all think we understand music -, but concerning the words this is a bit more difficult.

AH: Right, but it is also a good combination, when you have something without words, which conveys a lot of feeling, on the one hand, and on the other hand verbal contributions which show the same thing again, on another level. I read from different books, two books, two and a half, maybe, for one thing from my poetry album "Loving Jay. A Timeless Story", I read a couple of pieces from that which partly also are enriched musically by the Duo Rubin, and I also read from the book "We Both Want to Live Here. A Difficult Friendship in Jerusalem" edited by Sylke Tempel, by Odelia Ainbinder and Amal Rifai, appeared last year in the Rowohlt Berlin Publishing House, dialogues between an Israeli and a Palestinian.

GS: Could you read something for us?

AH: I would like to recite a tiny poem from "Loving Jay", maybe, which might be better for the radio purpose than a longer text, would, anyway, like to mention before that at the end (of the stage appearances) I also play one of my songs together with Ithay, who accompanies me on the cello, while I play guitar, because I am also a songwriter. And the short poem, which normally is well-received on stage, is called: "Kinds of Love". It is a three-line-poem and it goes like this: "To rule wants human love. To heal wants divine love. Kings we are, with wings of dust."

GS: How do you know whether something is well-received when you are on stage? What does the audience convey to you?

AH: Normally one can sense this, it does not even always need the applause, there is a kind of connexion to the audience. Sometimes, like in Leipzig, we even had standing ovations, at the end, in other cases, like in Oldenburg, people were a bit more reserved. There had obviously been a distance. But generally we are receiving very good feedback, both that we feel it and that people tell us afterwards. There are a lot of cordialities and many friendly faces looking at us.

GGK: I would like to add that our feeling shows that this, actually, is a subject which is interesting for everybody, only that somebody has to start and take the initiative. In each audience, no matter whether seniors or juniors, we sensed a good deal of engagement, that we have shown them a way. And they now try to think about how they themselves can further promote this thing. Also that they had stood up after the concert... the whole audience, this of course for us artists was an unbelievably touching and very exciting moment... when we saw, the audience is standing up, applauds, and this is not only for our art, but for the whole humanity. This is something exquisitely beautiful.

GS: So you are saying that a longing for peace is being expressed there which you are giving wings to, kind of like in the poem by Anis Hamadeh?

GGK: Yeah, right. Exactly.

GS: Which music do you play? Are you exclusively playing classical music?

IK: No, in the first half we also play a piece of an Arab composer, by Alberto Hemsí, "Meditation", and also two songs without words by Paul Ben Chaim, who is an Israeli composer, and this is to symbolize how similar the music on both sides is, on the Arab and on the Israeli, meaning that we try to convey something of this mood from the outside, yet we do not stay there long.

GS: So let us listen to some of this music...

*Musical contribution: "Sepharadic Melody" by Paul Ben Chaim*

GS: What was this title?

IK: This was the "Sepharadic Melody" by Paul Ben Chaim, Israeli composer, and we also play this in our program, but as I said: we don't only play Arab and Israeli composers, but in the second half we mostly play classical works. What we wanted to present was that it is possible that Israeli and Palestinian artists can do something together on stage and it does not necessarily have to be connected with the clumsiness of the Middle East conflict. It could simply be highlights from classical music or the beautiful poems, the poetry of Anis Hamadeh, or other things.

GS: Does anybody want to add anything?

GGK: We play classical highlights, and this is meant for a broader audience, we also took low entrance fees for this concert, because we want a lot of people to come to the concert in Berlin. The classical pieces are meant for many people who might not listen to classical music every day, for example Paganini or Monti: Csárdás, or Piazzolla: The Great Tango...

GS: But also Arab and Israeli composers. This is a kind of music which is meant to fascinate, to motivate listening and thinking. And it is also to motivate donations, so that the purchase of a ticket is money which is connected to a specific project, that is the net profit of the concerts you are conducting now, for Givat Haviva and the projects which come into being there, or came into being already and which are

to be continued. And for this reason I want to ask Dagmar Schmidt now about what kind of projects these are. Dagmar Schmidt as the chairwoman of Givat Haviva Germany, SPD member of Parliament: DS: Yes thank you very much. First of all I would really like to thank these young people that they have all this engagement, and that especially Gabriella so resolutely has brought this idea forward and continued despite all difficulties and that she is doing all this. We found a sponsor, well, they found him themselves...

GGK: Right. If I am allowed to say a very short word to our sponsor, this is necessary in this place, because certainly we have received a lot of refusals, too, while we were looking for sponsors. But DaimlerChrysler Services... and our very special thanks goes to our mentor Schlomo Ben Hur, who completely, a hundred percent, or a thousand percent, has promoted the cause and he said: with your art you can move so many people. And I am so much for this peace between the two peoples that I support your project. He has made it possible that this tour could happen at all and again many thanks to him.

GS: This is always important, to have friends who make donations, who support, patronages, which today is called sponsoring, is very very important. And Givat Haviva does also live by patronages, from sponsoring, and this is why Dagmar Schmidt is so important in this circle, because she as a politician can move something.

DS: Unfortunately, Givat Haviva almost entirely subsists on that, and therefore it is especially important in these times that people do not resign, but that they maybe leave something there beyond the entrance fee as a donation. For one thing in order to support this great idea - we hope that we can bring about further concerts, that means, we are also looking for sponsors for further concerts, another series... Because these projects are immensely important. Especially this "Children Teach Children". Everybody knows that the socialisation of infants is the most significant one, and I would actually like to start renaming this project "Children Teach Children". These children, who taught each other, should now start to go and teach the adults.

GS: What is going on in "Children Teach Children"? Do tell us more about the project, about this communication center Givat Haviva. It is a center in the Sharon area, in ...(?) ... between Haifa and Tel Aviv, rather close to the border.

DS: Yes, we have met children there ourselves during a short visit... Apart from this there is hardly any possibility for the Arab Israelis and the Jewish Israelis to go into the families of the respective other. They live their lives, but they do it separately. And here in this communication center the children come together. They experience that they have the same troubles, that they are angry about the same things. This has also led to another project, a newspaper project by young people. They work in the artistic field, they cooperate in many areas and realize: we are, in the end, not so alien to each other, but in many human encounters we have the same reasons for being angry, the same reasons for being happy, and children are much better in coping with these things than grown-ups.

GS: "Children Teach Children", is this a kind of superposed concept or is it one specific project?

DS: They are new projects generated again and again, wherever children are brought together, school classes, sometimes even voluntarily, in the afternoons, at the weekends... Adolescents, I mean somewhat grown children....

GS: In the "Zeitpunkte" we have reported about a project of Givat Haviva's before, that was called "With the Eyes of the Other". In it, each child got a camera into the hand and people also showed them, in case they did not know it before, how to work with a camera. Such a thing of course also costs money. Are such projects still demanded? This was really bizarre: they just went into the house of the other and open the door of the fridge and take pictures of the inside of the fridge, they enter the bathroom, they enter the living-room, they watch out for the kinds of sweets which are there... But this is something that has to be paid for, such cameras and such initiatives.

DS: You are as curious with a camera as you are without one, but the camera provides a certain kind of protection. One is not so directly the voyeur and observes and watches and has a distance. And afterwards there is a discussion about the pictures. And people suddenly realize: Ah look-a-there, the other does have an interest in me, because he or she has photographed this and that, well why? People talk about it. People overcome their clichés. Especially these projects have largely impressed me, also when at one point we saw the photo exhibition on the spot ourselves. Meanwhile there is a touring exhibition also in Germany, which travels through several cities... This attempt, to motivate people via this medium of photography, to also talk about the things they saw and to lose their inhibitions and take a closer look, this has been successful with the camera. And children suddenly have the opportunity - or youth also - to reduce these very typifications: Israelis are not always the soldiers with the Uzis, and Palestinians are not always the terrorists with the belt of bombs around their bellies, but there are indeed parallels in young people, in the sentiment, in life, and a curiosity to know more about the respective other.

GS: Now it is one thing to reduce prejudices here and to refer to Givat Haviva, and another thing to do this in the country itself, in Israel. How difficult is that?

DS: This is getting increasingly difficult, also because the part which had been coming in from governmental support by the governmental offices, this has almost stopped. Also, there is a continuous up and down. There always are highlights and valleys in the work of Givat Haviva, and despite all this, despite the valleys also, where one says to oneself: isn't everything useless, anyway? Because, right now when you listen to the current news it could be that people tend to resign again. But the fact that here people like tumbler-dolls are ready again and again to say: now more than ever! And: we have to carry on with this issue. We are the ones who know how to change the situation in a long-lasting and sound way, by starting with the people who promote the dialogue, by supporting meetings, and not by isolation and insulation and no meetings and speechlessness.

GS: Next to you, that is next to Dagmar Schmidt, sits Anis Hamadeh, and I look at him and he looks half sceptically, half warmly nicely in agreement. What is this doubt that I perceive in you?

AH: You did ask yourself in the beginning: what about the will for peace and the possibilities in Israel/Palestine on the spot. And there I also thought about what my opinion is... I think that... in the end, no war has lasted forever, and one day there will be peace, and we have to provide such patterns, to show there are these kinds of cooperations, because one day this will happen (broadly). Yet, on the other hand I am also concerned myself, because I have relatives there and devote a lot of time to it... And I can also see that the current political situation is not exactly beautiful to promote the dialogue.

GS: We will soon continue. How can we overcome the difficulties? How can we find the way to peace? How can we invest into the future in our work, in our engagement? For now we will listen to Timna Brauer with "We shall Overcome", where she beautifully mixes this peace song "We shall Overcome" with John Lennon, we will hear a live recording with her choir "Voices for Peace", live in Vienna in 1999. *Musical contribution: "We shall Overcome" by Timna Brauer*

GS: This was Timna Brauer with her live appearance in Vienna, "Voices for Peace", in 1999. We are talking here about the beneficiary concert "Shalom-Salam". Three artists of very different descent stand on stage together and sing and recite for Givat Haviva, the peace center in Israel. Artists of very different descent - I already said that - Hungary, Israel, Germany, and German Palestinian background. Three artists on a concert stage... And how do you convey Givat Haviva to the audience at all?

IK: Our program starts with a documentary excerpt from a film by Givat Haviva, "With the Eyes of the Other", and there the project with the cameras is also shown. I think it is rather interesting to see how they visit an Arab family, and then also an Israeli family... And also through the speeches. There are several speeches...

GS: Who holds these speeches?

IK: In Berlin, for example, Ms. Dagmar Schmidt - I hope - will give a speech and also talk a little about the projects, about our common aims...

GGK: And mayors and first mayors and vice mayors, during the whole tour, and we have always found a word for Givat Haviva...

IK: Among other things...

GS: I did not get that. What word did you find for Givat Haviva?

IK: Of course praising words. (laughs)

GS: I see, so you have been able to really stimulate an interest, so that people now know: ah there is this center, there we can make ourselves helpful... be it through money or through activity.

GK: Exactly. And there also is an info table in the break and after the concert and everybody can inform themselves one more time, and on the flyer there also are some words about Givat Haviva.

GS: And you are standing there and give information, or have you disappeared backstage then?

IK: In the break we are present. Everybody can come to us and talk with us. Normally in the classical concert one withdraws and rehearses a couple of details and concentrates, but I think that in this concert it is also very important to have the direct contact with the audience. And if somebody has any questions then he or she should find the suitable answer, too.

GS: Anis Hamadeh, the German Palestinian essayist, absolver of Islamic Studies, once said in a specific context: "We have different history books". What, for example, is the difference between your history book, Anis Hamadeh, and the history book of Ithay Khen, the Israeli?

AH: Well, yes, without going to deeply into the details now, one can say that there are two... (laughs) yeah, you don't want that, either, Ithay...

IK: Nay, not necessarily...

AH: Well, there are a couple of issues where we simply disagree in opinion, and this is not even restricted to Israel or Palestine, but partly is due to our respective understandings of the state, and also what we think what a state may do and must not do. This surely is one of these issues. Another point is the foundation of Israel, for example the subject of expulsions, where we also are not exactly of the same opinion. And having said that there is to add that we also are in a process and we both collect information. Also, I am not a political scientist in this sense, and don't want to be, I rather observe the societies than parties or party political details. There are quite some issues, but it is a process, and we do speak about it regularly and could not do without...

GS: I did not yet exactly understand the conflicts. One you want to escape, the one about the foundation of Israel, how it came about and what it means for the Palestinians, for the Arab population there. This is what you do not want to talk about now. But are there any topical problems, for example?

IK: It is a broad issue and the problem which Anis mentioned above - I assume - is this: there are different narratives and there are details which are minimized or which there is silence about, on both sides, and there are other parts which are maximized, and this is something about which we have great discussions among each other as well. We often discuss things. We travel a lot together, there we also have the time for it. But we can really not get to this in more details now, because this takes too much time.

GGK: We have decided: when we always only dig in the past and try to distribute rights: you are right or I am right... this will not improve the situation. And therefore we have said: we are artists, our means of communication is art, and what we can improve, that basically... well, the future, we are looking into the future and not into the past. But we pose ourselves the question: what can we do for the future? And politics is not our department, as it were... of course, I always enjoy this again, these discussions between the two boys, when we are sitting in the car, but I am very touched on stage when I see the two - for me they symbolize the two peoples - and the big unity and the harmony which they personalize on stage together... And I always think: it is possible. When you spend a lot of time together and when you are also ready to listen to what the other one says, and when you are prepared to improve or to say: let us try now "to forget the forgetting", by Anis, then we have hope for the future at all.

GS: It is remarkable that from all the three artists, who are present here, only one has no German roots, and this is Gabriella who is Hungarian and married to an Israeli and now living here in Germany. All others here have German roots. How is it, when you tell your friends about your engagement, Ithay for example, how is it when you talk in Israel about what you are doing? Do you meet a hundred percent of agreement?

IK: Agreement yes. But the reaction is typical Israeli: they ask me if it would not be dangerous to do such a thing. People immediately think about security, about possible terror... I don't know what... that something could happen to us. This, thank God, is not the case. We do not feel this danger at all.

GGK: We do not even think about the danger, because for us there is no danger. We are supporting a humanitarian cause, and this has nothing to do with politics...

GS: And for you it is dangerous to not be engaged, dangerous for the future of the children. You also have a son.

GGK: Right. Precisely.

AH: I also think it is a matter of responsibility. When you can do something and when you know something, that you should do it. I have met a lot of agreement from my part. My parents were attending the concert in Bocholt and were very enthusiastic about it. Also from the internet community I receive many nice mails, also criticism in parts, from Palestinians who say: yeah, you are doing something for the Israelis and so on, where it also sometimes comes down to quarrels, in the positive sense, to debates. I find that rather constructive. At the same time I have to say that I have written a lot into my diary in this time which has been very rich in experiences, and I need that, because I realize that surely I can reach something with such concerts or such discussions like this one, but there is still a lot missing. Especially the subject matters which we have mentioned in the end: the official Israel and the Israeli society, for example, as such a problematic case. And I write about all these things. And I do have to talk to Ithay and Gabriella about the way I can make this accessible. But I want this discussion to continue and that art does not remain to be the only thing.

GS: Art should not remain the only thing. Have you any plans already, about what is going to happen after this benefice tour, which will have ended on the 26th in Berlin? You made some allusions... Well, it will not be the foundation of a new party, will it?

AH: No.

IK: Well, I think we should for now master this tour until the end and hopefully this will also bring about something for Givat Haviva. I do believe this is the case. And afterwards we might plan a second round, with this tour, possibly also in other countries.

GS: And in which form can politics support the engagement for Givat Haviva, the engagement for peace between the Jewish and the Palestinian people, Dagmar Schmidt? I mean, beyond a speech at the concert on the 26th.

DS: The political sector can surely not effect a lot with finances in times of low budgets...

GS: Really not?

DS: ...This is to say that we can notice everywhere that the places where the federal countries had supported Givat Haviva, Northrhine-Westfalia, Hessen, Niedersachsen, that the tills there are getting more and more empty and nothing is given anymore, or less. This means we are relying on the support of engaged individuals, associations, companies. What can a company do for peace? It can support this thing, Givat Haviva. So that it gets more known. And one of the really nice supporters also receives the peace prize, this is Mister Barenboim, he will receive the peace prize of Givat Haviva... and I only know that through this the name of this institution will become more popular and people will trust it more. And

they know: the money will arrive. It does not get lost on the way or seeps away, nor does it pay an expensive chair council... Everybody is doing this voluntarily and they go without high salaries, in this case. And the money arrives and is applied directly on the spot. This is the good thing about it. And I think what is also super is when there are not only reports about this concert, but when you know afterwards: this, what is happening here individually in the small, this is also possible in the big. You can digest history, you can... Every behavior, every dialogue is political in a sense, and when you notice that it is working here and when you develop and reduce prejudice, then this should be possible in the bigger contexts. This surely is, next to the effect of making Givat Haviva more popular and to collect some money, a significant, valuable aspect.

GS: Givat Haviva and the conflict between the Jewish and the Palestinian people also has a lot to do with German history, with the past. Is it so that sometimes people come to you after the concert to say: I have, due to your music or the calm, which you have conveyed to me, or the engagement, suddenly realized that I have to do more, and starts to tell about the past of the parents or the grandparents? Do you learn something about your audience, also in this respect, or never?

IK: Not so much.

(GGK: No)

AH: Actually yes... sorry but... Well I do have the impression that, when you count all the things together... I did hear a lot, actually... Both directly, that people came up after the concert and... well, maybe not that they...

GS: You mean they don't say: Granny was a Nazi, but ...

AH: Yeah, well, maybe not exactly that people freak out, but it is rather frequent that people are stimulated and start to talk about their own things and what they are doing.

IK: But this is also so in everyday life, this is not special, concerning our tour.

AH: Also, for instance, the fact that we have been often invited before the performances from the side of mayors, this for me also was a nice sign, that the politicians say: yeah, well, actually we also are interested in this and want to know more about it, this I actually found very delightful.

*Ithay and Gabriella agreeing*

GS: The Zeitpunkte are coming to an end. What is left for me is to point to the final concert, the final concert of "Shalom-Salam", the benefice tour. It takes place in Berlin, on May 26, at Daimler Chrysler's in the Eichhornstraße number 3 on the Potsdamer Platz. Start is at 7 p.m. The 26th is a Wednesday. It is, as I said, a beneficiary performance, this is also why we do not want to give away any free tickets. A ticket costs 15 Euros and less for children and juveniles. But you can also give more money of course, so 15 Euros would be quite OK.

*Musical contribution*

GS: These were the Zeitpunkte on May 23, 2004, editor was Birgit Ludwig who also selected the music. Technician was Annette Kruschke, host at the microphone Gesine Stempel. More music of the Duo Rubin you can find on the CD "On Tour" and I recommend to you the homepage of Anis Hamadeh, [www.anis-online.de](http://www.anis-online.de). And I say a big and warm thank you very much to my guests in the studio, thanks for having come to the studio in the middle of the tour. Thanks, goodbye, lot of success, and you know the proverb: "A bissel und a bissel gibt a volle Schüssel". (A little and a little makes a full bowl) This is a Yiddish proverb which I like very much. Thanks a lot, wish you a lot of success.

AH/IK/GGK: To you, too.

