Federal Republic of Germany

National Affairs

From the beginning of 1990, all signs pointed toward a speedy unification of the two Germanys. The slogan of the East German revolution, "We are the people," had changed into the slogan for unification, "We are one people." The West German political class, especially the governing Christian Democrats and Liberals (CDU-FDP), as well as much of the established media, lent their support to the pro-unification elements inside the German Democratic Republic (GDR). This push for unification among western politicians contrasted sharply with the sentiments of large segments of the West German population who showed little enthusiasm for the influx of East Germans into West Germany and saw their standard of living threatened by the investments necessary to rebuilding the east.

In the political sphere there were divergences as well. The Social Democratic party (SPD) was divided between supporters and opponents of unification, with its leader, Oskar Lafontaine, opposing unification, and later, in light of the overwhelming movement toward unity, favoring a slower process of unification. The Green party was virtually united in its opposition to unification, seeing in it potential for German big-power ambitions and a dangerous new German nationalism. These sentiments on the Left were expressed in a demonstration in Frankfurt-am-Main on May 13, as well as in debates and statements by artists and writers, such as Günter Grass, who took a particularly strong stand against unity.

In the end, it was the will of the East Germans that determined the course of events. In January 1990, the new Social Democratic party of East Germany held its first Party Congress of Delegates, in East Berlin, in which it declared itself almost unanimously in favor of unification. At its founding in October 1989, party leaders had envisioned a separate GDR state, but sentiment shifted quickly toward unification.

In the wake of these largely internal processes, West German leaders moved to gain the agreement of the major powers to unification. On February 12, Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher flew to Moscow to seek President Mikhail Gorbachev's support. Immediately thereafter, the two, plus the East German foreign minister, met in Ottawa, on the occasion of the "Open Skies" Conference, with the four World War II Allied powers to clarify the issues of Germany's membership in NATO and Germany's borders with its neighbors, especially Czechoslovakia and Poland. In the "two-plus-four talks" that were now being set up, the two Germanys were first to clarify some issues internal to the two states and then negotiate the other issues of relevance to the wartime allies.
By July, the Soviet Union had accepted a status of full sovereignty for Germany and its continuing membership in NATO. Germany, in turn, agreed to reduce its armed forces to 370,000 soldiers. In September, Germany and the Soviet Union signed a friendship treaty that involved substantial financial contributions on the part of Germany. A treaty was also signed with Poland, on November 14, which recognized the inviolability of the Oder-Neisse border. The “two-plus-four talks” had already been concluded in Moscow, on September 12, with the signing of a treaty recognizing the unity and sovereignty of Germany. Its European neighbors—Italy, France, and Great Britain—by and large showed little enthusiasm for German unity.

In the spring, especially following April elections in the GDR, the process of unification picked up speed. It took a major step forward with the currency union on July 2, when the Deutsche mark became the official currency in the east. By August, the government of Prime Minister Lothar de Maizière began to weaken, with several coalition partners leaving the cabinet. Later that month, the GDR Volkskammer (parliament), with the exception of the PDS, the renamed former Communist party, voted in favor of unification. This set the stage for the signing of the unity treaty between the two Germanys, on August 31, in East Berlin. On October 3, unification was officially declared and the day proclaimed a new national holiday.

The first all-German national elections took place on December 2, resulting in a resounding victory for the governing conservative-liberal coalition: the Christian Democrats received 43.8 percent of the vote, approximately equally in both East and West Germany; the Free Democrats, previously thought to be moribund, rose to 11 percent, due especially to the popularity in the east of Foreign Minister Genscher, who is of Saxon origin and presented himself as an advocate of the East German population.

**Jews and Unification**

Although many public pronouncements were made concerning Germany’s continuing obligations to the Jews and to Israel, little of this was reflected in the actual unity process. Despite numerous strong appeals by Heinz Galinski, chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany (Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland), the unity treaty contained neither a clear statement of German responsibility for the Nazi past nor a satisfactory formulation of the issue of restitution. The preamble to the Grundgesetz (constitution), which had to be revised, contained no more than an oblique reference to the German people's responsibility “before history.” Critics of Galinski claimed that his difficult personal relations with major government officials, including the chancellor, were partly to blame for the lack of success of his otherwise admirable attempts at intervention.

In early May, the World Jewish Congress (WJC) met in Berlin—despite the opposition and the boycott of some delegates, especially from Israel. This was the first
time since the Holocaust that any major international Jewish body had held a meeting in Germany, and Heinz Galinski proudly announced that with this visit the German Jewish community had once again become a "fully accepted member" of the world Jewish community. In the presence of several government dignitaries, including Chancellor Kohl and Interior Minister Wolfgang Schäuble, a solemn declaration drafted by Elie Wiesel was read at the Wannsee Villa where, in 1942, the Nazi leadership planned the "final solution" and the establishment of the death camps.

Underlying the holding of the meeting was a tacit agreement, a form of "linkage": the WJC would support unification, and the GDR government would accept responsibility for its role in the Holocaust. When the WJC delegation visited East Berlin, Prime Minister de Maizière delivered a strong statement regarding German responsibility for Nazi crimes and his government's firm commitment to the Jewish people; this was a clear departure from the position taken by previous GDR governments. The WJC had originally planned the meeting—held in both East and West Berlin—as a way to press Jewish interests in the GDR and to underscore the importance of the GDR's full recognition of its part in the crimes committed in Hitler's Germany, including acceptance of the framework of restitution agreed to in the 1952 Hague treaty between the Federal Republic and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

No one, however, had foreseen the speed of developments leading to unification. As a result, the objectives of both sides changed mid-course. Both East and West Germans saw this as a media opportunity, a chance to demonstrate to the world that "nothing really had changed," that the traditional commitments of West Germany would continue to be honored after unification; for this, they sought Jewish blessing. The World Jewish Congress, on the other hand, recognized this as an opportunity to press for continuing commitment from a united Germany to the Jews and to Israel, including a willingness to negotiate claims to Jewish property on the territory of the GDR. The meeting in Berlin was therefore very much in the mutual interest of both Germany and the Jewish/Israeli representatives.

Relations with Israel

Some disharmony was evident this year, particularly because relations between the European Community (EC) and Israel continued to be strained over the intifada and continuing West Bank settlement. The deterioration was blamed by the Israeli government on European anti-Semitism, Europe's economic interests in the Middle East, and the failure of Israeli information-propaganda services. Moreover, in this 25th year of diplomatic relations between Israel and West Germany, many Israeli political leaders, including Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and other personalities, notably German-born publisher Gershom Schocken, left little doubt about their opposition to unification—an opposition which PDS leader Gregor Gysi attempted to use in his appeal to Jews everywhere to oppose the dissolution of the GDR. (Some Israelis, however, like Moshe Arens, on his visit to Bonn in February, expressed full
confidence in a united Germany.) These tensions notwithstanding, the West German government attempted to present itself as the defender of Israel's interests in the EC and continued to cultivate contacts at all levels with the Jewish state.

