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The SCRIBE

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Wishing all our Readers a Happy Passover

Israel Golden Jubilee

"If you will it, it is no dream"

Theodor Herzl 1860-1904

Not a dream but a nightmare!

by Naim Dangoor

When, as a result of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, Russia withdrew from the First World War, the Allies had to bring in the United States on their side to redress the balance. To enlist the considerable financial and political influence of American Jewry, the Balfour Declaration was issued on 2 November 1917, for the establishment of a Jewish National Home, (leading to an independent state).

But hardly had the war ended than the British Foreign Office and the military started to frustrate that objective. The Arabs were incited to rebel and Jewish immigration was curtailed and barred from Transjordan on the pretext that Mandated Palestine could not support more than the two million population which it had then reached. That same area now has prosperous populations totalling ten million.

For Israel, the dream became a nightmare with no prospect of a lasting peace in sight. The Arabs have been the greatest winners of the two World Wars, with no independent countries at the start, emerging with 21 super-oil rich independent Sovereign states at the end. There is no case for yet another Arab state in the West Bank and Gaza, opposed to and endangering the very existence of Israel. The Palestinian Arabs should be exchanged for the Jews of Arab countries who came to Israel.

The reason for Arab intransigence towards Israel and the Jewish people is that they, the Arabs, wish to protect an unfair advantage which they hold. Hence, there can be no real lasting peace in the region unless, and until, the shape of the Fertile Crescent is revised, discarding the arbitrary colonial borders of 1918. Turkey, again, has an important role to play in the future of the region and its stability. ●

When the British troops embarked from Haifa in May 1948 on the termination of the mandate, and the proclamation of the state of Israel, seven Arab States invaded the country. The Arab Legion of Transjordan, led by British officers, was stationed at Latrun. Against all predictions, voiced even by Field Marshal Montgomery, Israel defeated the well-organised and trained Arab armies. Bevin refused to recognise the new Jewish State and was determined to defy America, strangle the infant state and show the world that Britain was still a great power. With all the Arab enemies hell-bent on the destruction of Israel, Bevin was no less intent on giving them a helping hand.

Three hours after the cease-fire was declared on all fronts, British warplanes flew over Tel-Aviv in order to reconnoitre Israeli positions. Four RAF aeroplanes were shot down by the Israeli Air Force. It is ironic that in spite of the pro-Arab stance of the Foreign Offices, the RAF pilots were given instructions that in case they were to bail out, they should land on Israeli and not on Egyptian territory while the Israeli pilots broadcast a friendly message to their counterparts telling them that if they had to bail out in Israel, they would find many familiar faces and former comrades-in-arms of the second World War.

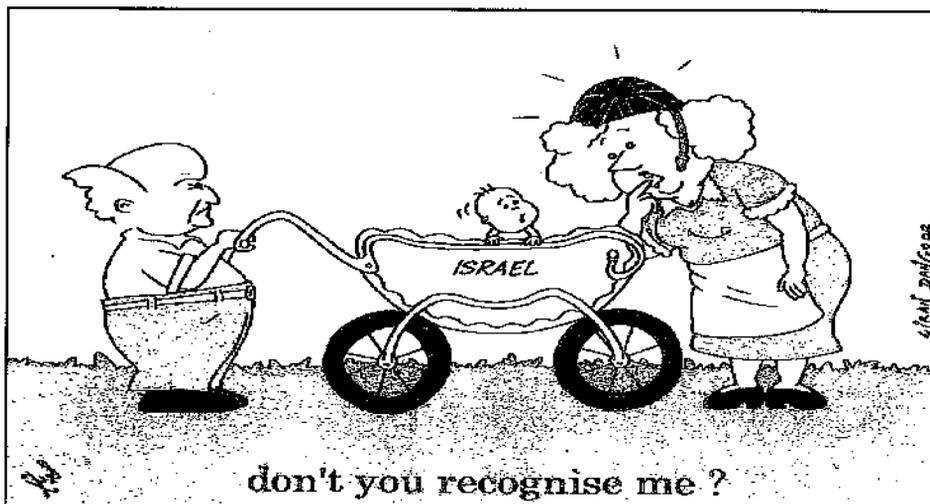
During the British election of 1945, the Labour leaders, Attlee, Morrison and others proclaimed that a Labour government will allot to the Jews not only Palestine but also Trans-Jordan which was part of it. When they came to power they not only reneged on their promise but became the worst anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish of any British government. One strong champion of Zionist causes was Blanche Dugdale, a niece and biographer of her uncle Lord Balfour.

Like King Cyrus of Persia, Balfour wanted to help the Jews to return to Palestine and re-establish their country. According to Mrs Dugdale he had faith in the loyalty of the Jewish people and wanted them to live in that part of the world, who will interpret the East to the West and the West to the East.

On the day Israel was proclaimed as an independent state, Ben-Gurion sent a telegram to Mrs Dugdale thanking her for all her efforts in the struggle to fulfil her uncle's aim. The next day Mrs Dugdale died. ●

London

Abdulla S. Dangoor



Although Britain had been entrusted by the League of Nations to facilitate the establishment of the Jewish National home in Palestine, it took Britain over a year to recognise the Jewish state when it finally emerged in 1948.

A cartoon in a British paper at the time showed Britain peering quizzically into a pram in which "baby" Israel asks her, "Don't you recognise me?"

We were unable to locate the original cartoon, but well-known Israeli cartoonist, Liran Dangoor, has again expressed the idea brilliantly in the above cartoon. ●

My Life and Times, Part III

by Salim Dangoor, Stockholm

My children and grandchildren enjoy my stories of the past, and want me to put more in writing.

The earliest incident in my life was a dangerous one, and it could have been my last.

We lived at the time in a big house overlooking the River Tigris. One day, when I was fifteen months old, I fell into the pond we had in the courtyard which was full of water. I do not know how it happened, but probably I looked into the pond and saw a child's reflection in the water and must have tried to touch it, and fell in head over heels. My brother Naim, who was about three and half years old, saw me and pulled me clear of the water, and without panicking, instead of calling Nana, called in a loud voice: "Umm Abdalla," as she was called by the grown-ups, in order to impress the seriousness of the situation, "your son has fallen in the water." Nana heard the call, and run down from the top floor, barefooted, straight to the courtyard and pulled me out unconscious. I was suspended by my feet until all the water came out and they managed to revive me and put me to sleep crying.

At that time, nobody had telephones at home, and Baba heard the story only in the evening when he came home from work. He immediately took a prayer book and wrote on the first page: "On Friday the 2nd Elul 5679 and the 12th September, Salim climbed into the big pond which was full of water and fell inside. Naim was standing nearby and held him



Naim - The young savior of 3 1/2 years. ●

up and shouted Umm Abdalla come and take Salim from the water etc. Therefore, Salim must always be thankful to his brother Meir Naim."

Time passed. I remember how on Saturdays, Baba used to take me with one of my brothers to visit a famous writer, Abdul Latif El Falahi. I must have been just over five years old when Abdul Latif Beg saw me looking in a newspaper as if reading. He asked me if I could read without punctuations, and when I answered in the affirmative, gave me Al Hilal magazine to read. He was impressed and praised me in front of Baba, and took a nice little metal box and wrote on it, after putting one shiny silver Rupee inside:

When I was eleven, my grandfather, Hakham Ezra Dangoor, passed away after a short illness. He was very popular and some ten thousand people went to the funeral. On the seventh day a big memorial service was held at Albert Sassoon Synagogue. Many dignitaries and a representative of the king were present. I was asked by the late Sasson Murad, a community notable in charge of the service, to read a eulogy which he wrote for me. I stood on a high-chair and I started reading the speech with tears in my eyes.

When I read the passage "Oh God, we are deprived of someone we loved dearly. Won't you make a miracle to bring him back to life for at least one month?" The ladies started crying and wailing loudly and the public joined. The speech was a big success and the following day it came out in all the newspapers that "the lad Salim, the grandson brought tears to all present with his moving words." With my picture published in the papers, I felt very proud.



Our house in Baghdad on the Tigris at that time. ●

Time passed. At the age of seventeen my father wanted me to stay and help him with his publishing work. My two elder brothers chose another path. One studied economics and the other engineering. But, I too wanted to continue my studies.

At the time, Father planned to publish the first directory of Iraq in about 1,000 pages. He engaged two capable editors, one my cousin Meer Basri, and the other Mahmood Fahmi Darwish, a well-known writer. The latter suggested that he tours the country and collect the necessary material and photos. He was to start in the North and Father agreed that I accompany him to get interested in the job. Nana objected because of the danger of Malaria, but she was assured that I would be taking the necessary precautions. The doctor prescribed two pills of quinine daily, and one pill of plasmokine. It was a memorable and fantastic journey. We met all the governors and tens of Kurdish leaders and Yezidis and Assyrians. It lasted three unforgettable months. But when I returned, I fell immediately sick with Malaria. I lost weight and stayed in bed some three months between life and death. My mother was beside my bed day and night until I recovered. What effects the sickness left on me, I did not know then.

The doctors said that taking the anti-malaria medicine daily for three months can by itself cause malaria.

The Iraq Directory of 1936 was a great success.

Time passed. I insisted to leave to London and join my two brothers there to take my matriculation. But that is another story to which I may return later on. ●

Best Wishes to Salim Dangoor for a speedy recovery in his present illness. ●

I have come across your magazine by chance, and it was like finding a "treasure." It was very exciting to read the articles, the readers' letters, book reviews and the unbelievable pictures!

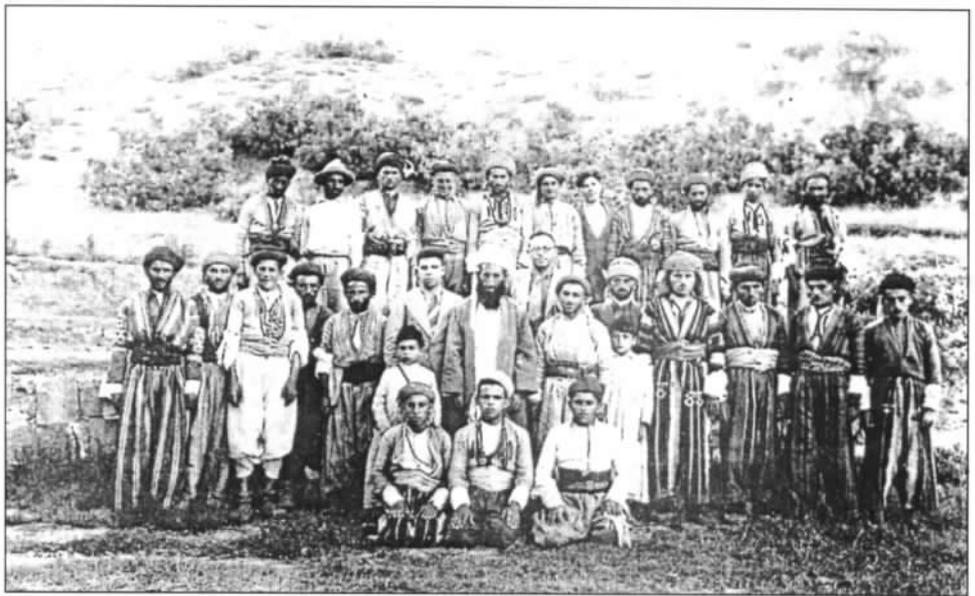
My parents emigrated in 1951 from Baghdad to Israel. My father is Murad Nathan, my mother's name is Nazima (Bat Nissim Cohen from Amara), sister to Sasson and David Cohen.

The family emigrated to Australia in 1982 following my brother who married a Sydney girl. My father passed away in 1992 at the age of 82. I read to my mum, who is 77, everything in the Scribe, and I can't describe her joy (and my excitement). Please put me on your mailing list.

You deserve the best mark for putting so much effort into this project, and the results are so wonderful enriching and nourishing for the roots of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th generations which couldn't have reached their tradition and the way our parents, grandparents and more had lived. This makes us very proud to be descendants of such a rich and ancient community. Thank you for all that. ●

New Australia

Ruth A. Nathan



After climbing seven hours on mulebacks, we reached Barwalibala in Amadiye, a most beautiful village on the mountains to meet a famous Kurdish leader, Sheikh Muzhir Alnagheshbandi, standing to his left and right Mahmood and myself with some of his followers. ●



With the Yazidis, in the centre the governor and judge of Sindjar. ●



With the Assyrians. ●

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Dear Mr Dangoor,

It was a great pleasure to meet you and your son David recently.

My overall proposals and suggestions for either the complete or partial use of the Carmel College campus:-

I believe that what the world Jewish community in general and the Anglo-Jewish community in particular requires strong, inspiring, and talented leadership. Clearly, the fact that Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks was the brightest student of his year in Cambridge is also a great inspiration to the Jewish community and we have to try and persuade more extremely talented young Jewish men and women from around the world.

It is our intention therefore at some point to set up a Jewish Rhodes scholarship which will provide a stipend accommodation and expert teachers giving sophisticated courses in Jewish learning and communal organisation to the most talented and brightest young Jewish men and women from around the world. As I mentioned to you, the close proximity from Carmel College to Oxford grants phenomenal possibilities of premises that can be used to house such a programme with the reflected glory of Oxford in the background. I have also mentioned to you that I have approached a number of leading Jewish philanthropists requesting their financial assistance and they are in the process of returning to me and we are also in the process of fleshing out the programme more.

One of the great needs of our community at this stage is to address the needs of singles. Working with hundreds of Jewish singles per week in London, I notice how rotten, frustrating and deeply disappointing the Jewish single scene is to young Jewish men

and women. *Indeed, I believe the great problem facing our community is not just inter-marriage, but rather lack of marriage.* Since the age of marriage for young singles has doubled over the past ten years, the age of marriage for Jewish men has climbed to 33 and for Jewish women 29, which is devastating the demographic numbers of Jews since people who marry at that age usually have two children or less, thereby not even replenishing the death rate which is 2.1.

Therefore, if we use Carmel College as a retreat for Jewish singles every week and then a different programme and a different group used it, I think it would address one of our community's greatest needs. Since there are so many different organisations that work with singles, what we could do is have them all create an umbrella group in which they work out who would be using it at different times and work together to ensure that the accommodation is used virtually every weekend. You would have the great merit of encouraging, promoting and facilitating hundreds of new Jewish marriages a year.

I admire you for going forward in acquiring Carmel College to ensure that it remains in communal hands, and hope that you will also consider giving financial support to L'Chaim Society as we are in the process of raising funds to rent and outfit new premises in Cambridge, which will service the needs of hundreds more Jewish Students.

You may be interested to know that Police and Security Minister, Avigdor Kahalani is visiting London. He is not only one of Israel's most popular politicians, but he is also Israel's greatest war hero having saved the Golan Heights in one of the great feats of modern military history in the 1973 Yom Kippur war about which a film has been made called *Three on the Heights*. He is like you and myself, a Sephardic Jew, who may one day be the most powerful man in the country.

**L'Chaim Society Rabbi Shmuley Boteach
Oxford
Executive Director**

Dear Rabbi Boteach,

My advice is to dispose of your properties at Oxford and at Cambridge, and follow me to make Carmel College a cultural and recreational centre for Anglo Jewry.

I thank you for the two volumes of your book *Moses of Oxford* (see reference below). I was surprised to find that you give 423BCE as the date of the destruction of the first Temple, which was of course 586BCE. I also note that you do not mention that the universities of Oxford and Cambridge were themselves modelled on the two famous Babylonian academies of Sura and Pumbedita.

I have pleasure in sending you, in return, two volumes of my Grandfather's commentary of the Chumash. More copies are available for your students if required.

Dear Mr Dangoor,

My desire to co-operate with you in reviving Carmel College should not interfere with the need to develop the L'Chaim Society in the two elite university cities so that we can create leadership for the Jewish community.

I am sorry for the mistake with the date of the destruction of the first Temple, and I thank you very much for correcting it.

I also thank you for pointing out to me about the universities of Oxford and Cambridge which no doubt you are correct in asserting were modelled on the Sura and Pumbedita academies.

Rabbi Shmuley Boteach

Books received:

MOSES OF OXFORD

**A Jewish Vision of a University and its Life
by Rabbi Shmuel Boteach**

2 volumes

Published by Andre Deutch Ltd £36

Before the thirteenth-century, expulsion of the Jews from England, Oxford was home to a significant Jewish community and a noted Jewish scholar known as Moses of Oxford.

Some seven hundred years later, his life and work still serve as an inspiration to the Oxford University L'Chaim Society and its dynamic director, Rabbi Shmuel Boteach.

At the age of twenty-one, Rabbi Boteach was sent to Oxford by the Lubavitch Foundation as the first residential Rabbi in decades to stimulate students and share Judaism's timeless message of inclusion, tolerance and love as well as conveying its engagement in the modern world. In the six years since his arrival, he has researched and written this challenging two-volume collection of his own ideas and those of the people drawn to his lively society, which has become a controversial hub of both Jewish and non-Jewish intellectual debate and has grown, in just four years, to become Oxford's second largest student organisation.

Rabbi Boteach, in this stimulating and comprehensive work, examines both the lessons of the past and looks to the future, exploring the key issues confronting Judaism as the end of the millennium approaches. ●

SHECHITA IN THE LIGHT OF THE YEAR 2000

by I. M. Levinger. 204 pp.

**1995 Published by Maskil L'David,
Jerusalem**

Many judgements have previously been drawn regarding ritual slaughter, in which contradictory options have often appeared and re-appeared. The monograph at hand is, a worthy contribution towards the clarification of this often contested problem. ●

Who Discovered Relativity?

My dear cousin Naim,

A million thanks for the two volume commentary on the Torah "Adi Zahav" by Hakham Ezra Dangoor. What a delightful and very interesting book! I have read the Torah many times and read several commentaries, including Rashi, and I find this one closer to my views.

I remembered your comment, a few years ago in the "Scribe" that Hakham Ezra had commented that God created also Time and upon receiving the book I looked for it in chapter one and found it in the first page. I don't remember having read any other commentator saying that! I am certain that when your grandfather wrote it - he had not heard about Einstein and his theory yet! I continue to read the book and find in it interesting commentaries everyday. Now the questions: 1) What is the story behind the book and the history of its publication? How did you succeed to rescue the manuscript? 2) What happened to his other writings mentioned in the introduction-poetry, liturgy etc.? Have you rescued them? 3) Hezkel-Barukh, my grandfather and your grandfather's brother, is mentioned in the introduction as having been murdered by the Turks in 1917 - was he really 85 years old? (His daughter Muzli, my mother, was born in 1903 or 1902 - when he was 71?)

And last, many of the readers of the Scribe, including some of my family, never heard about the book. It is worth mentioning again so they can order it in the book shop.

My wife 'Ava (who was born in Hungary, and met me in Israel, is an avid reader of the Scribe, particularly the recipes).

Here is a Passover story that happened many years ago. In Israel, I met a carpenter, who was repairing a house in the hospital backyard. When he learned of my Baghdad origin, he told me that he had been in Baghdad, although he is a Polish immigrant. During WWII, he joined the Brigade of Colonel Anders, who was stationed at one time in Palestine, under British Command, and then in the neighbourhood of Baghdad. This was in 1942. At the eve of Passover he was given permission to go to Baghdad to celebrate the holidays with a Jewish family. He took the train and landed in the afternoon at the station in Baghdad. He did not know anyone there, neither spoke the language, or even English. He saw a horse carriage. The driver looked at him and called him in Arabic - he did not understand, then in English - still did not; then the driver yelled: "Israel? Israel?," He nodded "yes" with his head. The driver invited him to get in the carriage, drove him to the Jewish quarter and knocked on one door. A Jew opened and was so happy to have a guest for Passover, that he paid the driver a *whole Dinar!*

Arlington-Illinois

Moshe Zamir

Naim Dangoor writes: Grandfather's manuscripts were among the few things salvaged by the family from Baghdad over the years. I sent "Adi Zahav" to be printed in Jerusalem at Machon Yerushalayem. Others may be published in due course. ●

Who discovered Relativity first, Einstein or the Rabbi?

by Naim Dangoor

In 1905 Einstein wrote five important papers including one on Relativity. For years, few scientists took any notice of them and very few understood what he meant by Relativity. When asked to explain, he said, in gest, "if I sit with a pretty girl for half an hour, it would seem like five minutes; but if I sit with an ugly woman for five minutes, it would seem like half an hour. This is what is meant by relativity."

Einstein arrived at his Theory by means of complex equation and long formulas. In due course he was proved right by many experiments. It has now been proved that if someone can travel into space by very high speed and return to Earth a year later, he may find that one hundred years may have elapsed on Earth in the meantime.

In other words, Einstein is saying that Time is not absolute but is simply one additional dimension to the three dimensions of space (length, width and height) that we know, i.e., Time is a fourth dimension. Einstein is saying that time does not exist outside our Universe.

In the biblical story of creation, Judaism teaches the timeless eternity of God and his Kingdom: Lord over all; whose power the sceptre swayed Ere first Creation's wonderous form was framed when all shall cease - the Universe be o'er. In awful greatness He alone will reign.

When Hakham Ezra Dangoor wrote his commentary on the Torah in the early 1920's, he could not have heard of Einstein or studied his theories which only became popular since 1924. But on the first page of his book he wrote "when the world was created Time itself was created." Thus he expressed in a few words the whole theory of Relativity. What he is saying in those nine words is that before the creation of the world there was no Time: Time is not absolute but is relative to our Universe. It appears so far that no other Bible commentator has ever mentioned such a thing before.

But what is the indication in the Bible that Time was itself created with the creation of the Universe? Why, the indication is in the very first word in Genesis - "BERESHITH" which is correctly translated as "In the beginning." In the beginning of what? In the beginning of Time of course.

Whether Einstein or my grandfather first discovered Relativity, it is not surprising that the theory was arrived at simultaneously by a Jew, each being steeped in Bible study.

The question, "What happened just before the Big Bang?" does not make any sense. Because with the Big Bang, Time itself was created. Outside the Big Bang there is Eternity. We cannot say, "Two years before the Big Bang."

It is not surprising therefore that scientists probing into the past cannot get to the very first fraction of a second of Creation. ●



The above is a picture of my late father Menashe Bekhor taken about 1900, which shows how the youth used to dress at that time. You will notice that he wears a ring which had a red stone and at the same time the ring was used as a signature stamp. He also wore a golden watch with a golden chain.

My grandmother passed away when my father was only 8 years old, and his uncle Moshe Shlomo-David took care of him.

