

The SCRIBE

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WISHING ALL OUR READERS A HAPPY PASSOVER

The unacceptable faces of Capitalism

by Naim Dangoor

When I was at University in the early thirties studying engineering, I often used to reflect as a teenager on the prevalent economic order that was responsible for mounting unemployment and deepening depression. I once asked myself, how can money earn interest if I lend to other people and yet it does not earn interest if I keep it in my pocket? I also noticed that the bad distribution of wealth created unnecessary poverty in a world of plenty.

I realised that the capitalist system which had evolved over many centuries had many hidden fallacies that needed correction. Communism was not the answer. Communism is a manifestation of a faulty capitalist system that breeds revolt as the rich get richer and the poor find themselves cheated. In short, communism is the disease of capitalism.

In the event, communism lasted just 70 years, and 1989 will be remembered as a watershed in modern history. The domino collapse of East European regimes was the result of disillusionment with the communist philosophy. The swing is now in the opposite direction, towards free enterprise and private ownership. A State Department official celebrated "the victory of Western liberal capitalism over socialism" by concluding that the best of all possible socio-economic systems is now centre stage.

Such euphoria is unwarranted, for we are back to the *status quo ante* with all its faults. The formula, "each for himself and let the devil take the hindmost" is not acceptable as a just social philosophy.

While socialism preaches equality, capitalism preaches equal opportunity; but the opportunity of free enterprise must not permit exploitation and private ownership must not result in economic slavery.

Capitalism's faults

In 1940, exactly fifty years ago, I identified the errors of capitalism by differentiating between the creation of

wealth and the storage of wealth, and came to the conclusion that individuals should not have the ability to store wealth in fictitious values – in other words, in assets which constitute a debt on the community. The main culprits in this category are: land values, paper money and public debts. I came to this conclusion on my own before I heard of Henry George, who was only concerned with land values. His cure-all remedy of land value taxation did not catch on.

I believe that the individual must not be allowed to store wealth in paper or in land. At present, every child in Britain is born to a debt of some £20,000 and has to pay a large part of his future earnings to service this debt.

Islamic economics

Iranian leader, Ali Khomeini, recently predicted that capitalism would go the same way as communism, leaving Islam to dominate the world! "Neither East nor West," he reiterated. "There is no East any more and the West will eventually go the same way." But Islam has nothing to offer in the way of modern economics. Islamic banking is just a clumsy way to get around usury by artificial means.

The divine command against usury has never been understood by all three Judaic religions since the time of Moses. The only way to abolish usury is to have money issued by the consumer and not by the moneylender. A viable banking system can function on that basis.

Cry freedom

The Jubilee system of the Torah is the basis of sound economics. Every 50 years, land reverts to the nation, all debts are wiped out and the community starts with a clean slate. This can be done in the modern world by taxing land and paper, and providing a national dividend for all.

Since the end of the war, vast fortunes have been made by property owners. How can a person justify a personal wealth of £20,000 million?

It was one of our Babylonian

Geonim, 1000 years ago, who noticed that there was less poverty in new towns than in old, but he didn't know the reason. In new towns wealth had not yet precipitated to the pockets of a few individuals.

The Jews of York

March 1990 witnessed the 800th anniversary of the martyrdom of the Jews of York, England. Beseiged in Clifford's Tower by a local mob, they were given the choice of being baptised or being killed.

The Jews of York chose a third option: mass suicide in imitation of the defenders of Massada as the Roman army closed in on them.

In 1189, when Richard I came to power, he helped to organise the Third Crusade. The Jews of England suffered at the hands of the populace who wanted to indulge in a crusade less dangerous and with more immediate profit. At Richard's coronation there were riots at Westminster and rumours that the king had given permission to kill the Jews. In London, the mob attacked Old Jewry, setting fire to houses. All Jews were killed at Lynn. Many were slain at Stamford Fair and Bury St. Edmunds. The greatest tragedy of the period was the annihilation of the Jewish community of York in March 1190.

"Five hundred Jews had retired into the castle for safety and, finding themselves unable to defend the place, murdered their own wives and children, threw the dead bodies over the walls upon the populace and then, setting fire to the houses, perished in the flames. The gentry of the neighbourhood, who were all indebted to the Jews, ran to the cathedral where their bonds were kept and made a solemn bonfire of the papers before the altar!"

(*History of England* by David Hume, 1823, Vol. II)

Beth Hatefutsoth is about to publish an album on the Jews of Iraq as part of our series of Community Albums. I shall be conducting research in British Archives in the coming weeks and hope to be able to collect visual material among the Babylonian community as well.

Beth Hatefutsoth, Sarah Gilboa-Karni Israel

Scribe: Any reader who can supply interesting photographs, please contact this Journal.

Dating the Exodus from Egypt

by Naim Dangoor

According to Bible reckoning, the Exodus took place in the year 2448 Anno Mundi – 1312 BCE, 33 centuries ago. But most historians put the date of the Exodus 76 years later in 1236 BCE.

All sources agree that the story of Joseph, and Jacob's descent to Egypt with 70 souls, took place during the 18th Dynasty (1559-1319) of the New Kingdom (1575-1200).