This attitude reflected the importance the Federal Republic—and similarly the new GDR—attributed to maintaining visibly positive relations with Israel, for internal, symbolic reasons, as well as in foreign policy. The visit of the presidents of the West and East German parliaments, Rita Süßmuth and Sabine Bergmann-Pohl, respectively, to Jerusalem, and especially their much publicized tour of Yad Vashem, was an example of this thinking. Such visits, as well as statements by both East and West German politicians, were intended to demonstrate to the world and to Germans, especially East Germans, that a united Germany would continue to be at least verbally mindful of the Holocaust and to recognize its self-defined political responsibility toward Israel.

Because both countries were occupied with extraordinary problems, political contacts this year were low-key. Berlin mayor Walter Momper visited Israel and toured Yad Vashem; Tel Aviv mayor Shlomo Lahat traveled to Tel Aviv's twin city, Frankfurt. North Rhine-Westphalia's premier, Johannes Rau, used the occasion of a trip to Israel, at the time of the Gulf crisis, to demand a worldwide prohibition of chemical arms, and the German warship Bayern anchored in Haifa in order to “strengthen good relations between the marine forces of both countries.” Shortly after the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, Israeli foreign minister David Levy arrived in Bonn to ask Foreign Minister Genscher to put pressure on German firms to stop aiding Iraqi arms development. Other political contacts occurred at the local level: for example, the district of Gilboa and the Hochtaunus region in Hesse established a partnership, and a group of Friends of Ramat-Gan/Weinheim was organized.

CULTURAL RELATIONS

Israel's increasing international political isolation notwithstanding, contacts and exchanges in the cultural sphere continued to grow. German institutions and individuals went out of their way to foster contacts with Israeli artists, musicians, and writers. This was reciprocated on the Israeli side, for example, with the award to German painter Anselm Kiefer of a Wolf Foundation Prize. There was also an invitation to the Berlin Philharmonic to perform in Israel, which became possible only after the death the previous year of conductor Herbert von Karajan, whose Nazi ties had made him unacceptable to the Israelis. Gottfried Wagner, a great-grandson of Richard Wagner, was invited to participate in lectures and discussions. Other visitors were Rector Heinrich Fink of Humboldt University in East Berlin to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, to draw up an agreement for mutual cooperation; and writer Günter Kunert for his first lecture tour in Israel.

Israeli artists had a considerable presence in West Germany. Public art exhibits included Israeli landscape artists at the Mittelrhein Museum in Koblenz, in late
1989 and early 1990; photographer Moshe Raviv-Vorobeichic at the Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin; Yaakov Abitbol at the Jewish community building in Heidelberg; and Yigal Ozeri in Wiesbaden. An exhibit of sculptures and drawings by Israelis, previously shown elsewhere in Europe and in the United States, came to the Neukölln district of Berlin; a photographic exhibit, "Encounters Berlin-Jerusalem," was shown in East Berlin.

A meeting of Israeli and German authors took place in late September, in Mainz, with Israelis Aharon Megged, Yoram Kaniuk, Ruth Almog, and David Grossman participating. A gathering of Jewish artists from Tel Aviv, New York, and Berlin took place in Berlin, on the theme "Between Remembrance and the Present." In music, two Israeli musicians who had won the Ariane-Katcz piano competition were invited to perform in the Alte Oper, Frankfurt; and the Kibbutz Chamber Orchestra played in Munich. In theater, Motti Lerner's Else, a play about poetess Else Lasker-Schüler's life in Palestine, was staged in Berlin. Omri Nitzan, a visiting director and Brecht specialist, enjoyed success in Munich; and a performance of Silence, by the Israeli choreographer Joseph Tmim, was featured in Berlin.

**War-Crimes Trials**

A number of trials began or continued in 1990, among them that of Ernst-August König, in Siegen, now in its third year. König was accused of the murder of Gypsies. The trial began in Münster of Latvian-born Boleslav Maikovskis, who fled to West Germany in 1987 from the United States, presumably to avoid deportation to the Soviet Union, where he had been convicted of war crimes. In Hildesheim, the trial began of physician Klaus Endruweit, accused of involvement in the Nazi euthanasia program; in Oberhausen, Heinrich Johannes Kühnemann was arrested for war crimes. The trial began in Bonn of Josef Schwammberger, extradited from Argentina after several appeals and accused of responsibility in the killing of some 5,000 Jews in Polish concentration camps. Bruno Karl Blach, a former commandant of labor and concentration camps, who was extradited from the United States in 1989 and arrested for the murder of three concentration-camp inmates, was brought to court in Duisburg, together with Dominik Gleba, another former SS officer.

A center for research into Nazi justice was scheduled to open in Berlin in 1991, to house all available files concerning Nazi trials. On a related matter, the United States refused an early return to German control of the Document Center in Berlin, which housed the archive of the Nazi party. The center's ownership became an issue this year, with the granting of full sovereignty to Germany.

**Right-Wing Extremism**

A definite, albeit diffuse, increase in right-wing activity took place in West Germany in 1990. It was of two types: that organized by the official ultra-Right parties, on one hand, and the actions of individuals in small and often informal extremist groups, on the other.
As a result of events in East Germany in 1989, the right-wing Republikaner party lost a significant degree of appeal. One of its major platform planks, the call for unification and for a greater Germany, suddenly disappeared when that goal was appropriated by the government in Bonn and showed signs of being realized. Moreover, the party found itself in a dilemma when East Germans began fleeing to the west, arousing the displeasure of precisely those groups in the population that supported the Republicans and similar right-wing parties. Similarly, the "national goal" of helping the East Germans created resentment among the party's erstwhile supporters. These developments, following the party's earlier spectacular rise in popularity, led to deep internal divisions and to the temporary removal of the Republikaner party leader, Franz Schönhuber, in January. At the January meeting, Schönhuber attacked President Richard von Weizsäcker and Jewish community head Heinz Galinski—the latter for slandering German patriots and for "being himself responsible for anti-Semitism" in Germany. Despite some fall-off in support in the Bavarian local elections in March, the party gained over 7 percent nationwide, and Schönhuber was reelected at a party convention in the summer.

This relative decline of the established Right may only have benefited the militant ultra-Right, supporters of the late Michael Kühnen—the major militant neo-Nazi leader—and similar groupings. Many of the most visible actions this year, such as desecration of Jewish cemeteries, could be attributed to these groups. The desecrations of cemeteries in Stuttgart-Bad Cannstadt, in Kusterdingen-Wankheim, Hchingen, and Ihringen—all in the area near Stuttgart—were later identified as the work of a young couple with neo-Nazi beliefs, who were subsequently sentenced to jail; other cemeteries desecrated were in Babenhausen in Southern Hesse and in Paderborn in northwest Germany. In East Berlin the graves of Helene Weigel and Bertolt Brecht were vandalized (possibly engineered by elements close to the old Communist party in order to raise the spectre of a resurgent Nazism that could accompany unification), as were graves in the Weissensee cemetery. Militant ultra-Right groups were buoyed by their new opportunities in East Germany and by the rise in unemployment in the west, which was due largely to the influx of East Germans and the increased visibility of foreigners, mostly people claiming political-refugee status.