Before engagement, as used to be the custom, my aunt Misooda, had to be seen by her future fiancé and his family. Moshe Shlomo-David sent her youngest brother Ephraim instead of her, claiming that she looked like him, and consequently the engagement took place and both she and her husband lived happily ever-after. ●

Israel

Eliahou Bekhor



Sabiha and Jacob Tricot with their large family on the occasion of his 80th Birthday. ●

Scribe: Last December, Grace and Samir Tricot hosted a party celebrating the 80th Birthday of Samir's father Jacob Tricot.

Jacob Tricot by his natural ability and business acumen, he established successful businesses in Iraq, Israel and the U.K.

His qualities made him respected and loved by his family and friends.

Mr and Mrs Tricot are the proud parents of six children, 16 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, with more on the way.

As Jacob did not look his age, we asked Sabiha if he is really 80 or maybe he had to increase his age for reasons of military service. She told us on the authority of her mother-in-law, ie., Jacob's mother, that he was born in the year the Inglesi (the British army) entered Baghdad which was in 1917, that he was born during Hanukah on Shabbath and Rosh Hodesh. We checked all the above and found that Jacob was in fact born on 15 December 1917. ●

Some works of art based on the Bible can't seem to get things straight. Consider a great piece of sculpture by Michaelangelo "Moses the Lawgiver."

The first time the Bible was translated from Hebrew into Greek, a mistake was made in the description of Moses coming down from Mount Sinai with the tablets of the Commandments.

In the Hebrew, Moses is said to have 'Karan', a "ray of light" shining from his forehead. In the Greek translation by Aquila Ponticus in the 2nd Century, this read 'Keren', or "horns", which were coming from the head of Moses. When Michaelangelo was sculpturing Moses for his monumental statue, the sculptor followed the Greek rendering of this passage and gave the leader of the Jews two horns on the top of his head. The mistranslated Bible, combined with Michaelangelo's sculpture, helped feed centuries of Christian beliefs that Jews had horns, a belief that had persisted in some quarters even down to the modern times. ●

Milan Edward Yamen

In the Shamash photograph of 1949-50 which appeared on page 17 of the last issue (No.68), I could identify the following: In the middle of the third row from right we have the Physics teacher, Dr. Nessim Ezra Nessim who became the Deputy Mayor of Ramat Gan. Near him is Mr Allan Rogers, the English teacher and first left in the second row, Mr Mohammed Sharara, the Arabic teacher. In the third row, first left is my friend Sasson Somekh who is now Professor of Arabic at the Tel Aviv University. I appear the first right in the second row. ●

Israel Abraham Pereg



The famous Masguf of Bag Shabbut (Carp) fish grilled in front of aromatic faggot fire. ●



Open-air charcoal fires barbecuing 100 chickens for tourists at the foot of the Pyramids near Cairo. ●

MIDRASH BEN ISH HAI
by Rachel Manasseh

Events have been moving forward interestingly and rapidly in Midrash Ben Ish Hai, in New York, in the last few months. Under the dedicated and dynamic leadership of Rabbi Ya'aqob Menashe (Manasseh), a multi-faceted program continues aimed at the preservation of rejuvenation of our Babylonian tradition and heritage. Besides the regular classes for men, for women, and children, lectures and community functions, and daily prayers three times a day, some special events have taken place recently.

DEVELOPMENTS AT GREAT NECK, LONG ISLAND

Rabbi Menashe's meetings with members of the Iraqi community, including the youth, in Great Neck have been well received. Here is a community conscious of its Babylonian roots and the need for a further knowledge of our heritage. There is a demand for more meetings and lectures.

DEDICATION OF SEFER TORAH

Outstanding was the dedication of the first Sefer Torah presented to the Midrash (after ten years of our existence!). The Sefer Torah was presented in the name of Moshe N. J. Sultoon who died last year after several years of charitable and community work in Bombay. The Sefer was generously initiated by Sasson, Rebecca and Diana Shahmoon in memory of their parents Ezra and Lydia Shahmoon. A major donor was Solomon F. Sopher who came from Bombay specially for the dedication. A number of friends and well-wishers both here and abroad contributed generously, and the Sefer Torah - a specially fine manuscript and silver case in the Babylonian style - was installed at the Midrash on June 15, 1997 amidst joyous enthusiasm. The procession wended its way some blocks down Queen's Boulevard with song and "hlihil" (ululations), to the Midrash at Rego Park where, as is customary, two Sifrei Torah were waiting to greet it. It was a wonderfully happy and harmonious dedication.

By the hand of Providence, a second Sefer Torah was presented to Midrash Ben Ish Hai in the short space of two months, on August 24, 1997, by Esther Sourojan and Mazal Setton in memory of their beloved family, through the good offices of an old friend, Mr Shmuel Levy. Once again, the dedication was made with the joyous participation of many, who appreciated the warmth and generosity of the donors. Thanks to all those who made these inspiring events possible.

THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Celebrating ten years of serving our communities was the annual dinner held on June 18, 1997 at the Huntington Hilton, Long Island. The honourees were Dr Edith Robbins and Aethial Aaron Robbins, Mr Eliyahou and Mrs Dalia Shamash, and Mr Solomon Sopher,



Sefer Torah in the name of Moshe N. J. Sultoon at Midrash Ben Ish Hai, New York. With, at right, Rabbi Ya'aqob Manasseh and at left, Mr. Solomon F. Sopher. ●



Midrash High School - 9th Grade 1996-97. ●

all of whom take a special interest in Midrash Ben Ish Hai. The Midrash Boys' Choir, in traditional Baghdadian costumes, sang traditional hymns (shbahoth) which were enthusiastically received, a video of the dedication of the Sefer Torah, good music, and good food catered by Aodi Zilkha, all made for a most enjoyable evening.

THE MIDRASH HIGH SCHOOL

This is today the highlight of our endeavours in upholding and rejuvenating our rich Babylonian heritage. The Midrash High School was started with one class in the 9th grade in September 1996, last year another grade was added. The education provides a high standard in both general and Jewish studies and computer technology. There is a particular need for the school, as there is no Sephardi high school in the area.

Education is the cornerstone of a community's existence and its future. Midrash Ben Ish Hai, pursuing the vision for the future, has been working hard to counteract the rampant forces of assimilation, and restore the authentic glorious heritage of Sephardi Jewry. Imbued with the right spirit and education for our times, from this school would come our future Torah scholars and lay leaders, to lead our communities into the coming century.

The Midrash High School is thus a project of the utmost importance, and it is our prayer that foundations and individuals with these causes at heart will come forward to foster its development on a sound, permanent basis. ●

In 1932 one of the books Mahatma Ghandi took with him to prison was "The Book of Jewish Thoughts" by the Chief Rabbi of the British Empire. ●

Book reviews:

THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE SHOULD BE FREE

The Politics of Hope

by Chief Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sacks

Published 1997 by Jonathan Cape. £15.99

Reviewed by Naim Dangoor

After the collapse of Communism and hard line Socialism, (good theory, bad practice), the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction. It has become fashionable, all over the world, for everything to be privatised, even the water we drink is in private hands. But the line has to be drawn somewhere, and no one has suggested that the air we breathe should be metered. What a bonanza it would be for some enterprising people!

Noting the widening gap between rich and poor Dr. Sacks recommends a mild form of Socialism. The best things in life should remain free - open spaces, public libraries, education, transport.

I find Dr. Sack's appeal, in his erudite and well-documented book, to self-imposed restrictions to our freedom an admission of failure of our economic systems.

The Chief Rabbi makes only a passing reference to the Jubilee system of the Torah, and I don't blame him, because Moses himself did not sufficiently stress the importance of Biblical economics. Moreover, Moses condemned and denounced usury, but did not offer a solution to the problem. Again, he only appealed to human decency in not charging interest on lending money to "your brother." The irony is that Jews found themselves in the role of moneylenders to the rest of mankind and thus the "bloodsuckers" of Hitler and Farrakhan.

I always knew that Communism would fail because it succeeded in its promise to make everybody equally poor. Likewise, capitalism will eventually fail because it does not succeed in making everybody rich as it promises. It only succeeds in making a few people super rich.

The only true solution to the ills of our society is through a just economic system, namely the economics of the Torah. This is to find a practical adaptation of the 50-year jubilee principle and of removing the curse of usury. To illustrate the seriousness of usury, I can only say that if Moses had deposited only one Shekel with a reputable bank at only one percent per annum compound interest, every Jew today would have become a multi-millionaire.

The world is immersed in the cult of borrowing; the failure of South Korea which had a foreign debt of 200 billion dollars and other Far Eastern countries, is only the tip of the iceberg. I say that our social ills are the direct result of disillusionment with our bad economic system.

The future of mankind will depend on its ability to discover the economics of the Torah: a practical adaptation of a fresh start every 50 years and of suppressing usury by simply accepting the principle that promissory money can only be issued by the borrower and not by the lender, by the debtor and not by the creditor, by the consumer and not by the central bank. This is the only solution, and mankind will eventually come around to it, even if it takes them 1,000 years to "discover" it.

I have nothing to offer the Third World, where population is doubling every 30 years. The North has to construct adequate immigration barriers if it wants its way of life to survive.

In his "Regent's Park" analogy, Dr. Sacks comes very close to the correct economic answer, but appears to be afraid to venture further inside. Taken to its logical conclusion, Regent's Park leads to the biblical Jubilee system which says in effect, that every generation is entitled to an unencumbered title to the total national wealth, free of all indebtedness - entitlement not just to free transport, open spaces and public libraries. The "national dividend" produced by the jubilee idea would solve crime, the need for prison, immigration problems, unemployment benefits as well as taxation itself. A system which centres on taxation of individual income becomes immoral.

By the way, our Bible does not say "Love thy neighbour as yourself." It says "Wish for thy neighbour (and even for the foreigner) as you wish for yourself."●

SPAIN AND THE JEWS

The Sephardi Experience 1492 and After

Edited by Elie Kedourie

1992 Thames and Hudson Ltd. London

248 pp with 44 illustrations

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Book reviews:

GENESIS

Translation and commentary

by Robert Alter

W.W. Norton & Co

309 pages \$25 £18.95

Reviewed by Naim Dangoor

Professor Alter has made a mess of the opening words of the Bible. He joins three verses in one long sentence which is a poor paraphrase of the original.

He writes: When God began to create heaven and earth, and the earth then was welter and waste and darkness over the deep and God's breath hovering over the waters, God said, "Let there be light. And there was light."

Compare the above with the sweeping majesty of the King James version, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth...." Robert Alter who is Professor of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley, does not succeed in achieving a better translation, even though, he translates from the original Hebrew. The King James version remains more faithful to the original text, and an English classic in its own right. Alter's commentary is likewise narrow-minded. Although God's name YHWH was only revealed to Moses at Sinai, there is no contradiction in that the name appears in Genesis.

When a parent asks a teacher if the Bible should still be taught to children, in view of continuing scientific discoveries, the teacher retorted "what are we teaching them. In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth."

In fact, the first chapter of Genesis covers most of modern scientific discoveries - the Big Bang, the theory of Relativity, Man's place in the universe, the Brotherhood of man etc...●

Book reviews:

THE JEWISH EXODUS FROM IRAQ, 1948-1951

by Moshe Gat. London and Portland:

Frank Cass, 1997 Pp.viii + 209

abbreviations and bibliography, index.

£35.00/\$47.50 (hardback); £16.00/\$18.50

(paperback).

Abbreviated review by Meer Basri

Moshe Gat's book is a well-researched and documented three-years drama of the decline and fall of a 2,500-year-old community which prospered and languished, and shared the woes and fortunes of the population of Mesopotamia, known recently by the name of Iraq, under the Babylonians, Assyrians, Medes, Persians, Arabs, Mongols, Turks, British and finally Arabs again.

Brought to the rivers of Babylon by their Babylonian captors in 586 BC, the Jews followed their Prophet Jeremiah's exhortations to build houses, plant gardens and multiply and not be diminished, and to seek the peace of the country to where they had been carried. When Cyrus King of Persia allowed them to return to Jerusalem and build the second Temple, most of them elected to remain in the country of their captivity. They compiled the Babylonian Talmud and laid the bases of religion, instituted colleges and houses of learning, and excelled in trade, banking and the professions.

Hundreds of years passed, but in Baghdad, the new capital of the Abbassid Kingdom, the Jewish community continued to live and flourish headed by the Gaons and Exilarchs. After many more cycles and changes of government, for better or worse, the British defeated the Turks in 1917 and captured Baghdad. Four years later the new Arab Kingdom of Iraq came into being with the Amir Faisal of the Hejaz installed as king. A new era was opened for the Jewish community which held in its hands most of the country's trade. Prominent Jews acceded to high offices as minister, magistrates, directors-general, accountants, engineers, teachers, senators and deputies and even served in the army and the police force.

When the partition of Palestine was decided by the United Nations in 1947 and the State of Israel was created, the Jews of Iraq were suddenly persecuted, jailed and molested. In no more than two years all the Jewish officials were dismissed, the merchants were denied import and export licences and the majority of Jews found themselves unemployed and destitute. Thus a community numbering about 180,000 was suddenly incapacitated and ripe for emigration.

In 1950 the time was ripe for the displacement of the Iraqi Jewish community and a law was passed to allow the Jews to relinquish their nationality and go to Israel. In one year 108,000 Jews were, at their request, denationalised and their properties and assets

were frozen. Other Jews left the country illegally or by passports and thousands of them went to England, the United States, Canada, France, Australia and South America and have been dispersed under every star.

The transportation of the Jews stripped of their Iraqi nationality did not go smoothly. Israel had but scant means to bring and absorb immigrants. She gave priority to refugees from Poland and Rumania and left thousands of Jews stateless, dispossessed and distressed to rot in their country of origin, threatened constantly by the Iraqi authorities to throw them outside the borders.

At long last, in March 1951, Israel allowed the last 78,000 stateless Jews to be flown to their new country. When they finally arrived to their destination, they had to live many years in shacks and 'Ma'abaroths'. Among them there were hundreds of doctors, engineers, civil servants, lawyers, teachers, professionals and skilled workmen and farmers. It took them years to assert their merits and occupy their rightful place in the country of their adoption.

The Jewish Exodus from Iraq, 1948-1951 writes the last chapter of the history of a community who lived on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates for 2,500 years and was uprooted in a matter of a few years.

Scribe: It is unfair to criticise Israel for being unable to absorb an additional 25% to her population and not blame Iraq for attempting to throw the Jews outside its borders. ☺

November 1997, the Queen made a special visit to the ancient Cochin Synagogue in South India. The above shows Keith Hallelue showing Her Majesty the inside of a Sepher. Behind the Queen is sitting Dr. L. Singbvi, Indian High Commissioner in London. On her return to London, the Queen said that she was fascinated by her visit to the Synagogue which she greatly enjoyed. ☺

Books received:

AFTER GOD

The future of religion

by Don Cupitt

143 pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £11.99

The author questions the future of religion in view of the fact that science made most alleged miracles seem highly improbable.

We are shown, for example, how a religion of spirits corresponded to the conditions of hunter-gatherers and nomads, while settled farmers and, later, city-dwellers needed the dominant authority of a state god to hold together and regulate their communities. ☺

*If you tell the truth you don't
have to remember anything.*

Mark Twain

Book reviews:

Please Don't Wish Me A Merry Christmas A critical history of the separation of Church and State.

by Stephen M. Feldman

395 pp. New York University Press;

distributed in the UK by Plymbridge. £24.95.

Please don't wish me a Merry Xmas, I am Jewish.

Having shown the way to God to all mankind, at great suffering to themselves, the Jews now find themselves a vulnerable, and a dwindling minority. Paradoxically, they now find themselves in favour of separation between Religion and State. ☺

In the toy department of a large store, Father Xmas asked the little boy sitting on his knee, what present he would like to receive for that season. The boy replied apologetically, "I don't celebrate Xmas, I am Jewish!" "God bless you, my son," answered the bearded Papa Noël, "I am Jewish too!" ☺

Last December, my wife and I flew to Israel in order to escape the dull Xmas season to which we do not relate. On arrival at the Princess Hotel in Eilat, however, we were met by Father Xmas who was offering greetings and presents to all guests. ☺

N.D.

Panic at Gardenia

In 1972 the situation in the Middle East was tense and members of the Community were constantly concerned about security and acts of terrorism.

One November evening, while members were playing bridge and other games at the Gardenia Club in Kensington, loud burst of machine gun fire directed at that building alarmed everyone. Some went under the table for protection, others started blaming me for my articles which might have incited such act of retaliation. No one was willing to open the window or go to the balcony to investigate, but one brave member went to the telephone and called the Police who immediately arrived on the scene. They rang the bell and asked what was the problem. When we told them that we underwent an attack by machine gun, they looked around the building but could not find any traces of bullets. They asked why we were so scared and what was the organisation using this premises, and when we told them, they still could not find any reason for a machine gun attack on us. They explained that it was the 5th of November, Guy Faukes night when it is traditional to have fireworks in memory of a failed attack on the Houses of Parliament. Apparently, one enterprising driver attached a spark plug to the exhaust of his car which gave the loud noise as he drove past our building.

After we were reassured that no one had intended to harm us, we all felt a bit silly of our unwarranted scare. ☺

Book reviews:

INTERNATIONAL GUIDE TO FORMS OF ADDRESS

A complete guide for over 200 countries by
T. L. Shanson
Published by Macmillan £16.99

Every country and every community has its own tradition of addressing people either in writing or orally. In the modern world with communication by fax and e-mail becoming so widespread, and with jumbo jets taking tourists all over the world it is important to know the correct form of addressing other people. For example, in China and Japan the surname comes before the given name and in Iceland one should formally address strangers by their first name.

United Kingdom: In addition to the conventional, Mr, Mrs and Miss, women are increasingly opting for the neutral Ms (pronounced Mezz), as being the feminine form of Mr. Sometimes, instead of Mr., the term Esq. (Esquire) is used after the name of men of means.

Tradition is changing, and now first names are used increasingly just after an initial introduction.

A British idiosyncrasy is that while medical practitioners are called Doctor, but a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons reverts to being called Mr/Mrs/Miss unless or until they acquire a PhD.

(Scribe: This practice started in the 1930's when British Surgeons wanted to differentiate themselves from the influx of Jewish Doctors from Germany).

The Dental Council has now ruled that dentists may call themselves *Doctor* without it being deemed as professional misconduct. Letters to the Queen are addressed on the envelope: The Private Secretary to Her Majesty the Queen. Start the letter: Your Majesty. Introductions and oral address: Your Majesty (subsequently Ma'am). *(Scribe: No postage stamp is necessary on letters sent to the Queen).* Ministers should have "The Honourable" before their names.

U.S.A: Esquire (or Esq.) is very rarely used in the British way. Esquire is, however used for lawyers, male or female.

A person who has the same name as his father adds "Jr." (Junior) or the "2nd" to his name. The wife retains the same suffix after her name.

Any University teacher is called Professor. The term is as common in America as Doctor is in Continental Europe.

The term Minister refers to Clergymen, and government Ministers are called Secretaries. The courtesy title Honourable is used officially by Ambassadors and Secretaries and others when they are addressed by name.

Israel: Formality is generally discarded and people greet each other with the word "Shalom". Wives often add their previous surname to their husband's. Exceptionally, and for formal occasions, use "Mar" (before surname) for Mr and "Geveret" for Madam/Mrs or Miss, but revert to informality on second mention.

(Scribe: In civilised countries women and children are allowed to walk ahead of the men for protection. Then women started to expect walking ahead out of respect. In Israel they carry matters even further by some people by addressing letters to Mrs & Mr.... which is wrong.

In the 19th century, European Jews were required by law to adopt a surname. From 1948, Israelis have been required to adopt a Hebrew name and surname instead of their non-Jewish names of origin which has given rise to confusion regarding the ancestry of many people. However, this is in line with the accepted practice that when a person moves to a new country, a new family tree is started).

Turkey: In conversations the name is followed by *Bey* for men and *Hanin* for women. In correspondence the name is preceded by *Bay* for men and *Bayan* for women. Sayin is an additional term of respect such as *Sayin Bay* or *Sayin Bayan*. There is no distinction between Mrs and Miss.

In Ottoman times, the term *Effendi* was a high title applied to Royal Princes, but following the establishment of the Republic in 1923, all titles have been abolished.

However, the term *Effendi* is now used for someone who is lower in status than oneself, thus saying Hassan Effendi when calling or introducing your gardener for instance. The term *Effendi* is written in short *Eff.* and the same in Arabic. The term also survives, without loss of status, when saying *Bey Effendi* or *Hanimeffendi*. *Effendim* is used to denote excuse me, yes sir or yes madam.

Arab countries: A father or a mother are usually called by the name of their first born such as *Abu Jamil* (father of Jamil) or *Umm Jamil* (the mother of Jamil).

The name of many Moslems start with Mohammed. Other Moslems are also allowed to add the Prophet's name before their name if they so wish.

Scribe: It is considered correct that letters are "topped" and "tailed" by the writers hand, even though the text of the letter is typed written.

A married woman uses her husband's first name after Mrs, but if she is a widow she uses her first name after Mrs.

Servants should call young members of the family by their first name preceded by Mr or Miss. ●



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Dear Mr & Mrs Dangoor,

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh thank you for sending your kind message of good wishes on the occasion of their Golden Wedding.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness much appreciate your kindness and The Queen wishes me to tell you that both she and His Royal Highness were particularly touched to know that you are thinking of them as they mark their special anniversary.

With The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh's renewed thanks. ●

Yours sincerely,
Philippa Pass
Lady in Waiting

Books received:

PROGRESS, POVERTY AND POPULATION

Re-reading Condorcet, Godwin and Malthus
151 pp. Cass. £32.50 (paperback, £15)

The book recounts the debate between Condorcet and Godwin on the one hand and Malthus on the other-between the glorious vision of infinite progress and perfectibility and the grim spectre of overpopulation and poverty.

Both were right, Avery suggests. Malthus in demonstrating the indubitable fact that population, if unchecked, grows "exponentially," while the produce of the earth is "finite," and Condorcet and Godwin in anticipating the vast improvement in the condition of at least most of mankind - at least until now, when over-population, resulting indirectly in global warming and all the other assaults on the environment, once again threatens Condorcet's noble dream of the "progress of the human spirit."

The limited resources of the earth should be shared fairly among a controlled population. ●

THE DERVISH WARS

Gordon and Kitchener
in the Sudan 1880 - 1898

by Robin Neillands

John Murray (Publishers) Ltd. 230 pp.
£19.99

The story of Gordon's tragic last stand at Khartoum and Kitchener's 'revenge' at Omdurman. ●

THE ARAB WAR ON ISRAEL: 50 YEARS AND COUNTING

by A. M. Rosenthal

The "peace process" between Arabs and Israelis has been going on not for the four years since Oslo but for the half-century since the founding of Israel. Almost all the while it has been the Israelis who have been offering peace and the Arabs who have been answering with acts of war.