The Semitic Hyksos invaded Egypt c.1659 and were in power when the New Kingdom began in 1575. In 1559 the Hyksos rulers were driven out of Egypt, and that was the start of the 18th Dynasty. Joseph and, later, Jacob, came to Egypt during that dynasty and the Israelites were given land in Goshen, in the eastern Delta, far from the seat of Pharaoh which was at Thebes in Upper Egypt, 400 miles away.

But wherever the Jews settle, the region becomes prosperous, and Goshen eventually became so prosperous that the later rulers of the 18th Dynasty moved their capital from Thebes to the Delta. (This explains how Pharaoh's daughter was there to spot baby Moses among the bulrushes). **It is very likely that it was Joseph himself who moved the Egyptian capital to the Delta.** The message that Joseph, as ruler of Egypt, sent to his father was, "Come down to me; don't delay. You shall dwell in the region of Goshen and **be near me.**" (Gen. 45:10).

Akhnaton (r.1367-1350), whose wife was Nefertiti, was in Goshen when he introduced a kind of monotheism in Egypt during his 17-year reign, influenced no doubt by Hebrew beliefs and practices. The four principles of the new faith were: 1) Aton, the sun's disc, is the only god. 2) This single god created and maintains Egypt and Nubia and Canaan and even the most distant regions. 3) This god has none of the forms imagined by the people. 4) Pharaoh is the son of Aton; like his father, the sun, he is reborn every morning.

Akhnaton's son, Tutankhamun (r.1347-1339), spent most of his short life in the Delta at Memphis, the capital built by Menes, the first Pharaoh, who united Upper and Lower Egypt, the two Egypts, the two "Misr"s – hence "Misrayim". **I believe that the famous treasures of Tutankhamun were the work of Hebrew craftsmen.** In reply to my letter, the British Museum have said that they have nothing to disprove this theory.

The last king of the 18th Dynasty was Horemheb, who reigned for 30 years. He had no son, and he therefore secured the succession for Rameses, the mayor of Zaru (Avaris), and the king's vizier, after his own death. Avaris was built by the Hyksos and was their last stronghold in Egypt.

Rameses I was very old when he ascended the throne as founder of the 19th Dynasty and ruled for only a couple of years before being succeeded by his son as Seti I. He must, therefore, have been mayor of Avaris for a long time.

Rameses II also served as mayor of Avaris when he was crown prince. All the indications are that it was the Rameses mayors who forced the Israelites to build the store cities in the Goshen area. Rameses I is the Pharaoh referred to in the Bible as the one "who knew not Joseph." The Oppression thus started in 1317 BCE at the start of the 19th Dynasty.

Moses killed the Egyptian in the reign of Rameses II and remained a fugitive till the end of his long reign, which lasted 66 years, and an amnesty was declared when the son of Rameses II ascended the throne as Merneptah in 1237. It was during this Pharaoh's reign that "Prince" Moses, now 80 years old, came to ask, "Let my people go!"

If the Exodus took place in 1236 BCE, how long did the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt last? Four centuries, as God has foretold Abraham (Gen.15: 13-14), or four generations, since Moses was the son of Amram, son of Kehath, son of Levi, son of Jacob?

There is no reason to doubt that Moses was 4th generation from Jacob or to doubt the exact length of the sojourn in Egypt, given in the Bible (Ex.12:40) as 430 years. However, there is no way that 70 souls would become 600,000 men, besides the women and children, in four generations.

The explanation is that the Exodus involved not just Jacob's descendants but other Habirus who had come to the Delta much earlier, as well as later: $1236 + 430 = 1666$, the year of the migration of Habirus to Egypt. Some historians, such as Josephus, associate the arrival of the Habirus with the coming of the Semitic Hyksos, who invaded in 1659 and were driven out in 1559. But the name Hyksos refers only to the rulers.

The conclusion is that Habiru tribesmen

came to Egypt before the Hyksos and remained there after the Hyksos rulers were driven out. The Hyksos, of course, made use of the presence of Habiru tribesmen during their century-long rule in Lower Egypt (the Delta).

In his controversial book *Stranger in the Valley of the Kings* (Souvenir Press, 1987) the Egyptian author, Ahmed Osman explains that the line of descent in Egypt was through the eldest daughter, and the eldest son married her to keep the title of Pharaoh in the family.

Osman claims that Joseph was appointed Vizier by Tuthmosis IV (r.1413-1405), and continued as Vizier to his son Amenhotep III (r.1405-1367) who ascended the throne at the age of 12. Osman identifies Joseph with Yuya who was the maternal grandfather of Akhnaton, and says that **Joseph's mummy is to be found in the Cairo Museum.** Joseph is quoted in the Bible as saying, "God hath set me a father to Pharaoh." Yuya, who was not of royal blood but whose tomb was discovered almost intact in 1905 in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes, opposite Luxor, is the only person in Egyptian history known to have the title "a father to Pharaoh."

Osman concludes by noting that not long after the departure of the Israelites, Egypt fell under foreign rule, a domination that lasted, in one form or another, for 3,000 years, until 1952, when the Albanian King Farouk was ousted. "It almost coincided with the Israeli homecoming."

