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*Wishing all our readers all the best for a*

*Happy Easter and Chag Pesach Kasher v'Sameach*



### Report from our Honorary Secretary & Treasurer, Dr Sister Marianne Dacy:

#### *Israel in Winter and Early Spring*

Winter in Israel can be quite cold, especially in Jerusalem and mountainous regions in the north. I arrived here on 23 January, a grey, bleak day. It can be chilly at the end of January and this year was no exception. Spring is late this year, and for the first time in seven years it has rained heavily and now the Kinneret is beginning to get to the required level.

I was fortunate that my week in the Galilee began in Tiberias, where the cold was much less, and a walk to Capharnaum was without rain. Again, I was at Zippori, where the excavations have made enormous progress since I was last there. As I began the ten-kilometre trek back to the bus stop the first drops of rain began.

On arriving at Kfar V'radim, which is inland and east of Akko,

the rain came down in torrents and the hail, and some snow that melted immediately. The news on the television was the weather and speculation as to whether there would be snow. None fell in Jerusalem, but last weekend there was a small amount of snow. The last time there was thick snow was in 2000 and earlier in 1973. It is quite a rare event.

Rain is a blessing, and indeed it is, but it is hard to think so when soaked to the skin, having had one's new umbrella blown inside out in the strong wind and broken. Jerusalem transport has changed in the last six months. Yes, the long awaited light rail or tram is now running through the heart of Jerusalem. It begins at Mount Hertzl and runs past Mahane Yehuda to





Yaffa Street and then down the hill to outside the Damascus Gate and onwards to French Hill. Buses no longer run along this route and tickets must be bought in advance, and last for ninety minutes.

Spring is late and there have been few sunny days, but the almond trees were out in all their glory at the beginning of February and some red anemones have begun to appear.

We celebrated the New Year of the Trees, Tu B'Shvat, in early February with the fruits of the land – almonds, dates, pistachios and other fruits – which are for sale in great quantities in Mahane Yehuda. Large, juicy strawberries are still selling at a very cheap rate at

ten shekels a kilo and in our garden in Ein Karem are lemons, oranges and mandarins, but the grapefruit are rather tart, not like the sweet fruit from Jericho.

Purim is this week, and this is a great time for dressing up. The stalls and small shops selling plastic swords, axes and fancy hats are full of young patrons trying them on, and mothers with young children have bags full of the costumes that will soon be worn. A large tiger was walking around Mahane Yehuda, yesterday. The reading of the scroll of Esther is about to begin.

*Marianne*

REPORT OF  
THE 24TH  
CONFERENCE  
OF THE  
AUSTRALIAN  
ASSOCIATION  
OF JEWISH  
STUDIES  
✧  
MELBOURNE,  
MONASH  
UNIVERSITY,  
FEBRUARY  
2012

## OLD NEW JEWS: JEWISH IDENTITY IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

On 12-13 February, the Dina and Ron Goldschlager Family Conference on Contemporary Jewish Life, and the 24th Annual Conference of the AAJS, was held at the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation, Monash University, Melbourne.

On the Sunday, the opening day of the conference, four international speakers presented papers on the different aspects of Jewish identity, including American and Soviet Jewry, religious identification and the impact of Israel and Zionism. The Monday was dedicated to various panels relating to a wide range of topics, from Holocaust, to Israel to Jewish education in the Diaspora.

*Myer Bloom from Melbourne reflected on the Sunday keynote speakers:*

It is fair to say that this year's conference produced a thorough analysis of the Jewish presence not only in the world of today but also through its connection to the past, the development of new movements and the revival of the old. Speaker after speaker related to this subject in a most professional way. Moreover, and this is impor-

tant, no area of Jewish presence and identity had been overlooked.

The conference began with a discussion of the spectacular rise of Jews in the United States, who arrived in America as a poverty stricken mass of oppressed and downtrodden human beings at the beginning of the twentieth century,

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to their integration into American society and the success of their descendants who made a significant contributions.

This was the theme of the presentation of Professor Bethamie Horowitz, who also stressed, that in spite of being “Americanized” they did not lose their Jewish identity. Amongst the contemporary Jewish society in America, there exists a broad spectrum of emotional and cultural expressions to which controversial issues, such as conversion, intermarriage, gay relationships, ultra-orthodoxy and the question of obtaining a university degrees must be added and submitted to examination.

The American Jewish identity, presence and its position in American society was contrasted with issues concerning Jews from the former Soviet Union. While the tribulations of Jews of the diaspora throughout the ages has been recognized, the new Russian Jewish diaspora presents new aspects of Jewish diversity and divisiveness. This discussion was presented by Professor David Schneer who focused on the unprecedented advancement of Jews from an oppressive, antisemitic, regime to free and mostly very wealthy groups of predominantly secular and urbanized Jews who before and after the disintegration of the Soviet Union settled in Western Europe, especially in Germany, in the US, Canada and Israel and not unlike their American coreligionists exerted economic and cultural influence in their new homes.

