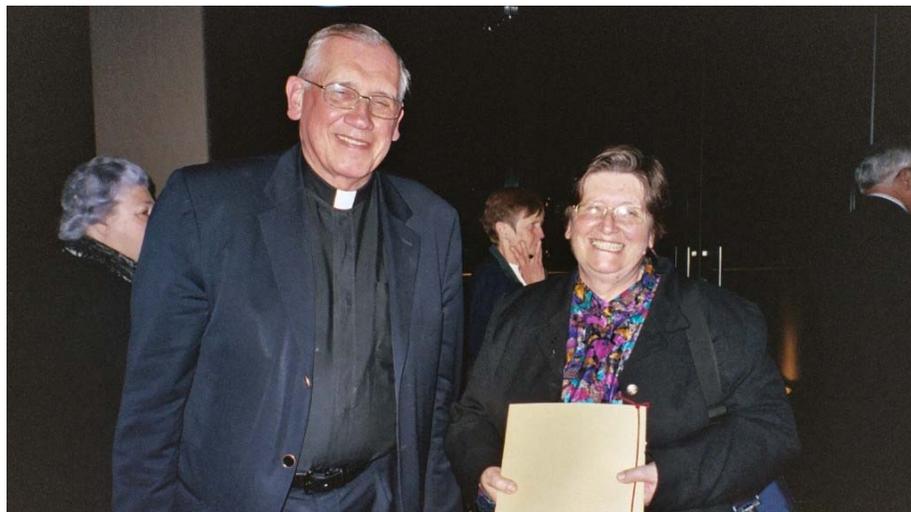


SHANA TOVA!

Major Interfaith Award for Dr Marianne Dacy

- Interfaith Award
- Cardinal Lustiger dies
- Eva Fahadi-her story
- Sydney Yiddish conference
- Call for essays
- Recent Dissertations
- NAPH conference

Marianne Dacy (NDS), who runs the Archive of Australian Judaica in the Fisher Library at the University of Sydney was recently awarded the prestigious Sir Sigmund Sternberg Award at the 2007 International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ) Conference held from 8th-12th July in Sydney. The award, which also carries a prize of £2000, was given for her “sustained intellectual contribution to the furtherance of interreligious understanding, particularly, but not exclusively in the field of Jewish-Christian relations, which has had impact and influence beyond the society and borders of Australia”.



The citation added that the award was in recognition of her “many achievements in the field of Christian-Jewish relations” which include numerous publications. Particularly noted was her directorship of the specialist Judaica Library at Ratisbonne, Jerusalem, and her long-term position as archivist and librarian of the Archive of Australian Judaica at the University of Sydney.

The citation continued: “A tireless worker who also acts as honorary secretary of the New South Wales Council of Christians and Jews and the Australian Council, Dr Sr Dacy also serves as honorary Treasurer of the Australian Association of Jewish Studies. This award also marks the ICCJ’s gratitude for her inspiring contribution in bringing about the first ICCJ conference in Australia.” The ICCJ was founded in 1942 in London during the Holocaust, to help confront the rising anti-Semitism in Europe.

Marianne Dacy is a member of the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion, a Congregation founded by a convert from Judaism, Theodore Ratisbonne in the 1840s. The principal work of the Sisters of Sion has always been in certain areas of education, with a special emphasis on learning about Judaism and the Jewish roots of Christianity. Although, at first the sisters prayed for the conversion of the Jews, after the Holocaust, the idea of conversion was dropped and the focus changed to Christian-Jewish relations.

Antisemitism has been part of the Church’s agenda from earliest times, and Jews were accused of being God killers and persecuted in the name of religion. The task of the Congregation is to bring into the Church’s consciousness the acknowledgement of the Jewish roots of Christianity and the desire for reconciliation after 2000 years of Church hostility towards the Jews. The special work or charism of the Sisters of Sion involves working for a world of peace and justice by means of Jewish/Christian relations and social justice issues.

All members of the AAJS. We wish to warmly congratulate Marianne on this award. Without her tireless efforts as honorary Treasurer and Secretary, the Association would not have kept functioning. The award is a well deserved tribute to her ongoing contributions in a range of fields.

