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Chag Sukkot Sameach



Cover art "Sukkot, praying by the Kotel" by Alex Levin
(see full painting and About the Cover, p.3).

Editorial

Below is my editorial from six years ago at this time of year. My father, Gabriel Cohen (1908–2007), founder of this newspaper, died the following spring and that was the last year I had my own sukkah. I miss him and although it is great fun to visit some of the sukkahs around town, I miss having my own.

As I type this editorial on my keyboard, I am merely feet away from my rainbow sukkah (see photo p.20). If it weren't too much trouble to move my computer, I would be typing on the table inside of it. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur felt to me like 40 years of wandering in the desert, and now joy comes from being able to sit in the sukkah, inhaling the fresh, crisp air of autumn.

Feeling the gentle wind on my face, watching the bright yellow leaves as they swirl off the branches to the ground, and hearing the crunching of dry leaves as my neighbors walk on the sidewalk past the front of the house are all reminders of this season. Smelling the sweet aroma of the *etrog* and *luluv* as I shake it in all four directions then up and down help me appreciate the bounty of the harvest – apples, corn, and pumpkins that grow locally.

We had no sukkah at my house when I was growing up. My first memory of this ritual is from years ago at the local JEA (Jewish Educational Association), the Hebrew school I attended after school, three days a week. I also have fond memories of the sukkah that students erected in front of the Hillel House at Indiana University in Bloomington.

This year I was able to finish building my sukkah early, before sunset, even amidst several interruptions such as a long-distance phone call from a rabbi in New York who wanted to put in a good word about an employee, and running back and forth to my father's bedroom every 15 minutes when he called wanting to know what was going on. Then we ran out of duct tape, which I was using to strengthen some of the joints. With the help of only one other person, we accomplished the job in about four hours.

This sukkah is made with PVC pipes and sides of 42-inch panels of cloth, each a different color. About 10 years ago, I bought bright-colored fabric of all the colors in the rainbow and sewed each panel. Then I used three metal eyelets, evenly spaced across the top so I could secure the panels to the PVC pipe with rope. The *s'chach*, or roof, is long wooden 2X2 strips placed along the length and width, with branches trimmed from the yard on top.

I got the idea for this sukkah after seeing a similar one in Berkeley at the

Chassidic Rabbi

BY RABBI BENZION COHEN

One of my readers took issue with the negative picture I painted of my secular upbringing. He feels that some secular people are good and ethical and some religious people are not.

Chassidism teaches that each of us has good and evil. Our good side tries to make us good, and our evil side tempts us to do wrong. When I lived a secular life the most important thing was to have a good time. I spent all my time and energy looking for and dreaming about having a good time, but rarely experienced it. However, I considered myself to be a good person. There were some nasty things going on around me that I never participated in. So it is indeed possible to be secular and good. But can you be secular and lead a happy and wonderful life? I did not succeed.

Now the most important thing in my life is to do good. I discovered Lubavitch and learned how to have a real good time, almost 24 hours a day. I enjoy the daily prayers, learning Torah, and bringing love and happiness to as many people as I can. However, my evil side often ambushes me. When I pray, he sends me all kinds of interesting thoughts to take my mind off of the words that I am saying. If things are not going my way, he can sometimes get me upset or angry. These are not good feelings. I am doing much better, but there is room for improvement. So even though I am religious I still do wrong. But basically I lead a good and happy life.

What about people who consider themselves secular, and yet they try to be loving and helpful to all people? This is a step in the right direction. In fact, I would not consider such a person secular at all. To love your neighbor is one of the most important *mitzvahs* in the Torah. Hillel the Elder, one of our greatest sages, said about this commandment: "This is the whole Torah, whilst the rest is but commentary".

Why is this mitzvah so important and central? Why are all of the other 612

(see Ben Zion, page 3)



home of the then rabbi of Hillel at San Francisco State University, Dan Dorfman. In previous years, different kinds of flying insects have been attracted to the colorful cloth panels. They seem to like resting on them. I don't mind as long as they don't think they are *ushpizin*.