In particular, Professor Schneer, devoted his attention to Alexander Sharansky, the well known Jewish

dissident in the late 1960s and 1970s in the Soviet Union who was released from prison by the Soviet authorities and permitted to emigrate to Israel, later becoming a cabinet minister. He also discussed the career of Avigdor Liberman who at present is Israel's Foreign Minister. To demonstrate the financial power of Russian Jews in Israel, Professor Schneer mentioned Leonid Nevzlin who is a millionaire philanthropist intent of creating a museum of the Jewish people with emphasis on Jewish life, expressions of Jewish identity and the connection between Jews.

The particular traits of Jewish identity and its response to religion and the secular world were the focus of Professor Samuel Heilman's two presentations: “Lubavitch, messianism and the denial of death: What Menachem Mendel Schneerson wrought”. It was this transformation from a secular human being into a giant of orthodoxy with presumably mystical powers, reaching out from the realm of the cosmos that was a ground breaking feature in the annals of Jewish orthodoxy. The significance of Rabbi Shneerson rests in the reality that he was able to overpower the rational thinking of other Jews and even non-Jews who submitted to the tenets of his teachings and began creating Chabad houses worldwide, including countries that are not sympathetic to Jews and those that never had any connections to Jews.

In contrast to his presentation on Lubavitch mesianism, Professor Heilman also addressed the growing influence of the *Charedim*, a



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movement that takes the practice of ultra-orthodoxy to further heights, in particular in America and in Israel. Contrary to all expectations, the *Charedi* movement was able to survive its losses during the Shoah, and given its high birth rate and its political and religious influence in Israel, it has a potential to divide the Jewish community even more.

In contrast to these two movements, Heilman argued that the modern orthodox community is a more tolerant and pluralist one, valuing university education, professional work and equality of women, something that is anathema to the ultra-orthodox *Charedi* movement. Importantly, the *Charedis* now have the potential to influence political directions in Israel and suppressing the modern trends that shaped the development of Israeli society.



Daniel Gordis addressed the topic of “New Zionism for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”. This theme is has always been regarded as crucial not only in Jewish his-

tory but also to Israel's standing in the world at present. Referring to Zionism as the stronghold of Jewish beliefs for the existence of a Jewish state, it set out to create its own distinct culture, history and language, which should counter the effects of globalization, which are causing the world to lose the sanctity of original sources of language, culture and distinct lifestyle. On the negative side, Dr. Gordis identified the reality that Zionism polarized and divided Jewish positions, in particular in the context of contemporary leftist identification of Zionism with the core problem of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In conclusion, it is also necessary to mention Professor Andrew Markus, Professor Lea Garrett and Professor Fania Oz-Salzberger who responded with valuable contributions to the discussion.



SYDNEY  
PRESENTATIONS  
OF ACJC  
SCHOLARS,  
MONASH  
UNIVERSITY

Some of the keynote speakers from the Dina and Ron Goldschlag and AAJS conference also addressed audiences in Sydney.

These included Samuel Heilman, Distinguished Professor of Sociology, City University of New York, who spoke at Mandelbaum House on “Lubavitchers, their Rebbe, and Jewish Messianism: How Did These All Come Together?” and Professor David

Shneer, University of Colorado at Boulder, who spoke at the Sydney Jewish Museum on “Through Soviet Jewish Eyes: Photography, War, and the Holocaust”.

This was the third talk in the Jewish and Yiddish culture lecture series organized by two departmental students, Clare Fester and Sean Sidky, who attended a summer course at and the Yiddish Book Center (Amherst, MA, USA) last year.

**DEPARTMENT  
OF  
HEBREW,  
BIBLICAL  
&  
JEWISH  
STUDIES**

**‘Beyond Camps and Forced Labour: Current International Research on Survivors of Nazi Persecution’**

In January 2012, Professor Suzanne Rutland attended the major conference dealing with the aftermath of the Holocaust, ‘Beyond Camps and Forced Labour: Current International Research on Survivors of Nazi Persecution’, the Fourth International Multidisciplinary Conference at the Imperial War Museum,

London 4-6 January 2012.

These conferences are held every three years and attract wide international participation. She presented a paper on ‘Battles over representation: Australian Jewry and the Claims Conference’, as well as chairing a session on ‘Memory and Violence’.

**Visit of Dr Zehavit Gross,  
Pratt Foundation Research Scholar**

Dr Zehavit Gross and Professor Suzanne Rutland participated in the Sydney launch of *POLICIES AND PRACTICES OF HOLOCAUST EDUCATION: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES: UNESCO Quarterly Review of Comparative Education*, at the Sydney Jewish Museum on 21 February.

