Switzerland in Britain's cultural life

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Napoleon, for one, believed that as important a reason as any for Robespierre's overthrow was that he had plans to relax the harsher rigours of the Terror:– *"Il a été culbuté parce qu'il voulut devenir modérateur et arrêter la Revolution"*.

From first to last the weakness of Robespierre illustrated and impersonated the strength of the Revolution: as a supporter of Mirabeau's policy in 1789, as a visionary champion of popular liberty in 1790, as a cautious republican in 1791, as an opponent of war and a partisan of the Paris Commune in 1792, as the chief exponent of Jacobinism in 1793 and as its most prominent martyr in 1794.

No one else had lived so fully through every experience of the Revolution or with such a regard for its principles. Mirabeau and Danton were dead, Sieyès was living in retirement, Lafayette lay in a foreign prison; when Robespierre fell, it was the end of the first phase of a movement which was indeed destined to repeat more than once its round from monarchy to republicanism and back again; but there would not be another Robespierre.

In fact he saw all life like a chess board, in black and white squares and no neutral colours. With too few friends, and too many admirers, he had nothing to correct his excess of logic or his defect of humour. He could, indeed, read men's minds, but he could not judge their characters; so he could make them think what he thought, but could not make them do what he wanted – like his master, Rousseau, he valued religion mainly as a bond of citizenship.

He became in time too small-minded to forgive, and yet powerful enough to punish; but punishment is a measure of despair. It may cause conformity; it cannot produce conviction, and, in adopting punishment Robespierre was taking up a weapon which he knew neither how to use nor how to throw away. So he failed and fell – the victim of men who had no convictions, and who were in most respects worse than himself: such at least was Napoleon's opinion, for he knew them well. Certainly with Robespierre's death the Revolution lost almost its last trace of moral dignity or political idealism.

SWITZERLAND IN BRITAIN'S CULTURAL LIFE

21st August to 8th September – Royal Festival Hall (Mon-Fri 7.30 p.m., Sat 3 & 7.30 p.m.) – *Manola Asensio* dances leading roles with the London Festival Ballet.

23rd August to 23rd September – Third Eye Centre, 350 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow – 29th September to 5th November – Scottish Arts Council Gallery, Charlotte Square, Edinburgh – Art Brut: *Aloïse, Wölfli* and *Müller* exhibition.

1st and 4th September (Il Ritorno di Ulisse in Patria), 3rd and 5th (L'Incoronazione di Poppea) – King's Theatre, Edinburgh, 7.30 p.m. – *Zurich Opera* present their widely praised cycle of Monteverdi operas.

Thursday, 14th September and Thursday, 21st September – Purcell Room, 7.30 p.m. – *Henri Honegger* plays the six Suites for unaccompanied cello by J. S. Bach (14.9: Nos 1, 5, 3; 21.9: Nos 2, 4, 6).

From 19th September – Art & Design Centre, Northern Ireland Polytechnic, Belfast – *Award Winning Books and Posters from Switzerland.*

Friday, 22nd September – Queen Elizabeth Hall, 7.45 p.m. – *Pierre Colombo* conducts the London Mozart Players in a Mozart, Roussel, Mendelssohn, Rameau and Ravel programme.

Wednesday, 4th October and Friday, 6th October – Snape Maltings – The pianist *Tamas Vasary* plays chamber music by Mozart and Rachmaninoff with other distinguished musicians.

Friday 6th October – Wigmore Hall, 7.30 p.m. – *Marianne Clément* (flute) and Raùl Sanchez (guitar) play works by *Swiss composers* and by Cima, Ortiz, de Falla and J. S. Bach.

Sunday, 8th October – Royal Albert Hall – The *Feldmuskgesellschaft Frohsinn Schotz* takes part in the European Brass Band Championship.

STOP PRESS

FORTHCOMING EVENT:

21st September, 7 p.m., OPEN MEETING of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique at the Swiss Embassy Lecture Hall, 16/18 Montagu Place, W1. There will be reports on the Assembly of the Swiss Abroad at Einsiedeln and information will be given on various matters of interest to Swiss living outside Switzerland (legislation affecting Swiss abroad, information, Solidarity Fund which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, etc.). All Swiss and their friends welcome.

ART FROM THOSE WE THINK ARTLESS!

Art Brut – or outsider art – consists of works produced by people who for various reasons have not been culturally indoctrinated or socially conditioned. They are recluses, maladjusted persons, psychiatric patients, prison inmates. They have produced from the depths of their own personalities and for themselves and no one else, works of outstanding originality in concept, subject and technique – works which owe nothing to tradition or fashion.

Of the three artists featured in the exhibition to be shown in Glasgow, Edinburgh and other places in Britain, only ALOISE (Aloyse Corbaz) was an educated person. Born in Lausanne in 1886, she became a governess upon graduating, was certified insane in 1918, and died in 1964 at the age of 78, still a mental patient in her native city.

After an underprivileged childhood ADOLF WOLFLI (1864–1930) was jailed, at the age of 25, for assaulting young girls. A year later he was committed to an asylum for similar offences. Having become violent he was kept in solitary confinement for 20 years.

Nothing is known about the personal life of HEINRICH ANTON MÜLLER beyond the fact that he was "institutionalised" since childhood.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN SWISS INDUSTRY

The Swiss Union of Trade and Industry has published the results of a survey carried out in 1975 concerning the state of research and development in Swiss private industry, from which it can be seen that private enterprise finances four-fifths of the R + D expenditure in Switzerland, which is unique in Europe.

The R + D expenditure of Swiss industry at home and outside Switzerland totalled 3.5 billion francs in 1975 and 4.1 billion when expenditure by other than private enterprise is added.

The ratio between overall expenditure and the gross national product works out at 2.86%, which places Switzerland first among industrialized nations according to the figures published by OECD.