For those who don't remember the word "ushpizin", (Aramaic for "guests"), they are our seven ancestors who visit us in our sukkah, one per day, during the holiday. Traditionally they were Abraham,

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Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and David but now sometimes women are included. Last year a movie was produced with that same title. (Jennie Cohen 10-11-06)

Chag Sukkot Sameach!

Jennie Cohen, October 3, 2012 ★

About the Cover

Sukkoth, praying by the Kotel

(Oil on canvas 40" x 48" – below)
by Alex Levin, Art Levin Studio –
www.ArtLevin.com.

Alex Levin comes from Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, where he was born in 1975 and later attended Art Academy, from which he graduated with honors.



In 1990 Levin immigrated to Israel, where he continues to live in the city of Herzeliya.

With a most productive and hectic schedule, Levin finds additional time to grow as an artist and studies new techniques with Professor Baruch Elron who was the Chairman of Israel Artist Association.

His main painting styles are Surrealism and Realism – featuring a range of works in oil, acrylic, pencil, charcoal, and tempera paints – practicing the original manner of 16th century technique, which is the multilayered use of tempera and oil (no brush strokes).



Artworks of Levin are admired worldwide and were purchased for numerous private, corporate, and institutional collections in the United States, Israel, France, Italy, Ukraine, Switzerland, and Belgium. This young artist, who just turned thirty years old, was directly acknowledged by many influential figures including actor and producer Richard Gere, Madonna, Canadian Jazz player Oscar Peterson and former president of Israel Ezer Weizman.

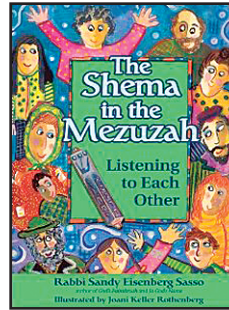
After serving 3 years in the Israeli Army, in 1997 Levin entered the industrial and web design program which was a great benefit to his artwork.

Rabbi Sandy Sasso pens another charming tale

REVIEWED BY SYBIL KAPLAN

The Shema in the Mezuzah: Listening to Each Other. By Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso. Jewish Lights, \$18.99 hardcover, October 2012. Illustrated by Joani Keller Rothenberg.

Anyone familiar with children's books can be excited when a new Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso book is published. She has written 16 children's books (if my count is correct) and at least five books for adults.



Based on a 12th century rabbinic debate, this charming tale begins with Annie's grandmother who delays baking cookies until the *mezuzah* is put up on the doorpost of her new house. She stops to tell Annie about a town where the people disagreed so much on how to put up the mezuzah on their doors, they shouted and argued loudly about it. Then they consulted the rabbi who had a very interesting reply to them.

Children ages 3 to 6 will enjoy this serious, yet lively story of how people who disagree can learn to compromise. It also teaches young children about God, the mezuzah, and living with each other.

Rabbi Sandy E. Sasso was the first female Reconstructionist rabbi and the second female to be ordained as a rabbi. When she married a rabbi, she and her husband became the first rabbinical couple, and she was the first rabbi to become a mother.

She and her husband have been rabbis at the Congregation Beth el Zedeck in Indianapolis, Ind. since 1977.

Joani Keller Rothenberg, who also lives in Indianapolis, is a children's art therapist and mural painter. She created the whimsical, colorful illustrations for this book.

Sybil Kaplan is a journalist, food and feature writer, and author of nine kosher cookbooks. ☆

He is currently working on two themes: "Tradition of Jewish Heritage" and "Venice through the mask's eyes".

"Tradition of Jewish Heritage" is a collection of works of Jerusalem's holy Western Wall and it's surrounding religious neighborhood. Through the strokes of his brush, Levin has captured the residents of Jerusalem's ultra-Orthodox neighborhood

(see Cover, page 7)

BENZION

(continued from page 2)

mitzvahs but commentary to this mitzvah? Chassidism explains that by learning Torah and fulfilling the other mitzvahs we can come to realize the holiness of life. We were all created by the same Father, and therefore we are all brothers and sisters. We all have a holy and awesome soul. From here it follows that we should love our neighbors and try to help them.