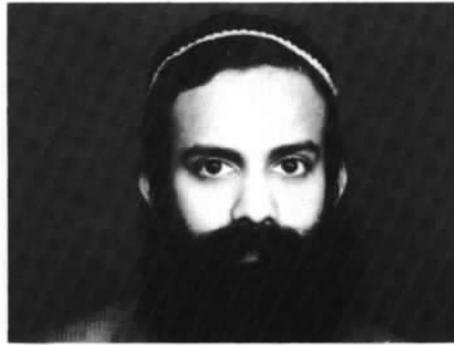
On a recent visit to Cairo we were taken to the Ibn Ezra Synagogue and we stood in awe when we were told that was the spot where Moses prayed just before embarking on the Exodus.

The site was apparently identified by the Prophet Jeremiah when he fled to Egypt after the destruction of the First Temple●



Can this be the face of Joseph? Yuya's amazingly well preserved mummy at the Cairo Museum. The features are non-Egyptian, the position of the hands, palms down under the chin, is unique in Ancient Egypt; the ears, unusually, are unpierced. In his book, *The Language of the Pentateuch in its Relation to Egyptian*, Abraham S. Yahuda discusses the meaning of Joseph's Egyptian name – Zaphnath Paaneah●

An Indian Convert



Prem Doss S. Yehudi, lawyer and writer, is a Dravidian Judaist. He was born in 1953 in Kerala, on the Malabar coast, India, to Christian parents. Of Tamil descent, he speaks Malayalam as his mother tongue and devotes his spare time to Hebrew studies.

In 1982 he studied at a yeshivah in Jerusalem and in 1986 was circumcised in Cochin, underwent Tebilat Gerut, was called up to the Torah and he added "Yehudi" to his name, and changed his signature to Hebrew characters.



His first major work - *Israel as seen by an Indian* - was published in 1983. In his latest book - *The Shingly Hebrews* - he gives a detailed account of the Jews in Kerala, popularly known as Cochin Jews.

Following are some extracts:

Kerala Jewry, with its 3,000-year history, is the oldest continuous Jewish community in the world. The ancestors of these Malayalam-speaking Jews are believed to have landed in Kodungallur during the reign of King Solomon. Shingly is the Hebrew name of their settlement.

It used to take at least three years to make the round voyage. The Hebrew sailors took back with them "ivory, apes and peacocks" and "almug trees (fragrant sandal wood) and precious stones." "And the King made of the sandal wood pillars for the house of the Lord, and for the King's house, harps also and psalteries for the singers; there came no such sandal wood, nor was seen, unto this day." "Moreover, the King made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the finest gold."

It was very hard to sail up to the Red Sea, because of the adverse wind and also because of the pirates. Goods were, therefore, brought overland by camel caravans from south Arabia. The Judean kingdom was one of the mediators in the trade that came from India to the West in the fleets of King Solomon.

Dravidian tradition considers that Ezra, an Israeli Jewish architect, designed the famous musical pillars of the Meenakshi temple at Madurai.

Jews also reached the Malabar coast after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel and of the

First and Second Temples. Jewish exiles brought with them from the Second Temple two trumpets with the ineffable name of the Eternal carved on them in Hebrew. They are the priceless possessions of the community.

Moses Pereira de Paiva, a Dutch Jew who visited Cochin in 1686, enquired about the ancestry of the local Jews. They told him that their ancestors came to Malabar from the Balearic Island of Majorca. Seventy to eighty thousand Jews arrived in Malabar in 379 CE. They were the descendants of Jews exiled from Judea to Majorca by Titus. This information is disputed.

Passover in Kerala

condensed from an article by Prem Doss S. Yehudi in *Indian Express* of Cochin

In Kerala, as elsewhere, Jews observe their annual Passover feast with the ritual of search for leaven.

Kerala Jewry, whose roots go back to the beginning of Judaism, is an exotic Orthodox community known for its unique customs and traditions which are based directly on the ancient Biblical rites followed in West Asia three millennia ago. Though the community has had to contend with the issue of massive emigration to Israel, Jewish life continues normally and unhindered in Kerala.

Hebrew and Indian cultures have existed side by side in Cochin city with mutual respect for centuries. In Jew Street, the two synagogues - Kadavumbhagam and Thekkumbhagam - are well preserved. But Cochin Jews go to Jew Town to discharge their religious obligations.

Today, Kerala's 100-strong Jewish community is the smallest religious group in the State.

The Cochin Jew Town Synagogue is 420 years old.