But every time an Arab bomb goes off in an Israeli marketplace or bus the world reacts as if it were the first. How terrible; active "talks" must resume, Israel must make more concessions.

All the Arab bombs that exploded through the decades, all the Arab armies that invaded Israel again and again, all the anti-Jew hate propaganda that has befouled the Mideast for decades, the years of Arab attempts to strangle Israel economically, all are mentioned barely or not at all, as if history had no meaning. It does.

To change history in the Mideast, America must first acknowledge the reality of the half-century Arab war against Israel and the overriding importance of demonstrating its end. Otherwise, the Arabs would continue their strategy of violence against the nation and people of Israel.

When the UN recognised the Israeli state, the Jews had accepted - and the Arabs had rejected - a partition plan that would have given Palestinians an independent nation. The Israelis had offered peace within their dangerously narrowed confines. But Arab armies attacked and Jordan annexed what the world calls the West Bank and Jewish history calls Judea and Samaria. The Jordanians took over the cherished centre of Jerusalem, banned all Jews not killed or driven out.

Israelis still dreamt peace. They did not attempt to take the West Bank until 1967, when Arab nations were stupid enough to attack again, and lost it all to Israel, and more. But when one, just one, Arab leader was willing to make peace in 1977, Israel returned the huge Sinai to Egypt. For this, Anwar Sadat, received the bullets of Egyptian military assassins.

For most of the years since, Israelis, official and private, kept holding out peace offers - this new boundary line or that, the sharing of water and electric power, a joint economic rose garden.

From Arabs came more acts of war - shelling, direct or by proxy from Lebanon, world economic boycott, ceaseless vilification at the UN. Unable to defeat the army of Israel, Arabs struck with hundreds of acts of terrorism.

In 1993, Yitzhak Rabin decided to reverse himself, return most of the West Bank and create the foundations of a Palestinian state for Yasser Arafat. Terrorism did not end, not then and not after Benjamin Netanyahu was elected.



23-12-1997. The Irish President, Mrs McAleese, lights the first candle of Hanukkah, watched by the Israeli Ambassador of Babylonian origin, Mr Zvi Gabay, at the opening of events to mark 50 years of Israeli Independence, in the Berkeley Court Hotel, Dublin. ●

Mr Netanyahu accepted what was written in Oslo, including the return of Hebron, which Labour did not dare carry out. But he would not accept Palestinian demands not agreed to at Oslo - the end of Jewish building in Jerusalem, the return of all the West Bank and a Palestinian capital in Jerusalem. Terrorism went on.

Meanwhile, Iranians and Iraqis slaughtered each other, Syria occupied Lebanon, Iraq started the Gulf War and Arab despots and fundamentalists murdered their brethren. None of these wars and atrocities had a thing to do with Israel. But the myth continued that if only Israelis would make enough concessions to Palestinians peace would come to the Mideast.

My own belief is that no lasting peace between Israel and Palestinians will come about until enough Arab governments are based on something better than bigotry and despotism.

Arab governments that cannot make peace with their people and their Arab neighbours are not likely to make peace with Israel, for a half-century their target to defile, their dream to destroy. ●

The New York Times
Sent by Zvi Gabay, Ambassador to Dublin

*The most important thing
a father can do for his children
is to love their mother.*

Rev. Hesburgh

In 1936 during the term of my late father, Ephraim Heskell Ephraim, whose picture appeared on page 6 of the last issue, as head of the Jewish Community of Basrah, a Jewish Polish citizen arrived in transit to Basrah with very poor funds in his possession. Since he found nobody to host him in his house for several nights, he went to the Synagogue and begged from the caretaker "Shammash" to allow him to sleep there for a few nights. The caretaker contacted my father on the matter and my father, on humanitarian grounds, agreed for his accommodation.

A week elapsed and after this person has left Basrah, the editor - a Jew baiter - Salman Al-Safwani published in his Baghdad journal "Al-Yaqdha" that the head of the Jewish Community of Basrah is harbouring Zionist Jewish refugees in the Synagogue at Basrah.

Immediately after this publication, Security Police arrived at our house and took my father to a temporary jail 'Tawqif.' He spent a week/10 days there until his case was brought up to court. At the advice of friends then, we, the family, had to call and arrange for a prominent lawyer, Daoud Al Sa'adi from Baghdad to stand for the defence of my father in court. In the first court session, this influential lawyer attained the acquittance of my father but, only after the sufferings of my father in jail and incurring the high charge of this lawyer from Baghdad.

This sad event still lingers in my memory. ●
Ramat Gan, Israel **Mrs Lydia Yadiid**

TURKEY'S FUTURE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Turkey should not mind her failure to be admitted into the European Union, it is a blessing in disguise. Turkey deserves better than to become a Balkan appendage to intolerant Europe - a Europe denominated by racist Germany and a fanatic Vatican. A Europe with a thin veneer of civilisation that has been the cause of so much human suffering and bloodshed.

The future of Turkey lies in reviving the Ottoman Empire which was so cruelly and treacherously brought to an end in 1918.

By creating a Middle East federation to include Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, possibly Cyprus (never a part of Europe), Kuwait, and possibly the whole of Arabia as well as all the Turkish speaking territories of the former Soviet Union, we can have a region that vies with Europe in area and wealth. Such a federation can be based on the old *Millet* system of the Ottoman administration and could solve the Kurdish problem turning the lemon into a lemonade.

In 1638, Sultan Murad IV marched on Baghdad with an army of 100,000, including 10,000 Jews, and put an end to the Persian threat to the region. Turkey can again march on Baghdad and put an end to an inhumane administration that is only allowed to continue because of containing Iranian ambitions. Such a federation will have the military and moral backing of the United States and of Israel.

As the murderous twentieth Century and a disastrous millennium draws to a close, now is the time to organise the Middle East Federation with a new central capital somewhere on the Euphrates to be called Abraham. Turkey already holds the water lifeline of this region. ●

N. E. Dangoor

Dear Mr Dangoor

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me on my recent trip to London. Your cordiality and welcome were most appreciated. I was particularly impressed with your knowledge and wisdom relating to Jewish affairs and the State of Israel, and I found our time together both exhilarating and enlightening. It is clear to me that you represent an outstanding model of Jewish involvement and generosity, most aptly illustrated by The Scribe, a most impressive journal, and more recently by your acquisition of the Cannel College estate at Wallingford.

On my return to Israel, I was fascinated to see an article in The Jerusalem Post, written by Efraim Inbar, a professor at Bar Ilan University, commenting on the importance of an alliance between Israel and Turkey. During our discussion in your office, we spoke about his precise issue and I was struck by the accuracy of your analysis, and the depth of your understanding of strategic issues in the Middle East.

We believe that Bar Ilan University offers the perfect balance between the sciences and the humanities, between technological research and traditional values - a combination that will equip and prepare the next generation for the 21st century.

Dealing with national security and mideast politics is one of the essential tasks of THE BEGIN-SADAT CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES (BESA) at Bar Ilan University.

Ramat-Gan

Vera Muravitz

Director of British desk

A NEW BALANCE OF POWER

From: Jerusalem Post

by Efraim Inbar

The emerging relationship, since 1991, between Israel and Turkey is one of the most important international developments in the Middle East. It brings together the two staunchest and strongest allies of the West in the region. After many years of preoccupation with the Soviet threat and its unsuccessful quest of becoming part of Europe, Turkey is paying greater attention to the Middle East, particularly to its radical neighbours Iran, Iraq and Syria. Moreover, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Central Asia - a region of great interest to Turkey - has become part of a greater Middle East. Fortunately for Israel, there is a clear convergence of the two countries' national interest.

Both Israel and Turkey fear abandonment by the West, particularly in an international system where their contribution to contain Soviet expansionism is no longer needed. Israel seems to be in a better position than Turkey in Washington, but both are interested in strengthening their ties with the United States, which for various reasons is not sensitive enough to their security needs.

Washington placed an informal embargo on arms sales to Turkey and is inclined to pressure Israel to make territorial concessions dangerous to its national security. Moreover, a continuous American presence in the region is viewed as beneficial in Jerusalem and Ankara, as it brings about stability in the region, and assists its two pro-Western and democratic allies.

Both countries wish to curb the influence of radical Islam emanating primarily from Iran. Islamic extremism calls for the destruction of Israel and threatens the secular nature of the Turkish polity. In addition, radical Islamists are attempting to destabilise pro-Western Arab regimes, such as Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

Israel and Turkey also face a common enemy - Syria. The two countries have similar disputes with Syria - over water and territory - and face similar challenges. Syria hosts the headquarters of Kurdish and Armenian terrorist groups, which fight Turkey. It also hosts Palestinian organisations such as Hamas and the Popular Fronts, which are engaged in terror against Israel. Damascus also conducts a war by proxy - the Hizbullah - against Israel in southern Lebanon.

The Turks have learned from their own experience that agreements signed by the Syrian regime under President Hafez Assad are constantly violated, and are concerned that Israel might be lured into an agreement with Damascus, which would leave Syria free to cause greater mischief to Turkey. An Israeli-Turkish partnership, however, forces Assad into a more cautious and moderate posture.

Another common strategic interest is to minimise the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and long-range ballistic missiles to the radical states in the region, primarily Iran, Iraq and Syria. Turkey borders all three. Israel was already subjected to missile attacks from Iraq (1991) and Syria (1973) and fears that Iran would extend the range of its missiles to reach targets within its territory. They both fear that the West will not address this threat seriously and they will be left alone to cope with this security challenge.

Finally, there is a clear possibility of co-operation in the security domain to enhance the military capabilities of each side. Access to Turkish airspace, allows the Israel Air Force to train better, but also provides new routes to enemy territory. Turkey's proximity to the radical states enhances efforts to collect valuable intelligence.

In turn, Jerusalem can assist Ankara in upgrading its military forces with its technological and operational know-how. Israel is already retrofitting Turkish Phantoms and is ready to transfer other military technologies to the Turkish defence industries. It also sells a variety of military equipment. The Turks are interested in the antiballistic missile Arrow system and Merkava tanks.

This strategic partnership between the two countries is of tremendous importance because it creates a new balance of power in the Middle East. Israeli diplomatic efforts should be directed to buttressing the relations with Turkey at all levels, rather than engage Syria, or unimportant Arab players.

The alliance with Turkey is also critical for progress in the peace process, which is predicated on a strong Israel. ●

TURKEY TURNS AWAY FROM EUROPE TOWARD NEW STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

Under Mr Yilmaz, the new Turkish Prime Minister, Turkey is striving to redefine its place in the world, by tying its future to the United States, Russia, Israel and the new nations of the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Balkans.

Turkey may still seek to improve its human rights record, resolve the Kurdish conflict and improve relations with Greece, but it will do so without guidance from the EU.

Immediately after the disappointment in Luxembourg, Mr Yilmaz met with Russian and U.S. leaders. He was warmly received in Washington by President Bill Clinton, who emphasised how important it is for the United States to have a dependable ally wedged between the turbulent Balkans, Caucasus and Middle East.

עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים.

WE WERE SLAVES UNTO PHARAOH IN EGYPT

Recently, Mr Yilmaz visited Turkmenistan, which controls part of the vast oil and gas reserve in and around the Caspian Sea. Turkey's booming economy is starved for energy, and able to offer much trade and expertise to neighbours in exchange for fuel.

The final major piece in Turkey's new strategic positioning is Israel. The two countries' armies were working together even under the Islamic-led government, and now their governments have become astonishingly close. Generals, cabinet ministers and legislators are working on scores of development projects and designing what they hope will be a long-term military alliance.

Last January, Turkish, Israeli and U.S. warships joined in a military exercise in the Mediterranean.

These steps add up to a very new message from Ankara, one that may reshape the political map of the region. Turkey is saying that it no longer needs to count on either the EU or the Islamic world. Instead, it will forge what Mr Yilmaz calls "strategic partnerships" with the United States and Israel, try to strengthen its ties with Russia and renew its effort to make friends in the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Balkans.

Foreign Minister Ismail Cem said: "Culturally, historically and geographically, we are a global state, and now we are becoming more aware of that". ●

From The International Herald Tribune

TURKISH JEWRY

It is known that there were Jews in Anatolia before the collapse of the Second Temple (70 C.E.). Archaeological excavations in the Aegean region unearthed such remarkable synagogues as Sardes dating from the 4th century B.C.E.

When the Ottomans captured Bursa in 1324, they found a Jewish community oppressed under Byzantine rule. From the early 15th century on, the Ottomans actively encouraged Jewish immigration to their domains. Jews expelled from Hungary in 1376, from France in 1394, from Sicily early in the 15th century and from Bavaria in 1470 found refuge in the Ottoman Empire.

Following this policy, Sultan Bayazid II ordered governors of the provinces, upon news of the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492, "not to refuse the Jews entry or cause them difficulty but to receive them cordially."

During the following centuries, the creativity and prosperity of the Ottoman Jews rivalled that of the Golden Age of Spain. Four Turkish cities - Istanbul, Izmir, Safed and Salonica - became centres of Turkish Jewry. Most of the court physicians were Jews and occupied an important place in Ottoman diplomacy. Most innovatively, David and Saruuel ibn Nahmias introduced the printing press to the Empire in 1493.

The Hebrews in Egypt were not slaves by origin. Because of recurring famine in Canaan, there was a continuous stream of Hebrew migration to the Egyptian Delta in search of sustenance. These were eventually joined by Jacob himself and all his household of 70 Souls.

Then, how did the Hebrews become slaves, and who enslaved them?

Jews in high office are often more royalist than the royals, and Joseph was no exception. Upon his appointment as Viceroy of Egypt, he introduced his 14-year plan of cornering the grain market, and pursued it with such vigour without regard to its effect on his own people.

Listen to this:

And when that year was ended, the people came unto Joseph the second year and said unto him, "We will not hide from my Lord, now that our money is all spent; and the herds of cattle are my Lord's; there is nought left in the sight of my Lord, but our bodies, and our lands... Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be bondsmen unto Pharaoh; and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, and that the land be not desolate..... Then Joseph said unto the people: 'Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh.'

Genesis: 47: 18, 19, 23.●

After its foundation in 1923, the Turkish Republic continued to respect the rights of the Jewish community to carry on with their own schools, social institutions and funds. In 1933, in the face of the increasing persecution of Jewish academics in Germany, Ataturk invited numbers of German Jewish professors to settle in Turkey. These scholars contributed a great deal to the development of the Turkish university system.

During World War II, Turkey served as a safe passage for many Jews fleeing the horrors of Nazi Germany. Several Turkish diplomats expended much effort to save the Turkish Jews in occupied countries and succeeded.

The present size of the Turkish Jewish community is estimated at around 26,000, mostly Sephardis. The vast majority lives in Istanbul and Izmir.

The community runs primary and secondary schools, two hospitals, homes for the aged, several welfare associations to assist the poor, the sick, needy children and orphans, and Talmud Tora religious courses and youth clubs. Shalom is the newspaper of the community and is published weekly in Turkish and Judeo-Espagnol (Ladino) languages.

In spite of their small numbers in a country of 60 million, the Turkish Jews have distinguished themselves in academic, business, industrial life and liberal professions. ●

From a newspaper article sent by Mr Nagavkar Asher, Netanya, Israel

Many thanks for making available to your readers the information in the Scribe this valuable record of Babylonian Jewry which you have so arduously and admirably strived to produce for so many years.●

London

Anthony D'Angour

CONCERNING THE JEWS

- If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one percent of the human race.
- It suggests a nebulous dim puff of star dust in the blaze of the milky way.
- Properly, the Jew ought hardly to be heard; but he is heard of.
- Has always been heard of.
- He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk.
- His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine and abstruse learning are also way out proportion to the weakness of his number.
- He has made a marvellous fight in the world, in all ages and has done it with his hands tied behind him.
- He could be vain of himself and be excused for it.
- The Egyptian, the Babylonian and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendour, then faded to dream stuff and passed away.
- The Greek and Roman followed and made a vast noise, and they are gone.
- Other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burnt out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished.
- The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind.
- All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains.
- What is the secret of his immortality?

Mark Twain 1835 - 1910

Sent in by Abdulla S. Dangoor

Scribe: Mark Twain wrote this a hundred years ago. Since then Jewish numbers have declined now constitute only 1/4 of one per cent of world population. However, their influence in the March of a human endeavour has even increased. ●

On Wednesday 28th May, I had to perform the sad duty of officiating at the funeral of Dr. Joseph Sibley, in Brighton. I was fortunate to be shown a brief autobiographical sketch he had prepared some years ago, which I am enclosing, as it may be of interest to your readers.

In my Hespered I stated that he had clearly been a man of determination - he had, literally, crossed burning deserts, seas and then raging blizzards in order to pursue the aims of his life! I also said that it was appropriate that, after the Rothschild Foundation had proved unable to help him earlier in his career, it was a Rothschild now helping him at his funeral...

Leeds **Rabbi Walter L. Rothschild**

THE JOSEPH SIBLEY STORY

I was born on a very cold night, in Baghdad, Iraq, on Saturday 23rd January, 1913. I started my life, and nearly ended it, by suffering from so-called "white asphyxia", that is, cold, white and motionless, and I was pronounced dead by the midwife.

But an aunt of mine who was present at my birth disagreed with the midwife's diagnosis and said that I was merely very cold. She lit a fire in spite of it being on the Sabbath, but was allowed for saving a life, (for lighting a fire was forbidden on the Sabbath) and warmed me up - and she was right - I came back to life. Everyone present at my birth was overjoyed at my recovery, which I celebrated by showering everybody with urine!

I was named Joseph Hayim after a famous Patriarch in Baghdad who died a few years earlier, and it was my father's hope that I would grow up to follow in the Patriarch's footsteps.

I was the fifth son of a family of seven children with loving parents and a pious father. Our upbringing was religious, happy and loving. My brothers and sisters attended schools where emphasis was given to religious education, and on reaching sixteen or seventeen years of age, my brothers were articled to different trades, while my sisters helped at home until their marriages were arranged on reaching the age of about eighteen.

In 1924, a new modern school was opened in our district, which some of my friends joined. I begged my father to send me to that school but on learning the high cost (£5 per year), and agreed with great difficulty.

Prince Ghazi, son of King Faisal, came to our school that year and presented every student who came out first in his class with a magnificent pocket watch. I was very proud of mine and spent a lot of time showing it to my friends.

In 1923, a Medical College, run mainly by English doctors, was established in Baghdad. Although I came eleventh out of the 400 students who sat the entrance examination, I

was over the Jewish quota and I was not accepted. But I heard that I could apply at Montpellier University in France, where no fees were charged.

This raised my hope and I pleaded with my father to let me travel to France and join my friend. When I arrived at Montpellier University, I was told that I had to pass the "Examen des Etrangers" which would take one year. So I moved to London, and managed to pass the university entrance exams nine months later.

I was accepted at Bartholomew Hospital Medical School, but was presented with a bill of £85 being the entrance fee. This I could not afford. I wrote to my parents who sent me in return £30, being the proceeds of the sale of my mother's gold bracelet.

In despair, I wrote to Rothchilds, pleading for assistance and promising to pay back with interest any allowance they might make, as soon as I qualified. My letter was duly acknowledged - with regret, they were not prepared to help.

I then applied to the Anglo-Jewish Association who after receiving confirmation from the Chief Rabbi of Baghdad regarding my parent's circumstances, agreed to pay me £250 per year throughout my training.

That day was one of the happiest in my life and I would not have changed places with the King of England.

At that time, my greatest wish was to live with a Jewish family. To my surprise and good fortune I noticed an advertisement in the Jewish Chronicle offering a comfortable home with full-board to a student. That was another lucky day for it proved to be a second home to me.

Shortly after I had moved in, I fell ill with a severe attack of influenza and was looked after by my landlady and her daughter, Mary. I am ashamed to say that after two weeks of being cosseted, I began to enjoy my illness and was in no hurry to show that I was recovering. It was now not the aftermath of flue' from which I was suffering, but another disease, not nearly so distressing, but not treatable by medicine, and in my case, was to last a lifetime. It's called Romantic Fever and the reader will find out why I continued to suffer from it!

I stayed with them till the blitz on London put an end to my bliss, when mother and daughter evacuated themselves to Leicestershire. I was billeted at Bart's.

I missed Mary's company very much and only her frequent letters assuaged my misery. When the mail came and I saw her handwriting on the envelopes my heart started pounding and I could not open them fast enough.

In January 1942 I qualified! I was a doctor at last and I had succeeded in the vow I had taken

twelve years ago, in 1930.

What better moment could there be to propose marriage to Mary? I wasted no time and took the train to Melton Mowbray, arriving at 10.30 pm only to find that I had missed the last bus to the village. The wind was howling and the snow was deep, but I covered that six miles in no time at all, for having just qualified and being about to propose marriage on the following day - I was walking on air!

And on the following day, I did propose, only to be met by a hesitant young lady. My heart sank and I feared the worst - that during my absence I had been beaten by a luckier opponent. I must have looked miserable and dejected, for Mary said "Listen, my dear, it is not that I don't love you, for I do. But I'm sure I shall be lonely, miserable and homesick if I have to live abroad."

I replied, using the words of Ruth, in the Bible - perhaps not quite accurately: "If you marry me I promise that 'your Country will be my Country and your God will be my God'." And to my everlasting joy, Mary consented to be my wife.

Over a lifetime together, Mary has made many suggestions - nearly all good! One of the best was that she urged me to change my surname from Zibli to Sibley. I, and many of my young relatives at home, had suffered greatly from teasing about our name, for Zibli in Arabic, and Zeble in Hebrew means - garbage!

It was, of course, a war-time marriage and a utility wedding with only nine guests present, but that was of no consequence for nine or a hundred and nine, our eyes would not have been focused on them. It was, and continued to be, a most happy marriage, and if we had a tiff or two, it was I who went to Mary's mother for consolation, for she was my friend and the staunchest of allies.

In 1948 I was granted a Certificate of Naturalisation, which made me enormously proud.

Our marriage was blessed with two lovely children who were our pride and joy and it seemed in no time at all, our fledglings took to their wings, deserted our nest, built their own and presented us with four lovely grandchildren.

We celebrated our Golden Wedding anniversary on November 10th, 1992, and casting my mind back over the years, I regard myself as a very fortunate person.