Dr Gross spoke on “Holocaust education: an international perspective” and Professor Rutland

spoke on “Creating effective Holocaust education programmes for government schools with large Muslim populations in Sydney”. The event was chaired by Professor Konrad Kwiet.

Also in attendance was Prof Emeritus Terry Lovat, a former Dean of Education at the University of Newcastle, and an expert in religion in Australia, who came especially to attend this lecture.



Prof. Konrad Kwiet, Prof. Suzanne Rutland, Dr. Zehavit Gross, Prof. Terry Lovat

## CALL FOR PAPERS:

## JEWISH CYBERCULTURE

### Call for Papers: Jewish Cyberculture for volume of the Jewish Cultural Studies Series

Fifth volume in book series on Jewish Cultural Studies, edited by Andrea Lieber, Sophia Ava Asbell Chair in Judaic Studies, Dickinson College, USA, ([lieber@dickinson.edu](mailto:lieber@dickinson.edu)) and Simon J. Bronner, Distinguished University Professor of American Studies and Folklore, The Pennsylvania State University, USA ([sbronner@psu.edu](mailto:sbronner@psu.edu))

**Publisher:** Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, Oxford (UK) and Portland, Oregon (USA)

**Format and Guidelines:** 7,000-9,000 word essays in English, prepared electronically in Word, following Oxford Guide to Style (in-text citation with reference list at the end)

**Deadline for submissions:** August 1, 2012

The Jewish Cultural Studies series, published by Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, invites original papers for a volume on Jewish Cyberculture. Topics of interest for the fifth volume in the series include effects of social media on Jewish identity, perceived conflicts and integration of the Internet with religious values, adaptation of technology such as cell phones and webcams for religious purposes, marketing and consumption of Jewish books and products in cyberspace, rise of virtual Judaism and Jewishness, changes to oral and social genres such as humor and ritual in digital cultural contexts, effects of the Internet on Jewish/non-Jewish relations, and the use of technology to challenge or redefine traditional structures of authority in the Jewish community

The purpose of the series is to present thematic volumes interpreting

Jewish cultures ethnographically and historically around the globe, and exploring the idea of Jewish culture as it has been constructed, symbolized, produced, communicated, and consumed in diverse contexts. Themes of volumes are interdisciplinary, drawing particularly on research in anthropology, sociology, folkloristics, communications, and history.

For inquiries and proposals, contact Simon J. Bronner at [sbronner@psu.edu](mailto:sbronner@psu.edu)

For more information on the Jewish Cultural Studies series, see <http://littman.co.uk/jcs>.



## ASSOCIATION FOR THE PHILOSOPHY OF JUDAISM ESSAY PRIZE

The Association for the Philosophy of Judaism is dedicated to encouraging new work in the philosophy of Judaism.

Our annual APJ Essay Prize will be awarded to new work in the philosophy of Judaism. The winner will receive \$500 and will also have their paper published in *Faith & Philosophy*, subject to the ratification of the editorial team of the journal. We are grateful to *Faith & Philosophy* for their support of our prize.

We define the philosophy of Judaism broadly, to include any of the following:

- Philosophical engagement with any of the key texts of Rabbinic Judaism (Biblical or Rabbinic)
- Philosophical engagement with any of the key tenets of Jewish faith
- Philosophical engagement with any of the key concepts of Jewish peoplehood, such as communal identity over time.

- Philosophical engagement with classical texts of Jewish philosophy and with philosophers of Judaism, i.e. with texts and philosophers that dealt with any of the issues raised above.

We invite submissions of new work in any of these fields to be considered for the prize. Candidate essays should be no longer than 10,000 words and include a 500 word abstract; they must not have been published elsewhere and must not be under review by any journal until we have finished considering it for the prize.

Entries should be prepared for blind-review and sent to [info@theapj.com](mailto:info@theapj.com)

Deadline for entries is 31 August, 2012, and the winner will be announced by 1 November, 2012

The Association for the Philosophy of Judaism reserves the right not to award the prize if no entry is thought to be of a suitably high quality. [www.theapj.com](http://www.theapj.com)

## CALL FOR GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH PROPOSALS

### המכון הבינלאומי לגנאלוגיה יהודית ומרכז פאול יעקבי, ירושלים The International Institute for Jewish Genealogy

The International Institute for Jewish Genealogy invites proposals for original research in the field of Jewish Genealogy, to be carried out in the academic year of 2012-13.

Successful applicants will be awarded grants of up to \$10,000.

***Proposals are requested by  
31 May, 2012.***

Proposals meeting strict standards of academic excellence will be judged by the extent to which they

broaden the horizons of Jewish genealogical research and/or create innovative tools or technologies to assist Jewish genealogists and family historians in their work.

Successful applicants will be announced on 1 September 2012.