After the recording the four of us stood in front of the radio building, as long as Dagmar Schmidt was waiting for her taxi. In thoughts I still was with the introduction by Gesine Stempel. "Day by day new terrifying news about worldwide violence, day by day news from the conflict between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, and again and again new suicide and killing assaults in Israel. The confrontations between Israeli soldiers and armed Palestinians have been escalating in the last days in the Gaza Strip." Was it so? What about the confrontations between Israeli soldiers and the Palestinian civil population? What about the settlers? About the things Sophia Deeg, for example, reports in her book. Also, as far as I could recall there had currently not been any suicide or killing attacks from the Palestinian side, although the Israeli policy, for instance in Gaza, had been utterly violent.

I did not mention that in the interview, it would have led to principal discussions which were beyond the framework of such a cultural program. There would not have been a constructive effect to it. Maybe at the end, when Gesine asked again. She did want to hear our opinions. But I didn't feel up to it rhetorically, either, on that day. What surprised me in a positive way was the fact that Gesine Strempele really listened, also listened to me, with an attention that was not superficial.

In the car to Cologne I suddenly laughed and tapped on my forehead. The wings of dust! I told Gabriella and Ithay that in the book "Loving Jay" there is an interview with the poet, in which he is asked about the motivation of his writing. His answer is: "Because I have to. The point is to fix the truth of the moment. The things that go unnoticed in the news. 'Kings we are, with wings of dust', for example, has not yet been broadcast in the news." So now I had almost made it: "Kings we are, with wings of dust" was broadcast on the radio.

### **Cologne, Wallraf Richartz Museum**

*(May 23, 2004)* Somebody said to me after the performance in Cologne that I allegedly said "Richard Wagner Museum" on stage instead of "Wallraf Richartz Museum". I didn't think I did, but of course something like this can happen in a live situation. Normally I only forgot the first name of the composer Hemsch and then looked at Ithay in a questioning way. - But that it had to be Wagner... whereas I like his music, it is big. The Wallraf Richartz Museum, which is situated near the Dome of Cologne, is an architecturally remarkable building in which mainly historic paintings and graphics are exhibited. But it also is a place for performances, and we played in the Stifter Hall. I am really grateful for having appeared on stage in so many beautiful places.

Again we had visitors. The chef for peace Jalil Schwarz had come and served Arabian coffee in the break. He originally is from the city of Ramle near Yafa and has already collected many donations for diverse projects. For his engagement in the mutual understanding he received the Bundesverdienstkreuz, the highest honor in Germany. He is living nearby, in Cologne Ehrenfeld, and Michael Krebs had invited him which we found very fitting. At [www.friedenskoch.de](http://www.friedenskoch.de) you can learn more about Jalil Schwarz and his work.

The hall was simple, but with style. It had a high ceiling and wooden grid patterns on the walls. I associated it with Zen and with Japan. Exactly my style. From out of the panorama window behind the stage one had an overwhelming sight on old masonry which was shining like in a fairytale when the sunlight fell on it from the right angle. Too bad that I cannot describe optical sensations so well, for concerning the architecture this was the place I liked best. The clear forms, the clear materials, the exquisite black stairs. Not snobby, but noble. We had a room near the entrance at our disposal, on the first floor, where we could dress.



Through a long slot window I looked down into the entrance hall where the visitors were now strolling in the direction of the hall. The Duo Rubin was not there yet, they were bringing the car into the parking house. I dressed and made my way to the hall, because I wanted to say hello to the chef for peace who was standing behind his table with some friends.

In passing by I smelled tobacco and noticed a couple of young people, assistants from the museum, in official clothing in a semi-open room in the middle of which there was a working desk with a counter, and around it they were standing and chatting. I asked if I could smoke one here. Sure. I sat down without following the conversation, just took the scene into my mind. It was a Jaques Tati atmosphere. This ingenious French filmmaker with the shining corridors and the long takes.

It is not usual for an artist to enter the hall before the appearance. It is a funny feeling, because you don't really know where to look and how to look. But anyway. Already in the antichambre I met an Arab journalist from the Deutsche Welle who said hello to me. We talked a little. He apologized that he did not know me before. I had to laugh. Yes, he said, he had accidentally met my mother on the dome square, right now, and she told him about me. Mom! This was funny. I, too, had just arrived from the dome square, had to pull myself a burger before the appearance, but I did not see her there. My Mom came with her Syrian friend Nahla and she was attending for the second time.

In the hall I met another Arab journalist from the Deutsche Welle, who had come with his son, and we introduced ourselves. Michael Krebs was in thoughts and went from one side of the hall to the other. There were blue yellow paintings by Bernd Schwarzer standing in front of the stage. He has still remained lively in my memory since our meeting in Düsseldorf. The eccentric ingenious painter himself was not attending this time. Michael had successfully made an effort to mobilize people in his hometown Cologne, the hall was well filled. In Cologne, too, we had had a press meeting before, and it had even been pleasantly relaxing.

We heard speeches by the mayor Renate Canisius and secretary (Staatssekretär) Hartmut Krebs who conveyed greetings of the prime minister of Northrhine Westfalia, Peer Steinbrück, and reported from his recent Israel journey in which he participated. I listened to this with the ears of an intelligence service, because I had read what Mister Steinbrück had said during his stay in Israel and I did not like it. He had conjured up an allround Israel solidarity, something which did not seem adequate to me in times of helicopter assaults and routine disregard of the human rights and of international law. It sounded similar to the conservative leader Angela Merkel and her "In doubt pro Israel". I ask myself: in what doubt? In doubt between Israel and human right? And which Israel? The real one or the abstract one, the glorified one?

But what secretary Krebs said was constructive. He made an alert impression in general and seemed to be an interesting individual. If just this conflict would not lead to distrust and disharmony so easily! When after the break the mayor had also spoken and it was my turn to continue with poetry I did not say anything about it. Also, the speech of the secretary did not give me any reason to open the conflict. So I rather said in front of the audience that we artists really sensed this attention from the politicians and appreciated it, because it is not an every day event that politicians can be mobilized with this subject matter. This was taken with an applause. No political discussions here. It is necessary to talk about it. Somewhere else.

When later I received a nice word concerning my poetry from this man I was touched. This meant something to me. The whole performance was pleasant. Afterwards we went with a couple of people into an very old restaurant around the corner which was called Sion. The seats were excellent, but the dishes were not so good. But the Cologne press after the event was.

## **Chapter 6: Berlin**

## **In the Stefan's**

*(Tuesday, May 25, 2004)* I stood on the little balcony on the third floor above the Stefan's, a coffehouse with a confectioner's shop, and looked at the street corner below me. Berlin. By now I like the city. In former times I found it terrible, because of the island atmosphere, the accent, and the dirty streets. But since one or two years I have come here more regularly. At first it was Kulturattac, then a Palestine conference where I met some Berlin Arabs. Then Shalom-Salam, the agreement talks and rehearsals. The first solo appearance of my life in Berlin would take place this evening down in the coffeehouse: "Clouds in the Heads. Satires and songs". I had just finished playing for some hours on the guitar, rehearsing. For a long time I had not been playing and singing with such patience, it was liberating. Now I was writing the diary. My arrival was yesterday already. Stefan was so friendly as to offer me this apartment for the duration of the stay. This was also easier for Gabriella and Ithay, as I would have gone to them otherwise. Tomorrow was the finale of the tour, in the Daimler Chrysler Building at the Potsdamer Platz. Although I was put up here in the center of the city, on Olivaer Square at the Kurfürstendamm there was a pleasant air of calm and seclusion in the apartment.

Stefan, who I have never asked for his surname, is an uncomplicated man with style. For some years he has been running his coffeehouse and although there is a lot to do and although it is not always easy he knows how to live. From time to time there are cultural events in the Stefan's, like today. I came into the room with the guitar. They are basically two rooms. I was sitting in a way that most of the people could see me. A part of the audience sat around the corner and only heard my voice over the speakers. It is strange when you cannot see your audience but still feel it. Not many people came for the appearance, but the ones, who were there, were important to me. The thing was that Alex Elsohn from Givat Haviva for this day had wished a dinner together to celebrate the end of the tour, as he was bound to take a plane tomorrow right after the concert. This meal was scheduled to happen after my appearance. So most of the people from the tour came together: Dagmar Schmidt with her friendly assistant, the journalist Martin Forberg, Bettina Hildebrand from the Institute for Human Rights, Alex and Stefan, Michael Krebs was there and other friends. The dish was... sparagus. I don't know how often I had sparagus during the journey, but I could not get enough of it, anyway. It was May, the sparagus month. Such a pity that the Duo Rubin could not attend! But they had even more dates and obligations, and they also have a son. And tomorrow the finale. It was a full program indeed.

So now I was on stage again. First I had to get acquainted with the acoustics and the room. Then it became an increasing pleasure to read and sing in front of exactly this audience. I had the opportunity to show a wide range of my artistic work, much more than in Shalom-Salam. Played some blues, read satires like

"The Prince on the Melon" and "The Monkey with the Banjo". Somewhere along the line I ran out of songs, but the people wanted to hear more songs. There I started to sing the Palestinian Song which I had not planned to play at all. "Ich bin Palästinenser, und ich suche den Bremser. Ich gehe auf die Straße, und ich sag es laut". (*I am Palestinian and I am looking for the brakeman, I go out on the street and I say it loud.*) The song has only two chords and belongs to the joke songs which I have. The melody is - without directly being inspired by it - a bit similar to a part in "Coconut Woman" by Harry Belafonte, who I admire a lot, (for example the passage: "Take some coconut water, it is good for your daughter"). "Ich stehe am Fenster und zähle Gespenster. Ich bin Palästinenser in meiner Haut." (*I am standing at the window and count ghosts. I am Palestinian in my skin.*) When I sang it I unintentionally concentrated on Alex who is Israeli. "Ich bin kein Israeli, und ich komm nicht aus Neu Delhi, ich bin Palästinenser, und ich sag es laut." (*I am not an Israeli and I don't come from New Delhi, I am Palestinian and I say it loud.*) What might he think about it? He grinned. He also still talked with me afterwards. "Ich war in Camp David und hielt es für'n Fortschritt. Ich war auch in Oslo und hab drauf vertraut." (*I have been to Camp David and thought it was a progress, I also have been to Oslo and put my trust in it.*) Never before had I sung this song in front of Israelis or Jews. I never thought about it, either, when I wrote it. "Rock'n'Roll Palästinenser, wo ist der Bremser? Wie sag ichs nur den Kindern, wie sag ichs meiner Braut?" (*Rock'n'Roll Palestinian, where is the brakeman? How can I tell it to the children, how to my bride?*) At the moment I am working on an English version: I am Palestinian and I have an opinion...

The first time that I really talked with Alex was in a bakery in Halle, over a cup of coffee. I was interested to know more about his attitudes towards life and his opinions. He is a diplomatic man, and must be, otherwise he could not do this job. In the Stefan's we also had some conversations. But there was still a lot left to talk about. He surely is a deep water and it is hard to characterize him after only few encounters. The distance between us, at any rate, had not been long right from the start and I never had reason to distrust him. He told me about the Haviva Reik Peace Prize which was to be awarded to Daniel Barenboim at the end of June and he asked me if I liked to participate in it together with the Duo Rubin in the cultural program of the prize award in the Sorat hotel. Daniel Barenboim! This was a big honor. There are quite some things I owe to Alex Elsohn.

### **On Criticism of the Tour**

It was around the end end of the tour that I forwarded Alex Elsohn a mail by a critical spectator from Cologne. She criticized that the introductory word of the Duo Rubin (see Chapter 1) is one-sided, because it started with Palestinian violence. Also the fact that DaimlerChrysler sponsored us was part of her critique, as was Givat Haviva's credibility. My answer to the criticism of the word of the Duo Rubin was that the authentic event at the Vadi Ara was the motif for

their initiative to begin with. Thus it was completely legitimate that they freely uttered their perceptions. I did it likewise myself and had written a press info to utter my perceptions, and now this book as a summary to reach my inner balance. As this critique also dealt with Givat Haviva and principle questions I forwarded the mail with my reply so that Alex Elsohn had the opportunity to respond to it. He devoted himself to this mail in detail and wrote among other things: "The central activities of Givat Haviva concern the pragmatic work with the civil population in many different areas of education. This automatically leads to closer ties with organisations like Chalonot, Reut/Sadaka etc. and rather free contacts under the roof of the 'peace coalition' with organisations like Taayush, Women Link, Peace Now etc."

Concerning DaimlerChrysler, this was a precedent. There were individuals there who supported our project, especially Shlomo Ben Hur who is held in high esteem by the Duo Rubin. Michael Krebs had met the critical lady live before the show in Cologne. He had told her that the whole tour would not have been possible without DaimlerChrysler. And that there hardly could be a better investment than Shalom Salam. When the name DaimlerChrysler appeared for the first time I asked Jürgen Grässlin from the Armament Information Office, for I wanted to make sure that our sponsor does not deliver any armament to one of the sides of the conflict, be it directly or indirectly. This was necessary just like the readiness from my part to be grateful and loyal vis-à-vis DaimlerChrysler concerning the tour. Of course without denying myself. As a liberal individual I am convinced that the different forces of society should cooperate and keep in touch so that social peace can be kept or established, respectively. This may sound a little far out, but I had to confront myself with these questions and had to develop principles to make solid decisions regarding the capitalist side of the world. During my membership in Kulturattac the role of sponsors in the cultural field had been a central issue and I had been dealing with the matter for a longer time before. I did not have a bad feeling about the cooperation with DaimlerChrysler, because there were no conditions involved about what I had to do and what I had to leave. After the consideration of all relevant factors the positive impulses for a cooperation in my assessment exceeded by far.

My own values are spiritual, I do not take material things as a measure. For me as a songwriter and poet inspiration plays a decisive role. The exploration of trances and inspiration lets you see and understand the world in an alternative way. Shalom Salam is not material for me, even if on the surface it was about the raising of material funds. (I did, by the way, receive a certain sum for the tour. This had been necessary, because otherwise I would not have been able to make a living during that time. Besides, it would have been an exaggeration if the artists did not get anything. People would have taken us less seriously.) While our main sponsor, i.e. DC, covered expenses like advertisement and rents the entrance money went directly to Givat Haviva as a donation. From a spiritual point of view the following chain of thoughts went through my head: What are they doing with the money mainly? They maintain a cultural center. What is the main purpose of this cultural center? The understanding between Jews and

Palestinians. This is not a material end. On the subject "pop and commerce" the German newspaper "taz" two years ago printed one of my reader's mails in which there is an explanation of what I mean by different values:

"Pop and Commerce, Subject: "The Signs of the Riot", taz from 4. 5. 02. The thesis that pop is a profane economy good is interesting to me. It seems to me as if this was rather the point-of-view of the soberly reflecting journalist. When John wrote 'Revolution' he wrote pop music, and he knew that, because he felt it. The song is genuine and can inherently be understood as being genuine. That people later would make commerce with it, even John himself, has nothing to do with that. The materialistic side of Rock'n'Roll altogether seems to be a sort of children's ailment, caused by the loss of former values like obedience and force and by gaining freedom and fun as new values through the creation of pop. It is difficult to separate freedom and fun from the material, even for inspired pop artists. The material also serves to connect the artist with the values of his surroundings. But commerce by itself in my definition is not pop, it is only the material proof of its fitness in a world which does not acknowledge other proofs."

And what about Givat Haviva now? I still was not able to really develop a detailed opinion. How did the participants deal with the conflict? This was a basic problem I thought about often. There is the talk of the so-called "two narratives", the two historical views in the Middle East conflict. I regard this issue as a good starting-point, because I aspire to reach the synthesis of the two narratives, or, in my terminology out of cognitive philosophy: the two scenarios or frameworks. For what is the difference between "two narratives" and war? Isn't this the war that there are two historical positions which seemed incompatible? Basically, every conflict can be described as the manifestation of two narratives. We need the synthesis.

Later I read in the newspaper about another project between Jews and Arabs, also connected with Givat Haviva. It is called "Crossing Borders" and the Süddeutsche Zeitung reported about it on July 10, 2004 on page 3 (Marcus Jauer). It is about an inter-cultural newspaper project in a context with a "Berlin Middle East Youth Summit". Jauer concludes: "When they are back home, Hillel, Naama, Rawya and Amani want to tell that the others, who they had met here, are humans, too, not only Palestinians or Israelis." This surely is a constructive approach. In a second conclusion it reads: "The Israeli and the Palestinian coordinators of the project had made some changes so that the text now appeared more balanced. But it is still one shared text and in it there are two views on the very same thing."

To stop here would in my estimation mean to not solve the conflict. It means the coexistence of contradicting items, it means schizophrenia. I had already dealt with this matter in the globalisation critical movement Attac. Of course there are different historical views, but there is only one human right. For it, Danton died in the French Revolution, for the one standard which could be valid for everybody. So the Palestinian journalist Hakam Abdel-Hadi in an email on the

above-mentioned Crossing Borders Project the following note: "On July 7, 2004 the Axel Springer publishing house ('Bild am Sonntag') asked in for a so-called Middle East Youth Summit which took place in Berlin. In this 'summit' 21 young people from Palestine, Jordan and Israel participated. The idea is supported by the Jewish Arab peace center Givat Haviva and the international students' journal CROSSING BORDERS (CB). With the help of the assistants of the publishing house and CB, which was founded by the International People's College in the year 1994 in Denmark, the young people were to produce a new edition of the CB journal in the publishing house within one week. (...) During the three hours of debate the following thought came to my mind: How significant are such events? Is their main purpose to make publicity for the sponsors or to ease the conscience of the not really peace promoting German and European foreign policies? Do such encounters bring the yearned for peace a little closer to the two peoples? (...) In my opinion such encounters and efforts will have little results, if the cardinal question does not stand in the focus of all talks: What do we have to do that the almost 40 years of Israeli occupation, the major cause of all wrong, will be ended as soon as possible? In Germany and Europe, too, this question has to be highlighted, if Berlin and Brussels honestly want to mediate between the two sides. Everything else for me is fake."

This above is not about scenarios or narratives. The end of the occupation is not a narrative, but the establishment of international law. What I do not believe is that the occupation is the "major cause", let alone "of all wrong". The occupation is already a consequence of the conflict. Nevertheless I principally agree with Mister Abdel-Hadi. The end of the occupation today means the beginning of peace, because it implies a change in the Israeli mentality. It is an asymmetrical conflict and it has no equally entitled participants. The Palestinians do not have the power to end the conflict, this can only the Israelis and Jews. This is also why in my work I mostly quote Jews and Israelis and not, for example, the excellent Palestinian thinkers and politicians Haidar Abdel Shafi, Hanan Ashrawi, Mustafa Barghouti, Azmi Bishara, Sumaya Farhat-Naser. Those latter, according to experience, are not listened to in the German and in the international public in a comparable way, because the things they say contradict the idealized image of Israel and thus have a rather irritating and disturbing effect on leading participants of the discourse.

The cause of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians/Arabs is the fact that rights of Jews stand higher than the human right which in turn is due to the horror of the Holocaust. Arab aggressions are not the cause. It is rather so that the public mainstream distrusts the complaints about the human rights, suspecting anti-Israeli affairs behind them. This means a devaluation of the human rights and the UN. Here is an example out of the Süddeutsche Zeitung from the same day on which it had reported about "Crossing Borders" (July 10, 2004). There it calls the UN General Assembly on the front page "philo-Palestinian in tendency". In order to keep the narrative and the camp thinking established the SZ judges according to the measure of groups, not the measure of the situation. A narrative needs an ego perspective, the human right needs a universal

perspective. Stefan Ulrich writes on July 22, 2004 in the same paper on page 4 in the article: "Demanding, but fair. Why Israel in the wall controversy this time must not complain about the United Nations" the words: "Indeed does the General Assembly like herself in the role of ritually punishing the small country. It is easy to find majorities for this among the 191 UN member states. For in blaming Israel one can so wonderfully bundle anti-American, anti-Western, anti-colonial anti-capitalist prejudices." It is easy to detect who is the one with the prejudice. The SZ, after all the biggest of the quality papers in Germany with more than a million daily readers, apparently believes in a global diplomatic conspiracy or plot against Israel and against the West with its capitalism. Such assessments like the one of the SZ are inevitable whenever the decisions are based on a specific camp and not on the democratic order and international law.