The relative political naivété prevalent in East Germany after the Wende, the revolt against Communism, coupled with the passivity of left-wing and democratic elements, offered the Right an open field for its activities. Thus, for example, revisionist historian David Irving gave lectures in Leipzig and elsewhere on the "hoax" of Auschwitz, and Michael Kühnen led marches in the east. Computer games with right-wing and racist themes, which had been available for some time in the Federal Republic, came to East Germany as well; they had titles like "Auschwitz," the "Turkish Test," and "The Nazi."

The mounting rise of neo-Nazism—which looked ever more like equivalent movements in France—met with some public opposition. In February, for example, a conference on "Neofascism and Racism" was held in Frankfurt's Paulskirche. (Although the conference succeeded in assembling an impressive coalition of
groups, it failed in the end because of divided views over unification.) In Stuttgart, a march was organized to protest the desecration of the Bad Cannstadt cemetery, and Aktion Sühnezeichen appealed for help to take care of Jewish cemeteries, as a direct response to the desecrations.

**Holocaust Commemoration**

The Holocaust was commemorated again this year with numerous events throughout West Germany. In Cologne, the opening of an exhibit, "*Im Namen des Deutschen Volkes—Justiz und Nationalsozialismus*" (on justice and law in Nazi Germany), featured a panel discussion, led by the minister of justice for North-Rhine-Westphalia, Rolf Krumsiek. The Jewish Museum in Frankfurt organized an exhibit on the Lodz Ghetto, "*Unser einziger Weg ist Arbeit*" ("Our only road is work"). The city of Münster presented an exhibit on "School and Anti-Semitism in Germany, 1933-1945"; a documentary exhibit on Buchenwald, prepared in the GDR, was shown in Berlin's Martin-Gropius-Bau; and the photodocumentary "*Aus Nachbarn wurden Juden*" ("When neighbors became Jews"), initiated in West Berlin, went to the Nikolai Church in Leipzig, GDR. Berlin also featured an exhibit on women's resistance, "*Lösch nie die Spuren—Frauen leisten Widerstand*" ("Never extinguish the traces—women resist"), organized by Gerda Szepansky.

This year was the 50th anniversary of the deportation of Jews from southern Germany and the Alsace to Gurs concentration camp in southern France. The event was commemorated in Karlsruhe and in a number of other cities in Baden-Württemberg. Mannheim hosted an exhibit, "*Gurs, an Internment Camp in Southern France*"; that later traveled to Konstanz and Hamburg. Other exhibits related to Neuengamme (in Berlin); expulsion of Jews (Düsseldorf), and flight (Darmstadt). The 52nd anniversary of *Kristallnacht* was observed in over 60 German towns and cities.

Two new commemorative sites were opened: in Bergen-Belsen, on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the liberation of the Jews there; and in Essens (Eastern Frisia), the only Jewish museum and memorial site in this corner of northwest Germany.

Cities inviting their former residents back, usually for a weeklong visit, this year included Frankfurt, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Fürth, Koblenz, Marburg, Bonn, Berlin, Bad Nauheim, and the state of Schleswig-Holstein.

**JEWISH COMMUNITY**

**Demography**

As of January 1, 1991, Jewish community membership in West Germany had increased from 27,711 the previous year to 28,468. This substantial rise, the first in
about a decade, was almost entirely due to the influx of Eastern European, mostly Soviet, Jews. Most of them chose to settle in those cities where Soviet Jews had settled earlier, i.e., Berlin and, to a lesser degree, Frankfurt and the Ruhr region of North Rhine–Westphalia.

The movement of Soviet Jews to these cities occurred largely because the respective Länder (states) were more receptive to Jewish immigration than others, such as Bavaria, which allowed only a tiny number of Jewish immigrants to settle there. (Soviet Jewish immigration to East Germany and especially to East Berlin was much larger, since both the government and individual Jews had made special efforts to welcome Soviet Jews.) Whereas in the seventies and early eighties most Soviet Jews settling in Germany were "dropouts," ostensibly en route to Israel, the vast majority of Soviet Jews arriving in the past four years had Germany as their destination. This direct immigration evoked Israeli protests to the German Jewish leadership and the German government.

Soviet Jewish Immigration

The most important development for German Jewry in many years was undoubtedly the large influx of Soviet Jews into first East and then West Germany. While the small community of Jews in East Germany not only welcomed, but even actively promoted, this flow (see report on the GDR elsewhere in this volume), and while welcoming Soviet refugees was considered a form of restitution by the GDR government, the West German Jewish leadership vacillated between rejection and acceptance. Early in the year, Heinz Galinski, chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, opposed a larger immigration, arguing that Berlin had already absorbed many Soviet Jews and that neither Berlin nor other communities were able to absorb any more.

Due to the pressure of refugees arriving in the East, and critical voices in the Jewish community itself, Galinski subsequently changed his mind and advocated opening the doors to greater numbers of refugees. The West German government, meanwhile, largely opposed the influx; in August it refused to process new visa applications by Jews in its Soviet consulates; moreover, it called on the GDR authorities to act likewise.

In reaction, a special session of the Central Council voted unanimously to demand that the government rescind its decision to refuse visas for Soviet Jews. The International Council of Christians and Jews appealed to Germans to contribute money for plane tickets and, after a special Bundestag debate, that body voted, in November, to grant a special quota and refugee status to Soviet Jews; subsequently, the Zentrarat demanded that the government contribute financially to help absorb the refugees.

Late in the year, however, some German Jewish leaders began to have second thoughts, questioning whether they could morally encourage the settlement of Jews in Germany; others, of course, found this position hypocritical, since they themselves were living in Germany and advocated the right of Jewish refugees to settle
wherever they wanted. As the number of refugees grew, and especially as it became apparent that tens of thousands more were planning to go to Germany rather than Israel, the Israeli government stepped up its pressure on the Jewish leadership and the German government to stop the flow of Jews to Germany, on the ground that their “proper place” was in Israel.

**Unification of the Jewish Community**

While Heinz Galinski warned against swift unification of the two Germanys, he moved very quickly to bring about unification of the two Jewish communities in those states. In February, representatives of the Jewish organizations from West and East Germany, including the respective heads, Heinz Galinski and Siegmund Rotstein, met for the first time and decided to set up a partnership. For the West German Central Council, there were several issues to be resolved: ownership of properties currently held by the East German communities and claims to former Jewish property, including valuable real estate in Berlin; the legitimacy of the community leadership (although East Berlin had democratically elected leaders); and last but not least, the legitimacy of the membership itself, namely, whether the East German Jews were indeed all Jews from the point of view of Halakhah. By December, the two communities, east and west, were officially unified. Some offices of the West German community were moved to the eastern part of the city, and two East Germans, heads of the new regional associations, Siegmund Rotstein of Chemnitz and Hans Levy of Magdeburg, joined the Zentralrat’s board of directors. The East Berlin community council dissolved itself, as did the GDR-wide Jewish Verband, the Association of Jewish Communities. One member of the former East Berlin leadership, Hans Rotholz, was coopted onto the West Berlin Jewish community council. (Conspicuously bypassed was Peter Kirchner, president of the East Berlin Jewish community, who had hoped to preserve some of that community’s distinct identity.)