“Instructions to Applicants” are to be found on the Institute’s website:

[www.iihg.org](http://www.iihg.org), - under “RESEARCH”/ “Research Grants”.

***Only applications in the correct format will be considered.***

ARCHIVAL  
RESEARCHER  
AVAILABLE

NATIONAL  
ARCHIVES  
OF THE  
UNITED  
KINGDOM,  
LONDON

#### **AN ARCHIVAL RESEARCHER – DO YOU NEED ONE?**

I am sure that everybody had the experience at one time or another. You need to find some important information in the archives for your work but the archives are overseas. You have a good idea what you are looking for because you have been immersed in your research for some time. The problem, however, is that you cannot, for whatever reason, find affordable accommodation, get on the plane, find your niche in the archives and spend as much time as you need to get the material that is available.

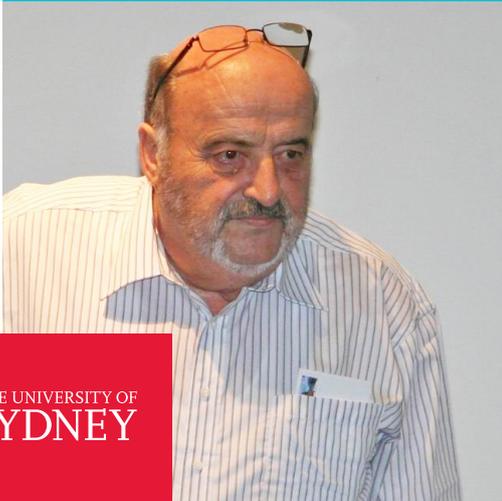
This was the problem that I encountered last year. Yet, there is a way how to tackle it if you need to do research in the National Archives of the United Kingdom in London. I was very fortunate to find an experienced historian-researcher, referred to me by an acquaintance in Sydney. This lady did a wonderful job for me and I could not have been more satisfied with the result. All that is required is to provide an abstract of your work and exact information on the material that is required.

Anyone who would be interested should contact Mrs. Pauline Crump on her e-mail address [pauline@crump491.plus.com](mailto:pauline@crump491.plus.com)



# INVITATION

## A CELEBRATION OF THE CAREER AND CONTRIBUTION OF PROFESSOR KONRAD KWIET



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY

Konrad Kwiet is the Pratt Professor in Jewish and Holocaust Studies at the University of Sydney and the Resident Historian of the Sydney Jewish Museum. Professor Kwiet has been the leading Australian scholar of the Holocaust for the past forty years and held academic posts at Macquarie University and the University of New South Wales as well as a variety of international fellowships. He also served as Chief Historian for the Australian war crimes commission (Special Investigations Unit). As part of the evening's proceedings Professor Kwiet will address the gathering on the topic:

### **Once upon a Time in Australia: Aborigines, Racists and Jews**

This celebration is taking place as part of the international conference

### **The Holocaust and Legacies of Race in the Postcolonial World, 1945 to the Present**

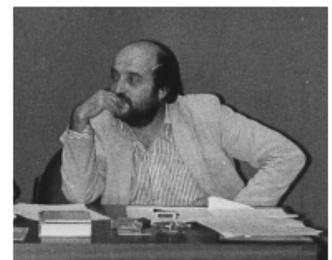
organised by the University of Sydney in partnership with the Universities of Cape Town and Southampton.

The Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies, the University of Sydney; and the Sydney Jewish Museum, take great pleasure in inviting you to:

### **A Celebration of the Career and Contribution of Professor Konrad Kwiet**

Date: Wednesday 11 April 2012  
Time: 8pm  
Location: Sydney Jewish Museum

RSVP essential to [reception@sjm.com.au](mailto:reception@sjm.com.au)  
or 9360 799 by Thursday 5 April



# THE AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH STUDIES

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

**Please print this form, complete it and send it to:**

The Honorary Treasurer  
Australian Association of Jewish Studies  
c/- Arhive of Australian Judaica  
Rare books, Fisher Library  
The University of Sydney, NSW, 2006  
Australia

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone numbers(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Fax number \_\_\_\_\_

**Please tick the box by the relevant membership option**

- Benefactor AU\$250
- Regular AU\$60
- Full-time student / Pensioner AU\$25
- Institutional AU\$70
- Overseas AU\$80

**Payment may be made by cheque, VISA or MasterCard.** Please tick the box by the payment option you will use:

- Cheque in Australian dollars. Please enclose your cheque with this form.
- VISA or MasterCard. Please note that a small surcharge will be added when your credit card payment is processed (2.25%- Standard VISA, MasterCard; 3.25%- Premium VISA, MasterCard)

Name of cardholder (as on card) \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number and expiry date \_\_\_\_\_

Standard or Premium card \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of cardholder. \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you!*