REPORT OF THE
OXFORD CENTRE FOR HEBREW AND JEWISH STUDIES

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2006–2007

A RECOGNIZED
INDEPENDENT CENTRE OF
OXFORD UNIVERSITY

OXFORD CENTRE FOR
HEBREW AND JEWISH STUDIES

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Preface

The Centre's role in the University at large is increasingly conspicuous. That we sustain the Hebrew and Jewish Studies Unit in the Oriental Institute is rightly taken for granted. As this *Report* goes to press, Oxford's submissions for the current five-year national Research Assessment Exercise are being assembled, and the publications and other activities of Centre Fellows feature in half-a-dozen faculties. The Centre's Librarian, Dr Piet van Boxel, was appointed at mid-year to the major additional post of Hebraica and Judaica Curator of the Bodleian. Bodley's incomparable historical holdings in this field are indeed complemented for the modern period by our own collections in the Leopold Muller Library, and the two are now to be managed in coordinated fashion, along with other material elsewhere in the University (such as the Taylorian Library's holdings in Yiddish). As an immediate by-product of the new regime, some of the Bodleian's Judaica treasures were highlighted during Trinity Term in a series of four lectures on Hebrew Codicology delivered in a room in the Sheldonian Theatre by Malachi Beit-Arié, Emeritus Professor in the Hebrew University and a Kennedy Leigh Visiting Fellow of the Centre.

With Dr van Boxel henceforth dividing his time between Yarnton and the Bodleian, the Centre has been fortunate to appoint as Deputy Librarian Dr César Merchan-Hamann from Leo Baeck College, whose wide-ranging expertise includes competence in a dozen languages. For further library news see pages 115–2 below.

Five other academic appointments were announced during the year, all effective from October 2007. Dr Adam Silverstein, already at the Oriental Institute, was appointed Fellow and University Research Lecturer in Jewish-Muslim Relations (in succession to Ron Nettler, who himself remains active in the Centre post-retirement). Dr François Guesnet joins us from Potsdam as Research Fellow in Russian-Jewish History. Dr Raffaella Del Sarto from the European University Institute in Florence is appointed Pears-Rich Research Fellow in Israel Studies, in association with St Antony's College where she will be a member of the Middle East Centre. Dr Francesca Bregoli, having completed her doctorate at the Department of History, University of

Pennsylvania, is Albert and Rachel Lehmann Junior Research Fellow in Jewish Studies, her principal research focus being the history of the Jews of Livorno. Finally, we welcome Dr Haike Beruriah Wiegand as Yiddish language lector in succession to Dr Kerstin Hoge of St Anne's College, who leaves us after six years on appointment to a Departmental Lectureship in German linguistics.

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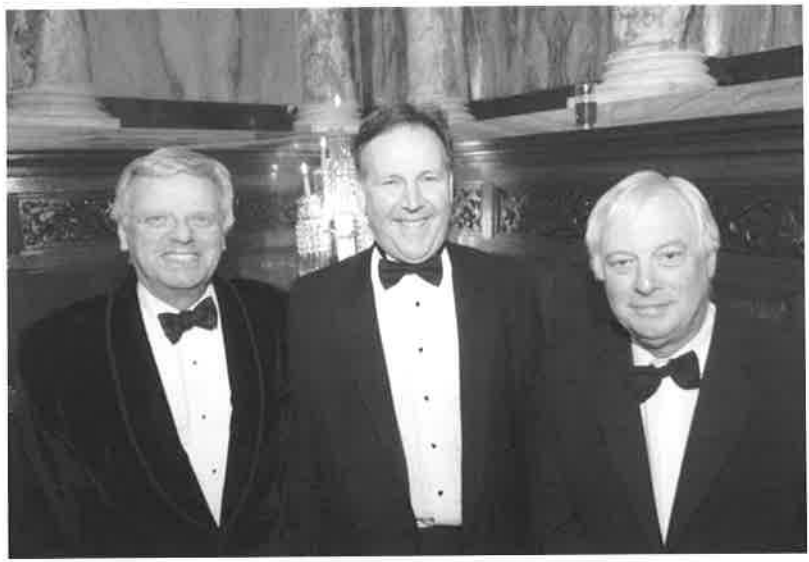
For the second year running the Centre held a patrons' dinner (generously sponsored by two Governors) at the Drapers' Hall in London in the first week of May. The occasion was again in memory of Founder President David Patterson. Our distinguished guest speakers – pictured on either side of the Chairman of Governors, Stanley Fink – were the Rt Hon. Lord Patten of Barnes, Chancellor of the University, and Michael Grade, head of ITV (and previously Chairman of the BBC). Physical resemblance of the speakers notwithstanding, their remarks were suitably contrasting: Mr Grade the entertainer (not excluding risqué anecdotes), the Chancellor reflecting with some gravitas on intercommunal and religious affairs in today's globalized world.



Photograph by David Rifkin

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The year witnessed no lack of special academic occasions. On 23 January 2007 a celebration of the Library's Coppenhagen Collection was attended by three generations of the family, including a youthful Oron Coppenhagen who played Chopin in memory of his grandfather. A family friend, Mr Willy Lindwer, gave an address.

On 1 March Dr Robert Satloff, Executive Director of the Washington Institute for Near-East Policy, delivered an Isaiah Berlin lecture to introduce his book, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands.* More harrowing material on the Holocaust from the Jewish community of Wierzbick near Warsaw was treated by Christopher Browning from North Carolina, this year's Bertelsmann Visiting Professor, who lectured at Yarnton on 31 May, in his series entitled 'Remembering Survival'.

Dr Daniela Mantovan's Stencl lecture on Yiddish writings of Der Nister may be read on pages 25–48 of this *Report.* On 6 June Dr Ada Rapoport-Albert of University College London initiated a new Centre lecture series in commemoration of Rabbi Dr Louis Jacobs. Her subject was the Sabbatean movement of Hasidism, and in particular the 'Displacement of Female Spirituality in the Post-Sabbatean Era'.

Congratulations to Dr Jeremy Schonfield, whose book on the liturgy, *Undercurrents of Jewish Prayer* (see below pages 55–69), came joint second in the 'Modern Jewish Thought' division of the National Jewish Book Awards in the USA.

Lest we be thought complacent, it is with sadness that we report that the Levantine Archaeology Laboratory initiated by Professor Tom Levy of the University of California, San Diego, is currently in abeyance. However, we do welcome an archaeologist colleague to the Hebrew and Jewish Studies Unit. This is Dr Garth Gilmour, a Research Associate of the University's Institute of Archaeology as well as Administrator of the European Association of Jewish Studies. Dr Gilmour will be teaching an 'Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Israel: The Iron Age (1200–332 BCE)' in the MSt in Jewish Studies programme.

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The Centre is honoured that General the Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank has agreed to become a Governor. As Sir Charles Guthrie he was an

exceptionally distinguished Chief of Staff of Britain's armed forces between 1997 and 2001. Lord Guthrie is now a non-executive Director of N. M. Rothschild and Sons. He is also a compelling lecturer. In February 2007 he addressed a large audience at Lincoln College, Oxford, on 'Israel's Army and its Conduct: A UK Perspective'.

Last but far from least, the Centre bade reluctant farewell at the end of June to its Bursar of almost fifteen years, Peter Da Costa. Peter came to Yarnton Manor from the City of London in November 1992. His stewardship of the Centre's finances and administration included some difficult episodes in which his cheerful disposition and unflappable temperament proved invaluable. At his farewell receptions (with the Board of Governors at Sugar Quay in London, and with Centre colleagues in Yarnton) his oversight of improvements in the Centre's premises and accommodation, both at Yarnton itself and in the Oriental Institute, was particularly noted. This was all the more appropriate because the second half of the Manor Farm development at the end of Church Lane – comprising five new apartments for visiting academics and their families – had been handed over by the contractors only weeks earlier, on schedule and on budget. We are grateful to Peter and we wish him and Moira many years of happy retirement, with due attention to their new duties as grandparents.

The succession to Peter involves a regime change: to a job-share between two energetic part-timers, with a formidable array of firepower between them. Simon Ryde had already been assisting Peter Da Costa on estates and investment matters and now takes over responsibility in those areas. He was born in London in 1961, trained as a Chartered Accountant and has for the past two decades managed a family property Investment Company. He has been active in local charitable activities and has for several years been a supporter of the Centre financially as well as professionally.

His colleague Stuart Carroll, aged 55, has been appointed Senior Bursar, with particular responsibility for staffing and related issues. He is by training a solicitor and specialist on labour law. His previous career has included professional practice (first with Robin Thompson and Partners, subsequently with Nabarro Nathanson and in New York with Nabarros' relationship firm Weil, Gotshal and Manges); senior business responsibilities (in 1995–9 as General Counsel and company secretary at British Aerospace plc; and in 1999–2001 as an Executive

Director of Morse plc, a technology company); and academe (at Christ's College, Cambridge, where until 2006 he taught labour law and was on the college's Development Committee and Campaign Board for its 500th anniversary). He is currently a part-time Associate Fellow at the Clifford Chance Centre of the Said Business School at Oxford, which researches the organization and strategies of professional service firms. Stuart and Simon are both most heartily welcome.

September 2007

PETER OPPENHEIMER
President

*Origins of the Balfour Declaration: An Unexplored Dimension**

JONATHAN SCHNEER

The Balfour Declaration of 1917, by which Great Britain promised to support the establishment of a homeland for Jews in Palestine, is a seminal twentieth-century document that has been much studied and debated. By now there is broad consensus as to why Balfour made the famous promise – aside from his personal philo-Semitism. Put briefly, the Government of which Balfour was Foreign Secretary believed that issuing the pledge would win support from world Jewry, especially American and Russian Jewry, in the war against Germany. World Jewry was a power not to be despised, the British Government had come to believe; it might even spell the difference between victory and defeat in the Great War. Nevertheless there are details and aspects of the lead-up to the Balfour Declaration that remain little known except to specialists, and some details and aspects perhaps not even to them.

I discovered one such aspect while carrying out research for a book about the Balfour Declaration at the National Archive in Kew. There I found a Foreign Office account of a meeting held in London on 19 June 1917 by the Central Islamic Society.[1] Speakers at the meeting were disturbed by the growing influence of Zionism within the British Government. They feared that Muslim interests in Palestine were receiving short shrift, and they pointed out that it was in Britain's interest to conciliate their views because there were a hundred-million Muslims in the British Empire as a whole. Indeed after Turkey, Britain was the world's largest Muslim power.

The First World War-era British Muslim community is under-researched and little understood. Suffice to say here that it was small in number (there was only one mosque in all Britain, located in Woking) and that its political views were progressive. Its leaders advocated

* A report on Professor Schneer's stay at the Centre appears on page 151 of this *Report*.

[1] National Archive, FO 371/3053/152248, Central Islamic Society, *Muslim Interests in Palestine*.

toleration and racial equality. Nevertheless their response to the Balfour Declaration was negative. At a meeting held on 5 November 1917, three days after the Declaration had been issued, the Central Islamic Society resolved: '1. ... to remind the British Government of its pledge to keep inviolate the places of Moslem worship including Masjid-i-Aksa, which is synonymous with the Latin name of Palestine.[2] That we members of the Islamic Society view with great concern the mischievous movement started by some people calling themselves Zionists, and we hope that the British Government will once more make a declaration of its policy at an early date in order to remove any misapprehension which may exist in the minds of the Moslims.'[2] But the CIS lacked political weight and the Foreign Office treated its protest with disdain. Here is the reaction of an important figure in the Foreign Office to the petition and those who had sent it: 'I strongly urge no notice be taken of this ... crew of seditionists ... Most of the members ought to be behind barbed wire. In any other country they would be.'[3]

By themselves then, British Muslims had little influence on political events. To have impact they must ally with a more powerful group – and this they did. The Anglo-Ottoman Society included Members of both Houses of Parliament from all three political parties, and also important journalists, writers, academics and intellectuals. The living bridge between Anglo-Ottomans and British Muslims was Marmaduke Pickthall, the popular novelist. The son of an Anglican clergyman, Pickthall, who had lived and travelled widely in the Ottoman Empire, converted secretly to Islam in 1917 and later became famous for writing an English translation of the Koran. Like all British Muslims and Turcophiles, Pickthall wished that the Ottomans had not sided with the Central Powers in the War, and blamed his own country for pushing Turkey into that camp by allying with Russia (Turkey's traditional enemy). Pickthall longed for a return to Disraeli's old anti-Russian pro-Turkish stance, as did other Turcophiles. They deemed the Young Turk regime much more progressive than the Tsarist one, a fitter ally for Liberal England, and hated the fact that their country was at war with the greatest Muslim power in the world. Together, Turcophiles and British Muslims pushed hard and consistently for a separate peace between their country and the Ottomans, as long as the war with Turkey lasted.

[2] FO *op. cit.*, Islamic Society, 46 Great Russell St., Meeting held 5 November 1917.
[3] *Ibid.*, the official is none other than Sir Mark Sykes.

It is this peace movement spearheaded by British Muslims and Turcophiles, and the Zionist response to it, which constitutes the unknown chapter in the lead-up to the Balfour Declaration.

The first, relatively tentative push for a separate peace did not get far. In January 1914 Pickthall had come to know Dr Felix Valyi, editor of a quarterly called *La Revue Politique Internationale*, published in Paris but transferred to Lausanne with the outbreak of war. In Switzerland Valyi became friendly with Fouad Selim al-Hijari, Turkish Minister in Berne, who was in contact with Talaat Pasha, a member of the triumvirate that ruled Turkey, together with Enver Pasha and Djemal Pasha. Talaat was least enthusiastic of the three Young Turk leaders about the Ottoman alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary, and may have inspired Valyi's invitation to Pickthall early in 1916: 'Tâchez de venir ici le plus tôt possible. Vous pourriez être d'une grande utilité pour votre pays ... Vous inspirez une confiance absolute dans le monde islamique et vous êtes le seul homme capable de rendre service à votre pays dans la question d'Orient. Vous pouvez montrer ma letter à qui ce soit, le cas échéant.'

Pickthall showed the letter to his acquaintance the Conservative MP, Sir Mark Sykes, a member of the prewar Turcophile community and an expert on the Near and Middle East. Before the war Sykes had worked occasionally as a freelance agent for the Government, and was now serving temporarily at the Foreign Office. Pickthall did not realize that Sykes's views had undergone rapid transformation: he was Turcophile no longer, and in fact very much the reverse. Sykes was a leader among the small number of British diplomats and politicians who, anticipating the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, had begun prospectively to divide it up with their Russian and French counterparts, redrawing the map of the Middle East. One culmination of these efforts was the infamous Sykes-Picot Treaty which, roughly speaking, allocated Syria and Lebanon to France and the Arabian Peninsula and Mesopotamia to Britain.

It was not just Pickthall who was unaware of the Sykes-Picot Agreement in 1916; practically everyone was until the Russian Bolsheviks revealed various Allied 'secret treaties' late in the war. But the three-cornered correspondence between Pickthall and Valyi on the one hand, and Pickthall and Sykes on the other, traces the former's education in

Realpolitik more generally, as he travelled from enthusiasm and high hopes to disillusionment and even bitterness. He was an amateur; a pawn; he should stick to his books.[4] In fact he did not; he remained a critic of British policy with regard to Turkey for as long as the War continued and said so publicly, never ceasing to advocate the separate peace. But he no longer nourished any hopes of a diplomatic role for himself. This first effort at exploring a *modus vivendi* with Turkey had gone nowhere.

Pickthall was something of an innocent and an idealist and his motivations were ideological. The next figure to emerge as champion of a separate peace with Turkey was different – a Turcophile who favoured peace for financial reasons, although, judging from his letters, it would be unjust to say that he was purely self-interested. J. R. Pilling was an English businessman who had had extensive interests in Turkey during the prewar era. As a result he knew Young Turk leaders, possibly including Talaat Pasha himself. He also knew one Mrs Evans who knew David Lloyd George, then Minister of Munitions, soon to become Prime Minister. She introduced Pilling to Lloyd George in October 1916, when British fortunes in the War were not prospering. The trenches were devouring her soldiers on the Western Front and no breakthrough appeared likely. To the east the Gallipoli campaign had proved disastrous to Britain and in Mesopotamia British soldiers had surrendered unconditionally at Kut. When Pilling told Lloyd George that he could make contact in Switzerland with Turks interested in a separate peace (he did not mention that he stood to profit financially once peace was restored) Lloyd George did not turn him down as Pickthall had been turned down, but instead passed him along to the War Office. Perhaps the prospective division of the Ottoman carcass seemed less likely or anyway less important to him at that moment.

From the War Office Pilling received the passport denied to Pickthall, and in February 1917 he travelled to Berne. There he met Fouad Selim al-Hijari, the very man who had induced Dr Valyi to contact Pickthall in the preceding year. He also met Britain's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Swiss Republic, Horace Rumbold. Pilling sent letters to Talaat Pasha enquiring about Turkish terms, and copies to the War Office and Foreign Office. The letters to

[4] The episode may be traced in FO 371/27777/116911, FO 800/22/45–47, and very partially in Anne Fremantle, *Loyal Enemy* (London 1938) 270–8.

Talaat were conveyed in the Turkish diplomatic pouch, which suggests that Pilling had earned Fouad Selim's trust. The British seemed to trust him too – at this point. Although his passport ran out in April 1917, before the reply from Talaat arrived, Pilling, who had returned reluctantly to Britain, received permission from the Director of Military Intelligence to go back to Switzerland to await the letter. The Director 'thought him fairly reasonable'. Back in Berne in June 1917 Pilling received from Talaat the letter containing Turkish peace terms, or rather said he did – he never showed it to British authorities. But he reported what he described as Turkish terms to the War Office and then returned to London for good.

At this point a third British Turcophile enters the picture. Aubrey Herbert was a Conservative MP, like his close friend Sir Mark Sykes. He was also a good friend of Marmaduke Pickthall, but was a much harder-edged and more effective person. The son of the Earl of Carnarvon, he was half-brother of the man who discovered the tomb of Tutankhamen, and the inspiration of John Buchan's adventurer hero Sandy Arbuthnot in the thrilling novel *Greenmantle.* He had travelled extensively in the Ottoman Empire in prewar years, notably in Albania where he became friendly with a wide assortment of nationalists who wanted independence from Turkey. Indeed he was twice offered, and twice turned down, the Albanian throne. He was, too, a war hero, wounded in Belgium, freed from German captivity by advancing Allied troops, transferred to the Dardanelles as an intelligence officer, and thence to Cairo and Mesopotamia where he again saw action. Like Pickthall he sympathized with the plight of small nations and with subject nationalities. Unlike Pickthall he did not exempt Arabs and Albanians from this category, even though it was Turkey they were subjected to. He was a Turcophile who wanted subject nations within the Ottoman Empire to be free, but also he wanted a separate peace between Britain and Turkey.

Herbert could not be dismissed by Foreign Office mandarins as a crank, as Pickthall had been. He was on close terms with Robert Cecil, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and he was a cousin of Ronald Graham, Assistant Under-Secretary of State. Nor could he be accused of having a financial stake in a separate peace, as Pilling could be. Like other Turcophiles, Herbert had advocated that Britain come to an understanding with Turkey almost as soon as the

two countries declared war on each other, and this in private letters and conversation to men at the top of government and the Foreign Office. His correspondents had not been disposed to heed him then, but by the late spring of 1917 they were, with trench warfare still consuming British manpower, and with Britain's Russian ally nearing collapse and no longer interested in dissecting the Ottoman Empire but merely in surviving.

There was a further reason for their change of heart. The Foreign Office had been receiving reports about political and economic unrest among Turks since the outset of war. Now the reports seemed more credible. Many reached the Foreign Office via Horace Rumbold in Switzerland. As Rumbold wrote to his mother-in-law in late 1916: 'This country is crammed full of spies and rascals of every description and it is incredible that such a small country should be able to hold so many of these gentry. We have everything here of every nationality from ex-potentates down to the lowest agents.'[5] And to another correspondent, he wrote, 'I sit in my room like a spider and attract every day news and information which would keep a diplomatist in prewar days going for months. You haven't an idea of how absorbing it all is and you can imagine how I revel in it.'[6] On 27 June 1917 Rumbold reported to his masters in London that a coalition of 'prominent Turks in Switzerland formed a Committee ... under name of Ottoman League of Peace and Liberation with a view to fighting Committee of Union and Progress and eventually to replace present Turkish Government.' A week later he was reporting that a dissident CUP member would be traveling from Turkey to Switzerland to consult Rechid Bey, an expatriate former Turkish Liberal Minister of the Interior and a leader of the weeks-old League. The two men wished 'to meet some prominent Englishman in this country'.[7]

The outline of a crucial nexus was becoming visible to high officials in the Foreign Office. Aubrey Herbert had been pressing to go to Switzerland to meet Turks to begin discussing a separate peace; now Turks in Switzerland were pressing to meet someone like Aubrey

[5] New Bodleian Library, Room 132, Horace Rumbold Papers, Box 22, Rumbold to Sir Ronald Graham, 22 June 1917.

[6] *Ibid.*, Box 21, Rumbold to Lady Fane, 12 February 1917.

[7] See FO 371/ 3057/119809, 130229 and 144287 for Rumbold's telegrams to London on the dissident Turks in Switzerland and their desire to make contact with British agents.

Herbert for the same purpose. Over a few weeks Herbert spoke several times with George Clerk, a Middle East expert at the Foreign Office, with Clerk's superior, Robert Cecil and with Cecil's superior, Lord Hardinge, thus climbing nearly to the top of the Foreign Office ladder. He dined with Lord Milner of the War Cabinet. Between them Herbert and the Foreign Office concocted a scheme of which John Buchan might have been proud: he would travel to Switzerland ostensibly to recover from war wounds, but really to make contact with the Turks. He would be accompanied by his wife, Mary Vesey, a tall, slender-necked, aristocratic beauty, on the grounds that 'Nobody who wants to hide walks with a giraffe'.

On 16 July 1917 Herbert arrived in Switzerland and reported to Rumbold. His diary records what happened next: 'July 18: arranged to see a Turk whom I had known before. He was a strong Anglophile and came from one of the best families. I stayed at the Hotel de la Cloche [in Geneva] and next morning was woken up at 6.30 by a man who said "Mr. Smith is waiting for you". I said "Tell Mr. Smith to go to the devil", but then remembered and got up and went out and ran into a black man. I found out afterward that he was the nephew of the ex-Khedive and also of the present Sultan. He told me that a car should wait for me at 3 that afternoon ... At 3 Mr. Smith walked through the lobby and I followed him out through a couple of streets to a car and we went off to his flat. Nobody lived there as far as I could make out and it was unfurnished except for one oriental picture. After a time my friend turned up. He said, "How are you Aubrey Herbert? I hope your wound is better. You must have had a filthy time with the Germans." ... After that we had a long conversation ....'

Three days later Herbert's diary records another meeting: 'Yesterday, July 21st, I was sitting in the Kursaal at Interlaken when Dr. Parodi [a British agent employed by Horace Rumbold] in company with Turkish friends came to a neighbouring table. He introduced me to his two friends who were Hakki Halid Bey, ex-Director of the Mint at Constantinople, now living at Geneva, and Dr. Noureddin Bey, an influential member of the CUP and director of a hospital at Constantinople. ... We went walking in the garden which was completely deserted. ...' In the garden Noureddin Bey made a proposal for Herbert to take back to London. He, Noureddin, 'should return to Turkey where he would see Talaat. Talaat would then appoint an authoritative person with

credentials who would journey to Switzerland on grounds of ill-health accompanied by Dr. Noureddin as his physician. ... On arriving in Switzerland this envoy would enter into direct relations with the British Government.' Herbert believed the offer was genuine. As he reported in a memorandum to the Foreign Office: 'these suggestions were made in good faith ... the evidence points to his having been sent by Talaat.'

As he stood on the railway platform in Berne, moments before boarding the train for home, someone slipped into his hand a document written in French. It contained the Turkish negotiating position. 'I do not think it is acceptable,' Herbert recorded, 'but it would form a basis.' The train stopped in Paris where an Allied meeting was taking place. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Balfour, sent for him: 'I told him what happened. He was interested. In the evening I had an hour with Lloyd George... He took it all in well enough. I read him my memorandum.' Back in London additional meetings followed with Hardinge and Cecil again, with Balfour again and with the most recent addition to the War Cabinet, the South African General Jan Smuts who requested another memorandum.[8]

Herbert was optimistic that further contacts with Turkey would follow, but they did not. Meanwhile, J. R. Pilling had discovered that no one at the War Office or Foreign Office would talk to him anymore. During the autumn and early winter of 1917 he wrote a series of increasingly distressed letters to both. He attempted to telephone Balfour who refused to take his call, and even wrote to the King explaining the position. No reply. Herbert and Pilling both had good reason to wonder what had gone wrong.

And so we come to the role played by British Zionists with regard to the Muslim and Turcophile campaign in Britain for a separate peace with Turkey.

British Muslims and Turcophiles had been distressed when the Ottoman and British empires went to war. British Zionists too were distressed

[8] For Herbert see Margaret Fitzherbert, *The Man who was Greenmantle* (Oxford 1985). She mentions the trip to Switzerland. For details, including Herbert's diary (from which Fitzherbert quotes selectively), see Sussex Record Office, Aubrey Herbert Papers, microfilm reels DD/HER 701–702. See too FO 371/3057/146009, FO 800 (Balfour misc.) 335–411; Hull University Library, Sledmere Collection (containing Mark Sykes's papers) Add. Mat., Misc. Correspondence Feb.-May 1917, DDSY/2/11/50–56; and Rumbold Papers, Box 22.

by the bloody consequences the war must entail, but they instantly grasped that the defeat of Turkey could lead to the break-up of her empire and to the establishment of a new protectorate over Palestine. Under such conditions, unrestricted Jewish immigration might be permitted, which could lead to Jewish autonomy within Palestine and eventually to a Jewish state. They hoped this would take place under British or American auspices (America being their second choice), but they thought that even French or international control would be preferable to the Ottomans. On the other hand, a separate peace with Turkey might leave her empire intact and Palestine still part of it. Then the Zionist goal would be as far off as ever. So most British Zionists advocated a fight to the finish with Turkey, and opposed the idea of a separate peace tooth and nail.

They did so in public and in private. A typical public statement of opposition appeared in the Zionist journal, *Palestine*, on 23 June 1917. It was written probably by the *Manchester Guardian*'s military expert, Herbert Sidebotham, who was a Zionist primarily because he believed a British Palestine populated by Jews could serve as a reliable buffer state for Egypt. (The article cannot have been written by *Palestine*'s other main editor and contributor, Harry Sacher, for reasons that will become apparent below.) According to Sidebotham, Turcophile sentimentalists (like Pickthall) were 'past arguing with', given Turkey's record and recent treatment of Armenians. Self-interested businessmen (like Pilling) 'need not worry us [either] ... Even on narrow financial grounds there is much to be said for the complete break up of Turkey.' Military experts (perhaps like Aubrey Herbert) who favoured a separate peace with Turkey because it would free troops for the decisive battle with Germany on the Western Front simply had it wrong: 'Victory will come there most surely and most easily not by an accumulation of men, that is an accumulation of slaughter, but by new methods of war and a surer application of science and of industrial forces to the matter in hand.'

In private the Zionists lobbied hard against the separate peace as well, on three separate occasions. The first occasion is well known, but the other two have never been examined.

As for the first: Chaim Weizmann, the preeminent Zionist leader, helped to cut short an American peace initiative to Turkey in June 1917. President Wilson sent Henry Morgenthau, the former US ambassador

in Turkey, to Palestine, ostensibly to check on conditions there, but really to sound Turks out on possible peace terms. Foreign Office documents reveal that at first the British Government supported Morgenthau's mission, but that the mood changed and gradually hardened into implacable opposition. Weizmann played a vital role in this evolution, lobbying Foreign Office officials against what he termed a 'pro-German' manoeuver. Eventually he persuaded Balfour to send him to Gibraltar to head off Morgenthau. There Weizmann convinced the American to cut short his journey, and not to talk to any Turks. It was a diplomatic tour de force.[9]

Historians of Zionism have treated this episode as a one-off display of Weizmann's extraordinary abilities. It was indeed extraordinary, but was hardly a one-off. In fact Weizmann was determined to defeat J. R. Pilling and Aubrey Herbert too, and he played an active role in doing so. These are the two other, so far unknown occasions on which he opposed the separate peace with Turkey.

Pilling was a relatively easy target. The War Office may have been impressed by his connection with Lloyd George, but the Foreign Office took the trouble to investigate further and unearthed much damaging evidence. Pilling was a Manchester solicitor 'and an undischarged bankrupt' who nevertheless seemed to have plenty of money. His prewar railway projects in Turkey had always failed. While in Constantinople he lived at the Pera Palace Hotel with Fräulein Therese de Koelle, who received generous financial support from the German Embassy. This 'seemed to indicate that [Fräulein Koelle] either had great influence or that she was a useful agent of the German Government'.

Foreign Office distaste for Mr Pilling was almost palpable. Lord Hardinge explained: 'Mr. Pilling has an intimate knowledge of law which enabled him in his own business and in financial matters to sail just about as close to the wind as possible. There is no doubt that he is an adventurer and thoroughly untrustworthy. Everything points to his not being altogether disinterested in his desire for an early peace with Turkey and I do not at all like his former connection with Fraulein Koelle which for all I know he may still maintain.'[10]

[9] The two best accounts are Leonard Stein's *The Balfour Declaration* (London 1963) 356–60 and Ronald Sanders, *The High Walls of Jerusalem...* (New York 1983) 551–6.

[10] Cambridge University Library, Lord Hardinge of Penshurst Collection, Vol. 35, Hardinge to Lansdowne, 24 November 1917.

The Foreign Office would not stoop to employ such an instrument. But why not? After all, it had employed disreputable agents in the past and would employ them again in the future. Lord Crewe, the former Liberal Cabinet Minister, with whom Hardinge shared the Foreign Office report, saw no insuperable objection to Pilling's employment: 'I should not think his antecedents bar to making any use of him that might appear possible, even though he may be more on the look-out for money than for anything else'.[11] Crewe apparently did not understand that Pilling's mission antagonized the Zionists, or perhaps he did not understand how influential the Zionists had become. This is peculiar given that Crewe was married to a Rothschild who had direct access to Zionist leaders. How could he not know that Weizmann had convinced the Government the Jews were a force in the world, and that most Jews were Zionists who opposed a separate peace with Turkey?

The Foreign Office certainly knew. Weizmann and James Malcolm, a leader of the British Armenian community, called on Ronald Graham at the Foreign Office. The Armenians, of course, were as anxious to prosecute the war with Turkey to a successful conclusion as ever the Zionists were. The two men knew all about Mr Pilling. He was 'a friend of Mrs. Evans who was a friend of Mr. Lloyd George'. Now he was 'stating broadcast that he had been to Switzerland as agent for the Prime Minister [and] had negotiated a separate peace with Turkey. ... Mr. Pilling might in fact have some mission from the Prime Minister.' But he was 'a shady adventurer' with 'discreditable antecedents'. Moreover 'his language and pretensions were causing serious concern not to say alarm ... in Armenian and Jewish circles'. These feared that Britain might renege on promises to liberate Palestine and Armenia from the Turkish yoke.[12]

It is an index of Weizmann's influence, and of the importance the Government now attached to the good opinion of the movement he led, that after this meeting Graham consulted his superior Lord Hardinge, who sent a minute to the Foreign Secretary, Lord Balfour saying 'It seems to me desirable that the Prime Minister should know what is going on and that he should if possible take steps to get Mr. Pilling to hold his tongue',[13] and that the Prime Minister probably did

[11] *Ibid.*, Crewe to Hardinge, 7 December 1917.
[12] FO 371/3057 Ronald Graham minute of 20 November 1917.
[13] For this episode see FO 371/3057/22200.

lean on the Manchester lawyer, since his letters to the Foreign Office, including claims for expenses totaling £800, abruptly ceased.