Fortunate in having had loving and supportive parents. Fortunate to have realised my ambition and qualified as a doctor. Fortunate to have enjoyed my work and been successful in my chosen profession. Fortunate in having been blessed with good health, but above all, doubly fortunate in that I have a wonderful wife, a long and happy marriage and a loving and devoted family. ●

“And In Death They Were Not Parted”

Naim Dangoor writes:

I remember attending the Award Ceremony at the Watania School referred to by the writer in company with my Grandfather, Hakam Ezra Dangoor, when I was nine years old, and was seated a few chairs away from Crown Prince Gazhi. I still remember that his right leg was bandaged and he was wearing (Fil-d'Ecausse socks). ●

Mr Jack Cohen was kind enough to lend me his copy of The Scribe here in Perth.

I was very interested in reading this magazine as my forefathers went to India from Iraq. My maternal grandfather Ezra Barukh (Barook) with his father trekked to India from Iraq when he was eight years old around the 1880/1890's. When they got to India my great grandfather passed away and my grandfather was brought up by Jews in Calcutta. He could not remember his address in Iraq or the names of his sisters or any other family member. We therefore never knew any of our relatives in Iraq.

It was very interesting reading some of the news from Calcutta as I was brought up there and went to the Jewish Girls School as my mother and sisters did (Miss Luddy was our principal). ●

Australia

Mrs Seema Cohen



Last December 31st, Simha Levy passed away, and three weeks later was followed by her husband Philip Levy after long illnesses.

Philip was born in Basrah in 1921. He completed his studies in Beirut prior to his return to Basrah in 1938. He moved to Iran in 1944 where he resided until 1978, when he moved to London. He founded and actively operated several companies in Iran and London.

Philip was known as a special loveable and respected personality for his care and generosity to others. Simha, née Nimrodi, was born in Baghdad in 1929 and moved to Iran in 1949. She married Philip in 1950. She was a devoted wife and mother who lived with great vision and strength. She shared vigorously with Philip throughout all times with grace and dignity.

Philip and Simha will be missed by all the family members, friends and especially their four children and seven grandchildren. ●

A man asked:

When I was young my parents were always right and now my children are always right!

I am wondering, when is my turn?!!!

Our condolences to Mrs Nancy David of Golders Green, London, on the passing of her husband of over 50 years, Jack, at the age of 93. Jack who was born in Singapore, was interned for three years in the notorious Japanese prisoner camp in Changyi, Singapore, during the Second World War. In later years he had served as Private Secretary to Sir David Ezra of Calcutta.

We also send condolences to Ms Phyllis and Kitty Nissim of New York on the passing of their brother, Esmond, aged 78. Their grandfather was Sir Menashy Meyer of Singapore. They were born in Shanghai, and their father was Mr Edward Nissim, of Bombay, who worked for the firm of E.D. Sassoon & Co., in Shanghai where he also served as President of the Shanghai Jewish Association for many years. With their mother, Ramah, and aunt, Mrs Mozelle Nissim, and uncle, Mr Reuben Meyer, and other relatives, they were fortunate to leave Singapore for Bombay just before the Japanese invasion in February 1942. ●

Thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow. *Deut. 15: 5,6*

The poor shall never cease out of the land. *Deut. 15: 10,11 Lev. 19: 9,10*

Land redemption. *Lev. 25: 23,24*

You shall not lend upon interest to your brother. *Deut. 23: 19,20*

Rab. Amram Gaon in one of his response states that it is prohibited to lend money on interest even to a non-Jew.

In 12th century Hebrew gained importance as an international language alongside Arabic and Latin.

Admission rules at Harvard in 1636 required knowledge of Hebrew.

The dictionary is the only place where the word success comes before work.



Mary and Joseph Sibley on their 50th Wedding Anniversary, November 1992. ●

PSG

Swastika over Paris

THE FATE OF THE FRENCH JEWS

by Jeremy Josephs 1989, Lindsay Publishing-Bloomsbury. £14.95.

The current trial in Bordeaux of Maurice Papon, as wartime German collaborator for sending Jews to Auschwitz over 50 years ago, has turned into a farce, coming as it does so many years after the events. After taking 16 years to come to trial, the case is now likely to collapse.

Wartime crimes against French Jews demonstrated the ugly side of the French people. They can be regarded as a sequel to the Dreyfus affair which took place 50 years earlier.

[At the time of the Dreyfus affair, a boy at Eton was asked to translate the saying, "Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle." After thinking hard, he blurted "The Jew is not worth the scandal."]

The French psyche, is tainted with chauvinism leading to racism and anti-Semitism as is currently demonstrated by the growing following of the National Front.

How the Final Solution came to Paris! The book is a true account of events that took place after the sudden fall of France. After the fall of France in June 1940, the Germans occupied Paris and made their headquarters at Hotel Crillon.

On 22 September 1940, the Germans published the first ordinance concerning Jews. The Jews were defined as all those who belong or used to belong to the Jewish Religion, and all those who have more than two Jewish grandparents. It announced that a census of the Jews was to be taken. All Jews were instructed to report to the Prefecture of Police before 20 October. Exactly 149,734 Parisian Jews duly subscribed to show their respect for the law. October 1941, 7 synagogues were blown up. Gradually, new restrictions were imposed on Jews. Forbidden to have a radio or telephone, go to restaurants, cinemas and other public places. In May 1942, Jews had to wear the yellow star. "It is forbidden for Jews aged 6 years and upwards to appear in public without wearing a yellow star."

20,000 Jewish businesses were confiscated. No decree against playing Jewish music, however could stop Jack Offenbach's (1819-1880) Can Can from being played in night-clubs. Portraits of Jews in the Louvre were destroyed as well as 500 paintings burned as racially undesirable.

The first round-up of Jews took place on 14.5.1941. Some 4,000 were invited to go to the police for an identity control. They were detained. In August 1941, the 11th arrondissement was sealed and Jews were arrested and sent to Drancy an unfinished housing estate on the outskirts of Paris.

French and foreign Jews were deported. Page 16

Altogether 200 trains took away Jewish deportees. 80,000 victims in France. 12 of 23 resistance fighters of one batch executed were Jews. 16% of resistance fighters shot - were Jews, although Jews constituted only 0.7% of the French population.

Brünner, Eichmann's right-hand man, was sent to Paris to deport as many Jews as possible. He was motivated by fanaticism and used cunning and cruelty in his drive. Brünner, unrepentant now lives in Damascus under the protection of the Syrian government.

September 1943 arrests in Nice after departure of Italians who had proved ample protection for Jews.

Marcel Bloch the well-known French manufacturer of Mirage and Mystère was in the last train August 1944. His life was spared when he became Catholic.

La Grande Rafle (the great storm)

This round-up on July 16, 1942 known as "Vent Printanier" (Operation Spring Wind), was purely a French undertaking. The gendarmerie, the mobile guard, the judiciary police, bailiffs, detectives and patrolmen - all were assembled and waiting to strike. In all, more than 9,000 French officials were waiting for zero hour.

At four in the morning squads of French police burst into the homes of Jews all over Paris. Thousands of apartment blocks were swarming with police knocking on Jewish addresses shouting, Police open up. Many Jews were reassured by the uniformed French officers and some Jews felt they were in safe hands. Doors that were not opened were not forced.

During the course of this operation three people who had just died were wrapped up and taken with the rest. In all one hundred committed suicide, twenty-four died from sickness, two of whom were women in the full throes of childbirth. One mother threw her four children out of the window of her fifth-floor apartment as the door was being forced against instruction, then leapt after them. A doctor killed himself and his entire family with hypodermic injections.

Fifty city buses were used to shuttle the arrested Jews from the collecting centres to the Vélodrome d'Hiver stadium and to Drancy. Outside the stadium the Jews stood in a daze, with children and bundles cluttered around them. 7,000 Jews were interned there of whom 4,000 were children. No food was provided and there was not a drop of water. In no time at all the air had become unbreathable, stinking and thick with dust.

It was a most remarkable spectacle: thousands of people penned in like cattle in that supposedly most civilised city in the world.

Pierre Laval, head of Marshal Petain's

government, let it be known that he was not opposed to the deportation of the 4,051 children rounded up in *La Grande Rafle*. In the implementation of the "Final Solution of the Jewish problem," Vichy and the rest of France were ahead of the German Reich.

THE ROUND-UP IN NICE

On September 10, 1943, Brünner, Eichmann's agent left Paris for Nice. The sudden collapse of Mussolini and the evacuation of the Italian zone presented an ideal opportunity to round-up still more Jews. For more than two months he set about terrorising the Jews of Nice. People who had spent considerable time and money in obtaining the correct paperwork - certificates of Aryianisation, of Baptism, of communion and the like - soon discovered that their efforts had been wasted. A circumcised male was automatically deemed to be Jewish, and all documentation to the contrary were useless. It did not take long for Brünner to organise in Nice a comprehensive network of informers, those prepared to betray their neighbours for some small monetary gain.

At the end of the war the Germans tried to destroy much of the evidence of Auschwitz, but in the six warehouses that survived out of twenty-nine, were found still unshipped to Germany. Among other things, there were 348,820 men's suits; 836,000 items of women's clothing; 5,525 pairs of women's shoes; 38,000 items of men's shoes; an enormous quantity of toothbrushes and spectacles and enough toys to have occupied thousands of small children, and tons of human hair.

Alois Brünner's war against the Jews had yet to run. Posted to head the camp of Sered he was able to add the names of another 13,000 deportees - this time Slovakian Jews - to his awesome total.

Naim Dangoor writes: The round up of the Jews of Nice began on the first day of Rosh-Hashana 30 September 1943 when all the worshippers in the main Synagogue were arrested and taken away. I was living in Istanbul at that time and although very close to the border of German occupied Europe, little did we realise the tragic events that were taking place for the Jews there. Below is my Synagogue card for the High Holy days in Istanbul in 1943. ●



CARMELITE CONVENT AT AUSCHWITZ

Naim Dangoor writes: Some years ago, I was one of the first to hear that the Catholic Church was planning to build a Carmelite convent on the site of the death camp where millions of Jews were cruelly massacred by the Germans, with the connivance of the Church, of the International Red Cross and the local people, thus adding insult to injury inflicted on the Jewish Martyrs.

I immediately wrote to the Chief Rabbinate in Jerusalem drawing attention to this audacious development, adding lest one day Christian pilgrims to that establishment will be told, "this is the spot where the 'murderers of God' received their just punishment." The Chief Rabbinate replied that my letter broke their heart as they hadn't heard this news before and asking for more information.

Since then, the world Jewish Congress and other Jewish Organisations took up the matter and put up strong opposition to such desecration to the memory of millions innocent Jewish martyrs, but at the end there appears to be a church, some shops and a supermarket in that place. ●

Holocaust victims were several millions.

Recently released intelligence reports show that the Holocaust began much earlier than previously thought.

German police radio reports intercepted by the Bletchley Park codebreaking unit show that German police were massacring Jews in the occupied areas of the Soviet Union as early as June 1941, months before the Final Solution commenced. This raises the number of Jews believed to have been killed by the Germans from six million to seven million. Hundreds of thousands of Jews were systematically executed in mopping-up operations.

In September 1941, the Germans suspected that the Allies might be listening to the radio reports and further reports were sent to Berlin by courier. ●

From The Daily Telegraph

Nazis' hatred of Jews main cause of war

Professor Yehuda Bauer, a world authority on the Holocaust, recently said in London that the Second World War broke out to a considerable degree because of the Nazis' hatred of the Jews.

"The Second World War broke out, not for economic or military reasons, but for purely ideological ones," the Professor said. ●

THE RUN-UP OF THE MILLENNIUM: 2000 shameful years

Jesus - What crimes have been committed in your name!

Murder, torture, genocide, intolerance, forced conversion and anti-Semitism.

The year 2000 does not herald the beginning of a new century or a new Millennium. That will take place on 1/1/2001. The year 2000 is simply a nice round figure of a date in a calendar that has become universal and most people would be impatient to wait another year to celebrate the new epoch.

The Christian Church, however, is trying to hijack the coming event by claiming that it primarily marks 2000 years since the birth of Jesus. But most historians believe that Jesus was born between - 4BCE and -16 BCE, and 1st January marks the traditional date. Not of his birth, but of his circumcision! Ninety percent of mankind will not attach any Christian significance to the transition from 1999 to 2000.

The Christian Church has no reason to boast of its achievements for the last 2000 years. Historically, the Church can be regarded as the most notorious terrorist organisation the world has ever seen. The crime committed by Christian popes and by Christian religious leaders against humanity are horrendous. In particular, crimes against Jews, burning whole Jewish communities alive in their Synagogues, the Crusades, the Inquisition, culminating in the Church's role in the Holocaust, cannot be forgotten.

All these atrocities were done in the name of Jesus whom they now wish to glorify. If Jesus could see what crimes were committed in his name he would probably commit hara-kiri! But his second coming expected in the year 1000 did not take place, neither will it materialise in the year 2000.

Christian activists, who wish to celebrate 2000 years of Christianity must hang their heads in shame and contrition for their past record and seek forgiveness of God and of Man which can only be earned by genuine and complete repentance. Christians should mark the beginning of the year 2000 by a week of fasting and prayer, and above all, a change of heart.

A fitting start for the year 2000 would be, as midnight sweeps across Europe could be for the Angel of Death to pass over the Continent and smite all the neo-Nazis, racists and antisemites in the land!

"And let all the people hear and fear." ●

Those who want to wait to the year 2001 to celebrate the new Millennium miss the point. It is not an anniversary that we shall be celebrating in the year 2000. Because nothing whatever happened at either the beginning or the end of 1 BCE, certainly not the birth of Jesus.

What we are getting excited about is that all the numbers will change. It is like seeing 99,999 turn to 100,000 on the car milometer. That's what it is all about.

Letter to The Times

THE FRENCH CHURCH REPENTS

The Roman Catholic Bishops of France issued a declaration at Drancy on September 30, 1997, seeking forgiveness for the failings of their Church during the Holocaust period.

The declaration ended as follows: "The Church did not realise that they had considerable power and influence, and that given the silence of other institutions, the impact of a public statement might have forestalled an irreparable catastrophe.

We acknowledge this reality today because this failure of the Church of France and its responsibility toward the Jewish people are part of its history. We confess this sin. We beg God's forgiveness and ask the Jewish people to hear our words of repentance."

The French Church has been examining her record with the rest of the Roman Catholic Church. She has been summoned to do so by Pope John Paul II at the approach of the third Millennium.

Scribe: It is obvious that the Church now wishes to clean up its past in the run up to the new Millennium, and to whitewash its role of commission and omission in the Holocaust. Realising that the Jews are in no position to forgive and forget, the church is appealing directly to God.

Forgiveness is earned only for true repentance and not for a form of words. There is no evidence that the Christian Church has abandoned its old attitude towards the Jews, who are still being targeted for conversion. ●

BISHOP MONTEFIORE SPEAKS OUT

Hugh Montefiore who converted to Christianity some 50 years ago has recently published a book - "On being a Jewish Christian." In it he calls on the Church to mark the millennium with an apology for its treatment of the Jewish people down the ages.

Former Bishop of Birmingham, Bishop Montefiore feels that any Jew who accepts Christianity has to bear in his soul a terrible burden of guilt as a member of a church which has not even apologised for what it has done in the past to his own Jewish people. His book is scathing in its attack on Christianity insensitivity towards the Church's long involvement in anti-Semitism. He states that Nazi German anti-Semitism culminating in the Holocaust was a secularised form of Christian anti-Judaism.

"Despite generalised statements by various Christian churches, few had come close to admitting guilt or responsibility for the crimes committed against the Jews."

Although a minister in the Church of England for more than 45 years, Montefiore writes, "I am Jewish. I feel Jewish and I love the race to which I belong." He castigated Christians for ignoring their religion's Jewish origins.

Book reviews:

Sylvia Kedourie (editor),
Elie Kedourie 1926-1992:
History, Philosophy and Politics.
London, 1998, 132 pages
Reviewed by Ariel Levine

Elie Kedourie is one of the first names that any beginner student of the modern history of the Middle East is bound to encounter. Kedourie's numerous writings are a must in any serious reading list covering the political history of the region in the first half of the Twentieth Century. Some of Kedourie's ideas, constituting the core of many of these writings can be found in the short extracts from two articles, which are included in *Elie Kedourie: History, Philosophy and Politics*, and appear at the end of this review.

The book, edited by Kedourie's widow Sylvia, a known scholar in her own right, is an insightful collection of accounts by scholars from a variety of nationalities and disciplines. All of them shared one thing, which they vividly express in these accounts - an admiration of Kedourie's work and personality. It is regretful, however, that aside to Sylvia Kedourie's very brief introduction, no details are given about the contributors.

The main achievement of this compilation is its exquisite balance between its component enabling the reader to get acquainted with the different sides of a truly great scholar. For those of us who already knew Kedourie from his writings on the Middle East, the book is an introduction to his other faces. It reveals an important political scientist and philosopher who had a major contribution to the study of nationalism. Moreover, it describes Kedourie's role alongside Michael Oakshot's in the emergence of the London School of Economics as a leading British university and worthy alternative to the Oxbridge academic dominance. More importantly, many of the articles provide us a fascinating account of Kedourie the man, loved by his students as well as his colleagues. The contributions by Kamal Salibi, Regina Allen and Noel O'Sullivan are an example to this notion, as well as a highly enjoyable reading. Kedourie's previously unpublished article about the Jews of Babylon and Baghdad, depicts him as a proud member of this community, an aspect that comes out in many of the contributions.

The inclusion of the Alain Silvera's and Alan Beattie's learned articles about Kedourie's political philosophy gives the reader an introduction to, as well as a more general view of Kedourie's vast intellectual heritage. All in all, the book manages in well edited 132 pages to draw an intriguingly interesting picture of one of the most original minds in political thought in the second half of this century. No doubt that Kedourie's premature death in 1992, was a great loss to this discipline as well as to the study of the Middle East.

(Excerpts from the book following)

All those who have come across Elie's prose must have marvelled at his lucidity of expression. But this talent was deployed not only to create an impressive body of historical writing, which ensured his reputation as a leading authority on the modern history and politics of the Middle East. It was also wielded as a vehicle for imparting some moral truth, some basic verity with which to adorn a story or recount a tale. For if Elie Kedourie could be categorised at all, it would have to be, first and foremost, as a moralist who devoted a lifetime of historical scholarship to explain and to judge the springs of human conduct in public affairs.

The introduction to the 1987 reprint of (Kedourie's first book) *England and the Middle East* sets out to describe the origins of an Oxford D. Phil. Thesis that he chose to withdraw rather than modify its conclusions to suit the opinions of his examiner. The examiner, H.A.R. (later Sir Hamilton) Gibb, the most eminent Arabist of the day, was a pillar of the establishment who held strong views on the underlying reasons for the Arab world's predicament. In the course of the viva Gibb contended that the disastrous condition of the Middle East should be ascribed to a 'crisis of British imperial thinking' during the war and to Britain's subsequent betrayal of the genuine aspirations of the Arabs to achieve nationhood in the years that followed the peace. A young Kedourie, still in his twenties, retorted that all the sources at his disposal showed that such a version of events was at variance with the historical record and was, moreover, plainly tainted by a species of political advocacy especially prevalent in British official and academic circles at the time. This self-incriminating and arid moralism, nourished by a sense of British remorse and misgivings for having somehow let the Arabs down, was to elicit Kedourie's scorn on many a subsequent occasion. It was to be scrupulously dissected in a steady flow of learned articles and reviews, such as 'The Capture of Damascus, 1 October 1918,' first published in the inaugural issue of his new journal *Middle Eastern Studies* in 1964, or 'The Surrender of Medina, January 1919' and 'Great Britain and Palestine: the Turning Point,' reprinted in *Islam and the Modern World* (1980), and scrutinised most notably in the title-easy of *The Chatham House Version* and other *Middle Eastern Studies* (1970), where all the ramifications of Britain's guilt for empire, erected into a principle for the formulation and execution of British policy in that part of the world, were exposed to such devastating effect.

Romanticism was in fact the fatal flaw in the ideology of revolutionary nationalism - a doctrine that glorified collective self-worship in the name of an abstract principle unrelated to people's real needs and interests. Kedourie celebrated indictment of nationalism, the subject of his second major work published in 1960 under that title (reprinted in its forth edition, with a foreword by his wife, Sylvia

Kedourie), tracked down, both in theory and in practice the false assumptions and philosophical errors of an ideology of self-determination conceived by its proponents as a Kantian substitute for religion. Religion remained at the core of Kedourie's beliefs, not only because he himself chose to observe its laws and rituals in his private life, but also because the values it enshrined stood out as the last remaining bulwark still capable of preserving some semblance of order and decency against the furies unleashed by xenophobic nationalism and ethnic chauvinism. (Extracts from Alain Silvera, "Elie Kedourie, *Politique et Moraliste*," in *Elie Kedourie: History, Philosophy and Politics*, pp. 99-108).

Kedourie's account in *England and the Middle East* of the situation of the Ottoman Empire before the First World War is detailed and subtle. This empire was the pawn European great power interest; these powers saw the weakness of the Ottoman Empire as remediable only by either partition between them, or by strengthening the empire through English and French methods of centralisation and efficient administrations. Kedourie's treatment of the question of the 'inevitability' of imperial decline was equally subtle. Of the view that the collapse of the Ottoman Empire was 'inevitable', he held that this might be true, but only in the sense that a series of previous contingencies and decisions had produced a situation in which the collapse of the Empire was entirely explicable. What he wanted to resist was the idea that this outcome was ordained by 'iron laws' history, or that it was a result arrived at independently of a collection of past individual human decisions, or that the fore of contingent circumstances were such that they could never have permitted the participant actors to have averted the eventual outcome. (Extracts from Alan Beattie, "Elie Kedourie's Philosophical History" in *Elie Kedourie: History, Philosophy and Politics*, pp. 109-132). ☺

Books received:

An Iraqi Jew in the Mossad
Memoirs of an Israeli Intelligence Officer
by Joshua Horesh
MacFarland and Company, Inc. Publishers
Box 611 - Jefferson, NC 28640
215 pp \$38.50 (paperback)

Horesh relates his personal experience during his years of service. He was born in Baghdad in 1920 and lives now in Florida. ☺

I read your nice paper "The Scribe" when I visited a friend in Jerusalem.

I live with my family at Kibbutz Evom, in West Galilee. Many interesting things that I used to ask my Dad about the Jewish community of Iraq, were answered by him from memory, and sometime didn't. I was very excited to find a lot of answers in your magazine.