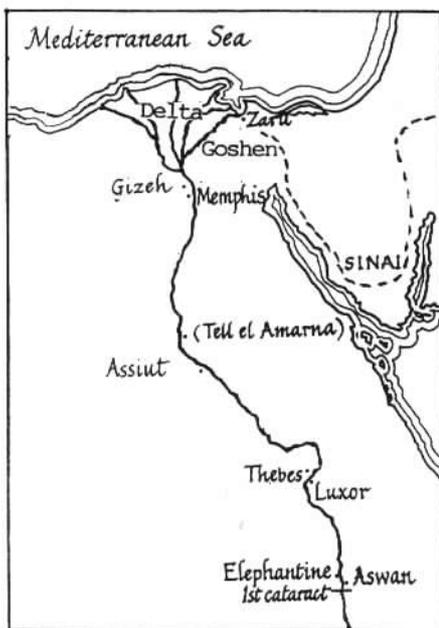
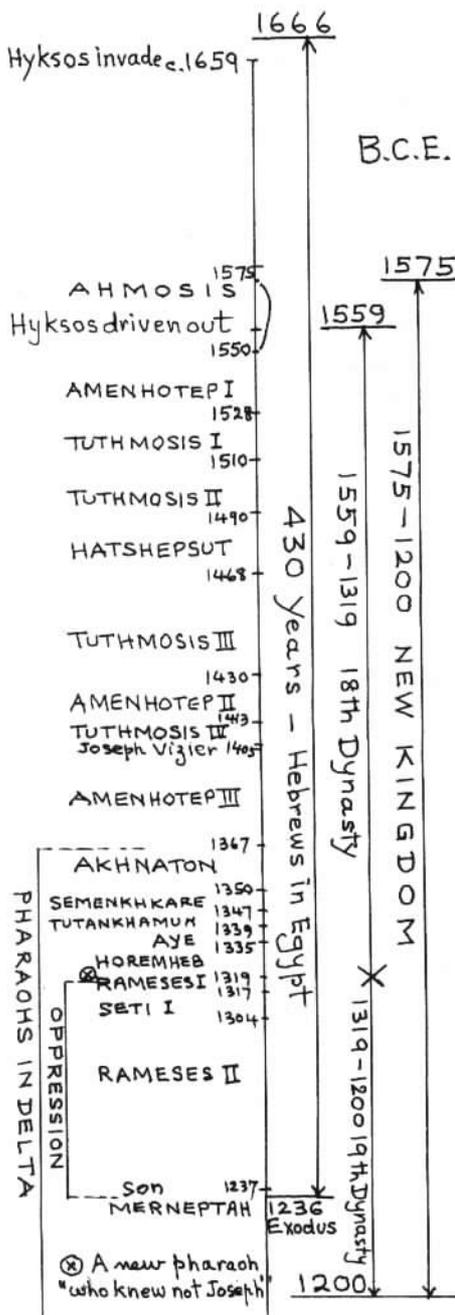
Large quantities of unleavened bread are baked before the onset of the holy day. This special bread, called *Matzah*, is the symbol of the bread of affliction which the Hebrews ate in Mitzrayim.

Kerala Jews make their own *matzoth* weeks before the holy day, even though it is possible to obtain them from Bombay and Israel.

The distinctive ritual of Pessah is the chanting of the Haggadah during dinner on the first day of the festival.

The emancipation of the Hebrew slaves has had a beneficial impact on the history of mankind, it illuminates the concept of freedom and provides it with divine sanction. The Torah enjoins: "It (Pessah) is a night of observance unto Hashem (the Almighty) for bringing them (the Hebrews) out of the land of Egypt. This same night is a night of observance unto Hashem for all the children of Israel throughout their generations" (Shemoth 12, 42). Therefore every Jew is bound to mark the appointed day by taking part in the Seder feast.

It is pertinent to note that Pessah is designed to instil in the observants regard for the values of humility and fraternity. During the feast they see themselves as though they themselves had emerged from slavery. And they come out physically and spiritually refreshed. Even so, it is one of the happy holidays in the Jewish calendar.





At the Dangoor-Pinto wedding in March. The gathering included guests from 17 countries. Dangoor; Michael and Audrey; Sylvain and Denise Pinto; Dayan Dr. Pinhas Toledano.

LETTERS

Thank you for adding my name to your mailing list. I was born in Basra in 1943, lived in Israel from 1953-1958, and in Britain from 1958 to date.

All best wishes to your organisation. Please let me know if I can be of any help●
Southsea, Hampshire Adel Resouly

May I make some observations about your April '89 issue?

1. **Thoughts on Passover** (P. Gourgey): by the Fourth Commandment Moses emerges as the world's first trade unionist.
2. **From Baghdad to Jerusalem** (M. Kahtan): "Kurdish refugees and mass murder by chemicals" of Kurds not "by Kurds" – "Judaica" should be Judea.
3. **The Cairo Conference of 1921** (N. Dangoor) was excellent●
East Yorkshire (Dr.) Leslie I. Hardy

While Elie and I were in Australia last summer, we met many people from Iraq, or born of Iraqi parents. It was most interesting.

One of our best friends – born of Iraqi parents – had not heard of *The Scribe* and would be very interested to receive it. His Honour J. Isaac is Emeritus Professor and a Judge in the Arbitration Court in Victoria●
London Sylvia Kedourie

I would appreciate information about the Exilarch's Foundation: its background, and its current activities. Also, are private contributions needed to support the Foundation?●

Brooklyn, N.Y. Elliot Shakarchi
The Scribe: The Exilarch was the head of Babylonian Jewry since early days; it is said that King Yehoyachin, who was exiled in 593 BCE, was the first Exilarch. The office came to an end in 1270 and was revived in London by Mr. Naim Dangoor

in 1970, exactly 700 years afterwards. The aim is to keep together Babylonian Jews who are now dispersed all over the world.