So much for Mr Pilling. Defeating the formidable Aubrey Herbert was more difficult. At first Weizmann went about it in much the same manner. On the morning of 9 June 1917 he and James Malcolm called this time on William Ormsby-Gore, parliamentary private secretary to Lord Milner of the War Cabinet. 'They informed me that they had come ... about a matter which was to them of the first importance, namely the proposal of the British Government to allow ... Messrs. Aubrey Herbert ... and Marmaduke Pickthall to get into touch with the Turks with a view to arranging a separate Peace between Turkey and the Allies. [They] were very much excited and very angry and both stated that we were not only playing with fire in approaching the Turks at this juncture but also imperiling the interests of the British Empire and the causes which they have more especially at heart. ... Both stated they would do all they could to oppose Mr. Aubrey Herbert and his designs and that they intended to make as much trouble as possible.'

Four days later Weizmann called on Graham again to reiterate this message. But in fact he had a better friend in the Foreign Office than either Graham or Ormsby-Gore, although both these men were well disposed to him and to Zionism. The better friend was Sir Mark Sykes. Among all diplomats who played a role in the lead-up to the Balfour Declaration, not excluding Balfour himself, Sykes was the most intimately involved on a day-to-day basis, and the most resourceful, determined and energetic of the Zionist movement's non-Jewish allies. He had returned to London from the Middle East just as Herbert was finalizing plans to travel to Switzerland. On 11 June the latter learned about Zionist and Armenian opposition to his scheme, and realized that he no longer had deep cover for the journey. He wrote in his diary: 'It would be interesting to know who has been the traitor. I think I can guess.' We may guess that Herbert believed his old friend Mark Sykes had alerted the Zionists and Armenians to his mission.

We know for certain that Sykes opposed it with might and main. He wrote a scathing memo to the Foreign Office to condemn it: 'The visit of a (to the Turks) notorious Turcophile MP to Turkish Agents in Switzerland will certainly be interpreted by the CUP as a proof ... that ... the English and their Allies believe that they cannot win the war.' The notorious Turcophile MP was, of course, Aubrey Herbert. Sykes

poured scorn on the Turks Herbert proposed to meet: 'Hakki Bey is a well-intentioned Liberal who had to flee Turkey for participation in an anti-CUP combination. To negotiate with him or such members of the so-called "opposition" is futile or worse. They are not of the calibre to cope with [the] Jacobin clique [running Turkey].'[14]

In 1916 Sykes had stopped Marmaduke Pickthall from travelling to Switzerland, but in 1917 even with Weizmann's help he could not stop Aubrey Herbert. He could, however, render Herbert's journey futile. When Herbert returned to London, Sykes was ready for him. Who else favoured the separate peace that Herbert advocated, he rhetorically asked Robert Cecil in a blistering letter circulated among Foreign Office mandarins. He answered himself: 'Pacifists [by whom he meant Herbert among others, and Lady Ottoline Morrell, a famous anti-war figure who happened to be his cousin] ... Indian and Egyptian Muslim seditionists and their sympathizers such as Pickthall ... the Semitic anti-Zionists who are undisguised pro-Turco-Germans....' And what would a separate peace lead to? 'Pan-Turanianism [meaning a greater Turkey in Asia] reinforced by Political control over the Muslim world; a firm grip on the control levers of international finance; close cooperation with the various revolutionary movements in Europe and the USA such as syndicalism ... Leninism and cognate forces.' If the British Government felt it must negotiate with the Turks for political reasons, Sykes argued, it should pitch demands so high they could not possibly be met. He wanted nothing less than the disarmament and dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. He listed a few specific demands he thought would scupper any talks: 'Arab [including Syrian which meant including Palestinian] independence ... Armenian liberation ...', surrender of Turkish battleships.[15]

There would be no negotiations. Sykes's campaign was too effective: 'I find myself in close agreement with what Sir Mark says', one Foreign Office official minuted in a typical reaction.[16] Meanwhile, Weizmann had played his trump card: 'He informed me', Ormsby-Gore recounted after their meeting, 'that the Germans had recently approached the Zionists with a view to coming to terms with them and that it was really

[14] Sledmere Papers, Add. Mat. 11/62 'Note' n.d.

[15] St Antony's College, Oxford, Middle East Centre, Sykes Collection, Add. Mat. 11/71, Sykes to Robert Cecil, 28 July 1917.

[16] FO 371/3057/148486, Minute by Sir George Clerk.

a question whether the Zionists were to realize their aims through Germany and Turkey or through Great Britain. He of course was absolutely loyal to Great Britain....'[17] At a meeting with Robert Cecil, Weizmann played this card again: while the British Government was pursuing a separate peace with Turkey which was inimical to Zionist interests, the German Government was wooing them with promises of support for their 'claim on Palestine'.[18] The implication was clear: Zionist support for the Entente was conditional and could be withdrawn, in which case the Entente would lose an important ally – and quite possibly the war.

Between them, Sykes and Weizmann defeated Herbert as completely as Pickthall, Pilling and the American Morgenthau had been defeated. Sykes boasted: 'I arrived in the nick of time ... Luckily Zionism held good and the plots were foiled'.[19] But he knew only one side of the story. He did not realize that Weizmann had been fighting on a separate front all the while. That there were advocates of peace with Turkey within the Zionist camp is an aspect of the lead-up to the Balfour Declaration as little known as the tangential influence on events of British Muslims and Turcophiles.

Chaim Weizmann was a giant who towered over his colleagues. He did not hesitate to act without reference to them when it suited his purpose, but he did so at his own peril, for they were never shy about voicing opposition when they disagreed with him. Some of the tensions that beset the small inner circle of his advisors on the Zionist 'Political Committee' have been well chronicled. These became so sharp that Weizmann threatened more than once to resign, not merely from that body, but from the Zionist movement as a whole. One issue of contention was his refusal to dissociate Zionism from Ze'ev Jabotinsky's campaign for a Jewish Legion to fight in the Middle East. Another was his trust in and cooperation with Sykes and other British diplomats, leading, so his critics argued, to Zionism's virtual identification with British policies and aims. The critics held that Zionism should remain independent and 'pure'. A third point of friction was precisely Weizmann's autocratic

[17] FO 371/3057/ 22200.

[18] Stein Collection, Box 27, FO 371, no further identification except 'Cecil to Hardinge, June 13, 1917'.

[19] *Ibid.*, No. 69, Sykes to Clayton, 22 July 1917.

style of leadership. And a fourth was his opposition to a separate peace with Turkey.

These points of friction, and others, were interwoven in complex fashion. For example, those who opposed Weizmann on a particular issue might also resent what they considered to be his undemocratic attitude when he ignored them, while those who supported Weizmann might never experience or even recognize this 'autocratic' approach. In any event, some of these tensions were apparent when Weizmann argued at the Foreign Office against a separate peace with Turkey. He must have realized even as he spoke with Cecil, Ormsby-Gore and Graham that at least two of his closest advisors profoundly disagreed with what he was doing.

The two doubters were Leon Simon, a civil servant at the Post Office who was also president of the London University Zionist Society, and Harry Sacher, a journalist currently employed by the *Manchester Guardian*. Both were among Weizmann's earliest and most devoted supporters, but neither would write him a blank cheque. In the spring of 1917 the world was increasingly war-weary, as was the British public, many of whom now doubted the possibility of total victory and longed for a negotiated settlement to end the carnage. Among the manifestations of this new mood was a meeting in Stockholm of European socialists to discuss peace terms; also a monster demonstration at Leeds where participants planned to establish workers' and soldiers' councils on the Bolshevik model in order to force a compromise peace, and perhaps even social revolution. Sacher and Simon were acutely aware of the new mood. Sacher thought the war would end in a few months and, even if it did not, he wrote, 'the centre of gravity will shift steadily towards the "pacifists". The future is with them.'[20] Simon, his political ally and confidant, agreed, as, it appears from their correspondence, did another member of the Political Committee, Ahad Ha'am, the Jewish philosopher who was as close to being a mentor to Weizmann as the great Zionist ever had. The longing for peace, and the recognition of the left's growing strength, not merely in Britain but almost everywhere, meant to these Zionists that their movement must maintain its distance from advocates of 'the knock-out blow', and of British imperialism. This meant that they would not dismiss out of hand the possibility of a separate peace with Turkey.

[20] Weizmann Institute, Rehovot, Weizmann Correspondence, Sacher to Weizmann, 3 August 1917.

Weizmann and his allies, however, deemed the campaign for compromise with Turkey to be insincere on the Turkish side and objectively pro-German on the British, since at this point in the war Germany, not Britain, was more open to negotiating a settlement. At one point Nahum Sokolow, who was second in the Zionist hierarchy only to Weizmann, attempted to enlist Harry Sacher in the campaign against the advocates of a separate peace. 'There is only one means of fighting against such a tendency, i.e. publicity', he exhorted Sacher. 'The secret poison will be dangerous as long as it works in the dark; light would kill it at once. ... It has therefore been suggested that to begin with an article should be published ... and I think nobody can write that better than yourself.'[21] Sokolow intended to publish the piece in *New Europe*, an influential monthly journal, but Sacher would not write it. 'You give me none of the points which have brought you to the conclusion that we must campaign against a separate peace with Turkey. ... I am opposed to some kinds of peace with Turkey but not to the idea as such ....'[22]

In a letter to Weizmann, Sacher went further. 'You will have gathered from the short talk we had in London that I did not see eye to eye with you ... I think you were much too emphatic in discouraging and combating the idea of a separate peace with Turkey. ... It would be a grave error ... if we got into the way of thinking that our interest as Zionists is bound up somehow with the general prolongation of the war ... I myself would not buy a British protectorate [in Palestine] at the cost of prolonging the war by a single day.'[23]

Leon Simon backed up Sacher at a meeting of the Political Committee, pointing out the political risks Weizmann was running. If the country learned that Zionists opposed even discussing a possible compromise with Turkey, 'the movement will incur well-deserved odium'. He was prepared to resign from the Political Committee if it endorsed Weizmann's opposition to the separate peace: 'I would not tie myself up with the policy – or tendency – which this move implies'.[24]

In the end, of course, Weizmann overbore both men. Sacher had to content himself with an article not for *New Europe* but for *Palestine*, of

[21] New Bodleian Library, Room 132, Stein Collection, Box 5, Sokolow to Sacher, 6 July 1917.

[22] Central Zionist Archive, CZA/440/118, Sacher to Sokolow, 10 July 1917.

[23] Weizmann Institute, Rehovot, Sacher to Weizmann, 3 August 1917.

[24] Central Zionist Archive, Jerusalem, CZA/AK200 Simon's notebook with copies of memoranda and letters, Simon to Sacher, 1 July 1917.

which he was an editor, and in which he explained that 'There are no objections to' a separate peace 'provided that adequate guarantees [are] secured for the liberty and rights of nationality for the subject races. ... Palestine recovered from the Turks, we might have little objection to the conclusion of such a peace ....'[25] This was the position he had adumbrated to Sokolow. Weizmann simply ignored it. But the reluctance of two of his chief advisors to support him on this critical matter is a reminder that British Zionism, like any other important world movement, was not monolithic, even during its heroic years, and that Weizmann had to woo or defeat opponents among his closest friends as well as in the British diplomatic and political world before the Balfour Declaration could be written.

Chaim Weizmann alone did not block the movement mounted by British Muslims and Turcophiles for a separate peace with the Ottoman Empire, and nor were he and Sir Mark Sykes together solely responsible. There were other great forces working against it too.

One of these was what might be called the 'zig-zag factor'. Whenever Britain was prepared to 'zig', Turkey seemed always to 'zag'. Put simply, the British were most interested in negotiating a separate peace with Turkey when they felt least confident of winning the war, which usually was when the Turks felt most confident. During most of 1914–18, therefore, the two countries were like ships passing in the night: closer to one another than was obvious, but uncontactable nevertheless.

It is also the case that so long as Enver Pasha remained supreme in Turkey, a separate peace with Britain was unlikely. He was committed to total victory for the Central Powers. But Enver's position was never totally secure, and the British often thought that Talaat Pasha, who was more open to negotiations, would move against him. He never did.

On the other hand, it would not do to minimize the plausibility of the separate peace movement either. At different times at least two of the five members of the War Cabinet, Milner and Smuts, appeared to favour it. Lloyd George himself would not reject it out of hand, as can be seen from his dealings with Mr Pilling. He could not ignore any measure designed to weaken Germany. British Zionists understood this

[25] *Palestine*, 25 August 1917.

about the Prime Minister and his Cabinet. They took the movement for a separate peace with Turkey very seriously indeed and went to great lengths to defeat it. Weizmann threw everything he had against it – and also things he did not really have. When he threatened Ormsby-Gore and Robert Cecil with the withdrawal of Zionist support it was all bluff: not because Zionists would never have supported Germany instead of Britain (although it is hard to imagine that they would have), but because Weizmann was in fact threatening to withdraw from Britain the world financial power Jews were thought to possess, and the influence they were thought to hold over American bankers and Russian revolutionaries. But in truth there were no international cabals of Jewish financiers, or of revolutionaries. Weizmann was threatening the withdrawal of forces that did not exist.

In sum it is fair to say that had the movement Weizmann so strenuously opposed succeeded despite him, Turkey might have retained its Empire, including Palestine. There would have been no British Protectorate there and the Balfour Declaration would never have been written. By uncovering the Zionist role in helping to check-mate the advocates of separate peace, I hope to have added to an understanding of the forces and counter-forces involved in producing one of the twentieth century's major documents.

THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL
A. N. STENCL LECTURE IN YIDDISH STUDIES

Transgressing the Boundaries of Genre: The Children's Stories of the Soviet Yiddish Writer Der Nister (1884–1950)[1]

DANIELA MANTOVAN

In *Scienza Nuova* (New Science), Giambattista Vico's *magnum opus*, the early-eighteenth-century Italian philosopher placed myth at the centre of mankind's history, postulating imagination as the foundation and core of human development. Myth, he noted, is the form in which mankind expresses itself in its earliest history – in its childhood, as it were.[2] For Vico, myth is the primary form in which imagination casts human emotions and feelings. If imagination is the starting point of human history, and myth lies at the beginning of our literary history, then fairy tales, rhymes and songs stand at the very outset of social life. The oral transmission of tales and rhymes is invested with a formative function, its memory lingering into adulthood and the realm of adult imagination.

Transposing these concepts into modern literary terms, we find imagination and its need to find creative outlets emerging repeatedly in intensified form at different periods of literary history. Examples are apparent in symbolist works, particularly those produced by the poets of nineteenth-century France. Framed as a kind of unconscious outpouring in

[1] Dr Daniela Mantovan, of the Hochschule für Jüdische Studien, Heidelberg, delivered this Fifteenth Annual A. N. Stencl Lecture in Yiddish Studies at Yarnton Manor on 10 May 2007. A report on Dr Mantovan will appear in the next issue of the *Report*

[2] Giambattista Vico (1688–1744) published his work in Naples in three different editions of five volumes. *Cinque libri di G. B. Vico de' principi d'una scienza nuova d'intorno alla comune natura delle nazioni* first appeared in 1725, was republished in 1733 and again posthumously in 1745. In the first of his three phases of human history Vico argued for imagination as the source of language and poetry, from which derives his re-evaluation of myth and specifically of Homer's poetry. The connection he made between language, poetry and myth was later introduced into modern literary criticism and discussed by Mikhail Bakhtin.

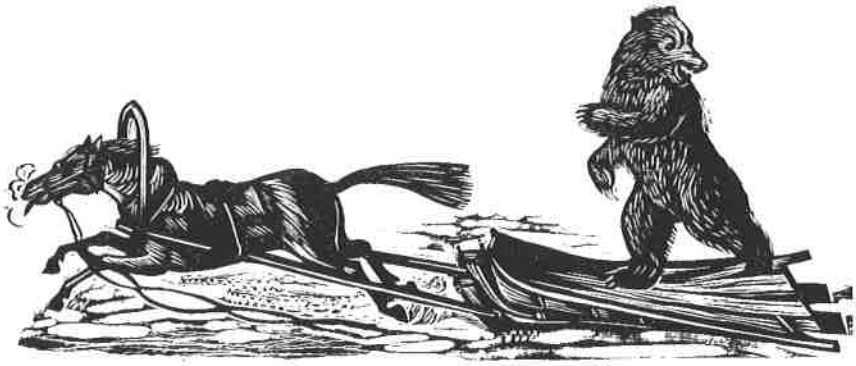


Plate 1 *un genumen hot zikh trogn / mitn ber un mitn shlitn*, 'And rapidly [the horse] dashed off / With bear and sledge alike'. From 'A mayse mit a ber' (A story with a bear) from *Dray mayselekh* (Three little tales), illustrated with woodcuts by M. Fradkin and B. Blank (Kiev: Kinder-farlag 1934), pp. 16–17.

experimental writing at the beginning of the twentieth century, particularly in French avant-garde literary movements such as Dadaism, imagination was discussed at length by artists, writers and literary critics. Conspicuously among them was the Russian philosopher and theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (1885–1975), who in his late essays elaborated his conception of imaginative language and its multilayered connection to both verbal and written communication.[3] Tropes such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and symbolism recur not only in writing, but also orally, in everyday language. Although these figures of speech seem to conceal what is being communicated both in children's tales and in daily discourse, they operate within well-known frames of reference, and are ultimately unambiguous.

The literary work of the Soviet-Yiddish author Pinkhes Kahanovitsh (1884–1950), better known by his pseudonym Der Nister, 'the Hidden One', embodies some of these issues. A symbolist writer known in the Yiddish literary milieu of his time as the creator of *mayselekh*, 'little stories', a phrase that conventionally designated children tales, he was steeped in traditional religious lore and remained throughout his life

[3] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, edited by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986).

obsessed with literature, which he conceived of and practised as a highly cryptic form of imagination. His pseudonym, 'the Hidden One', was a mask that defined and ultimately determined his identity. Respected for his unquestioned stylistic bravura, he was often misunderstood and at times rejected. He remained essentially an outsider in every literary group to which he gravitated.

Der Nister entered the Yiddish literary tradition as a visionary writer of enigmatic short stories at a time when imaginative writing, especially in symbolist mode, was neglected and largely disparaged by practitioners and critics of a dominant realist strain. Yitskhok-Leybush Peretz (1852–1915), one of the three 'classical' founders of modern Yiddish literature and a writer often characterized as a romantic realist,[4] is said to have influenced at least some of Der Nister's writings; but this assumption is unsupported by the evidence. The relationship between Peretz and Der Nister was initially strained. In 1910, after sending Peretz three chapters of his manuscript 'Der kadmen' (The Primordial One) for critical evaluation, Der Nister wrote:

> I broke with Peretz. I sent him some chapters of 'Kadmen'. He answered with an angry letter, [saying] that he was no specialist and that he did not understand it. There [in the letter] he wrote the sentence, 'Perhaps I am too grey for you and you are too green for me' ... God bless him ... I am not in low spirits, because I think that anyone who believes in himself does not even need to believe in God. And in particular ... not in Peretz.[5]

Eventually Der Nister came to terms with Peretz and honoured his memory in an essay written in 1940, though first published posthumously in 1957. Even then, however, he acknowledged no literary debt to Peretz, paying tribute instead to his moral authority: 'I feel his vigilance and his moral control supporting and admonishing me: "Remember the people for whom you are responsible."'[6]

The 'strangeness' of Der Nister's themes and style, together with his apparent disconnection from any 'tradition' or 'influence', is clearly one

[4] For example by Sol Liptzin in *A History of Yiddish Literature* (New York: Jonathan David, 1985) 56.

[5] Cited in Avrom Novershtern (ed.) 'Igrotav shel Der Nister el Shmuel Niger' [Letters from Der Nister to Shmuel Niger], *Khulyot* 1 (Winter 1993), Letter No. 11, pp. 163–4.

[6] Der Nister, 'Peretz hot geredt un ikh hob gehert' [Peretz spoke and I listened], published posthumously in Der Nister, *Dertseylungen un eseyen 1940–1948* [Stories and Essays 1940–1948] (New York: YKUF Farlag, 1957) 289. All translations from Yiddish into English are my own.

reason why contemporary Yiddish literary critics never bothered to analyse his symbolist writings, preferring instead to relegate his work to the better-known and more readily classified area of 'spiritual' and 'kabbalistic' writing. His mysterious personality, concealed behind a pseudonym that evoked the Jewish mystical tradition and its legends, reinforced this perception of eccentricity, which critics confronted and dismissed with the generally accepted, though ambivalent, formulation that Der Nister was simply 'a writer of *mayselekh*'.[7] As a result, his tales for children, a genre he developed and continued to practise alongside his other writings for at least two decades, were never examined in relation to his major symbolist work.

As soon as we define a certain kind of fiction as 'children's literature', we enter the domain of free imagination, in which the constraints of credibility and veracity imposed on fiction in modern times do not apply. In this sense it is the freest of all literary genres, even though it is traditionally among the most ritualized. The term 'children's literature' denotes a complex aggregate of tales, songs, rhymes and lullabies, orally transmitted and elaborated over centuries before being written down, revised or amended, often by anonymous hands. Contemporary strata also include authored tales, a modern variant of the traditional narrative. Yiddish culture, rooted in a long and richly articulated religious history, has been the matrix of a consistent body of such traditional tales. On this fertile soil there developed a literature which lay extremely close to oral speech. Yiddish had for centuries been the language of uneducated women and children, of the household and the marketplace and of everyday life in all its manifestations. As a literary language, as Peretz maintained in 1888, emerging modern Yiddish might have

[7] The Soviet critic Nokhem Oyslender, for instance, writing about Der Nister's early production, stated as late as 1948: 'He is still a vaguely outlined figure. We do not know all the poetic works he published, and have not correctly evaluated those we do know'. Cited in Nokhem Oyslender, 'Nister der dikhter' [Nister the poet], *Yidishe kultur* 6 (June-July 1959) 29. The article is dated Moscow, 1948. In an earlier article, published in 1924, Oyslender went so far as to observe: 'And so it happened that, because of the peculiarity of Nister's early work, one did not even look closely at his later production'. See Nokhem Oyslender, 'Der Nister', in *Veg-ayn veg-oys: literarishe epizodn* [This way and that: literary episodes] (Kiev: Kultur-lige, 1924) 39. In an anthology of Yiddish poetry published in New York in 1917, Der Nister's work is said to have brought *mistishe farnepltkayt fun der kabole in der naye yidishe literatur* ['the mystical fogginess of the Kabbalah into new Yiddish literature']. This is only one of many similar disparaging comments. See M. Bassin (ed.) *Finf hundert yor yidishe poezye* [Five hundred years of Yiddish poetry] with an introduction by Ber Borokhov (New York: Farlag dos yidishe bukh, 1917) 175.

been inadequate to express refined emotions and thoughts,[8] but it certainly proved a perfect medium for rhymes, lullabies, songs and stories for children.

Modern Yiddish literature, from its beginnings during the second half of the nineteenth century, was directed both towards adult readers and to a large extent also towards children. If most nineteenth-century writers often felt uneasy writing seriously for adults in Yiddish, they had no such difficulty composing texts for children. The difference lay not in the readership but in the language and the use to which it was put. Yiddish was a natural vehicle to use when writing or speaking to children, as it was not when the aim was to create sophisticated 'literature'. In addressing children, authors could slip comfortably into spoken Yiddish, steering clear of problems relating to the nature of 'literary' Yiddish, and thus evading any ambiguity attaching to their status as writers in a despised *zhargon* who simultaneously demanded to be taken seriously. Predictably, children's literature in Yiddish flowered well into the twentieth century. As yet, however, we have few studies of this rich production.[9]

Modern children's literature in Yiddish displays two basic features. First, it makes use of language which was not 'refined' in the terms Peretz had in mind, which is to say that it was not formalized by a centuries-old writing tradition centred on canonized genres developed in a high register. Yiddish was a language of quotidian needs, and it continued to fulfil this function into modern times. The need to 'cleanse' the Yiddish language of perceived impurities and to render it 'literary' grew ever more pressing as the twentieth century wore on. But this need, most evident in poetry, was less apparent in, if not absent from, fiction written for children, which demands a colloquial, everyday register.

[8] Y.-L. Peretz, *Monish*. For this poem's first publication in the *Folks-biblyotek* in 1888 as well as his poem on the Yiddish language, see *Mayne muze* (My muse) (1891) in *Ale verk fun Y.-L. Perets*, vol. 1 (New York: CYCO, 1947) 28.

[9] The history of the Yiddish folk tale, by contrast, has been widely researched. See *Yiddish Folktales*, edited by Beatrice Silverman Weinreich (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988), which contains a detailed and annotated bibliography on the subject. Yiddish literary tales have not yet been researched to the same extent. Although there is no comprehensive work on the subject, single studies on individual Yiddish authors include David Goldberg, 'Itsik Kipnis's Books for Children' in David Goldberg (ed.) *The Field of Yiddish*, Fifth Collection (New York: Northwestern University Press and YIVO, 1993), which also lists articles on, and reviews of, Yiddish children literature published in the Soviet Union in the 1920s.

Orality simulates direct contact between listener and teller and – most importantly for my argument – requires the use of language free from literary constraints.[10] Second, in terms of content, modern children's tales are characterized by a high degree of conceptual freedom in which imagery plays a prominent role and imagination and fancy[11] are two main ingredients.

As we know from the scanty details of Der Nister's biography, he lived from 1905 to the outbreak of the First World War in Zhitomir, where he worked for a time as a teacher in a girls' school, *Mefitsey Haskole*, in Holte. This employment, combined with his frequent contact with children – his own daughter Hodel was born in Zhitomir in 1913 – perhaps motivated his interest in children's literature. In any case, he acquired a great love of the Danish author Hans Christian Andersen (1805–75), a selection of whose works he translated into Yiddish in 1919.[12] His interest in modern teaching methods was additionally stimulated from 1919 on when he and other writers, poets, artists, musicians and actors participated in the experimental new approaches to education initiated by Borukh Shvartsman[13] in the Children's Colony of Malakhovka, a Jewish

[10] This observation is based on the low frequency or even absence of traditional formal elements of language used in modern tales.

[11] 'Since the late eighteenth century the tendency has been to make *imagination* and *fancy* antithetical. *Imagination* is often used to designate the power of representing the real (or that which gives an illusion of reality) in its entirety and organic unity, and also, usually, in its ideal or universal character; *fancy* the power of inventing the novel and unreal by recombining the elements found in reality. So interpreted, *imagination* represents men not only in their outward but in their inward life, and produces a Hamlet; *fancy* presents them in alien surroundings, or essentially changed in their natural physical and mental constitution, and produces centaurs and Brobdingnagians.' So far Webster's useful differentiation. See *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language*, second edition unabridged (Springfield MA: G. C. Merriam Company, 1949) 917. In the case I am making, the two concepts are not antithetical but rather complementary.

[12] On Nister's reading as a young man see Yankev Lvovsky, 'Der Nister in zayne yugnt-yorn' [Der Nister in his youth], *Sovetish heymland* 3 (1963) 106–9.

[13] Shvartsman, the director of the colony, became active in education around 1912. He was a founder of the so-called *Demievker shul* ('the school of Demievka', a suburb of Kiev), a Yiddish secular school for Jewish children considered illegal before the revolution of 1917. In 1919, after the Red Army left Kiev, Shvartsman went to Moscow where he was asked by the *komisariat far folks-bildung* (Commissariat for Popular Education) to direct the orphanage at Malakhovka which was supported by the Moscow Jewish community, and was then home to 125 children from all parts of Russia. The new 'communist' concept of teaching and the Malakhovka experience were illustrated and commented on by the pedagogue Zalmen Aronov in his *Malakhovke kinder-kolonye* (Moscow: Emes farlag, 1932). Another report on the work done at the Malakhovka orphanage appears in Meyer Polanski, 'Kinder fun Oktyaber', *Sovetish Heymland* 7 (1968) 127.

orphanage not far from Moscow.[14] Der Nister lived there for some months during 1920–1 in company with Marc Chagall and other Yiddish cultural activists. These included, at different times, Leyb Kvitko, Dovid Hofsteyn, Shloyme Mikhoels and Yekhezkel Dobrushin, all of whom subsequently played formative roles in Soviet Yiddish culture. Shvartsman introduced pedagogical practices that demanded self-administration and individual responsibility from each member of the community, whether pupil or teacher. At the same time the influential Soviet pedagogue Anton Semyonovich Makarenko (1888–1939) began putting into practice his developing theory of upbringing in children's collectives that made productive labour part of the educational process. Makarenko started his work with Ukrainian and Jewish children in the Gorky Colony, a self-supporting home for youngsters orphaned by the Civil War, where the collective was the central mechanism through which all aspects of the human personality were trained to develop in an integrated form. Makarenko's work, and possibly that of Shvartsman, exercised a remarkable influence on educational concepts later practised in the *kibbutz*.

Der Nister's first two tales for children, published together in 1917 by the Kletskin farlag in Petrograd, 'A mayse mit a hon' (A tale with a rooster) and 'Dos tsigele' (The little goat), both illustrated by Marc Chagall (1887–1985), were well received. The slim volume, only 31 pages in length, was followed the same year by a slightly augmented collection of 48 pages with the title *Mayselekh in ferzn* (Little tales in rhyme), published by the Kiever farlag. This went through four editions, the second appearing in 1919, the third (of 60 pages) in Warsaw in 1921 also with Chagall's illustrations, and the fourth in Berlin in 1923. This last edition includes twelve tales, written, like all Der Nister's stories for children, in rhyme. At roughly the same time, he was writing some of

[14] Shvartsman, the director of the colony, became active in education around 1912. He was a founder of the so-called *Demievker shul* ('the school of Demievka', a suburb of Kiev), a Yiddish secular school for Jewish children considered illegal before the revolution of 1917. In 1919, after the Red Army left Kiev, Shvartsman went to Moscow where he was asked by the *komisariat far folks-bildung* (Commissariat for Popular Education) to direct the orphanage at Malakhovka which was supported by the Moscow Jewish community, and was then home to 125 children from all parts of Russia. The new 'communist' concept of teaching and the Malakhovka experience were illustrated and commented on by the pedagogue Zalmen Aronov in his *Malakhovke kinder-kolonye* (Moscow: Emes farlag, 1932). Another report on the work done at the Malakhovka orphanage appears in Meyer Polanski, 'Kinder fun Oktyaber', *Sovetish Heymland* 7 (1968) 127.

his most dramatic and intriguing symbolist short stories. He published his collected symbolist writings for the first time in a two-volume edition entitled *Gedakht* (Thought) in Berlin in 1922–3.

Der Nister's production for children ceased between 1921 and 1934 when his personal life was unsettled. After Moscow-Malakhovka in 1920–1, he lived briefly in Kovno and then in Berlin – where his son Josef was born – until 1924. He then worked in Hamburg until 1926 when he returned to the Soviet Union and settled in Kharkov. *Mayselekh in ferzn*, which in later editions also included his first two tales, was his only collection to be reviewed in the press. Khaym-Shloyme Kazdan, the author of one of the book's only two reviews,[15] noted: 'Like all great works for children, *Mayselekh in ferzn* is also for adults.'[16] Der Nister's slim volume was indeed popular among adults, but the fact that it was also deliberately directed towards them is much more to the point than Kazdan was probably aware.

Der Nister's tales for children form part of the Jewish folk tradition both written and oral, but are also connected to Russian and German folklore, with which their author was familiar. His world of animals drew on the ancient vein of storytelling that stretched from Aesop to Phaedrus and La Fontaine, mostly centred on the social behaviour of animals. Following this tradition, his creatures are more allegories than portraits, at times plainly humans in disguise, and occasionally fantastic, imaginary beings. Kazdan noticed that Der Nister's choice of animals was typical of established Jewish folk tales, as though the author had combed through both the religious and the literary tradition to select specifically 'Jewish fauna'. In Kazdan's enthusiastic words, Der Nister is truly the author of 'the first [Jewish] national animal epic'. His compendium of animal protagonists includes some of the best-known and most beloved characters of Russian folk tales, like the bear and the raven, and less pleasant creatures like the flea and the louse. But his selection might better be described as a *bestiarium*, replete with animals

[15] The second review, by Nakhmen Mayzel, dating from 1919 and entitled 'Religieze un veltlekhe folks-mayses (Peretses "folkshtimlikhe geshikhtn" un Nisters "Mayselekh in ferzn")', [Religious and secular folk tales (Peretz's 'folk tales' and Nister's 'Little tales in verse')], was republished in Mayzel's *Noente un vayte* [Near and far] (Vilna: Kletskin farlag, 1927) 162–9.