According to secular thought life has no meaning. How did we come to be alive? Due to a series of accidents that happened many years ago. Do accidents have any meaning? According to secular thought, no. So why help this guy in need? He is nothing, just an accident.

If you try to love and help your neighbor, you have adopted one of the main points of Judaism. What comes next? Think about how this has improved your life. When you help someone in a loving way, when you cheer up someone who is sad, you experience a spiritual pleasure far superior to all of the physical pleasures. Spiritual pleasures are also great for your health, while many physical pleasures, like overeating or smoking, can ruin your health. When you show people love, it is only natural that they should feel love for you. This is how you can find real friendship.

If one religious practice has really improved your life, it is certainly worthwhile to try out more mitzvahs. Who knows? Maybe all of our ancestors, who lived lives of Torah and mitzvahs, were not just primitive. Maybe they had the secrets of a truly good life.

A further point. Why have many so called "secular" people adopted the mitzvah of loving your neighbor? This is another sign that we are getting very close to our complete and final redemption. At that time there will be no more war, crime or hatred – only peace and love. I see great progress in this direction, both in my personal life, and in the lives of many millions worldwide. The Rebbe told us 20 years ago that we are at the beginning of our redemption. We only need to open our eyes and we can see it happening. It is up to each and every one of us to make it happen sooner. Each additional mitzvah helps to bring *Moshiach* now!

We wish all of our readers and all of Israel a happy *Succos*. May we all celebrate together in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Cohen lives in K'far Chabad, Israel. He can be reached by email at bzcohen@orange.net.il. ☆



Civility and Democracy



BY RABBIS
DENNIS C. AND
SANDY E. SASSO

As the Jewish High Holy Days end, the election season swings into full gear with the party conventions and the Presidential debates soon to come. Political advertisements pit one candidate against the other, focusing less on relevant issues than on personal attacks. The climate is combative and marked by an atmosphere of confrontational and uncivil discourse. Ideological polarization in our country grows deeper and wider. There is little incentive to reach consensus. The very concept is tantamount to political suicide. The desire for personal advancement and private gain takes precedence over the critical needs of the public welfare and the civil good. Gaining power takes priority over solving problems.

We tend to approach disagreements as "either/or" debates that disintegrate into over-simplification of complex issues. False dichotomies invite hostility and incivility. The results are proving toxic.

Technology worsens the addiction. Faceless communication makes it easier to demonize others. The demand for instantaneous response does not allow for reflection or for tempering of anger. Civil society must operate within the framework of cherished liberties. Still, just because we have the right of free speech, does not mean that everything we think, should be said; nor that everything we say, should be written; nor everything written, published or given a public forum. Yet that is what often happens on the internet.

Words have power. Biblically the divine act of creation is verbal. *Cosmos* (order) is called into being out of *chaos* (disorder). The magical expression – abracadabra comes from the Aramaic. It means *abra* – I will create, *kadabra* – as I speak. Words create worlds. Unfortunately, our words are generating chaos rather than cosmos, tearing us apart rather than bringing us together.

We need fewer split screens of pro/con debates that seek to entertain us and more in-depth and thoughtful analyses that aim educate us. We need to refrain from character assassination and engage in issues illumination. We need our candidates and elected politicians to do less for the sake of partisanship and more for the sake of our commonwealth.



An Observant Eye

BY RABBI AVI SHAFRAN

Living "out of the box"

Olivewood is beautiful. It reminds me of *Eretz Yisrael* and little carved camels; it has a delicate, calming hue. And silver, well, it is pure and shiny and smooth, and brings *sefer Torah* ornaments to mind. The *esrog* boxes made of ornately carved olivewood and elegant, glimmering silver are most fitting containers for holding an *objet d'mitzvah*. My personal preference, though, is cardboard.

Not any cardboard, that is, but *my*



De Tocqueville, the insightful Frenchman who in the 1830's wrote about American society, remarked that democracy would fail if Americans didn't develop certain "Habits of the Heart." In his new book, *Healing the Heart of Democracy*, Parker Palmer calls these "Habits" the "inward and invisible infrastructure of democracy." They are ways of receiving, interpreting and responding to experiences by engaging our intellect, our emotions, our sense of meaning and purpose. He speaks of a politics of the broken-hearted in which our shared concerns can open us to build bridges of connections.