Please put me on your mailing list. I am sure I can find other things to know and learn by reading it. ☺

Israel

Eyal Dangur

Picture



The Queen visiting the Kochin Synagogue last summer. ●



Renée and Naim Dangoor at the private Golden Wedding Anniversary.

In 1946 Naim contracted to buy from the all the roses that grew throughout Turkey, most of it was sold in America at the remaining copper container, still in perfect into various perfumery products for offer.



William Hague, the new leader of the Conservative Party, attended the new offices of the Exilarch's Foundation in Mayfair, where the well-known sculptress, Frances Segelman, modelled a head of the Tory Leader, and fellow Yorkshire person, at a two-hour sitting.

Mrs Segelman has made a speciality of producing clay heads of famous persons in two hours. The sculpting took place at a Reception held by the Exilarch's Foundation in aid of Children in Need, a BBC-sponsored charity which raises every year £20 million in a famous television programme. The Reception was attended by some 50 invited guests as well as major press and television reporters. As the above picture shows, the clay head is a very good likeness of Mr Hague's. However, no-one has suggested that the Tory leader needs a new head, nor that the Conservative Party needs a new Head, or that two heads are better than one.

The idea is that William Hague has a cast-iron case to lead the Conservative Party and, hopefully one day, to lead the Government.

When the head is cast in bronze, it will be presented to Mr Hague by Naim Dangoor in the House of Commons. ●



Painting of a traditional .

Gallery



Dinner last November to celebrate their

Turkish Government the essence (atar) of that year. It came to 36 kilograms, and me at more than the price of gold. The condition after 50 years is now being made ng to friends and well-wishers. ●



wish wedding in Venice. ●



Rishon LeZion, Rabbi Eliyahu Bakshi-Doron, Sephardi Chief Rabbi of Israel, visited the Naima JPS school, established and capably supervised by Rabbi Dr. Abraham Levy, Sephardi Communal Rabbi of London.

The above picture shows from right to left: Rabbi Bakshi-Doron; Naim Dangoor; Rabbi Abraham Levy; Arie Cohen; among the pupils of the school who sang Hanukkah songs.

Rishon LeZion flew to London at the invitation for a Brit Milah of a friend's son. Chief Rabbi Bakshi Doron travelled afterwards to Rabat in Morocco to attend an interfaith symposium. He also flew to Istanbul where he met Turkish leaders.

Bakshi Doron, which means Gift of God in Persian, was born in Shiraz, Iran. ●



On recent visit to Montreal Naim Dangoor and son David were cordially invited to a Friday night dinner at the Montefiore Club.

The above picture shows, left to right: Morris Chitayat; Simha Peress; Naim Dangoor; Claire Chitayat.

Standing: David Dangoor; Joyce Rose; Maurice Peress. ●

Salim Soffair



Mr Salim Soffair passed away lately due to a serious illness at the age of 84.

He had a great and impressive life. Started as a junior clerk in the Eastern Bank Baghdad, then he became sub-manager in the Eastern Bank of Bahrain followed by his appointment as the manager of the Eastern Bank Karkook.

Then came the emigration to Israel. He avoided being arrested in Iraq on trumped up charges by a whisker, and rushed to Israel with a large family and penniless. He told his wife not to worry because all his wealth is in his head!

He was immediately taken by Barclays Bank Tel Aviv, as a sub-manager.

He established or helped to establish several banks in Israel and in England, and lived long periods in different countries and in different cities. He led an active life till the end. He is survived by his wife, three sons and three daughters.

A very interesting and engaging book can be written about him. Very few people have the confidence, stamina, perseverance, and good humour which he had. He hardly complained and was always smiling and coming up with a joke, even when he had multiple problems in his mind.

He loved playing bridge in which the players normally criticise. He neither criticised nor answered to criticism. He was a keen freemason and played the oud (lute).

He will always be remembered for his personality and good sense of humour.●

London Elias Dangoor

The eulogy read by Latif Hoory at the Memorial Service at the Lauderdale Road Synagogue on Thursday 12 February.

I wish to express my sad emotion at losing Salim Soffair, a long-time friend of mine and of my family.

I do not remember meeting with this man without a pleasant end effect. He was a smooth, quiet, tranquil man in his character. I do not remember him upset or in a mood of losing his temper. He could say "no" exactly in the same way he could say "yes."

Nature offered him a friendly attitude and kept a friendly relationship with all those who knew him. He managed his way through life by allowing time to everything and never rushing to a conclusion. I heard and learnt a lot from Salim's wisdom. He was an intimate friend to my Uncle Sasson Nawi and my brother Eliahou before I met him. I cannot forget my first meeting with him in December 1961 at his bank in Israel.

His personality was settled as an established bank manager. His stability gave him the power to talk loudly with responsible people above him at the Federal Bank of Israel. Especially, when they were committing obvious mistakes, like the example limiting the rate of interest to be given to the investors at 11% while the Jewish Agency was giving 36%. He was crying hard to the authorities saying "how can we convince the investor that the Jewish agency is different from the Jewish State, and ask them to take 11% instead of 36%."

Furthermore, I can for sure say that the peaceful dialogue between the Jews and the Arab inhabitants of Israel started by the establishing of the Israeli Arab Bank in the 60's, when Salim adopted an important role. This association held an important effort in this area, which was fully supported by the late Prime Minister, Ben-Gurion, the Arab clients felt very comfortable when they could talk with their bank manager in Arabic.

Salim was a man who you felt comfortable with. Wise enough to think in three ways: his way, your way, and what could possibly be the objective way. That was why he was trusted by so many people to act as an arbitrator or middle man. Sometimes he was authorised as a final decision-maker for some very bitter disputes.

He developed a strength and tranquillity of mind which you can rarely find. He encountered many difficulties in his life.

He was helping others in several countries on many occasions. He never forgot where he came from and he knew exactly where he was going.

He will always be remembered in our thoughts as an example of an honourable man.●

London Latif Hoory

Dear grandfather

*He was far
But always present
And his presence had a lot of weight.*

*He didn't speak much
But you could always sense his thoughts.*

*If we didn't eat
He was always wondering why;
If Mummy wasn't around for lunch,
he would wait with us, and once she arrived
he would give her this teasing look and smile.*

*He always insisted,
one should never lose his or her brains,
your "little box", he called it;
And he definitely never did.*

*He came a long way
But what made him a unique personality
was his ability to keep his modesty and
his simple attitude to life even after coming
such a long way,
and above all, never losing his ability to smile
both in good times
and bad times.*

*I admired him and respected him,
and although he is gone now, I feel he is still
around
because people of his kind do not die,
they only go away.*

*As he said to me more than once,
people do not like to see other people sad or
upset,
and hence I feel that
although this is a memorial service to his
death,
I am positive
he would have liked you all to see it as
A celebration of his life! ●*

Read at the Memorial Service to Salim Soffair by his grandson, Guy Rashty



At the House in Savyon 1968
Left to right standing: Ezra Dangoor,
Rachel Dangoor, Lidya Rashty, Alfred Rashty
Sitting: Salim Soffair, Marcelle Soffair,
Iris Dangoor, Dalia Dangoor, Mira Rashty
Sammy Soffair, Mona Soffak-Yadin,
David Soffair, Jacob Soffair.

MAURICE RAEBURN

I read with great interest David Schayek's letter to the Scribe (No. 68) p. 13 about Maurice Raeburn, who was the brother of my maternal grandmother, Simcha (Sadka) Zilkha.

As children, in Bombay, my four sisters and I lived in awe of our Uncle Maurice. We had to give him progress reports on our school work and anything else about us of interest. We were taught to have great respect for him. My parents told us a bit about him and when I met my Uncle Robert (Zilkha) in England many years ago, he told me a great deal about Uncle Maurice, but never in such glowing terms as in David Schayek's letter. We knew only that we had this stern uncle whom we tried so hard to please, who lived in Nice and then in Santa Barbara, and from whom we heard occasionally. It is, therefore, interesting to note what David had to say about this remote man who had such a profound bearing on our lives.

Once again, many thanks to the Scribe for giving me so much information about my family background. ●

Sydney, Australia Dolly (Dayan) Shadler

May I bring to your attention to page 13 of your last issue No. 68 an article by David Schayek which caused me a great deal of distress. In his article he called Maurice Raeburn (Sadka) a "great man who gave lavish presents to his friends." This "great man" was my granny Simcha Zilkha's brother. Granny was a rich woman, Maurice took control of her money and invested it in Japanese shares. During the war he wrote and told her that he was sorry as the money he had used was all lost and she had nothing left. She was left penniless as a young widow with four young children, Ellis, Robert, Hilaye and Georgette Dayan, my mother. Maurice decided to take the boys from her and sent them to the U.K. to a boarding school.

My father decided to sail, with the family to Bombay, and we took granny with us. After many, many, years Ellis, a young adult, turned up at our house and said Maurice had dismissed and cut him off because he did not agree that he should go into business! During the war, Robert then an officer in the British Army was sent to Bombay. When granny saw her big handsome son, after so very many years she did not know him, and also sad to say, was not able to communicate with him, as she spoke only Arabic and Robert spoke only English. He said that Maurice had dismissed him and cut him off, as Robert had refused to marry a woman of Raeburn's choice!

May I point out that before giving a Requiem on a person, one should go into the real character of the said person, who by the way, did not leave a penny to granny but distributed his wealth to strangers.

Dear Editor, please forgive me for writing all the above, but if I did not, I could not live with myself, as I know that granny will now rest in peace, knowing that her sad story has been told. ●

Ramat-Gan, Israel

Nancy Dayan

David Schayek writes:

RE: MAURICE RAEBURN

My comments on the above letter are:-

1. In my article I made it clear that Mr Raeburn could get very upset with people and would write them very angry letters. I would have thought that the frustrations of a very sick man tied to a chain would give him a short fuse.

2. Nancy Dayan says that Simcha Zilkha had been a rich woman whose capital was looked after by Mr Raeburn, and was lost in Japanese shares. Mr Raeburn was an expert on Japan, and almost certainly had much of his own capital invested in Japan. The last time I saw him was in about 1938. Then he was not in Villa Les Mouttes, but was staying in a very modest *pension* in Paris. I think he then had just one servant. Surely the Japanese war against the Western Powers changed his financial position so that he could not afford to help his relatives as he had done earlier when he sent his nephews to boarding school in the UK.

I knew Robert in 1926 (when I was 6 years old). He then appeared to be in his early 20's. Suppose Robert was born in 1906, he would have been 30 in 1936 and 40 in 1946 when the war ended. I understand that Robert got an introduction to a very famous English company who employed him in the late 1920's. He did very well indeed working in that company to whom he had been introduced through friends of Mr Raeburn.

When Robert went in to the Army, he would have been in his 30's with some 10 years in the Company's service and so well established.

3. I have no idea what Mr Raeburn left when he died nor who he left his estate to, but maybe what he may have left to strangers was to those who had looked after him in his affliction.

4. Most of my memories of Mr Raeburn were from when I was between three and nine years old. I continue to hold him in affection and respect. ●

I have enjoyed The Scribe and will continue to look forward to receiving every issue.

May I also express my profound congratulations to your Foundation's grandiose effort in saving Carmel.

I taught for a bit at Whittingham College in the early 60's and I would have despaired if yet another Jewish Institution would have fallen by the way side. I look forward to hearing what your esteemed Foundation would do with Carmel College. ●

London

Harry Elias

BRIBE OR RANSOM?

I was a little boy when I returned home one day from Shamash School - 1946 to find our house under search. The investigators had collected every book, paper, note and newspaper they could find. They suggested that I might accompany them to bring back the documents, which I believed.

I was placed in a dirty small detention room. Then my father was arrested at his work and joined me. He told me that we were falsely accused of Zionism. We had nothing to do with politics - only loved to follow the news.

One month had passed and the investigation continued about politics and whether I intended to go to Palestine. I denied what they wanted me to confess and begged them to release me to prepare for my Matriculation Examination.

In the meantime, my older brother tried to get our release on the basis that not a single evidence was found. He went to the C.I.D. (Criminal Investigations Department), and managed to see the senior investigator, Abdul Razzaq. To my brother's surprise he was kind and even offered him tea. Without mentioning time, he emphasised that we would be free as soon as the investigations are over. My brother dared to ask him his address which he willingly gave it to him.

On the same day at night, my mother took 200 Dinars in her bag and went with her sister to the house of Abdul Razzaq who greeted them very gently. His wife served them tea with Arab traditional hospitality. When my mother gave him the money, he pretended to be very angry and swore not to take it. A few minutes later, he excused himself from the meeting saying he had to take a shower. He suggested that my mother and her sister could stay with his wife if they wished to do so.

When my mother gave the money to his wife in his absence, she smiled and said "why this trouble?"

Both my father and myself were free next day. Abdul Razzaq didn't take the money, but his wife did!

Recently I asked my mother, who is now 95 years old, if she still remembered the bribe she gave to the wife of Abdul Razzaq. She smiled and said: "It wasn't a bribe; it was a ransom! ●"
Great Neck Albert Khabbaza M.D.

Sirs,

I am looking for Menahem Omran or his brother Said Omran, or their descendants. They used to live in Al Rasheed Street in the 1940's.

Also Yusef Hai and Eshaq Shalom Obadia or their descendants. I will be grateful if you publish my request. ●

London

M. Naghar

BAGHDADI WWI OFFICERS IN THE OTTOMAN ARMY

by Edward Yamen, Milan

I take pleasure in sending a historical photograph of three officers of Baghdad origin in the service of the Ottoman Empire. It clearly chronicles other than the officers in person a portrayal of uniforms and impressively illustrates other accurate details which go back in time to WWI, coined as the 'Great War' and been referred to for a long time in Iraq by the name of 'SAFAR-BARR' - (land mobilisation).

These young officers were old friends and contemporaries since they were in Baghdad at the Military College (A 'dadi A'skari) and then as cadets and colleagues in the Imperial Military Academy in Constantinople the capital, at which they graduated exactly in 1914, an eventful year in world affairs, when largest army ever put into the field and in circumstances more difficult than those that have ever existed before.

The war came in an industrial age and men in the armed forces were to face each other in a continuous line of battle from which these three officers had fortunately walked out alive at the end.

The positive factor for the Ottomans was the quality of their fighting men. The Turkish soldiers were capable of enduring immense hardships and followed their commanders into seemingly impossible battles. Contemporary and modern analysts used words such as "magnificent bravery" to describe them, and it was to them that the survival of the Ottoman Empire for more than 400 years against much stronger enemies was primarily due.

The Turks were not able to stop the European conquerors aided by the Arab rebellion, but they were able to save their homeland, modern Turkey.



Hussain Fawzi; Noori Thabit; Yamen Youssuf. ●

The officer in the picture, holding a sword, was my late father Yamen Youssuf. That sword of honour was awarded to him in recognition of his courage, bravery and know-how. The Chinese wisdom says that a picture sometimes is worth one thousand words. In the centre of the picture, you can see sitting Lieutenant Noori Thabit. I notice that his name surfaced on page 37 of the last issue of the Scribe, as a composer of an old national anthem which used to be sung in Iraqi schools. After his return from the war to Baghdad, he became inspector in the ministry of education as he couldn't make the officer due to health reasons. He was also the editor of 'Habazbooze' a popular weekly newspaper, a sort of satirical like (Karandal) or if you like today's "Le Canard Enchaîné" in France. In this connection I like to mention that Thabit used to temper his editions every now and then with few proverbs, anecdotes etc., in the Arabic Baghdadi Judaic dialect. He had that easiness to speak like a Jew and as good as his rival, Mulla Abbood El-Karkhi, another first-rate satirist.

The third officer in the picture, standing on the left, was lieutenant Hussain Fawzi who became at last a General in the Iraqi Army. As regards my late father, I know that he was rushed in 1914 to the area of conflict on the Russian borders. He was honoured for his valour with respectable medals from the Ottoman Army and am in possession of two official certificates of praise and recognition in respect to his fight in the 'Kavkaz' (Caucasus) war as well as he was engaged in that fierce and terrible battle of 'Chanakal'a - (Galipoli).

After his return to Baghdad, he was enrolled in the Iraqi Army with the first group which constituted the nucleus of Armed Forces. A royal order was issued compelling his retirement after a little more than a decade in the service of Royal Iraqi Army, with only one promotion all over that period.

Hussain Fawzi who became a general with the passing of time didn't wait so much to get his promotions! Does he look smarter or sharper in the picture?

So, the raw material of the cause was 'discrimination.' And Hussain Fawzi surely was not 'Jewish.' - I understand that David Pryce-Jones has given some very interesting answers to questions like that in his book. 'The Closed Circle' - an interpretation of the Arabs - published by George Weidenfeld and Nicolson of London.

I should read it carefully as soon as I can.

Before concluding I want to subscribe strongly to the statement by Mr Naim Dangoor on page 11 of the Scribe No: 68 that the Allies of the Great War promised self-determination to the peoples of the region only to betray the minorities when they handed over the whole regions to the Arabs.

By doing that, I should say that the Allies, knowingly or unknowingly, brought misfortune to the Arabs as much as to the minorities. So, the wrong-doings of the Allies were detrimental and disastrous to both the Arabs and the minorities of the region and who will still suffer most probably for a long time. ●

TORY PARTY SHARES TRADITIONAL JEWISH ETHICS

In a speech at a recent lunch given by the Conservative Friends of Israel, William Hague, the Conservative leader, echoed the views of Lady Thatcher, who was known to admire many of the ethics of British Judaism.

He said that Conservatism is very much like Judaism because it shares its beliefs in freedom, hard work, family, charity and responsibility.

Mr Hague told his audience that the Jewish values of tradition, community and family were also central themes of his brand of Conservatism.

"There is no more fundamental duty than the duty of the child to honour their father and mother and the duty of the parent to raise their children properly, to educate them to take their place in the community as good citizens," he said.

He repeated his call for tolerance of alternative lifestyles but added: "Conservatives believe that the best place for children to be raised is with their mother and father in their own home, happily married to each other.

Mr Hague questioned whether Judaism could have survived thousands of years of exile and persecution "if it had carelessly abandoned its traditions."

Party sources said much of the speech was written by Daniel Finkelstein, head of the Tory research department and a prominent Jewish Conservative.

Mr Hague said that on community and charity, Tories and Jews took a similar view. "For Jews, justice and charity go hand in hand. So too for Conservatives.

"A vague feeling of benevolence is not enough. What matters is practical obligation.

"It is an obligation which begins with family, for charity begins at home.

"Then there are neighbours, friends. Then there is the community in which we live, an ever-widening series of circles of obligation."

He quoted one of the greatest Jewish teachers, Rabbi Hillel, who had said: "If I am not for myself who should be for me but if I am only for myself who am I?"

Perhaps most important however, was the shared importance attached to freedom. It is not about comfort or prosperity; it is about the ability to make moral choices."

Likewise, he said, the Tories would always stand up for freedom, "even when it was the freedom to do unpopular things." ●

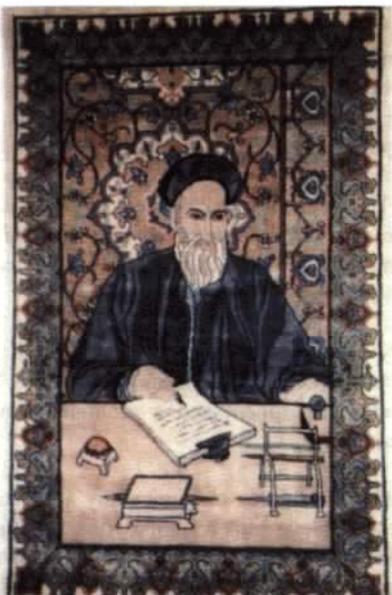
From The Daily Telegraph



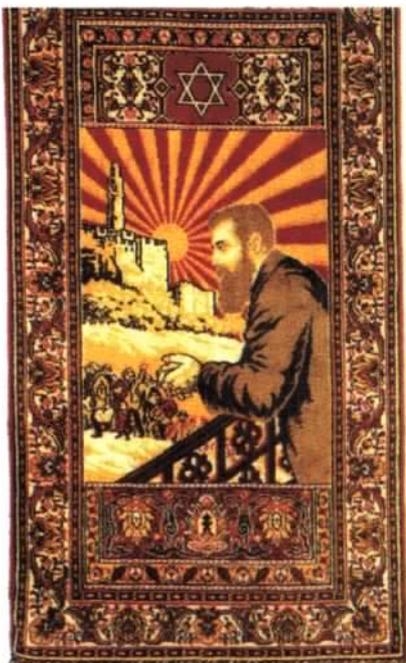
Moses in the Bulrushes. ●



Moses and Aaron and the Twelve Tribes. ●



Hakham Ezra Dangoor - 1848-1930. ●



Theodor Herzl - 1860-1904. ●



The Beth Tzedek Carpet - Made in Kashan. ●

JEWISH CARPETS

by Anton Felton

Published by Antiquo Collector's Club Ltd

Reviewed by Mr & Mrs Cary Zitcer

This 200 page hardback book, with over 100 colour photographs, is the first book ever written about Jewish rugs. It is an intriguing journey through Jewish history written with obvious love and devotion by the author to a subject that encapsulates the essence of cross-culture ebbs and flows to which the Jewish people have been exposed.

It is split into five clearly defined sections. The first deals with the author's reasons for wanting to write this book. The next three cover the essence, spirit and historical background and the fifth analyses in a well defined way and yet individually important rugs.

The book goes quite some way towards satiating an historic thirst for knowledge and yet the author manages to leave one with an unquenched desire to want to know more. This feeling of unsolved mystery one is left with, is illustrated beautifully on page 143 where the author has given us only a small part of the puzzle to look at. It is part thriller part taster. What is the meaning of the Hebrew letters and who was the mysterious weaver leaving a message for? The drawback of such a piece of almost devout research is that it can provide the background but cannot fully cover all the tributaries that run off from the core of the book. It certainly left me hoping that the author will still have enough energy left to write a second edition providing answers to so many unanswered questions.

This is a rich and varied work which will appeal to a broad range of reader. ●

Scribe: Jewish carpets are made in China, Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, Roumania and other countries.

The above book was kindly presented to us by the author on the recommendation of our mutual friend Freddie Knoller.

The author writes: Last year I gave a lecture on the history of Jewish Persian Carpets to the Centre for Iranian Jewish Oral History in Los Angeles and suspect that I learned more from the organisers and participants about Jewish Persian carpets than I was able to impart to them. ●

A JEW UNDER THE SHADOW OF ISLAM

(in Hebrew) by Yehuda Barshan

I am glad to send you my second book in Hebrew, which is a continuation of my first book "Dead End Lane," published two years ago and was reviewed by Professor Shimuel Moreh in the Scribe.