[16] Kh.-Sh. Kazdan, 'Der Nisters "Mayselekh in ferzn"' (Review), *Bikhervelt: kritish bibliografisher zhurnal* [Book World: Critical and Bibliographical Journal], Nos 4–5 (August 1919) 92.

dear both to Jewish tradition, such as the goat, horse, cat, mouse and cockerel, and the world of childhood, including kittens, puppies, dolphins, snails and swans. What is peculiar in Der Nister's tales is the appearance of a number of fanciful creatures, produced by a fertile imagination working with both profane and sacred images. His assorted demonic figures, including *rukhes*, *sheydim*, *ruakhlekh*, *shretlekh* (demons, devils, ghosts and dwarves), as well as odd creatures such as *kroyt-keplekh* (little cabbage heads) or *shney-goylems* (snow-golems), are his bizarre literary trademark. Apart from the oddity of such characters – an aspect probably even more apparent once the *shtetl*, Eastern Europe's characteristically Jewish environment, had disappeared after the Russian Revolution – his tales have a familiar quality. As Kazdan pointed out, one has the impression of reading, or more accurately of hearing, old tales with well-known motifs and familiar characters, while repeatedly discovering new aspects and details, as if an old texture had been reworked and taken to another level.

Thematically, Der Nister's children's tales explore animated and animistic nature, the coexistence and opposition of Christian and Jewish concerns and the presence of the demonic, together with aspects of the normal physical development of children like recovering from an illness or losing a tooth. Some characters, like the King of the Winds and the tiny child (in 'Dos tsigele') are clearly derived from the work of Hans Christian Andersen. Der Nister's style is characterized by repetition and the use of diminutive forms common to everyday speech, and of formulaic beginnings or endings typical of traditional tales, like *in alte tsaytn iz a mol gevezn* ('once upon a time'), *ven er hot a tint un feder, volt zayn lebn dort bashribn* ('if he had pen and ink he would have written down the story of his life'), *in a feldl tsi in a veldl shteyt af hinerfis a hayzl* ('in a little field, in a little wood, stands a little house on chicken legs').[17]

It might therefore seem that the innovative character of Der Nister's

[17] Der Nister, 'Mizele-mayzele', in *Mayselekh in ferzn* (Warsaw: Farlag kultur-lige, 1921) 46. The expression, 'a little house on chicken legs', is clearly calqued on the *izbushka na kur'ikh nozhkakh*, 'cabin on chicken legs', the witch Baba Yaga's home in Russian folk tales, with which Der Nister was evidently familiar. The first major collection of Russian folk tales, *Narodnye russkie skazki*, was assembled and published by Alexander Nikolayevich Afanasyev (1826–71) in an eight-volume edition between 1855 and 1864. Der Nister had almost certainly also read *Vaysrusishe folksmayses* (Belorussian folk tales), the anthology edited and translated into Yiddish by his close friend Leyb Kvitko (Berlin: Yidisher sektsye baym komisaryat far folkbildung, 1923).

mayselekh lies in their formal stylistic choices, in their author's use of language and characterisation. But closer scrutiny reveals other features less easy to define. In his review Kazdan touched fleetingly on some of their emotive aspects. He mentions, for instance, *di yidishe goles-neshome*, 'the Jewish diaspora-soul' and its 'feelings of love and tenderness for animals and birds'. Der Nister would thus appear to have voiced a new sensibility towards nature and living creatures. Kazdan did not probe the point more deeply, or speak of what is commonly called the 'content' of the tales, their plot or the progression of events. Yet this, in my view, is worth commenting on, for it raises questions about the readers for whom Der Nister intended his *mayselekh* and his purpose in writing them. Several seem to be written for children of pre-school age, although most are directed to pre-adolescent school-goers. Their themes cover a wide range. In 'Vinter' (Winter) images of water and snow at the season's turn are interwoven with a variation on the traditional motif of a bird migrating to a warmer climate during the winter and returning in spring. In Der Nister's tale, not a bird but a fallen 'summer-angel' is found in a field by Russian peasants (*goyim*) who shelter the expiring creature in a little house. Revived, the angel unfurls his wings to fly back to heaven. In 'Dos tsigele' (The goat), the healing motif is woven through a narrative texture drawn from both traditional and literary tales. A white goat goes to a palace in the woods in which the King of the Winds and his family live, and there he cures the king's tiny child of insomnia. In 'Shretlekh' (Dwarves), Der Nister's diminutive demons act like trolls in northern legends, possessing gold and silver, living underground in mouseholes and emerging at night. A human lucky enough to spot one and grab his cap would be rewarded with riches for the rest of his life in exchange for returning the cap to its owner.

One can imagine tales like these, built on themes close to traditional folk tales, being read or sung to children. The tale 'A khurve' (A ruin), with its macabre night-time atmosphere, recalls one of those old lullabies, characterized by violence and cruelty.[18] It describes two ghosts

[18] This supernatural element of the Jewish tradition has been explored by Beatrice Silverman Weinreich, *Yiddish Folktales* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988); see particularly Part 7. The unsettling character of many lullabies, at times linked to historic events preserved in nursery rhymes, is often bound up with the appearance of witches and ghosts. Violence is frequently involved in English and other nursery rhymes. For examples see Iona and Peter Opie (eds) *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952).

sitting in a deserted ruin with a newborn baby whom they have stolen, discussing what to do with it:

tsi mir trogn es avek
ergets vayt un in a hek,
oyf a feld, tsi in a vald,
dortn shteyt a shtibl alt.

un in shtibl dortn voynt
ber, der meylekh, iz gekroynt
af tsigayners un af undz
un af shvartser sheydim-kunts...[19]

Should we carry it away,
somewhere distant and remote
to a field or to a wood,
where there stands a small old house

and in that house right over there
lives the bear, by certain right
king of gypsies and of us,
and of all black magic's secret arts...

The demons cannot decide whether to kill the baby, give it to demons to play with, bring it to the Bear-King, or simply return it. Two other tales in this collection, 'Der shney-bok' (The snow-goat) and 'A mayse mit a hon' (A tale with a rooster) are almost devoid of plot. In the first, the traditional theme of the golem[20] has undergone a transformation: the golem-creature is a snowman – made by a child – which at night wanders through the streets of the village. The tale is rich in cold,

[19] Der Nister, *Mayselekh in ferzn* (Berlin: Farlag shveln, 1923) 10.

[20] A *golem*, literally 'unfinished being', is most familiar from the legend of the Golem of Prague. In this a creature is made of clay and infused with the spirit of life by the magical incantations of Rabbi Judah Löw (the Maharal of Prague), to help the Jews of his city defend themselves against false blood libels. This legend was first published in 1847 by Wolf Pascheles, giving rise to a number of golem figures in both German Romantic literature and Expressionist movies. The Golem image is Talmudic; see Moshe Idel, *Golem* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990), or *Encylopaedia Judaica* 7:753. Shneyer Z. Leiman has traced the link with the Maharal to Rabbi Yudel Rosenberg in the late nineteenth century; see his article in *Tradition* 36:1 (2002) 26–58.

Plate 2 ***un mit hak hot zikh farmostn / tsu zayn vortsl im fununtn***, 'And with an axe to roots beneath / He measured all his strength'. From 'A mayse mit a ber' (A story with a bear) from *Dray mayselekh* (Three little tales), illustrated with woodcuts by M. Fradkin and B. Blank (Kiev: Kinder-farlag 1934), p. 13.

luminous detail, notably the beautiful scene of the snowman standing alone in the moonlight, a black raven on his head. There is no story to tell, only a picture to look at. Der Nister's tales indeed often make their impact by means of visualization. In 'A mayse mit a hon', a *bobele* (little granny) takes care of a cockerel for many years until she falls ill, whereupon the rooster keeps watch at her deathbed and later prays for her soul. In its humble piety this story echoes Hasidic motifs.

Most tales centre on death or illness. In 'A mayse mit a ber' (A tale of a bear), a *goy* or Russian peasant fells a tree in the forest which, as it falls, rouses a sleeping bear. The peasant flees, the bear leaps on to the peasant's horse-drawn sledge, and the horse gallops off wildly, rushing through the woods and past a hill on which stands a cross:

Plate 3 *hot zikh oyfgekhapt der ber dan / un fun grub a kuk gegebn*, 'and then the bear awoke from sleep / and glowered from his lair'. From 'A mayse mit a ber' (A story with a bear) from *Dray mayselekh* (Three little tales), illustrated with woodcuts by M. Fradkin and B. Blank (Kiev: Kinder-farlag 1934), p. 15.

hot er oysgeshtrekt a lape
un a nem geton dem tseylem,
iz er foyl geven fun untn,
iz er mitgegan mit oylem:

mitn ferd un mitn shlitn
un mit ber arumgenumen
vi shoyn lang af im gevart hot
un atsind iz er gekumen,

im fun dortn tsu tsunemen
fun farvitkeyt un fun shneyen,

r'zol in feld aleyn nisht blaybn
un in elent dort nit shteyen.

un fun demolt on, dertseylt men,
shoyn fun kame-kame yorn,
tomid vinter in di felder
zet men ber mit tseylem forn.[21]

He [the bear] stretched out a paw
and snatched away the cross
which, rotten at its very base,
went freely off with all of them,

with the horse and with the sledge;
it hugged the bear with heartfelt warmth,
as though awaiting his arrival long
who now had just appeared

to carry him away from there,
from heavy weather and from snow,
so he might no longer in the field
stand friendless in his solitude.

And from thenceforth, the tale is told,
for long, long years by now,
throughout the winter in the fields
the bear strides onwards with the cross.

The tale's frenzied action should not distract from the significance of its narrative elements. The felling of the healthy tree is described as its slow death: *hot derzen der boym – gekumen iz zayn tsayt shoyn tsu shtarbn*, 'the tree saw that the time had come for him to die', and in so doing, it utters a barely audible whisper of agony. The narrative voice relates that the cross was lonely, weather-worn and bent, having waited a painfully long time until the bear finally arrives. As for the peasant:

[21] Der Nister, *Mayselekh in ferzn*, p. 6.

fregn kinder, viln visn:
'un der goy, vu z'ingekumen?'
entfert men zey: 'mitn friling,
mitn vaser iz farshvumen.'

Children ask, they want to know,
'What happened to the peasant?'
And they are answered: 'In springtime
he came floating with the water.'

At least three moments in which sadness and death linger are evident in this short tale.

If the agony of the tree reflects a pantheistic conception of nature to which Der Nister certainly responded deeply,[22] the cross is the most striking symbol of human suffering in Western literature and was widely used in this way by writers and artists in modern Yiddish literature and culture during the early 1920s. The death of the peasant, in itself not commented on in the poem, is actually not even part of the narrative *stricto sensu*, but is mentioned only in answer to a question raised by the children; as such it is thus deprived of significance. In springtime, when nature comes to life again, the remains of the peasant's corpse, casually denoted merely with the pronoun 'he', comes floating by with the newly unfrozen water, like any other piece of winter debris. Behind this casualness it is difficult not to suspect almost a sense of elation at the death of the peasant who caused the death of the tree.

Although traditional tales do not shy away from pain, loss or fear, they tend to have happy endings. This is not the case with Der Nister. The last tale in his first collection, given the childlike title 'Dos hintl' (The little dog), is probably the most complex and intriguing. Here the protagonist is a little dog troubled by a flea in his fur. In order to get rid of this, the dog bites himself, tearing at his fur and hide, which he rips off and sells to the 'dog-striker'. At this point

[22] Der Nister's symbolist short stories as well as his children's tales are characterized by a striking perception of nature that often borders on animism or pantheism. Nature is alive and sentient in the stories, animals and celestial bodies speak and feel, and all of them are often the bearers of a superior, hidden truth.

iz hintele aroys on fel,
on hoyt un opgeshundn,
vund-fleyshikeyt arosygezen
ful blutik-hoyle vundn.

Furless, the little dog emerged,
his skin stripped off and torn,
his bare flesh visible to all,
scarred with great bleeding wounds.[23]

He runs to a hut where dogs customarily gather. There, other dogs begin sniffing at the new arrival: they lick him and draw closer and closer, crowding around him, until one of them bites him:

in gikhenish, in aylenish,
un khapndik zikh khapn,
a bisn oykh fun hintele
in groys-gedrang dertapn.

dertapn un avek mit bis,
un ergets zikh farklaybn
n'a vinkele bahaltn zikh
aleyn mit zikh nor blaybn

un shtil un shtil un lang azoy
un hintish zikh fargesn —
hobn hint azoy dos hintele
in gantsn oyfgegesen.[24]

rushing madly, in a frenzy
blindly seizing each the other,
in the tussling free-for-all they bit
a chunk out of the little dog.

[23] Der Nister, *Mayselekh in ferzn*, p. 33.
[24] Der Nister, *Mayselekh in ferzn*, p. 35.

and having grabbed, they drew away,
and skulking came together
to hide themselves away from sight
and huddle on their own.

and silently, and for long hours,
forgetting themselves as all dogs do –
in this abstracted way, these dogs
ate up the little dog entirely.

Then the 'dog-striker', who has a little drum hanging from his neck, passes by. He enters the hut and, standing in its centre, begins beating his drum, which is made of dog-skin, demanding that all the dogs around should listen.

un lang, un lang gepoykt azoy,
un hint hot ayngeladn,
dem hintels ale brider-hint,
khaveyrim, kameradn.

And long and long he beat his drum
and all the dogs he summoned,
the dog-brothers of the little dog,
his comrades and confederates.

Insisting that he wants to say something about the little dog, he reveals that he himself made the drum with its fur, and that when he first began to beat it, he heard it laughing, urging him to go to its dog-brothers to tell his tale and to give them his greetings:

'aykh alemen, vos ir zayt do
far mir tsunoyfgeklibn,
a kleyninke tsavoele
dos hintl hot geshribn.

es shraybt zikh in tsavoele,
dos hintl lozt aykh visn,
dos floyele hot emes dem
in felekhl gebisn.

dokh hint zaynen keyn brider nisht,
nor hint, vi ir, azoyne,
oykh eygn-fel z'keyn miskher nisht
un hint-shleger – keyn koyne.' [25]

'To all of you who've gathered here,
assembled here before me,
a final little testament
the little dog has written.

In this last will it's written thus:
the little dog informs you
that yes, the flea did truly bite him,
deep in his little fur.

Yet dogs are certainly no brothers,
but dogs they are, like you,
and one's own fur is not sale stock
nor is the striker purchaser.'

This final tale, beginning with an apparently commonplace nuisance – a flea in a dog's fur – steadily assumes such monstrous dimensions that by its denouement one doubts who exactly the tale as a whole is intended to address. To escape from the flea, the little dog strips off his hide, makes himself vulnerable to further attack, and is finally devoured by other dogs. His testament reviews his mistakes: do not trade with your own skin, dogs are not brothers, the dog-striker is no well-intentioned purchaser. As if this message were not clear enough, Der Nister calls the little dog's brothers *khaveyrim*, *kameraden* ('comrades'), terms usually applied not to dogs but to people wishing to define their political affiliation. Furthermore, one who catches stray dogs is called in Yiddish *hitsel*, while the word *hint-shleger*, 'dog-striker', is a neologism created by the author to denote one who thrashes dogs.

Further light is thrown on the message of 'Dos hintl' by another symbolist short story entitled 'Muser' (Moral instruction) which Der Nister published in January 1923 in the New York periodical *Di tsukunft*

[25] Der Nister, *Mayzelekh in ferzn*, pp. 36–7.

(The Future).[26] In this, a little porcelain dog is the wise narrator who relates how wolves were domesticated in ancient times and draws a shrewd moral from their experience: 'True freedom is the *desire* to be free, and sometimes *taking a yoke upon oneself* is actually the greatest rebellion ... and that's why I've recounted the tale about the wolf'. This stoic vision of personal freedom seems also to have informed 'Dos hintl', where it has mutated into a cruder and more revealing truth: dogs, like humans, are no brothers, but cannibals ready to devour you; never risk your own skin; and recall that whoever purchases your skin is an evildoer.

This Darwinian view of life is expressed in even more anguished terms in 'A mayse mit a lets, mit a moyz, un mit dem Nister aleyn' (A story with a demon, with a mouse, and with Der Nister himself), written some time before 1928.[27] In this later tale the fur, which is sold by *a leytsim-shleger* ('a demon-striker') to Der Nister in person, itself recounts part of the tale. Here a rat-catcher, modelled on the Pied Piper of Hamelin, evolves into a *leytsim-shleger* strikingly similar to the earlier *hint-shleger*. Like the dogs in 'Dos hintl', the demons finally devour each other. This is again a symbolist narrative addressed to sophisticated adult readers, but one more complex than 'Dos hintl', since its components are related both to an external reality and to an interior emotional experience. In the earlier tale the images are linked to precise historical and political situations.[28] In the later one they imply a corre-

[26] Der Nister's story 'Muser' was published first in the New York Yiddish periodical *Di tsukunft* 1 (January 1923) 53–6, and again in the second volume of the collection *Gedakht* (Berlin: Literarisher farlag, 1923). Given its publication date, it was written presumably no later than 1922. An English translation by Joseph Sherman appeared as 'Moral Instruction' in *Midstream* 51:4 (July/August 2005) 36–40.

[27] First published in *Fun mayne giter* [From my estates] (Kharkov: Melukhe farlag fun Ukrayne, 1929), a collection of short stories ready for publication in 1928, to judge by the permit issued by the Soviet censor. We lack proof that it was written much earlier, but even in Berlin in the early 1920s Der Nister had planned to publish his collected symbolist stories in three volumes, an ambition that was only partially realized. His symbolist stories appeared in a two-volume edition entitled *Gedakht* (Berlin 1922–3).

[28] A further element that might have played a role in the creation of the figure of the dog was the well-known St Petersburg cabaret, 'The Stray Dog', which opened in 1912. It became a meeting-place for actors, poets and writers, among them such significant figures in modern Russian literature as Anna Akhmatova, Nikolai Gumilev, Velimir Khlebnikov, Sergei Esenin, Marina Tsvetaeva, Osip Mandelstam and Alexander Blok, who apparently considered themselves 'stray dogs', set apart from aristocratic society. This name was well known also in Yiddish circles, since David Bergelson in his short story 'Friling' (Spring) ironically called Mura, one of his characters, *farmurzhet hintl*, 'bourgeois little dog'. The

Plate 4 *er hit im un firt im / in komendantur*, 'he guards him and leads him / direct to the commissariat. From 'Der toyt fun a khinezer' (The death of a Chinese man) from *Dray mayselekh*' (Three little tales), illustrated with woodcuts by M. Fradkin and B. Blank (Kiev: Kinder-farlag 1934), p. 7.

spondence between an inward *and* an outward reality expressed through the same set of tropes.

His parable in 'A mayse mit a lets' is directed more to adults than to children, its implied meaning pointing to the difficulties of moral and ethical survival at a time – the early twenties – when conflicting political

Russian word *farmazevt*, literally 'pharmacist' but metaphorically signifying 'Philistine', was applied mockingly in the cabaret also to people attending performances who did not yet belong to the artists' circle. Der Nister may or may not have known about this cabaret, but he and several other Yiddish writers of the period, such as I. J. Singer and Peretz Markish, would certainly have known the hordes of stray dogs that scavenged for food in Russian cities during the Civil War (1917–21) and the famine (1920–1).

and ideological struggles in the Soviet Union limited Yiddish intellectuals' freedom of expression. In 1922, for example, Der Nister's editorial collaboration with the short-lived periodical *Milgroym* (Pomegranate), published in Berlin from 1922 to 1924, was heavily criticized in Moscow on grounds of this journal's supposedly 'bourgeois' orientation. He and David Bergelson, his co-editor, thereupon resigned their association and sent a brief, joint letter to the editorial board of the new Moscow-based Yiddish periodical *Shtrom* (Stream), whose editorial advisers included Moyshe Litvakov (1875–1937), the ideological watchdog of Soviet Yiddish literature, informing their Soviet colleagues that they were no longer part of *Milgroym*'s editorial board. Whether or not this was an attempt to find a middle ground, it was certainly a self-protective response to a dangerous attack that threatened the creative life of the writers concerned, illustrating clearly the pressures under which they were now being placed. Seven years later, in 1929, Der Nister was reduced to silence for several years following a particularly harsh assault in the press by Soviet literary critics, who dismissed his work as obscure and reactionary.

Der Nister underwent a number of such ordeals, as did most of the Soviet Yiddish literary establishment during the 1930s, including Peretz Markish, Shmuel Halkin, Leyb Kvitko and Ezra Fininberg. All suffered direct ideological condemnation by so-called 'proletarian' critics who accused them of such cardinal Marxist sins as chauvinism, nationalism, passivity, Epicureanism and symbolism. Such terms were freely deployed in the Soviet Yiddish press with considerable negative consequences for the life and work of authors so stigmatized.

Der Nister's new tales for children appeared again in Kharkov only in 1934, and five years later, for the last time, in Kiev. In these two, only partially new, slim collections, entitled simply *Dray mayselekh* (Three little tales), a 32–page booklet issued by the Kinder-farlag, and *Zeks mayselekh* (Six little tales), a 47-page booklet published in Kiev by the Melukhe-farlag in 1939, the themes of cannibalism and death become pervasive. Unsurprisingly it is not only animals that devour one another. People are also arbitrarily put to death without hearing or trial. In 'Der toyt fun a khinezer' (The death of a Chinese man) a Chinese worker is arrested by the secret police for having illegally printed leaflets and is quickly beheaded. Since the action, which takes place in China, is viewed from the point of view of one writing in the Soviet Union, a fictional or

metaphorical distance is established which permitted the expression of some open criticism, as in the following lines:

un a tsayt, mayne libe,
a tsayt aza itst,
ven s'vildevet terror
un soynes shverd blitst...

in a tsayt aza, veyst ir,
s'iz klor dokh, gevis,
ven an arbeter pakt zikh
nit gut iz, iz mies...

bazunders nokh dortn,
bifrat ot-o der,
ven s'klore bavayzn,
vos darf men den mer?[29]

At such a time, my dears,
such a time as now,
when terror holds sway
and the enemy's sword gleams...

at such a time, you know,
it's clear and perfectly certain,
when a worker holds back and is idle
it's really not good but so ugly...

especially so in such a case
especially so of such a one
when the proofs are all quite clear,
what more does one need?

The tale 'Kozekl royt' (Little Red Cossack), in the collection *Zeks mayselekh* of 1939, stages the mock murder of a Trotskyite, in a puppet show. The Little Red Cossack asks the other puppet:

[29] Der Nister, *Dray mayselekh* [Three little tales] (Kharkov: Kinder farlag, 1934) 6.

un ver hot geshikt dikh?
un aleyn du ver bistu?
un s'flatert dos rukhl
un shtamlt: 'trotskist...'
[...]
un m'hot mir geheysn,
oy, kozekl-royt
i dikh mit di kinder
dershlogn tsum toyt!
[...]
vos kumt aza eynem.
vos kumt ot-o-dem
far zukhn azoyne?
a kukhn mit krem?[30]

And who is it who sent you?
And who might you be?
And the fiendish one trembles
and stammers out. 'Trotsky'...
[...]
And, dear me, they bade me
Oh, Little Red Cossack!
beat you to death
both you and the children!
[...]
And what does one merit
What does one deserve
For seeking out such a person?
A fine cake with cream?

And the children joyfully shout:

'neyn, s'kumt derfar toyt!'

'No, he deserves putting to death!'

[30] Der Nister, *Zeks mayselekh* [Six little tales] (Kiev: Melukhe-farlag,1939) 26–7.

This little farce, played out in front of small children, is evidently not an innocent rhyme but an anguished outcry, made possible only through an acceptable disguise. The arbitrariness of a death sentence imposed without trial, and the monstrousness of children trained to shout for it to be carried out, went unnoticed.

Der Nister, it seems, was walking a tightrope: writing ostensibly for children yet clearly intending his tales – at least some of his earliest texts and those of the 1930s – to be read also by adults. The characters in his children's tales, in the guise of animals, demons and fabulous creatures, tell us much about the fragile borders between outward and inward worlds, and reveal the dangerous thinness separating nightmares from reality.

Formative Encounter: Patterson, Agnon and Hebrew Literary Study[1]

ANNE GOLOMB HOFFMAN

In my junior year at Cornell, majoring in English but longing for comparative literature, I was introduced by David Patterson to modern Hebrew literature in general and to the fiction of S. Y. Agnon in particular. It proved to be a formative experience for me.

Reading Agnon opens up a domain of inquiry that can bring together elements of earliest childhood experience and the wealth of traditional Jewish sources, to create networks of allusion and reference that we know to be inexhaustible. These networks are the intertextual fabrics that our critical labours seek to illuminate.

'Fabric' is a key term here. We can think of textuality as a weave or cloth of language, what Roland Barthes refers to as 'a tissue of signs.'[2] Text is linked conceptually (and in English, etymologically) to cloth (*textus* as textile, a weave of words), a linkage that plays out in Agnon's writing. We cannot help but feel the creative energies that fuel his struggles with a tradition of sacred texts and commentary.

What story of Agnon's was it that I read in David Patterson's class? It was *HaMalbush*, 'The Cloak' or 'The Garment'.[3] I find an associative link in the fabric that is, on the one hand, a vivid image for conceptualizing the weave of intertextual relationships and, on the other hand, the very material out of which Agnon's protagonist, a tailor, undertakes to fashion a garment for a wealthy and powerful aristocrat. *HaMalbush* is the story of this unnamed tailor who has committed himself to making a coat for the local lord, out of 'the finest fabric', *muvhar shebamuvhar*, to be found in the lord's workhouse. I recall reading *HaMalbush* all those years ago as part folk tale and fairy tale, but with a modernist

[1] This is a shortened version of a paper presented on 18 December 2006 at the Association for Jewish Studies, San Diego, in a session in memory of David Patterson.

[2] Roland Barthes, 'From Work to Text', *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang 1977) 147.

[3] *Kol Sipurav shel Shmuel Yosef Agnon*, vol. 7: *Ad hena* (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv: Schocken 1968).

twist, an ironic awareness that engages the reader with the sense that there is more here than meets the eye. That 'more' is not innocent. It indicates Agnon's awareness of fantasy as the domain of transgressive desires. (According to Dan Laor, the story appeared first in the Rosh Hashanah edition of *Ha'aretz* in 1950. Arnold Band ranks it as one of Agnon's major successes in the genre of the folk tale, or, we might say, the folk tale transformed.[4])

Looking back to my encounter with *HaMalbush* in that semester with David Patterson, I know that the story felt both familiar and strange. To read it was to be caught up, in the manner of a child, in its intimate universe, while becoming aware of its disruptive potential, its modernist edge. Reading Agnon constituted an opening through which I could extend the exercise of literary understanding into the familiar and even familial domain of Hebrew. Hebrew is a language associated with my father and with the early years of education in a bicultural day school in Brooklyn. If Agnon was the doorway, then David Patterson was the amiable doorkeeper (a transferential figure, to be sure), invitating to enter with characteristically self-deprecating charm.

HaMalbush opens with the kind of condensed exposition that takes the reader to an unnamed milieu redolent both of Eastern Europe and of the magical universe of the folk tale. With his usual economy, Agnon positions the tailor in a universe where time is running out: the hour is late and the work is long, and furthermore the tailor, whose eyes no longer see as well as they used to, has wasted valuable daylight time on things that he now realizes do not matter. Echoes of *Pirkei Avot*, the mishnaic tractate known as 'Ethics of the Fathers', pervade the narrative universe. Consider, for example, *Pirkei Avot* 2.20: 'The day is short, and the work is great, and the labourers are sluggish, and the reward is much, and the Master is urgent'.[5] We find ourselves in a world where work is gritty, the demands great, and choices irrevocable. *HaMalbush* is thus a story of delay, the kind of absorbing, intimately detailed delay that so often constitutes narrative time in Agnon. Coming after the dreamlike stories of *Sefer haMa'asim*, *HaMalbush* remains in the mode

[4] Band considers *HaMalbush* alongside *HaAdonit vehaRohel*, *Shnei Talmidei Hahamim*... and *Tehila*. Arnold J. Band, *Nostalgia and Nightmare: A Study in the Fiction of S. Y. Agnon* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of Calif. Press 1968) 398–406. Dan Laor, *Hayei Agnon: Biografiyah* (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv 1998) 430.

[5] *Sayings of the Fathers, or Pirke Aboth*, trans. Joseph H. Hertz (New York: Behrman House 1945) 43.

of folk tale while sketching for us the heavy sleepiness, the loss of conscious will and the ability to regulate bodily action that we identify with Agnon's more Kafkaesque mode. Just so, the disintegration of an organizing consciousness in the tailor moves him into an infantile realm. I translate roughly: 'Fear fell on him, but the brandy that served to awaken him at first finally caused his limbs to become heavy. His eyes became laced with sleep, even his old limbs began to doze off from within his weak flesh. The tailor forgot the lord and forgot the cloak and lowered his head on to his chest and sat there as if he were lodged in the entrails of his mother and there was nothing before him, nothing behind him, nothing.' This reference to the child lodged in its mother's body is stunning in its condensation of the midrashic image of the wise child, together with the impression of an utter loss of individuation and coherent identity. Agnon's protagonists seem always to have suffered from this sort of sudden paralysis that manifests itself concretely in the literal disarticulation of bodily limbs. The drive to undo individuality constitutes a fierce pressure in the world of Agnon's fiction.

By the end of the story the tailor has soiled the garment and failed to fulfill his obligations both in daily prayer and in the service owed to the lord. The comic grotesque ending features an aggressive fish that jumps out of the river where the tailor has gone to wash the garment that he soiled with gravy from his stew; the fish swallows the garment and the tailor leaps into the river to follow it, but the fish disappears, leaving the tailor 'with no one to ask about it, since it's in the nature of fish that they don't speak'. Between the waves and the weeds the tailor is lost in waters that cut into his old flesh as if with a knife. After a few days the river vomits him up onto shore and he is taken to his burial place. The story ends with the observation that the lord has many garments, but the tailor had only one, a comment that resonates with, among other texts, Kafka's doorkeeper who tells the man from the country (the *am ha'aretz*, we might call him) that this door was for him alone and now he is going to shut it. At the same time, the story yields a more direct association with *Pirkei Avot* and its earthy texture of daily work and obligation. If *Pirkei Avot* offers a negotiation among obligations, then Agnon may be said to have taken that implied structure of human labour in relation to divine obligation and crafted this tale in which the catastrophic dimensions of an individual life make themselves felt with rueful humour.

The ending of *HaMalbush* may be comic and grotesque, but it is also grounded existentially in a manner that links it to central themes of delay, distraction and lateness in Agnon's fiction. Paternal inscriptions shape the literary personae of the writer Agnon, whose condition it was to be late for his father's funeral, remiss in his observance of Yom Kippur, marginal on a map centred on Torah.

I want to raise a question here about the ethical implications of lateness in Agnon's fictional universe. What can be narrated and what is not narratable in Agnon's stories? The reiteration of failure, as in the seriocomic events of *HaMalbush*, shows us the consequences of a moment of decision that is itself not narratable. Agnon can show us desire and can engage us in following its restless movements, but he cannot ever disclose completely what it is that desire seeks. We may name it Torah, in response to pervasive nostalgia in the fiction for a world centred on Torah, but the conception of a Torah-centred geography designates something that cannot be grasped in language.

Without being either flippant or reductive, I would like to indicate the pervasive register of paternal inscription, of exploration of the body of the father in Agnon's fiction. My suggestion is that this constitutes an important aspect of Agnon's literary enterprise and, as such, offers an invitation to readers to enter and look around.[6]

J. Hillis Miller explores the ethical value of literary experience by thinking about what it can communicate. He comments: 'Two kinds of knowledge may be distinguished. One is the kind obtained from historical research or from seeing something with one's own eyes. That kind can be narrated. The other is the blind, bodily, material kind that cannot be narrated. We can only witness to it, in another speech act.'[7] Decisive moments of indecision and delay occur again and again in Agnon, and yet their inner content can never be known completely. That is, we hear from characters their narrative accounts of inaction in physical terms, or of actions that are the outcome of a disarticulation of body parts and conscious will: on the one hand, legs that refuse to move, a mouth that will not open, and on the other hand, a mouth that

[6] As I write this, I am teaching *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and note the influence on Dorian of a little yellow book with a soiled cover: its contents and its existence as a physical object.

[7] J. Hillis Miller, *Literature as Conduct: Speech Acts in Henry James* (New York: Fordham University Press 2005) 22.

does open or a hand that picks up a paintbrush and writes on the back of a dog.