The Jewish High Holy Days invite us to develop such "Habits of the Heart" – to understand we are all in this together, to respect differences, to disagree in life-affirming ways, to know that our voice can make a difference, and that we have the capacity to strengthen community. This is a time for turning – to turn to one another in dialogue, to develop appreciation for a "commonwealth" that places dignity and respect above privatism, consumerism, violence and greed.

A core component of the High Holy Days prayers of confession deal with the ways we use language, whether to bless or to curse, to upbuild or to denigrate, to praise or malign, to break or to make whole. May the words of our mouths express our best hopes and open our hearts to one another for a year of wholeness and healing, renewal and peace.

Mazel Tov to the Rabbis Sasso who have been senior rabbis of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis for 35 years, and to Sandy whose newest children's book, The Shema in the Mezuzah: Listening to Each Other has just been published. ★

cardboard, the white heavy-paper stock box in which an *esrog* of mine, many years ago, was packed when I bought it. These days, the standard-issue boxes tend toward illustrated green affairs. The old-fashioned white ones were more bland, but also better canvases on which a child's imagination could assert itself.

And so my old *esrog* box – or at least its panels, re-attached now to a more sturdy modern box, covering up the garish green – is unique. Its sides and top feature a young child's rendering in colored markers of, respectively, an *esrog* and *lulav*; a *sukkah*; a smiley-face; and (inexplicably but endearingly) a turtle whose shell is a *sukkah* covered with *schach*. The artists are now either mothers or "in *shidduchim*," but some of us like, on occasion, to time-travel. We look at our grown children and see five-year-olds where they stand. The artwork was beloved to me many years ago when it was created; it's no less beloved to me now.

And so, in my own personal ritual, I yearly unpack my new *esrog* from its sale-box and delicately place it in the one whose panels have enclosed each of my *esrogim* over nearly 20 years. It's not olivewood, and not silver. Not even gold or platinum. It's more precious than that.

I admit I get some stares in *shul*. Some may think I'm a cheapskate, unwilling to shell out a few dollars for what they think would be a more respectable container for a holy object, or insufficiently aware of the importance of *hiddur mitzvah*, the ideal of "beautifying a commandment." Others, though – at least I like to imagine – understand the ethereal beauty of my unusual *esrog*-box, and perhaps are brought to some memories of their own, and even to some thoughts appropriate to *Sukkos*.

The word *sukkah*, *sefarim* note, can be seen as rooted in *socheh* – "to see" or "to perceive." A *sukkah*, it seems, can afford us a deeper perspective on life. Most people – and Jews are people too – go through life trying to "get stuff." What storehouses of gold and silver once conferred on their owners is today bestowed by new-model cars and luxurious homes built on the ruins of less luxurious predecessors. But stuff is stuff.

And even those of us who buy used vehicles and live in modest homes are far from immune to the "get stuff" societal imperative. We may apply it differently, limited as we are by reality. But we still feel the push to add to the inventories we'll never take with us.

When we sit in our primitive week-house, though, outside the homes that harbor so many of our possessions, we may find it easier to realize that our accumulations are not essential. We can

(see Shafran, page 9)



Jewish Educator

BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN

The art of forgiveness

Have you ever wondered why it's so hard to forgive someone who has hurt your feelings? Do you hesitate to say you're sorry when you've hurt someone you love?

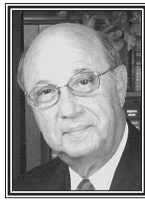
The act of forgiveness is a reciprocal process because it involves two people: the one who has done the injury and the one who has been injured. But whether we are asking for forgiveness or giving it to others, it is one of the first "morality" lessons we learn as human beings. Because from the moment we begin to assert our autonomy, independence and free will, we will inevitably do things that hurt others.

Consider two-year-old Sarah playing in the sandbox with her sister Ellen. She hits Ellen and grabs her shovel. Mom scolds Sarah for being bad and tells her to say "I'm sorry" to Ellen. When she does, mom encourages Ellen to tell Sarah "That's okay." And so begins the cycle of learning that when we hurt others, we must apologize for our mistakes and that when we are hurt, we should accept apologies graciously.