Ramat-Gan Yehuda (Gourji) Barshan

Scribe: the book preface reads:

From the very beginning of Iraq's

THE IRANIAN POLICE, THE KORAN AND IRAQI JEWS

By Elias Dabby

As an Iraqi Jew who lived in Teheran from the -1940's to 1965. I still feel a strong attachment to Iran, the land that gave us refuge when we escaped from Baghdad. One way I still keep in touch is listening to Kol Yisrael Radio's excellent service in Farsi.

I recall living in Iran in the mid-1950's, at the height of crisis over the nationalisation of the Iran's oil industry by Dr. Mossadeq.

The atmosphere in Iran was very tense at that time. The country stood alone on the world stage and was desperately in need of friends at the United Nations, especially the Arab countries. The Arabs, at the time, were still smarting from their defeat at the hands of the Jews who established the state of Israel.

Iran, unlike the Arabs, had a very pro-Israel policy. It was the only Mideast nation to sell oil to the Israelis. But the wave of nationalism and antagonism to the West, had created a lot of pressure to suppress foreign institutions in Iran.

One such institution was the American Community School of Teheran which was threatened with closure. We prepared to find an alternative place of learning for our children.

With several members of the Iraqi Jewish community got together and considered the solutions. We decided that if the Community School was closed we would shift our children over to the Iraqi Jewish school, near Teheran University. The school there was attached to the main Iraqi synagogue.

The school was established by the late Meyer Abdallah. Both School and Synagogue were run at the time by a gentleman called Saeed Khan. He had had this job as Honorary for many years and few in the community would ever dream of challenging his authority or right to do things his way. Saeed Khan was the self-appointed president of the Iraqi Jewish community in Teheran.

He reluctantly agreed to hand over the leadership to me.

One day soon after, Saeed Khan called on me, and said, "You're the head of the Iraqi school

Independence, the Jews proved their loyalty and service to their country. However, these were not reciprocated.

My book, unfolds the day to day existence of the Iraqi Jews who live together with the Muslims in the alleys of Baghdad. It also reveals tragic events throughout the years; how Jews who could not afford to pay *badal* (military tax) under Ottoman rule, were forced to fight for Turkey in the Kavkaz front against Russia under harsh conditions. ●

now and the secret police want to ask us some questions. You'll have to go and talk to them yourself."

I said we have nothing to hide from them since we don't engage in politics. So I went to the secret police headquarters in Teheran, and after waiting five hours, a senior officer came and took me to a room where there were other four gentlemen. Then, he started asking me questions about our community and its links to Israel. I told him that as Jews were scattered all over the world, Jerusalem was our focus in prayer and thought for more than two thousand years. He asked me if we were supplying aid to Israel to help them buy weapons. I said with only a few thousand families in Teheran, our community didn't have the means to do so, especially since we have lost much of our belongings when we left Baghdad.

He asked about our synagogue and school. I pointed out that the Iraqi Jewish school was also home to children from three Moslem families, two of whom could not afford the tuition and were being subsidised by the synagogue, for which he was very happy.

Then, I asked if I would be permitted a question. How is it that the people of Iran managed to survive thousands of years without losing their language or culture like the other great civilisations that came before them, or after them. They looked at each other, wondering what I was getting at.

I told them that as Jews, we were without a land and just like orphans. The Koran says that God will answer the prayers of all orphans. Some 2,500 years ago, the Persian Emperor Cyrus the Great, gave permission to the exiled Jews of Babylon to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple after the destruction of the first temple.

I told them that every year, as Jews, we remember that act and pray for the descendants of Cyrus. Now, history repeats itself and your king, the Shah (who had temporarily fled to Rome) is helping the modern Jewish exiles in Babylon. We came to you as refugees and are now preparing to go to Jerusalem. Like our ancestors we are grateful, and pray for you.

The secret police officer was so moved he shook my hand, assuring me that the Jews can still count on Iran to help them out. We said a warm good-bye and the meeting ended.

Soon after that, I was appointed president of the Iraqi Jewish school and synagogue in Teheran and our community prospered for many years. The American Community School survived and we didn't have to transfer our children out of there. But the Iraqi school was modernised with the help of British teachers and helped graduate some fine students who went on to excel in their chosen fields.

Elias Dabby is retired and living in Montreal, Canada. He was helped by his son Victor to prepare this article. ●

I enclose photographs, with supporting information on two synagogues built in memory of Sasson N. Cohen.

These were given to me by his son Edward, together with the text of the speech delivered by Sasson's grandson, Ben Cohen, at the official opening ceremony.

London Rabbi Israel Elia

Sasson N. Cohen 1904 - 1991

In 1990 the late Sasson Cohen (zl) asked his sons, Edmond and Edward, who both live in Jerusalem, to build a Sephardi synagogue in Jerusalem. In fact, two synagogues were built, one in Baka, Jerusalem and one in a boarding school in Bet Shemesh. The opening of the two synagogues took place on 17th and 18th September, attended by Sasson Cohen's widow, Marcelle, his children Edmond, Marjorie, and Edward and his grandchildren Opher, Emma, Benjamin, Odelliah and Noa.

The guests of honour at Baka were the former Sephardi Chief Rabbi, Mordechai Eliyahu and the Mayor of Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert. At Bet Shemesh they were the Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv, Yohnatan Metzger, Interior Minister Eli Ishai and the Mayor of Bet Shemesh.

SPEECH DELIVERED BY BEN COHEN IN BET SHEMESH, ISRAEL ON 18 SEPTEMBER 1997, AT THE DEDICATION OF THE KOL SASSON SYNAGOGUE

This is a proud and special moment for myself and for the rest of my family. To see so many people gathered here this evening is a mark of the esteem in which my grandfather Sasson, Zichrono Livracha, was held. To see one of his dearest wishes carried out through the construction of this synagogue is gratifying indeed.

My grandfather was a remarkable man who lived a remarkable life. He was a man who bravely and successfully fought the tides of history to build a secure and happy life for his family - his wife, my beloved grandmother Marcelle, his children and his grandchildren. His odyssey from Iraq to India to England and finally to Jerusalem brought him many trials, and he tackled each one with love and dedication. For what singled out my grandfather was the absence of any bitterness in his heart, despite everything he faced. That is something I will always remember.

I was lucky enough to have a grandfather to play with, to laugh with, to tease and, as I got older, to talk with. My brother Joshua and I would get excited at the thought of being with our grandparents in the way that other children get excited over a visit to the cinema or a new toy. For us as children, to be with our grandparents was a pleasure and a treat.

I am grateful to my grandfather for his influence on me. He always taught me -



The exterior of the Synagogue in memory of the late Sasson Cohen. ●



Widow and family of Sasson Cohen at the opening of the Synagogue. ●

directly and indirectly - to be proud of my heritage and to behave as a decent human being. In fact, whenever someone these days casually asks me what my origins are, they get a half-hour lecture on the history of the Jews of Iraq! That is a measure of the pride which my grandfather instilled in me.

I want to end by sharing one story with you. It took place towards the end of my grandfather's life. All of you will remember the night during the Gulf War when Iraq attacked Israel with scud missiles. I was at home in London, where I received a telephone call from a friend who said simply, "They're bombing Israel." I hung up on him and immediately called my grandparents at their flat on King George Street in Jerusalem. I talked to my grandfather

and I heard in his voice the tones of peace. And although, quite naturally, my worry remained, it was a relief to know that my grandfather's spirit had risen above the immediate danger, as it had so often before during his lifetime.

I know now that he is resting in peace, after a rich life in which he gave so much to others - and to me especially.

The other side of my family are Sephardim from Spain. We have a custom on happy occasions of wishing each other good fortune "for many years" - para muchos anos. I would like to wish you all a healthy, happy and successful future here for many years - para muchos anos. ●

ASSYRIA AND JAPAN

Dear Mrs Gayton,

I was pleased to meet you at the recent Gala Dinner in aid of the Kirov ballet and was interested to learn that you specialise in Assyrian history.

I enclose a copy of my journal *The Scribe* No: 62 which shows an Assyrian mural purchased by a Japanese for £7.7M.

In the past, imperial powers used to deport whole populations to ensure submission and protect outline borders. Thus, the Assyrians defrosted the ten tribes of Israel c. 750BCE, to central Asia and the Far East. It is said that the last King of Israel, Hosai, was the same Hose, the first Emperor of Japan. Do you subscribe to this view? Is it true that Japan was toying with the idea of converting to Judaism after the end of WWII? How do you explain current anti-Semitism in Japan with only a handful of Jews?

Dear Mr Dangoor,

I was delighted to have such a stimulating conversation with you and your wife at the recent Gala Dinner.

The orthodox Japanese history states that Junno Tenno was the first Emperor in 667BC. However, Japan's ancient origins are not well documented, evidence is fragmentary and events shrouded in mystery and legend. Anecdotally it may be possible to trace Japanese origins from the much earlier period you refer to. It is also possible that the two names only exhibit a phonetic similarity.

As regards the conversion of Japan to Judaism after 1945, I would say that this is purely conjecture. Japan has always been firmly shintoist with Buddhist overlay.

It has also been strongly nationalist and militaristic which has resulted in a bellicose chauvinism opposed to any 'foreign' cultural or religious imports. Although, Christianity gained a 'toe hold' after the Portuguese and Dutch settlements. The first Jews to arrive in Japan may have been Sephardic Jews after the expulsion of the Jews by Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492. They may also have been merchants who came with the Dutch in the 1600's. They may have converted a very small number of Japanese but they were restricted to the foreign settlements in Kobe and Nagasaki.

I would explain current anti-Semitism in Japan not as the result of the hatred of Jews per se, but as the traditional Japanese hostility to all things foreign. This does not stop the Japanese borrowing 'Western' ideas, but it assimilates these to make that 'Japanese'. It may also lie in current Israeli politics and policies which seem very Zionist.

I would be happy to be on your mailing list for copies of the *Scribe*. ●

London

Hiroko Gayton

***The Arab is our Brother
We have no other.***

HUNTING IN IRAQ

From The Spectator

Fox-hunting has gone on in Mesopotamia since time immemorial; and Englishmen would don their hunting pink and ride to hounds in the palm groves near the river Tigris. Their quarry also included wild boar.

Under the monarchy, hunting would take place March to April, for by May it was too hot to hunt.

Hunt members rode both Arab horses and English thoroughbreds. They did so with Gazelle hounds (saluki) and Afghan hounds.

All this changed after the monarchy was overthrown in 1958, and even more so when the Ba'ath party came to power ten years later. As expropriations began, even those landowners who held onto their property no longer had the money or the leisure to hunt. The old landed elite were denounced as "bloodsuckers" by the Ba'ath and English-style hunting was frowned upon as colonial nonsense. The Revolutionary Command Council officially banned all forms of hunting, not on ground of sentimentalism, but as a bogus environmental measure to halt the depletion of numbers.

The real reason was more straightforward: the Ba'athist numenkatura itself was keen to acquire a monopoly on hunting. After their take-over in 1968, they sought to mix with members of the Hunting Club, based in the prestigious Mansour area of Baghdad. Saddam's personal bodyguard, Sabah al-Mirza, took over and unco-operative members found their privileges suspended.

In the mid-1980's the Hunting Club was taken under the wing of the Hunting Society headed by Saddam's second son, Qusay. Its purpose was to regulate hunting, shooting and fishing. Only senior officials are granted licences; conversely, peasants who supplemented their diets by killing partridges and ducks were forbidden to do so (in the south the authorities have been especially vigilant about banning all ownership of private firearms following the Shi'ite revolt of 1991).

Not only has Saddam's policy of draining marshland devastated waterfowl and depleted the numbers of fish (including the once omnipresent shabut, or carp) but even anglers themselves have been targeted. When Saddam's half-brother, Watban Ibrahim al-Tikriti, found some men fishing without licences at Lank Tharthar north of Baghdad, his bodyguards shot them. Huge tracts of land are cordoned off and declared presidential areas; Saddam himself has even been shown in these hunting zones on Iraqi television, but not astride a stallion. Instead, he shot at deer with a Browning rifle from a Bell helicopter.

When Jordan's King Hussein met Saddam during the Iran-Iraq war, he took some of his children. Saddam's sons took the Hashemite

princes on a fishing expedition to Lake Habbaniya west of Baghdad. Whilst the royal children prepared their tackle, they were astonished to find Saddam's sons hurling grenades into the water. When the dead fish floated to the surface, the Iraqis rejoiced over a "good day's fishing". Later, the two groups took hunting rifles into the desert; Saddam's boys grabbed a machine-gun on the command car and mowed down a herb of gazelles.

Scribe: Hunting in Iraq some 5,000 years ago is mentioned in the Bible: And Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; wherefore it is said: "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord". ● Genesis 10: 8, 9

THE COMMONWEALTH JEWISH COUNCIL IN ACTION

by Jeff Durkin, Chairman

Greville (Lord Janner) and I recently attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Edinburgh. This was the first time that the Commonwealth Jewish Council was represented, as an NGO (non-Governmental Organisation). As you help us so much in our work, I thought you would want to know of the remarkable access that we achieved.

We both attended a private reception, given by the Commonwealth Secretary General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, for Heads of Government and their High Commissioners. We had happy talks with President Nelson Mandela, about our Conference in South Africa and his reception of our delegation at his home; with the Foreign Minister of Kenya, whose country has a warm relationship with Israel: with the Minister of Barbados, about our Conference on his island; and with the Prime Ministers of Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe, about our visits to their countries; and with many other Commonwealth leaders. We also met Prime Ministers of countries as diverse as Fiji, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Greville managed to speak privately to the Malaysian Prime Minister and was able to deal with the very unpleasant statements that he had made about Jews allegedly undermining his country's currency. He agreed to Greville putting out a statement that he regretted the offence he had caused, which he did not intend; that he would be much more careful in the future; and that he would seek an opportunity to put matters right publicly.

We also spoke to most of the delegates - including Prime Minister Tony Blair and Foreign Secretary Robin Cook. And on the second evening, we attended the reception given by the Queen in Holyrood House.

The presence of a Jewish organisation amongst the NGOs was also of considerable symbolic importance. Everyone knew of our presence - and to have a presence amongst leaders of nations which include more than one quarter of the population of the world, was an achievement of which I hope that you will be proud. ●

CAPTURING A LANGUAGE

by Dr. Ephraim Nissan

In a highly readable article in "Peamim" (no. 56, 1993), Professor Simon Hopkins provides a review of the Neo-Aramaic dialects of the Jews of Kurdistan. Some of these are still unresearched, and there is little hope that enough would eventually obtain for the perusal of scholarship. In recent years, Professor Yona Sabar of UCLA, Los Angeles, has been investigating some of the written texts of this linguistic tradition: Biblical translations and commentaries.

According to Hopkins (pp. 55-56), news about the existence of a spoken Jewish Aramaic vernacular only reached Europe as S.E. Blogg, in a book of 1826, related that on the previous year, he had met in Hanover two Jews "from Baghdad" who were speaking to each other in a strange vernacular he half-understood, so he inquired with them and found out the language was "Chaldaic" (Aramaic). Apart from the Jews of Kurdistan, Christians in the region have also been speaking Neo-Aramaic vernaculars (that Baghdadi Jews would routinely term "talkefi", in their own Judaeo-Arabic).

New-Aramaic is quite evolved, with respect to so-called Middle Aramaic, including any of the Jewish varieties of Aramaic as found in such texts (Targum Onqelos, the Gemara) that have long been available to Jewry world-wide. In Neo-Aramaic, the inflection of verbs is revolutionised. The vocabulary has been massively influenced by the Arabic, Kurdish, Persian, and Turkish.

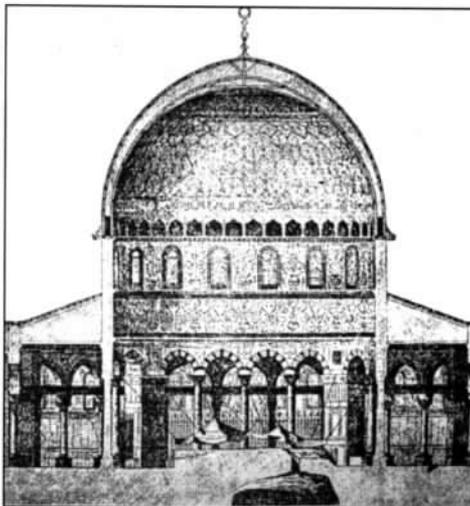
In this note, I wish to signal Mrs Varda Shilo's "New Neo-Aramaic Dictionary: Jewish Dialect of Zakho" (Jerusalem, 1995). In two volumes, it can be obtained directly from Mrs Shilo (16 Ben-Gamla Street, 93188 Jerusalem) for \$75 + mail (Make it \$100 from the UK). She previously published an acclaimed book on the ethnic cuisine. As to her single-handedly preparing the dictionary for 15 years, this endeavour by a private citizen is nothing less than heroic.

In the front material, along with some touching biographical details which prompt admiration, she points out that no public funding or support was available to her, for this project, even though two professors provided encouragement and some advice.

The end product is a delight, to both the scholar, and the lay reader with an interest in the community.

Also, such readers of "The Scribe", whose own background vernacular is the Judaeo-Arabic of Baghdad, may find it rewarding to browse the dictionary of the Zakho vernacular. Some of the vocabulary is shared by both dialects, though less so than could be expected. Sheer surprise, however, is the gist of adventure. ●

THE DOME OF THE ROCK



The Dome of the Rock or the Mosque of Omar was erected by the Omayyad Caliph Abdul Malik ibn Marwan, over the Foundation Stone of King Solomon's Temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. That beautiful structure, however, was built not by Moslem architects but by Greeks, Armenians and Jews.

The Mosque is an exact replica of a Christian Church in Basra, Iraq. Instead of crosses and holy pictures and other such tell-tale marks of the Christian place of worship, the building is covered, inside and out, with many coloured mosaics, a great variety of geometric designs, and other ornaments reminiscent of Persian architecture.

Verses from the Koran inscribed on the walls take the place of pictures, which are forbidden in Islam.

The Mosque is an eight-sided building, topped by a large dome. The most striking feature of the interior is the great rock standing in the centre, covered by a green silken cloth. This is the famed Foundation Stone, which at one time served as an altar in the Jewish Temple.

Everything but Arab:

It is difficult to discover in this piece of work much in the way of a distinctively Arab contribution. As far as the site is concerned, it is the very spot where once stood Solomon's Temple, nor do the Arabs try to gloss-over this fact, (as others have done); on the contrary, they have spared no effort to try to establish their own connection with the sacred place.

As for the style, it is Syriac-Byzantine.

Even the building materials were ready at hand. As in the case of mosques built in other parts of the Moslem realm, ample use was made of the ruins of Synagogues and Churches in the vicinity.

Cases are known where entire walls and columns were salvaged for this purpose. And plans are even now under way to transfer a complete dome from a Christian Church in Damascus to a Mosque now under construction.

In some places, the Moslems have made things still easier for themselves by simply converting an existing Church or Synagogue into a Mosque. All they have to do in these cases is to redecorate the walls.

This idea of "building the new on the ruins of the old" is being carried out - though in a more strictly literal sense - in the current construction of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in one corner of the courtyard of the Dome of the Rock. Underneath Al-Aqsa, are the remains of one of King Solomon's palaces.

From: *Chronicles of the Past* No. 18, 694CE

Scribe: The original scale model of the Dome of the Rock still stands alongside the main building which was constructed 1300 years ago. The 1/10 model was prepared for the Caliph's approval before starting the main building.

The Mosque mentioned in the Koran by which Mohammed passed on his way to Heaven is referred to as the Aqsa Mosque, which in fact stands 200 metres from the other building.

Cross-Section of the Dome of the Rock. ●

Percy Gourney writes:

Congratulations...

Our warmest congratulations to Rabbi and Mrs Abraham Gubbay on the marriage of their daughter, Selina (Sarah) to Michael Horowitz of Manchester. The wedding at a prestigious London West End Hotel was a magnificent occasion befitting a member of the Sassoon family, prominent among the several hundred guests was the former Israel Sephardi Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, and Lord Jacobovits, Emeritus Chief Rabbi of Britain, who officiated at the ceremony. ●

Words could never express my thanks to you for all the work you have done to build The Scribe into such a wonderful periodical. I have learned a great deal and will continue to learn through your knowledge and wonderful articles. ●

Toronto

Bernice Mukamal

The recent issue of The Scribe is to our thinking, one of the best we've seen. It is fascinating reading, opening up to us a Judaic world previously unknown to us. It seems far more comprehensive than other issues, and again, most of the writing was the work of Naim.

In a recent issue of the New York Times, we were delighted to find a photo and an article about David E. R. Dangoor "reared and educated in Sweden." He must be the son of your brother who lives in Stockholm. He certainly must be extremely capable and bright to have achieved such a prominent position. With best wishes. ●

U.S.A.

Annette and George Steiner

A SMALL PIECE OF INDIA'S HISTORY

by Commander Fred Sopher I.N. (ret'd)

I was pleasantly surprised to see the photo of Pakistan's surrender and to see the late Vice-Admiral N. Krishnan (dressed in white) who was there as the Naval representative and Flag Officer Commanding either the Western or Easter Fleet at that time.

As a Captain he was my Commanding Officer in I.N.S. Delhi (a Cruiser of some 7000 tons) when I was second-in-command in the rank of Commander during 1960/61. Krishnan was 5 feet tall, and about the same around his waist, but was a brilliant naval officer, and in my opinion, one of the best that one could wish to serve under.

During the action against Portugal in 1961 we were sent to the Portuguese outposts of Daman and Diu and pounded them with our main armament into surrender. We then sent in a landing party with one of our officers who hoisted the Indian Flag there. We were next dispatched to Goa where the Portuguese troops had already surrendered. Some cabinet and senior ministers of the Indian Government meanwhile were coming there to arrange India's take-over. After having established a Government at Goa they left for New Delhi.

Our next role was to transport 3,200 Portuguese prisoners-of-war from Goa to Bombay from whence they would be repatriated to Portugal. I had part of the ship sealed off under armed guard to accommodate 400 of them per trip. All the POW's were transported without a single incident and in fact was thanked by quite a few Portuguese officers for the hospitality on board.

After Captain Krishnan was transferred from the ship, I was given command. During this period whilst at Bombay, I was approached by my cousin the late Moses Hillel (father of Hakam Yakov Hillel of Jerusalem) that Yael Dayan daughter of Moshe Dayan, was touring India as a journalist and wanted to visit an Indian Navy ship as she was writing an article on India. I of course agreed and entertained her aboard.