'That was a nice letter you wrote me', says the narrator of *Kishre kesharim* ('Knots Upon Knots') to Shmuel Emden, who was expounding to a group on an obscure matter. 'Perhaps I was supposed to have answered it?' the unnamed narrator continues, and he watches the face of Emden whiten, in the manner 'of one who has been insulted. And I knew that I had not done well to leave his letter unanswered.'[8] The ethical failures of Agnon's characters motivate the plot, while remaining opaque and resistant to our interpretive desires. Through that opacity they enter us and become, in turn, our own failures to repay debts and obligations, our own obscure losses and regrets. In this regard, we might consider reading as reenactment, both in the choice of what one reads and in how one reads, what one finds.

To reverse and undo the scene of loss. No writer can undo the primal cut, a cut that brings the subject into language and severs the intimate relationship to body that precedes our ability to name it. This is the loss that is the cost of entry into the symbolic. Writing thus figures for Agnon as a form of deferred action, a way of revisiting that can only then register the moment of rupture. Writing is something of an attempt to revisit the traumatic scene, this time to configure loss and to give it the kind of expressive form that we identify as literary.

Miller reflects on the critic's work as part of an ongoing, interactive process: 'Re-seeing [...] is also a re-writing, that form of writing we call criticism or teaching. [...] My writing as re-writing in its turn is performative, productive. If it has value at all it opens access for my readers and students not to the meaning of the text, the information it conveys, but to the "matter," "thing," or "force" latent in the work.'[9]

I want to adapt Miller's sense of the ethical value of reading and writing to the work of this session in memory of David Patterson. There

[8] Emden is one of a pair of opposing characters and, to deepen the opposition, Agnon gives each of them one of his own names, along with the surnames of two eminent feuding rabbis of the eighteenth century. Jacob Emden and Jonathan Eibeschutz split German Jewry when Emden accused Eibeschutz of being a covert follower of Shabbetai Zevi, the seventeenth-century false messiah who ended in apostasy. *Kishre kesharim*, translated by Anne Golomb Hoffman, in *'A Book That Was Lost' and Other Stories by S. Y. Agnon* (New York: Schocken 1995) 124. *Kol Sipurav*, vol. 6: *Kishre kesharim*, *Sefer haMa'asim*, *Samukh veNir'eh*.

[9] J. Hillis Miller, *The Ethics of Reading: Kant, de Man, Eliot, Trollope, James, and Benjamin* (New York: Columbia University Press 1987) 120.

is ethical value to the work of disseminating literary texts in a manner that makes them newly accessible to readers previously unfamiliar with a whole body of literary works. And there is ethical value to classroom encounters of which the instructor may be unaware and yet which he or she has made possible. Through such encounters new generations of readers find entry into fields of linguistic play where unexpected combinations and juxtapositions render the fictional universe by turns intelligible and mysterious.

David's earliest publications, entitled *Abraham Mapu* and on *The Hebrew Novel in Czarist Russia*, might be thought of as both initiating and consolidating a scholarly identity shaped by a determination to bring into English not only the works, but the historical and critical contexts against which they might be read. Thus the introduction to the Mapu volume makes a claim for the writer's literary output as 'the first productions of real merit in modern Hebrew literature' and for their 'powerful influence on its subsequent development and on the renaissance of Hebrew as a modern language. They are equally important for the impact which they made on the segregated Jewish communities in eastern Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century.'[10] David Patterson reconstructs the milieu in order to appreciate its animating force in culture. And one sees immediately the depth of meaning that such a project assumes in the wake of the destruction of European Jewry.

Literature is that which cannot be paraphrased or summarized. It is no more and no less than the words of the text that we take in and animate with our thoughts, fantasies and memories, conscious and unconscious. The moment in which it lives is also the moment in which it is extinguished. The impossible fulfillment of that moment can be felt in its opposite, that is, in the interminable delay of *HaMalbush* and the tailor who defers until he can defer no longer and the story comes to an end.

All of this David Patterson led one to, but did not claim for himself. Self-deprecatingly he opened doorways through quiet devotion to close readings of literary works whose wider dissemination he helped to bring about.

[10] David Patterson, *Abraham Mapu: A Literary Study of the Creator of the Modern Hebrew Novel* (London: Horovitz Publishing 1964) n.p.

Undercurrents of Jewish Prayer: *Some Afterthoughts*[1]

JEREMY SCHONFIELD

I first encountered liturgy as a small boy, sitting with my father, who was rabbi of the Adath Yisroel Synagogue, London. As Orthodox rabbis sit on the eastern wall, I found myself facing a congregation of grave men, some with prayer-shawls worn cowl-like over their heads. They focused closely on the voice of the prayer leader, who was on occasion my father, chanting complex texts with passion and precision. They were apparently familiar with what seemed to me a dizzying succession of prose, song, silent recital, repetition, antiphony and ceremonial. I, as a child, was mainly an observer, sent out from the synagogue altogether for the prayers for the dead – reasonably enough only a decade after the war – but feeling excluded as a result.

Daily and Shabbat services soon became familiar, but on festivals the usual sequences were supplemented by *piyyutim* – poetic inserts – which interrupted the flow for what seemed like hours, and on the Day of Atonement filled much of the day. Two men occasionally came forward to sing tenor and bass harmonies with the prayer leader, transporting us before returning slowly to their seats as the familiar words and chants could be heard again.

It was some years before I asked what these *piyyutim* meant. Echoing the old reluctance to verbalize reactions to prayer, people would respond 'They are very complicated'. I was encouraged when someone else said 'Read this translation', and gave me a copy of D. A. De Sola's prayer book of 1860.[2] But the volume consisted, I found, of densely interwoven threats, thanks, regrets, requests and inventories of angels, without discernable narrative or even overtly poetic language. The

[1] A version of this paper was presented as a David Patterson Seminar on 21 February 2007, at a launch for *Undercurrents of Jewish Prayer* (Oxford and Portland, Oregon: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2006). The book was a finalist in the 'Modern Jewish Thought' category of the National Jewish Book Awards in America, 2006.

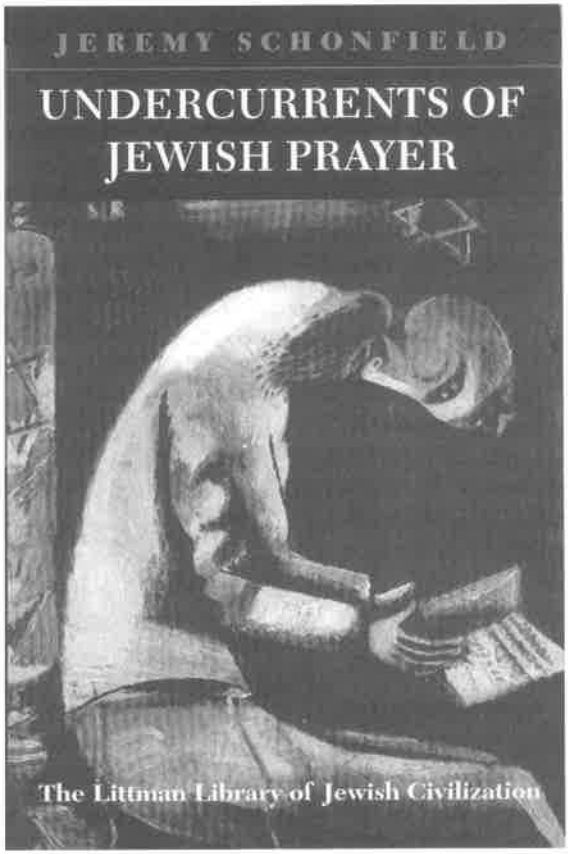
[2] *The Festival Prayers According to the Custom of the Polish and German Jews* (London 1860) 6 vols, reprinted in 1881 and reset in 1929.

prayers were read mostly at so torrential a speed that it is hard to imagine anyone following them in detail. De Sola himself found some passages too opaque to translate, explaining in footnotes when he felt compelled to reproduce the work of a predecessor, even though he had set out to replace that publication.

The German-speaking refugees who made up the congregation seemed fully engaged in the liturgy, despite the obstacles. They readily suspended the Kantian clarity that many of them professed in everyday life, adopting instead a medieval world-view in which angels hover above one's shoulder, God reads every thought, and the course of events is determined by the words one utters. Most used Hebrew prayer books with German translations. But even without the help of these they could recognize biblical echoes and citations, and probably complete by heart any verse being quoted. The red-bound prayer books published by Wolf Heidenheim at the beginning of the nineteenth century, which my father inherited from his father and which I still have, identify each such source. But these books and others do not attempt to describe the impact of embedded quotations, or the overall argument presented by the liturgy. It is likely that participants did not feel the need to think about such matters, but allowed the impressions to wash over them, as though they were hearing music rather than words. What, therefore, did they understand by it all? Their participation did not seem to be a matter of ritual obedience, yet no one seemed able or inclined to explain what was happening.

Still later, as an undergraduate, I realized that the way those worshippers understood the composite nature of the service and participated in the action transformed the synagogue into a place in which they were both readers and the subject of which they were reading. They were part of an unusual – and perhaps unique – form of literary experience, unlike even fairly unconventional theatre. Traditional Jews share this experience unselfconsciously, deploying critical reading skills in ways that are complex but emotionally immediate. It is not necessary to be able to define the ideas involved to feel their power acutely.

It remained hard to accept that the people of that congregation were indeed unconcerned by the lack of a clear narrative thread and disinclined to look for it. But the fact that they were prepared to abdicate conceptual thought on entering synagogue was confirmed by the fact that there were few commentaries available. The authors of most of



those in English would explain when and where each prose-writer or poet had lived and which rhyme-schemes he had followed, while ignoring the overall meaning of passages and even of entire services. Robert Alter, writing later about the Hebrew Bible, described this approach as excavative or archaeological, since it shows more interest in materials and modes of manufacture than in the experience of reading.[3] This critique remains true of most writing on the liturgy. Central literary questions are not asked, such as how the texts affect one, and how a prayer

[3] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (London 1981) 13–14.

leader's urgency of articulation transforms the act of reading into something richly multilayered. It might have helped to call such blends of word and action a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, however inappropriate the term. But no one attempted to define what was happening in synagogue, or what the overall theme of the liturgy might be.

The tendency to ignore the obscurity of liturgy has a long history. D. A. De Sola's preface to the prayer book describes it as a simple and easily accessible work of devotion in need of no further comment, an assertion for which he unsurprisingly adduces no evidence. Liturgical scholars of the twentieth century and more recent times similarly neglect narrative meaning.[4] Even those who provide tabular representations of structure or analyses of numerological and other patterns generally neglect the impact of what they describe in terms of its argument or theology. Contemporary methodologies have not been applied with any rigour until now.

Most striking is the failure of traditional Jews to assemble the commentaries that are available, and to establish the practice of studying these comparatively. Liturgical glosses have never been published collectively side by side with the many remarks on prayer scattered throughout rabbinic literature. Every other text – biblical, halakhic and midrashic – is scrutinized in the time-honoured format of the *shiur*, in which individuals or couples study texts over months or years, using a wide range of commentaries. The traditional structure of rabbinic study is based on dialogal study and the attempt to reconcile difficulties. Talmud and midrashic writings are all approached in this way. But prayer, the most frequently employed Jewish text, failed to encounter commentary, the predominant rabbinic mode of writing, and no publication makes serious liturgical study possible.

The strangeness of this omission is highlighted in Hillel's remark, when asked in the first century to encapsulate Torah while standing on one leg. 'Whatever is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour, is the whole Torah; the rest is commentary. Go and learn.'[5] If commentary is

[4] These include Lewis Dembitz, *Jewish Services in Synagogue and Home* (Philadelphia 1898), Israel Abrahams, *Companion to the Daily Prayer Book* (London 1914, 1922, 1939), Joseph H. Hertz, *Authorised Daily Prayer Book* (London 1942–5), Elie Munk, *World of Prayer* (New York 1954–63) and B. S. Jacobson, *The Weekday Siddur* (Tel Aviv 1978).

[5] Hillel's remark, based on 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' (Leviticus 19:18), appears in BT *Shabbat* 31a.

an extension of revelation, the absence of liturgical exegesis implies that comprehension is either impossible to attain or improper to seek. Prayer cannot be dismissed as something other than Torah and therefore not to be studied, since it is a legal obligation and represents the human response to divine revelation.

Almost every other rabbinic genre appears in folio editions designed to be read at a table or lectern. In these, the core text is surrounded by commentaries that can be compared with each other, or with still others in appendices.[6] Some major works appeared in sizes slightly smaller than folio, such as the Rabbinic Bibles produced by nineteenth-century printers in quarto format. This was more convenient for individuals' desks in synagogue, and such books could be used either for following biblical recitals or for study. Since worship and study could therefore coexist, one would expect editions of the liturgy similarly to have appeared either in folio size for study or in quarto size for study and worship. But no compendium of commentaries has ever been issued, even though there are commentaries available, some admittedly only in manuscript until recently. Those generated by twelfth- and thirteenth-century *Hasidei Ashkenaz*, for instance, have appeared usually without the liturgy to which they refer.

The most famous medieval liturgical commentary, by David Abudarham in the fourteenth-century, seems not to have appeared in its entirety either with the text of the prayers or with any other commentary. His identification of the sources of phrases and sentences embedded in liturgy could easily have formed the core of a larger corpus, but for some reason never did. But he seems to have established the standard approach to liturgy especially in Western Europe (where the exegetical emphasis in liturgical study is not kabbalistic): the compilation of catalogues of sources. These, uninterpreted and undigested, have the effect of surrounding liturgy in a critical silence in which thematic or conceptual analysis has no place.

The critical neglect of most of the liturgy contrasts with the vigorous tradition of studying the Passover Haggadah. This reflects the biblical

[6] The first printing of the entire Babylonian Talmud in 1520–3 contained the commentaries of Rashi and his followers the *Tosafot*, without which almost no edition has appeared since. The Vilna edition was issued in the late nineteenth century with over 100 glosses and superglosses, outnumbering the wordage of the main text, as do those in the same publisher's editions of the *Arba'ah Turim* and the *Shulhan Arukh*, and even of the non-halakhic *Midrash Rabbah*.

instruction to study the Exodus from Egypt 'all the days of your life'. Editions of the Haggadah have been issued with over 100 glosses, exemplifying how the rest of the liturgy might have been treated had it become ususal to scrutinize it.

The unique status of liturgy can be seen from the fact that although some prayer books have been issued in folio format, the traditional size for study books, such publications are for the use of prayer leaders, and not for students. They apparently echo the large-letter manuscripts prepared in the Middle Ages for prayer leaders who had to read in poor light, while most of the congregation had no books at all. Despite the large size of such folios, they are designed to accommodate not multiple commentaries, but the maximum amount of text on one spread, presented as clearly as possible. Wherever such prayer books do contain a commentary, this is generally a sixteenth-century gloss so garbled and abbreviated that it merely nods towards the need for study.[7] In general, large-format prayer books appear to be the only case of folio printing in Hebrew that does not feature commentaries. Uncommentated books tend to be in smaller format, while the larger format in the case of Bibles without commentaries is reserved for Torah scrolls. The splendid Koren folio edition of the Tanakh of the 1960s is modelled on European vernacular lectern Bibles rather than on Hebrew publications.

Prayer books in smaller-format, such as octavo (half of quarto) or less, usually contain just one commentary, again excluding comparative study. Examples are the eighteenth-century partly kabbalistic glosses of Isaiah Horowitz and Jacob of Emden, or the more textually focussed nineteenth-century annotations of Wolf Heidenheim on the festival prayers or of Yaakov Baer on the weekly liturgy. None of these were combined in single editions. Typically, the liturgical comments scattered through the writings of an early-modern rabbi such as Judah Loeb ben Bezalel of Prague (the Maharal) have recently been collected and juxtaposed with the text of the prayer book, but no other commentary appears together with them.[8]

One popular nineteenth-century Eastern European festival prayer book in quarto size with what looked like three commentaries was in fact the work of one author – Aaron ben Yechiyel Michael HaLevi of Mikhailishok – who devoted each gloss to a different approach. He and

[7] By Naftali Herz Treves, originally printed 1560.
[8] *Sidur maharal miprag* (Jerusalem 2004–5).

the printer clearly felt that presenting them as different texts rather than as a single one would be good for sales. But the result is almost a parody of the traditional multi-commentary edition, reflecting not a clash of minds and mentalities, but thinly disguised unanimity.

A few multi-commentary prayer books for weekly use did appear in the nineteenth century in octavo format, but this size leaves too little room for a full range of comparative material. In addition, most of the glosses included were halakhic in emphasis, focusing on practical matters rather than questions of meaning.[9] One edition in which the focus does happen to be literary rather than legal was *Otsar Hatefilot*, issued in Vilna in 1914; but its four main glosses, which are merely digests of the views of others, again offer too little text for comparative study.

The uncritical and non-conceptual approach to liturgy can be seen particularly clearly in the most popular edition of the festival prayers used in Britain. It is true that since the Enlightenment the synagogue has become the main site of most Western Jews' encounter with Judaism, and that British Jewry has low educational standards in Jewish matters. But the almost universally used edition of the festival liturgy of the last century takes to new extremes the task of making the texts it contains seem familiar to its users, rather than stimulating curiosity. The *Service of the Synagogue*, familiarly known as the 'Routledge *machzor*',[10] is a dignified Edwardian production, frequently reprinted, in which many of the festival poems are rendered into poetic form, domesticating these often theologically daring texts into conventional hymns. The prose versions in the older De Sola edition of the mid-nineteenth century seemed rather to emphasize the mysteriousness of the writings, by preventing the eye from gliding over them smoothly. In addition, several *piyyutim* in the Routledge edition are identified as optional and relegated to the ends of volumes, where some – often the most complex and opaque of them – are left untranslated. This segregation, part of a well-intentioned nineteenth-century attempt to shorten services, gives the impression that the liturgy is less an authoritative text

[9] Jacob Lorbeerbaum's *Derekh Hahayim* appeared in 1828 and was reissued with a supercommentary by Solomon Ganzfried in 1839. Both were combined with *Nehorah Hashalem* (by Aaron ben Yehiyel Michael HaLevi of Mikhailishok) in 1859 in Vienna.

[10] Herbert M. Adler and Arthur Davis (eds) *Mahzor Avodat Ohel Mo'ed. Service of the Synagogue. A New Edition of the Festival Prayers with an English Translation in Prose and Verse* (London 1904–8).

to be taken as a whole than a fluid anthology. The dual effects of the demystification of liturgy and the anthological viewpoint help to account for the prevailing lack of curiousity about the prayer book in English-speaking lands. The two-tiered approach even survives in the *Artscroll Machzor* – the acme of contemporary Orthodoxy – which similarly quarantines a number of untranslated texts to an appendix.

My own book on the liturgy was partly inspired by this accident of publication. I was struck by De Sola's admission of incomprehension in the face of liturgical complexity, coupled with his tacit assumption that it is a continuous, complete and authoritative whole. This emerges from the way his prose suggests at least potential cogency, rather than something formal and ornamental, and leads one to look for a beginning, middle and end. But he did not spell out the structure hinted at, and treated liturgy as though it was in need of no further comment. The dissonance between his approach and that of the Routledge team, for whom liturgy occasionally seemed merely decorative, seemed to me to be worth exploring.

I began by considering some of the factors that might have led to a suppression of liturgical commentary. First, commentators may have observed that since prayer is a substitute for the public cult of the Temple, which needed no particular devotion or intention, prayer likewise requires only to be performed, with or without intellectual engagement. This cannot explain the lack of commentary, however, since many prayers do demand attention and are also easily understood. Secondly, writers may have been put off writing commentaries by the existence of several parallel versions of the liturgy, none of them arguably superior to others or exclusively 'right'. The familiar Sephardi and Ashkenazi liturgies are survivals of a wider range of variants that disappeared with the invention of printing. Yet this did not discourage commentators from writing on the rites with which they were familiar, even if their commentaries were not systematically and comparatively studied.

Thirdly, commentators may have found liturgy too difficult to write about, due to its allusive and non-discursive nature. But since Bible, which is no less complex, is richly commentated, there is no obvious reason for liturgy to have been neglected. Fourthly, the frequent repetition of prayer led to contempt for the liturgical genre, reflected in

mantric styles of worship and traditions of informal behaviour in synagogue. The realization that prayers may be treated as something other than discursive writing appeared to me to explain the predominance of lists of sources in liturgical commentary. These are non-analytic and reflect the absence of thought in relating to liturgy commonly witnessed in synagogues. But the tendency to treat prayer as mantra does not explain why the study of commentaries should be discouraged in the way it is.

A fifth and last factor is that rabbinic writers seem to have been aware that open discussion of the philosophical problems associated with formal liturgical prayer might demoralize non-specialists and undermine communal life. For this reason serious debate about Hebrew liturgical prayer was conducted well out of the view of the uninitiated, if at all. They could ask whether God hears private thoughts, understands languages other than Hebrew, accepts wishes at non-prayer times, can be told something he does not know, or be persuaded to change his mind, but it is better to avoid such issues. For this reason talmudic writers discourage what they called *Iyun tefillah*, which commentators have defined as 'checking the efficacy of worship'. This avoidance ensured that by the Middle Ages philosophical approaches to prayer were current among only a relatively small intellectual elite.

Talmudic rabbis were clearly thinking in these terms when they recommended that one praise God for bad as well as good experiences.[11] This is a complex statement. It suggests, first, that good might emerge from suffering. Secondly it implies that petitionary prayer might indeed have a value, however obscure. But thirdly it could mean that the effectiveness of prayer is immaterial and survival itself a matter for praise. The ability to pray is sufficient reason to do so, whether or not we think we have anything for which to be grateful. Prayer acknowledging the fact that we are alive is likely to be reflexive rather than addressed to God, however, and therefore to be neither petitionary nor praiseful.

Implicitly, therefore, worship can be either naturalistically self-addressed or supernaturally petitionary, or both. Self-addressed liturgy would be something other than what we regard as conventionally prayerful, of course, but by involving the use of Hebrew – the language of Torah – it brings worshippers into contact with the sacred narrative. This itself has a salvific function for the supernaturally minded, because

[11] BT *Berakhot* 33b.

closeness to Torah is a condition for wellbeing. Similarly for the naturalistically minded, Torah is a tool with which to think about the world, and therefore a key to 'wisdom' and happiness.

I suggest in my book that conceptual commentary was therefore excluded to preserve public morale. But if so, why was its place taken by the compilation of lists of sources? Would it not have been easier to exclude commentary altogether? I had originally viewed these lists as an exercise in avoidance, breaking the silence merely in order to cover up a critical boycott – a sort of exegetical smokescreen. Lists of sources are a non-commentary, disguising critical silence by critical indirection.

I now feel, however, that this fails to do justice to their function.[12] The mantric state of mind that accompanies detachment from the conceptual meaning of prayer resembles a meditative reverie that enables readers to respond to the echo-chamber-like qualities of the liturgy.[13] A list of sources opens a door to the undercurrents of the text on the page, directing readers to the original contexts from which the words on the page are derived and importing these into a polyphonic reading of the texts.

Most liturgical texts are composed out of citation, allusion and echo, and the ability to identify original contexts throws familiar words into multiple, unfamiliar focus. The effect of such literary multilayering – conventionally referred to as 'intertextuality' – is to destabilize the referential power of the words on the page and to expand the range of underlying meanings. An example of this is the use of the formulation 'God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob' at the beginning of the Amidah prayer. Lists of liturgical sources highlight the fact that his formulation was chosen rather than the more common and economical 'God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob'. The reader is told enough to be able to discover that the formula used here occurs in the Bible uniquely in the Burning Bush scene, in which Moses is called to redeem the Israelites from slavery.[14] In this way it locates the worshipper precisely in that foundation scene of freedom, experiencing revelation. It throws light on the symbolic location of the synagogue or place of prayer as a wilderness, and on the potential role of each worshipper as a rescuer.

[12] I am grateful to Professor Martin Goodman and Professor Raphael Loewe for challenging me on the issue.

[13] For more on 'reverie' see Thomas Ogden, *Conversations at the Frontier of Dreaming* (New Jersey, London 2001) 21. I am grateful to Rabbi Jeffrey Newman for this reference.

[14] Exodus 3:6, 15.

Those who compiled lists of liturgical sources ensured that the chromatic range wielded by the liturgical editors could be correctly understood by someone whose literary sensitivity was alerted to the presence of a subtext.

Rabbinic writers had a sufficiently sophisticated understanding of the act of reading to recognize that one can be aware of several different levels of language at the same time even without actively 'thinking' about them. In this way they anticipated contemporary understandings of dreams, as well as so-called 'Freudian slips' and the destabilizing power of puns,[15] what Aviva Zornberg has dubbed 'harmonics'.[16] Much midrashic writing is predicated on a similar approach to the written word, most obviously in the exegetical principle of *gezerah shavah*, literally 'inference from similarity', or 'parallel passage', in which similar wordings are juxtaposed. Frequent repetition of prayer, coupled by awareness of sources, makes surface and underlying meanings simultaneously accessible, and ensures that these resonate with the worshipper's own concerns.

The need for this heightened style of reading if liturgy is to remain a lively experience might have inspired the boycott of analytic discussion in the first place. Liturgical commentators refrained from documenting their own readings not only because of the embarrassing ideas that might emerge, but in order to allow others to experience the undercurrents of liturgical texts in their own terms. This would preserve the freshness of approach that makes prayers capable of constant reinterpretation over time and depending on circumstances. Commentators knew that associative readings are too multilayered to be made fully conscious, and that conceptual language cannot carry multiple strata of significance. Liturgy, they might have said, must be read with the personal insight one brings to poetry, rather than through the eyes of others. To achieve this, commentators provided the tools for each reader to produce the sort of self-made commentary that reflects their private concerns – lists of sources, rather than full exposition.

[15] A bilingual example, pointed out to me by Professor Raphael Loewe, is Napier's apocryphal one-word dispatch after his completion of a campaign that colleagues feared would overextend his lines: *Peccavi* ('I have Sin[ne]d' [= India]').

[16] A patient of the psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion responded to an interpretation, saying 'I understand'. Bion replied: 'Please try not to understand. If you must, superstand, circumstand, parastand, but please try not to understand'. Thomas Ogden, *Conversations at the Frontier of Dreaming* (New Jersey, London 2001) 71 n. 3.

My own analytical reading of the liturgy might contravene the approach that I think rabbinic writers recommended. But I have set out primarily to demonstrate what they implied was possible, treating the commentators' silence as an invitation to associative approaches and as a mouthpiece for a response that might be a model for others.

It will be helpful to illustrate this argument by unpacking some of the undercurrents of two related liturgical texts. The first of these is the blessing formula, the most common and ancient Jewish prayer, and perhaps the most familiar group of words in the liturgy. A usual form of this opens with the words 'Blessed are you God, our Lord, king of the universe'. This phrase seems to be addressed to God, but 'blessed' is a curious form of address to use in this context; and the formula next shifts to the third person for the rest of the introductory clause: 'who sanctified us with his commands and ordered us to…', followed by the name of some ritual or other. This is a strange formulation that translators have often disguised by using the second person singular throughout.

If one focuses on the associations of the words rather their literal meaning, one notes that the two parts of the formula use different names of God. The opening clause, 'blessed are you, God', uses the Tetragrammaton, while the second clause, 'our Lord, king of the universe', uses a different name, *Elohim*. The first of these, the Tetragrammaton, is the divine name that rabbinic writers associate with the more gentle divine attributes of divine closeness, kindness and paternity, associations confirmed by the second-person form of address in the opening clause. The second name is associated rather with divine severity, transcendence, remoteness and kingliness, qualities reflected in the use of the word 'king' in the same phrase. Blessings that continue in the third person, 'who sanctified us with his commands and ordered us to…', merely emphasize this shift away from the familiarity and warmth of the first three Hebrew words towards the colder remoteness of the next three.

The blessing formula, which is so much part of the liturgical landscape that it is usually taken for granted, can therefore be seen as something dynamic and challenging. For a supernaturally minded reader it will be a simple statement of faith, but for a naturalistically minded one it becomes a philosophical proposition representing a bipolar relationship

with God. In this one moves from an awareness of divine immanence towards one of transcendence. Seen in this way the words represent the way we aspire to closeness to God, but invariably fail to attain it. This idea echoes the principle of delayed gratification that one finds throughout the liturgy and implicitly also in the biblical narrative. It is illustrated, for instance, by Moses's failure to enter the Promised Land, or the non-occurrence of messianic redemption from exile. The liturgy uses it as a template for each formal address to God.

The other text to be reviewed here is the Shema, the central creedal statement read twice a day. It comprises three juxtaposed biblical paragraphs. The first (Deuteronomy 6:4–9) demands that we remain close to God by attending to his revelation. The second (Deuteronomy 11:13–21) repeats this demand and promises happiness if we succeed in remaining close, but exile if we depart. The emphasis on exile implies that this brief anthology was compiled when Jews had already been deported to Babylon. The third (Numbers 15:37–41) requires Jews to wear 'fringes' on their clothes to remind them of God's commandments.

These three texts are no mere anthology, however, but a fresh confection in which the original context of each passage is relevant. It is essential to take equal account of both levels of interpretation – the old and the new contexts – in order to recover the liturgical editors' intended meaning. Most obviously, the passages were chosen since they emphasize the obligation to study Torah, and make it possible to perform that obligation. But reading them associatively suggests that they were chosen in order to rationalize the loss of homeland, and to do so by acknowledging the editors' own departure from Torah.

The editors could have attributed their failure to understand Torah, and their consequent exile, to the limitations of the human mind, as did the rabbis who attributed to Torah seventy faces which God alone can see, thereby sentencing humans to ignorance and landlessness. But they went further, enacting this departure by fragmenting Torah so that it is no longer seen in its integral form. Retracing their steps, we can see that the first paragraph (from Deuteronomy 6:4–9) is followed in the Bible by a conditional statement (Deuteronomy 6:10–16) that is very similar to the one that now appears after it in the liturgy. The liturgical second paragraph was taken from elsewhere in the Bible (Deuteronomy 11:13–21), while the paragraph that appears after it in the Bible was

rejected. One reason for substituting the biblical sequel to paragraph one for another text is that the second paragraph now in the Shema (Deuteronomy 11:13–21) threatens merely exile for those departing from Torah (or would have been read as such by rabbinic interpreters), while the biblical sequel to the first paragraph (Deuteronomy 6:10–16) promises complete destruction. The liturgical editors may well have found the punishment of destruction distasteful or demoralizing, given their own exile, and have wanted to remove the reference to it. But by substituting the passages they departed from the text of Torah and caused liturgical readers to do likewise, thereby misrepresenting revelation and perpetrating the very sin for which exile is promised.

The editors seem to have been aware of what they had done, since the third paragraph of the Shema (Numbers 15:37–41) implies their belief in the possibility of surviving exile and eventually arriving in the land. Here again the biblical context is relevant. The passage in its original setting follows the episode of the spies, after which the wandering Israelites are told they would never enter the Holy Land, but would die landless in the wilderness. Only their children, provided they wear fringes on the corners of their garments, will enter the land, overcoming exile by means of attending to Torah. Fringes – possibly metaphors for remaining visibly and publically Jewish – therefore help Jews overcome landlessness and keep alive the possibility that they will benefit from messianic rescue. This is alluded to in the closing mention in the paragraph to the redemption from Egypt. The fringes – a ritual gesture – replace intellectual process, acknowledging the impossibility of the study instructed in the first two paragraphs. The paragraph also implies that messianic redemption, like the Exodus, will be the gratuitous result of divine kindness rather than earned by good deeds.

A similar idea emerges from first and last lines of the Shema. The first features both the divine names mentioned earlier in the context of the blessing formula. This states: 'Hear, Israel. God [the Tetragrammaton, the divine name suggesting mercy] our Lord [the name implying severity] is one God [the Tetragammaton again]'. In this formula the Tetragrammaton of mercy outnumbers and flanks the name associated with severity, without completely overcoming it and thereby suggesting hope. But when the same names reappear in the last verse of the third paragraph (Numbers 15: 41), which begins and ends with the formula 'I am God your Lord', the aligning of the names suggests that

the associations of the names – mercy and severity – will be in equilibrium. On the one hand this suggests the failure of mercy and the withdrawal of closeness, much as in the blessing formula. But on the other hand the central words of the verse – 'who brought you out of Egypt' – imply that God's gratuitous mercy, which once redeemed the Israelites from Egypt and ensures the liturgical speaker's present survival, will overcome the severity that permits exile. But even without this act of gratuitous kindness, our present survival represents the victory of mercy in the here-and-now. The liturgy for the Days of Awe repeatedly asks God to move from his throne of severity to that of mercy, in a trope often assumed to be characteristic of that season alone. But this idea can now be traced in the deployment of divine names throughout the daily prayers.