To be human is to be flawed. We err, act without thinking, and react out of anger, frustration and indifference. It is impossible to be in relationship with others and not hurt them at some point along the way.

For many of us it is not easy to forgive others, perhaps because we have difficulty in forgiving ourselves. All too often, *both* parties feel that they are the injured person and that it is the other person who should apologize. Jewish tradition offers great wisdom and practical advice however, to help us learn the art of forgiveness. Beginning with the Biblical model of Divine forgiveness, we are taught a short but sweet lesson about the sins we commit against God. Simply stated, man sins and God forgives.

For God to forgive us, we must first take three corrective steps: acknowledge our wrongdoing, cease from doing it again and take action to do better in the future. That is the message of the High Holidays; the idea that God will forgive us when we engage in sincere *teshuvah*, or repenting and returning to God. Our liturgy affirms this when we say together, as a community, prayers like *Unantana Tokef*, acknowledging that we have all erred but that through repentance, sincere prayer and acts of charity, God's decree and judgment will be tempered.



Wiener's Wisdom

BY RABBI IRWIN WIENER, D.D.

The whole duty of Man

Fall is here. At least that is what the calendar says. Of course, here in sunny Arizona it is still summer. The cool weather will arrive, if only for a short visit. Elsewhere the trees are changing color. The air is brisk. Wardrobes change. Attention is directed toward the fall holidays.

October is the time for *Sukkot*. It is sort of the stepchild of all the holidays, coming just five days after Yom Kippur. It gets lost in the commotion of repentance, contrition and fasting. We are weary from all the celebrations of gratitude and forgiveness and acceptance.

However, *Sukkot* is a remarkable holiday because it encompasses three tireless messages: Thanksgiving – a time set aside to thank God for all that we have; Fortitude – a time to reflect on our endurance; Contemplation – a time to understand that everything is temporary.

We commemorate the Exodus, the defining moment in our history, not only with Passover, but with *Sukkot* as well. We are commanded to build booths to dwell in as a reminder of the makeshift buildings used for shelter. Another reminder of what Solomon writes in



But what about the wrongs we commit against one another? For those, we must seek forgiveness, not from God, but directly from the person we have hurt. Jewish law mandates that if someone has hurt you and sincerely asks for your forgiveness, you must forgive him with a complete heart and a willing spirit. Because of the human tendency to hold on to our resentments, there is a special reward for one who freely forgives. The Talmud tells us: "For the person who overcomes his natural tendencies and instead forgives, all of his sins are forgiven."

There are times however, when we are too angry or too hurt to forgive, even when we are approached by the wrongdoer. In that case, we are counseled to tell the person seeking forgiveness the truth: that we aren't ready yet but that he should come back, in a week or a month, and ask again. During that time, it is up to us to work on our anger and try to overcome what is preventing us from granting

(see Lederman, page 9)

Ecclesiastes about time and chance.

On the other hand, I believe, we should look at Scripture's reminder of the past as a blue print for the future. The booth may be temporary but the reminder is permanent; to take the time allotted to us and make it more productive; to take away the pettiness and concentrate on those things that will enhance our lives.

There is so much turmoil in the world. For example, we witness the murder of innocent people in the name of religion. It is an indication of the hatred that exists in the world, the hatred of humanity, as we know it; the hatred of decency; the hatred fostered by frustration and indifference. It seems that at every turn someone is determined to unravel the weave of human existence. What do we do? How do we plan for the future? Is there a future?

The reading of Ecclesiastes is a reminder that not all is wrong with the world. There is a time to weep, but there is a time to laugh; a time to tear down, but also a time to build up; a time to love as well as a time for hate. Everything has its time and season. *Sukkot* is a stark reminder of this because the buildings we erect are not there tomorrow. Life, like the *Sukkah*, is tenuous, which also is an indication that we must make the best of what we have and enjoy it to the fullest.