For this purpose *The Scribe* was started in 1971 and has been resumed in 1983. It is now appearing about 6 times a year and is sent to an ever increasing circle. The Exilarch's Foundation also publishes a Baghdadian Haggadah in Hebrew, Arabic and English and has also published in Israel a Hebrew commentary on the Pentateuch in two volumes by Chief Rabbi Hakham Ezra Dangoor. The Foundation is also endeavouring to prepare a register of Iraqi Jews all over the world for the benefit of future generations. We are also ready to help Iraqi communities in solving their problems and promoting unity.

The Foundation has been endowed by Mr. Dangoor and while private contributions are not needed they would be very welcome●

In your leading article "People of Israel, Listen to me," in *The Scribe* of March



Inset – Top Table, l. to r. Communal Rabbi Dr. Abraham and Mrs. Levy; Naim and Renée

(Panoramic photos by CAMEO)

1990, you have excelled once again, and in no uncertain terms, in exposing in a very brief but concise manner, the facts of a very complicated problem. These facts which are invariably ignored not only by the media but the politicians for reasons of their own, are paramount, to borrow a word often used by Mrs. Thatcher, and have to be taken into account if a lasting settlement is really to be found.

In the meantime, considering the vigour with which most nations cry rape everytime Arabs are hurt or killed whilst carrying out acts of rioting and terrorism in Israel, and the amazing lack of concern and resilience in accepting daily massacres of Arabs in Arab countries, Israel, the State of Israel as well as Jews everywhere, should stop pussy-footing around and get on with the job of ensuring Israel's security and the well-being of its people in their land●

Surrey Moshe Kahtan

I was very happy to hear about your organisation. I was born in Iraq and now I

am "back to my roots." I am very interested in getting your publication. I also want to get an Iraqi Haggadah. I thank you very very much!●

Canoga Park, C.A., Rivka Ben-Daniel U.S.A.

I must say that it was quite exciting to see in the back page of the March issue all about my talk. The photo surprised me too, no end. It adds a lot to the write-up. Thanks again for everything you have done for me. It is very much appreciated●

Lexington, Mass. Prof. Fred Ezekiel

My visit to Baghdad in November was a complete failure.

In Baghdad I could not find any city maps, and people at the Ministry of Information as well as the Canadian Embassy did not know or were not willing to tell me the whereabouts of the Jewish Community. So I have nothing to report.

From there I proceeded to Calcutta.

McGill-Queen's University Press in Montreal is considering whether to undertake publishing a book on The Jews of Calcutta which I am preparing. I shall be spending six weeks in China recording folk music of the Naxi minority nationality in Yunnan province. I return to Toronto in April●

Toronto

Norman Track

I was very fascinated when I read in your September 1989 issue the article about H. Abdullah Somekh, who is my father's first uncle. I would appreciate it if you put me on your mailing list●

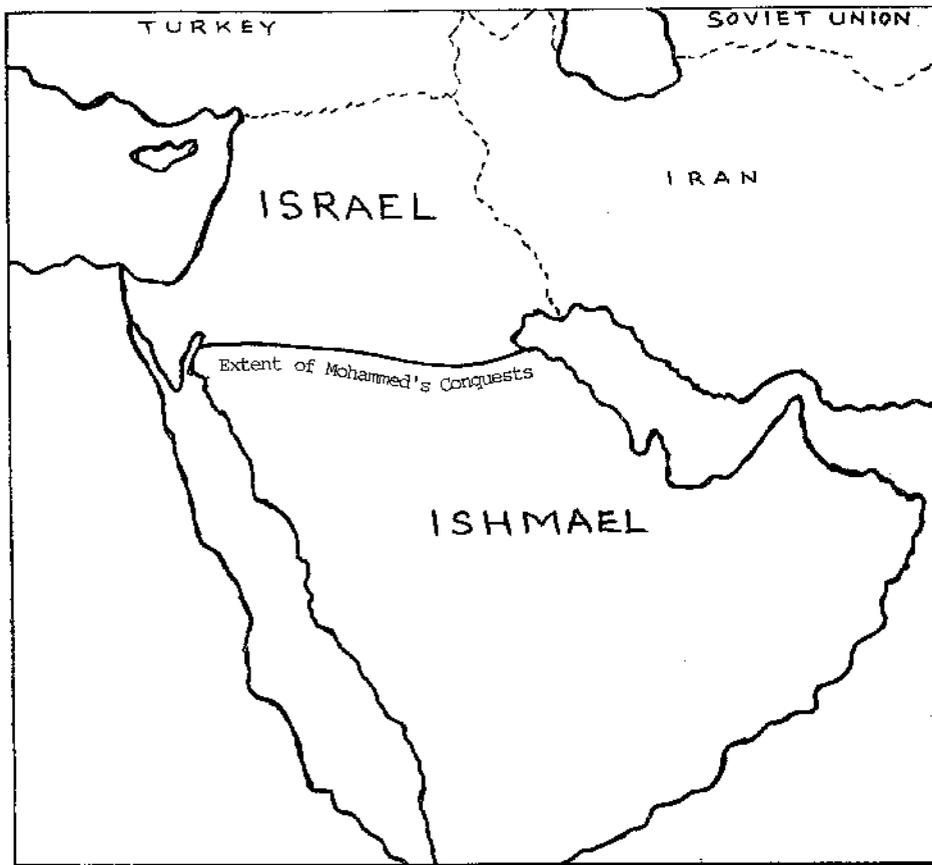
Montreal

Regina Saleh (née Somekh)

Mr. S.S. has been telling people that he has known me for 75 years. He must be right. Although I am only 75 years old, I well remember seeing him at my Brith Mila!●

Cheshire

George E.