Reading multilayered liturgical texts associatively in this way shows the figure of God as both an actual and an ideal interlocutor, poised between kindness and severity, while the speaker can be regarded, depending on theological preferences, as in immediate contact with him or as ultimately alone. The liturgical narrative, as I suggest in the book, is a multilayered series of theological propositions, and one that we can at last begin to read.

Would the self-absorbed worshippers of my childhood have agreed with this approach to the prayer book? Some might have acknowledged that it is an echo chamber of allusion and counterallusion, even if they did not agree with each of my readings. In showing what can be done by one reader, the book is a tribute to such people, who I think could instinctively penetrate the exegetical silence surrounding the prayer book. They did so by deploying a mode of reading that is both pre- and post-literate, apparently best achieved with a prayer shawl over ones head – an unfamiliar posture for literary critics, but one with much to recommend it.

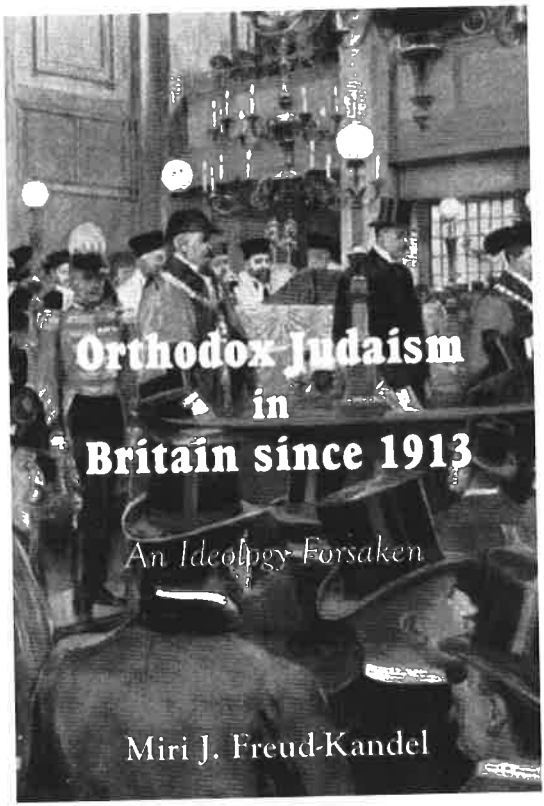
Orthodox Judaism in Britain Since 1913: An Ideology Forsaken[1]

MIRI FREUD-KANDEL

The book outlined here focuses on the periods in office of two British chief rabbis: Joseph Hermann Hertz (1872–1946) who served between 1913 and 1946, and Israel Brodie (1895–1979) who was in office from 1948 until 1965. The subsequent incumbency of Immanuel Jakobovits (1921–1999), which lasted from 1967 to 1991, rounds off the work of three chief rabbis who span the twentieth century. The book is less an historical survey of Anglo-Jewish Orthodoxy, than an investigation into the shifting theological balance of the community in response to social and institutional changes, including the ability of the Chief Rabbi to represent and lead the community effectively, the importance of immigration in altering both the physical and intellectual makeup of Anglo-Jewry, and the role of the so-called 'Jacobs Affair'. The changes significantly influenced a central challenge of Anglo-Jewish life: how to balance Jewish identity with active engagement in British society.

Most Jews in Britain have traditionally belonged to mainstream Orthodox synagogues. However, as Chief Rabbi Jakobovits noted in a sermon delivered at the Centenary Service of the United Synagogue, 'Unlike other synagogue groups, whether to the right or to the left of us, which attract their members primarily through some ideological commitment ... our synagogues have depended in the main on a sense of reverence for tradition, on filial loyalty, on sons expecting to take the place of their fathers. ... a hereditary nobility in which parents automatically bequeath their life titles and their obligations to their children.' Jakobovits also observed, perhaps especially once he had entered the House of Lords, that popular acceptance of the peerage system is in decline in British society, making it harder for religious leaders in Anglo-Jewry to find a way to 'induce our children to earn their own

[1] Miri Freud-Kandel, *Orthodox Judaism in Britain Since 1913: An Ideology Forsaken* (London: Vallentine Mitchell 2006).



elevation to the House of Israel if we expect them to wear the crown of Torah-living after us'.[2]

Indeed, for all three Chief Rabbis considered here the difficulty was to find a way of encouraging Jews in Britain not only to retain an affiliation to mainstream Orthodox Judaism, but to buy into Orthodox values and ritual observance while continuing to engage in the life of British society at large.

A survey of Anglo-Jewry that focused on the London community, entitled *A Time for Change*, was undertaken in 1991–2, at the end of the

[2] 'Milestones and Millstones', Address, July 1970, in *The Timely and Timeless: Jews, Judaism and Society in a Storm-tossed Decade* (London: Vallentine Mitchell 1977) 65–6.

period studied in this work. It revealed numerical decline and a sense of alienation from the values long held to characterize the community and the principles dominating its religious institutions. The term *minhag Anglia*, literally the 'the custom of England', has been identified as capturing the traditional values of Anglo-Jewry. It was defined as 'a celebration of the twofold blessing of being Jewish and British',[3] Jewish settlement in Britain having generally been seen as blessed by tolerance, successful integration and stability. The expression masked some of the harsher realities and, from a rabbinic perspective, some of the weaknesses that had long characterized Judaism in Britain. Yet it accurately reflected the belief among Jews that they would be able to blend the dual roles of being Jewish and British rather than having to choose between them. The fact that the 1992 survey uncovered a weakening of this sentiment implied that an ideology characteristic of Anglo-Jewry had been forsaken.

On appointment as Chief Rabbi in 1913, Joseph Herman Hertz faced a divided community. He was expected to represent Anglo-Jewry as a whole. But the gap between those who exerted power and the views of those they purportedly represented would prove an abiding phenomenon.

The election process of the new Chief Rabbi had been dominated by the United Synagogue and its president Lord Rothschild. This synagogal body, established in 1870, formed a key pillar of Anglo-Jewry's attempts to centralize control over the community. The drive for centralization had emerged from historical experience. As a voluntary community, Anglo-Jewry depended on synagogue membership fees – alongside other revenues collected from such activities as ritual slaughter – to fund the religious services required by the community. There were no compulsory communal taxes, so legislation developed to regulate the community was generally designed to give prominence and additional rights to those who contributed to the central coffers by paying membership dues.

In an attempt to encourage Jews to affiliate as members, Anglo-Jewry developed a tendency to inclusivism without necessarily requiring related levels of religious observance and practice. These impulses towards centralization and religious inclusivism were also influenced by

[3] *A Time for Change: United Synagogue Review* (London 1992) 37.

perceptions of how religion functioned in Britain as a whole. The Jewish community felt compelled particularly during the nineteenth century to demonstrate its affinity to British values and mores, in an attempt to prove its worth as an acceptable part of wider British society. Jews were subjected to what some historians have characterized as an 'antisemitism of tolerance',[4] a form of British liberalism predicated on accepting those who conformed to an idealized model of how to be English while downplaying their distinctive features. For Jews the established Church of England acted as a powerful model of the appropriate religiosity. This encouraged religious affiliation, often perceived as a symbol of respectability, without demanding that one define the theology implied by one's religious identity. The development of Judaism and its institutions in Britain is consequently coloured by an Anglican emphasis on centralized and hierarchical control, alongside a generally inclusivist 'broad church' theology.

The office of Chief Rabbi is similarly a product of historical circumstance and social influences affecting the Anglo-Jewish community. Limits on the number of trained rabbinic authorities supported by Jewish communities in Britain was one factor encouraging the emergence of a single rabbinic authority. A disinclination to emphasize the importance of religious education also undermined the chances of producing rabbinical leadership from within Anglo-Jewry. Moreover, British tolerance for Judaism precluded the need to engage in elaborate debates on the place of Judaism, as sometimes occurred on the Continent. Under different circumstances the need to encourage religious Jewish thought within the community might have fostered the development of a more varied religious leadership. Here the impulse to centralize control and authority produced the desire, which increased during the nineteenth century, to create a single representative leadership figure who could share a platform with the religious leader of the Anglican Church and representatives of the other major religious groups.

The inclination to demonstrate the compatibility of Judaism with Britishness increased as the nineteenth century progressed. Mass immigration from Eastern Europe burst on the scene in the 1880s, radically

[4] Bill Williams, 'Anti-Semitism of Tolerance: Middle Class Manchester and the Jews, 1870–1900', in A. J. Kidd and K. W. Roberts (eds) *City, Class and Culture: Studies of Social Policy and Cultural Production in Victorian Manchester* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1985) 74–102.

altering the shape of Anglo-Jewry. If the established Jewish community had been concerned about perceptions of Jews as foreigners prior to this immigration, the arrival of some 200,000 Eastern European Jews between 1880 and 1914 exacerbated both external and internal perceptions of Jews as tainted with 'foreignness'. For Jews wishing to demonstrate their ability to be ideal British citizens, the need to play down Jewish distinctiveness became more urgent. For a Chief Rabbi leading a community in which the priorities of the established community often differed from those of the immigrants, the task of finding a means of maintaining Jewish identity, affiliation and practice became more delicate.

By the early twentieth century the previous century's impulse towards centralization was being undermined by growing disparities within the Anglo-Jewish community – split between its so-called native and immigrant populations, although both groups owed their presence in Britain to immigration. In 1913 the Chief Rabbi's ability to represent a community characterized by differing goals, concerns and beliefs would be determined by the character, theology and leadership of the individual in office. Perhaps more by luck than judgement, Chief Rabbi Hertz was generally successful as a unifying leadership figure. As my book discusses, this was due both to his theology and to the forceful personality which enabled him to promulgate his views with confidence.

Hertz's progressive conservative Judaism was predicated on a sense that Judaism was shown by history to be perfectly capable of engaging in the ideas of the surrounding society. It could synthesize what was best from the thought it encountered, while imparting the wisdom of its own values back to society. Hertz characterized this as a process of 'cross-fertilisation' in which both Judaism and host societies benefited and together contributed to an overall understanding of truth.[5] In Anglo-Jewry this position enabled Hertz to defend and promote traditional Judaism among strict adherents of the religion. Since these were often concentrated in the immigrant community, he established a viable role for himself in this sector. Meanwhile, the more Anglicized Jews were appeased and attracted by the manner in which Hertz championed the value of active engagement with the ideas of British society.

[5] See for example his 'The Hallowing of History', in J. H. Hertz, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs: Hebrew text, English Translation and Commentary* (London: Soncino, 2nd edn, 1975) 936.

Hertz promulgated a religious understanding of Jewishness and Britishness that would allow traditional Judaism to flourish in Britain without impairing participation in society. He fought to improve education, understanding and observance of Judaism across Anglo-Jewry. Among supporters of what some viewed as 'obscurantist' Judaism he argued for the viability of active engagement in secular life and thought. Among the more assimilated, indifferent or non-Orthodox he battled to improve religious observance, arguing for the abiding appeal of Judaism and the certainty that revelation gave its teachings over the fleeting attractions of contemporary fads.

Half a century later in 1967, when Immanuel Jakobovits acceded to the Chief Rabbinate, he was similarly required to provide unifying leadership and representation to a bitterly divided Jewish community in Britain. Anglo-Jewry still bore the scars of the infamous Jacobs Affair of the later years of the incumbency of Israel Brodie, Chief Rabbi between 1948 and 1965. Jakobovits exhibited a confidence in the viability and suitability of the theological programme that he would advocate for Anglo-Jewry that in some ways recalled Hertz. Neither man would succumb to pressure to alter a principled position, and both promoted a Jewish ideology of synthesis – a blending of Britishness and Jewishness. Yet the historical circumstances in which these two leaders found themselves differed markedly.

Within weeks of Jakobovits's accession he was forced to address the crises and triumphs of the Six Day War. Perceptions of the merits of the modern world and the role of Jewish identity had been shaped by the Jewish experiences of the twentieth century: the Shoah and the creation of a Jewish state. Hertz, by contrast, had imbibed appreciation of the liberal societies and opinions to which Jews had been granted access in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This stance, absorbed by Hertz during his rabbinic training under the Sephardi Sabato Morais, was absent from the thought of Jakobovits. Born in Germany and a refugee from Nazism, Jakobovits had been raised in the neo-Orthodox *Torah im derekh eretz* ('Torah with the way of the world') school of thought. Although this theology encouraged engagement in the surrounding society, the sense that a post-Shoah society had positive practical values to offer Judaism had been undermined. Meanwhile the growing role of Israel in Jewish consciousness tended to encourage a greater pride in a distinctive Jewish identity.

Moreover, the Anglo-Jewish setting in which Jakobovits found himself differed considerably from that which Hertz had known. Between 1946 and 1967 Britain had to deal with the aftermath of World War II, see its imperial role unravel and its society struggle to establish its new identity and future character. Jakobovits, who often spoke appreciatively of the liberal British tradition that had accepted him as a refugee in the 1930s, perceived the ideological shifts manifesting themselves during the 1970s and 1980s and quickly identified the weaknesses he believed to be a feature of that society. He emphasized the principles that he felt Judaism could contribute,[6] viewing this as a *Torah im derekh eretz* theology in which Torah could contribute to the surrounding *derekh eretz*. However he saw little scope for understandings of Torah to gain from the encounter. The values he subsequently espoused as Chief Rabbi famously endeared him to Margaret Thatcher. Yet his belief in the vacuity of contemporary society led him to discourage the cross-fertilisation which many in his Anglo-Jewish audience still sought to maintain. The perenial question of how to blend Jewish and British identities was approached by Jakobovits in largely negative terms, thereby failing to address the concerns of the constituency he had been appointed to lead.

The opening two stages of what became known as 'the Jacobs Affair', which immediately preceded Jakobovits's appointment, in many ways encapsulates the issue of how to balance Jewishness and Britishness. Ostensibly it arose from Rabbi Dr Louis Jacobs's book *We Have Reason to Believe* published in 1957. The furore was sparked off in 1961 by a public letter of resignation from the faculty of Jews' College, the major rabbinical training institute of Anglo-Jewry. This was sent by Jacobs in response to Chief Rabbi Brodie's refusal to ratify his appointment as Principal of the College, a post promised to Jacobs by several governors of the College, despite the power of veto which the Chief Rabbi exercised over the appointment. Jacobs's supporters hoped that he would one day be in a position to lead the community, so his resignation was accompanied by those of a number of the governors, leaving Jews' College in turmoil and embroiling the Chief Rabbinate in a public controversy.

[6] See, for example, 'Human Rights and Human Duties', Address delivered to the Institute of Directors, November 1976, in I. Jakobovits, *The Timely and Timeless: Jews, Judaism and Society in a Storm-tossed Decade* (London: Vallentine Mitchell 1977) 125–9.

Jacobs's promised appointment as Principal, which had encouraged him to leave his ministerial post at the prestigious New West End Synagogue where he had been a leading rabbi in the United Synagogue ministry, belied his solidly ultra-Orthodox credentials. Trained in two bastions of ultra-Orthodoxy, Manchester Yeshivah and Gateshead Kolel, Jacobs's journey to Jews' College had followed what could be viewed as an increasingly progressive religious path. After initially committing himself to full-time talmudic study, he held posts at the German-Orthodox-inspired Golders Green Beth Hamedrash and at the Central Synagogue in Manchester before entering the United Synagogue ministry. Jacobs later explained that he viewed his appointment at the New West End as an opportunity for greater theological scope and religious flexibility than he had been able to enjoy in his earlier positions.[7]

Jacobs's religious development can be examined in relation to his increasing engagement with secular studies. On receiving *semikhah* from his Rosh Yeshivah at Manchester he and his fellow students had been warned against wasting time on university studies that should be devoted to Torah learning. But following his appointment as assistant rabbi at the Samson Raphael Hirsch-inspired Golders Green Beth Hamedrash, where university studies were not viewed with the same fear, Jacobs did pursue these interests. It is uncertain whether it was this initial decision to enter university or the subsequent uses to which he would put the knowledge he acquired there that posed the greater problem for the Orthodox critics who would later ostracize him. Either way, this was the point from which Jacobs's previously unimpeachable Orthodoxy came to be questioned.

Jacobs first studied for an undergraduate degree and then a doctorate in Semitics, and was struck by the apparent contradictions between scholarly views and teachings current in yeshivot especially about the sources and development of revelation. Unable to ignore the claims either of Jewish teachings regarding *Torah min haShamayim* ('Torah from heaven') or of scholarly arguments regarding the history and authorship of biblical texts, Jacobs wrote his *We Have Reason to Believe* in an attempt to reconcile these views.

[7] 'The New West End Synagogue in St. Petersburgh Place, Kensington, was the Anglicised synagogue *par excellence*. ... The result was typical Anglo-Jewish compromise.' L. Jacobs, *Helping with Inquiries: An Autobiography* (London: Vallentine Mitchell 1989) 104.

Subsequent stages in the Jacobs Affair seem to have been motivated by factors unrelated to these theological arguments. They included concerns over the authority of the central institutions of Anglo-Jewry – the Chief Rabbinate and the United Synagogue – and the attempts by leaders of the old native community to maintain control in the face of the growing authority and confidence of the children and grandchildren of immigrants. The *Jewish Chronicle* – a principal protagonist in the Affair – revelled in the opportunity to debate religious issues in a community renowned for steering clear of such concerns, although popular interest was driven more by the controversy than the principles being discussed. Even among the rabbinical protagonists debating issues of theology, the Jacobs Affair was about more than acceptable interpretations of the doctrine of *Torah min haShamayim*. It revolved around the question of how Jews in Britain should approach the dilemma of their dual identities as British Jews.

Leaving aside the details of Jacobs's attempted reinterpretation of *Torah min haShamayim*, it is important to note that he lacked the educational training that underpinned Chief Rabbi Hertz's progressive conservative Judaism. Hertz had been concerned precisely to prepare Jewish youth for the encounter between the sometimes contradictory teachings of Judaism and the ideas of the surrounding society. His educational system sought to address the challenge of *minhag Anglia*: the balancing act between Jewish and British identities. But those in the rabbinical hierarchy who came to question the very viability of *minhag Anglia*, in the light of Jacobs's exposition of the doctrine of revelation following his encounter with the university, ignored the absence of a Hertzian style of worldly education in Jacobs's background. They feared that if someone of Jacobs's Orthodox credentials could question the principles of *Torah min haShamayim*, no-one in Anglo-Jewry was safe from the dangers of contamination. Attempting to balance British and Jewish identities could leave Judaism susceptible to fearful influences.

Even though the fears raised by Jacobs's views led some rabbinic leaders to shy away from the challenge of maintaining intellectual Jewish engagement in British society, this did not remove the popular impulse to do so. For many in Anglo-Jewry the theological disputes of the Jacobs Affair and any proposed solutions were of slight importance. Most Jews in Britain continued to seek full involvement in their host society. Only a small, if increasing, proportion followed the rabbinate in

steering clear of external ideas out of fear for the consequences of attempting to balance identities. The influence of the religious leadership was limited by practical considerations. The Jacobs Affair, in short, failed to produce a sharp rightward theological shift among most laity, and affected most strongly the rabbinate, from whom there was only a gradual seeping down of influence into the community.

As noted above, the accession of Jakobovits to the Chief Rabbinate introduced into Anglo-Jewry a rabbinic leader who on one level identified with an ideology of synthesis and support for the value of Britishness, while on another level, in line with the growing rabbinic consensus, limited the practical application of these ideas. This would help strengthen right-wing Orthodoxy in Britain and exert considerable influence over the mainstream institutions.

In some respects this strengthening of a right-wing Orthodoxy that shied away from endorsing interactions with the host society can be seen to reflect changing values in wider British society. In the second half of the twentieth century Britain witnessed growing support for multiculturalism. In one perspective the shift away a theology of synthesis towards a theology of compartmentalization reflected lack of confidence in Judaism's ability to survive its encounter with the surrounding society. Yet it also symbolized a new-found confidence among minority groups in their ability to celebrate their particularist identities in contradistinction to their Britishness. The waning appeal of certain British values, especially imperialist ones, provided a further incentive.

Burgeoning British multicultural values empowered certain minority groups to avoid integration and to demand acceptance precisely in terms of their differences rather than their similarities with the host society. Outflanking traditional British tolerance, the principle of multiculturalism gave credence to a demand for acceptance of the other as other. The very nature of Anglo-Jewry's inclination to harmonize with British society thereby enabled certain sectors of the community to make use of developing ideas in the surrounding society while formally dissociating from it.

The related shift in mindset from modernism to post-modernism was also important for right-wing Orthodoxy. The loss of hope in the values of modernism, or in the possibility of objective truth, contributed to the strengthening of alternative viewpoints. Despite these historical,

social and intellectual factors that could help to underpin right-wing Orthodoxy in Britain, the appeal of this shifting theology to Anglo-Jewish laity has remained limited. As already noted, *A Time for Change*, the survey carried out by the United Synagogue as Jonathan Sacks was acceding to the Chief Rabbinate, uncovered deep dissatisfaction with the state of Orthodoxy in Britain and with the leadership provided by the community's central bodies. It also highlighted popular discontent with the rightward theological shift perceived to have occurred in the community. According to this, the religious leadership of the United Synagogue, Chief Rabbinate and London Bet Din were failing to reflect the priorities of the community in their approach to the question of how to balance Jewish and British identities. For many in the laity the response to this question was more practically oriented than driven by methodical theology. Yet whether seeking practical or theoretical answers, the challenge of balancing dual identities remains a critical issue for Jews in Britain.

For Anglo-Jewish Orthodoxy in the twenty-first century the question is whether it is viable or useful to search for one single broadly appealing model of how to be Jewish and British. The shift to post-modernism highlights the manner in which individuals can develop and maintain multiple layers of identity understood in different ways by different individuals. The current decade has witnessed a fall in the appeal of overly simplistic views of multiculturalism. Meanwhile the value of cultural monism remains in doubt. The impetus to seek and impose a single means of being Anglo-Jewish, and the continuing desire to present this as a position that could be advocated by a single representative Chief Rabbi, reflects older British influences.

The central question for minority groups of how to balance particularism and engagement remains as vital today in Judaism as in the surrounding society. By examining some of the theological models that have been propounded in the Jewish community in Britain in response to this question, I have tried in my book to make some contribution to this debate.

THE ACADEMIC YEAR

Michaelmas Term 2006

Lectures, Seminars and Classes

Topics in Biblical History *Professor Hugh Williamson*

Isaiah 6:1–9:6 *Professor Hugh Williamson*

Advanced Biblical Hebrew Language *Professor Hugh Williamson*

Jewish History, 200 BCE to 70 CE *Professor Martin Goodman*

Seminar on Jewish History and Literature in the Graeco-Roman Period[1]
(*Convened by Professor Martin Goodman*)

Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1–3: Text, Tradition and Interpretation *Dr Timothy Edwards*

The Qumran Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and the Celestial Hierarchy of Dionysius the Areopagite: A Comparative Approach *Professor Philip Alexander*

'For the Welfare of his Mother-in-Law': Synagogues, Benefactors and Jewish Inscriptions in the Roman Empire *Dr David Noy*

Holy Tongue, Temple Tongue and Divine Tongue *Dr Willem Smelik*

The Reliability of Attributions in Early Rabbinic Literature: Dead Horse or Red Herring? *Dr Sacha Stern*

Fearers of Heaven *Geoffrey Moore*

The Qumran Forum
(*Convened by Professor Martin Goodman and Professor Geza Vermes*)

Scriptural Allusions and Exegesis in the Hodayot *Dr Julie Hughes*

The Formation of Rabbinic Judaism *Professor Martin Goodman and Dr Joanna Weinberg*

[1] Dr Hava Tirosh-Samuelson's paper entitled 'Nature in Second-Temple Wisdom Literature: Ben Sira, Wisdom of Solomon, and I Enoch', delivered in Trinity Term 2006 in place of a lecture which was cancelled at short notice, was inadvertently omitted from the *Report* for 2005–6. A report on her stay at the Centre appears on pages 152–3 below.

Rabbinic Texts *Dr Joanna Weinberg*

Introduction to Jewish Life, Thought and Worship
Dr Miri Freud-Kandel

Jewish Liturgy *Dr Jeremy Schonfield*

Jewish and Christian Bible Translation and Interpretation in Antiquity *Dr Alison Salvesen*

Reading the Psalms from King David to David Kimhi
Dr Timothy Edwards

Modern European Jewish History *Dr Natan Meir*

The Emergence of Modern Religious Movements in Judaism
Dr Miri Freud-Kandel

Islam in the Middle East in the Twentieth Century: Islamic Thought
Ronald Nettler

Questions of Jewish Identity in Modern Yiddish Fiction
Dr Joseph Sherman

Introduction to Yiddish Studies
(*Convened by Dr Kerstin Hoge and Dr Joseph Sherman*)

- What is Yiddish Literature? *Dr Joseph Sherman*
- What is Yiddish? *Dr Kerstin Hoge*
- Fiddler on the Train: A Look at Sholem Aleichem
  Dr Joseph Sherman
- Yiddish Dialects: or How You Speak is How You Eat
  Dr Kerstin Hoge

Seminar in Jewish Studies
(*Convened by Dr Piet van Boxel*)

- Finding Moses Amidst the Kings of Judah *Madhavi Nevader*
- The Ancient Versions of the Hebrew Bible as Cultural Artefacts: The Case of the Book of Lamentations
  Professor Philip Alexander
- *Minhag Anglia*: A Celebration of the Twofold Blessing of Being Jewish and British *Dr Miri Freud-Kandel*
- The Israelite Historical Credos in Assyriological Context
  Dr Robert Miller

Language Class: Biblical Hebrew *Dr Timothy Edwards*

Language Class: Modern Hebrew *Dr Tali Argov*

Language Class: Yiddish *Dr Kerstin Hoge*

The David Patterson Seminars

(*Convened by Dr Piet van Boxel*)

Israel's Covenant in Ancient Near Eastern Context *Dr Robert Miller*

The Notion of Covenant in the Dead Sea Scrolls
Professor Geza Vermes

Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic Theology in Early Rabbinic Judaism *Professor Philip Alexander*

Sons and Daughters of the Covenant in the Writings of Aphrahat the Persian Sage *Revd Dr Robert J. Owens*

Haman's Midlife Crisis *Dr Adam Silverstein*

Reconfigured Constellations in Hebrew and Yiddish Poetry: The Modernisms of Avraham Shlonsky and Perets Markish
Dr Jordan Finkin

Patterns of Leadership in Nineteenth-century Anglo-Jewry: Moses Montefiore, Lionel de Rothschild and David Salomons
Dr Haim Sperber

Booklaunch: *Isaiah* 1–5 by Professor Hugh Williamson, FBA
Professor Hugh Williamson and Dr Alison Salvesen

Special Lecture

(*Arranged jointly by the Centre and the Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford*)

Muslim-Jewish Relations in Morocco: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries *Professor Mohammed Kenbib*

Hilary Term 2007

Lectures, Seminars and Classes

The Study of Ancient Israelite Religion *Madhavi Nevader*

Isaiah 40–45 *Professor Hugh Williamson*

Selected Psalms *Professor Hugh Williamson*

Proverbs 1, 7–9 *Professor Hugh Williamson*

Biblical Hebrew Prose Composition *Dr Alison Salvesen*

The Diaspora in the Roman Empire: Jews, Pagans and Christians to 450 CE *Professor Fergus Millar*

Seminar on Jewish History and Literature in the Graeco-Roman Period
(*Convened by Professor Martin Goodman*)

Rome and Jerusalem: A Comparison of Lifestyles
Professor Martin Goodman

A Rabbinic Disquisition on Leviticus 26: A Utopian Vision Among Jews and Christians *Dr Joanna Weinberg*

Reconstructing 4QMMT *Professor Reinhard Kratz*

National Identity and Territory: The Limits of the Land of Israel in the Consciousness of the People of the Second Temple and the Roman-Byzantine Period *Eyal Ben-Eliyahu*

'He Saw His Glory': John 12:41 and Jewish Interpretations of Isaiah's Call-vision *Dr Catrin Williams*

The Qumran Forum
(*Convened by Professor Martin Goodman and Professor Geza Vermes*)

The Idea of Moral Impurity in 1QS *Mila Ginsbursky*

Septuagint *Dr Alison Salvesen*

Varieties of Judaism in the Late Second Temple Period
Professor Martin Goodman

A Survey of Rabbinic Literature *Dr Joanna Weinberg*

Introduction to Talmud *Dr Norman Solomon*

Midrash *Dr Joanna Weinberg*

Medieval Jewish Exegesis *Dr Joanna Weinberg*

Judaism and Islam: Medieval Intellectual and Cultural Traditions *Ronald Nettler*

Islamic Religious Texts *Ronald Nettler*

Modern Judaism *Dr Miri Freud-Kandel*

Aspects of Yiddish Literature *Dr Joseph Sherman*

Is Modern Hebrew Literature Jewish? *Dr Jordan Finkin*

Dalia Rabikovitch: Selected Poems *Dr Tali Argov*

Seminar in Jewish Studies
(*Convened by Dr Piet van Boxel*)

Bergelson, Stalinism and the Holocaust *Dr Joseph Sherman*

'Your Sweet Saliva is the Living Wine': Drink, Desire and Devotion in Thirteenth-century Syriac Wine Songs *Dr David Taylor*

Jubilees 8–9 in Near Eastern Context *Dr Adam Silverstein*

'Jewish Sufism' in Late Medieval Egypt: Research in Progress *Ronald Nettler*

Language Class: Biblical Hebrew *Dr Timothy Edwards*

Language Class: Modern Hebrew *Dr Tali Argov*

Modern Hebrew Ulpan *Dr Tali Argov*

Language Class: Yiddish *Dr Kerstin Hoge*

The David Patterson Seminars

(*Convened by Dr Piet van Boxel*)

Politics, Ethnicity and Religion in Israel: Learning from Shas *Dr David Lehman*

Temple and Torah: Reflections on the Legal Status of the Torah Between Elephantine and Qumran *Professor Reinhard Kratz*

Semitism and the Enlightenment Mind: Towards a Judeo-Islamic Response to Modernity *Tim Winter*

Book Launch: *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations Professor Martin Goodman*

Reflections on the Many Forms of Hebrew Scripture in the Light of the Septuagint and 4Q Reworked Pentateuch *Professor Emanuel Tov*

Book Launch: *Undercurrents of Jewish Prayer Dr Jeremy Schonfield*

Pleasures Among Eighteenth-century Jews and Their Cultural Meaning *Professor Shmuel Feiner*

Re-writing the Gospel from a Jewish Perspective: Sholem Ash's novel 'The Nazarene' *Dr Daniela Mantovan*

Special Lectures

Isaiah Berlin Public Lecture in Middle East Dialogue

The Arab Experience During the Holocaust: A Hopeful Antidote to Holocaust Denial in the Arab World *Dr Robert Satloff*

Trinity Term 2007

Lectures, Seminars and Classes

Biblical Hebrew Prose Composition (2nd year) *Dr Alison Salvesen*

Biblical Hebrew Prose Composition (3rd year)
Professor Hugh Williamson

Genesis 1–11 *Professor Hugh Williamson*

2 Kings 18–20 *Professor Hugh Williamson*

Seminar on Jewish History and Literature in the Graeco-Roman Period
(*Convened by Professor Martin Goodman*)

Texts that Require Themes: Coherence in the Biblical Canon and Rabbinic Documents *Dr Alexander Samely*

The Septuagint of Isaiah 8:11–16 and its Relation to Contemporaneous Events *Professor Ross Wagner*

Esther and Identity *Dr Jill Middlemas*

'Holier Than Thou'? Marriage and Divorce in the Scrolls, the New Testament and Early Rabbinic Sources
Professor Bernard Jackson

The Jewish Context of the Text of Acts in Codex Bezae
Dr Jenny Read-Heimerdinger

Midrash *Dr Joanna Weinberg*

Medieval Jewish Exegesis *Dr Joanna Weinberg*

Masterclass Series on Hebrew Codicology: The Medieval Jewish Hand-Produced Book in Comparison with Non-Hebrew Manuscripts *Professor Malachi Beit-Arié*

The Distinctive Circumstances of Jewish Book Production and Consumption and Their Impact on the Reproduction of Texts

The Functional, Economic and Aesthetic Interests and Constraints of Producing Hebrew and Latin Manuscripts

The Codicological Database of the Hebrew Paleography Project: A Pioneering Tool for Dating and Localizing Medieval

Manuscripts and Their Historical Typology

The Evolution of Scribal Customs and Scripts, Techniques and Designs: A Selection of Hebrew Manuscripts from the Bodleian Library in Comparison with Non-Hebrew Manuscripts

Maimonides *Dr Joanna Weinberg*

Islamic Religious Texts *Ronald Nettler*

'Israeli' versus 'Jewish' in Yoram Kanyuk's Prose *Dr Tali Argov*

Seminar in Jewish Studies
(*Convened by Dr Piet van Boxel*)

Dreams, Gender and Fundamentalism: The Dreamworlds of a Nineteenth-Century Ultra-Orthodox Rabbinical Couple
Dr Michael Silber

Rav and Shmuel: Inventors of the Talmud
Rabbi Dr Norman Solomon

Moses Mendelssohn's Dreams and Nightmares
Professor Shmuel Feiner

Language Class: Biblical Hebrew *Dr Timothy Edwards*

Language Class: Modern Hebrew *Dr Tali Argov*

Modern Hebrew Ulpan *Dr Tali Argov*

Language Class: Yiddish *Dr Kerstin Hoge*

Yiddish Ulpan *Małgorzata Sochańska*

The David Patterson Seminars

(*Convened by Dr Piet van Boxel*)

The Exegesis of the Psalms in the New Testament: Some Notes on Method *Dr Timothy Edwards*

'Alliance of the Hebrews', 1863–1875: From Diaspora Nationalism in Hungary to Political Zionism in Palestine – The Evolution of an Ultra-Orthodox Utopia *Professor Michael Silber*

A New Blood Libel? The Publication of *Passovers of Blood* in Italy *Professor David Abulafia*

The Problem of the 'Chained Wife' (*Agunah*): The Current State of Halakhic Research and Politics *Professor Bernard Jackson*

Taking a Fish to Tarshish – Travelling the Mediterranean Biblical Style *Dr Anselm Hagedorn*

'Is the Highest Place the Holiest Place?': Rabbinic Literature and the Holy Places *Eyal Ben-Eliyahu*

Special Lectures

One of a series entitled 'Remembering Survival' under the auspices of Mansfield College

The Jewish Community of Wierzbnik
Professor Christopher Browning

The Fifteenth Stencl Lecture in Yiddish Studies

Transgressing the Boundaries of Genre: The Children's Stories of the Soviet Yiddish Writer Der Nister (1884–1950)
Dr Daniela Mantovan

The Louis Jacobs Lecture

From Sabbatean Prophetess to Hasidic Mad Woman: The Displacement of Female Spirituality in the Post-Sabbatean Era
Dr Ada Rapoport-Albert

MSt in Jewish Studies, University of Oxford

Nine students studied at the Centre this year and graduated in June 2007.