The haste with which Galinski and the Zentralrat moved to bring about speedy unification on western terms probably had two motives. One was fear that independent new forces among East German Jewry might assert themselves; the other was Galinski’s desire to be in a strong negotiating position vis-à-vis Israel and especially the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany. Indeed, by July, after the currency and economic union came about, Galinski demanded that the Central Council be an equal partner in the restitution negotiations between the GDR, the Claims Conference, and the Israeli representatives, especially over restitution for communal Jewish property.

**Jewish-Christian Relations**

The major event this year was the presence of a Jewish Lehrhaus, or academy—a name with a long, proud tradition in German Jewish history—at the 90th Roman
Catholic Kirchentag (national convention) in Berlin, with several Jewish theologians and lay persons participating. Jewish critics of the event pointed to the church's continuing lack of sensitivity concerning Jewish themes. While acknowledging that the church had taken some initiative in confronting Nazism, they noted that Kristallnacht (the November pogrom) was viewed as a "signal from God," and that Carmelite nuns justified their presence in former concentration camps "in order to confront their own faith." Jews were also troubled by aggressive criticism of Israel, such as young Catholics speaking of the "Nazi methods" used by Israelis.

The Buber-Rosenzweig Medal of the Council for Christian-Jewish Cooperation was awarded this year to Charlotte Petersen, the founder of the Wapniarka Aid Society. Otto von Habsburg, of the Austrian imperial family, was awarded an honorary fellowship by the Hebrew University for his help in saving Jews during the war and his involvement in Jewish-Christian cooperation. Johann Waltenberger, the director of a gymnasium in Dachau, was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit, for his involvement in creating a youth meeting center in Dachau.

Communal Affairs

The major developments of the year—unification and the Soviet Jewish influx—had relatively little impact on the ongoing internal affairs of the Jewish communities in the FRG.

The WIZO organization in Germany this year celebrated its 30th anniversary in Germany and the 70th year of its existence worldwide. The group was especially active in Frankfurt, Munich, and Berlin. Helen Israel was elected the new honorary president, and Lala Süsskind, the Berlin chairwoman, became the new president of WIZO in Germany. In recent years, WIZO had emerged as the most dynamic Jewish organization in Germany, sponsoring numerous social events, large and small. With most of the German Jewish community bodies dominated by men, WIZO was the one place in which women could meet, socialize, and develop their own organizational capacities. A large portion of the funds collected by WIZO in Germany went to the Heuss Mother's Convalescence Center in Herzliya, Israel.

Other groups, as well, worked to support medical activity in Israel. A Bavarian committee to support aid to cancer patients in Israel held a benefit on the occasion of its tenth anniversary; a gala dinner was held at Kronberg Castle in support of Israeli children suffering from leukemia; and the Micha Society for Deaf Children in Haifa received support from the Sprecher-Heilbrunn Fund.

The Allgemeine Jüdische Wochenzeitung, once an independent weekly but for the past two decades the semi-official organ of the Central Council, dismissed two longtime editors, both non-Jews, without explanation. They were Friedo Sachser, its principal editor, who had been with the paper since 1950, and Boike Jacobs, an associate editor, on staff for about 15 years. The move was seen as an attempt to bring the paper under closer control of the Zentralrat after Galinski's accession to the top position. While the change may have made it harder to attack existing
communal structures publicly, criticism persisted. One source was the opposition bimonthly Semit, which published at times vitriolic attacks against the Jewish leadership. A Zentralrat-sponsored Jewish youth congress in Berlin criticized the operation of the Jewish communities for excluding the younger generations from the decision-making process.

**Culture**

Historian Herbert Strauss, longtime faculty member of City College of New York, retired as director of the Berliner Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung at the Technical University and returned to New York. He was arranging for the transfer to Berlin of an archive of original documents and microfilms, housed in New York, related to the history of German-Jewish immigration.

Among Jewish artists whose work was exhibited in Germany this year were Naftali Bezem, Frank Rödel, Lasar Segal, Fritz Wisten, Emil Orlik, and photographers Sasha and Cami Stone, Herbert Sonnenfeld, and Tim Nachum Gidal. A first German exhibit of Leon Abramowicz was shown in Seebruck in southern Bavaria. El Lissitzky's "Typographical Works" were presented in Darmstadt; the Jewish Museum in Frankfurt arranged an exhibition on the theme "Expressionism and Exile," with works selected from the Fischer family private collection. Hamburg artist and writer Arie Goral presented two exhibits, "Meine jüdische Bilderwelt" ("The world of my Jewish pictures") and "Theresienstadt and Other Concentration Camps." He also lectured in his native town of Rheda. Other exhibitions of note included the work of poet and painter Uriel Birnbaum at the University of Hagen; works by Marc Chagall, in Ludwigshafen; photographic portraits of Jewish émigrés by Herlinde Koelbl, in Munich; and a display on Hanukkah, in the Rashi House in Worms.

The 100th birthday of satirist-journalist Kurt Tucholsky was marked by two exhibitions and two new books. Munich's Gasteig featured a comprehensive memorial exhibit, and in Marbach near Stuttgart, at the Schiller Nationalmuseum, an exhibit addressed Tucholsky's role as a writer in the Weimar Republic. The two publications were Fritz J. Raddatz's Tucholsky—ein Pseudonym, and Kurt Tucholsky. Ein Lebensbild, by Helga Bemmann.

A documentary film of note this year was Alle Juden raus. Judenverfolgung in einer deutschen Kleinstadt 1933–1945 ("Out with the Jews: Persecution of Jews in a small German town"), by Emanuel Rund. The film portrays the history of Jewish persecution in a small Swabian town, the recollections of former Jewish citizens, and how the town was dealing with its past.

In Cologne's ancient underground city, a mikveh dating from 1170 was restored and reopened.
Klezmer music and Klezmer bands had been enjoying a boom in popularity in West Germany for several years. Advertisements sometimes presented "Klezmer" as an independent musical genre, along with classical music, jazz, and rock. An international Klezmer society was founded that included German (non-Jewish) musicians as well as Jews. Members of at least one American Klezmer band were living and working permanently in Berlin, and others were frequent guests or went on tour throughout Germany. The American Giora Feidman spent much of his time in Germany, giving concerts this year in Munich and Berlin, among other places.

A festival of Jewish music featuring concerts and discussions was organized by the West German Radio Broadcasting Service in Cologne. At the request of President von Weizsäcker, the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra gave a benefit concert to help restore the Jewish cemeteries in Berlin.