Concerning negative or even rejecting criticism of the Shalom Salam tour, there was little. But maybe Gabriella and Ithay and the other participants have made different experiences in this respect, in the preparation time, for instance. I am also sure that there will have been some Arabs who would see priorities for fundraising other than Givat Haviva, or who are less confident. This is normal, you can never please everybody. Important is that one is feeling alright with the thing one is doing and that one does not do it without reflection.

### **At DaimlerChrysler's**

*(May 26, 2004)* Michael Krebs and me had breakfast in the Stefan's and after that strolled over the Kurfürstendamm right around the corner. I bought some newspapers, because today several papers had written about us. An exciting life. So now DaimlerChrysler. First we had to find it at all. In a parking house at the Potsdamer Platz we noticed that there were diverse Daimler Chrysler buildings around. The movie "The Sky Over Berlin" came to my mind, the monologue at the Potsdamer Platz. It is one of my favorite movies. The whole quarter resembled a movie setting a little. I had never been here before. It seemed to be a pure working and entertainment quarter. Uninhabited, but crowded with people. Some streets later then we found it.

We entered a representative, high atrium with a stage at the back of which a huge screen was attached. Technicians passed us by. Gabriella already played on the piano. Unmistakably. Behind the piano three flags were exhibited: the Israeli one, the Palestinian one, and in the middle the one of DaimlerChrysler. I liked that. I saw the black white green flag with the red triangle on the left side, it was the Palestinian flag. During the whole tour I did not see it. It was the first time I saw the two flags next to each other to begin with. It was amazing: I accepted the Israeli one. Normally, the blue and white of the Israeli flag is not a positive symbol for me, because I associate expulsion and occupation with it. But this time the negative associations got neutralized by the other flag. My first impression was positive.



Some men in expensive suits passed us by. Cameras were positioned. I cordially greeted Gabriella and Ithay and we told each other about all the things that had happened during the past days. Then we went and prepared the CD and book table. All the pieces of the Duo Rubin, which were played on the tour, are available on a CD, of course also now, after the tour. The title of the CD is: "On Tour" and it was produced shortly before the tour at the label Genuin in Germany. In the hall, everything seemed to be excellently organized. We made a soundcheck. Several technicians coordinated that. I talked nonsense into the microphone until the acoustics were properly adjusted. Michael went through the corridor in the middle between the lines of the seats to the rear of the hall to check the speakers. A solemn atmosphere. Young security men with young-security-men-haircuts stood behind the stage and the screen. Ithay and me played through "Wie oft". A young woman from DC accompanied us to the dressing room on the first or second floor. We had coffee and read the newspapers.

Through a window we were able to look down on the hall which gradually became filled with people. I watched the audience which in turn was also able to see us when they looked up and had a close look. I saw Alex Elsohn and Dagmar Schmidt, the people who had also been to the Stefan's the day before, and there was Jörn! My buddy Jörn. I was happy that he came. I met him in Kulturattac and have visited him several times since, whenever I was in Berlin. With him one can talk about the three important things in life: art, politics, and women. Now he had discovered us and answered my waving signs. Gabriella showed me Shlomo Ben-Hur and his wife Frau Robin, who had already taken their seats. They were the ones who had convinced DC to support Shalom-Salam. Without Mr. Ben-Hur (, whom I did not really meet and talk to, as I noticed afterwards with regret,) all this would not have been possible.

All this together admittedly got a bit exciting and I became a little nervous. So I did my usual tripping about in the dressing room while Gabriella was doing the same on the other side of the room. Ithay played his extra wrong notes for relaxation, Gabriella said: "Stop that now", and Ithay produced another particularly squeaky sound. That was all completely normal. In between we had some visitors, among them also Mr. Ben-Hur, and from time to time the young coordinator from Daimler popped in for briefings on final details. Then we descended. My guitar was ready in the bag behind the stage. They would bring it to the stage for the last song. Ithay had his cello always with him. OK, now one more deep breath, and action...

## **The Finale**

From the welcoming applause we could tell that a numerous audience has gathered together here. We looked from the stage into the audience. They were more than threehundred and hardly any seats left. Some of the visitors were dressed up, a few even super serious. I, too, always wore a suit on stage, it was

adequate. Gabriella held the short welcome speech and turned over to the film while Ithay and me took our seats in the front row. It was a relief that the technical things had been perfectly arranged, one could just live the performance and did not have to worry about anything. The screen was huge, the sound excellent. Now I see you for the last time in the near future, I thought while looking at the young people in the film. Could they relate to what we were doing here? Would they have questions if they met us? Would we have questions? If they celebrated together like there in the documentary, was I able to celebrate with them? Yes, I think so. One day.

The film was over, Ithay entered the stage. The Duo Rubin played the Meditation by Alberto Hemsi. They were good. Ithay has an astonishing ambition. Both have, Gabriella, too. I know from Ithay that he used to be a professional sportsman, a swimmer, and that he had achieved quite a lot in this discipline in Israel. It was quite a decision for him to choose music. His father also is a cellist and they get along well with each other. Despite or because of this fact, I don't know. I think that he has a strong need to unfold, similar to me, and that he had been searching until he found the discipline which fulfilled him most. Similar to the way I started with chess, then carambolage billiards, then Islamic Studies and finally art, where I have arrived. Gabriella also has a second talent, she draws and paints. Concerning the unfolding issue the medium is more or less secondary. You can even put it into a simple tea ceremony, like in Zen. I think Zen would be something for Ithay.

After the musical piece I entered the stage, made my introduction and then read out of "We Both Want to Live Here." I had gotten myself a couple of current books on the subject in the preparation time of the tour and had chosen this one, because it is close to life and it shows the conflict in an authentic way. It is about the young generation and the intellectual and emotional worlds young people live in. The opinions are quite frank, reflected, with a good deal of authentic innocence in them, and yet in a manner which potentially remains attackable, without diplomatic twists. There were some passages which did not please Ithay so I deleted them in the course of the tour, for it was important that all participants were comfortable with the texts. Actually, I have even deleted a couple of additional lines in the readings, which Ithay had not mentioned but of which I was certain that if he did not want the other quotes he would surely not want these, either. It was the part where Odelia says: "A racist is the last thing I want to be. But when you are really afraid then you don't think about whether you are feeling or acting 'intolerantly'; you fear for your life." At first I did not further think about it, because this sentence was even one of the quotes on the backside of the cover. But later I found that it was not adequate for the situation. The quote is important, but not in this context on stage.

After the Arab composer followed the Israeli one, Paul Ben Haim. It was like fireworks for the senses. On the screen you could not only watch in enlargement what happened on stage, but there were visual effects like crossovers of different cameras, double pictures, zooms, it was like on TV, really impressive.

Unfortunately there is no video of it. Gabriella tried everything to get a recording as a souvenir, but there was no way. Yet there are some photos. Then I came on stage again and read "The Secret of Time" out of "Loving Jay": Where you stop time / stops. You name / the place. You name / the situation. Where you stop. // Where you move on the past / falls apart. A new place / comes up, a different / situation. This is not you anymore. / Where you move on. // Where you can fly the future / falls apart. In this garden / we will meet you. / Where you stop." I stepped back a few paces from the desk. The Duo Rubin played some bars of Bach's music. Then it went on with the gateless gate, the piece, which received most of the feedback concerning the poetry: "We suffered from suffering and were ashamed / of shame. We needed / needing. The search / we searched. // First we had to / forget about forgetting / to remember / memorizing. // We had to / doubt doubt / and contradict / contradiction, / to love love / and to endure / patience. // For understanding / understanding / we had to let the letting, / to break with the breaking, / and to resist / resistance. // We ignored / ignorance and destroyed / destruction. // Soon we were faster / than speed / and we ruled / power." I was quite happy that I could not see myself on the screen, this would surely have irritated me. Again followed Bach, then "Amphibians", with which my part ended: "Under water / we live. Above water / we live. Like the iceberg's / tip. Speak / a word! Speak another / word. Pull it / out of the water! // The air is high. / We can / see each other / can we. / The air is high. // Out of the water / pull it! Another word / speak / a word! Speak / from the tip / of the iceberg! Like / we live / above water we live / under water." I sat down again and listened to the two. At the end of the tour the Duo Rubin had moved the Fire Dance by de Falla up in order to finish the first part of the concert with an atmospherical fast piece. We bowed and went into the pause.

Giora was there, too, Gabriella's and Ithay's son, and Gabriella's mother with her partner. The break was soon over, salutation addresses and speeches were held and again I was positively surprised. There really was an interest in peace. The speakers and all the audience, they would not have come if it wasn't for a broad social need for a positive change of the circumstances. The speakers were Michael Averhoff, Director of Corporate Protocol Daimler Chrysler, Dagmar Schmidt, Member of German Parliament, chairwoman of Givat Haviva Germany, and Matthias Mumenstädt from the Federal Presidential Office who conveyed greetings from Federal President Johannes Rau, the patron of our performances. In his address Mister Rau said that he has taken the patronage for our and also for other initiatives, "because I want to encourage individuals like the couple Khen and the writer Hamadeh to not leave off their efforts for peace and mutual understanding. (...) I wish everybody, who is working on reviving the peace process, perseverance, patience, and the determination to not let the dialogue stop. I wish you that new trust will grow. But you shall also know that you have reliable friends who accompany you on the way to peace. Your Johannes Rau". This was very moving. Each of us got the quatro-lingual book "Children write for Peace" by Givat Haviva with the signature of the German President.

As I grew up in Northrhine-Westfalia I have an idea of Mister Rau since decades. Before he became Federal President he had for a long time been Prime Minister in our land. I have always regarded him to be one of the most competent, most credible and sympathetic politicians, mostly because of the fact that he is a believer. More than once had I watched interviews with him and features about him on TV, also the one about his farewell from the presidential office. I understand his values. This picture, however, is not complete like that. There also is another side, I also have aggressions with which I have to deal. Sometimes I remember the colored photo collection from the OSCE conference against anti-Semitism, in which one can see Mister Rau and Mister Spiegel smile and joke together, shortly after the helicopter attacks on human beings, during the creation of the wall, during the destruction of human life and of private homes in Rafah by a state. And they go and make an anti-Semitism conference! I think it was the Jüdische Allgemeine, which published this photo collection. I had seen the page open somewhere on the tour, but had to turn away, because I got dizzy when I saw it. Yet I could not ignore it, it was part of the whole. I suppressed it most of the time, but what should be the use of that? I had to build up an opinion. And my Arab friends also read newspapers, they will ask me how I feel about Mister Rau. Besides, it is politically relevant if the speech is written "for the concert of the Duo Rubin on May 26, 2004", even if I am addressed directly in the beginning of the speech. A friend saw a copy of this letter in the file which Michael Krebs produced for us after the tour, and he said: "You are subsumed under Duo Rubin, just as the Westbank is subsumed under Israel. Nix Palestinians. Hegemony. No change." Of course I had to seriously deal with such things, for our aim was equality. Did Mister Rau regard us as equal? Would he remain a reliable friend in controversy? As I had been occupied with these questions for so many days I could not remain silent about them, if I was looking for inner balance.

All this was invisible on the stage. I sincerely was glad about the interest and the book and I was proud of the signature. The speech of the DaimlerChrysler spokesman I found also good, and the one by Dagmar Schmidt. In the middle of the show I was not completely able to concentrate on the speeches, but my subconscious overheard the scene and conveyed a positive feeling to me. So we went with power through the second part of the performance, with "Curfew for Feelings" and the king's poem, the long musical part and "our song" - as Michael Krebs uses to call it - at the very end. Michael inserted a photo of us in the file on which one can see the three of us hand in hand at the final reverence: on the left of the picture Ithay with cello and bow in the right hand, looking in at us, to the right in front of the piano a merrily smiling, beautiful Gabriella, and me in the middle, looking down in a bow, concentrated, as if I was about to jump from a 10-meter-spring-board. Behind us there is a part of the screen. The applause was long. The people stood up from their seats. It was a touching moment.

### **This was the Tour**

After the appearance there was sparkling wine served in the front area of the enormous atrium. Many impressions. Pity was only that the national press was not sharing this. Someone approached me, said hello and introduced himself as Michael Eiser. He is the hotel manager of the Sorat in Berlin at the Spreebogen, where one month later the prize award to Maestro Barenboim would take place. Together with Jörn I went to the table where Martin Forberg was standing. The Duo Rubin was still changing clothes and later joined us. Only slowly we realized that now we could relax and cool down. After we had chatted a little in the atrium we continued in a small group and walked over to the restaurant which we did not find at once. I tried to make clear to myself that we made it, but was still in thought with the happenings of the past hours. When we entered the crowded restaurant we were overwhelmed by the people who all arose from their seats and applauded. They were from the audience of our performance. I have never experienced such a thing before, it was incredible, like in a fairytale. I could not relate this to my own self. At first it irritated me, while I found a seat next to Mrs. Robin Ben-Hur, then I was glad, because these were people who supported our concern. They applauded for peace between Israelis and Palestinians. We had accomplished our mission. We had reached thousands of people on stage and over the media. We had mobilized politicians, organizers and other artists. At the end of the tour we had come closer to each other and had not moved away from each other. We had set a sample, a precedence, a way of togetherness. We had changed.

Ithay and Gabriella brought me back to the apartment above the Stefan's at night, and we said goodbye as friends. We were proud that we had made this together. At the same time it was clear to us that there was still a huge lot in the respective other that we did not know of. That the world was so much greater and so much more complex than we kings with wings of dust would ever grasp. But whatever the future would hold this tour is standing there. It existed.

Next morning, or noon, respectively, I cleared the room and got my things together. I left the gigantic flower bouquet from the night before in the apartment, there was no way to transport it. Everything was super. Too super. When I had shoved the suitcase and the guitar into the corridor and pulled the door shut behind me I looked for the key to lock the door. I had forgotten it, it stuck inside. Shoot. Stefan took it with serenity. He even brought me to the station. At night in Kiel I realized step by step that all these things had really happened.

## **Chapter 7: Haviva Reik Peace Prize Award**

### **Daniel Barenboim**

Daniel Barenboim started his musical career approximately at the same time as Elvis, in summer 1954. Or even in August 1950, when he gave his first official concert in Buenos Aires. The debut as a pianist followed in 1952 in Vienna and Rome. Often quoted are the words of the conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler: "The eleven-year old Barenboim is a phenomenon...", and it seemed to have been a similar initial ignition like the simultaneous words of a young artist from Memphis - transmitted via radio - who sang: "That's alright Mama, that's alright for you." At that time the Barenboims have already lived for two years in the freshly founded Israel and Daniel made first recordings: Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Bartok. Some stations: in 1967 Daniel Barenboim conducted the New Philharmonia Orchestra in London, in 1973 he conducted an opera for the first time, Don Giovanni. In 1991 he became Music Director of the Chicago

Symphony Orchestra, and since 2000 he is Chief Conductor at the Staatskapelle Berlin. The music of Daniel Barenboim is appreciated in the whole world. So is his integration work beyond the realm of music. It is showing, for instance, in his cooperations with German orchestras: they always constitute a German-Israeli cooperation, too. In the early nineties he met the Palestinian thinker Edward Said by accident in a London hotel lobby and ever since they had been tied by a friendship. This led to the foundation of the "West Eastern Divan", an inter-cultural musical project, as well as to his first appearance in the Westbank, at Bir Zeit University in February 1999. The Maestro's and pianist's musical range is broad and includes Jazz and Tango, Afro-American and Brazilian music. In fall 2002 the updated version of his autobiography "A Life in Music" was published in English and Spanish. His exchange of ideas with Edward Said also is available in book form.

Daniel Barenboim received many awards, like the Spanish "Prince of Asturias Concord Prize" (2002) for the work at the West Eastern Divan together with Edward Said. The Tolerance Prize by the Protestant Academy of Tutzing (2002) for the dialogue work between Israelis and Palestinians. He is an honorary citizen of Spain and bearer of the German award Großes Bundesverdienstkreuz. On May 9 this year he received the Wolf Prize in the Knesset, a very high award. The speech, which Mr. Barenboim held at that day, and the reactions on this speech were perceived in the whole world with great attention. It can be found in English at [www.daniel-barenboim.com](http://www.daniel-barenboim.com). In it, he called for pragmatic, humanitarian and socially just solutions and against ideologies. He further quoted some excerpts from the Declaration of Israel's Independence: "The state of Israel will devote itself to the development of this country for the benefit of all its people; It will be founded on the principles of freedom, justice and peace, guided by the visions of the prophets of Israel; It will grant full equal, social and political rights to all its citizens regardless of differences of religious faith, race (sic!) or sex; It will ensure freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture." Mr. Barenboim also quoted the part in which the founding fathers of the State of Israel, who had signed the Declaration, spoke about committing themselves "to pursue peace and good relations with all neighboring states and people". The prize-winner was worried and wondered whether the Israelis can ignore the gap between the idea and the realities of Israel. Does the occupation fit this Declaration of Independence? he asked. The speech reached Ithay, Gabriella and me on the road during the tour. In the car between Halle and Vreden I read out to them what the papers had written. All the papers had reported about this event.

The first time I really got aware of Mr. Barenboim was in a Spiegel interview not too long ago. I also saw him in talkshows and always found it especially good what he said. He has often repeated that he does not believe in a military solution of the conflict. This for me is the main reference point. I did not read the dialogue between Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said yet, it is on the list. Surely I will find some hints there concerning an issue I want to know more about. For Daniel Barenboim wrote in the article "I have a dream", which was published in

the German weekly paper "Die Zeit" in October 1999: "I am also in favor of letting the two countries keep their weapons. Israel has to remain valiant vis-à-vis the Arab World, Palestine - and be it for psychological reasons -, too." In the English translation on the official Barenboim homepage the statement even turns to denote active armament: "Secondly, I am in favour of arming both nations. Israel must remain vigilant against the Arab world - but so should Palestine, (at least for her own peace of mind)." It is hard for me to understand how one does not believe in a military solution while still believing in weapons. Where is the difference? Of course, it won't be possible to re-function all weapons to ploughshares over night, but peace? For example, with my neighbors I have peace. But this is not due to the fact that we were armed. I guess, if I armed myself and if my neighbor did, too, then we would start to fear each other. The danger of an outbreak of violence would strongly increase. Is it naive to think this way or is it naive to think in a different way? In his thanking speech in the Sorat Mr. Barenboim said: "There is no military solution, we know that. There is only the illusion of power, the illusion of security." Is military security an illusion now, or is it not?

### **The Peace Prize Award**

*(June 27, 2004)* "The peace prize, which is named after the Kibbutz activist and resistance fighter Haviva Reik - she was executed by German soldiers in 1944 -, was awarded for the tenth time in 2004. Many of the former prize winners attended this event in the Sorat hotel in Berlin, like the Swiss Ellen Ringier, Professor Eduard Badeen und Peter Liatowitsch. Dahlia Rabin-Pelessof, former member of the Knesset and vice minister, honored with the Haviva Reik Peace Award in 1997, held the laudatio for the conductor and musician Barenboim. Among the 120 guests of the ceremony were Berlin's ruling mayor Klaus Wowereit and ARD (TV) host Sabine Christiansen. The delicious catering for the guests was prepared by the Arab and Jewish Chefs for Peace within the frame of a benefice gala dinner. The Israeli Jewish Duo Rubin and the German Palestinian writer Anis Hamadeh, who have ended their successful series of benefice concerts under the name 'Shalom - Salam' for the benefit of Givat Haviva a month earlier, provided a pleasant musical and literary frame." So in the press information.