The Faculty

Courses and languages presented in the MSt programme were taught by Fellows of the Centre; by Dr Natan Meir, University of Southampton; Professor Fergus Millar, Emeritus Professor of Ancient History, Oxford University; Ms Madhavi Nevader, Oriel College; and by Dr Norman Solomon, Senior Associate. Ronald Nettler (Michaelmas Term) and Dr Alison Salvesen (Hilary and Trinity Terms) served as Director of Studies and Martine Smith-Huvers, Student Registrar, administered the course.

Courses

Students studied Biblical or Modern Hebrew or Yiddish. In addition, they selected four courses from the list below and submitted dissertations. The following courses were offered during the 2006–2007 academic year:

- A Survey of Rabbinic Literature *Dr Joanna Weinberg*
- Introduction to Talmud *Dr Norman Solomon*
- Is Modern Hebrew Literature Jewish? *Dr Jordan Finkin*
- Jewish and Christian Bible Translation and Interpretation in Antiquity *Dr Alison Salvesen*
- Jewish History 200 BCE to 70 CE *Professor Martin Goodman*
- Jewish Liturgy *Dr Jeremy Schonfield*
- Modern European Jewish History *Dr Natan Meir*
- Questions of Jewish Identity in Modern Yiddish Fiction *Dr Joseph Sherman*
- Reading the Psalms from King David to David Kimhi *Dr Timothy Edwards*

- Septuagint *Dr Alison Salvesen*
- The Diaspora in the Roman Empire: Jews, Pagans and Christians to 450 CE *Professor Fergus Millar*
- The Study of Ancient Israelite Religion *Madhavi Nevader*

Languages:
- Biblical Hebrew (elementary, intermediate and advanced) *Dr Timothy Edwards*
- Modern Hebrew (elementary and intermediate) *Dr Tali Argov*
- Yiddish (intermediate) *Dr Kerstin Hoge*

The Students

This year students came from Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Rebecca Marie Cain (*b.* 1981) graduated in religion, classics and world languages at Concordia College, Minnesota, and completed an MA in Theological Studies at the Harvard Divinity School in 2006. She came to the Centre to deepen her knowledge of Hebrew Bible, a subject in which she hopes eventually to take a doctorate, focusing on the development and reuse of biblical texts in the Second Temple Period, and looking particularly at narratives dealing with family dynamics and the roles of gender and reproduction. Her dissertation was entitled 'Incest Narratives in Jewish Writings'.

Daniel Wingate Darg (*b.* 1982) completed an MSc in Theoretical Physics at Imperial College, London, in 2005, and came to the Centre to explore a fascination with fundamental questions in philosophy and theology. Intending eventually to write a PhD in Physics (hopefully in Israel, for which a knowledge of Modern Hebrew would be helpful), he began a second BA in Theology at Oxford, but after a year decided to apply for the MSt, aiming to focus on the Hebrew Bible. His dissertation was entitled 'Wrestling with Creation: Genesis 1 and the Cosmologies of Jewish Scientists'.

Robert Timothy DeBold (*b.* 1980) graduated in religious studies at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and completed an MA in

Jewish Studies at Emory University in 2005. Before beginning doctoral research on ancient Judaism and Hebrew Bible he decided to take the MSt course to hone his biblical, rabbinic and modern Hebrew and to study Second Temple Judaism, having so far focused more on First Temple Israelite culture. His dissertation was entitled 'An Analysis of Section Twelve of Leviticus Rabbah'.

Steven Anthony Graham is a mature student who graduated in French Literature at the University of Oregon and received an MA in Theological Studies from George Fox University in 2002. He has worked for several years as a professional actor off Broadway and in television, as well as writing books. One of these involved working with Alter Weiner, a Holocaust survivor, on his autobiography. He hopes to become a religious studies teacher and facilitator of interfaith communication between Jews, Christians and Muslims, aiming 'to build bridges of tolerance among different faiths without causing people to convert', and eventually to open a 'museum of tolerance' in his home city of Portland, Oregon. His dissertation was entitled 'Augustine and the Jews: The Role of Hostility in Early Christian Thought'.

Milena Anna Hadrzynska (*b.* 1982) graduated and received an MA in Political Science at the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland, and took a further MA in History, specializing in Jewish studies, at the Central European University in Budapest in 2006. She would like to carry out PhD research in Jewish studies. Her interests include Jewish attitudes towards Polish nationalism in the November and January Uprisings (1830–1 and 1863–4), and Jewish reactions to the reunification of Poland after the First World War, especially in the cities of Poznan, Cracow and Warsaw. She has also studied the Warsaw Jewish assimilationist journals *Jutrzenka. Tygodnik dla Izraelitow Polkich*, 'The Dawn. A Weekly Addressed to Polish Israelites', and *Izraelita*, 'Israelite', on which she wrote her dissertation entitled 'Jewish Identity and Acculturation Patterns in the Polish-Language Jewish Press in 19th-Century Warsaw'.

Joshua M. Harrison (*b.* 1977) came to biblical studies as a committed Christian, having discovered the inadequacies of English Bible translations. He embarked on learning Biblical Hebrew, participated in a

summer Modern Hebrew Ulpan at the University of Haifa and came to the Centre to deepen his understanding of Jewish history and culture. His long-term aim is to teach Semitic languages at university level. His dissertation was entitled 'The Dramatic Outlooks of *Job*'s First Discourse (Job 3–11)'.

Benjamin Richard Merkle (*b.* 1972) graduated in chemistry and history and received an MA in English Literature at the University of Idaho in 2005. He has lectured in theology at an independent college in Idaho, focusing particularly on 'how Rabbinic discussions of the concept of covenant may have influenced the theology of the Reformers, John Calvin in particular'. He came to the Centre since he felt the MSt would provide him with a basis from which to pursue a DPhil at Oxford. His dissertation was entitled 'The Place of Jewish Exegesis in the Works of John Calvin'.

Alan Michiel Peters (*b.* 1982), who graduated in Arabic language from the University of Exeter in 2006, is principally a linguist with an interest in philology and comparative morphology. He came to the Centre because of 'the massive impact of Classical Hebrew not just on other Semitic languages, but, owing to some of the texts written in it, on the Western world as a whole'. His dissertation entitled 'The Tower of Babel and the Confusion of Tongues' won the prize for the best dissertation.

Sara Michelle Yudkoff (*b.* 1984) received an AB degree in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard College in 2006, specializing in Hebrew and Yiddish language and literature. She came to the Centre to explore Jewish literature against a background of modern philosophies of religion, Jewish history and current trends in Jewish studies scholarship, hoping to work eventually in Jewish literary criticism. Her dissertation was entitled 'Jews, Gentiles and the Forces of Nature: Shaping Identity in Some Short Fiction by I. J. Singer'.

End-of-Year Party

The end-of-year party was held at Yarnton Manor on Wednesday 20 June 2007. The President, Peter Oppenheimer, addressed the students and their guests, as well as the fellows, teachers, staff and their

partners. The President bade farewell to Dr Kerstin Hoge, Lector in Yiddish since 2001, and to Peter Da Costa, the Bursar, who retired after fifteen years at the Centre.

Acknowledgements

The Centre would like to record its gratitude to the Skirball Foundation, New York, for assisting with scholarships this academic year.

MSt in Jewish Studies, 2006–2007

Front Row (left to right)

Dr Kerstin Hoge, Dr Joseph Sherman, Dr Alison Salvesen (DIRECTOR OF STUDIES), Dr Joanna Weinberg, Dr Piet van Boxel, Mr Peter Oppenheimer (PRESIDENT), Professor Martin Goodman, Dr Jeremy Schonfield, Professor Fergus Millar, Madhavi Nevader, Dr Timothy Edwards

Second Row (left to right)

Rebecca Cain (USA), Dr Tali Argov, Dr César Merchan-Hamann, Dr Jordan Finkin, Michael Fischer, Martine Smith-Huvers (STUDENT REGISTRAR), Sara (Sunny) Yudkoff (USA)

Back Row (left to right)

Milena Hadrzynska (Poland), Benjamin Merkle (USA), Daniel Darg (UK), Steven Graham (USA), Timothy DeBold (USA), Alan Peters (UK), Joshua Harrison (USA)

The Qumran Forum

THE OXFORD FORUM for Qumran Research, directed by Professor Geza Vermes FBA and Professor Martin Goodman FBA, continued to meet during this academic year. Two guest speakers addressed the Forum in the course of the year. In Michaelmas Term, Dr Julie Hughes of the University of Manchester spoke on 'Scriptural Allusions and Exegesis in the Hodayot'. In Hilary Term, Mila Ginsbursky of the University of Cambridge delivered a lecture entitled 'The Idea of Moral Impurity in 1QS'. Seven Qumran seminars are planned for the coming Michaelmas Term.

The David Patterson Seminars

'Is the Highest Place the Holiest Place?': Rabbinic Literature and the Holy Places *Eyal Ben-Eliyahu*

Early rabbinic writers refer rarely to holy places other than Jerusalem and the Temple, unlike Christian Byzantine or medieval Jewish authors. Mishnaic emphasis on the holiness of the Land of Israel in general and of Jerusalem and the Temple in particular can be seen, for instance, in *Kelim* 1. But while rabbinic literature often debates the idea of holy places outside Jerusalem, such as the mounts of Olives, Sinai, Carmel, Hermon and Tabor, it is silent on locations such as Bethel, Hebron, Timnat Serach (the Tomb of Joshua) and Shechem, even though these feature in the formation of national identity. The lecturer argued that the Babylonian Talmud's listing (*Berakhot* 54a-b) of locations in which visitors should recite blessings in honour of miracles is an ironic comment on the attempt to identify holy places. The parallel passage in the Jerusalem Talmud includes just two locations, both in Babylonia, showing that while the Babylonian Talmud offers examples from the Land of Israel, the Jerusalem Talmud concentrates on sites in distant Babylonia.

The Exegesis of the Psalms in the New Testament: Some Notes on Method *Dr Timothy Edwards*

Some scholars despair of defining the method of exegesis applied to the Psalms in the New Testament, while others assume it to be based on a careful reading of biblical texts concerning the life of Jesus. Yet even the latter rarely discuss the mechanics of this approach. Dr Edwards described the repeated allusions to Psalm 2:7 in Luke 3:21-2, Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Acts 13:29-35 and Hebrews 1:1-5 and 5:5 in the context of Jesus' baptism/anointing, resurrection and ascension. He argued that this verse may even lie behind the crucifixion narrative, if this is defined as his coronation as 'king' on 'Mount Zion', since he is called 'son' by the centurion. These applications may be traced to v. 6 of the Psalm, where the Hebrew root *n-s-kh* may mean pour, set/forge, establish, appoint king, pour in libation. The

fact that the Hebrew text lies behind the exegesis, rather that the Greek Septuagint, suggests that those responsible were Jews with a knowledge of Biblical Hebrew, whose work has close parallels in rabbinic midrash.

Pleasures Among Eighteenth-Century Jews and their Cultural Meaning ***Professor Shmuel Feiner***

Pleasures of the body and mind were commonly regarded in pre-modern times as signs of weakness. Yet Enlightenment thinkers in eighteenth-century Britain began to acknowledge their instinctive nature and to promote the acquisition of happiness.

Inhabitants of London, Amsterdam, Vienna, Paris, Berlin or Hamburg needed no philosophical justification for their entertainments. They drank and smoked in taverns or coffee houses; played chess, cards, dice or other games; watched fencing or boxing; wore colourful clothes and wigs; decorated their homes with objets d'art; strolled or rode in carriages through parks and boulevards; travelled to spas; listened to music being performed and enjoyed the theatre or opera.

The decline of traditional corporations in the face of a centralized state; the growth of the city and the bourgeoisie; and improvements in public health, street-lighting, law-enforcement, literacy, postal services and newspapers produced what amounted to a cultural revolution.

Few testimonies of Jewish society are available from this time. Jacob Katz took the view that since the growing indifference towards religious obligations was not joined by conscious defiance of religious norms or fundamental changes in relations between Jews and Christians, this did not amount to a breakdown of the 'old fabric'. But this judgement needs to be revised as we better understand Jewish communities such as those of London and Amsterdsam, and encounter social types – such as Port Jews – whose lifestyle was more integrated into contemporary Europe than into religious institutions. Eighteenth-century Jews in Western and Central Europe acquired a degree of personal independence that seems wholly new.

Wealthy merchants and financiers enjoyed moderate acculturation, adopting fashionable dress, learning French and furnishing their homes in European style in London, Metz, Hamburg, The Hague,

Vienna, Bordeaux, Berlin and elsewhere. Some even followed a libertine lifestyle outside the restrictions of *halakhah*. Portraits of court Jews in Germany and Austria, merchants in London or the Portuguese elite in Amsterdam and The Hague show men and women in modish clothing and precious jewels, possessing fine furniture, porcelain, gold watches, silver tea sets and enjoying imported gourmet food. They constituted a thin stratum, but their impact was perceptible even on those with less expensive entertainments.

Acculturation is evident from the importance men and women attributed to their appearance. Dress, hairstyles and wigs necessitating daily care proclaimed their aspiration to belong to certain segments of society and their independence as individuals in Jewish and European society.

Azriel Shohat, who has catalogued sexual offences among Jews in the first half of the eighteenth century, argues that rather than mere deviations, these constitute a new style of relations between the sexes. Todd Endelman shows that some members of the upper class followed a code of sexual behaviour that was radically liberal in comparison to the dictates of religious law, a phenomenon traced in London and elsewhere in Europe among Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews by Jonathan Israel. Voltaire's *Candide* (1759) mentions 'a Jew named Don Issachar who traded in Holland and Portugal and was passionately fond of women', and who kept a Christian mistress whom he shared with an Inquisitor from Lisbon. Rabbis considered this a 'licentious generation', but seem to have made allowances. One leading rabbi, Jacob Emden, suggested that married men be allowed to have sexual relations with a permanent mistress in order 'to banish offences, licentiousness and prostitution and to reduce lust', but admitted that this needed first to be sanctioned by other rabbis.

The mid-eighteenth century philosopher Moses Mendelssohn sought to legitimize pleasure in Jewish culture by replacing the passions of the flesh with those of the intellect: 'the sweet honey of true pleasure'. 'The contemplation of the structure of the world thus remains the inexhaustible source of pleasure for the philosopher', he argues, contrasting this with the frivolous pleasures spreading from France, the results of which 'are apt to be terrible. ... Who is the wise man? He who keeps himself with the weapon of reason against this seductive force'.

Mendelssohn was at home in the social and cultural space of European and Jewish elites, wearing wigs, frequenting coffee houses, visiting spas, enjoying society and attending concerts and plays. He was also the first to challenge the rabbinical elite by regarding man, nature and the pleasures of life and beauty as the work of God. It was appropriate for man, as the crown of creation, to take pleasure in the goodness and beauty of the best of all possible worlds.

Reconfigured Constellations in Hebrew and Yiddish Poetry: The Modernisms of Avraham Shlonsky and Perets Markish ***Dr Jordan Finkin***

Dr Finkin argued that modern Yiddish and Hebrew modernist writings were reflexes of the same literature, their authors participating in early-twentieth-century Eastern European Jewish polyglot culture, exploring modernisms that emerged from a largely secularized and secularizing outgrowth of their multilingual, multitextual cultural environment.

Interwar European modernisms tended to be less movements than constantly reconfiguring constellations of poets with intersecting, but constantly shifting poetic tendencies, drawn from a number of movements. Avraham Shlonsky, despite his affinities with Russian Futurism's pugnacious rejection of the idea of literary heritage, wrote poems brilliantly and subversively saturated with biblicality, quotation and allusions. Peretz Markish, too, in his great poema *Di kupe*, 'The Heap', about the Horodishtsh pogrom of Yom Kippur 1921, integrated his thematic material—again with subversive, anti-sacral intent—with themes and language from the Yom Kippur liturgy.

Dr Finkin explored the polyvalent sensibilities binding these poets as participants in the broader currents of European modernism, taking into account both their social and ideological commitments—Markish's revolutionary socialism and Shlonsky's Zionism—and their antipathy towards their contemporaries' æstheticist notions of art for art's sake. The most important unifying experimental imperative turns out to be a preoccupation with the freedom and possibilities of language itself.

Taking a Fish to Tarshish: Travelling the Mediterranean Biblical Style *Dr Anselm C. Hagedorn*

The place of the Mediterranean in biblical literature is richly illustrated by the book of Jonah which, among other texts (e.g. Exodus 23:31, Numbers 34:6, Joel 2:20) presents the sea as the natural border of Israel. It can be crossed, although no Israelite is known to have done so and seafaring is limited to Israel's neighbours. Jonah wants to cross it to move away from God, but divine interference shows God to be in command of the Mediterranean and its climate. Not all naval activities are negative, however, and a positive view emerges from Psalm 72:8–11, for instance.

The sea therefore represents also a medium of universalism. Crossing it may be dangerous, and has to be done in accordance with God's will. The book of Jonah and the Bible as a whole do not propagate the idea of a shared Mediterranean identity. God's thwarting of Jonah's attempt to be like other people bordering the Mediterranean is a powerful reminder that biblical writers' relations with the sea are not driven simply by the desire 'to represent themselves as exercising cultural choice in parallel with other, neighbouring populations doing exactly the same thing' (M. Herzfeld).

The Problem of the 'Chained Wife' (*Agunah*): The Current State of Halakhic Research and Politics *Professor Bernard S. Jackson*

Divorce in Jewish law takes place when a husband delivers a bill of divorce, rather than by act of court. If he refuses to do so, despite an order from a rabbinic court, the wife is termed an *agunah* ('chained woman'), who may not remarry during the lifetime of her husband. A subsequent civil union would be regarded as adulterous and involve substantial disabilities for the children. Husbands occasionally withhold a bill of divorce (*get*) from malice, or make substantial financial or other demands before granting it. Since this is widely regarded as an abuse by the rabbinic authorities, the problem has prompted civil legislative intervention: the Divorce (Religious Marriages) Act 2002.

Any solution to the problem must come from within Jewish law itself. Three principal approaches used historically have been: (1) coercion of the husband; (2) annulment of the marriage *ab initio*; and (3)

inclusion of a special condition in the marriage contract terminating the marriage on refusal by the husband to give a *get*. But rabbinic authorities in recent generations have opposed these on technical grounds, claiming that they no longer possess the authority to implement them. The Agunah Research Unit at the University of Manchester (http://www.mucjs.org/agunahunit.htm), directed by the lecturer, seeks to analyse the problems of technique and authority and to discuss the religious politics involved. The problem was highlighted by the cancellation in November 2006 of a Global Rabbinic Conference convened by the Sephardi Chief Rabbi of Israel, and the subsequent controversy regarding the appointment of *dayyanim* to state religious courts.

Temple and Torah: Reflections on the Legal Status of the Pentateuch Between Elephantine and Qumran
Professor Reinhard Kratz

Professor Kratz explored the process by which the Pentateuch became Torah, the foundational document of Judaism. Comparing the lack of evidence for an acquaintance with the Torah at Elephantine with the situation in Qumran, he investigated the acceptance and practice of the Torah in the late Persian and Early Hellenistic Periods. The Torah may have originated away from the Temple (both that of Elephantine as well as that in Jerusalem) and as an alternative to it, only later becoming mandatory also near the Temple. This closing stage may be dated to the late Persian period and have continued into Hellenistic times, perhaps triggered by Samaritan competition and intensified by the pressure of Hellenization.

Torah was handed down and kept sacred in circles such as the community of Qumran. But priests at the Temple and political representatives of the province would increasingly have wished to link the religious customs of the Temple and beyond with Torah. The Maccabees and the Hasmoneans used the Torah in their insurgence against Seleucid rule and proclaimed rigorous obedience to it. From then on, Temple and Torah were no longer alternatives, the proper interpretation of Torah becoming central either on or following the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE.

Rewriting the Gospels from a Jewish Perspective: Sholem Ash's Yiddish Novel *The Nazarene* *Dr Daniela Mantovan*

The lecturer illustrated how narrative permits one to review history from various perspectives by comparing the canonical version of the Gospels, a recently published fragment of the Gospel of Judas Iscariot and Sholem Ash's novel *The Nazarene*, confirming Borges' view that readers reinterpret stories to the point of generating different narratives.

Contemporary and later criticism of Ash's novel by Jewish and non-Jewish readers raises questions about the 'Jewishness' of Ash's characters, the relationship of faith and narrative truth in the book, and their consequences for the author's reputation.

Sholem Ash's interest in the Christological motif, which he approached from a humanitarian and a-religious viewpoint, helps explain what led him to publish a Yiddish novel on the foundation narrative of Christianity in New York in 1939, when anti-Semitism was on the rise. The appearance of an English translation soon afterwards prompted unprecedented attacks by Jewish literary critics, revealing their dislike for Ash as the cosmopolitan author of several international bestsellers. The fiercest opponent, Abe Cahan, the editor of the Yiddish newspaper *Forverts*, launched a campaign from a 'secular' perspective, challenging the novel's *yidishkeyt*, by which he meant the extent to which secular Yiddish readers could identify with such a book at a time of suffering in Europe.

The Nazarene is a complex polyphonic novel exploring the perspectives of a corrupt Roman officer, Judas the follower of Jeshua and a young Jewish orthodox scholar. These permit the author to throw light on the complex relations both between an occupying power and a subjugated Jewish nation, and between orthodoxy and a new messianic message. His depictions of German soldiers in antiquity and of the anti-Semitic Polish owner of a manuscript of *The Gospel of Judas* address contemporary issues and reflect his understanding of the situation in Europe. Ash's rewriting of religious history deserves to be seen as a tour de force addressed simultaneously to Orthodox Jews, Jewish-American secularists and Anglo-American readers of the time.

Israel's Covenant in Ancient Near Eastern Context
Dr Robert Miller

Research into the term 'covenant' – used to describe the way Israel understood its relationship with God – has a long history. George Mendenhall's influential study draws parallels with Late Bronze Age suzerainty treaties, but he cites problematical examples. Dr Miller bases his view instead on the Barrakab inscription from ancient Sam'al, in southeastern Anatolia, which he analyses within the history of Sam'al. This reveals a 'propaganda of submission', highlighting the vassal's total and grateful dependence on a gracious Assyrian emperor. It fits the context of Neo-Assyrian royal propaganda, its words, images and ideology providing a vassal's-eye view of the relationship. He argues that this is perhaps our best illustration of how minor states on the western periphery of the empire – such as Israel and Judah – absorbed and reused Assyrian propaganda, noting many ideological similarities as well as semantic parallels between biblical language and the Aramaic of the Barrakab inscription. Biblical authors use language taken from Neo-Assyrian propaganda most often in Deuteronomic and Deuteronomistic literature, and Dr Miller surveyed relations between Assyria, Israel and Judah, eliminating possible non-Assyrian sources for the language and ideology. He concluded that the sharing of idioms took place while Judah was fully within the Assyrian vassal system, between the time of Ahaz and the fall of Nineveh.

'Sons and Daughters of the Covenant' in the 'Demonstrations' of Aphrahat ***Revd Dr Robert Owens***

The ascetic character of Syriac-speaking Christianity in upper Mesopotamia, established in the second century CE, is clear from the writings of the fourth-century theologian known as Aphrahat. His twenty-three essays, commonly termed 'Demonstrations', suggest that he was a member of an group whose name, commonly translated 'son[s] of the covenant', occurs more often in his writings than in earlier Syriac compositions.

Several Syriac phrases used for Christian ascetics – 'single one', 'male virgin', 'female virgin', 'holy ones' and 'son [or daughter] of the covenant' – imply the rejection of sexual activity, even by those who are married, and especially in the case of those termed 'single one'

(Syriac *ihiday*), discussed in detail by Robert Murray and Sebastian Brock.

Current understandings of the term *qeyama* in 'son of the *covenant*' range from 'resurrection' or 'standing' (whether referring to angels or to movements within a liturgy of dedication) to 'covenant' (whether referring to the Christian life generally, or to the specific status an ascetic). 'Son of the covenant' seems less problematic than 'son of the resurrection' or 'son of the standing', but would have been potentially confusing given the use of the same term for the Christian life generally (as in 'new covenant').

The lecturer proposed that the primary meaning of *qeyama* in the phrase for ascetics was 'pledge of obligation', and that the phrase is related to the Aramaic translation tradition of Numbers 30:1ff. Both Targum Neofiti and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan use there the Aramaic term *qeyyam* for Hebrew *isar*, meaning a 'pledge of obligation'. Thus, a *ben qeyama* was literally a 'son of the pledge', i.e., devoted to lifelong sexual abstinence.

'Alliance of the Hebrews', 1863–1875: From Diaspora Nationalism in Hungary to Political Zionism in Palestine – The Evolution of an Ultra-Orthodox Utopia *Dr Michael K. Silber*

Jewish historians usually locate the beginnings of modern Zionism in the early 1880s, in the rise of the *Hovevei Zion* ('Lovers of Zion') movement following the wave of pogroms in Russia. Dr Silber argued that ideas of Jewish nationalism emerged a generation earlier in Hungary, far from the classic Russian breeding ground of Zionism. Akiva Yosef Schlesinger's utopian association, *Kolel Ha'ivri*, 'Alliance of the Hebrews', blended organically ultra-Orthodox piety with modern Jewish nationalism. He developed his notions of nationalism initially in the context of the Diaspora, and only later married nationalism with this-worldly messianism in the framework of the Holy Land. His utopian vision evolved organizationally from an Orthodox international society analogous to the Alliance Israélite Universelle in the 1860s into a dream of a full-blown political entity, a semi-independent state in Palestine under Ottoman suzerainty by the mid-1870s.

Dr Silber described how the combination of religious fundamentalism and modern nationalism, once considered farfetched, has now

become an accepted, albeit problematic, commonplace. The Jewish version can be dated back to the emergence of Jewish nationalism among ultra-Orthodox elements in the 1860s in Hungary, antedating the rise of the modern secular Zionist movement in Russia by almost two decades.

Haman's Mid-Life Crisis *Dr Adam Silverstein*

Relations between Jewish and Islamic scriptural and exegetical traditions are highlighted by the case of Haman, the Persian functionary in the Book of Esther who attempted to have the empire's Jews massacred, and who appears also in the Qur'an as one of Pharaoh's acolytes. Are these two Hamans the same person and, if so, how do we account for the dramatic change in historical context? Did Haman, a Persian vizier, have a 'mid-life crisis' in which he reinvented himself as an Egyptian officer?

The issue of Haman's changing identities is important as polemicists have used it for centuries to prove that the Qur'an contains mistakes so cannot be the word of God. But there is much evidence that the Qur'an's Haman was indeed the Haman of the Book of Esther, despite his passage from Achaemenid Persia to Pharaonic Egypt. Haman's evil credentials can also be shown to be even more impressive than previously thought: it would appear that his name was a *topos* for 'evil vizier' in the Near East from pre-biblical times until the modern period. The 'original' Haman was therefore an earlier villain – perhaps the Elamite deity Humman – who dipped in and out of Near Eastern literatures whenever a character with evil attributes was needed.

Patterns of Anglo-Jewish Leadership in the Nineteenth Century *Dr Haim Sperber*

The leadership of Anglo-Jewry in the nineteenth century was in the hands of a relatively small plutocracy, most of whose members were linked by business or family ties. Two patterns of leadership can be distinguished. The first comprised leaders who controlled the communal apparatus, enabling them to nominate trusted individuals to key roles. Sir Moses Montefiore presented himself principally as a

philanthropist, but his power in communal affairs derived from his control of communal institutions. The second group includes those whose power was based on prestige gained by success in extra-communal activities. The Rothschilds, especially Baron Lionel de Rothschild, examplify this pattern.

Montefiore was a conservative leader whose field of activity was the Jewish community rather than the British state, which helps explain his lack of enthusiasm for emancipation. The Rothschilds, on the other hand, regarded the Jewish community both as a power base and as a route towards the higher levels of British and European society.

The Jewish community provided the new rich with a sense of belonging. Those who failed to integrate into the highest ranks of European society could find satisfaction leading the Jewish community. This, and the honours accompanying it, compensated for fuller integration. Philanthropy played an important role in adjusting Jewish society to new norms and in enhancing the political power of the economic elite.

The greatest problem facing Jewish philanthropists was the influx of poor immigrants. The leaders first tried to minimize immigration by helping Jews remain in their own countries by improving conditions where they were. When this failed it was decided to prevent anti-Semitism by establishing institutions designed to change the image and occupations of immigrants, and to create 'new Jews' corresponding to the expectations of the Jewish bourgeoisie.

Reflections on the Many Forms of Hebrew Scripture in Light of the Septuagint and 4QReworked Pentateuch

Professor Emanuel Tov

Historians of Hebrew Scripture are faced with the problem of how to assess the status or authority of the many different versions to have survived. The Masoretic Text (MT) is meticulously transmitted, but widely divergent texts were known in ancient Israel, including compositions earlier than those included in MT, and reworked compositions. Professor Tov focused on the rewritten texts incorporated in the Septuagint (1 Kings [3 Kingdoms], Esther, and Daniel), and reviewed their characteristic features including aspects of rewriting. Presumably all three Greek translations were based on Hebrew and Aramaic

rewritings of earlier compositions resembling ones now included in MT. An early rewritten biblical text, Chronicles, was included in the Hebrew and Greek canon. Some literary reshapings were not accepted by all communities, and made their way to the Jewish Septuagint translators, but not to the MT. Other texts were adopted in the Qumran community. 4QReworked Pentateuch (4QRP) was one such text. We have no information on its status, but it may have been considered authoritative by the Qumran community or another group. What is shared by 4QRP, the Hebrew source of some Septuagint books, and the Samaritan Pentateuch (together with some similar manuscripts from Qumran) is the interaction of stretches of Scriptural text and of exegetical expansion, although the expansions differ in nature and tendency. If all available texts were considered authoritative in their respective settings, it is probable that 4QRP enjoyed a similar status.