1 August 2007

Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger – Some Scattered Thoughts

By Professor Zeev Mankowitz, Hebrew University Mandelbaum Scholar at the University of Sydney



Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, the former Archbishop of Paris died last month at the age of 80. He was born in 1926 to an observant Polish Jewish family. In 1940 he and his sister were sent to Orleans for safekeeping and it was there at the age of 14 that he converted to Catholicism. His mother Giselle died later in Auschwitz and for many years his father refused to acknowledge his conversion.

Throughout history individuals have taken on new identities in the wake of conquest, travel, love and shipwreck. The Jewish experience in the modern era has taught us how complicated shifts of this kind can be when those converting are suspected of fleeing the disabilities of their native roots in order to acquire the advantages of joining the majority. Converts and others moving from one identity to another often found themselves living under a cloud of suspicion and arousing the mistrust of their new brethren. The unspoken question haunting them was: if you abandoned your own in order to better your situation, how do we know that when the chips are down you will not turn your back on us in turn? Can you really be trusted?

What is unique about the late Cardinal Lustiger is that he consistently declared that he remained Jewish despite his conversion to Christianity. He retained his given name Aaron, he ceaselessly highlighted his Jewish ancestry, played a prominent role in promoting Christian-Jewish dialogue, profoundly identified with the fate of his people during the Holocaust and thus announced to the world: my conversion was an act of faith and was in no way motivated by the opportunistic goals. Assimilating Jews who insisted that they were not Jewish always aroused suspicion while Lustiger's policy of spiritual transparency largely pre-empted responses of this kind.

The renowned historian Professor Saul Friedlander tells in his autobiographical fragment *When Memory Comes* of being faced with the dilemma similar to that of Lustiger except that he opted to remain Jewish and after the war settled in Israel. All historians are keenly aware of their inability to persuasively account for momentous individual decisions of this kind – why did Friedlander go one way and his friend Lustiger another?

And so it is in the case at hand: Whatever we feel about Aaron Lustiger's conversion we cannot deny the ongoing courage and integrity of his possibly quixotic quest, given the power of collective memory, to remain faithful to his Jewish roots. **1st August 2007**

Eva Fahidi – Her Story

By Anna Rosenbaum

Earlier this year, in my quest to find Czech and Slovak Jews who arrived in Australia prior to or after WWII, I attended a meeting of child survivors in Bondi, hoping that somebody would come forward and tell me that he or she was one of them or that he or she knows of somebody who would fit my requirement. Little did I know at the time that I would meet a Hungarian lady by the name of Anna Prior who not only introduced me to a former Czech Jewish refugee, but also put me in touch with her friend, a Hungarian Jewish writer, whose book *Anima Rerum (A Dolgok Lelke)* in Hungarian as been widely acclaimed in her native Hungary. We began corresponding.

Eva Fahidi is a remarkable lady. Growing up in Debrecen, she remembers with great affection her childhood, education and adolescence, surrounded by a loving well-to-do Jewish family. Her parents, grandparents and little sister lived in paradise judging by the description of their lives in pre-war Hungary. She knew not, of course, that their paradise was nothing else than the fool's playground. At the age of 18, Eva's world came crashing down when she and her family were pushed into cargo holds and transported to Auschwitz. Mother and 11 year old Gililke, Anna Prior's childhood friend, were immediately consigned to the gas chamber, while her father succumbed to hard labour a short time later.

Six weeks after her arrival in Auschwitz-Birkenau, Eva Fahidi was transferred to Buchenwald and suffered the trauma of a Jewish slave worker. She survived but her life, like that of untold numbers of survivors, was marked forever. While dealing with Nazi German atrocities in concentration camps, Eva Fahidi also focuses on the lesser known aspect of the Hungarian complicity in the Shoah. In order to come to terms with a life shredded to pieces, she had to do two things: to write about her wartime experiences and to focus on Holocaust education of young Europeans.