The Jews' missed opportunities

Much discussion is going on concerning the future of the West Bank and Gaza and Israel's secure borders, but these discussions are confined to narrow parameters, without regard to the realities of the Middle East and the lessons of history.

The lesson of the last 3,000 years is that any nation that wants to have a lasting presence in the Fertile Crescent must achieve hegemony over the whole region. Any attempt to hold only a small part of the area has ended in failure.

This, perhaps, partly explains why the First Temple lasted only 350 years, the Second 600 years and the Mosque of Omar on the site has lasted over 1,300 years. (The architecture may also be a factor).

Does history repeat itself? Like a good teacher, History only repeats itself when its lesson is not learned. Israel must realise that her true frontiers are on the borders of Iran and Turkey and must regard the whole Fertile Crescent as her area of concern and influence.

It was the Jews who invited the Arabs and helped them to conquer the Fertile Crescent and played a leading role in organising its administration.

Since the end of the First World War, Arab regimes have been set up in the region without regard to the rights and interests of the other inhabitants. In Iraq, in particular, Jews had more historical rights than the Arabs but the Arabianization of the region has been going on for 70 years and has been intensified for the last 30 years, during which time the Arab population has doubled and redoubled.

The Jews were squeezed out of Iraq and Syria, the Kurds have been persecuted and transferred from their habitats to distant places and the Lebanese Christians are being subdued.

In the 1,100 years from 500 BCE to 600 CE, the Jews had several opportunities to establish their rule in the Fertile Crescent, but they left it to the Arabs to burst out of the desert and spread the Judaic message of Islam.

Can there be a new opportunity?●

Arab Land Law takes effect Thousands of Jews deprived of lands from *Chronicles of the Past*

3 April, 694
1296 years ago

The Law of Land Expropriation went into effect today, after the Caliph's High Court in Damascus rejected a last minute appeal by the Jews of Beth Shan.

Thousands of families which had returned to the farms taken away from them 65 years ago by Roman Emperor Heraclius, are now to be expropriated once again – this time by the Caliph.

Some of the seized lands will become the Caliph's personal property, while the rest are to be distributed among Moslem immigrants from Arabia.

Arab leaders explained that all lands now belong to them by the right of conquest●

Antisemitism defined

There is a significant component of sadism in antisemitism. Sadists are excited by the proximity of defenceless individuals; and when the individuals cease to appear defenceless, some potential antisemites tend to lose interest.

Opinion surveys show that antisemitism actually reached its peak right at the end of WWII – when Jews seemed at their most helpless, ever – and went on declining through the fifties and sixties when Jews began to look distinctly less helpless. It is said that after the Six Day War, every Jew became an inch taller!

It is on the rise again, as more pressure is applied on Israel to accommodate the Palestinians, and the Jewish State is looking more isolated in the world.

The Arabs have cleverly manoeuvred world opinion into believing that the Middle East conflict is between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs. The conflict is with the neighbouring Arab countries who have to find a solution themselves to the Palestinian problem which they created.

By turning the tables on the Arabs, antisemitism would again lose its force●

Arabs and Soviet Jewry

Since 1987, the PLO and various Arab governments have been trying to put pressure on Moscow to prevent Russian Jews from leaving for Israel. But the Soviet government has refused to discuss a domestic subject, one involving human rights and covered by Soviet-US trade agreements.

During WWII, the Arabs followed the same tactics with Hitler and succeeded in stopping Jews from leaving Europe, thus ending in the gas chambers. The Arabs have to bear a major responsibility for the Holocaust.

Arab countries often threaten with boycott, but nothing happens to those who call their bluff. After the war they tried to prevent West Germany from paying reparations to Israel, but Bonn refused to be intimidated and went on to pay £27 billion in Jewish compensation●

Tell me a story

A lady told me the other day that she reads *The Scribe* from cover to cover, and enjoys every word of it. But, she confessed, she forgets everything soon afterwards. I assured her that she didn't have to feel guilty.

When I was eight and my grandfather was nearly eighty, we used to lie down on the flat roof of the house in the heat of the Baghdad summer evening and he used to tell me interesting anecdotes from his life experience and his vast knowledge. He then used to ask me to tell him a story myself. After recounting short tales from my limited repertoire, I once asked him, "Sida, will you remember the stories I am telling you?" "No, my son," came the reply. "But I enjoy them for the moment"●



The Rose Garden

by Meer S. Basri

Meer Basri occupied many high positions in Iraq: at the Foreign Ministry, Director of the Baghdad Chamber of Commerce, Manager of Eastern Commercial Corporation, Director of the Dates Marketing Board, represented Iraq at a number of international conferences, and was finally President of the Community in Iraq. His prolific memory is a veritable encyclopaedia of dates, events and personalities. He wrote several books on economics, politics and literature.