It may be of interest to readers to know that before the Indian Government bought the Delhi she was known as the Achilles and was one of the ships that took part in the battle of the River Plate against the Graf Spee. The scars from this battle were still visible when the ship was with us and shown to Yael also.

The Delhi was scrapped some years later having out-lived her time and usefulness. It was for me the happiest of my sea-time during the 25 years. ●

THE JEWS OF IRAQ IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

1935 Jews removed from Government Service. Many Jews forbidden to travel to Palestine.
 1936 Ten Jews killed by Arab riots in Baghdad and Basra. Teaching of Hebrew prohibited.
 1942 No Jewish children accepted in Government schools.
 August 1948 Zionism declared a crime (with Nazism, Communism, Atheism and Anarchism). Many Jews imprisoned, some hanged.
 10 March 1950 Official decree confiscates all property of Jews leaving for Israel, and appoints a special custodian to sell it by public auction.
 All emigrants' bank accounts seized by the State.
 25 February 1958 Abolition of Jewish Community Status. All community property, including schools and hospitals, transferred to Government.
 Dec 1949 Anti-Jewish riots, many injured.

JEWISH POPULATION

1946	135,000
1971	2,500
1974	400

1933 20 Jews murdered
 Dec 1947 A Jew accused of trying to inject cholera germs in water drunk by Arab children

July 1937 Violent anti-Jewish demonstrations. Jewish property destroyed
 June 1941 During riots following collapse of pro-Nazi Government of Rashid Ali, 75 Jews killed and 1,000 injured. Much looting of Jewish property. 500 Jewish houses destroyed. Many Jews tortured
 July 1948 Anti-Jewish riots. Hundreds of Jews wounded and much property destroyed
 May 1947 A Jew murdered by a mob which accused him of giving poisoned sweets to an Arab child

نزهة المشتاق • A NOSTALGIC TRIP INTO THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF IRAQ

March 1948 Many wealthy Jews fled. One, a millionaire, hanged and his body no longer found. His cousin died after four days in prison. All were accused of secretly supplying arms to the "Zionists".

نزهة المشتاق

في تاريخ يهود العراق

تأليف: يوسف رزق الله غنيمه

the local Jew's Community assisted on charge of maintaining contact with

A NOSTALGIC TRIP INTO THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF IRAQ

Written by
Yusuf Risk-Allah Ghanimah

Free translation by
 Reading Dallal
 B.H.L., B.A., M.H.L., D.H.L.

With an introduction and update
 Edited by Sheila Dallal

I read in your last issue that the History of Iraqi Jews by Yousef Ghanimah has been reprinted in Arabic without an English translation.

I have been working on a free English translation of that book which is now nearly ready. It includes interviews with the latest visitors to the community and pictures of the people who remain there today.

I just retired from teaching Hebrew and Etymology in Evanston High School and am now dedicating my time to bring this work to light as soon as possible.

Publishers are reluctant to print a book on this

subject unless they know there is a demand for it. Can you help?

By the way, my daughter is married to Rabbi Hillel Simon of the British Orthodox Synagogue, Bristol. Rabbi Simon is also the Chaplain of 6 universities in the western region of England.

Evanston, Ill. Dr. Reading Dallal

Scribe: We have confirmed to the publishers that we are prepared to buy 100 copies of the finished work, and hope that this will help them to proceed. ●



The I.N.S. Delhi. ●

Dear Naim,

Thanks for sending me a photocopy of the article which appeared in the Jewish Chronicle, which I requested, concerning the purchase of Carmel College.

Your continued efforts on behalf of our community are most appreciated by all of us here in Israel. I am making some 50 copies of the said article to distribute to our well wishers.

Thanks again for everything you are doing. ●
Tel-Aviv Yeheskel Dangoor

Many thanks for the current issue of The Scribe. It is fascinating to read of the history of so many of my clients, and pleasing to see some of my photographs being used.

We do not frequently see in print, copies of the photographs we produced. If you require copies of photographs for future issues please do not hesitate to contact us. ●

Parliament Hill Studios **Oliver J. Murray**
 31 Grove Terrace
 Highgate Road
 London NW5 1PL

I would like to refer to the debate about the meaning of Elohim as Gods that took place in the Scribe No: 68 under the title 'Yes Only One God.' Such a debate took place 90 years ago in the Arabic newspaper Al-Mashraq - 15 December 1907 and came to the conclusion that Elohim used in the Bible in the sense of Honour and Glorification.

I enclose the copy of the article. ●

Tel-Aviv

Dr. Shaoul Sehayik

المشرق
مجله كاثوليكيه... تحتوى مباحث علميه
وأدبيه وفنيه... طبع في المطبعه الكاثوليكيه
للأباء اليسوعيين ببغداد.

السنة العاشرة العدد ٢٤ ١٥ كانون الاول سنة ١٩٠٧

١١٠٦ التوحيد في بني اسرائيل وجمع التفضيم في الكتابات السامية

المشرق

التوحيد في بني اسرائيل

وجمع التفضيم في الكتابات السامية

لاديب يوسف اوغرد احد اعضاء الجمعية الكتابية الأخرية

في المقالات التي نشرناها سابقاً في المشرق عن اسفار العهد القديم وما ورد في الاكتشافات المستحدثة من الآثار المثبتة لصحتها لم تعرض لغير الامور المقررة المبينة على حجج راهنة وبينات لامة فتعاشينا كل بحث استند الى الخدس والتخمين او كانت براهينه غير مقنعة

ومن جملة المطالب التي كان العلماء يتباحثون فيها الاسم الكريم الذي ورد في اول سفر التكوين ثم في فصوله التالية وفي آيات متعددة على صورة الجمع فيدعي الرب سبحانه وتعالى باسم «الوهم» والعبرانية «אֱלֹהִים» الذي تسميه الالهة . فذهب بعض العلماء لاسيا اللاتين ممن لا يعتقدون بالوحي الى ان استعمال هذه اللفظة في الاسفار المقدسة دليل واضح على توثن بني اسرائيل في اول عهدهم وانهم سجدوا للطواغيت كتيبة الامم المتسكعة في ظلمة الشرك . وزاد هولاء الكتبة على زعمهم هذا ان الوثنية بقيت مدة قرون متوالية شائعة في شعب اسرائيل بخلاف التوحيد الذي كان منحصراً في بعض الافراد منهم فقط

فهذا القول لو ثبت لنقض ما يدعيه المحافظون على كرامة الوحي والمدافون على صدق الاسفار الالهية وهي تثبت ان توحيد تعالى لم ينقطع في الجنس البشري وأنه عز وجل اختار له بين الآباء صفيًا وهو ابراهيم الخليل الذي جملة ابا لامة كريمة
المشرق السنة العاشرة العدد ٢٤

Books received:

THE HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE
ETHNIC CONFLICT FROM THE BALKANS TO ANATOLIA TO THE CAUCASUS
by Vahagn N. Dadrian
Berghahn Books, Oxford

The book based on the official Ottoman-Turkish documents, as well as those of Imperial Germany and Imperial Austria. The book concludes that the Armenian genocide was but an attempt by Ottoman-Turkish authorities to terminally resolve the corrosive and lingering Turko-Armenian conflict. ●

استودعها حقيقة التوحيد تصونها سالمة من كل شوائب الشرك بين ظلمات الوثنية على ان ذوي الرأي المستقيم لم يسكتوا عن هذه الدعاوي الباطلة فتقدروا بأدلة شتى لا تخلو من القوة . وهالك الاكتشافات الحديثة قد أتت اليوم لتفتي كل ريب عن هذه المسئلة الخيوية فأحببنا ان نجتمع هنا تلك البراهين ليتحقق القراء ضاية الله تبارك اسمه الذي يأتينا كل يوم بشواهد جديدة على صدق وحيه

ولسنا نزيد في ذكر هذه الحجج ان الوثنية لم تؤثر في العبرانيين تأثيراً سئياً فان شعب الله كان معرضاً لخطر دائم بين الشعوب الوثنية التي تحددت به فينجذب الى عبادتها الباطلة ونرى الانبياء يكتبون على قلة ثباته في خدمة ربه وعلى ميله الى الآلهة الغريبة بل ربما اصابته لذلك آفات عديدة ليعود الى الله وينبذ ارجاس الامم . ومع قرارنا بما تقدم لا نسلم بان الوثنية استمدت بني اسرائيل بحيث انتمت لهم او ان عبادة هذا الإله كانت شبيهة بعبادة الاصنام وان إلههم الحق كان كاحد الهة الامم او ان الذات الالهية كانت في اعينهم متعددة في جوهرها . فكل ذلك تأتي التسليم به لأنه يخالف الحق من كل وجه

واول برهان تقدمه رد على اوهام الملحدين تأخذه من نص الآيات التي ورد فيها اسم الجلالة مجموعاً . فان من يتبين التصوص للذكرة مجدها جامعة بين الاسم الجمع والفعل الفرد على خلاف قاعدة اللغة العبرانية التي يتبع فيها الفعل فاعله في الافراد والجمع سواء تقدم الفعل على فاعله او الفاعل على فعله فيقولون « الرجال دخلوا » كما يقولون « دخلوا الرجال » يجمع الفعل على اسالتين . اما اذا كان الفاعل اسم الجلالة فتدري الفعل على عكس الامر مفرداً فيقولون : خلق الالهيم (ברא אלוהים) وقال الالهيم (ברא אלוהים) ودعا الالهيم (קרא אלוהים) وقس على ذلك . فهذا ولا شك برهان قاطع على ان موسى النبي لم يقصد بجمع لفظة الوهم تعدد الهة وانما اراد بها مجرد التفضيم . وهذه حجة كافية لبيان التصرد واليهما التبعاً للفسرون لتزييف من قرع ديانة الاسرائيليين بالتوثن في اصلها ونسبها الى الشرك

فهذه اذن ان يستطيع الزادقة اثبات زعمهم بهذه التصوص . ولدينا براهين أخرى تؤيد قولنا وتبطل رأي اولئك الكتبة في صحة معنى هذه الجموع وذلك بان

Letter to the Editor of The Times

Sir,

"THE TRANSVESTITE LEADERS"

New Labour's landslide at the General Election was mainly due to Tony Blair putting on Tory clothing.

Now, William Hague, wants to follow suit by donning Leftist attire. The former Chief Rabbi, Lord Jacobovits, is right; the Conservative Party must not abandon traditional morality to please the voters. ●

Naim Dangoor

Congratulations on an outstanding issue of The Scribe and Mabrouk on the unique acquisition of Carmel College.

It recalls your inspired purchase, a generation ago, of the Russell Road Centre, where you revived a sense of community. By opening out the purchase to founder membership, you ensured a wide involvement and a commitment to its success from those who became its founder members such as my parents and myself.

Inshallah this venture too will thrive and prosper and offer similar opportunities for participation on a global scale. ●

London Lena Zebaida (nee Shamash)

MOISE ELGHANAYAN



Moise Elghanayan. ●

Moise Elghanayan died very suddenly and unexpectedly in his sleep of a massive heart attack on the morning of Wednesday March 11th, 1998, at the young age of 52. He is survived by his loyal and dedicated wife, Rhonda, and his young son, David.

The peaceful manner in which Moise passed away contrasted sharply with the shock waves which were felt only hours after his death in communities around the world. The unexpected news had family, friends, and acquaintances reeling from the impact and the total disbelief at the unfolding tragedy. For here was a young man loved by all, a dotting father, a devoted husband, a wonderful friend to many, and a large benefactor to numerous charities taken in such a tragic and untimely way.

The burial took place at Edgwarebury Cemetery in London on Friday and was attended by the largest turnout ever witnessed at the Cemetery. Family and friends flew from all corners of the globe to pay their last farewell to their dear friend. Rabbi Abraham Levy made the poignant address expressing everyone's feelings about what an impact Moise had on everyone who came in contact with him and how short his stay was on this earth. He further went on to praise Moise for being such a dedicated son to his parents while they were alive and how he touched each member of his family and friends individually and made each one feel special. Rabbi Levy suggested we all try to emulate Moise's qualities of sensitivity, kindness, and love of one's fellow human beings. The subsequent week saw hundreds of friends and family come each night for the Shiva with Rhonda, David and Moise's sisters Flora, Pary and Shirley.

Moise Elghanayan was an extremely popular and a much loved individual who had exceptional charm, presence and breeding that made him a true gentleman. He had great humility and his wide circle of friends, drawn from all walks of life, attested to the fact that he was able to get along with people of differing

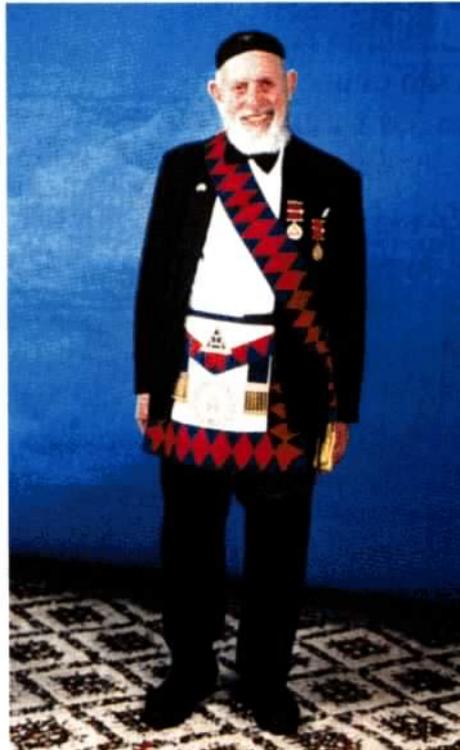
ages, religions and backgrounds. He was born in Iran, the only son of Davod and Aghdas Elghanayan.

Moise was a very successful businessman with interests in many areas. He was renowned for spotting opportunities and for being a visionary. His ideas and projects always seemed to be one or two steps ahead of others. Everyone who worked with him trusted him implicitly and his generosity and hospitality to friend and family were legendary. He had a phenomenal memory for numbers and was a world class backgammon player. It is prophetic that he died on Erev Purim.

Moise's life is a fascinating story, and as most stories we wish it would go on forever, but we understand that even the best of stories have to end. So instead of grieving that it had to end, we should feel blessed that we were lucky enough to have been a part of it.

So farewell dear friend... may you rest in peace and know that you will be in our hearts forever.

Victor Chitayat



Frederic Joseph Hemi
P. Asst. G. Dir. of C. (1972). ●
(see article on page 22)

Two new books by Meer Basri have now been published (in Arabic) in London and Beirut. "Thirsty Souls", short stories, followed by "Men and Gods", dramas, and "Baghdad Sketches".

These and other books by Mr Basri may be obtained from London Arabic Bookshops: Al-Warrak and Al-Rafid.

Al-Warrak Bookshop
132 Hammersmith Road
London W6 7JP

Al-Rafid Distributing and Publishing
348A Harrow Road
Paddington, London W9 2HR
Tel: 0171-266 4342

OH, GOD WHERE WERE YOU?

In his book, *The Trial of God*, Elie Wiesel, the Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1986, wrote harsh and burning words about God, accusing Him of enabling the Holocaust to occur. He brought God to "justice" in His absence. But in such a strange trial there were no defenders of God.

The victims of the Holocaust, however, except Elie Wiesel and others like him, had faith in God and prayed the Psalm:

Lord, hear my prayer
and let my cry for help reach thee.
Hide not thy face from me
when I am in distress.
Listen to my prayer
and, when I call, answer me soon;
for my days vanish like smoke,
my body is burnt up as in an oven.

Psalm 102-1-3

They did not feel like in an oven but they were actually burnt in an oven and their bodies vanished not like smoke but turned to actual smoke.

How cruel could God be? Did the suffering and pain of His Chosen People inflicted by his other people cause Him no pain? Where was God during the Holocaust and why He didn't interfere??

This question has been haunting me for years and I asked different groups of people for an answer. Their responses were:

First Rabbi: Hush! God is God. We cannot question His ways and logic for we cannot understand them.

Second Rabbi: The Holocaust is a punishment of the Jews who didn't follow the teaching of the Torah or turned to assimilation.

Politician: Israel was born out of the Holocaust. If there were no Holocaust, Israel would not have been existed today.

Psychiatrist: It is beyond my apprehension, beyond my imagination. The Holocaust must forever remain a question mark, a puzzle unconceived by man with or without God.

Lawyer: The Holocaust was not Heaven-made. Do you blame God for the action of man? Do you accuse God for the killing of an innocent child by a lunatic?

Philosopher: The Victims of the Holocaust must either had committed a more horrible crime before they were born or they are enjoying now an eternal happiness in Paradise!

All the above answers are either nonsense or not convincing. Does "the Scribe" have a better response??

Great-Neck Albert Khabbaza, MD

Scribe: *The creation of Israel does not justify the sacrifice of 6 million innocent Jews. The true explanation for the Holocaust is this: Having accepted the role of Chosen People, we Jews suffer not only for our own sins, but we also suffer for God the wickedness of mankind. ●*

In the Scribe No: 66 pages 22-23 under the title Baghdad reminiscences, three of my paintings were published. Since then I finished some more in the same theme. Enclosed please find three new water-colour paintings.

The first painting goes under the name "Purim" and depicts the courtyard of Eliahu Reuben's house. In the patio two ladies are sitting with typical Baghdadi hand fans, woven from palm tree leaves. Notice the small garden we used to call 'Baqchah' (the word comes from Persian where Baqchah means garden).

Purim was a very important feast for the Jews of Baghdad especially for the children. We used to get money from our father and from our uncles. My cousins, the children of Hayawee Sawdayee would also get gold coins (King George pounds) from their grandma Loulou Hananya. The coins would come in a big tray, covered with a white embroidered sheet and carried by a maid.

The tray was full with 'Massafan' (Almond macaroons); 'Malfouf' (sheets of pastry filled with almonds and sugar then rolled with cylindrical stick just like a cigar); 'Halqoon' (Turkish delight); 'Melabass' (almonds covered with sugar); 'Hadji Bada' (almond macaroons); 'Pasteryak' (shaped as little white birds, firs, stars and many other shapes); 'Louzina mal Purtqal' and 'louzina b'shakar.' All this mound was decorated by two branches of Myrtel covered with gold leaves and on the sides lay the golden coins one for each child.

We used to play games of chance. We would either play 'Naqsh Yehud' (similar to black jack but the winning number is fifteen) or 'Dossa' (the banker breaks a pack of cards, face down, into parts in accordance with the number of players, then each player places some coins over the card of his choice. The one left is the Banker's. The Banker then uncovers his card, and the player who has a higher card than the Banker's wins while the rest lose to the Banker).

The second painting's name is 'Sylan' (date syrup): In the month of Elul two or three big baskets full of dates would be brought to the kitchen-house and then soon after, two men with a big wooden press and a lot of 'Hellanat' (big pouches woven from palm tree leaves) arrive to our house. They would unload their equipment and then assemble the press in the kitchen-house. In a big pot, over a wooden fire, they would put dates and some water and then cook the dates until they are soft and mushy.

They would then fill the 'Hellanat' with the softened dates and stack them one over the other in the press. Then they start turning the wooden screw of the press and a honey-like juice starts to pour in special containers 'Tasht.' When each container was partially filled it was carried to the roof then covered by a light sheet and left for a few days for the syrup to thicken. The syllan is then poured in big glazed jars 'b'ghani' and stored for Passover. It was also used to sweeten sweet and sour foods.

The leftover seeds and residue were then shaped into loaves and baked in the sun to be used a fuel for cooking or baking in the 'Tanour' (clay oven).

The third painting's name is 'Kursi Jafuf': My great grandmother Yumma Amam who was the sister of Rabbi Eliahu Mani, Chief Rabbi of Hebron, was an old woman in my childhood. In winter during the cold evenings they used to make especially for her a 'Kursi Jafuf' (Charcoal stove placed over the bed and over the stove a stool is placed covered by a blanket. We children used to slide sit under the blanket to hear our great grandma tell us stories of Abu Zaid el Helali, Anka Anka Bent el Rih and many more until they carried us to bed to sleep.

I hope you'll be interested in publishing these paintings which I am sure will bring good old memories to many of your readers.