The reading is not just a rendering of the futility of existence, but also contains some wise recommendations indicating that perhaps Solomon, even in his darkest moments, understood that there is a purpose to life. After all, he writes, "To everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven." (Chapter 3)

What we do, how we plan, will determine our future and those following. Even Solomon ends with the phrase, "The sum of the matter, when all is said and done, revere God and observe His commandments, for that is the whole duty of man." (12:13)

Sometimes life is not fair. Sometimes we witness unmentionable horrors. Sometimes we lose faith in our ability to overcome the sadness that we encounter. Then we wake to realize that there are blessings as well, birth, celebrations, longevity and happiness. This is the message of *Sukkot*; "We give thanks to God for He is good, His mercy endures forever". All we need do is ask. All we need do is sit in the *Sukkah* and look at the stars through the branches and be reminded that the Torah demands that we do not have to accept things as they are, but can make them better.

Perhaps Shakespeare said it best when he wrote that the fault lies not in the stars, but in us.

Rabbi Irwin Wiener is spiritual leader of the Sun Lakes Jewish Congregation. Comments to ravyitz@cox.net. His new book, *Living with Faith*, will be published in January, 2013. ★



Kabbalah of the Month

By MELINDA RIBNER

Sukkah – divine protection

As the rain poured down heavily in Manhattan, I was reminded of a teaching regarding the timing of the holiday of *Sukkot*. Because the Israelites lived in the *sukkah* dwellings after the Exodus that took place in the spring it would seem more reasonable for the Jewish people to dwell in these huts during the spring time. Why then are the Jewish people commanded to live in these dwellings in *Tishrei*, during the fall?

All the holidays in *Tishrei* are devoted to deepening our relationship with God. This month is a time to experience one's vulnerability and the need for divine protection which is best done in the fall when the weather is changing, when it is not too cold, but getting colder. Because the *sukkah* provides shelter from the natural elements to some extent, it engenders a feeling of divine protection. If *Sukkot* were to be celebrated during the spring, the rabbis suggest that the holiday might be experienced as a time of communing with nature, rather than a testimony to divine protection during the wanderings in the desert. Another reason given is that the *sukkah* commemorates the clouds of glory that surrounded the Jewish people after the Exodus. The clouds of glory departed during the sin of the golden calf and returned after *Yom Kippur* when forgiveness had been received.

For the many of us who may feel displaced at this time, not clear about our place in the world, the *sukkah* may just be our place to find ourselves in a new way. The holidays preceding *Sukkot* are a preparation for the intimacy available on *Sukkot*. *Yom Kippur* purified us and we are now invited to God's humble abode of the *sukkah*.

The Torah tells us "You shall dwell in booths (*sukkot*) for a seven day period in order that your generations shall know that I caused the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them forth from the land of Egypt." (Lev23:42-44)

Everything we need to learn in life, we can learn in the *sukkah*. You will not know what I am talking about unless you give yourself some time in a *sukkah*. Sitting, eating, drinking, meditating,

praying in a *sukkah* transmits deep teachings that are more powerful than words could ever do so please avail yourself of this spiritual gift. The holiday of *Sukkot* reminds of what life is really all about. It teaches us to be simple, to be real, to be childlike, to be loving and to share with each other. We are all together on this journey of life. When we are sitting in the *sukkah*, we realize that all the external structures that we have built in our lives are not necessary. Furthermore, they have too often created barriers and separation, rather than unity and love. On *Sukkot* we know that love is what is true, love is what is real. And it is divine love that brings joy.

We were created for joy, so we look in many places for joy in our lives. On *Yom Kippur* we experience a profound awesome joy. We transcend the physical by not eating, drinking, washing, allowing us to be bathed in unconditional love and divine compassion available on that day. On *Sukkot* we experience also a holy awesome joy but this is the joy of the immanence of God: God surrounds us, is with us, and within each of us. We eat, drink, sing, and sit with other people and we feel God. The awareness of God's Presence and love in our lives, in our world, fills us with joy.

In the *sukkah*, we can easily allow ourselves to experience our vulnerability, our depths, our simplicity, our heart and feel totally safe because we are fulfilling a mitzvah prescribed in the Torah. We are sitting in God's humble dwelling place as instructed to do. And that is all that we truly need. The holiday *Sukkot* is a time of intimacy with God and others. Intimacy with God, with our own soul and with other people brings joy.