Publications

Among a number of new works of Jewish interest published this year, the following are particularly noteworthy: Arie Goral's *Jüdischer Bestand und Widerstand in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Texte 1960–1989* (on Jewish existence in Germany); Dagmar Hartung von Doetinchem and Rudolf Winau, eds., *Zerstörte Fortschritte. Das jüdische Krankenhaus in Berlin 1756–1860–1914–1989* (the history of a Jewish hospital in Berlin); a novel by Karin Lindemann, *Wege heimwärts* (about the effects of Nazism on the second generation, the children of both victims and perpetrators); Jan Lokers’s *Die Juden in Emden 1530–1806: eine sozial- und wirtschaftsgeschichtliche Studie zur Geschichte der Juden in Norddeutschland vom ausgehenden Mittelalter bis zur Emanzipationsgesetzgebung* (history of the Jews in Emden); Ilse Losa’s *Die Welt in der ich lebte* (memoir of a Jewish woman’s childhood and youth in Germany; translated from the Portuguese edition of 1949 by Maralde Meyer-Minnemann and the author); *Briefwechsel Martin Buber–Ludwig Strauss 1913–1953* (the Buber-Strauss correspondence), edited by Tuvia Rübner and Dafna Mach; Helga Schubert’s *Judasfrauen* (on women who turned others in to the Gestapo); Günther Schwarberg’s *Die Mörderwaschmaschine* (about the German legal establishment’s effort after 1945 to block investigations into Nazi crimes); *Der deutsch-israelische Dialog, 1987–1990*, 8 vols., edited by Rolf Vogel (a standard sourcebook on German-Israeli relations); *Solange wie das eingehaltene Licht. Briefe 1966–82* (“As long as the light lasts”) by Clara von Bodman and Elazar Benyoetz (correspondence between a German and an Israeli writer).

Lea Rosh and Eberhardt Jäckel received the Geschwister Scholl Prize for their book on the Holocaust, *Der Tod ist ein Meister aus Deutschland* (“Death is a master from Germany”).
**Personalia**

Writer Ralph Giordano—son of a Sicilian father and a Jewish mother—received the award of the Heinz Galinski Foundation, the Federal Cross of Merit, and an honorary doctorate from the University of Kassel. The 66-year-old journalist and TV documentary maker had previously won the prestigious Grimme and Hans-Fallada Prizes. His autobiographical novel *The Bertinis* (1982) was made into a popular TV film. More recent works were *Die zweite Schuld oder von der Last Deutscher zu sein* (“The second guilt, or, about the burden of being a German”) and *Wenn Hitler den Krieg gewonnen hätte* (“If Hitler had won the war”).

Erich Liebermann, member of the board of the Jewish community organization of Wiesbaden, received the Federal Medal of Merit. Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek was invited to the Catholic Church’s national meeting in Berlin in May; in the fall he received the 1990 Moses Mendelssohn Prize, from Berlin mayor Walter Momper. Playwright George Tabori was awarded a prize by the Mülheim Theater convention.

Within the Jewish community, Micha Paz was appointed the new director of the Jewish National Fund (KKL) in Germany, and Michel Friedmann, the person responsible for cultural affairs in the Jewish community of Frankfurt, was elected the new chairman of ORT Germany.

Among prominent German-Jewish émigrés who died this year were psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim, in Silver Spring, Maryland, aged 86 (he was posthumously awarded the Leopold Lucas Prize); social philosopher Alfred Sohn-Rethel, who had lived in England, aged 91; philanthropist Fred W. Lessing, in New York; and Munich-born Karl Neumeyer, a leader of Shovevei Zion, a settlement of Swabian Jews in Israel, aged 79. Two prominent émigrés who subsequently returned to Germany died this year: banker and philanthropist Eric M. Warburg, long active in Jewish organizations and chairman of the board of the Jewish Hospital in Hamburg, aged 90; and world-renowned sociologist Norbert Elias, who had taught in England, the Netherlands, and later in Bielefeld, aged 93. Hans Seidenberg, a longtime chairman of the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation in the Taunus region, died in February, aged 80.

The deaths of several non-Jews who had been important to the Jewish community should be noted. Herbert Wehner, a former leader of the Social Democratic party who was instrumental in setting up numerous German-Israeli contacts, was eulogized at a formal state commemoration in Bonn in the presence of Federal president Richard von Weizsäcker and Zentralrat chairman Heinz Galinski. Charlotte Landgrebe, who died in November 1989, aged 71, fought against Nazism and for the rights of minorities, including those of Gypsies.

Y. MICHAL BODEMANN
German Democratic Republic

National Affairs

The year 1990 was one of political, social, and economic chaos in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), climaxing in October in political unification with the Federal Republic of Germany. Over the course of the year, the territory of the GDR was governed by three heads of state in succession, and the formerly dominant Socialist Unity Party (SED) changed its name twice—in December 1989 to Socialist Unity Party-Party for Democratic Socialism (SED-PDS), and in February 1990 to Party for Democratic Socialism (PDS). In reaction to the chaos and uncertainty, 15,000 people, mostly young—of a population of approximately 16 million inhabitants—emigrated each month, in most cases to West Germany.

In January, weekly demonstrations in all major cities (drawing 150,000 in Leipzig alone) protested Communist rule and called for unification with West Germany; former head of state Erich Honecker was arrested but declared unfit to stand trial. On March 18, in the GDR's first free general election by secret ballot, the Alliance for (a united) Germany, led by the Christian Democratic party, scored a sensational victory, winning 40.8 percent of the popular vote. And on April 4, Christian Democratic leader Lothar de Maizière replaced Hans Modrow of the PDS as head of state. July 1 saw the creation of a currency union of the two Germanys, which led to a series of bankruptcies of centralized socialist production units and caused massive layoffs in a country which for 40 years had known no unemployment.

On October 3, the German Democratic Republic formally united with the Federal Republic of Germany, ending its 41 years as an independent state. Five provinces (Länder) were created in the territory of the GDR: Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Pomerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia. East Berlin maintained a provisional separate existence, with the intention of a future merger with West Berlin. The area that had been the German Democratic Republic was henceforth to be known as the Five New Provinces (FNP).

Jews and the GDR

Jews and the Jewish communities of the GDR experienced and participated in the dissolution of the state and the preparations for German unification in many ways. In March, Gregor Gysi, leader of the PDS (and of partly Jewish descent), called on the Jewish communities of the world to support the continued independence of the GDR. On April 12, the GDR's newly elected Christian Democratic government publicly acknowledged responsibility for the Holocaust and announced
its willingness to make restitution payments to survivors. Moreover, it begged forgiveness for the “hypocrisy and hostility of official East German policies toward Israel and for the persecution and degradation of Jewish citizens also after 1945 in our country” and promised that it would grant asylum to persecuted Jews.

The same month, on Easter Sunday, the first East-West Berlin Easter March (for peace) brought 10,000 demonstrators into the streets. Because of heavy participation by the PDS, Konrad Weiss of the citizens’ group Democracy Now canceled his scheduled appearance as keynote speaker. His place was taken by Peter Kirchner, president of the East Berlin Jewish community. In his address, Kirchner warned against marginalizing the PDS and praised the party for having learned from its mistakes.