Now in her eighties, Eva Fahidi travels throughout Europe lecturing young people who in their majority know not much about events that are now disappearing beyond the generational horizon. She talks on the radio and on television and she is involved in the organization of an exhibition in Debrecen in 2008. Given the rise of the extreme right, the phenomenon of Holocaust revisionism and Islamist fundamentalism in today's Europe, her activities are truly praiseworthy.

DVDs in which she talks about her life and activities are available in Hungarian. The beautifully produced book, published by Tudomány Kiadó KFT in Budapest in 2005, is now being translated into English and German.

Yosef (Asi) Aharonov – A Sydney University Ph.D. Student

Mr. Aharonov is a recipient of a NSW Interschools Committee Scholarship for Doctoral Students in Jewish Education. This is in the second year of his studies.

Topic of Dissertation:

Educational Emissaries from Countries of Origin to Diaspora Communities: A Case Study of Israeli *Shlichim* to Australia.

Shlichim (emissaries) who come from Israel to Australia are a well-known phenomenon in the Jewish community in general and in the Jewish education system in particular. To my knowledge, almost no research has been done on *Schlichim* coming from Israel to the Jewish community in Australia and very little on emissaries from Israel in general. Through a follow-up in both the formal and informal settings, that is Jewish day-schools and youth movements in the three large communities Melbourne, Sydney and Perth, I found that *Shlichim* come for a period of one to three years and often experience various cultural challenges, which may result in educational and other significant implications. This becomes even more significant as they also seek to introduce

changes as educators. My study will examine how they contend with this process, how they manage to fulfil their mission and in what way it contributes to their professional lives and to their views about Israel and Diaspora relations.

This research project is expected to shed some light in the area of *Shlichim* to Australia and to Diaspora communities in general.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Dr. Michael Abrahams-Sprod on successfully completing his Ph.D. dissertation on *Jewish Life in Magdeburg under Nazi Rule*.

To Dr. Reingard Porges on successfully completing her Ph.D. dissertation *On Theodor Wolff in Exile*.

CALL FOR OTHER DOCTORAL STUDENTS

PLEASE SEND IN A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF YOUR Ph.D. THESIS FOR THE NEWSLETTER AS ASI AHARONOV HAS DONE.

3rd International Mandelbaum Conference on Yiddish Studies “Kehiles”/Communities

25–26 November 2007, Mandelbaum House, University of Sydney
(please note change of date)



organized into a political, municipal, or social unity; those members of a civil community, who have certain circumstances of nativity, religion, or pursuit, common to them, but not shared by those among whom they live". Hence, communities under discussion can be geographical (Bialystock, Birbidzhan, Ottawa, Melbourne), religio-political (Bundist, Satmar Hasidim), social (artists, virtual, *landmanshaftn*).

This is an interdisciplinary conference: papers relating to pedagogy, history, literature, sociology, and the arts are welcomed. Other topics will be considered, but only those bearing directly upon Yiddish language, culture and education will be accepted. Postgraduate students are encouraged to submit proposals based on their research.

Papers can be presented in English, Yiddish or bi-lingually. In addition, the possibility presentation via video-conferencing exists if arranged in advance.

Abstracts should not exceed three hundred words and must include title, author's name, postal and email address. Please send abstracts either electronically or by post to:

Dr Jennifer Dowling
Daniel Goodridge Lecturer in Yiddish Studies
Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies (A17)
SLC
University of Sydney
Sydney NSW 2006
or email j.dowling@usyd.edu.au

As formal teaching within the university will have wound down for the year, Mandelbaum House will be able to offer accommodation to conference participants, with breakfast provided. For information on Mandelbaum House, please visit the website (<http://www.usyd.edu.au/colleges/mandelbaum/home.htm>).

Call for Essays

Revisoning Ritual; Jewish Traditions in Transition.

Third volume in book series on Jewish Cultural Studies, edited by Simon J. Bronner, Distinguished University Professor, The Pennsylvania State University, USA.

Publisher: Littman Library of Jewish Civilisation, Oxford, UK
<http://www.littman.co.uk/jcs/index.html>

Format and Guidelines: 10,000-20,000 word essays in English.
Prepared electronically in Word (in-text citations with reference List).
Photographs in TIF format (min. 300 dpi).