But above all, Meer Basri wishes to be remembered as a poet. He has several collections of poetry, in particular, an iyyad on the history of the world – 3000 verses long.

مير بصري

جنة الورد

جنة الورد يقيني في الشتاء
 وفصول الورد مالت عارية
 والغيوم الذئبة تحتل الفضاء
 تحجب الشمس العجوز الواهية
 تصفر الريح كغطى بأثمة
 فقذرت دفة الجار النائبة
 والشجيرات تثبت لدية
 حلالاً صفرًا، فروعًا بالية
 همد القم كأطباق الحديد
 تلمح الماء بطوق مه عديد
 وتبتئ المأس في الكون الحزين
 ولما الورد تخفى نائمًا
 في الشجيرات، جنبًا حاليما
 بربيع بلقي ضاحي الجبين

عود الى جنة الورد

عدت، والعود الخائض أهدى
 والربيع الغضبي يري في النسيم
 يصر الثلجان، يلهو بتوعد
 ويثير النقي بالوعيد القديم
 يا لورد الروض نهار المبراعم
 نيتي بالعطر والنور البسيم
 يفتحي الكمام صبحًا وهو هاشم
 بهوى النقي كفتريس الوسيم
 قال لي الورد: ألد ندي، وهل
 ضعت بين المأس بطغي والتمل
 فاحترت الحزن طورًا والسرور؟
 ولما الأدمان تبلي وتجرد
 تغمر الدفق متى هم تبدد
 كل شيء عابر متى الدهور

The Rose Garden in Regents Park, London (Translated from the Arabic)

The Rose Garden called me in winter.
The naked twigs bowed down,
Dark clouds filled the sky
shrouding the old languid sun.

The wind whistled like a forlorn bereaved mother
who lost the warmth of far-off seas.
The bushes bended their heads
wearing their yellow tattered garments.

The cold was frozen like a sheet of ice,
bridling water with an iron ring,
sending a wave of desperation in the dull universe.
But the roses slept mysteriously inside the bushes
akin to embryos dreaming
of a warm brilliant spring.

The Rose Garden Re-visited

I returned to the Garden. What a happy return,
when the nascent spring flutters with the breeze.
It sings, plays, exudes love and
intoxicates the soul with dormant passions.

O Roses blossoming in a bath
of fragrance and light,
unfurling their petals at dawn,
enamoured of themselves like graceful Narcissi.

The Rose said to me: Do you not know?
You were lost between despair and hope,
you felt sorrow and happiness.
But Time wears and renews,
fills the horizon with glitter and then dissipates
the light.
Everything is transient, even Eternity●

Jewish Senior Officials of Iraq – 1950

In addition to the list of 1945 which appeared in the No. 38 issue.
This and previous lists were supplied by Mr. Meer S. Basri.

- Shaul Hakham Sasson, b.1908, Mumayiz, Ministry of Agriculture
- Yahuda Ishaq, b.1899, Mumayiz, Ministry of Finance
- Heskail Haron Ishaq, b.1900, Mumayiz, Ministry of Finance
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- Ya'cub Ezra, b.1904, Accountant, Ministry of Justice
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COOKERY CORNER

Terbiyeli Tebit – a variation of Tebit by Lisette David

(This recipe has come about as a result of an argument between the children, all wanting a lot of stuffing from the original Tebit. I found that by filling the whole skin with as much stuffing as possible, then there are no more arguments and they all can have a share).

Ingredients:

1 × 5½lb roaster, the skin removed in one piece (see below).

The stuffing:

1½ cups (approx 11oz) basmati rice, soaked in cold water for 2 hours
Flesh of the chicken, cut in ½ inch chunks
2 medium (5oz) onions, finely chopped
3 tbsps oil
3 tbsps tomato purée
1 cup water
2oz margarine, chopped in little bits
2 rounded tbsps mixed spices
Salt and black pepper to taste

The sauce:

1 × 15oz can chopped tomatoes
2 tbsps tomato purée
1 large sliced onion
1½ cups (12 fl.oz) water
1 teaspoon salt
10 grinds black pepper
2 tbsps oil
1 tsp mixed spices

Persuade the butcher to skin the chicken. If he demurs, proceed yourself as follows: using a sharp knife, cut round the skin at the end joint of the wings and legs, then loosen the skin from the flesh all over the bird, using your fingers. Finally pull off the skin as though “undressing” the bird, finishing with the legs.

To make the stuffing:

Sauté the chopped onions in the oil until golden, then add the raw chicken chunks and the tomato purée, and cook until the chicken has browned well. Stir in the well-rinsed rice and the water, and keep stirring to avoid sticking.

When almost all the moisture has evaporated, take the pan off the heat and add the chopped margarine, the spices, salt and pepper. Sew up the skin, leaving an aperture, stuff, then transfer the stuffed skin to a large casserole and re-form with your hands into the shape of a flattened chicken. (Can be frozen at this stage). Whisk all the sauce ingredients in a bowl and pour over the “bird”. Cover with foil and bake for 3 hours in a moderate oven (Gas No.5, 375F, 190C) until the “bird” is rich brown and has absorbed all liquid.