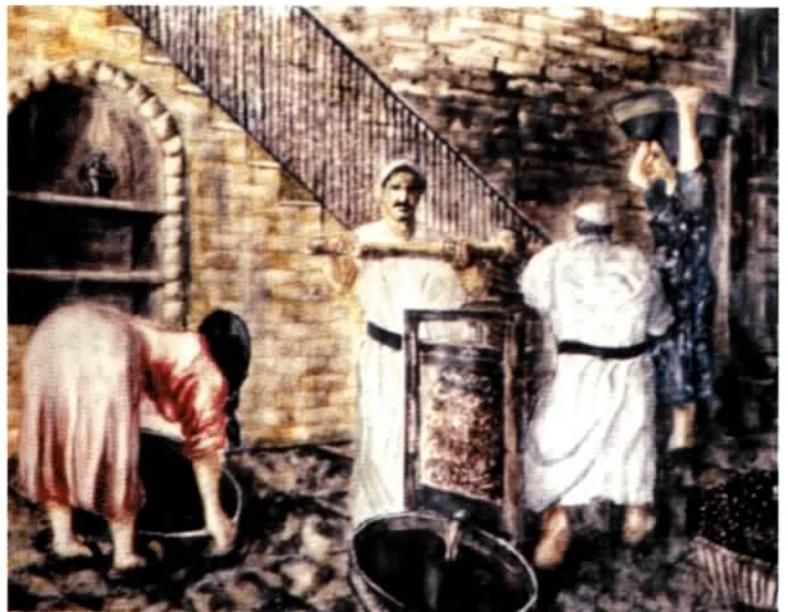
To paint Purim first, I built a maquette of the house in which I was born then I sculptured figures with plasticene. I then moved the figures to different places in the maquette until I got the combination that best conveyed the scene I remembered from childhood. Then came the experimentation with lighting. With my video camera, I photographed the scene from various angles and elevations and then with the aid of my VCR, and TV, I froze the most flattering set-up. ●

Israel

Eli Sawdayee



Celebrating Purim. ●



Making date Syrup (Sylan). ●

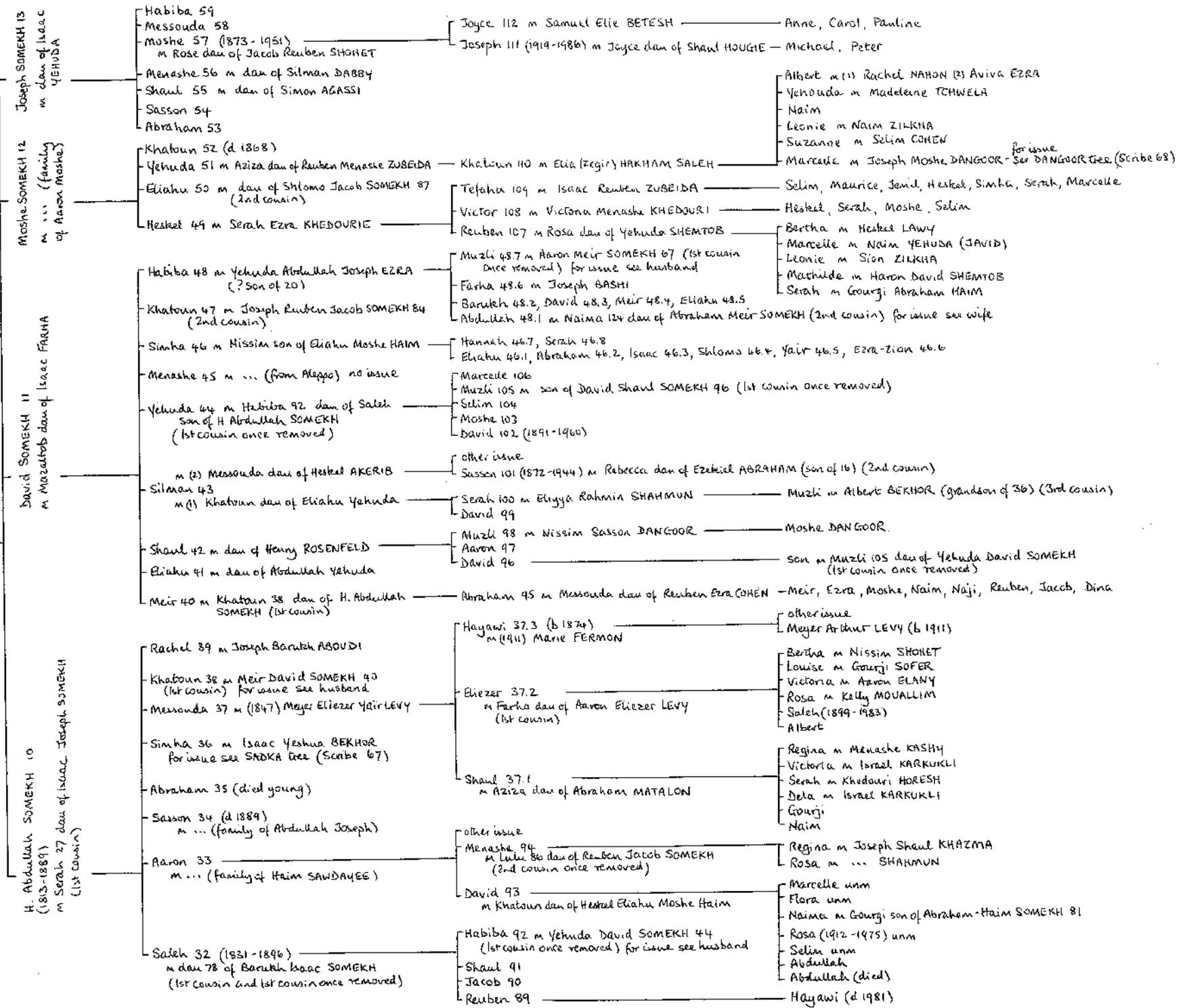


Kursi Jafuf - warming the bed. ●

- Nissim 1
- Abraham 2
- Eliahu 3
- Heskel ha'SOMEKH 4
- Joseph 5

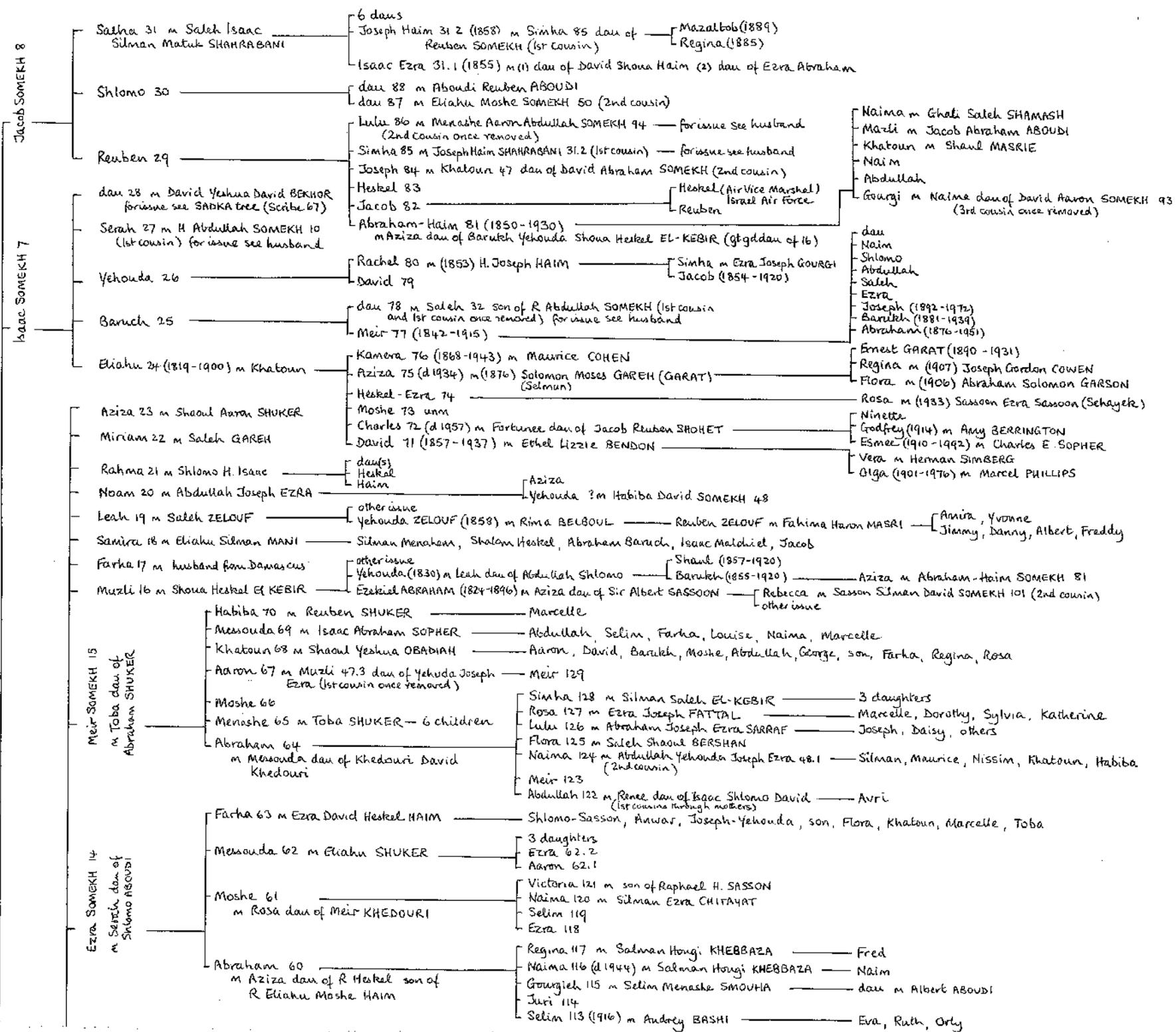
daughter 9
m Ezra Sasson Ezra Sasson SERAYEK

Abraham SOMEKH 6 (d 1855)
m Khatoun dau of Abdulkah Joseph Faraj



Somekh Family Tree

chart prepared by Lydia Collins

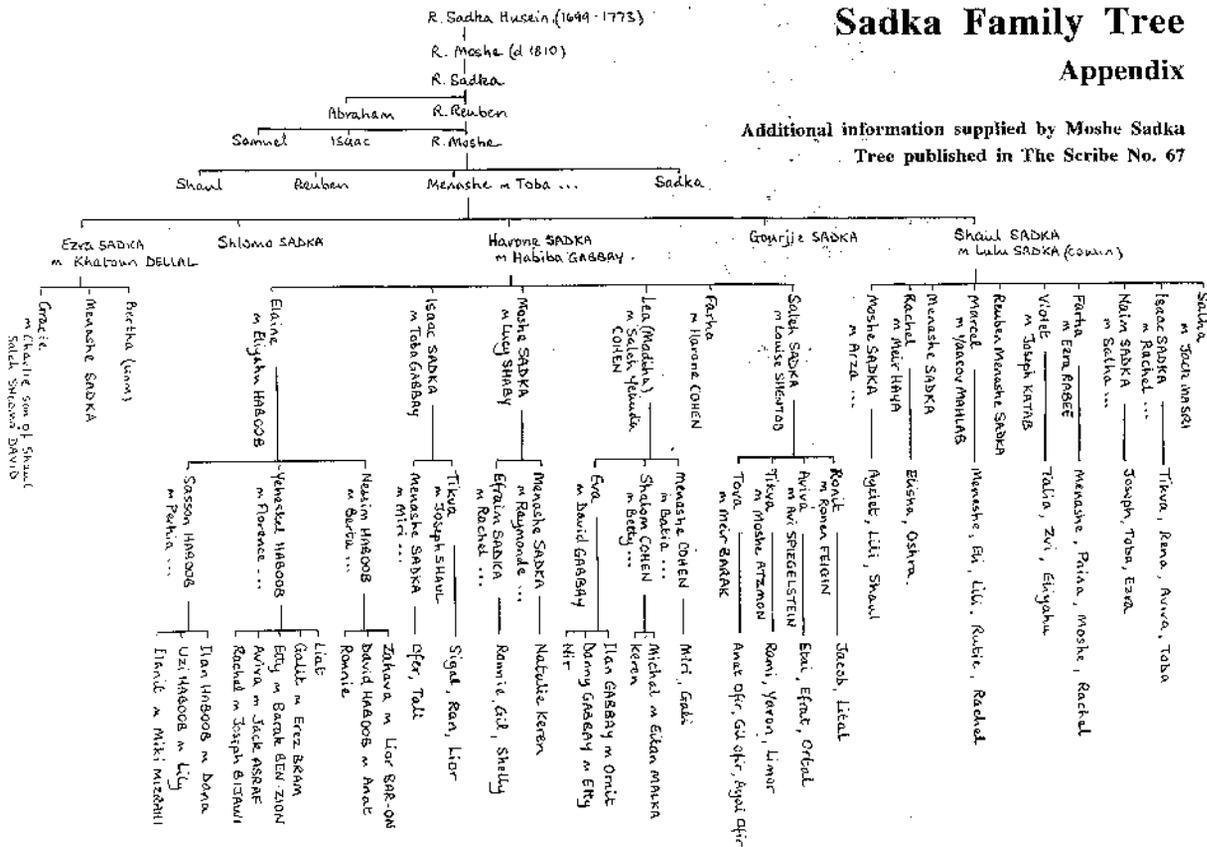


Based on Toledot Ha R. Abdullah Somekh by Abraham Ben-Yacob with additions

Sadka Family Tree

Appendix

Additional information supplied by Moshe Sadka
Tree published in The Scribe No. 67



ANCES-TREE

Michael Dangoor (The Scribe 68, p.15) asks if I have tried to construct ancestry charts working backwards tracing all the ancestors of a particular person. This method has been used particularly for royalty where there is interest in tracing the 16 great-great-grandparents (known as the size quarters) and more remote ancestry. An example from this country is the work by the late Gerald Paget to document all the known ancestors of the present Prince of Wales. A similar study, as yet unpublished, of the ancestry of Diana, Princess of Wales has produced the surprising information that her earliest-known matrilineal ancestor was an Armenian lady living in Surat in the eighteenth century. I think this method may be more difficult and of less general interest in the case of the ordinary person.

Family trees tracing forwards usually begin with a prominent personality. The descendants like to relate to this ancestor and these families are usually better documented. This may also explain changes in the use of a family surname where the name of a well-known ancestor is sometimes adopted in preference to an existing family surname.

The family trees published in The Scribe which begin at the top and work forwards try to show all the blood relatives, including female lines, who share a descent from a common ancestor and also cousin marriages. I hope that they will go some way to helping readers to construct their own ancestry charts. Incidentally a person will in theory have 8 great grandparents, 16 great great-

grandparents, and so on, doubling with each generation, but those who descend from cousin marriages will find the number reduced. ●

London Lydia Collins

I have been trying for a very long time to get information about the family of Joseph Zilkha, my maternal grandfather. My grandmother was Simcha (Sadka) Zilkha. Her parents were Rabbi Moshe Sadka, descendant of Rabbi Sadka Hussein, and Sulha (Sassoon) Sadka, descendant of Sheik Sassoon ben Saleh. My mother was Gourjee (Zilkha) Dayan and my father was Haron Dayan, son of Rabbi Dayan Nissim HaCohen, also a descendant of Rabbi Sadka Hussein and member of the Beth Din.

I give you this family information so that you will know to which family I refer in the following story as told to my sister Nancy by my grandmother.

Apparently, a lady by the name of Zilkha arrived in Baghdad from Spain with her daughters and a retinue of servants. She had no sons and when her daughters married, their husbands took her name, ie., Zilkha. She was very wealthy and she built a synagogue, calling it Beit Zilkha.

I wonder if there is any way you could check the veracity of this story and I would be very grateful for your assistance.

My personal thanks to Naim Dangoor for helping me find my roots. I think he is just great. ●

Sydney, Australia Dolly (Dayan) Shadler

The following entries should be added to the Dangoor Family Tree.

Elias Dangoor No. 129, add Ruth to his children.

Abraham Dangoor No 32, add Jonathan to his children. ●

Your publication, The Scribe, brings me much pleasure. I have received it for many years, first in St Thomas, in the U.S. Virgin Islands and then in Greenville, Mississippi, USA, where I served the Hebrew Union Congregation. I retired last June, was elected Rabbi Emeritus, and have moved to New York City.

I so much enjoy reading The Scribe, as does my wife. The articles you print about Babylonian Jewry are a source of history and pride for the world Jewish community. Please continue to send me The Scribe at my new address. ●

Brooklyn, NY Rabbi Stanley T. Relkin, D.D.

Someone lost his hat. What is his telephone number?

Answer: Avenue 1 (Have a new one!).

Another man lost his hat. What is his telephone number?

Answer: Avenue 1 2 (Have a new one too!).

★ ★ ★

If a friend in London rings you, what is his telephone number?

Answer: 14713 (No matter who he is, if you dial that number you can speak to him).

THE NETANEL HAGGADAH

I am sending the two opening pages, from the Haggadah written by my great grandfather in 1881.

I would like to publish the Haggadah in a deluxe edition, but this task is financially beyond my means. However, maybe some of your readers would like to sponsor the publication.

This illuminated manuscript was hand-written in 1881 by my great grandfather, and was smuggled out of Baghdad by my father when he immigrated to Israel. The name of the scribe (Solomon Joshua Haim Netanel) and the date (1881) are inscribed on the last page of the manuscript.

The Haggadah is written partly in modern Hebrew letters and partly with Rashi letters, as was the custom of writing Hebrew at that time by the Jews of Baghdad.

The size of the manuscript, which is leather-bound, is 4 by 7 inches. The Haggadah includes several wholly illuminated pages, and each page is decorated with an illuminated framework depicting small colourful flower drawings. Also, each chapter is headed by bright and colourful illuminations, and each paragraph begins with a decorated word each in a different lively colour.

This Haggadah, conforming to the customs of the Babylonian Jewish community, whose history goes back more than 2600 years, is probably the only one of its kind, and unique in its illuminations and illustrations of religious texts, reflecting the artistic traditions of that ancient community.

The text of the Haggadah includes a translation - chapter by chapter - into Jewish-Iraqi-Arabic dialect, and could be of unique interest not only to collectors,

researchers, libraries, universities and museums, but also to the many Jews of Iraqi origin scattered around the world and in Israel, who undoubtedly will be interested in reminiscing on the rites of their Babylonian forefathers and on their habits in performing the ritual of the Passover Seder.

This Haggadah is a unique piece of art - and it is part of a set of four books (all leather-bound and the same size), including the one described above, another similar one, a prayer book and the Song of Songs.

The whole set was appraised by Sotheby's Judaica specialists, and found to be "Extremely interesting." ●

Jerusalem Moshe Netanel
Former Economic Counsellor
at the Israeli Embassy London 1968-1973

Scribe: It is a pity that the Haggadah is written in Rashi Script and not in the more traditional and correct Shuri Script.



SPICES FOR LIFE

Human beings have inherited a taste for spicy food because it played a key part in prehistoric survival, say biologists. Spices kept food safe by killing bacteria. Tribes who liked their food bland were more likely to drop dead from poisoning. The result was that early spice-eaters had a survival advantage and passed on genes that made spices taste good to more offspring. American researchers concluded after a study of 4,500 recipes from 36 countries.

"Why do spices taste good?" asked Paul Sharman of Cornell University. "Traits that are beneficial are transmitted culturally and genetically, and that includes taste receptors in our mouths. People who enjoyed food with antibacterial spices probably were healthier, especially in hot climates.

"They lived longer and left more offspring. They taught their offspring: this is how to cook a mastodon. The ultimate reason for using spices is to kill food-borne bacteria and fungi. "The study of traditional meat-based cuisines compared the climates of each country, and the horticultural range of 43 spice plants. Even today, hotter countries use spices the most.

The best bacteria-killers are garlic, onion, allspice and oregano: they are said to kill everything.

Thyme, cinnamon, tarragon and cumin can kill 80 per cent of bacteria, with capsicums, chillies and other peppers not far behind. Peppers of the white or black variety are less powerful, killing 25 per cent of bacteria, the same as ginger, aniseed, celery seed and lemon and lime juice.

Professor Sharman said: "In hot countries, nearly every meat-based recipe calls for at least one spice, and most include many spices, especially the potent spices. "Thailand, the Philippines, India and Malaysia are top of the list, with Sweden, Finland and Norway at the bottom. America and China are in the middle, but America showed regional variations, with spicier food in the hotter south.

Writing in the Quarterly Review of Biology, Professor Sharman and his co-researcher Jennifer Billing say that alternative explanations are less plausible. Some thought that spices helped people to cool down by making them sweat, but not all spices cause sweating and there are better ways of cooling "like moving into the shade." The idea that spices disguise the taste of rotten food "ignores the health dangers". Spices have the same nutritive value as vegetables, and warmer countries do not grow a wider range of spices. Even onion and garlic, which grow almost everywhere, are more widely used in hotter countries.

Professor Sharman say: "Everything we do with food - drying, cooking, smoking, salting or adding spices - is an attempt to keep from being poisoned by our microscopic competitors. They're constantly mutating and evolving to stay ahead of us. One way we reduce food-borne illnesses is to add another spice to the recipe."

From the London Times

Scribe: In hot countries, people also eat spices to make them thirsty and drink more water, thus preventing them from getting dehydrated. ●

DHUL' MAHSHI (Stuffed Breast of Lamb)

- 3 breasts of lamb, about 12 inches long
- 1 small onion, chopped fine
- 1/4 cup uncooked long-grain rice, washed and soaked 2 hours
- 3/4 pound lean lamb, chopped
- dash of ground cinnamon
- dash of ground cloves
- dash of ground cardamom

- 1 tablespoon slivered almonds
- 1 tablespoon dried currants
- 1 medium-size onion
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon dried rose petal, or 1 teaspoon rosewater
- 1 medium-size tomato, chopped

Ask the butcher to make a pocket on each breast of lamb between the fibrous side and the bones in order to make room for stuffing. Wash the meat thoroughly in cold water. Mix together all stuffing ingredients except the whole onion, reserving some of the turmeric and pepper and divide the mixture into 3 parts. Stuff the pockets loosely with the mixture and sew up the openings. Place the breasts in a pot, add the whole onion, pepper and a dash of turmeric. Cover with cold water and boil uncovered, for about 5 minutes, then drain and rinse thoroughly.

Put the breasts in a roasting pan and prick with a fork. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and a dash of turmeric. Roast in a preheated 400° oven for 2 to 3 hours, adding a little water to prevent drying and turning occasionally to ensure even roasting. Serve with a salad and Turshi.

Makes 4 servings.

NOTE: You may wish to add some vegetables to the pan to cook along with the roast. Potatoes, carrots and whole little onions are suggested.

Breast of veal can be prepared in this same way. ●

KUBBAT HALEB (Meat Stuffed Rice Patties)

- 1 small onion, chopped fine
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 2 tablespoons plus 3/4 cup oil
- 1/2 pound lean lamb or beef, ground

- 1/2 cup blanched, slivered almonds
- 1/2 cup finely chopped parsley
- salt
- 1 cup uncooked rice
- 1 egg

Cook the onion and a dash each of pepper and turmeric, in two tablespoons oil. When the onion is golden, add the meat and cook until all liquid evaporates. Add the almonds and mix for a few seconds. Add 1/8 teaspoon salt and mix well. Remove the pan from the heat. Add the parsley. Mix and set aside.

Rinse the rice, and cook in boiling water over medium heat for about 20 minutes or until well cooked. Drain and let it cool. Mix the rice with pepper and turmeric to taste, and knead to make a doughlike mixture. Wet your hands with cold water. Take a lump of rice dough the size of an egg, hold it in your left hand, and flatten it with your right hand. Put 1 teaspoon of the meat filling in the center and gather the sides to close evenly. Wet hands, and roll the *kubba* between your hands to make an oblong flat patty. Place the patties on a plate until all are done. Beat an egg in a saucer, adding a pinch of pepper. Dip the *kubba* into the egg and fry in 3/4 cup oil until golden on both sides. Serve with Turshi or salad and herbs. *Kubbat haleb* is good for picnics. *Makes 10 patties. ●*

صدر مؤخرًا في لندن كتاباً جديداً من ألف
 مير بصري، وهما: «نفوس ظالمة» (قصص)
 و«صوت قلب» ملحم به «بشر وألحد» مسرحيات
 و«شخص بغدادية»، يكتم الحصول على هذين
 الكتابين وسائر مؤلفات مير بصري؛
 اعلدم اليهود في العارم الحديث (جزآن)
 اعلدم الكلدان
 اعلدم العرب (جزآن)
 اعلدم التركمان والادب التركي في العارم الحديث
 رحلة العمر (مذكرات)
 أنا في الحب والخلود (شعر) من الكتب العربية
 في لندن ●