In May the World Jewish Congress held a conference in East and West Berlin, the first time the group had convened any gathering on German soil. The meeting was addressed by the heads of the two German states, Helmut Kohl and Lothar de Maizière, and heard a declaration written for the occasion by Elie Wiesel. As the year progressed, two major issues for Jews assumed high priority: the implementation of GDR restitution payments to Holocaust survivors and the return of property confiscated from individual Jews and Jewish communities in the territory of the GDR. Behind the scenes, negotiations involving the Central Council of Jews in Germany, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, and the governments of Israel and the two Germanys took place regarding the amounts, scheduling, and recipients of GDR restitution payments. In September the Central Council of Jews in Germany hired a lawyer to pursue its claim to 700 former Jewish properties. In the end, the unification contract stipulated that Jews and other victims of the Nazis would be reimbursed only for property in the former GDR that was confiscated between 1933 and 1945.

Anti-Semitism and Extremism

Anti-Semitism became a more serious problem in the GDR/FNP in 1990, often expressed in conjunction with aggression against Russians, foreigners, homosexuals, and Communists. Among many incidents: in January, graves of Soviet soldiers in Pirna and Goerlitz were desecrated with anti-Semitic slogans; in May, the words “Saujud” (Jew Pig) and “Juden Raus” (Jews Out) were sprayed on the graves of Bertolt Brecht and Helene Weigel, and the walls of an East Berlin public swimming pool were painted with swastikas; in September—just before Rosh Hashanah—gravestones were destroyed in the Weissensee cemetery in East Berlin; in October, a fire was set at the construction site of the New Synagogue Berlin-Centrum Judäicum (see below); in November, a plaque on a former synagogue in Potsdam was spray-painted; and in December, the Adass Jisroel cemetery in East Berlin was damaged, and anti-Semitic slogans were painted on the synagogue walls.

For the first time since the establishment of the GDR, the Jewish communities requested and were assigned police protection. By autumn there were almost daily
incidents involving right-wing radicals, mostly in Saxony and Thuringia, where economic deterioration was particularly advanced. PDS leader Gregor Gysi was greeted by a right-wing demonstration when he arrived in Dresden for an election rally in November.

The role of external and internal political interests in managing right-wing and anti-Semitic incidents became increasingly clear as the year progressed. In early January the SED-PDS staged a demonstration of 100,000 (the largest demonstration in East Berlin after November 4, 1989) to protest desecration at the Soviet military cemetery in Treptow. However, the fact that the “fascist” slogans (“Occupiers Out,” “National Community Instead of Class Struggle,” and “Nationalism for a Europe of Free Peoples”) were written in party bureaucratese rather than in right-wing youth jargon led to charges that the party had in fact organized the desecration. In the weeks following this demonstration, several thousand members left the SED-PDS, and party president Gregor Gysi called the incident a “mistake.”

In February the militant right-wing organization National Alternative, supported by West German and Austrian neo-Nazis, opened shop in East Berlin. Over the summer, the British revisionist historian David Irving lectured in Dresden and Gera with the permission of the local authorities. In autumn two youths who had been convicted of desecrating an East Berlin Jewish cemetery in 1988 had their sentences reduced after appeal proceedings. The youths claimed they had been convicted in a show trial which took place in early autumn 1988 as part of the preparations for the observance of the 50th anniversary of *Kristallnacht* in November of that year. They said they had been drunk the evening of the crime and had caused damage in two non-Jewish cemeteries first, but had been told by the prosecuting attorney that the GDR was interested only in the desecration of the Jewish cemetery.

**Relations with Israel**

Throughout 1990, state visits, cultural exchanges, and the founding of two Israel-oriented organizations in East Berlin accompanied negotiations toward the establishment of diplomatic relations between the GDR and Israel. However, on October 3, when the GDR united with the FRG, the former had not established diplomatic ties with Israel.

The intense effort expended by a state going out of business to set up a formal relationship with Israel had its own logic. In the early months, the Modrow regime harbored the hope that Israeli fears of German reunification and a positive relation to the GDR might result in Israeli support for the continued existence of the GDR as an independent state. Once the decision was made to unite the two Germanys, the aim of diplomatic initiatives changed to soliciting Israeli acquiescence to the unification. On the Israeli side, the major concern seemed to be East Germany’s acceptance of responsibility for the Holocaust and restitution payments to individual survivors and to Israel.

In January GDR head of state Hans Modrow called for the establishment of
diplomatic relations with Israel, and in February he assured the Israeli government and the World Jewish Congress that the GDR would acknowledge its role in the Holocaust and would make restitution payments to Jewish survivors. Representatives of Yad Vashem designated six GDR citizens as "Righteous Gentiles" and trees honoring them were planted along the Avenue of the Righteous in Jerusalem. For the first time, guests from the GDR were invited to a seminar held by the Zionist organizations of West Germany and Switzerland. In March the GDR-Israel Society was founded in East Berlin, an initiative of the GDR League for Friendship Among Peoples. However, because it was closely associated with the Foreign Ministry and the Central Committee of the SED, many members and functionaries of the GDR's Jewish communities viewed it as a "laundering" institution for Communists with a compromised past and did not join. In May, Israeli political scientist Shlomo Avineri spoke at East Berlin's Humboldt University at the invitation of the GDR-Israel Society.

In June three Knesset members—Nawaf Massalha, Haggai Meirom, and Shimon Shetreet—visited East Berlin as guests of the Jewish community, and the GDR state travel agency began to offer package tours to Israel. In July Israel's Habimah Theater played for the first time in East Berlin. The presidents of the two German parliaments, Sabine Bergmann-Pohl (East) and Rita Süssmuth (West), visited Jerusalem to solicit Israeli support for German unification.

In August GDR defense minister Rainer Eppelman agreed to discontinue the training of PLO troops and commando units in the GDR. In September the Israeli airline El Al started regular service to Schönefeld airport. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Humboldt University in East Berlin signed an agreement to exchange students and scholars and to develop cooperative research projects. For the first time, an Israeli youth group visited East Berlin; its program included helping with the restoration of the Jewish cemetery in Weissensee.

After unification, in October, the GDR-Israel Society sponsored a lecture and an exhibit and then merged with the (West German) Germany-Israel Society. In November a photographic exhibit, "Berlin-Jerusalem Encounters," was displayed in East Berlin, and in December the Israeli embassy in Bonn announced plans to open a consulate in Berlin to serve the Five New Provinces.

**Holocaust-Related Matters**

As noted above, on April 12, the GDR formally acknowledged its role in the Holocaust and its willingness to compensate surviving Jewish victims. On April 23, for the first time, Yom Hashoah was observed at the synagogue on the Rykestrasse in East Berlin. On this occasion, announcement was made of the establishment of the GDR branch of Amcha—the international organization that provides counseling and rehabilitation for Holocaust survivors and their descendants in Israel. The GDR government promised to contribute 6.2 million marks to the program, as a humanitarian gesture.