The Duo Rubin and me sat together with other guests at one of the ten or twelve tables and we followed the course of the things which happened. There was a lot to see. Next to me sat Antje, who I have known since school days and who lives in Magdeburg, not far from Berlin. It was an opportunity to see her again. Sabine Christiansen passed by our table, she is the most known German talkshow host. The Chefs for Peace (Talli Inbal, Ibrahim Abu Seir, Joseph N.Asfour, Kevork Alemian) came in with a terrine of hummus and eggplant with parsley sauce, followed by a pumpkin soup with coriander. Before the event there had been a press conference at which the Chefs had said: "We use our knives only in the kitchen, to prepare delicious dishes with them." During and



after the prize award we had stuffed lamb cutlets with figs on mujaddara and Mediterranean fish filets with red pepper and ginger. Champagne soup with berries, puff pastry and a Rose water sorbet, and finally coffee with Guraybeh. Somebody from the other table asked me what Guraybeh is, but I had to pass. It was something with almonds, I think. Unfortunately, I am quite a dilettante in the nutrition department, my current eating habits are a catastrophe. The Chef of the Sorat hotel and and TV cook Rainer Strobel also participated in preparing the menu.

Mister Barenboim only arrived when the first dish was already on the tables. Meanwhile I recited the "Crocodile from Kiel". When he entered, the people stood up and applauded. How may it feel when everybody around you is super nice and you only look into grinning faces and shining eyes? There will be a high pressure due to the expectations. You are brought into a role which you have to fit. But I guess that Mr. Barenboim felt comfortable in this company, for he said in his speech: "The importance of this award for me is that Givat Haviva is a symbol for the necessity to fight against ignorance." His speech, by the way, was by far the best one of the day. He talked about music and orchestra as examples of peaceful structures. Nice was: "Head and heart really are inseparable, and you cannot play music emotionally only, and you also cannot play music rationally only. Because when you separate between the two, then it is not music anymore." He was the only one who mentioned the wall, or the separation device or however this thing may be called. The central quote from the speech is: "In Berlin we know about the meaning of a wall and one must not forget that. And this wall, which now is being built in Israel, is not only a humiliation for the Palestinians, it really is the greatest danger for Israel. And it is time that we all listen to the way responsible people talk about what we must do for the Palestinians. The Palestinians do not need us, they will go their own way. With or without us. And Israel will, to my mind, achieve real security and strength on the day when there will be the courage to produce the necessary gestures and facts which will lead to acceptance by the Palestinians. The only security and the only strength for Israel and for the Jewish people is the acceptance by the neighbors. If we don't manage to achieve this, not the Palestinians are in danger, but really the future of the state of Israel. "

This was exactly how I assessed the situation as well, so I applauded at this point. Not few others also did. As the ceremony, the speeches, addresses and words of thank were bilingual, German and Hebrew, we had a translator, Michael Sternheimer, who unobtrusively talked with a low voice into a microphone which he covered with a newspaper. Via a headset the audience could listen to the respective translation. Daniel Barenboim had announced to speak in two languages, but then remained speaking German. Next to a document he was delivered a painting which had been created just for him. As was mentioned at the press conference, the painter knew Mister Barenboim and he had introduced several elements in the painting the true meaning of which would disclose for the Maestro only. It was delivered by Dr. Sarah Osacky-Lazar, head of the research department of Givat Haviva, and Mohammad

Darawshe, spokesman of Givat Haviva. He said in his speech: "The prize was awarded to Maestro Barenboim for his manyfold and longtime work, for the peace talks of the Israelis as a partner, and he has pursued something and he saw: there is an alternative to the conflict. Out of an understanding of peace Maestro Barenboim has become an ambassador of peace, an ambassador of change and a spokesman for thousands of people on both sides of the trench; they are entering a dialogue and concern themselves with peace. Impossible is peace without an end of occupation. Without genuine equality it is not possible. It is not possible to have peace without good intentions." Mister Darawshe - an Arab - spoke Hebrew. He lives near Afula. There are some people living in this area which we both know. He was the only one who mentioned the occupation at all. Sarah Osacky-Lazar said in her contribution: "Maybe it is music: the universal language which is sunken in all phantastic things and helping us over the difficulties in everyday life. Very determined is the personality of Daniel Barenboim, his courage and his straightforwardness, his ability to say everything he wants without fear, without political correctness, it is the freedom spirit of the creative, of the creating individual. This may be the reason for Maestro Daniel Barenboim and his friend Eduard Saïd - whom I had the honor to meet during his stay in Israel - to shake hands for cooperation in this torn, hurt region. To let sounds fall between the Jewish and the Palestinian youth in a time of blood, to start with giving them hope."

There were further speeches which I liked, so the one of the representative of the Palestinian General Directory in Germany, Abdullah Hijazi. In it he said: "You, Mister Barenboim, are today awarded with the Haviva Reik Peace Prize for your engagement in the reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis, yes between Arabs and Jews. I cannot think of a more deserving award winner. I am glad to be able to thank you on this occasion as a Palestinian from Nablus for the things which you are doing in my homeland in your work with young Palestinians! With your work, with the establishment of a youth orchestra, you are planting a young tender plant of hope. For the young people who are traumatized and coined by the violence which they experience in everyday life. Therefore, venerable Mister Daniel Barenboim, I want to express my special and cordial thanks to you today." And Dagmar Schmidt, the parliamentary legislator and chairwoman of Givat Haviva Germany: "Unmeasurable in its effect is (...) the engagement of our award winner Daniel Barenboim on the spot. He is providing an example for us showing us how to bring young people on the right way. Not only the acquisition of knowledge about a musical instrument, the discovering of the own abilities, maybe even talents, but also the playing together within a unity, coin young people and make them search for a straight path in self-awareness. The one who finds his or her acknowledgement in the applause for production will not be looking for it in destruction." The address of Dr. Ellen Ringier from Switzerland - a former award winner - was nice, too. In it she said: "Givat Haviva beyond doubt is living a dream: peace between Israel and Palestine. And you and me and all of us, we are living this dream as well. Just like millions of Arabs and Jews are devoting themselves to one dream every night: peace between Israel and Palestine." Mrs. Ringier recited the poem of a

child and imagined peace, visualized it. It was not as intellectual as other contributions, but close to earth, without flourishes.

The rest of the speeches and addresses I did not like too much, partly found them even destructive. The laudatio of the Israeli politician Dalia Pelossof-Rabin dealt with resuming the path of Oslo. It remained abstract. Similarly in the greeting address of Gavri Bar-Gil, General Secretary of the Kibbuz movement HaArzti. He calls Oslo a philosophy and says: "More and more Israelis and more and more Palestinians understand that there is no other way (than Oslo), and therefore we have many reasons to be optimistic, despite all the difficulties we are confronted with. We are closer than ever before to the goal for which we all are fighting." Sounded of tired paroles and desperation.

The ruling mayor of Berlin, Klaus Wowereit, said in his speech: "Berlin takes an interest in the events in the Middle East! We mourn the many people who die day by day, and I also say these suicide assaults are so terrible, because they attempt to destroy a public life. Israel is used to defend its borders, to be confronted with military. But that children, that women commit suicide assaults in such a manner is a huge danger for every public life and for every public freedom. And especially we as Germans, and also as Berliners, know that we will always support the right of Israel's existence and peace in the Middle East and will do so with all emphasis." With this speech the mayor of Berlin did not only offend me, but also some other guests, as I found out later in talks. The effect of his statement is as if one would talk about the British society and judge it only by their soccer hooligans: "As long as there are these hooligans there will be no peace with England!" This is exactly the method to mute both the Palestinian (pseudo-) government and - and foremost - the Palestinian civil society. It prevents peace from the outset while feeding the war. There was no word of Wowereit's on Israeli violence. Instead, he mentions the "right of existence" (obviously including the human rights violations) of Israel, and only after it he mentions peace. Spontaneously I had to think about the fact that we Germans abolished a specific stanza of our national anthem for specific reasons and that I find that this is the right decision.

The greeting address by Federal President Johannes Rau appeared to me to be immaterial: "Two weeks ago I opened a conference of the political foundations in Berlin in which Israelis and Palestinians thought about and discussed the way to peace. This meeting did not proceed in consent, either - to put it carefully. Yet all the participants of the conference agreed on the fact that peace is only possible when both, Palestinians and Israelis, get back to dialogue, when they recognize the partner for peace in the other. Those, who want peace, need allies on both sides. That there are such people, colleagues and fighters for peace, this is what Daniel Barenboim's work has impressively proven." Herr Rau also wrote: "For the tour of the Duo Rubin, who will play for you today, I have taken the patronage", which sounded as if I had been the parsley in Shalom - Salam, or the stuffing. It hurt me. Maybe for Shalom - Salam we should call ourselves the Trio Emerald...

The words of the two Prime Ministers and former prize winners Sigmar Gabriel ("Still the spiral of violence is turning in Israel, one time motivated by the one side, another time by the other side, and it keeps this beautiful country in fear and horror. With his courage, his tolerance, intellectuality and his fearlessness Daniel Barenboim is a role-model for all of us.") and Kurt Beck ("Respect for human freedom and the tie to our fundamental values - those are the suppositions of tolerance. And tolerance is a condition for peace. It is best experienced and practised in personal encounters. You, dear Mister Barenboim, have made many of such encounters possible via the 'world language' of music.") were admittedly nice, yet I did not sense them to be progressive. The rhetorical "one time by the one side, another time by the other" implies two equal parties, and those do not exist.

Subsequent to the prize award we had our joint appearance. Before that, the Duo Rubin played a piece for piano and cello. They were quite excited, especially Gabriella whose first remark in her introduction was that she was quite excited. She addressed Mr. Barenboim directly and told him about how during her studies in Hungary she had listened to his recordings which at the time had been hard to get hold of, and about how important Daniel Barenboim has been for them in their lives. He listened closely to them and I was happy for the Duo Rubin about this joyful experience. Our joint appearance consisted of the three poems out of Loving Jay (The Secret of Time, The Gateless Gate, Amphibians), they were divided by Bach sequences. Unfortunately, Mr. Barenboim was already gone then. The poetry was well received, two people came up to me right after the reading asking for the book, among them one of the celebrities.

But this was not Sabine Christiansen. Mrs. Christiansen had been to Palestine and Israel recently. There she collected new information about the situation on the spot, and it also led to her appearance at the Barenboim event. I found that it was an elegant gesture. It was the first time I saw her and I only did so from a distance, just as I did not go to Mr. Barenboim, as there had been a lot of people standing around him and there was nothing specific I wanted to tell him, other than my presence and my applause.

### **The Crocodeel from Kiel**

Had somebody told me a month earlier that on that day I would see Daniel Barenboim and read "Das Krokodil aus Kiel" for him, I would hardly have believed it. But it really happened to be that way. I had just finished writing the crocodile, seven rhymed episodes. The Maestro was expected in the hall of the Sorat hotel, the people already sat at the ten or twelve tables and the first dish just came in. Alex Elsohn, who had coordinated and organized the whole performance, said if I wanted I could read the crocodile now, to avoid a pause at that moment. So it happened. The crocodeel from Kiel had an enormous

meal. This was easy to explain: without nutrition it felt pain. I read it into an orange microphone from TV channel 2 and into a blue one from the Bavarian Broadcast, and a third one. It was also filmed. What the people from Kiel would have thought about that, I wondered, had they had an interest in this event. Kiel never had a crocodile, says an inborn juvenile. But his brother emphasizes long and strong financial crises... There was a woman from Kiel attending, Barbara, who is an in-law to one of the Chefs for Peace and who was celebrating with us. Daniel Barenboim did not hear the crocodile, though. No, wait, Alex told me later that he escorted him from the entrance and that Mister Barenboim asked who was reading there. When Alex told him he allegedly said that he had heard about me before. Well, this could mean anything.

The wind blows mild, the wind blows wild, the crocodile loves every child. The big green crocodile would eat its favorite meal, would rob and cheat and steal, I think this can't be real. It had a stunning appetite, from dawn till dusk and through the night. So don't you lose your heads and hide under your beds! When I read it (in German) I had the feeling that the audience partly was a bit amazed about the choice of the genre. Which genre is this, anyway? I found it adequate for the occasion, as it sizzled in from a side-door so green and fresh. How quick the hours with play and style, thought the hungry crocodile. To my left I saw the translator trying to bring it into Hebrew simultaneously. I had forgotten about him, should have warned him before. When the story was over I passed him by on my way back to the seat. I had to laugh, tapped on his shoulders and admitted that I did not make it too easy for him. He grinned. Some time later he asked me if I had one of these crocodiles for him. This was a nice compliment.

In the course of the three days which I had the honor to lodge in the Sorat I distributed about twenty crocodile magazines. It was brandnew, only the press in Kiel knew about it, the cultural council and a couple of people in Kiel who happened to see one of the Croco stickers stuck on a traffic-light. The "Kieler Woche" (Kiel Week) had still been going on, a famous German event with regattas and music, and the day before I had written "The Crocodile on the Kieler Woche" when I, in the very night when the last part was completed, went for a stroll through the city distributing a couple of crocodile magazines to the local scene. It was fun. Such activities I regarded as constituting one of the pleasant duties of a writer. For some hours it had been as if I belonged to this place. I have always been dreaming of belonging somewhere. Since this years, even since last year, the attempts became more and more successful. I really belonged to Shalom Salam. Without having to deny myself. Without having to stop growing.

The night before the prize award we had already sat together at a large table, the Chefs for Peace, Alex Elsohn, Dagmar Schmidt, Martin Forberg, Michael Krebs and Petra, the event manager Rafael Brown, who had also contributed to the idea of the peace prize, Gavri Bar-Gil from the Kibbuz movement, Mohammad Darawshe and Sarah Osacky-Lazar from Givat Haviva, the hotel manager Michael Eiser and his wife, Reuven from the Golan Heights Winery,

Rainer Strobel, the continuously merry chef of the Sorat who from time to time appeared from out of his kitchen to joke with his colleagues, and I probably have forgotten some people. I think Stefan. In the middle of the dinner, Alex, Talli Inbal and me left to drive to another hotel where Mrs. Ringier expected us. She had come from Switzerland with some friends. We came in when the desert was served, a composition of tiramisu with big deco. We were introduced and sat at the head of the table where there were reservation cards with our names on them. I actually had no idea about what would expect me there. The conversation was in English, because Talli does not speak German. She is Israeli and has a fish restaurant of her own near Haifa. Last year she had been to Germany, too, participating in an event in Niedersachsen. It is courageous of her, because she lost relatives in Germany during the war. I did not enter the conversation at Mrs. Ringier's table and do not even recall a lot of it as I had enough to do with perceiving the people in front of me at the table. It was a noble society and a big hotel. We were received very cordially. When we had to return I gave a crocodile to Mrs. Ringier and one to her friend. Back in the Sorat we resumed eating. Our meals had been stored for us. It was a happy circle. Again I realized that I had been alone for a long time, because I was not used to such a lot of simultaneous impressions. I distributed the remaining crocodiles and read out the end of the last part to Dagmar Schmidt: "Thus the reptile's farewell was throughout ambivalent: Some people were glad about it, others mourned the friend. Croco became in the end a historical legend, just like Jack the Ripper, Lassie dog or Flipper."

I was really happy to have Croco with me, for he had refreshingly little to do with the Middle East conflict. When you engage yourself too long only in "the thing" you get mad. When we had a barbecue together at Stefan's home on the evening after the prize award Alex showed me the bar-tender and told me that this man owned a real crocodile. Sure, I thought, who doesn't? But it was really true. The man had a twirled moustache. He said that his wife and he are so fond of crocodiles that they keep one in their home, in a room of its own with all kinds of exotic things in it, so that the reptile feels comfortable. His wife confirmed this assertion. I handed them a copy and in turn he filled my glass with absinth.

### **Ideal and Reality**

In the last months and years a number of prominent Israeli observers has, partly in sharp words, drawn the general attention to the negative development of the country, among them Avraham Burg, Jossi Beilin, and Moshe Zuckermann. The discrepancy between the cliché of the "asylum of all Jews" and the real, acting state has grown through the years and decades. Both are called Israel. Daniel Barenboim had said: "The only security and the only power for Israel and for the Jewish people is the acceptance by the neighbors. If we fail to achieve this not the Palestinians are in danger, but really the future of the state of Israel." I wondered how many people in the hall had understood what he meant by this. THAT he meant it like this. That THIS state in this form could vanish, because it

is destroying itself. In matters of force Israel is stronger, that's undisputed. They have atomic bombs and a well-equipped army. One has to acknowledge this fact. There is no military power which could compete with Israel. One should rather start with the fact that the Israelis are not happy. This surely is much easier for me than for Palestinians who do not live in a safe country like Germany, but in Palestine and Israel, in the war zone.

Israelis and Jews apparently carry a heavy load with the cliché of the valiant/vigilant Jew. To not take anything. To secure the own existence. It is a stereotype, a role. It is clear where it comes from, and yet it can never be a success when clichés are substituted with counter-clichés. One only moves away from the human who does not let himself be pressed into roles. Moreover, the role of the valiant Jew consequently needs a complementary role, for there has to be someone against whom they are valiant. The existence of the Palestinians must be puzzling the Israelis completely, for the Palestinians on the one hand fit the needed complementary role well, on the other hand nobody can understand the Palestinians better than Jews or Israelis, respectively. For if there is a party fighting for its right of existence, then it is the Palestinians. It is hardly denied that they do not possess sovereignty and that they live either under occupation, or in exile, or in the state of Israel where they are discriminated because of their not being Jewish. As long as Jews are pressed into clichés or press themselves into them, they are isolated, alien, exclusive. And thus the finding of their identity fails, too. Genuine identity necessarily needs freedom for its growth, it is impossible to have it declared from above. Even if you have atomic bombs. If the new Israel (whatever name it may bear) has a Jewish character, then it will be because of free Jews who live there. And not, because it is written on a piece of paper.

But it is not enough to confirm that Israel is collapsing because of the incompatibility of ideal and reality. Mister Barenboim stressed in his speech that change has to originate in ourselves: "Maybe the worst thing in our society today is that we tolerate people's silence and people's inactivity. Always with the argument that it must come from somewhere else. It never comes from anywhere else. It never came from God, it never came from the kings, never from the presidents, it always came from the people." When this madness is over there finally will be safety for Israelis/Jews in the country, just like for everybody else. Security comes from the inside, not from the outside. Several speakers in the Sorat hotel had emphasized this, Mr. Barenboim and also Mrs. Pelossof-Rabin. The Palestinians have put up with the existence of the state of Israel years ago, this is a known fact. Even many of the extremists, on whom the cameras are directed. But most of all the civil society on which no cameras are directed, because it does not fit the (needed counter-) cliché. Israel's right of existence has or had factually not been questioned anymore for a long time. The Israelis had already made it to take a stand among the neighboring countries. But they did not know how to continue. And now? How does a valiant person make peace? A strong need for security came into being after the horrors of the Holocaust and the new virtue of valor went along with it. There had not been a

sufficient communication between Germans and Jews, because the society until today does not know how to deal with guilt. It is living according to material measures and does not understand much of healing processes, it rather scratches the old wounds open instead, for they are itching so, and even expects attention for this. The German Jewish conflict is not mastered at all yet. It is still there. This control drama was carried over to the Palestinians long ago. The war between Israelis and Palestinians, no: Arabs, largely is a result of the unmastered German-Jewish past. In my estimation (and I certainly am concerned with the matter, because I want to understand why my relatives are being discriminated) it is a continuation of World War II in the form of a control drama and has nothing to do with any Palestinians. Had the Jewish state been established in South America, what would have happened differently there?