The Notion of Covenant in the Dead Sea Scrolls

Professor Geza Vermes

The 'Covenant', and occasionally the 'new Covenant', is the term used to describe the foundation on which the Qumran Community was built. In times of wickedness the founding members would repent and became 'converts of Israel', returning to the Torah which the Prophets understood according to the explanation received by the Teacher of Righteousness, the founder, from the mouth of God. This interpretation is expressly defined as 'the last interpretation of the Law'.

In the Bible every Jew was a son or daughter of God, becoming beneficiaries of the divine Covenant by accepting the Torah. But then a moral distinction crept in. Only the faithful belonged to the Covenant, while wicked Israelites excluded themselves from it. In Qumran, people became members of the Community of the Covenant not by birthright, but through the personal commitment of an adult at the age of twenty.

There were two branches of the Community. One consisted of ordinary Jewish families, who were distinguished from other Jews by their sectarian life style, but who owned property and kept their earnings. The other branch, an elite minority, adopted a more ascetical

existence, undergoing a lengthy period of initiation. They were bound by strict obedience to their elders, adopted religious communism and, it would seem, celibacy. The Community resembles or is identical to the sect of the Essenes described by the Jewish writers Philo of Alexandria, Flavius Josephus and the Roman Pliny the Elder. The latter portrays the Essenes as dwelling on the western shore of the Dead Sea 'without women, renouncing sex entirely, without money, having for company only the palm trees'.

It was there, in all probability, that the members of the sect celebrated annually the feast of the Renewal of the Covenant, seeking spiritual transformation and renewal. On that occasion, to quote the Community Rule (1QS), each member 'shall be cleansed from all his sins by the spirit of holiness uniting him to [God's] truth, and his iniquity shall be expiated by the spirit of uprightness and humility. And when his flesh is ... sanctified by cleansing water, it shall be made clean by the humble submission of his soul to all the precepts of God. Let him then order his steps to walk perfectly in all the ways commanded by God concerning all the times appointed for him, ... and he shall be accepted by virtue of a pleasing atonement before God and it shall be to him a Covenant of the everlasting Community.'

Semitism and the Enlightenment Mind: Towards a Judeo-Islamic Response to Modernity ***Tim Winter***

John Gray, Slavoj Žižek and others have remarked on Islamic radicalism's deep indebtedness to Western modernity. This was facilitated by its partial overlap with several key Enlightenment themes, such as anticlericalism and popular activism, which led to the well-known philo-Islamic stance of de Boulainvilliers, Goethe, Rilke, Rousseau and others. It was accentuated by borrowings from mid-twentieth-century right-wing theorists such as Alexis Carrel, and by an increasingly rigorous rejection of medieval orthodoxy.

Several Western Muslim theologians, however, reject the Enlightenment habits of mind within both liberal Muslim and Islamist tendencies. Muslim artists such as Ivan Aguéli and Étienne Dinet suggest the importance of a 'Semitic' alternative to Enlightenment reason: a reincarnation of the human consciousness. This move, which restores confidence in medieval assurances of the human subject as an

integration of body and mind, has clear parallels in a major strand of Jewish thought, which from Maimonides to Daniel Boyarin has emphasized the rootedness of thinking in the body. This pre-Cartesian definition of the self, enabled by halakhah and the Sunna, offers an alternative to the fragmented postmodern mode of being. Anti-Muslim novelists such as Michel Houellebecq are at fault for failing to recognize the 'Semitic' valorization of what Merleau-Ponty calls the 'body-subject'. For Houellebecq, the only true response to the mediocrity of the modern world is a principled secular hedonism. The Semitisms, however, suggest the continuing possibility of a theistic alternative that values the fact of our enfleshment.

The 'Semitic' body-mind integration turns out to be the polar opposite of Enlightenment valorizations, framed against a certain image of Christianity, of a separated body and mind. The *philosophes* ended up not knowing what to do with the body other than to heal it or make it stronger. The Semitisms, however, which generally rejected the public cult of the body, had always been intimately attuned to its functions, each of which was integrated into the human subject through intention (*niyya*) and halakhic practice. There are clear parallels, therefore, between traditionalist Islamic thought and the orthodox Jewish critique of modernity.

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

The Leopold Muller Memorial Library

The Library has grown significantly over recent years, with the acquisition of major collections that put Hebrew and Jewish Studies firmly on the academic map at Oxford University. Some of these have been described in previous issues of this *Report*. They include the Rabbi Louis Jacobs Collection which is rich in responsa and hasidic material previously lacking in Oxford, and the Coppenhagen and Foyle-Montefiore collections which comprise assemblages that substantially increase Oxford's resources in European Jewish history.

Library Staff

The Library's importance is acknowledged by the establishment of a joint venture with all University libraries whose holdings touch on Hebrew and Jewish Studies. The Centre's Librarian, Dr Piet van Boxel, has been appointed Hebrew Curator of the Bodleian Library and coordinator of acquisitions in the field of Hebrew and Jewish Studies in the University. This appointment, which he will combine with his position in the Leopold Muller Memorial Library, also demonstrates the Centre's progressive integration into the wider University.

In February 2007 a new Deputy Librarian, Dr César Merchan-Hamann, became responsible for the daily running of the Library. He received a PhD in Jewish Studies from University College London for his thesis on the works of Sammy Groneman (1875–1952) – lawyer, Zionist activist and humorous writer. Dr Merchan-Hamann joined Leo Baeck College in 1997 as assistant to Dr Piet van Boxel before succeeding him there as Librarian in 2002.

Michael Fischer, who has been Library Assistant since 2004, completed his Master's in Librarianship at the University of London and has been promoted to Assistant Librarian.

New Arrivals Celebrated

The Coppenhagen Collection – a unique assemblage of books, pamphlets, newspapers, photographs, etchings and audio-visual material on

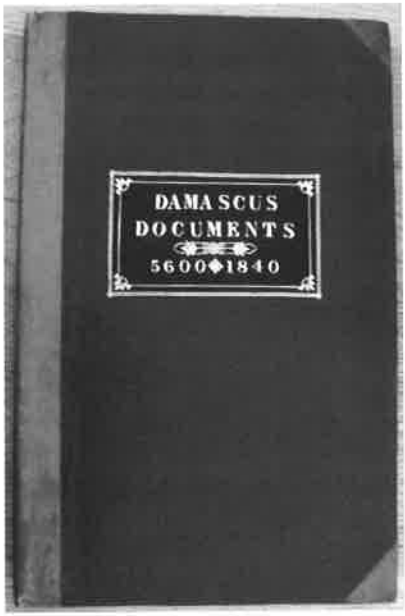


Plate 1 A dossier on the Damascus Affair of 1840 from the Arthur Sebag-Montefiore Archive.

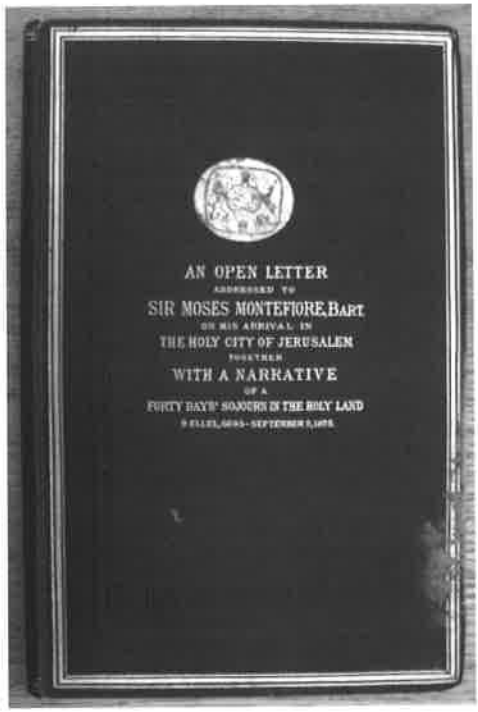


Plate 2 An open letter received in 1875 by Sir Moses Montefiore from Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, published with his own diary of his journey to the Holy Land. From the Arthur Sebag-Montefiore Archive.

Plate 3 The four volumes of Daniel Bomberg's Third Rabbinic Bible (*Mikra'ot Gedolot*) printed in Venice in 1546–8.

Dutch Jewry from the seventeenth-century influx of Portuguese and Spanish Jews to the second half of the twentieth century – was briefly described in the *Report* for 2004–2005 (pages 111–21). It was brought out of storage when the Manor Farm Library Annex was completed and formally opened on 23 January 2007. The event was accompanied by an exhibition of rare items, chiefly examples of Hebrew Bible production and works by Christian Hebraists of the seventeenth century illustrating the contribution of Dutch academics and universities to biblical and talmudic scholarship, an area in which the Collection is strong. Mrs Channa Coppenhagen, widow of the late Jacob Coppenhagen, as well as his sons Yochai and Uri and their families later thanked

> the wonderful and committed staff of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies ... for the arrangement and execution of the ceremony of the launch of the Coppenhagen Collection. ... We received many positive

Plate 4 The title-page of the Daniel Bomberg's Third Rabbinic Bible, bearing the stamp of Jews' College, London.

Plate 5 The title-page of the first edition of the responsa by Simeon ben Zemah Duran (1361–1444), printed in Amsterdam, 1738–41.

> compliments on the choice of the Centre ... to house the family collection for many generations. ... Jacob Coppenhagen ... would have been fully satisfied with the conditions and the arrangements agreed between the family and the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies...

The late Rabbi Dr Louis Jacobs's donation of his entire library to the Centre was also mentioned in last year's *Report* (pages 108–11). A reception in its honour was held on 6 June 2007, followed by a lecture by Dr Ada Rapoport-Albert (University College London). This was the first in an annual series in memory of Louis Jacobs, lecturers touching on particular aspects of Rabbi Jacob's wide-ranging scholarship. Dr Rapoport-Albert's paper – on Hasidism – was entitled 'From Sabbatean Prophetess to Hasidic Mad Woman: The Displacement of Female Spirituality in the Post-Sabbatean Era'.

Scholars and Students at Work

The Library aims to make its remarkable holdings accessible through an automated catalogue. All non-Hebrew titles of the Foyle-Montefiore Collection have been inserted in the University online catalogue and the Hebrew section will follow as soon as the University has installed the new (Unicode) catalogue programme. Roughly half the Louis Jacobs Collection is already listed online. A newly appointed cataloguer with knowledge of Hebrew, English and Dutch will commence the online catalogue of the Coppenhagen Collection in the 2007–2008 academic year.

Thanks to the Skirball and the Kennedy-Leigh foundations' support to the Centre, the Library was able to welcome scholars to use these expanded resources by offering a Visiting Fellowship at the Centre for researchers in the field of Modern European Jewish History. Impressed by its wealth, one of these described the Foyle-Montefiore Collection as an 'enormous and exciting collection [which] contains many unique publications in Hebrew and in German telling the dramatic story of the emergence of modern Jewish culture, ... the story of the Jewish cultural revolution of the eighteenth century.'

The Coppenhagen Collection is already being used by researchers, even before the completion of the online catalogue. One of its first readers was a student from the University of Utrecht (The Netherlands)

who received a scholarship in Modern European Jewish History from the Centre. Her Master's thesis, supervised by the Librarian, analysed relations between the Jewish community in the Netherlands and the Dutch royal family, in particular Queen Wilhelmina who reigned from 1890 to 1948. The Coppenhagen Collection contains material not usually taken into account in the historiography on this subject.

Donations

The Library's holdings have been enriched by several valuable donations over the academic year, which are hereby gratefully acknowledged.

An endowment in memory of the late Sir Isaiah Berlin enabled the Library to purchase books on Jewish history that are listed on page 185 of this *Report*.

The Hans and Rita Oppenheimer Fund – a permanent endowment of the Centre in memory of Hans and Rita Oppenheimer who perished in Bergen-Belsen and of their respective parents who died in Sobibor – is dedicated to acquiring books related to the Holocaust. Works purchased this year are likewise listed on page 185 of this *Report*.

The Library has been enriched by the donation of books on various aspects of Jewish studies belonging to the late Professor Julius Carlebach (1922–2001). These were presented by his wife Myrna. Julius Carlebach came to Britain as a refugee at the age of fifteen on the first 'Kindertransport', served for a time as a rabbi and was Reader in Sociology and later Emeritus Professor of German-Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex. His autobiography appeared in *Out of the Third Reich: Refugee Historians in Post-war Britain*, edited by Peter Alter (London: I. B. Tauris, 1998).

The Library received a welcome donation from Elizabeth and Daniel Peltz which made it possible to complete various sets of periodicals on Jewish history and thought.

Long-term Loans

The *Report* for 2005–2006 described the Arthur Sebag-Montefiore Archive deposited at the Centre on long-term loan by its custodian, Mr Robin Sebag-Montefiore (pages 90–1). This is a major addition to the

Library's holdings on Anglo-Jewry and on Sir Moses Montefiore in particular, consisting of letters written to Sir Moses, and of diaries and travel reports and documents related to Sir Moses's intervention on behalf of Jewish communities worldwide. The Archive arrived at the Centre from Château d'Oex (Switzerland) in March 2007. An online catalogue will be prepared and the Archive made accessible for research in 2009.

The Yiddish holdings of the Library have been substantially enriched by Mrs Hannah Lewis who deposited a microfiche set of all Yiddish publications printed in the Netherlands on long-term loan at the Library.

The Library is grateful to the Lewis Family Interests for making it the proud custodian of an important Rabbinic Bible. This four-volume Hebrew Bible with an Aramaic translation and various rabbinic commentaries was printed in Venice between 1546 and 1548 by Daniel Bomberg, an Antwerp-born Christian who set up a Hebrew press in Venice in 1516. His third Rabbinic Bible (the first and second were produced by him in 1517–1518 and 1524 respectively) is a landmark in Hebrew printing in Christian Europe since it is the last to be unaffected by censorship. The next, printed in 1568 by Marco Antonio Giustiniani, was censored on the instructions of the Venetian authorities, and all Rabbinic Bibles thereafter are marked either by secular or by ecclesiastical censorship. The 1727 Amsterdam edition, a copy of which is in the Foyle-Montefiore Collection, exemplifies this, and comparison with the 1546–8 edition sheds light on censorial activity in the sixteenth century.

A valuable addition to the assemblage of Hebrew books printed in Amsterdam now available in the Coppenhagen Collection is the first edition of Simeon ben Zemah Duran's *Responsa*, printed in Amsterdam by Naphtali Herz Levi Rofé in 1738–41. The name of the author and the title appear in an engraved architectural border depicting the biblical figures of Moses, Aaron, David and Solomon. It was acquired by the Lewis Family Interests and placed on long-term loan in the Library.

The Trust has also entrusted a unique Nazi document to the Library. The *Informationsheft G. B.*, written probably in 1940 as part of the Nazi invasion plan for Britain, contains a detailed description of the British political system and establishment, covering the church, industry, police, trade unions and even the Boy Scout movement. It also includes a list of the men and women the Gestapo had earmarked for immediate arrest.

Yiddish in St Petersburg

While floods encroached on Yarnton Manor in July 2007, Mogilev-Podolski, a busy market town on the border between Ukraine and Moldova (not to be confused with Mogilev in today's Belarus), experienced daytime temperatures of over 35 degrees Centigrade. Our team of researchers and students nevertheless carried out a comprehensive survey of the Jewish presence in the town, in part by talking to eighty-year-olds about their childhood experiences. Mogilev-Podolski was chosen for this survey as one of the most 'Jewish' towns in the European part of the Soviet Union. It was a thriving regional hub of trade and commerce before the October revolution, its roughly 10,000 Jewish merchants, craftsmen, and *kabtsonim* (paupers) constituting about half the total population. The River Dnestr links it with Odessa on the Black Sea, which made it possible to import goods through Mogilev to the towns of Bessarabia and Podolia and to export agricultural produce from there to the seaport.

The revolution put an end to this activity, since the river became the frontier between two hostile states, the Soviet Union and Romania, and was therefore closed to navigation. Mogilev had no contact for twenty years with Ataki, its Bessarabian counterpart across the river, until Bessarabia was occupied by the Soviet Union. The outbreak of war between the Soviet Union and Germany in June 1941 brought further changes. Mogilev became a centre of Transdnistria, an administrative unit on the Ukrainian bank of the Dnestr handed over by the Nazis to their Romanian allies. A ghetto in the commercial district housed the roughly 4000 Jews who remained and 15,000 or so exiles from Bessarabia and Bukovina. Although poor living condition, hunger, epidemics, floods and brutality by Romanian soldiers and their collaborators took their toll, Jews in Transdnistria were spared mass extermination, and many of them survived to be liberated by the Red Army on 19 March 1944, a date still celebrated by Mogilev Jews across the world.

After the war Jews again played a role in the life of the town. Yiddish was widely spoken until the late 1980s, although most people could neither read nor write it. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the economic hardships of the early 1990s drove many out of Ukraine to Israel,

Plate 1 The synagogue in Mogilev with members of the expedition and of the community after an evening service.

Germany and the United States, leaving only a few hundred Jews behind out of a total population of about 26,000, which was nonetheless a high proportion for Eastern Europe. The Jewish presence is highly visible. The ghetto museum, facing that of the town, is regularly visited by groups from local schools, and there is probably no other town in the world whose central monument – commemorating both those who died in the ghetto and their Gentile rescuers – has a Yiddish inscription. The synagogue holds daily afternoon and evening services, which are conducted in Russian since no one knows Hebrew. Former Mogilev residents in Israel and Germany increasingly spend summer holidays there.

The ethnographic expedition organized by the Centre for Jewish Studies at the European University in St Petersburg, in cooperation with the Yiddish in St Petersburg project of the Oxford Centre, had important questions to investigate. How did local Jews maintain their

Plate 2 The monument to the victims of the Nazi concentration camps and ghettos located in the main street of Mogilev, with inscriptions in Ukrainian and Yiddish.

Plate 3 A family treasure, a mid-nineteenth-century scroll of the Book of Esther in a silver case, which a Jewish family kept through the war years in different ghettos.

lifestyle during the Communist years? How did their Yiddish vernacular survive in the absence of formal education? Which elements of traditional belief and practice are the most enduring? Answers were sought from Jews and Gentiles living in Mogilev by a team comprising twenty-eight scholars and students from Russia, Ukraine, Finland, Canada and the United States, whose academic interests included folklore, musical culture, food, humour, lifecycle rituals, Yiddish linguistics and economic and social history.

It was found that the Jewish topography of the town reflected the community's social and economic structure. The area between the river and the market was home to Jewish craftsmen such as hat-makers, cobblers, tailors, carpenters and plumbers. Its main thoroughfare, officially called Carpenters' Street, was commonly known as Shotre, derived from the Ukrainian *sho treba?* ('What do you need?'), the words with which Jewish residents greeted peasants on their way to market. During the shortages of the Soviet years Jews played a vital role as suppliers of goods and procurers of services, activities tolerated by local authorities who were rewarded for their lenience. After the war Mogilev contained several synagogues, none officially registered, and a secret *heder* to

which war-orphans were admitted free so that they could learn enough Hebrew to pray for their deceased parents.

The district behind the market, known as Kaptsanivka ('pauperville'), was the abode of porters, coachmen and peddlers. Mogilev Jews respected physical strength, some of their tales resembling Isaac Babel's stories about Odessa gangsters. Mogilev is even sometimes referred to as 'Little Odessa', its residents proud that the current mayor of Odessa is a Jew from Mogilev. Although Kaptsanivka's only street bears the name of the Yiddish writer Sholem Aleichem, many present inhabitants associate this only with the traditional Yiddish greeting. Sholem Aleichem's works are now part of the school curriculum in Ukraine, however, and many towns have streets named after him. In the Soviet period many Jews worked at the mill-equipment factory, commonly known as the 'Jewish Factory'. A number remember the Jewish director who turned a small local workshop into a state-of-the-art industrial enterprise. With manufacturing industry in decline, the town's main commercial role is as a border-crossing between the two former Soviet republics Ukraine and Moldova.

Members of the expedition recorded many hours of Yiddish storytelling, songs and family narratives, all to be transcribed and analysed for evidence of historical, literary, anthropological and linguistic importance. Younger participants in particular benefited from the opportunity to make contact with Yiddish culture.

This expedition marks the conclusion of the Yiddish in St Petersburg Project, initiated by the Centre in 2003 with the generous help of the Yad Hanadiv Foundation. It was led by two Research Associates of the Center, Dr Gennady Estraikh (currently Rauch Visiting Professor of Yiddish Studies at New York University) and Dr Mikhail Krutikov (currently Assistant Professor of Slavic and Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor), in cooperation with the European University at St Petersburg, a major centre for postgraduate teaching in the humanities and social sciences in Russia.

The aim of the project was to incorporate Yiddish studies into the university curriculum and to train a generation of scholars able both to teach Yiddish language and culture and to use Yiddish in their research. For four years Dr Estraikh and Dr Krutikov travelled regularly to St Petersburg to present courses and seminars in Russian to members of the educated public and in Yiddish to smaller groups of specialists. Dr

Estraikh prepared a series of academic publications introducing new developments in contemporary Yiddish scholarship.

Dr Krutikov took part in the major anthropological survey of the Podolian Jewish shtetl described above. Participants received intensive prior training in St Petersburg to enable them to communicate with and record interviews with local inhabitants in a variety of Yiddish dialects. These materials will be analysed in publications and presentations, the first series of articles appearing in *East European Jewish Affairs*, December 2007. Yiddish Studies have in this way been firmly embedded in the Jewish Studies programme at the European University of St Petersburg, and will in future be available to all incoming graduate students.

Journal of Jewish Studies

The regular publication of the *Journal* has continued under the editorship of Professor Geza Vermes FBA and Dr Sacha Stern, with Dr Jonathan G. Campbell in charge of the book reviews. Dr Charlotte Hempel of Birmingham University will replace Dr Campbell as book-reviews editor from volume 58, no. 2.

Volume 57, no. 2 offers a selection of essays on Diaspora Judaism (Philo, Artapanus, a Jewish family in Hierapolis and Iranian epic motifs in Josephus), hermeneutics in the Tosefta, the edition of an autograph fragment of Maimonides from the Cairo Genizah, two discussions about the confucianization of the Kaifeng Jewish community, and an obituary of the Qumran scholar J. T. Milik.

Volume 58, no. 1 contains a variety of studies dealing with the Hellenistic portrait of Moses in Ezekiel Tragicus, three articles devoted to Flavius Josephus, two research papers on Rabbinic literature (parallels between Mishnah and Tosefta and a topic of Targumic midrash), and a survey of commercial relations between Jews and China in the Middle Ages. The volume ends with the analysis of a medieval Samaritan poem and two pieces on Qumran. Both issues include a substantial section of book reviews.

The digitization project of *JJS* has reached a new stage under the administration of Margaret Vermes. In addition to institutional subscribers, individual subscribers will also be able to access the *Journal* online by means of a username and password at www.jjs-online.net. The fully searchable table of contents from 1948 to 2007, as well as the full text up to 2005, are now available to electronic readers.

European Association of Jewish Studies

The secretariat of the European Association of Jewish Studies, based at Yarnton since 1995, was administered until March 2007 by Dr Karina Stern and thereafter by its new Administrator, Dr Garth Gilmour, under the supervision of the EAJS Secretary, Dr Sacha Stern (University College London).

The EAJS website and on-line directory of Jewish Studies in Europe, launched at the beginning of 2006 (www.eurojewishstudies.org), were completed in April 2007 under the management of Dr Garth Gilmour and funded by the Rothschild Foundation Europe. The first stage of a new project, the EAJS Funding Advisory Service, is expected to be launched soon.

Looted Art Research Unit

During the past year the Unit's research has shed further light on the activities of looters, dealers and auctioneers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland in the postwar period. Several dealers were able to re-establish themselves successfully with the help of caches of looted art. The most important of these were Karl Haberstock, Hitler's agent, and Bruno Lohse, Goering's agent and deputy head of the Einstatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg, the chief Nazi looting agency. Paintings owned by Lohse until his death in March 2007, which have resurfaced in the past year in Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Munich, include a Pissarro looted in Vienna from a Jewish publishing family. This passed from Eugen Primavesi, the chief Nazi appraiser in Vienna, to Hans Lange, the Berlin auctioneer and dealer, and then to Lohse.

Locating and mapping personal, trade and other archival sources remain central to the Unit's work. There is frequently a lack of transparency about materials in some German and Austrian archives, both public and private, and uncertainty about the location of certain types of expropriation records known to have been created in the Nazi era. Access to these and to dealers' and museum records remains problematical. Over 100,000 looted works of art remain unidentified in German museums. One of the leading German museum professionals in this field recently told the Unit that she cannot reveal information about curatorial, dealer and archival records in Germany because of the assistance this might provide to victims of Nazi thefts.

Agreement has recently been reached to open the Bad Arolsen archives, compiled in Germany by the International Tracing Service of the International Committee of the Red Cross over a sixty-year period. A copy of its fifty million records concerning seventeen million individuals will be made available in the UK. The Unit has been instrumental in establishing a committee to work with the Government on the holding and handling of these previously inaccessible materials.

The Looted Art Research Unit remains dedicated to identifying and ensuring the restoration of Nazi confiscated cultural property to its rightful heirs, and is partly funded for this purpose. The Unit has been instrumental in the past year in securing the return of 30 works of art

Plate 1 Erna Simion.

and over 500 books to 19 families across the world. Recent cases include the following three examples.

The University Library of Marburg found that its copy of *The Prevention of Destitution* ('Das Problem der Armut') by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, published in 1912, had been acquired in 1943 from a secondhand bookshop in Berlin called Antiquariat Bibula, from whom a total of twenty-one books were acquired in 1943 and 1944. Its flyleaf bore the signature 'Erna Simion 1913'. The Unit traced her family and discovered that she had been an economist who had studied in Berlin, Freiburg and Marburg, and had worked for Gustav Stolper's journal *Der deutsche Volkswirt*. She arrived in Britain on 27 August 1939, and her only son was killed while serving with the RAF at Arnhem in September 1944. In November 2006 an exhibition of looted books opened at the University

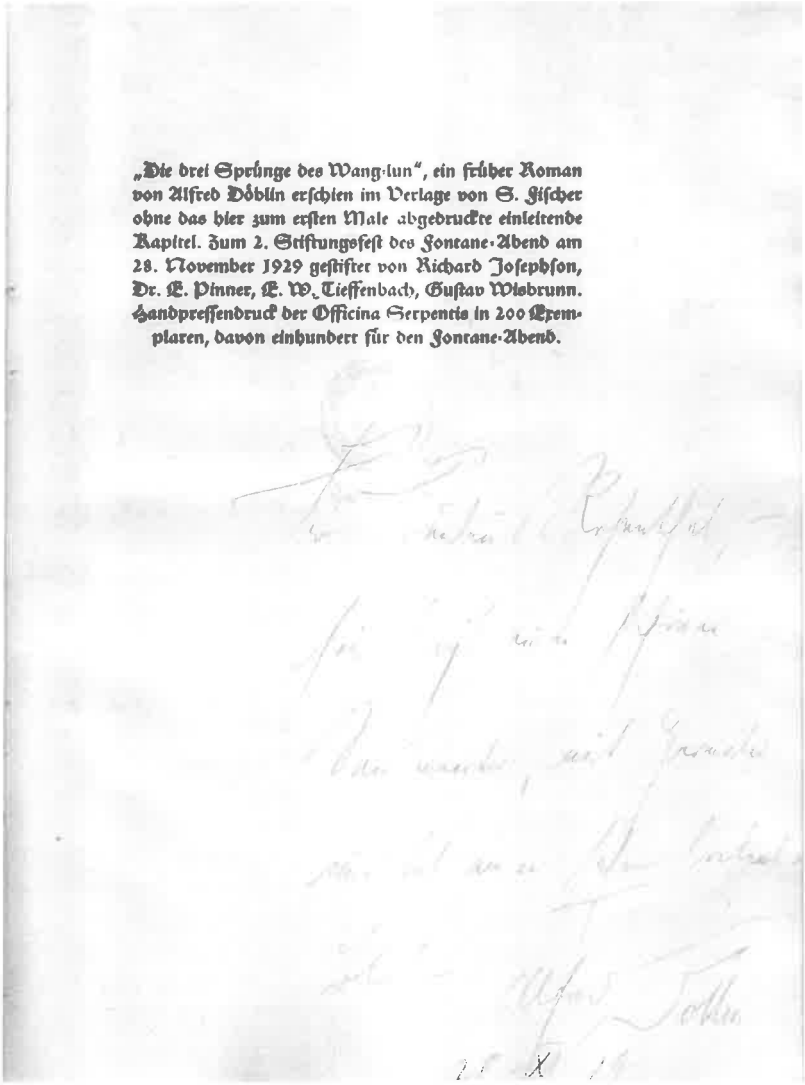

„Die drei Sprünge des Wang-lun", ein früher Roman von Alfred Döblin erſchien im Verlage von S. Fiſcher ohne das hier zum erſten Male abgedruckte einleitende Kapitel. Zum 2. Stiftungsfeſt des Fontane-Abend am 28. November 1929 geſtiftet von Richard Joſephſon, Dr. E. Pinner, E. W. Tieffenbach, Guſtav Wisbrunn. Handpreſſendruck der Officina Serpentis in 200 Exemplaren, davon einhundert für den Fontane-Abend.

Plate 2 Alfred Döblin's inscription to Susanne Rosenthal.

Plate 3 Painting by Perre Patel II, confiscated in 1943, whose owners have been identified by the Unit.

of Marburg in which her book was displayed. Three pages in the accompanying catalogue were dedicated to Erna Simion's history.

Continuing collaboration with the State and University Library of Bremen led to the return of several books this year. One, a novel entitled *Der Überfall* (1929) by the German expressionist Alfred Döblin, bore the inscription: 'For Fräulein Rosenthal – she wears a beautiful velvet coat with ermine and has a *very* alluring gaze. Alfred Döblin, 28. XI. 29'. The Unit was informed only that Susanne Rosenthal had been born in Breslau and lived in New York in the 1960s. Researchers located naturalization records from 1957 and a death notice in the July 1998 edition of *Aufbau*, the German-language newspaper published in New York. A reference to 'Ruth Ultmann' in the naturalization records, and to 'Ruth and John' in the death notice, led to the cancer researcher John Ultmann and his widow in Chicago. A moving letter sent by Ruth Ultmann in May 2007 explained how, after her mother's death on a train to Poland, Susanne Rosenthal had become her guardian, had

moved with them to Chicago in 1968 and had lived in their house until her death at the age of ninety-six.

In November 2006 the Unit identified a painting displayed in an exhibition in Amsterdam entitled 'Looted, but from Whom?' The landscape, by the French artist Pierre Patel II, had been confiscated from the collection of Martin Heidemann, a German lawyer living in Amsterdam. It was auctioned at the auction house Mak van Waay in Amsterdam in September 1943, after Heidemann's deportation to Bergen-Belsen where he and his wife perished in 1945. Despite nine years of research by the Dutch authorities the painting was still designated as without an heir. Within a very brief period the Unit was able to trace family in Israel with the help of records held at Yad Vashem and elsewhere, and to locate other heirs in Argentina. The Unit is working closely with the Dutch authorities to effect the return of the painting.

Institute for Polish–Jewish Studies

The Institute for Polish–Jewish Studies, an associated institute of the Centre, this year published volume 19 of *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, edited by Mieczysław Biskupski and Antony Polonsky, a volume focusing on 'Polish–Jewish Relations in North America'. When Poles and Jews emigrated to North America and elsewhere, the relationship between them developed in new ways, and volume 19 of *Polin* presents important new research on the subject. It contains nineteen papers, covering a wide range of topics, including the representation of Christians and Jews in Polish immigrant fiction, conflicts between Poles and Jews in Chicago in the first three decades of the twentieth century, comparison of the Jewish and Polish press in Canada as regards coverage of the Holocaust, the re-envisioning of Eastern Europe in American Jewish textbooks, and the ongoing Polish–Jewish debates over the Holocaust in Poland, especially the events in Jedwabne in 1941. The 650-page volume also includes fifteen other papers and one obituary.