Besides the declaration of April 12, several smaller steps were taken in 1990 by
government and public bodies to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive and to honor those who were killed. In turn, the GDR Jewish communities acknowledged these measures by honoring the six GDR citizens designated “Righteous Gentiles” for hiding Jews during the Nazi years.

In May the GDR called for the extradition of Nazi war criminal Alois Brunner, now living in Damascus. Brunner was considered to be one of the most important war criminals still living, and this was the first time the GDR had taken such a step. In August the GDR announced that it would open its archives of the Nazi years to the U.S. Justice Department.

In October, at the request of West German president Richard von Weizsäcker, the (West) Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra gave two benefit concerts, the proceeds going to help restore the extensive and run-down Jewish cemeteries in East Berlin. Daniel Barenboim conducted. And, although fears had been expressed that the opening of the Berlin wall on November 9, 1989, would overshadow the memory of the Kristallnacht pogrom of November 9, 1938, several commemorations of the 1938 pogrom did take place in East Berlin in 1990, sponsored by the Jewish community, the churches, citizens’ initiatives, and the PDS.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Demography

On December 31, 1990, 376 Jews belonged to the eight Jewish communities that had constituted the Association of Jewish Communities in the GDR. There were 209 members in East Berlin, 52 in Dresden, 34 in Magdeburg, 32 in Leipzig, 24 in Erfurt, 11 in Chemnitz (formerly Karl-Marx-Stadt), 8 in Halle/Saale, and 6 in Schwerin. An additional 2,000 to 3,000 former GDR citizens of Jewish ancestry did not belong to any organized Jewish community. The Jewish communities reported receiving increasing numbers of membership applications, and again complaints were heard that the processing of membership applications was often prolonged over years, even in cases where the applicant clearly met the halakhic requirements. Reports reached Heinz Galinski, president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, that in Leipzig and Dresden no new members had been accepted in two years. Especially in the very small communities, new members were often seen primarily as a threat to the internal balance of power.

Adass Jisroel, an independent Orthodox Jewish community in East Berlin, officially recognized by the East German government in December 1989 (see below), reported a membership of 200 families, some from East and some from West Berlin. In December, 13 Jews living in the Province of Brandenburg—of whom 12 had recently arrived from the Soviet Union—announced their intention to establish a new Jewish community in Potsdam. The new body was scheduled to come into being officially in September 1991.

The arrival of Jewish refugees from the Soviet Union, starting in early May (see
below), gave a considerable boost to the Jewish population. On December 31, an estimated 2,900 Soviet Jews were living in East Berlin and the Five New Provinces: 1,820 in East Berlin, 450 in Brandenburg, 100 in Pomerania-Mecklenburg, 350 in Saxony, 30 in Saxony-Anhalt, and 150 in Thuringia. Although some Soviet Jews had applied to join the Jewish communities in the New Provinces, as of December 31 the applications were still being processed.

**Soviet Jews**

One of the most important developments of 1990 was the immigration of almost 3,000 Soviet Jews to the GDR, and then to the united Germany. In February the newly formed Jewish Cultural Association (see below) called upon the GDR to admit Jews fleeing anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. The GDR government’s April 12 declaration of its willingness to grant asylum to persecuted Jews provided the legal basis for the arrival of the first Soviet Jews six days later. On July 11, the GDR Council of Ministers agreed to grant Jews arriving from the USSR residence rights, housing, upkeep, language training, and work permits.

Through the spring and summer, the Soviet Jewish immigrants, arriving at the rate of 40 per week, were looked after largely by the Jewish Cultural Association, the GDR Office for Foreigners, the Lutheran Church, and the new East Berlin Jewish community Adass Jisroel, as well as by individuals and citizens’ groups near the barracks where the Soviets were being housed (often ten to a room).

In the fall, the West Berlin Jewish community began to take over. In mid-September, with unification approaching, the West German government ordered its consulates in the USSR to stop processing immigration applications from Jews and advised the GDR to do the same. On October 2, West Germany closed its border to Soviet Jews. From then until the end of the year, Soviet Jews continued to arrive illegally, or semilegally, i.e., with “invitations to visit relatives.” They were admitted only in Berlin, however, where they were “tolerated,” i.e., allowed to remain, but with no clear legal status and no rights.

In the final months of 1990, Heinz Galinski, president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany and of the Berlin Jewish community, organized a staff of administrators and social workers for the Soviet Jews and publicly insisted that they be admitted to Germany on a nonquota basis and granted residence rights. He maintained this position against pressure from the German government, the Israeli government, and a large part of the membership of his own Jewish community. The Brandenburg Regional Workshop for Foreigners provided support services and counseling for the new arrivals, and the Jewish Cultural Association organized a Russian-German language school.

Although the integration of the Soviets into the chaos of the post GDR threatened to strain the resources of its Jewish communities for years to come, these immigrants represented the only hope for survival of the communities. It was also likely that the newcomers would radically alter the character of Jewish life in the Five New Provinces.
Communal Affairs

The dissolution of the GDR and the reunification of Germany brought about a reorganization of Jewish life in the Five New Provinces. The Association of Jewish Communities in the GDR disbanded in September. The Jewish communities of Dresden, Leipzig, Erfurt, Halle/Saale, Schwerin, Magdeburg, and Chemnitz (formerly Karl-Marx-Stadt) regrouped into two regional associations based on the division of the Five New Provinces—the Regional Association of Saxony and Thuringia, and the Regional Association of Saxony-Anhalt, Brandenburg, and Mecklenburg-Pomerania—and prepared to carry on with support from their respective provinces. The two regional associations joined the Central Council of Jews in Germany; the presidents of the regional associations, Siegmund Rotstein of Chemnitz and Hans Levy of Magdeburg, became members of the Central Council's board of directors. Some of the former GDR communities were “adopted” by larger Jewish communities in West Germany, which promised them financial and religious support. The East Berlin Jewish community merged with the larger Jewish community of West Berlin, ending a separation of 38 years. Heinz Rothholz of the East Berlin board of directors became a member of the council of representatives of the united Jewish community of Berlin.

In all eight Jewish communities of the former GDR, the intensification of religious and cultural offerings that had characterized the final years of the Honecker regime came to a halt. The members, busy reorganizing their private and family lives, stopped frequenting the lectures and gatherings. The officers and staff members had to redirect their energies toward communal reorganization, the efforts to locate and reclaim formerly Jewish property which had been confiscated by the Nazis and the GDR, and the care and integration of the newly arrived immigrants from the USSR. In Magdeburg, for example, the Jewish community of 34 pensioners found itself responsible for 100 Soviets.