### **Cultural Identities**

On the evening after the peace prize award we gathered in the lobby of the Sorat hotel and waited for the cars which would bring us to Stefan's home, outside Berlin, where we had a barbecue. The Chefs for Peace were very tired, but said that they would wake up again later. The ride took about an hour. The party was a success, there were many people from different cultures. They ate together and chatted. I talked to several people, among them Mrs. Osacky-Lazar who speaks good Arabic. She is a historian and told me that maybe she wanted to write about her own history. I tried to encourage her. She would surely have a lot to recount. I told her I would read it. While the barbecue was sizzling in front of the door to the garden and while the plates were filled we turned to talk about music, and when she heard that I am a songwriter she wanted to hear a song. Stefan went and borrowed a guitar from his neighbor and handed it over to me. I was not too sure if it was a good idea, but what should I do? I played "Wie oft wirst du es noch tun". Unfortunately, I had not tuned the guitar correctly which I only noticed when it was too late. I made it through the song, but felt a bit embarrassed. Next to me sat a jolly Dutchman who asked me if I could play "Proud Mary" by Creedence Clearwater Revival / Ike and Tina Turner. Of course I can play "Proud Mary". I tuned the instrument, this time correctly, and started with the intro. The Dutchman sang quite well, I accompanied him and sang the second voice in the chorus. I have no idea how this man came to our group, I think nobody exactly knew. But it was good to also have someone from the Netherlands with us. It was the second time during the tour. There had been another one in Wesel, he approached us short before the performance in the dressing room and was rich in words. He had some plans with us, but couldn't articulate them exactly.

With "Proud Mary" the cultural differences between East and West within the group became apparent, because there were some people for whom this song belonged to the collective memory and others who did not know the song and who were amazed that we memorized the lyrics, the Dutchman and me. Meanwhile, Mohammad Darawshe sat in the adjacent room watching the soccer



results. By the end of the gathering I danced with Barbara from Kiel. I had not danced for years, except alone. With Martin Forberg I talked longer than with anybody else. With him I could chat until the cows come home. Sometimes during these months there had been times when we could just not end the conversation. Politically, we do not share every single view, but in major issues we agree. We talked about politics and I also asked him what his favorite music was. On the way back to Berlin we kept talking all the time. I stressed the point that the latent definition of Jews in the public discourse according to which Jews are potential victims of anti-Semitism, is a negative and demarcating definition which cannot have positive effects on Jewish identity. He told me that he had seen Fatima Mernissi passing by in the Sorat hotel earlier in the day. He reminded me that there had just been a conference in the city on Arab media. So it was Kai Hafez, the professor for Islamic Studies, whom I had seen in the lobby of the Sorat. I had not been sure first. What a coincidence.

During the tour I had been so often and intensively together with Jews and Israelis as rarely before. After all these experiences I had gained new associations with the concept "Jewish". There had been things which for example Ithay and Mister Eiser from the Sorat and Mister Ben Hur from Daimler seemed to have in common. It is hard to put it into words, at least, I can't. Maybe later. It is, at any rate, different from the notion of "Jewish" in the Jewish paper *Hagalil*, for instance. In one of their newsletters I read in August 2004: "What could be more Jewish than the discourse, the dialectical discourse, the dialectical discussion, the perpetual questioning of the own self and everything else and the own positions, the constant reflection, the dispute which lets people cross borders with words, the challenge which results from unsanctioned speeches, sharpening the antennas for dangers and chances?... Dialogue, discourse. Dialectics... A continuous struggle and argumentation, which despite all the reproaches never questions the common basis..." This is a cliché, the cliché of the dialectical Jew. Paul Spiegel uses it, too, when he calls the Jews "a democratic little people" (see chapter 3). This cliché goes together with the notion of Israel being "the only democracy in the Middle East". Indeed there exist democratic elements in Israel, like elections and pluralism, as well as anti-democratic ones, like occupation, war law, custody of kin (*Sippenhaft*), torture, killings, disregard of UN resolutions, theft, arbitrary action and segregation.

There are certain characteristics where I sometimes think: Typical Arab! Typical German! Typical American! Typical Israeli/Jewish! Typical Palestinian! Typical British! These are generalisations and typifications and probably everybody has such conceptions. Whenever these characteristics I discover in my mind are negative, I question them principally: what gives me the idea? Which specifications from which situations do I single out here and why? Which part of my individual personality is activated here? All this is part of the confrontation with cultures and civilisations. The "typical" is a sword with two edges. There was an instance where I felt insulted for a short time, because I had been invited to a thing "and also a genuine Palestinian from Ramallah". I suddenly felt inferior. Two edges also has the word "more Palestinian than the Palestinians"

about which I mentioned in the beginning that I regarded it as nice only when it came from within the own family and this also only because it gives me the feeling of being accepted. When I compare it with "more German than the Germans" I realize that such concepts don't work. At the same time we need certain clichés to be able to grasp the complexity of cultural identities.

What is the secret of cultural and country-related collective identities? I have been dealing with this issue for a long time. I bear a name which is conspicuous in my surroundings. Which a lot of people cannot pronounce properly. I am German, for I grew up and was socialized in Germany, from kindergarten to school and non-military service to the masters degree. Yet I look beyond Germany, because my father grew up in Palestine and my mother was born in Königsberg. Because I grew up with the music from New Orleans and Memphis. Because I have trained my humor with British comedy cassettes and also have a longing for France. Because I love Alexandria and played chess in Baghdad on the Tigris riverside. Because the world is so unbelievably rich, full of wonders and amiable people and things.

One can gain cultural identities in a way similar to an actor or actress when they learn a role. Of course the role must fit and be authentic, otherwise it is no fun. But usually we acquire such identities in everyday life. From my studies and numerous experiences in Arab countries and with Arabs I have caught up with my Arab identity, so to speak. My first Arabic I learned with sixteen, in the Mustansiriya University (destroyed partly or totally by the Americans in 2003). The teachers only talked in Arabic, right from the start, and they played the first words for us as we did not have any vocabulary yet. We were a class of foreigners who learned Arabic, among us students from varying age groups and from five continents. It is not an easy identity for me, for I need a different kind of freedom from the one which is common in Arab societies. I have a lot to criticize in the East. Especially in the questions of violence and magisterial structures I sometimes have problems with the mainstream opinion of the East. Moreover, there is the phenomenon - like probably in all cultures - that you sometimes are accepted better when you only know a couple of words of the language. But as soon as you speak well the mistakes become the object of attention. Since my father and I have settled our conflict, however, it has become easier for me. Sometimes I feel more comfortable with Arabs than with Germans, because I experience Arabs on certain levels as being more ready for communication and more spiritual than Germans. They mostly understand my religious feelings better, no matter if they are Muslims, Christians or Jews. Concerning the historical reference, though, this I have acquired by myself. The Arab Islamic Middle Ages, for example, with their thinkers and poets, this has become part of my own collective history, like the European. I guess basically I am a conqueror.

I also have an American, an English, a French identity. Also an Israeli identity. A couple of years ago on the internet I read an appeal to Foreign Minister Fischer calling him to increase his engagement for peace in Israel/Palestine, on

the Hagalil board. Hagalil is a Jewish German newspaper based in Munich which often works together with the "taz", the newspaper "die tageszeitung". Hagalil had published a lot of items that horrified me. But this appeal aroused my interest and I read through some of the postings, wanted to know what kind of people they were. I read in a mixture of goodwill, intelligence and also aggression. Some of the contributions were discriminating, so I entered the mailing list and made my comments for a couple of days. Quickly I got a feedback, both in public and behind the scene. Nice that you are here! two or three people wrote me, then the discussion will become more balanced. You probably won't like it here for a long time, said others. Apparently, there had been "attempts" by Palestinians before me. The purpose of my stay was to show that Palestinians exist and that they are human beings, just like Jews and Israelis. It was rather exhausting and demanded high concentration and attention. It did not take long until some specialists had chased some quotes from my homepage about the Central Council through the public: "Look, this is the guy." So I had to install a discursive security wall. Extremely tiring. Then I posted "Words for Both", a piece to which this public had inspired me. Someone suggested I could go to Uri (Avnery).

At that moment something peculiar happened: a new identity rose up in me. My consciousness altered. I had absorbed this collective and formally went conform with it. I had the notion that the script in the mailing list was stylish. I recognized a style in this collective, a culture which I could acquire. It is very hard to describe this with words, it had not been an intellectual process. As if some contact nerves in my brains got newly connected, as if streets were created in my consciousness. I was Israeli now. The thought frightened me at first. I rationalized this fear and it was not justified. My personality was stable, there was no need to be afraid of corruption. I realized that as an Israeli I was a Jew and that "Israeli" did not really explain much. It was merely a form to bring some apprehensible structures to Judaism, it was an attempt, a sketch, a place which was set for identity to be found. My principles and views have not changed in the least during this process, on the contrary, they were only strengthened. But I left the mailing list soon afterwards, for it had been too exhausting and there was no development in the discussion, either. With a piece of literature I got out of the whole thing, there was nothing left to do there. Until today, however, I receive the Hagalil newsletters uncalled per email, they probably miss me.

## **Falckenstein**

*(August 6, 2004)* During the past weeks I had been busy writing down the tour memories. Now the book was almost finished. The manuscript laid beneath me in the sun. An entering ferry-boat violently honked at some swimmers who stayed in the water in the vicinity of the pier. It was a light day. A cool wind blew across the beach, I put my black T-shirt on again. Falckenstein. It was the right decision to come back here today, after having given a concert yesterday in the summer camp of the "Federation of the Democratic Working Class Associations" (DIDF). This roof organisation was founded 25 years ago with the

aim to represent the interests of the Turkish workers in Germany in an organized way. About 300 young people from all over Germany had come together for a long week in Kiel/Falckenstein, in the very north of Germany. There was a cultural and an academic program, including camp-fire music, and I was invited from Attac circles. (And when I say "Attac" I mean the network, not the cadre.) It was my pleasure and I also needed practise. I also played the brandnew song, "Give Your Lonely Heart Away", of which Björn had said it was one of my best. Together with Björn Högsdal from AssembleArt I was currently recording the crocodile jingle, he is a rapper and writer and he organizes cultural events in Kiel with growing success.

There really is a strange thing about inspiration: on Friday I received a mail from Nina (name changed by editor) after five years. On Saturday something dragged me to pick up the guitar, by evening time I had found some themes and at two o'clock in the morning the song was finished without me having the intention to write anything, at all. Like in the old days. For two years I had not composed a single song. Nina actually is not completely in the wrong place here, as she was also involved in the creation of "Wie oft wirst du es noch tun". How does she do that? We should start a business together and share the dough. But this was something I was forbidden to further think about, and I didn't want to, either. I analyzed myself. Was not a hundred per cent happy. There were several things I was concerned with, most of all this manuscript. Could I finish it now? Above me a seagull croaked. In front of me the waves, behind me the hill with the forest, the area of the summer camp. I put my hand on the front page of the manuscript and closed my eyes. Was there anything left to add? Did I not forget important things, was I fair in the more critical passages?

In my mind I went through all the pages. Originally, I wanted to have written more about conflict solutions. But this would mean to write about the family, for in the end the major event which ever since has been giving me hope and which has brought me to the conviction that every conflict can be solved was the settlement with my parents after five years of substantial conflict. But this would imply writing about my sisters and the German relatives and I did not want that. To be fair one has to make clear that "every conflict can be solved" does not mean the same as "every conflict will indeed be solved", not even that every conflict should be solved.

I also wanted to write something about aggression management, but I skip this now, like I skip the story of an American friend who after September 11 changed in a drastic manner, developing an alienating nationalism matched with enemy thinking. I saw parallels to some of the topics of the tour memories, concerning the idealisation of valiant states. The Sudan I at least wanted to mention, because for months the fact has been shocking me that the UN and the world are so completely failing, after that they did have the chance to learn. So many people die every day, it is a terrible scandal! I am convinced that even for such grave conflicts there are nonviolent solutions. If people just agreed on shared values. This is the supposition and it is quite realistic, according to my

experiences. To reach this we need dialogues and signs of trust. At this thought I noticed an urge to continue "Omega 5", the novel which deals with an alternative form of society with a nonviolent tradition.

Any events from the tour that I forgot to mention? Maybe that we were recorded by Babel TV during the extra concert in the Jewish highschool in Berlin. I talked to the man from Babel TV and he told me that it is a Jewish program which transmits seminars and concerts and the like. At this performance in Berlin I had a little press experience of which I did not tell. Before the show we were interviewed and photographed. The photographer showed us into poses: turn it like this, now like that. And you now please with the chin to this side etc. After about twenty photos I couldn't stand it anymore. I apologized and went out on the corridor where I took a deep breath. Then - to the relief of the Duo Rubin - I re-entered, murmuring something about basically having quit with the times of taking orders, yet being willed to be constructive. We continued and it was no problem. About the Duo Rubin I did not write all the things I witnessed, but only relevant things for the purpose of the book and some human impressions. This has to be considered while reading, in case some things should sound distanced. Oh yes, here is something I forgot to mention: when one evening in Berlin I had said goodnight to Ithay and Gabriella, on my way to bed, I asked Ithay if I could take this half a bottle of water from the table, for the night. Ithay replied: "Of course, I don't belong to those folks who take the water from the Palestinians." I found that remarkably funny.

What else? Should the Chefs for Peace interview, which I had just conducted, be part of this book? Well, no, it already can be found at Anis Online. Reuven from the Golan Heights Winery, this was an interesting encounter, after all, he is working on occupied territory. He said, when the circumstances in Golan change he won't have a problem with leaving to Israel, if it was serving the purpose of peace. That was acceptable. Concerning the project "children teach children" in Givat Haviva I forgot to note that I like "children learn from children" better, for it does not sound so didactic. I don't really believe in didacticism, it often is close to magisterial thinking. Who teaches dominates, who learns obeys. It does not have to be this way, but we find it a lot in real life, sometimes it happens consciously, other times unconsciously. I don't exclude myself here, which is one of the reasons why I like to work artistically best. So much for the supplements. What about the politically relevant parts of the manuscript? Again I went through the book from cover to cover. Some of the passages I had revised several times already. I wanted to write it in a way that I could reach the public with it and at the same time not hide any relevant opinion and analysis of mine. Was this possible at all? I did not know. The wheel would turn, no doubt. My karma would change with the publication of the manuscript. Where to? I did not know. A good friend, Sabine Yacoub, was reading the last chapters now, before I would mail them to the main participants of the tour. I decided to leave the manuscript after that for a week and to put it online on the anniversary of Elvis's death on August 16. It had to get out. I wanted to go ahead.

I packed the manuscript back into the rucksack, drank some Cola, shook the sand from the sheet and folded it. The tank was full again after this bath in the sun. Ten minutes later I found myself back in the camp and looked around. Between the twelve-people shacks there were some tables and chairs. They had a snackbar, and a professor was giving a lecture in Turkish on Greek mythology in the middle of the square. At the end of the corridor between the bungalows pictures were exhibited and a couple of people were painting at a long table. There also was the painter who had been with us yesterday night until the end at about two o'clock. Together with Andrea and Uwe from the multi-cultural band Colibri, whom I had joined several times, we had for some hours played and sung beneath the stage after the concert. Gregor was with us, too, Andrea's husband, and a couple of young people who listened and talked to us. Before, on stage, I had sung a couple of songs together with Andrea, taking the chance of her visit. So now I found this painter again, he was just brushing a Che Guevara on an arm. The camp in some points was clearly Socialist. I wondered what these kids knew about Che Guevara. In the end this was hardly connected with their real lives, there was little more than the icon which remained. Would Che bring them to freedom and unfolding? When I saw all those young people Givat Haviva came to my mind. The young folks were quite the same everywhere in the world. They had similar wishes, fears, abilities, questions, needs. I guess it is the idealism and the solidarity principle which connect me sometimes with the so-called left spectrum. But I am not left, because I don't believe in Klassenkampf. Not in this way, at any rate. My political direction is called Nonviolent Egalitarian Liberalism, I wrote the "New Pages" for explanation and detail, they are online.

I sat down next to the painter with the long hair. He was about 50 and counseled the young people who were painting at the table. There also sat Selvi, she was another one of those who had been with us yesterday until the end. She was from Frankfurt, probably a school student, and she seemed to be a bit bored. I asked her about her languages. Among the camp participants there was a majority of Turkish rooted people, yet the mother languages varied, depending on whether they were born and/or raised in Germany or in Turkey. Selvi went to school in Turkey, but her German by now had become her main language. She was perfect for the idea I just got. "Could you translate something short for me into Turkish?" I asked her, and she replied: "Sure." I took my clipboard out of the rucksack and wrote: "Kinds of Love: To rule wants human love. To heal wants divine love. Kings we are, with wings of dust." She thought about it for a moment, then she added below: "Sevginin Türleri: Hüküm etmek istiyor insanlık sevgisi. Yaralari sarmak istiyor tanrilik sevgisi. Krallariz biz, kanatlari tozdan olan." (There is an "i" without a dot in it which I cannot reproduce on the keyboard.)

We discussed the translation for a moment; I know some Turkish, not much. We also talked about the content of the poem and she understood what I explained to her about the wings of dust. Selvi mentioned that there were many Kurds here, too, and that we could try to get a Kurdish translation. At that I suggested to be consequent and to stroll through the camp to see how many languages

we could get together. And so we did. First we encountered Dutch people. They apparently were everywhere: "Soorten Liefde: Heersen wil de menselijke liefde. Helen wil de goddelijke liefde. Koningen zijn wij, met vleugels van stof." On a bank-table-combination made of stone we saw two women, one was Spanish: "Las Formas del Amor: Dominar quiere el amor humano. Curar quiere el amor divino. Reyes somos nosotros, con alas de polvo." The other French: "Les Arts de l'Amour: C'est régner que veut l'amour humain. C'est guérir que veut l'amour divin. Nous sommes des rois, aux ailes de poussière." I asked her, whether there was a way to bring the kings in the French translation to the top of the line, but there wasn't. In the meantime some people had gathered around us. They wanted to know what we were doing there. Volunteers came for Vietnamese, Kurdish and Russian, but they had to pass. The Spanish girl asked me from where she knew me. Now I had to pass. "Didn't you use to participate in the poetry slam in Kiel in former times?" Yes, so I did. "I recognized your voice", she said. An African with a cool pair of sunglasses approached us. People had called him to us, as he knew an exotic language. First he wrote it in Portuguese, while exchanging views with the Spanish girl and the French girl: "Maneras du Amor: Dominar quero a amor humana. Curar quero a amor du deus. Nos somos reies con alas polvu." After that he hesitatingly added a version in the language Lingala: "Ba ndenge ya bolingo: Bolingo na biso ya batu ya mokili elingi ko domine. Bolingo ya nzambe elingi ko sekua biso. Bisu tosalu ba rois na mapapu ya poussière." I think people speak this in Kongo, I cannot really remember. He told us about his relatives in Zaire, who speak Portuguese. The world is full of surprises... Selvi and I strolled on, looking for Kurdish and Polish. I supplemented the German: "Arten der Liebe: Herrschen will die menschliche Liebe. Heilen will die göttliche Liebe. Könige sind wir, mit Flügeln aus Staub." (Of course I supplemented the English here in reality, having started with the German.) I also wrote an Arabic version into the list:

"أنواع الحب: الحكم هو مراد الحب البشري. الشفاء هو مراد الحب الإلهي. إننا ملوك بأجنحة من تراب."