Deadline: October 1, 2007.

Contact: Professor Simon J. Bronner, School of Humanities
The Pennsylvania State University, 777 West Harrisburg Pike,

Middletown, PA 170757-4898, USA, sbronner@psu.edu

Essays are sought that interpret changes and controversies in Jewish rituals and customs, and investigate inventions and Revivals of Jewish traditions. Rituals and traditions are defined broadly to include Secular as well as religious observances of Jewish identity. The editorial board is especially looking for critical inquiry into symbolic uses of traditions and raises questions about the encounter of Jewish groups with dominant societies and modernity and the variation of distinctiveness of cultural practices within the Jewish world. The title of the volume refers the concern for the way that meaning is constructed as well as how practices are conducted.

For more information see:

<http://www.littman.co.uk/jcs/index.html> or contact the editor at sbronner@psu.edu

International Conference of Professors of Hebrew (NAPH) concludes successfully in Sydney

**2007 International Conference on Hebrew Language,
Literature and Culture**

**2-4 July
The University of Sydney
Sydney, Australia**



L-R. Prof Professor Gilead Moragh with Professor Rifaat Ebied and A/Prof Suzanne Rutland

In July, the 25th annual conference of the National Association of Professors of Hebrew (NAPH) was held at the University of Sydney. NAPH is a US based association that spans the teaching of

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Hebrew from the Classical period to the present time at university level. The conference had three main strands: Language and Linguistics; Literature and Pedagogy. It attracted over 60 presenters from North American, Europe and Israel. The Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies was well represented with a total of six papers, five in the area of Language and Linguistics and one for Pedagogy. The president of the conference was Professor Rifaat Ebied of the Department of Hebrew, Biblical & Jewish Studies.

In addition to the academic conference and conference dinner, the Jewish community hosted the conference participants at two evening functions, one at the Sydney Jewish Museum and one at Moriah College. At the Museum, the conference participants were divided into two groups, each of which was led by a survivor guide who took the participants around the museum. Afterwards, they were hosted with a reception and Professor Gilead Moragh spoke on 'Hebrew: A Language of Identity'. Internationally renowned Hebrew scholar, Professor Moragh is the Executive Vice President, National Association of Professors of Hebrew; Chairman of the Department of Hebrew and Semitic Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Fellow of the University of Wisconsin Teaching Academy; Officer of the National Council of Organizations of Less Commonly Taught Languages; Board, Heksherim Research Center for Jewish and Israeli Literature and Culture at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev; and on the Editorial Board, *Mikan*, a scholarly journal for the study of Hebrew literature published by the Heksherim Center in Israel. He has published widely, won numerous awards and been an invited speaker at many conferences and public events. He provided a thoughtful outline of the development of Hebrew in the twentieth century and its importance for Jewish peoplehood. A/Prof Suzanne Rutland chaired the evening's proceedings.



Left : Eddie Jaku with group at the Sydney Jewish Museum

The visit to Moriah College was also much appreciated by conference participants. College president, Mark Schneider, took the participants on a tour of the college campus. They then enjoyed a beautiful reception, which was followed by a question and answer session. Conference

participants also enjoyed tours of Sydney and the Blue Mountains, which were organised as part of the conference before and after its proceedings. **Suzanne Rutland**

Office Bearers
President: Dr Dvir Abramovich Secretary/ Treasurer Dr Marianne Dacy
Vice-presidents: A/Prof Danny Ben-Moshe (VIC);
Dr Michael Abrahams-Sprod (NSW)
Journal Editors: A/Prof Ziva Shavitsky & Dr Dvir Abramovich

REMINDER

Have you paid your membership subscription for 2007 or even 2006? Our Association depends on members paying their annual dues, and some have not!

- \$50 AU regular membership
- \$60 AU institutional and overseas
- \$15 AU full-time student/pensioner

Send fees to: Dr Marianne Dacy:
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Tel: 02 9351 4162
Fax: 02 9351 7765
mdacy@library.usyd.edu.au

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www.geocities.com/ajssite/ and at <http://judaica.library.usyd.edu.au/AAJS.html>

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