In East Berlin, two new Jewish organizations were founded. These new groups were recognized by the GDR but not by the Central Council of Jews in Germany. The Jewish Cultural Association was started by a group of people around Irene Runge, a sociologist and former member of the board of directors of the East Berlin Jewish community. This group of 300 members considered itself secular but regularly invited ultra-Orthodox rabbis from the United States and Israel to lecture. Its headquarters were located in the building of the former Central Committee of the SED, which supported the group. The Cultural Association took the first initiative toward the admission of Jewish refugees from the Soviet Union to the GDR. It held the first press conference for them when they arrived, and it organized a language school and a cultural program for them, in Russian. It took a leading role in protesting the increasing racism in the GDR, and it organized an extensive cultural program for its German members, many of whom were PDS members of Jewish ancestry, who had little or no relation to traditional Judaism.

In December Irene Runge announced that she had formerly worked for Staats sicherheit (the GDR state security service) and resigned her post as president. To
most West Germans, Irene Runge's confession discredited her, and in fact most of her western contacts dropped her immediately. To many East Berliners who had been close to the SED, on the other hand, Runge became something of a martyr. Many others had kept quiet about their pasts and were doing well, and her imaginative and successful initiatives on behalf of the Soviet Jews had brought her a lot of sympathy and admiration. Runge continued to run the Cultural Association, but working mostly behind the scenes.

The second new Jewish group, Adass Jisroel, organized by Mario Offenburg, considered itself Orthodox and claimed to be the surviving remnant of and legal successor to Berlin's prewar Orthodox community of the same name, whose former quarters it now inhabited. This claim was disputed by the Central Council of Jews in Germany. The Central Council's policy was to maintain one unified Jewish community in each city, and the Berlin community already had an Orthodox congregation. Also at stake were the titles to several extremely valuable pieces of real estate owned by the prewar community. In addition, the Central Council did not have the Offenburgs under its control, and Offenburg himself had a dubious past (in the 1960s, he was very close to the PLO and, it was rumored, to Honecker as well).

NEW SYNAGOGUE BERLIN-CENTRUM JUDAICUM

This foundation, now two years old, was the one established Jewish organization in East Berlin that survived the German and German-Jewish unifications. It was integrated intact into the network of Jewish institutions under the auspices of the Central Council of Jews in Germany. It was agreed that its structure and character would be preserved, though changes were made in the membership of the board of directors to accommodate the new political realities.

In June, Dr. Hermann Simon, director of the Centrum Judaicum, reported that the foundation had a balance of 72 million GDR marks and 1.4 million West German marks. In October the Berlin Senate and Magistrate guaranteed the restoration of the New Synagogue's edifice on (East) Berlin's Oranienburgerstrasse, once Berlin's most elegant and important synagogue. The construction, on which 6.8 million marks had already been spent, was expected to be completed in 1995. This year the foundation cosponsored, with (West) Berlin's Pedagogical Center, two exhibits that toured Berlin schools: "From Pogrom to Deportation" and "The World of Anne Frank."

Jewish-Christian Relations

In 1990 the GDR churches as well as the Jewish communities were largely preoccupied with their own restructuring in the wake of German unification. Lutheran churches nevertheless continued to sponsor lectures on Jewish religion
and history. Christian youth groups helped restore Jewish cemeteries, and churches collected money, clothing, furniture, and toys for Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union.

Culture

Despite the social and political chaos of 1990, some cultural events with Jewish content did take place in the GDR/FNP. In East Berlin the once-intensive cultural program of the established Jewish community was poorly attended and ultimately discontinued. However, the independent, secular Jewish Cultural Association offered a full program of lectures, book launchings, observance and explanation of major Jewish holidays, and social gatherings. Many of these events were conducted in Russian or with Russian interpreters present, as an outreach initiative to the newly arrived immigrants from the Soviet Union. East Berlin's Orthodox community, Adass Jisroel, offered a beginner's course in Hebrew and a lecture series on Jewish life in Germany after 1945.

In January Jalda Rebling organized the fourth annual Yiddish Cultural Festival, with guest performers from the USSR, Poland, and Romania. Several events took place in June: an exhibit on Auschwitz was shown in Köpenick; Claude Lanzmann visited East Berlin in connection with the first GDR screening of his film Shoah at the French Cultural Center; and the American production *E.G.: A Musical Portrait of Emma Goldman*, by Leonard Lehrman and Karen Kramer, was staged in East Berlin and Dresden.

Cultural events took place in the provinces as well; as in previous years, they were largely under the auspices of the local Jewish communities and Lutheran churches. In February the Warsaw Yiddish Theater played in Weimar and Dresden, and the West German Jewish journalist Günther Ginzel lectured in Leipzig on right-wing radicalism in the FRG and the GDR. In March West Berlin cantor Estrongo Nachamah performed a concert of synagogue music in Magdeburg; in April the Yiddish Theater of Bucharest played in Erfurt; in May the photographic exhibit "*Aus Nachbarn wurden Juden*" ("When Neighbors Became Jews")—originally mounted in West Berlin in 1988—was shown in Leipzig; and in the summer a comprehensive exhibit of Max Beckmann's paintings, 1905–1950, was displayed in Leipzig.

In February Helmut Eschwege, a member of the Dresden Jewish community and the GDR's leading authority on the history of the Jews in the territory of the GDR, was awarded the annual prize of the Technical University of Dresden. The university had nominated him for this award in 1982, but the nomination had been rejected because of Eschwege's criticism of the GDR's anti-Israel policies.
Publications

In 1990, 37 books of Jewish interest were published in the GDR/Five New Provinces. They included ten translations (one each from Spanish, French, Yiddish, Russian, Italian, and Hebrew and two each from English and Polish); five analyses of various aspects of German fascism, one children's book, one Yiddish dictionary, five novels, and three books about Israel and the Middle East. Seven of the books were originally published in West Germany and one had appeared previously in Austria. Of particular interest, this year two of the three published autobiographies of antifascists (Communists) included discussions of Stalinism.

Among this year's most important new publications were: Ilya Ehrenburg, *Menschen, Jahre, Leben. Memoiren* ("People, Years, Life: Memoirs"), the fourth volume of the autobiography of a major socialist writer in the Soviet Union, written between 1964 and 1967 but not published until after the onset of perestroika, and including material on Ehrenburg's Jewish identity (translated from Russian); Ralph Giordano, *Die zweite Schuld oder von der Last ein Deutscher zu sein* ("The Second Guilt, or, the Burden of Being a German"), a discussion of guilt and repression in the two postwar Germanys (published in West Germany in 1987); Stefan Heym, *Nachruf* ("Obituary"), the autobiography of a major East German Jewish novelist, describing his struggles against fascism, anti-Semitism, and Stalinism (originally published in West Germany in 1988); A. B. Yehoshua, *Späte Scheidung* ("A Late Divorce"), a work by a major Israeli novelist (translated from Hebrew, published in Israel in 1982 and in West Germany in 1986); Märtin Erwin, *Würde und Bürde. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Leipziger Juden* ("Dignity and Burden: A Contribution to the History of the Jews of Leipzig"), a documentary history of Jewish communal life in Leipzig.

ROBIN OSTOW