In front of the snack-bar we found the expert for Kurdish, whom we had been looking for all the time, as he had been recommended to us by several individuals. We showed him the list with the by now nine versions and he said he only could Zaza, a dialect close to Kurdish, varying from the two Kurdish languages/dialects Kurmanci and Sorani. Fine, I replied, do it in Zaza. He frowned a little and exchanged views with a friend. They took the Turkish translation as a basis. I fetched two chairs for them and shoved them into their knees from behind. They sat and went on discussing. Suddenly a lot of folks were standing around us, among them one who I had seen before watching the backgammon players advising them in words and gestures. Now he bent over the paper with the same look on his face, involving himself in the same manner. The result was the poem in Zaza: "Eshke Rengan: Najeno hüküm bikero êshkê insanan. Najeno birinan bipeso êshkê heke. Ma kralime, puru ma nelerao." (The "sh" originally is an "s" with a snake underneath it). They tried it in Kurdish for a while, but couldn't make it to come to a translation. Someone tried Greek, but managed to do the middle sentence only: "To kalo theli i agapi ton theon." Better than nothing. I thanked Selvi, who had a lot of fun and whose name means "cypress", then I declared the mission as successfully accomplished.

Back home I wondered how to finish the book. And where? Certainly not here in Kiel. In the book I still was in the Sorat hotel in Berlin. The last hours there I spent with Jörn. Jörn! Of course. Alright, here is what happened:

### **With Jörn at the Spreebogen**

(June 28, 2004) The next morning started late, I took my time and then checked out. A bill for the minibar, oh. I thought it was included. At the breakfast buffet I was the last one, as usual. I met the Chefs for Peace in the lobby, they were about to go for a tour through the city. In passing I also saw Michael Eiser, the hotel manager, and said goodbye, as I did not expect to meet him again before my departure. Alex Elsohn was sitting at the computer in the lobby and showed me first photos from the Barenboim event. I had made a reservation for the three o'clock train to Kiel, no need to be hectic. Jörn had already called saying he was on the way. I wanted to wait for him outside at the Spreebogen. (NB: the Spree is a river in Berlin, and "Bogen" means curve). It was sunny with windy spells. As a good democrat I greeted in the direction of our Ministry of Interior which is situated directly opposite the Sorat. I wandered along the Spree, smoked, and it seemed to take longer than expected until Jörn arrived. I noticed a memorial monument, between hotel and ministry, the sculpture of a man. Albrecht Haushofer (1903 - 1945), professor for political geography, author, read the tablet underneath his portrait. He was murdered by the Nazis short before the end of the war in the Moabit quarter. Haushofer wrote the Moabit Sonnets. Three of them are exhibited around the monument in metal tabloids. One deals with brown rats in a river, another one with homeland feelings. The third one I copied. At the end of the event I had taken the name-plate of Daniel Barenboim's from his table, because I had no paper and because it was a relic. On the backside I now wrote Haushofer's poem:

#### **Schuld (Guilt)**

Ich trage leicht an dem, was das Gericht  
*I carry with ease what the court*  
Mir Schuld benennen wird: an Plan und Sorgen  
*will call my guilt: plan and troubles*  
Verbrecher wär ich, hätt ich für das Morgen  
*Criminal I'd be, did I not for the people's tomorrow*  
des Volkes nicht geplant aus eigener Pflicht  
*plan, out of my own duty*

Doch schuldig bin ich. Anders als ihr denkt!  
*Yet guilty I am. Differently from what you think!*  
Ich musste früher meine Pflicht erkennen,  
*I had to recognize my duty earlier,*  
Ich musste schärfer Unheil Unheil nennen,



*I had to call harm harm more sharply,  
Mein Urteil hab ich viel zu lang gelenkt...  
My judgement for much too long have I guided...*

Ich klage mich in meinem Herzen an:  
*I accuse myself in my heart:*  
Ich habe mein Gewissen lang betrogen,  
*I have betrayed my conscience for a long time,*  
Ich hab mich selbst und andere belogen -  
*I have lied to myself and to others -*

Ich kannte früh des Jammers ganze Bahn.  
*I knew early misery's whole course.*  
Ich hab gewarnt - nicht hart genug und klar!  
*I have warned - not hard enough and clear!*  
Und heute weiß ich, was ich schuldig war.  
*And today I know what I was guilty of.*

Heavy stuff. I read it out to Jörn when we took a walk a short while later, in the park on the other side of the street. Jörn found it rather astonishing that someone wrote sonnets in such a situation, choosing a solid, traditional form in all this chaos. In the other poem, the one about the homeland, I had discovered a kind of nature-related patriotism which today is not common anymore, and I pondered on nationalism, patriotism, love of the homeland and country-related identity. It was good to see Jörn again. He talked about journeys and encounters of his recent past, about community experiences and soccer games. We were sitting in the children's playground and drank Cola. Jörn Hagenloch for me is one of the greatest living poets in Germany. When I told him that he started to laugh loudly, but I replied that he did write the most precise love poem of all times. And indeed, there was little he could hold against this fact. It is a jewel in the history of literature and I am happy to be able to present it here. This poem contains everything: longing, passion, hope, innocence, humor, philosophy, relationship drama. Despite the fact that it only consists of six little words. This is precision. This is poetry:

"Ich und du,  
dann wär Ruh."

*"Me and you, that would do."*  
(Literally: "Me and you, then there would be calm.")

## **Appendix:**

- Essay: "What is Peace?" (Dec 24, 2002)
- Essay: "Palestine, Israel and the Pictures" (Sep 06, 2002)
- Essay: " Palestine, Israel and Inhibition Thresholds" (Sep 11, 2002)
- Article: "The Schoolbook Project" (Jan 24, 2003)
- Register of Mentioned Books

# What is Peace?

Anis Hamadeh, Dec 24, 2002

*Summary: This essay investigates in how far peace is more than the absence of war and violence. In the etymologies of some languages there are semantic relations with "free" (German "Frieden"), "contentment" (German "Zufriedenheit") and "being intact, entirety" in Arabic. As a first approach serves the definition: "Peace is when you have peace." The task of visualising and dreaming peace in parts goes to the artists and philosophers, for they, e.g. John Lennon, are independent and can find new ways to make the society sensitive and aware, and to counter-balance violence with creativity, sensation, and publicity. A major supposition for peace work is the awareness that there is no peace now. With the example of movies and the heroes of the society - and even in Grimm's fairytales -, it shows that the public encourages violent images which entails the sacrifice of peaceful, e.g. erotic, elements. After the line of argument that the superiority of violence is a belief that can be surpassed by another belief in peace, and that the investigative journalism as well as the actions of Gandhi and other peace people are examples for a successful counter-public, the essay ends with the sentence: "So half of peace is the absence of pressure and the images of pressure, while the other half of peace is the empty space of an open situation which is to be filled individually and creatively in order to find its meaning, similar to freedom, the one half of which is passive (free from or of) and the other one active (free for or to)."*

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Contents: Introduction - Peace is When You Have Peace - Art as a Generator of Peace - Make Love Not War - The Path of Nonviolence is the Path into the Public  
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## - Introduction -

War and violence, say some politicians, may only be the very last means of conflict settlement, when all other means have failed. This opinion is controversial in respect to two different sides: war and violence must not be a means of politics at all, the doves say. War and violence should, on the contrary, more often be resorted to, the hawks think. In one thing, anyway, they are not far from each other's positions, for both hardly talk about alternative ideas for conflict settlement. How can we make peace without violence, if others use

violence as their argument? What is the better argument? And aren't violence and war part of our humanity?

On this background the talk will be about the character of peace in this essay. What really is peace? According to the German etymology, "Frieden" (peace) semantically has to do with "freedom" and also with joy ("Freude"). The Indo-Germanic root "priti-h" means "joy, satisfaction". The relationship to "free" lies in the root "prai-", also Indo-Germanic, for "protect, treat with consideration, care for, like, love". In law, "Frieden" means the unbroken juridical order as the basis for community life. "Cease-fire" is another meaning of "Frieden". The German adjective "zufrieden" (content, satisfied) from the 17th century is explained in the standard dictionary "Duden" as "not troubled, calm". English "peace", derived from Latin "pax", has to do with agreement, undisturbance and being unmolested. Meaning that it primarily is about the absence of something else. Generally, peace is seen as a state, rather than an action, a property or a feeling. In Arabic - and analogously probably in Hebrew (salaam / shalom) - there is a root "sa-li-ma" which denotes the being intact and the entirety of a person or a thing.

Among all these variations in the semantic field it mostly is the absence of war and violence that spontaneously comes to our minds, and the absence of famine. There is a close semantic relationship between the opposites "war" and "peace" in probably all languages. The definition of peace as nonwar seems more concrete and credible than other linguistic derivations. For everybody knows what war is. War is deads and injured, hopelessness, bombs and planes, destroyed houses, screams, destroyed cities, grief, tanks, generals, media and media control, and so on. One can imagine that. One can build up a picture with this. It is not a nice picture, but it is a picture. There are clear constellations and clear action paths. Almost everything of what happens in wars, happens by force, people feel obliged to do these things. Forced action is prevailing in a way that people always have something to do and something to feel. There are the own survival, pain, grief, and often guilt. War and violence have a high situational and experiential content.

Peace as the absence of a thing, however, does not bear such a high situational and experiential content. When e.g. a situation is defined by an unobtrusive person sitting on a chair watching TV, then the evidence of the absence of war is given, and one could call it peace. Yet, this would not occur to anybody, for what is special about an unobtrusive person watching TV? Is this peace? Or what is peace?

### **- Peace is When You Have Peace -**

Peace is when you have peace. With this motto, a first approach to the self-identity of peace is attempted. It centers around the person who poses the question, and not around a doubtful objectivity. This is the best short answer I

can think of. One of the main causes - if not the only cause at all - of war and violence is lacking Zufriedenheit, i.e. contentment. So we can also view violence as the (typical consequence of) absence of contentment and search for the essence in the positive concept. And maybe the negative concept is not really the one that is richer in experience and sensation.

Peace is contentment... When people are not oppressed and when they can unfold, then they don't have a reason for aggression, and there will be no violence. We just do not have the measuring instruments, as we have them for violence. How does one paint peace and contentment? How does contentment show? It is individually different. And yet here is where peace starts. With the feeling of contentment and the resulting lack of aggression. Or, respectively, it begins with those circumstances of life which make a transformation of the aggression into nonviolent acts possible, for there will always be aggressions, be it on the personal, the familiar, or the political level. Analogously, there will always be war, the question is how it will be led, for war is nothing but a violent conflict and can be transformed into a nonviolent conflict, if that conflict is recognized in its essence. War is a matter of definition, too, and the thesis and anti-thesis of war and peace can be brought on a different level. The development of chess in the Middle Ages, a game which lives war in a playful way, shows how much power and authority can be to nonviolent war! Also think of the chess world championship in 1972 in Reykjavik, when the victory of the American Bobby Fischer over the Russian Boris Spasski became an important factor in the "cold war".

In this definition, peace in its philosophical core is about the creation and maintenance of general contentment, starting with the individual, starting even with the I. It is to be considered here that the own contentment also has a social and political dimension: when there is force and misery prevailing in my surroundings, I cannot really be content and enjoy life. But how am I to define my peace, if I am helpless in view of the problems of my surroundings and the world? In most societies, in former times as well as today, this question has led to the isolation of the individual, to an abstraction and a separation of the outside world. In the twentieth century, the indifference towards violence in films and TV may have supported the lowering of certain inhibition thresholds, by the presentation of violent situations and violent role-models. The conscience, too, as the control entity of our actions, may have become object to indifference, so that some of us can find their peace in a situation, where somebody else would rather be troubled. The question posed to the powerful in the world, if they don't have any problems with their conscience ( e.g. in the song: "Masters of War" by Bob Dylan), may sound used up and meaningless for some people, but it is not! A society of content people, which claims to live in peace, will be aware of such political consequences and will aim at a responsible and veracious contentment.

**- Art as a Generator of Peace -**

Some time ago I attended an oriental festival with music and dance. The main room of the building was covered with mattresses and carpets on which the numerous guests sat around the dance floor. At the head of the room there was a narrow stage on which the musicians sat and played. A dancer went out on the floor and danced a solo in Melaya style. The whole room was filled with this situation. There was some magic in the air. The rhythms of the Egyptian drums brought the dancer into a slight trance that spread over to the audience in a lesser form, so that the beats were effecting the audience in two ways, directly and indirectly. It was a shared experience of great power. When the dance was over and when the rain of applause had finished the situation in a celebrating way, I knew that this dancer had accomplished something. She had made peace. That was peace. And it had a very high situational and experiential content.

A colleague asked me what art has to do with peace. He reported the question of a songwriter who was pondering about in how far he could do something for peace with his songs, at all. Perhaps, the archaic role of the artist in a society can be illustrated with the juxtaposition of Elvis and Hitler. Whereas Hitler had tempted the masses to be violent, with authoritarian behavior and especially with the ridiculous theory of a "master race", Elvis had tempted them with musical peaceful behavior and the magic of his loving heart. Both had a huge authority in their times, and after Dylan it was his follower John Lennon who also realized and lived the political chance of this peace art. There is no doubt that e.g. the Beatles have made peace through the power of their self-identity and their art. Every artist today can profit from these experiences, especially in our internet age in which everybody can set up their own worldwide medium with little cost and effort.

The responsibility of art today lies also in the mastering of the prevailing social alienation and indifference. Let the senses be touched again! This is an essential task of peace art. So that man might become more sensitive for the pain of others. And so that our consciousness expands and that we regain our conscience. To regain the vicinity of life which otherwise we half-consciously find in violence. Art be a projection field to replace stereotypes of an enemy. And art, this self-legitimizing archaic power, like philosophy and like sports, is one of the main areas in which such authorities develop which have kept their independence in a credible way.

This I say in times of great and unpredictable dangers of war. The necessary discourse cannot be led by the military, the politicians, the business people and journalists alone. They all have their dependencies and are more or less unfree and living a quick life. In former times, it had been the religions that held most of this authority, but then somebody thought that Galileo, Darwin, or Freud had made the scriptures superfluous. Later, people understood Nietzsche in a way that they thought, "God is dead" means that there is no God. Yet the Zarathustra book rather is about that you don't need God to please God. His existence is not the question here, it is the human who the book deals with.

The philosopher Schleiermacher brought up the concept of "art religion" ("Kunstreligion") in a former century and with this referred to the kinship of artistic and religious characteristics, which both can be called "spiritual" and can be recognized as being peaceful. Both also harbor dangers: there had been the dark popstars, like the criminal Charles Manson, who propagated a violent cult, similar to contemporary racist bands and their CDs. There had also been the omnipotence of the church with all its known violent excesses, before democracy and the human rights. The idea of the engaged artist, basically in the way formulated by Sartre in his "What is Literature?", seems to be a topical issue again.

Art also often is a digestion of violence and thus has a healing effect on the artist and the audience. And there are the openness, the fantasy and the liberty to generate orientation patterns, peace patterns. Ways to contentment. Values that are independent from materialism and accessible for everyone. Art transcends conflicts and can actually solve some and contribute to their solutions. Art shows life the way it is, as a broadener of awareness and as an experience, and art shows the possibilities of life by dreaming the wishes of society. This, anyhow, is how it can be. A temptation of love.

### **- Make Love Not War -**

Peace and war are both contagious. Whereas war and violence legitimate their claims with their official necessity and have success with this and prosper, peace is an attraction for its fulfilment of wishes and the freedom of expression, the beauty and the search for perfection, an attraction which effects the social climate. But it is not easy to bear love and peace. When someone experiences love for the first time, the question may come up why he or she had to live in such a loveless world before. Maybe they find out that many of the pressures under which they had lived, had been a lie, unnecessary aggravations and needless abstinence and pain. Interestingly, people for this reason are more afraid of love than of violence. They rather bear violence than love and prefer it to love. You don't believe this? Here are some examples:

The collective consciousness of our societies is widely structured by TV. When we compare the percentage of violent scenes and films to the percentage of love films we will find that we prefer violence by far. Watching those movies you can notice that the hero or the heroine almost every time reach their goals with violence. So our heroes are violent people. Let us choose between two movies: in the first one, Hollywood star Bruce Willis shoots somebody's arm off with a hightech weapon, in the second one, the erotic star Dahlia Grey is enjoying herself in an esthetical way with friends on a large sofa. Now, if mixed groups are confronted with these two films, it is predictable that their choice will fall on the violent movie and not on the love movie. And the larger the group is, the more readily the love film will be rejected. Our sexuality, which is suppressed

(uncontent) in the highly civilized world, is so embarrassing to us that we tend to substitute it with violence, also in pictures and movies.

A similar phenomenon occurred as soon as in the Grimm brothers. 190 years ago, in the year 1812, the first edition of Grimm's fairytales was published. Although the Grimm brothers wrote in the preface that they had not changed the stories, but only gathered and polished them, we can find in later editions that certain passages of the tales were rewritten. The radio program "Zeitzeichen" of the Deutschlandfunk explained that the Grimms, who were living under poor conditions, had made these changes so that the book would sell better. This happened with two tendencies: on the one hand, violent scenes were enriched and added (Rumpelstilzchen, Haensel and Gretel a.o.), on the other hand, erotic scenes were canceled or belittled (e.g. Rapunzel). This means mass compatibility to the favor of violence. There also seem to be parallels in the history of the publication of the "Arabian Nights", so it rather is not a western phenomenon.

Moreover, the basic question of journalism, the one about what makes news news, can honestly only be answered in the way that news tends to make a subject of violence, pressure, and mischief, and to highlight them. Thus we have an overproportional amount of war pictures and violent pictures in our consciousness and they define our notion of normality. Peace work in this context is the distribution of peace pictures and creative pictures. There has to be a clear stand against the prejudice of an alleged dirtiness of love, especially in its physical form, and the arguments have to be formulated to neutralize such allegations. The dirt of love is the violence and the advantage thinking with which some people mix it.

### **- The Path of Nonviolence is the Path into the Public -**

The belief in the superiority of violence is deeply rooted. It has to do with the need of protection, the defense of the meat pots, and a feeling of powerlessness. It bases on the traitor theory which says that a single black sheep is enough to destroy a nonviolent policy. Yet the traitor theory is too short in two points: it regards the "black sheep" from outside and with suspicion, so it deprives itself of the option of analyzing the "contentment structure" of the violent perpetrator, and to have an effect on it to stop the violence. The other point is that the traitor theory neglects the alternative weapon against violence, and that is publicity. For there is nothing that injustice fears more than the public. There is a secret in every war, and there is the absence of secrets as a part of every peace. And there is another sound argument against the belief in the invincibility of violence, for it is a belief, and thus it can be surpassed by another belief. The life and work of Gandhi and other peace people shows this convincingly. Peace always is close to the people who impersonate this peace.



To indicate that the public is stronger than violence we can again point to the press, this time in a positive context. The investigative journalism is the best example for a non-administrative peaceful victory over violence. The so-called public opinion is a strong power, which, by mastering the prevailing isolationism, can become the most powerful weapon for peace. The fundamental motivation for this is the consciousness that there is no peace now. My question "What is Peace?" in the end aims at the awareness of the fact that peace is something that we will have to create and build first. Something that we will have to re-dream anew in each concrete situation by ourselves.