Well done, Lisette!

Variation:

You may add the can of chopped tomatoes to the stuffing ingredients, reduce the water accordingly and dispense with the sauce altogether. In that case, brush the stuffed skin with the 2 tablespoons of oil.

Some people refuse to part with their recipes or they give them in a mutilated form. What do you think of them?●

The Laws of Passover

In commemoration of the Lord having spared the firstborn of Israel on the first Passover night, every Jewish male firstborn – of the father or of the mother, and even following a miscarriage, must fast on Passover Eve. For the firstborn under 13, the father has to fast. If it falls on the Sabbath, fast on Thursday. On taking part in a feast of a religious nature, one breaks the fast.

It is forbidden to eat matzah on Passover Eve, in order that at the Seder the matzah should have the flavour of originality.

We must dispose of all *hametz* by 10am on Passover Eve.

The five types of grain from which *hametz* (leaven) can be made are: wheat, spelt, barley, oats and rye. Legumes, such as rice, beans and lentils cannot become *hametz* at all. The general Sephardi custom is to permit them, as long as they have been thoroughly checked before Passover for the presence of any of the five types of grain.

On Sabbath eve, light candles, then say blessings; on other days say blessings and light candles at same time.

The Seder Service must commence half an hour after sunset, on both nights.

We must relate the story of the exodus from Egypt on Passover night.

We must eat matzah on Passover night.

It is customary to eat a roasted egg, after reciting the appropriate blessing, in commemoration of the pilgrimage sacrifice. It is usually eaten at the end of the meal but, if children are present, it can be eaten after *ma neshanna*. Some people believe that eating the egg is a sign of mourning. This is wrong. The egg is a symbol of life and denotes the renewal of nature at spring-time.

Every person is obliged to drink four cups of wine or grape juice at the Seder. The capacity of the cup should be about 87ml. wine and water. Each time, the greater part of that quantity is drunk. It is customary to have the wine prepared by another person, as a sign of freedom.

On drinking the four cups, as well as on eating the matzah, the *korekh* and the *afikoman*, one leans to the left side, as was the custom in ancient times among free noblemen who used to dine on couches in a leaning position.

If you drink wine without leaning, you have to drink again.

The Talmud (Pesachim 108a) stresses that



A Baghdadi smoking his narghila (from *National Geographic Magazine*). Leaning on the left is still customary in the Middle East●

to lean on the right is possibly dangerous, as it could cause a person to choke, as the food or drink may go into the windpipe before the gullet. (Leaning on the left also leaves the right hand free)●

Festival of Freedom

“In every generation,” says the Hagadah recited on Passover, “it is incumbent on every Jew to imagine that he himself left Egypt.” This is because he should appreciate the true meaning of Freedom, with its rights and privileges, as well as its duties and responsibilities.

The Exodus was the prototype of all the great national liberation movements in subsequent centuries. It had, moreover, an additional purpose. This was manifest at the Revelation on Mount Sinai when the Almighty gave Moses the Torah, including the Ten Commandments, which became the basis of civilised society. Thus the famous doctrine of “freedom under the law” was expounded to prevent liberty degenerating into licence.

The tremendous revolutions in Eastern Europe, as well as in the Soviet Union in recent months with the overthrow of Communist dictators and doctrines, is part of this same process of extending freedom under the law through the setting up of the framework of Democracy. The revolutions are considered more momentous than the French Revolution of 1789 or the nation-state revolutions of 1848, because they occurred peacefully, with the exception of Romania.

During Passover we are reminded of the famous *Shirat Moshe* (the song of Moses) sung at the parting of the Red Sea and the drowning of the Egyptian armies: “*Mi el Kamocha . . .* Who is like unto thee, O Lord, glorious in holiness, revered in praises, doing wonders.” It is said that a simple maidservant at that moment of history had a greater insight into the works of the Almighty than many a subsequent prophet. Thus Freedom and Social Justice are the twin ideals exemplified by *zeman herutenu*, the Season of our Freedom, Passover● P.S.G.

Israeli Television

Israeli Television sent a team of six to London to film a documentary on the Jews of Iraq in Britain – the first in a promising and interesting series to be called *The Jews of the East in the West*.

These documentaries are being made at the initiative of Baghdadi-born Mr. Yacov Lamdan (Muallem) who is the producer of the series. Mr. Meir Avihod, born in Basrah, is the director.

It is interesting to note that the temporary Director General of Israel's Television is Mr. Nessim Mashaal and the Director of Programmes is Mr. Yosef Semah – both Iraqi born.

The documentary should be ready in May/June●

We sadly report the death in Montreal, last February, of Mr. Sasson Abed at the age of 93. Born in Baghdad, he went to Basrah after WWI, where he was head of the Community in the forties. In Baghdad he served on several communal committees and was director of the Lawees automobile business. He donated substantial sums to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and to charities in Canada and Israel● M.S.B.

The Scribe comes out at irregular intervals. Readers can follow the sequence by the issue numbers●