In December a one-day international conference convened by Professor Jonathan Webber was held to launch the volume, disseminate its chief findings and to open up the discussion about Polish–Jewish relations and the aspirations and anxieties in Polish–Jewish dialogue, especially among young people. The conference, which was co-sponsored by the Polish Cultural Institute and held at the Polish Embassy in London, was opened by a presentation given by the chargé d'affaires of the Embassy (in the absence of the ambassador). Papers were then given by scholars from the United States, Poland and Australia, as well as by a senior representative of the American Jewish Committee and by the Polish ambassador to the Jewish diaspora. The conference concluded with the screening of five remarkable prewar short films about Jewish life in various Polish cities.

The conference was full to capacity, and there was lively discussion throughout, particularly following the films.

Other events organized by the Institute during the year included a special lecture given by Professor Ludwik Finkelstein on 'Jewish Religious Reform in Polish Lands', held in February at Leo Baeck College, London, and a musical soirée and buffet supper, held in June at the

Polish Embassy, consisting of works for violin and piano by both Polish and Jewish composers. The Institute also subsidized the translation into Polish of a biography of the Polish-born rabbi Chazkel Besser, an important figure active in Polish–Jewish dialogue.

The Website of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies

From December 2006 the Centre moved its web hosting to Eye Division Ltd. Since this time it has been possible to obtain more detailed and accurate statistics on website usage than before. The number of visits to the site hovers between 3500 and 4500 each month. The most popular area is the section for students, the MSt course-application form having been downloaded almost 2000 times in the six months from December to June, peaking in March at 514 downloads. The faculty page is the next most popular section, followed closely by the information for visiting scholars and the news section containing termly lecture lists and the occasional news bulletins which are available for download. The occasionally printed *Newsletter*, the ninth edition of which appeared in the spring, is also now available online in downloadable PDF format, for the first time this year. Past students of the Centre continue to keep the Alumni section up to date, maintaining personal contacts dating back over a decade in some cases.

You may visit the Centre's website on-line at http://www.ochjs.ac.uk

Fellows' Reports

Professor Glenda Abramson

Glenda Abramson, who retired in September 2006, has been awarded the title of Professor of Hebrew and Jewish Studies by the University and has become an Emeritus Fellow of the Centre. In July 2006 Professor Abramson gave a paper at the European Association of Jewish Studies Congress in Moscow entitled 'Disrobing the Body and Soul: U. Z. Greenberg's Idea of Nakedness'. In November she delivered the Ginor Seminar at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York on the subject of truth and fiction in Hebrew writing of the First World War. In November she lectured at Stanford University on aspects of Great War writing in Hebrew, and in December she presented a paper entitled 'Uri Zvi Greenberg's Miraculous Leap' in San Diego in the session of the Association of Jewish Studies congress dedicated to the memory of David Patterson. During the autumn semester Professor Abramson participated in teaching a class on Modern Hebrew literature (Agnon) at Hebrew Union College in New York. She was also a Visiting Scholar at New York University from October to December. Professor Abramson's book entitled Moonlight on the Wire, about First World War writing in Hebrew, has been accepted for publication.

Dr Jordan Finkin

Dr Finkin became Cowley Lecturer in Post-Biblical Hebrew in October 2006 and has spent much of the year completing a book on Jewish discourse and its Hebraic subtext in modern Yiddish literature. He taught several courses for the Faculty of Oriental Studies, including 'Modern Hebrew Literature' and 'Modern Hebrew Poetry'. In Hilary Term he delivered a lecture-series for the MSt programme entitled 'Is Modern Hebrew Literature Jewish?'

In November 2006 he presented a David Patterson Seminar entitled 'Reconfigured Constellations in Hebrew and Yiddish Poetry: The Modernisms of Avraham Shlonsky and Perets Markish', to be published in 2008 and summarized on page 102 of this *Report*.

In May he gave a paper at the Fifth Annual Yiddish Studies Conference at the University of California, Berkeley, entitled 'N. B. Minkov's

Polyphonic Aesthetic of Criticism'. This is a preliminary draft for a larger project on that poet's work.

Dr Miri Freud-Kandel

Dr Freud-Kandel's book entitled *Orthodox Judaism in Britain Since 1913: An Ideology Forsaken*, published in September 2006, examines the role of two Chief Rabbis – Dr Hertz and Dr Brodie – in shaping the changing theological direction of Anglo-Jewish Orthodoxy. She also discusses the impact of the Jacobs Affair on the Jewish community in Britain and the influence exerted by Chief Rabbi Jakobovits. She gave various lectures associated with the launch of her book.

Following on from this book she pursued research projects on the concept of *minhag Anglia* and on the Zionist thought of Lord Jakobovits. In Michaelmas Term she delivered a paper to the Seminar in Jewish Studies on the topic of '*Minhag Anglia*: A Celebration of the Twofold Blessing of Being Jewish and British'. She taught courses entitled 'Introduction to Jewish Life, Thought and Practice' and 'Modern Judaism' in Michaelmas and Hilary terms for undergraduate and MSt students in the Theology Faculty and Oriental Institute of the University. She also tutored undergraduate students for papers on Modern Judaism in both Faculties.

A version of a lecture she presented on her book appears on pages 70–80 of this *Report*.

Professor Martin Goodman

Professor Goodman continued to serve as Chairman of the Faculty Board of Oriental Studies throughout the academic year, and much of his time was taken up with administrative duties. Alongside his normal teaching duties he convened in each term a weekly graduate Seminar on Jewish History and Literature in the Graeco-Roman Period.

He presented a paper on 'Jesus and Jewish Messianic Expectations' at a Jewish-Christian Study Day in Birmingham in July 2006; and also a paper entitled 'CRINT and the Literature of the Sages: An Outsider's View', at a launch-seminar held in Utrecht in September for the publication of the second part of *The Literature of the Sages*, edited by Shmuel Safrai (dec.), Zeev Safrai, Joshua Schwartz and Peter Tomson, under the auspices of the Foundation Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum. He delivered a lecture on 'Faith and Works

in Late-Antique Judaism' to the Ancient History Graduate Seminar in Oxford in November as part of the series held under the auspices of the Oxford-Princeton Research Partnership; a public lecture in Birmingham in December on 'What Happened to the Maccabees After Hanukkah?'; and talks about his book *Rome and Jerusalem* at the launch of the book in Yarnton Manor in February 2007, at Jewish Book Week later in the same month, at Cambridge Limmud in March, and at the Hay-on-Wye Festival in May. At the end of May he attended two conferences in Cambridge: one on Josephus as literature, and another on messianism in Jewish and Christian history. In June he spoke on 'Jews, Christians and Romans' at a Biblical Study Day held in King's College London, on 'Philo as a Philosopher in Rome' at an international colloquium on Philo held in Brussels, and on 'Current Trends in Academic Jewish Studies in Europe' at a conference held in Amsterdam to honour Albert van der Heide.

Professor Goodman devoted most of his research time, apart from time spent on these projects, to the final preparation for publication of two books, *Rome and Jerusalem* and *Judaism in the Roman World*, both published in early 2007. He also wrote an article on 'Messianism and Politics in the Land of Israel, 66–135 CE', for a volume in honour of William Horbury.

Ronald Nettler

Ronald Nettler continued teaching for various undergraduate and Master's degrees, and supervising DPhil students. He served as an Assessor for the final examinations in Jewish Studies (undergraduate and MSt) and Modern Middle Eastern Studies (MPhil), and on admissions committees in Jewish Studies (MSt), Arabic (BA) and Middle Eastern Studies (MPhil and MSt). In Michaelmas Term he served as Director of Studies for the MSt in Jewish Studies.

He continued his research into Jewish Sufism in late medieval Egypt and on modern Islamic thought in Egypt in the early twentieth century. The project on Jewish Sufism is a long-term endeavour in an area where there has so far been very little research. He spoke on this subject in a research-in-progress report to the Seminar in Jewish Studies at the Oriental Institute in Hilary Term.

Dr David Rechter

Dr Rechter was on sabbatical leave throughout the academic year. During Michaelmas Term he wrote an article on Jewish national autonomy in the Austrian Empire, since published in the *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*. For the remainder of the year he continued work on his book on the history of Habsburg Bukovina Jewry. He gave a public lecture entitled 'The Habsburg Empire, 1867–1918: Good for the Jews?' and a faculty seminar at the University of Florida, in Gainesville, Florida. He also delivered a lecture on his Bukovina research at the University of Southampton; and presented a paper entitled 'A Minority Movement: Jewish National Autonomy in Habsburg Austria' at a conference on 'Jewish Politics in Central and Eastern Europe: From Shtadlanut to Mass Parties' at the Centre for the Study of the Culture and History of East European Jews in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Dr Alison Salvesen

Dr Salvesen delivered a paper to the Sixth World Syriac Conference in Kerala, India, entitled 'The Genesis of Ethnicity? The Role of the Bible in the Self-identity of Syriac Writers', in September 2006. The following month she gave an adapted version of the paper to the Oxford meeting of the Council of Christians and Jews, entitled, 'Stealing Jacob's God? The Quest for an Ethnic Identity in Syriac Writers'. She presented further work in this area at the Cambridge conference on 'The Exegetical Encounter between Jews and Christians in the Book of Genesis' in June 2007. Her lecture – a comparison of attitudes towards Laban and Aram in rabbinic and Syriac Christian literature – was entitled 'Keeping it in the Family? Jacob and his Aramean Heritage According to Jewish and Christian Sources'.

Over the past year Dr Salvesen taught two courses for the MSt in Jewish Studies programme, one on 'Jewish and Christian Bible Translation and Interpretation in Antiquity' and the other on the Jewish Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible known as the Septuagint. She supervised three Master's students in Jewish Studies for their dissertations, and three doctoral students, one of whom successfully submitted his thesis on St Jerome's Latin translation of the Hebrew Psalter. She taught Intermediate Biblical Hebrew Prose Composition to undergraduates, and gave classes on the Syriac text of Theodore of Mopsuestia's

Treatise against the Allegorists, and on the text of 2 Samuel in Hebrew and Greek.

As in most years Dr Salvesen was involved in university examining and in her duties as Tutor in Oriental Studies at Mansfield College. She also acted as an external examiner for the Hebrew and Jewish Studies Department at University College London, and served as Director of Studies for the MSt in Jewish Studies during Hilary and Trinity terms. With Dr Joanna Weinberg and Dr David Taylor she set up a new one-year Master's course in Bible Interpretation at the Oriental Institute.

Dr Joseph Sherman

Dr Sherman, the Centre's Woolf Corob Fellow in Yiddish Studies, participated in several seminars and conferences in the course of the academic year. In September 2006 he taught at the Sixth Seminar of Yiddish and Yiddish Culture organized by the Swedish Society for Yiddish in Stockholm, and gave three lectures in Yiddish on Sholem Aleykhem, Isaac Bashevis Singer and David Bergelson. In October he lectured on 'South African Yiddish Writing under Apartheid', as part of the series on 'Jewish Everyday Life and Popular Culture' given at the School Oriental and African Studies, London. During the Easter vacation he delivered papers in the United States, including one entitled 'Aspects of Cahan's Fiction in English' at a conference on 'Abraham Cahan and the *Forverts*' organized by New York University, Manhattan. While in New York he worked in the New York Public Library and YIVO and held an editorial meeting with Mr Shane Baker, director of the Central Yiddish Cultural Organization (CYCO), in collaboration with whom Dr Sherman is preparing an annotated edition of uncollected stories in Yiddish by Isaac Bashevis Singer, provisionally entitled *Der Frier Bashevis / The Early Bashevis*, due for publication in 2008. He also participated in an international conference at the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan on the theme, 'Place and Displacement of Yiddish' at which he read a paper entitled 'Yiddish in Africa', focusing on the image of Johannesburg in South African Yiddish poetry.

Dr Sherman was invited by the Modern Language Association of America to join the combined selection committee that awards the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize and Lois Roth Award for a Translation of a Literary Work. His tenure will run from 2007 to 2009. He continues to serve as co-editor of *Slavic Almanac* (University of South Africa)

and as Honorary Research Fellow in the School of Languages and Literatures, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Dr Joanna Weinberg

Dr Weinberg delivered various undergraduate courses on rabbinic and medieval Hebrew texts and medieval Jewish thought during the academic year, including 'A Survey of Rabbinic Literature' for the MSt in Jewish Studies and a Midrash class for doctoral students. She also gave lectures on 'The Formation of Rabbinic Judaism' for the Faculty of Theology.

She continued to serve as Chair of the Hebrew and Jewish Studies Unit of the Oriental Faculty and as external examiner for the external degree in Jewish History at the University of London.

In January she presented a seminar entitled 'A Rabbinic Disquisition on Leviticus 26: A Utopian Vision Among Jews and Christians' in the Seminar on Jewish History and Literature in the Graeco-Roman Period convened by Professor Goodman. She gave a lecture on Louis Jacobs' book *Rabbinic Thought in the Talmud* in the 'Reading Louis Jacobs' series in London, and participated in the workshop entitled 'Philology and its Dangers' organized by Professor Minkowski at Balliol College with a paper entitled 'Forgery and Philology in the work of Azariah de' Rossi'. She delivered a paper at the international conference on Philo of Alexandria held at the Université Libre de Bruxelles in June, entitled 'The Jewish Rediscovery of Philo in the Sixteenth Century'.

She continued to work with Professor Anthony Grafton of Princeton University on their joint project on Isaac Casaubon's Hebrew and Jewish scholarship.

Professor Hugh Williamson

In September Professor Williamson lectured and tutored for ten days at the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology on what is believed to be the first doctoral programme in biblical studies in Black Africa. There were twelve students from almost as many countries, and biblical issues of ethnicity and genealogy never seemed more vital. In November he gave the Ryan Lectures at Asbury Theological Seminary, Kenntucky, and read two papers at the Society of Biblical Literature meeting in Washington, DC, one on the Aramaic documents in the Book of Ezra and the other on biblical portrayals of the post-exilic

restoration (a memorial session for P. R. Ackroyd). In Oxford he was tutorial secretary for Hebrew and Jewish Studies and continued to supervise nine doctoral students. He also gave lectures or classes on Hebrew language, the history of Israel, and the Hebrew text of Genesis 1–11, 2 Kings 18–20, Isaiah 6–9, 40–55, Habakkuk and the Habakkuk Commentary from Qumran, selected Psalms, and Proverbs 1 and 7–9. Continuing responsibilities include chairing the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society, serving as secretary of the executive committee of the international Semantics of Ancient Hebrew Database Project, serving on the editorial Boards of *Vetus Testamentum* and *Oudtestamentische Studiën* and chairing the Humanities Group of the British Academy.

Visiting Scholars' Reports

Professor Malachi Beit-Arié

Professor Malachi Beit-Arié, Ludwig Jesselson Professor Emeritus of Codicology and Paleography at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, was a Kennedy Leigh Fellow at the Centre from 29 March to 28 June 2007. He delivered masterclasses on Hebrew codicology and the history of the medieval Jewish hand-produced book in a comparative perspective, which were illustrated by manuscripts from the Bodleian Library. The Hebrew and Jewish Studies Unit, Oxford University, and the Centre for Study of the Book, Bodleian Library, sponsored the series.

During his stay he wrote several chapters of his book *Hebrew Typology: Historical and Comparative Typology of Hebrew Medieval Codices Based on the Documentation of the Extant Dated Manuscripts in Quantitative Approach.*

Eyal Ben-Eliyahu

Eyal Ben-Eliyahu stayed at the Centre from 31 January to 22 July 2007 and completed his doctoral thesis entitled: 'National Identity and Territory: The Borders of the Land of Israel in the Consciousness of the People of the Second Temple and the Roman-Byzantine Periods', for the Department of History of the Jewish People, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. With the help of scholars from the Oriental Institute and the Classics Faculty he expanded his research to encompass the Graeco-Roman world. He also wrote articles about the role of holy places in rabbinic literature and on the names of the Jewish nation and its land at the ancient periods.

A summary of the David Patterson Seminar he delivered while at Yarnton appears on page 99 of this *Report*.

Professor Yuval Dror

Professor Yuval Dror, Head of the Tel Aviv University School of Education, who stayed at the Centre from 9 August to 28 September 2006, completed editing his book on the 'Communal Groups' research project he headed at the Yad Tabenkin research centre of the kibbutz movement.

The project, conducted mainly by PhD and MA students, examines two new types of kibbutz and commune established since the late 1980s by graduates of Zionist-socialist youth movements. These include two 'urban kibbutzim' in Jerusalem, one each in the development towns of Beit Shemesh and Sderot, and five 'educational kibbutzim' belonging to leftist youth movements. Members of these movements work for 'communes' located in development areas and integrated into youth movements or 'educational kibbutzim' for a year before their army service and for longer periods thereafter. There are currently roughly 2500 members in these new communal groups, most of whom have completed their army service and are in their twenties, and who carry out educational and community work instead of working in agriculture and industry as is usual in kibbutzim. 'Young adulthood' or 'prolonged youth' has recently come to be regarded as a distinct age-category, in which people seek their personal, group and national identities while working in a multi-age framework.

This historical and interdisciplinary study continues aspects of *The History of Kibbutz Education: Practice into Theory* (2002), which Professor Dror completed at the Centre in 1998–9, and his *'National Education' Through Mutually Supportive Devices: A Case Study of Zionist Education* (2007, in English and Hebrew), finished at Yarnton in 2005. He benefited in writing these from the holdings of the Leopold Muller Library, especially the Kressel Collection and the material on the Zionist movement.

Professor Shmuel Feiner

Professor Shmuel Feiner, holder of the Samuel Braun Chair for the History of the Jews in Prussia at Bar-Ilan University, stayed at the Centre as a Kennedy Leigh Fellow between 1 February and 30 June 2007. He was able to complete his book entitled *The Origins of Jewish Secularization in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, a ten-year project in which he examines 'doubt' and 'sin' in eighteenth-century European Jewry, the broad counter-reaction to these, and the early roots of Jewish secularization. In studying the growth of irreligious attitudes and especially Deism in Berlin, London, Amsterdam and Hamburg, he examined in particular sensitivity to the emergence of a 'New World', patterns of life marked by religious laxity, sexual permissiveness, ridicule of rabbis and talmudic scholars, as well as ostentatious acculturation, including the adoption of

fashionable clothing and the devotion of leisure time to personal pleasures.

Professor Feiner gave lectures and seminars on this book ('Pleasures Among the Jews and its Cultural Meaning', 'The Emergence of the Jewish New World') and on previous projects ('The Emergence of the Haskalah', 'Moses Mendelssohn') at the Centre and at the Oriental Institute in Oxford, at University College London, and at the universities of Birmingham, Sussex, Salzburg and Amsterdam. He particularly benefited from the collections related to Sir Moses Montefiore at the Centre's library.

A summary of the David Patterson Seminar delivered by Professor Feiner while he was at Yarnton appears on pages 100–2 of this *Report*.

Professor Stephen Geller

Professor Stephen Geller of the Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, stayed at the Centre from 1 June to 1 September 2006 and completed the first half of a commentary on the Book of Psalms, to be published as part of the Hermeneia Series on the books of the Bible by Fortress Press. Professor Geller aimed to provide scholars and students with a commentary on Psalms that combines classical biblical scholarship with modern literary approaches.

He delivered a David Patterson Seminar on the biblical roots of the Western tradition of religious warfare and violence, to appear in a volume on the theme of religiously motivated violence issued jointly by Boston University and Wellesley College, and completed a talk on 'Creation Typology and the Institution of the Sabbath', presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Washington in November 2006, and to be published subsequently by the Society in a volume of essays.

A summary of the David Patterson Seminar he delivered while at Yarnton appeared on pages 68–9 of the *Report* for the 2005–6 academic year.

Dr Motti Golani

Dr Golani of Haifa University stayed at the Centre from 26 April to 28 May and from 18 August to 15 September 2006, and worked in association with St Antony's College on his project entitled 'The End of the British Mandate of Palestine'. This comprises two books, the first

entitled *By the Skin of His Teeth – Sir Henry Gurney and the End of the British Mandate in Palestine, 1948* (based on Gurney's diary) and the second *The Last Commissioner of Judea – Sir Alan Gordon Cunningham and the Jewish Yishuv, 1945–1948*.

Dr Golani also wrote an article on the interaction between Jewish women and British soldiers in Palestine in 1940–8, and delivered a David Patterson Seminar, a summary of which appeared in the *Report* for the 2005–6 academic year, page 71.

Dr Robert Miller

Dr Robert Miller of Mount St Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, stayed at the Centre from 24 August 2006 to 13 January 2007, and completed the research and much of the writing for his book entitled *Covenant and Grace in the Old Testament*. In this he examines parallels between Assyrian royal propaganda of the eighth and seventh centuries BCE and the language Israel uses to describe its relationship with God, especially in the books of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History, and explains how biblical writers employed Assyrian motifs and terminology to express their total dependence on the unmerited gift of divine election. Dr Miller presented a David Patterson Seminar (summarized on page 106 of this *Report*) at the Centre and at the Oriental Institute, as well as delivering a guest lecture at the University of Durham.

Professor Shachar Pinsker

Professor Shachar Pinsker of the University of Michigan at Ann-Arbor, who stayed at the Centre from 1 June to 21 August 2006, worked on a book examining intertextual relations between rabbinic literature and modernist Hebrew fiction in Eastern and Central Europe, 1900–30. He researched key fictional texts and essays by Y. H. Brenner, G. Shofman, U. N. Gnessin and H. Zeitlin, and wrote a historical-cultural introduction placing the work of modernist Hebrew writers in the context of Jewish-cultural shifts in this period. He made use of the extensive holdings of early-twentieth-century Hebrew literature in the Kressel and Elkoshi collections in the Centre's library.

Dr Jenny Read-Heimerdinger

Dr Jenny Read-Heimerdinger of the University of Wales in Bangor, who stayed at the Centre from 8 February to 21 June 2007, investigated

the readings of Codex Bezae, a Greek manuscript of the New Testament book of Acts recognized as showing a closer familiarity with the Jewish context of the early Church than other such manuscripts. She concentrated on the chapters concerning Paul (Acts 13:1–22, 29) and discovered further evidence that the author of Acts aimed to present events and people of the early Church as re-enactments of those in the ancient history of Israel.

She was also able to complete, with Josep Rius-Camps of Barcelona, the third of a four-volume commentary on the book of Acts, comparing the message of the Bezan text with that of the more familiar one. Dr Read-Heimerdinger presented her findings to the Fifth Birmingham Colloquium on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament. The Centre's library was a valuable resource for discovering traditions and teachings of first-century Judaism and she was grateful to colleagues at the Centre and the Oriental Institute for sharing their expertise with her.

Stephen Russell (Visiting Research Student)

Stephen Russell of New York University, a former graduate of the Centre's Diploma (now MSt) programme, stayed at the Centre from 7 October 2005 to 24 August 2006 and completed the last of his New York University comprehensive examinations. These focused on theories of the emergence of Israel in Canaan in the Late Bronze Age, and on the textual and archaeological evidence on which these theories are based.

He also conducted research for his PhD dissertation entitled 'Images of Egypt in Early Biblical Literature: Israelite, Transjordanian and Judahite Portrayals', which will discuss biblical references to Egypt from before the eighth century BCE. Emphasis will be placed on texts that reflect traditions going back perhaps to the tenth or ninth centuries BCE or earlier, most importantly the Golden Calf stories from 1 Kings 12 and Exodus 32, the Balaam oracles in Numbers 22–4 and the Song of the Sea in Exodus 15. He will attempt to classify these texts geographically to show how traditions about Egypt differed in the north, Transjordan and the south. This will offer a more nuanced examination of the regional variation within the tradition than previous work in this area, which assumed that the tradition was monolithic.

Professor Jonathan Schneer

Jonathan Schneer, Professor of Modern British History at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, Georgia, stayed at the Centre from 5 September to 20 December 2006 and carried out research for a book on the Balfour Declaration, to be published by Random House in the USA, Doubleday in Canada and Bloomsbury Press in the UK. He made extensive use of the archives at the Middle East Centre, St Anthony's College, Oxford, and the Bodleian Library, and also visited archives in London, Cambridge, Hull, Durham and Taunton. He also prepared a paper entitled 'The Balfour Declaration: A New Angle?' which he delivered at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem on 7 March 2007. The book is expected to appear in the spring of 2010. An article on some of this research appears on pages 7–24 of this *Report*.

Dr Michael K. Silber

Dr Michael K. Silber of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem was a Kennedy Leigh Fellow at the Centre from 16 April to 16 June 2007. During his stay he worked on a biography of Akiva Yosef Schlesinger (Pressburg, 1838–Jerusalem, 1922), who can be considered the precursor both of the extreme ultra-Orthodox anti-Zionist Neturei Karta, and, paradoxically, of modern religious Zionism.

A recurring theme in Schlesinger's thought was the obsession with the rapid erosion of tradition in the Diaspora. He primarily blamed external factors, but nevertheless held that only the internal weakness of traditional society could explain its precipitous decline. His harshest criticism was reserved for the inner decay of Orthodox society and culture, which he held up to scrutiny and found wanting. He was deeply dissatisfied with the educational, marital, economic and organizational foundations of mainstream Orthodox, and sought to construct a more viable, all-encompassing society, better equipped to meet the challenges of the modern age. He moved to the Land of Israel in 1870 with little hope that Orthodox life as properly envisaged would survive in the contaminated lands of the Diaspora. He therefore urged the faithful to flee to Palestine, where Jews were to return as part of a gradual, this-worldly, active Messianism, echoing ideas of Maimonides as well as of older contemporaries like Zvi Hirsch Kalischer, Elijah Guttmacher and Judah Alkalay.

In the Land of Israel, an elite, quasi-monastic order of religious

virtuosi would be set up for the purpose of establishing what in fact was an Orthodox utopia. There the pristine language, dress and culture of the ancient Hebrews would be restored and religious life of the highest piety would be strictly enforced. On the practical side, land would be purchased from the Turks, agricultural settlements founded, and a militia, flag, administration and other accoutrements of a nation-state set up. His proposals led some historians, and in particular Getzel Kressel whose rich library on the history of the *Yishuv* is now housed at Yarnton Manor, to the conclusion that it was precisely among religious extremists that one could find a man like Schlesinger, 'who was a Zionist before there was Zionism'.

A summary of a David Patterson Seminar presented by Dr Silber while at Yarnton appears on pages 107–8 of this *Report*.

Dr Haim Sperber

Dr Haim Sperber of the Western Galilee College, Acre, stayed at the Centre between 16 October 2006 and 31 January 2007 and carried out research at the Muller and Bodleian libraries in Oxford, and at University College London, the Rothschild Archive and Metropolitan Archives in London. He completed articles entitled 'Philanthropy and Leadership in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century English Jewish Community' and 'Moses Montefiore and the English Rothschilds – Family and Rivalry', and began researching letters from immigrants to their families in Eastern Europe. He also wrote three of five planned five chapters for a book on nineteenth-century Anglo-Jewish philanthropy.

A summary of his David Patterson Seminar on 'Patterns of Leadership in Nineteenth-Century Anglo-Jewry' appears on pages 108–9 of this *Report*.

Professor Hava Tirosh-Samuelson

Professor Hava Tirosh-Samuelson of Arizona State University in Tempe was a Visiting Scholar at the Centre and a Visiting Fellow at Wolfson College from 21 March to 10 August 2006. During this time she completed the first three chapters of a book entitled *Judaism and Nature* to be published by Rowman & Littlefield. The first discusses nature in the Bible, the second attitudes towards nature in Second Temple Judaism, and the third nature in legal and non-legal aspects of the rabbinic corpus. She also delivered a paper to the seminar on

Judaism and Christianity in the Graeco-Roman World convened by Professor Martin Goodman, entitled 'Nature in Second-Temple Wisdom Literature: Ben Sira, Wisdom of Solomon, and 1 Enoch'. This demonstrated the emergence of an abstract conception of nature as a result of Jewish participation in Near Eastern wisdom culture and the encounter with Hellenistic culture in particular. Professor Tirosh-Samuelson hopes to write the remaining six chapters of the book in next two years, and to return to Yarnton to complete the project.

She also delivered a public lecture on Judaism and nature in Oxford-Chabad on the eve of Shavuot (1 June) in which she discussed the widespread but mistaken perception that Judaism is either uninterested in or even hostile to the natural world.

In addition to her long-term project, Professor Tirosh-Samuelson researched and wrote a paper entitled 'Jewish Philosophy and the New Genetics' for a conference on 'Creation, Procreation and the New Genetics' at the Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, in September 2006, and participated in a conference entitled 'Putting Science and Religion in Its Place: New Visions of Nature' organized by Professor John Brooke of Oxford (13–16 July).

She also made contact with British scholars whose research is related to her project 'Facing the Challenges of Transhumanism: Religion, Science and Technology', for which she has received a large grant from the John Templeton Foundation. Professor Tirosh-Samuelson discussed aspects of this project with Nick Bostrom (Oxford), Aubrey de Grey (Cambridge) and Geoffrey Cantor (University of Leeds), and planned an international conference for 2009. She was able to meet Margaret Vince who translated essays from German into English for a volume that Professor Tirosh-Samuelson was editing with Professor Christian Wiese, *Judaism and the Phenomenology of Life: The Legacy of Hans Jonas* (Brill Academic Publishers).

Publications

Centre Publications

Journal of Jewish Studies, edited by Professor Geza Vermes and Dr Sacha Stern, volume 57:2 (2006)

Journal of Jewish Studies, edited by Professor Geza Vermes and Dr Sacha Stern, volume 58:1 (2007)

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Fellows' Publications

FREUD-KANDEL, MIRI, *Orthodox Judaism in Britain Since 1913: An Ideology Forsaken*, London: Vallentine Mitchell (2006)

—— 'Has the middle-road reached a dead end?', *Jewish Chronicle*, 16 November 2006

GOODMAN, MARTIN, 'L'Histoire du Journal of Jewish Studies', in S. C. Mimouni and J. Olszowy-Schlanger (eds) *Les Revues Scientifiques d'Etudes Juives: Passé et Avenir*, Paris: Societé des Etudes Juives, Paris (2006) 61–71

—— 'The Meaning of FISCI IUDAICI CALUMNIA SUBLATA', in S. J. D. Cohen and J. J. Schwartz (eds) *Studies in Josephus and the Varieties of Ancient Judaism*, Leiden/Boston: Brill (2007) 81–9

—— 'Messianism and Politics in the Land of Israel, 66–135 CE', in M. Bockmuehl and J. Carleton Paget (eds) *Redemption and Resistance: The Messianic Hopes of Jews and Christians in Antiquity*, London and New York: T. & T. Clark (2007) 149–57

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—— *Judaism in the Roman World: Collected Essays*, Leiden/Boston: Brill (2007)

—— *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations*, London: Penguin (2007)

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—— 'Messianism in Ancient Bible Translations in Greek and Latin', in Markus Bockmuehl and James Carlton Paget (eds) *Redemption and Resistance: The Messianic Hopes of Jews and Christians in Antiquity*, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark (2007) 245–61

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—— "What balm for the heart…?" The Yiddish Poetry of David Fram (1903–1988)', *Midstream* 52:4 (July/August 2006) 7–11

—— 'Excess of Trust': Review of Florence Noiville, *Isaac B. Singer: A Life*, in *Times Literary Supplement (TLS)*, no. 5414 (5 January 2007) 23

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*Dissertations Submitted at the Centre, 2007**

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CAIN, REBECCA M. *Incest Narratives in Jewish Writings.* 61 pp.

DARG, DANIEL W. *Wrestling with Creation: Genesis 1 and the Cosmologies of Jewish Scientists.* 66 pp.

DEBOLD, R. TIMOTHY. *An Analysis of Section Twelve of Leviticus Rabbah.* 64 pp.

GRAHAM, STEVEN ANTHONY. *Augustine and the Jews: The Role of Hostility in Early Christian Thought.* 72 pp.

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PETERS, AL. *The Tower of Babel and the Confusion of Tongues.* 60 pp.

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