It is easier in world and state politics. When on these levels peace is primarily understood as nonkilling, and secondarily as nonviolence under consideration of structural and cultural violence, then this will suffice to make the world a beautiful place. So half of peace is the absence of pressure and the images of pressure, while the other half of peace is the empty space of an open situation which is to be filled individually and creatively in order to find its meaning, similar to freedom, the one half of which is passive (free from or of) and the other one active (free for or to).

## **Palestine, Israel, and the Pictures**

Anis Hamadeh, Sep 06, 2002

*Summary: This essay deals with the Israel Palestine War which is a substitute war. The rituals of the media and politicians activate private and public pictures and images, pictures of the suffering Jew, of the oppressed Palestinian, pictures derived from control and violence situations. Some of these pictures are prevailing in this process, and they are the ones that keep this war going, for it serves as a waste dump for our own unmastered conflicts, and we need the war for this reason. It is necessary to bring the pictures to consciousness in order to recognize the aspects which are highlighted in the discourse, and the aspects that are hidden. Then we can decide in how far these pictures are suitable for the situation. One of the main theses of the article is that the unmastered single conflicts of the concerned and of the public together constitute the world conflict which finds its clearest manifestation in the Palestine Israel War. In the final part of the essay, "Conflict Mastering", it is criticized that political analyses like e.g. Samuel Huntington's theses do not offer solution patterns and remain on the descriptive level. This is followed by some solution patterns, including the proposal of an internet project "Virtual Palestine".*

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Introduction - The Media - The Pictures - The Conflict and We - Why the War?  
- The World Conflict - Conflict Mastering - Virtual Palestine  
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There is a war going on in Israel and Palestine. It is the long-lasting war between the occupying Israelis and the occupied Palestinians. The whole world knows about this conflict, and many people have an opinion about it. Even more people have a conception about it, have a picture or image in their heads. To picture

things it only needs association, the activation of a repertoire in the memory system. This is relatively easier than the process to reach a clear own opinion through questioning and judgements. So everybody wants to be in the picture, but hardly anybody wants to be so presumptuous as to judge on this delicate and overall complex historical texture of relations in a competent way.

The war in the Middle East is a substitute war, meaning that not only the Israelis and the Palestinians are involved in this war, but also the neighbors, friends, and the audience. Everybody has his own war to contribute here, you, too, and I, too. Due to the duration and its complexity this war became an institution, an established factor in the collective memory. Rituals of the Israelis, rituals of the Palestinians, rituals in the media and in the audience. For what is this war a substitute, and what kind of rituals are that, turning in circles all the time?

A Palestinian who is confronted with the tanks and the deads in Ramallah, is immediately involved, as is the Israeli restaurant guest who experienced a terror assault. The experiences turn into events and the events turn into news. The news of Palestine / Israel are spread into the world. As soon as during the transformation of the experiences into events there is an abstraction involved, and every abstraction allows to enrich the situation with biasing assumptions e.g. in the shape of pictures and images. Let us investigate this a little further on two levels, the media and the news audience like you and I.

### **- The Media -**

The war in the Middle East is about people from two camps and their subjective perceptions which are not compatible with each other. The media cannot map the experiences, because news represent facts, and not subjective perceptions. So there is not much happening on the information level except for the mentioned rituals. There is more happening on the level of consciousness: the conflict is affirmed and pictures are evoked in the audience, an impulse is sent with which a set of associations is recalled.

The media are of great importance in this war like in every war, because they build a bridge between the events in the world and the democratic public. Without television people would not know what is going on. But who decides which news story is important and which is more important? Who decides what a fact is, at all, and what a top fact? I don't know that and that worries me. Sometimes dozens of people die at a place, but it is no big news story. Sometimes somebody gets kidnapped and it is a news story, sometimes it isn't.

The international media are self-critical enough to explain how they are functioning. It is not anything secret or new if I mention that media and politicians, too, place certain topics in the foreground and others in the background. I think, we all do this in our daily lives, for there have to be some

topics in the foreground and some in the background. Topics, this already means pictures here.

If somebody in the position of a journalist or a politician has an interest in having certain pictures dominating the collective consciousness, then this is a manageable and - to a certain degree - not necessarily insidious action. But I think that most of these mechanisms are subconscious processes, and they are the reason why the Palestine Israel War is not ending. A public can only carry a limited number of topics in the consciousness. How many headlines does an average news unit have? Let's say three or seven. The other topics are not denied, but they also do not enter the collective consciousness. Tchetchenia, for example, has for some time not been a topic anymore, although Russian soldiers are searching for terrorists there. On the other hand, the song of a girlgroup is in the Russian charts which is called: "I want a man like Putin". In cognitive linguistics, this is termed "highlighting and hiding".

Highlighting and hiding is a cognitive mechanism, because it is a fact that we can only hold a limited number of topics in our consciousness. And it is a fact that the media have limitations of time and of space.

### **- The Pictures -**

The war in Palestine / Israel is a substitute war. Everybody who is confronted with this most complicated of all wars projects the own images and pictures into this conflict. The long duration had a frustrating effect, people do not like to talk about solutions after all these failures. People get angry. I have not met anybody who is really indifferent about this conflict. It does, in a way, touch us all.

There are some of us who visualize the picture of the suffering Jew and associations of the Nazi period are evoked. Others visualize the picture of the suffering Palestinian and associations of the Arab and Muslim losses are evoked. All these are abstractions which are projected into the conflict in different ways by us. There are more pictures and images activated in the news-making process, like the one of a controlling authority which is confronted with a chaos that is suspected of violence. Israel's argument, one has to fight terror, fits well into the post-September 11 policy of US president Bush and Putin's Tchetchenia policy. In the other camp there stands a slightly faded picture of the solidarian fist of the oppressed, still reminding of the Che Guevara and Castro romantic. It is in many aspects a left-wing / right-wing mentality, cherished and saved out of a time where a left-wing / right-wing mentality reflected messages which had structured our society.

And there are many more pictures and images, they are diverse and constitute a texture, they overlap and distort each other. In the Western peace organisations and media, for example, we find an overlapping of the established picture of the mistreated Jew in Nazi Germany with the picture of the Israeli

victim of terror attacks and with the picture of the Israeli soldier who violates the human rights. Sometimes the picture of the malicious Arab, which we know from the Hollywood movies, is woven into the scenario, or the one of the malicious Jew, like in the Nazi propaganda.

### **- The Conflict and We -**

But not only such collective pictures are activated in the process of dealing with the war, we also find individual pictures. I know a lot of people, but I do not know anybody who could escape the conflict emotionally. Me, neither. There are times when I completely withdraw from the thing, because it becomes too exhausting, but it does not hold for long. I want Palestine. I cannot sit here and do nothing, because it touches me. It is a wise saying that emotionality is not promotive of the harmony of the situation, but nobody, Ladies and Gentlemen, not even the audience, can evade this emotionality, and most of all the directly involved people. They are many, if we consider the range and plenitude of the pictures. Therefore it is important to be conscious about the pictures, and thus to be able to control the own emotions, for this is the only way to avoid mistakes.

I, for example, discovered that I project my family conflicts into the Palestine Israel War, because I recall constellations which I have saved as memories. Their activation gives me an emotional impulse. Now you can say: but how can you biase the situation through such private enrichments? And I surely am posing myself this question. I can neither deny the impulses of the Middle East War nor escape them, and I assume that this will be the case with most of us. We are reminded of our personal lives without being confronted too closely with the own conflicts. And without having to be conscious of this connexion. A substitute struggle.

Like I said, I sometimes step out of the conflict, because it is exhausting to constantly have the pictures of the own conflicts before the inner eye, and to be able to separate between the things that happen in Palestine and Israel and the things that are related to the own biography. And not always is this separation attempt successful, and sometimes aggressions appear, in me, and probably in you, too. It is true that we all have a different private and inner life, but we all have one, and it is a part of us. In the things I hear in the news I often recognize structures of some unbalanced constellations out of my own life. And the way that the repertoire of my pictures is activated will be the way it happens with others, too, independently of the camps and of the individual opinions to which this activation leads.

In a SPIEGEL interview, the Israeli psychologist Haim Omer talked about the conflict between Sharon and Arafat: "Most of all it is that each one fears the other. Moreover, Sharon has an incredible fear to do something that might be interpreted as a weakness. Many parents are like that in the relationships with their children. But the attitude: "I must show who is the boss" inevitably leads to escalation."

Such parallels and dozens of other parallels with everyday-life situations indicate that there is a huge picture market and that private and public pictures overlap to a great extent. Which of these pictures are becoming highlights, which are kept in the background? And why? When I am touched emotionally, I normally analyze consciously why, for example, the deed in Jenin effected me so much, an event that originally is abstract to me, for I was and I am not there, and nobody was immediately concerned, who I personally know. Yet I clearly sensed that the Palestinians there could not defend themselves and that nobody came to help them when the camp was violently entered by the Israelis.

From my own fields of experience I know that daily life produces scapegoats, that innocent people are sometimes punished by an authority, and that in such cases hardly anybody stands up and comes to help. The robbery of freedom reminds me of instances of robbery of freedom in my life. The violence, which is exerted by the authority, reminds me of violence which I have experienced from comparable authorities. But also the suicide attacks I unintentionally compare with own memories of despair and guilt situations. There is no way for me to expel these pictures from my consciousness or my subconsciousness, but it seems possible to keep them out of the judgement, which I develop about the concrete situation, given that these pictures have nothing to do with the situation. The picture "Israel/Palestine is like parents/children", which is one of the strongest pictures in my own repertoire, is not only a private picture, it is a collective picture, the SPIEGEL interview shows that. We are dealing with comparable action patterns, in this case power and control constellations.

Only by bringing the pictures to consciousness we can decide, whether or not they fit in the situation, whether or not they are justified, and whether or not the comparisons are appropriate. The argument cannot be solved in this way, but we learn where the problems really are.

### **- Why the War? -**

The advantage of a substitute war is that one does not have to fight by oneself. One has others fight. The own conflicts that we all have, and by all means those who are dealing with Palestine and Israel, the own conflicts remain in the background. If there is a place for all the unpleasant inner conflicts and postponed decisions, a place for the own disappointments and aggressions, a waste dump where one can uninhibitedly be a victim without revealing oneself, then call this place Israel / Palestine!

Somebody who does not want to know about his or her own conflicts, will project them to the outside, because the conflicts are existing and can be denied on the surface only. Our subconscious is naturally programmed to clarify the inner conflicts, because we long to return to the state of innocence and can reach it only in this way. Our consciousness, however, does not want to know about that, for conflict mastering sometimes is painful, and we don't want that. Had we

no mental waste dumps like the Middle East War, we would have to let our suppressed conflicts closer to our hearts. But instead we have an enemy in whom we can denote what we originally hate in ourselves.

The Israel Palestine War is a perfect projection field for viewing the conflicts from a security distance, and this holds for the audience of the war as it does for the immediately involved, for they also have their pictures and lead their substitute struggles. In this particular war, a plenitude of historical pictures are united, the pictures of Judaism, of Islam, and of Christendom, brother religions, each having generated their own civilizations, their legal systems and power systems, three civilizations which all lack an appropriate out-group behavior, because they are fixed on control and thus intolerant.

Man in the beginning of the twenty-first century is a split personality: we have an official part and a familiar one. Without further pondering we have accepted that we double-judge things: on the personal and on the official level. It is the society of secrets. We want to deny certain things in ourselves and construe a private nest in which we let nobody have an insight, even ourselves, because in it there dwells a lie.

So we need the war. The war serves our undigested conflicts as a projection field and enables us to further postpone and repress them.

### **- The World Conflict -**

The leading world is an old man who does not want to remember that a lot of things in his life went wrong. Everything was alright, he says to himself, and flees into his business. Confronted with the horror of September 11, he repeats: "This was not my fault", and the tide also and the developments in the stock exchange were also not his fault. The old man knows what guilt is, because he himself had defeated the guilty in 1945 and he rescued the innocent. The old man thinks that guilt is a property of characters and not that it originates in a situation. Therefore, he today holds the picture of an ultimate struggle between good and evil, where the good will prevail.

The great world lie is that man wants to control and to possess. He is egotistic and does not see the other. The separation between public and private, doubtlessly necessary for a society, is far too wide today. A public caste has come into being which carries out political and social decisions. The (private) human mostly stands outside the public decisions, because private things are not measured and decided upon. It is the human who loses this game, like in the current hit song "Mensch" by Herbert Grönemeyer.

The undigested individual conflicts, which habitually are shoved off into the public sphere, together constitute the world conflict, and in Palestine Israel they find their clearest manifestation. This war is shouting at us all, saying: we have

not yet overcome the colonial and the imperial times, we are still stuck in the Nazi period, we have a worldwide struggle of generations and of genders. Our system is founded on capital, on a golden calf called stock exchange. There we act according to criteria of profit, and we don't exactly know what these companies do to achieve this profit, and we don't really want to know, either. We do know that our economical system is dependent on growth, and that systems cannot eternally grow, but we are unable to act and thus let the things happen as they come.

The Palestine Israel War and other conflicts are necessary for us, so that we can repress all this. Like a set of playing-cards with different pictures that we look at and that reminds us of all these problems out of our public and private spheres, without reaching too close to ourselves, without us having to have anything to do with it. Today, at the end of 2002, the situation in the world has further escalated through the events in the Middle East and the plans of George Bush. How great must the fire become, until the control politicians realize that they are cheating themselves and that they do not solve the problems, but enlarge them? The ship is steering towards the iceberg, while people inside are dancing.

### **- Conflict Mastering -**

Most of the Middle East commentaries leave space for the criticism that they are ritual and that they do not offer solution patterns. This also holds for Samuel Huntington's theses about the clash of civilizations, as accurately as they may represent the zeitgeist. But they do not indicate ways out of the conflict. Rather, they remain on the level of describing the situation. This will result in an uneasy feeling in the reader, a feeling of helplessness and fear, which in turn supports the political fear- and control-thinking that generates the clash of the civilizations.

The most important point of departure into a peace in the Middle East is the readiness from all involved sides to be self-critical. As after all these long years a large total of guilt has accumulated, self-criticism is a difficult thing and hardly anybody faces this confrontation voluntarily. The most ready people will be the ones from the periphery of violence, that is the peace activists on each opposing side. To concentrate on them to start the dialogue seems to make more sense than to concentrate on the soldiers and the extremists.

The only evil is ignorance, said Buddha, and thus bringing things to consciousness means moving towards happiness and peace. Bringing the pictures to consciousness on which our decisions and judgements depend. Bringing to consciousness also that the place Yad Vashem is situated unfar from living suffering Palestinians. Bringing to consciousness that Iraq is called to account with the help of the UN, but Israel not. And bringing to consciousness that the relationship between Jews and Germans can by no means be called

normal, only that you can hardly talk about this subject in public, because it is too sensitive, too close, too private.

Another method to de-escalate conflicts is to be instrumental in avoiding that people talk around the subject with arguments that do not meet. In cognitive linguistics there is the concept of "frame restructuring", meaning the harmonization of two pictures (frames, scenarios). Let's take, for example, the concepts of Zionism and of Jihad. Both are as abstract concepts as they are frequent in use in the Middle East War, and they are one of the main causes for misunderstanding. These concepts are like a box of which nobody really knows the content. In the respective in-group, these terms are identity-building and positive, in the respective out-group all negative pictures are projected into them. It is important to decompose abstract key concepts like Zionism and Jihad, terrorism and democracy, in order to come to comparable units, so that one can understand what people really mean by their concepts. Subsequently, a new picture can be structured which does justice to each group and their pictures, without doing injustice to another group. To want peace means to localize the core of the conflict and to overcome it. This overcoming has - as far as I can see and I hope to be wrong here - not yet been seriously brought on the way.

Moreover, the Israel Palestine War is too much viewed in terms of material categories which does not do justice to the situation, but is typical for the public side of our societies. As if it was only about soil and water! Of course the soil issue is one of the most important issues in the practical creation of the State of Palestine, (which is also wanted by the UN). But it is also and foremost about freedom and independence. And freedom and independence are in the first place things which one can feel, and not things which one can possess.

### **- Virtual Palestine -**

It is, for example, possible to create and to manifest Palestine without making that dependent on material property and soil. Of course not as a substitute, but as an identity-building measure. For this purpose I propose the project "Virtual Palestine". A detailed map of Palestine can be exposed in the internet (, without denying Israel). If you click on the cities you reach detail information. Cities and towns can be mapped like in a computer game and all business-people and artists and private people can settle in their towns, and even their streets. Every Palestinian can here make immediate use of their right of return and can give a home to their stories, their photos, and their memories.

This virtual Palestine already exists, but there is hardly a consciousness about it. And it is spread over thousands of webpages made by people who hardly know each other. Yet it only needs some coordination and the support of an acknowledged personality from the Palestinian establishment to virtually make Palestine a unit.



This is a practical possibility to build the Palestinian identity and to strengthen it without always focussing on the enemy. When, for instance, the Palestinian refugees or their descendants can return to their villages in this virtual way, then this does no harm or violence to the Israelis. The respect for the enemy demands to not undermine the right of existence of Israel. At the same time memorial places can come into being through the virtual rebuilding of destroyed villages and this will lead to relieve the Palestinians and thus will have a positive effect on the conflict. It can also be helpful to learn mastering the conflicts within the Palestinian society in a virtual surroundings.

Such a website should not be political in the first place, yet it should give space to all the political views. It is the people who stand in the center. When the people come to learn about each other they understand what Palestine is. It is not the land, it is the people.

## **Palestine, Israel, and Inhibition Thresholds**

Anis Hamadeh, Sep 11, 2002

*Summary: War and violence are said to be only the very last measure to end conflicts. I am not sure in how far violence can end conflicts at all, yet this essay deals with possibilities of cutting the ground of the Israel Palestine War. Under investigation are the inhibitions which have their effects at the periphery of the war, impeding communication. The war in its essence is about the search and the creation of identities that are not dependent on an enemy. The generation of such "self-identities" are alternatives to violence, because they produce peaceful behavior patterns. The vision of two independent states needs anticipation and precedence, islands of cohabitation and non-violence. In the search for inhibition thresholds towards peace we have to consider our own prejudices as well as the in-group behavior and the out-group behavior.*

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Content: Cutting the Ground of War - Renunciation of Feindbild - Conflict of Identities - Inhibition Thresholds - The Island Metaphor - The Own Prejudices - The Reproach of Treason - Victim Thinking - In-Group Behavior - Out-Group Behavior - History Book  
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### **- Cutting the Ground of War -**

In the terrorism debate, which began one year ago precisely, on September 11, German president Johannes Rau said that it makes no sense to fight terror with terror and that the point rather is to cut the ground of terror. Many citizens will have appreciated this attitude while seriously wondering about how the ground of terror could be cut. How the ground of violence could be cut. How the ground of the Israel Palestine War could be cut.

When we think of the war we mostly have in mind tanks and guns, we imagine the army and boys throwing stones, curfews, terrorists, assaults, and killer brigades. And indeed, this is the center of the war, this is the focal point of violence, and the media report about it. Peace will not start at this focal point, because violence obviously prevails there, and violence leads to guilt. Messages of peace and of conflict mastering cannot be heard there. Every attempt of immediate influence will be regarded as an aggression, for this is the logic of contemporary war.

Concerning the introduction of peace, I have three major images: one for the individual who can experience peace, like every other truth, from inside only. A second for a group which lives by a proper identity and without a stereotype image of the enemy (feindbild), a group which thus can constitute an island of peace. The third image is the one of a society which can stifle the source of violence with a ring of publicity which steers in a narrowing way from the outside to the center (also see the statement: FOUR LEVELS OF TERRORISM on Anis Online).

### **- Renunciation of Feindbild -**

Under consideration of these island and ring metaphors, the issue here is to search for possibilities to de-escalate the conflict, possibilities that are not dependent on violence. For war - this is what the West is saying, isn't it? - may only be the very last means, when all other ideas have failed. And you can tell by their precise scrutiny and their exuberant interest in alternatives that the minds of the western leaders are almost completely occupied with investigating all ideas that can avoid wars in a non-violent way.

My line of thought starts at the point of renouncing stereotype images and feindbild thinking, because they constitute a fertile soil - and more precisely: a projection field - for violence. In the Israel Palestine War we are to a great extent confronted with clichés and feindbild thinking. To dissolve them means to cut the ground of the war.

The renunciation of feindbild thinking does not mean to have no enemy. Whoever wanted to deny the enmity between Israelis and Palestinians, would be ridiculous. Feindbild thinking, though, blinds the eyes, it does not solve the conflict. One then does not know against whom one is fighting, because all information about the enemy is generated by oneself. One has difficulties in assessing the enemy and cannot really understand the situation, following the misconception that one is the situation oneself and alone.

The Palestine Israel War is not about a blood toll to be paid off to sacrifice the god of peace. It is about a conflict, the one between the Israelis and the Palestinians. This conflict wants to be solved, and it will not be violence that solves it. I am hearing the argument that Hitler also could only be stopped in a

violent way, but I cannot see any given proof for this assumption. Rather, this argument is used to justify violence, and most of all: to not even get into the situation of considering alternatives, for they might be viewed by others as an exposition of weakness.

### **- Conflict of Identities -**

The Israel Palestine War mostly is about the search of identity. The Palestinians do not understand why they have less rights than other people. They ask themselves whether they are so bad and worthless for being treated this way. With this they represent the Arabs and the Muslims, the Africans, too, and the Socialists, which all feel a bit this way, be it justified or not, in view of their traditionful relationship with the Western World.

The Israelis, on the other hand, are cast-aways of the shipwreck of history. They have experienced how the whole world let the gas chambers happen and the death of six million people, a deed unimaginable for a human brain, and unbearable for a human heart. After the tragedy of September 11, and even after the amok run in a school in Erfurt, Germany, there had been psychologists on the spot, immediately after the event, to help the concerned dealing with the situation. After the Holocaust, however, there were no such psychologists, and instead the Jews were again moved aside, with a materialistic present from the imperial world, and I can only view the taking of Palestinian territory as a stealthy form of reparation in its essence.

Because of such historical burdens, both camps are handicapped to recognize and to live their identities. Both camps have not overcome historical injustice and are situated in unmastered historical conflicts. It is the phase of repetition. The camps repeat their patterns and conjure the unsolved historical situations up again in order to clarify them. By doing this, they are fixed on the respective other, because neither side has enough self-identity and thus needs an enemy to create a substitute identity.

To cut the ground of this war it needs the practical prove that there are political means other than violence and that violence is not the only voice that the public listens to. The Israel Palestine War is in its essence a complex identity conflict and thus it seems right to deal with the Palestinian Arab identity and with the Israeli Jewish identity and to solve the conflict there. When the respective self-identities (my term for identities that are not generated by the demarcation from others) are consolidated and clarified, then the ground of the war is cut.

### **- Inhibition Thresholds -**

Inhibitions are fears, some of them are justified, others are not. They are of three kinds: there are ones that are based on ignorance, ones that are based on cultural and civilisatory behavior, and ones that are based on knowledge. There

is no need to argue about the third ones, for they are justified. We have an inhibition threshold towards homicide which is extremely high, and we need it just as we need the inhibition thresholds that beware us from incest, cannibalism, and the purchase of a Marilyn Manson CD.

It would be an interesting job to investigate the inhibitions that are based on culture and civilisation and to point out their manifestations. Especially the differences between the America-following West and the Arab Muslim East. There are some differences in their respective esthetical perceptions which seem to be due to cultural and civilisatory features. On oriental markets, to give a short example, you can sometimes buy living chicken and slaughter them at home, or they do it in the market on the spot. Although westerners also eat chicken, they are generally more inhibited to be aware of the killing aspect than easterners. Another short example is that the rejection of faith into which the western societies developed after Galileo and after 1945 cannot be detected in eastern societies to the same extend.

Yet this essay mostly deals with inhibitions that are based on ignorance, on the lack of knowledge. The leading idea of this essay is to find ways out of the Israel Palestine War. Sometimes we can step into action and do something to come closer to peace, but we do not carry out this action, because we have an uncertain feeling. Or because we don't even realize that here is a chance for peace, as we are too busy with repressing the conflict. Like invisible barriers they often keep us from even trying. Of these inhibitions, some can be overcome by creating an awareness about them and pointing to their manifestations.

### **- The Island Metaphor -**

There already exist mixed groups of Israelis and Palestinians in search of solutions. To those belong peace groups and political initiatives of different kinds. Yet these islands of dialogue and togetherness hardly reach the awareness of the public, and they are not many, either. If one has the vision of the cohabitation between an independent State of Palestine and an independent State of Israel - like the United Nations - one will visualize two societies that know each other and talk with each other. So the task will be to create prototypes of such cohabitation and to carry them into the public as images, so that people get used to peace. These are islands of communication which will bring about new impulses. They can grow and they can combine. In such a way we come closer to the vision.

The competition is not asleep. The Americans, for example, also have produced images and pictures during the past months, as an answer to September 11 that happened a year ago today. Let's take the fertile cooperation between the US government and some Hollywood directors. War films were created to bring the

reality of war into the heads of the audience, a war that was declared by no other man than George W. Bush ("We are at war.").

But it is not only the experienced cultural exchange that can lead to such islands, islands that anticipate peace in the Middle East. Every group that does not need an enemy for its own identity, has a relaxing effect on the conflict, like a way out of the war addiction. The fact that there are only few such groups and that such initiatives rarely reach the light of publicity, in my opinion is essentially due to social inhibitions. Some of these inhibitions will in the following be investigated by looking at the inhibition thresholds.

### **- The Own Prejudices -**

The cooperation with moderate circles of the respective enemy camp, as well as the renunciation of feindbild thinking, fails in the first place owing to our own prejudices. We ourselves are so much used to the enemy that we can hardly imagine a life without him. To hide this fact, we invent the necessity of scenarios that depend on an enemy.

The inhibition thresholds not only show in the opinions, but most of all in concrete communication situations. When I was in a communication situation with an Israeli soldier for the first time I rejected him. I was about 19, stood somewhere in the landscape and was identified by the soldier as a tourist. He started to talk to me in English. As far as I remember, he only asked me whether I liked the place, but I only replied that I did not want to talk to him and went away. Although I can well imagine to behave in a similar way today, for it is Israeli soldiers who are occupying the people of my father, I then only had little knowledge about my own limits and inhibition thresholds in the intercourse with Israelis.

Later I met Jews and Israelis in different contexts of life and I learnt that there are Israelis and Jews who think in a way similar to mine. When I at present urge for a clear and consequential separation between Palestinians and Israelis, then this may look like a contradiction. Yet it seems to be the right thing politically to disentangle the camps and to strengthen their respective self-identity by supporting the creation of self-sufficient and independent entities. In this way, feindbild thinking of the stereotype enemy will lose ground and importance, and only after this a comprehensive dialogue between the two societies can emerge.

It was this kind of dialogue which was not carried out after 1945, due to inhibitions. Therefore we lack the precedence to relate to in the Israel Palestine War. On the other hand, we are at the beginning of a new century, which statistically seen is a good time for a change of paradigms.

It is often the own prejudices for the sake of which we search for rational reasons to take them as a pretext. In this way inhibition thresholds appear that keep the

war going and that affirm the monopoly of authority to be in the hands of violence. But there are more reasons why the islands of an anticipated peace are having such a hard time. To those belong the reproach of treason, the state of being caged in victim thinking, and the uncertainties of in-group and out-group behavior.

### **- The Reproach of Treason -**

The suspicion of treason is one of the main inhibition thresholds of the conflict. The camps are so far away from each other that any kind of communication with the enemy immediately is suspicious. A Palestinian who talks to or with Israelis, who is looking for cooperation, quickly is regarded to be an 'amiil, a collaborator. It is similar in the opposite camp, and it is hard to name the side with the higher inhibition thresholds.

If you analyze the reproach of treason, you will find the argument that communication with the enemy is connected to a higher valuation of the enemy, for he is granted attention. Further you will find the argument that the enemy is getting information about the own camp. A third argument is the suspicion that personal interests are pursued at the expense of national interests.

Let us start with this last argument. Concerning the dialogue and the cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis we have to differentiate between work in the spirit of the UN vision of two states and work serving a private purpose, when somebody, for example, is hoping for an economical or other private advantage. Unfortunately, those cases exist, and they do not deserve mild sentences in my view. Yet there must be an urgent warning against quick judgements and suspicions, as I know them from examples. Like cases of blackmail misinterpreted as collaboration. Due to the fact that the reproach of collaboration can lead to mob-law, the inhibition thresholds are especially high. If, anyway, only one innocent guy dies because of such exaggerations (and they were more), then the reproach of treason soon turns against the one who spoke it. It is especially on this sensitive field where misunderstandings and wrong assessments are frequent. They can only be overcome by talking about the mistakes instead of making them.

This brings us to the second argument, the one that information out of the own camp comes into the hands of the opposite camp while communicating with the enemy. This argument, however, is threadbare, for it is grounded in the doubtful supposition that it is a disadvantage when the enemy knows us. It is the supposition that the enemy, if he has information about us, can use it against us by attacking the weak points and by instrumentalizing this information for hatching plots against us. This mentality is doubtful, because it is based on fear thinking and enemy-focussing. It is threadbare, because it leads to a situation where not only the enemy has no information about us, but we, neither. Moreover, as I know from my own work, it can fairly well be an advantage to

give the political opponent so much information about oneself that it becomes a challenge for him to scrutinize it, resulting in the knowledge that his position in relation to me did not improve by this action.

So, does communication with the enemy mean to give him value and is it treason? Principally, I answer this question with a no. I actually regard fear thinking and the fixation on the enemy to be high valuations of the enemy. I am rather concerned with the pragmatic question of who is able to have such a communication. For even if some of the inhibition thresholds can be overcome by creating an awareness, there remain a lot which disturb the communication. We have to keep in mind that we are talking about the Palestine Israel War and not about some quarrel about who is going to wash the dishes.

### **- Victim Thinking -**

Everybody who participates in the war feels to be a victim. Independently of the assessment of the whole situation and independently of the questions of which party is right and how much, each of the involved feels to be a victim, and the closer they stand to the center of violence the stronger becomes the victim mentality. One of the resulting inhibition thresholds is the attitude of expecting to be acknowledged as a victim. The Palestinians as victims of the occupation, the Israelis - and now also the Americans - as victims of terror.

Victim thinking has two sides: on the one side there is the violence situation, for example, when an Israeli soldier shoots a Palestinian citizen. Such situations are real, and the one element which every violence situation has is the victim. If there is no victim, then you cannot indicate violence. So it is wrong to deny or to belittle the own victimship.

On the other side there is the abstraction and the generalisation of the victim role. It can be misused as a justification of own exaggerated violence (We have to defend ourselves), and it can be misused as a reason to make self-criticism superfluous while being busy with the enemy. The inhibition threshold towards confronting oneself with the other party rises, because one needs a complementary perpetrator role to be able to keep the own victim role.

The mastering of the generalized victim attitude will not make e.g. soldiers and resistance fighters talk to each other, yet the peace-willing and less guilty moderate circles on both sides will be able to bring the two-state-project further on, if they develop an awareness of their inhibition thresholds that are based on victim thinking.

Not posed or even solved here are the questions of the rehabilitation of the victims and other aspects of historical and political justice in the Middle East. I am convinced that these questions can only be posed in their whole range and in a way that makes sense, after that the camps are disentangled. It is wrong to

lose one's faith in a non-violent justice, because otherwise one begins to live outside justice oneself.

### **- In-Group Behavior -**

To the constitutional elements of identity in the respective camps of the Israel Palestine War belong the common enemy and the fact that all members of the group are victims. This influences the in-group behavior, i.e. the behavior within the group. If we take away victim thinking and enemy-focussing from the group, there will remain control-less, open situations. A lot of people find it hard to deal with such unled situations and get an uneasy feeling. There is a fear that the in-group could fall apart, if the enemy is gone.

At war and in authoritarian societies the individual is strictly subordinate to the group. The personal and the private are pushed into the background. This disturbs the harmonical dynamics of the society, for the identity of a society or group always depends on the identities of its members. The stronger the identities of the individuals the stronger the identity of the group.

Unfortunately, almost only those person are identified as typical representatives of the respective camps - if at all - who participate in the war and in the violence of the war. The inhibitions to bring personal and individual aspects into the discourse works against the identity-building and with it against their own interest. Most of the inhibitions to end the Palestine Israel War concern the in-group behavior, because it is the in-group in which the people are living with each other in every day life. Here is the place where people get the attention they need so much in these war times, and so the fear of making mistakes rather concerns in-group behavior. The enemy hates them, anyway. This fear thinking, however, is connected with a mechanism of silence and holding things back which leads to a lack of communication within the in-group.

The blind alley of silence, that can also be described as the escaping of conflicts within the in-group by reason of unreflected inhibitions, can be overcome by individuals whose self-identities reflect back into the group and thus reinstall the dynamics between individual and group as integration people: popstars instead of war-stars. The more self-identity that is brought about by means of culture, art, history, faith, non-violent education, promotion of elites, humor, game, sports and the like, the more the members of the in-group will gather around non-violent situations and the more they will generate non-violent identities.

### **- Out-Group Behavior -**

Another place where inhibitions exist which are in this form not necessary is the behavior towards the out-group. As mentioned above, communication with the



enemy is quickly exposed to the reproach of treason, so there are high inhibition thresholds towards developing a constructive out-group behavior, at all.

Some politicians on both sides have such a behavior, even if it is often fatigued. But none of the three world religions as well as democracy really have instruments for an out-group behavior which is based on respecting the other, because all of these mentioned collective groups advocate a more or less latent claim of absolutism, which excludes the equality of a competing system from the outset.

The tolerance to set trust in a group which is equal to the own group without being controlled by it, this tolerance is the challenge of the twenty-first century and it is impossible to not at least mention Lessing's book "Nathan the Wise" in this context.

### **- History Book -**

The islands of an anticipated peace can only come into being when the inhibition thresholds, which are based on ignorance, are overcome by the constitutive individuals. When such prototypes of peace increase in number and when they enter the public consciousness, people will be able to believe in peace. Peace is only possible where people believe in it. When the public can believe in peace, it can implement it with a ring of arguments and legitimate individuals, moving from the outside to the center of violence and cutting the ground of war by having less and less people participate in it.

It is true that the Palestine Israel War has a long and terrible tradition. For 35 years there has hardly been any development, this is discouraging. Yet during these 35 years there have been changes elsewhere. The most essential change to me seems the genesis of a new kind of world public with the internet, which only now, in these years, is taking place. But September 11, too, brought about new measures and made it clear to us that the world has been carrying severe conflicts under the surface.

It is not necessary and not promotive to carry out these conflicts with violence. Important is to be able to name the conflict and to precisely describe it. This is not even difficult. It only needs a Palestinian and an Israeli who write a history book together. Then it will instantly be obvious where the conflicts are, and Germany and the USA as well as further countries will realize that they are far deeper involved in the conflict than they would like to be. So let us write this history book and discuss it in public. This does not even cost much money, unlike being at war. There are no obstacles in the way of such constructive solution patterns, especially when the Israeli occupation of Palestine stops, for which there is no basis in international law whatsoever.

We are living in a world in which people have lost their belief in paradise. What remains is the belief in hell. For the war is real, and test for yourself which is the voice you will trust more, the voice that says that there is no solution for this war and that it will tend to extend in the time ahead and probably even become worse due to its complexity and tradition, or the voice that says that there are solutions for this war, and that we can contribute to establish peace in the Middle East.

This mentality, however, will not cause me to limit or to lose my belief in paradise. A major wish needs formulation, manifestation, and the belief in its realization. A big hope is the fact that the majority of the Palestinians and the majority of the Israelis do not want this war.

## **The Schoolbook Project**

Anis Hamadeh, January 24, 2003

The opposite of war is peace. But how to reach it? In the course of my dealing with this question I have come to two interacting motives or results, respectively, over and over again: firstly, peace by means of public and publicity, secondly, peace through the mastering of history. (See e.g. the article "Peace work and virtual Palestine" at <http://www.redress.btinternet.co.uk/ahamadeh3.htm>) A recent radio news reminded me of that. It was on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Elysée Contract between France and Germany, and the news dealt with a schoolbook project between the Germans and the French. The schoolbooks of the two countries shall consider the shared history in an equal way, so that each text is a translation of the other. Without question, this will further improve the already harmonious relations between the two peoples. We should do this worldwide!

Let us imagine such a schoolbook project. The aim could be formulated as the availability of a standard historical text for all students in the world, in which they can read about the past of the international relations of their countries. This is not to be understood in an ideological way, but rather as a kind of agreement between peoples. It only secondarily is concerned with the respective domestic histories and concentrates on the interaction between countries. Similar to a UN resolution, this text will be elaborated in a process full of effort and conflict.

There are two advantages of such a text in comparison with a UN resolution: on the one hand it is written in a way that makes translations easy and that young people can understand. This to a major extend will exclude any phrase-mongers and ambiguities. On the other hand, different groups and individuals, such as politicians, journalists, or peace groups, independently from each other can enter this direction without needing further orders. The German monthly history journal "G/Geschichte", for example, very successfully lives this attitude and it is recommended by ministries and the German Youth Media Enterprise.

If we want to live in a world with no violence and if we want to prepare such a world for our children, then we are to elaborate the nonviolent alternatives and to coordinate them, and start now. Especially Germany already has generated good starting points, like the excellent German history TV documentaries. This attitude also concerns the press: the newspapers, too, present historical frames to us every day, and of course there also are conflicts and struggles about such frames. But what does make more sense today than to struggle over history in a civilized manner?

A text is to be construed which is accepted by all involved parties. That is the measure. A contract text which a child can understand. The Germans and the French will be able to manage, this is a start. A piece of the jig-saw. Which other groups have similarly good relations and can follow without many problems to support the structure? Easy things first! The respective ministries of education then can decide upon the justice of the text in accepting it.

But even if it was not possible to implement such a project on the high level so fast, it can be stated that the internet community is generating such a data bank, in any case. The science of history has been changed by the web, for nowhere else can you obtain targeted information about the historical events in the world so fast. This historical flood is continuously increasing and interlinking, a trend that can be observed independently of any kind of project. The universities, too, are living in the world of the augmented public and are losing their ivory tower image in this new competition.

The schoolbook project is a task that can be viewed within the framework of a world peace initiative. For in the beginning of this century we find more and more peace groups which get together and coordinate in the real virtual world with accelerating speed. Like, for example, the Transcend group around Professor Johan Galtung ([www.transcend.org](http://www.transcend.org)) Many contemporary conflict management systems are circulating in the web and taking shape. In view of this international density we today are in the position to approach such a complex issue as the common world history. Peace does not rain out of the sky like manna. Peace is something active. We want and we need peace. Real peace. Honest peace.

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