Sitting in a *sukkah* also reminds us of the Holy Temple and rekindles within us the dream and the prayer that the whole world will soon be a dwelling place for the Shechinah, the Divine Presence. May we see this miracle in our days. May the Holy Temple, the headquarters for love, joy, peace and prosperity for the entire world, be rebuilt in our days. If the world knew this secret, they would beg us to rebuild the Temple.

During the holiday of *Sukkot*, we read *Kohelet* (Ecclesiastes). King Solomon, who had wealth, women, power, and knowledge reviews all these things and concludes that none of them really matter. "All is vanity." In the end of the matter, all is heard, you shall fear God, observe His mitzvot for this is the whole of a person." It is the God connection that is the most important possession we acquire during our brief time on earth. It is the only thing that we take with us when we leave this physical world.

An excerpt from *New Age Judaism* (pg. 129):

Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler in his book *Strive for Truth* asked the following question. "Is giving the result of love or does love come from giving? Do we give to people we love? or do we love people we give to?"

It is customary to think that giving is a byproduct of love. We love someone so we give to them. This is true. But Reb Dessler said that if you want to love others, you should give to them. Become involved in something that is for their benefit. Giving breaks down the psychological barriers between people. We come to love the people we have given to or nurtured.

Remember the book *The Little Prince*? The little Prince goes to a planet where he sees a garden of beautiful roses. At first this discovery was disorienting to him because he had a rose on his own planet that he loved and cared for very much. He thought he loved his rose because she was unique and the most beautiful thing he ever saw. When he is confronted with so many roses as beautiful as his, he questions his love. Why did he think his rose was so special? Why did he love her?

The Little Prince realized that he loved his rose because he tended to her, he watered her, and he weeded her, which explains why the rose will always be precious to him. In the same way, we come naturally to love people we care for and give to. We have a stake in their well being. The only reason that a person is a stranger according to Reb Dessler is that we have not yet given to him. If you bestow goodness on every single person you meet, you will feel close to everyone.

Lesson: Make a point to show love and caring to people who are in your life each day. Each day of *Sukkot* welcome a person with love into your heart. Reach out to a new people during *Sukkot* and befriend them by showing interest in them for no other reason but to be a channel of blessing in the world.

I wish everyone a happy holiday. May we each be blessed to feel God's love and protection in the deepest way.

Melinda (Mindy) Ribner, L.C.S.W. is a spiritual psychotherapist and healer in private practice (www.kabbalahoftheheart.com). She is a teacher of Jewish meditation and Kabbalah for more than 25 years. Author of Kabbalah Month by Month, New Age Judaism, and Everyday Kabbalah, she is also the founder and director of Beit Miriam (www.Beitmiriam.org). She can be reached by email at Beitmiriam@msn.com or Miriam@kabbalahoftheheart.com. Her new book, *The Secret Legacy of Biblical Women* will be coming out soon. ✨

Gather the People



BY RABBI MOSHE
BEN ASHER, PH.D.
AND MAGIDAH
KHULDA BAT SARAH

You may rule over it

There's a verse in the Torah that reads: "If you do good, shall it not be lifted up? And if you do not do good, sin reposes at the door; and to you is its desire – but you may rule over it." (Genesis 4:7)

Regarding the words, "If you do good": We always have the choice to widen or narrow the distance between God and ourselves. The Divine Image – the spark of our inclination to do good, implanted within us by our Creator – may be nurtured or neglected. Up to a certain age that nurture or neglect can be laid at the doorstep of our parents. But beyond childhood it becomes our responsibility and that of the community in which we are members, if in fact we are members of an authentic community.

The understanding of Judaism is that one good deed leads to another, as does one bad deed. (Pirke Avot 4:2) Sometimes, for instance, we become annoyed or angry when we're held to account for the consequences of our misbehavior or for ignoring the well being of those around us. To assuage our feelings of estrangement from God and goodness, we may be tempted to choose greater alienation rather than atonement.

But, "If you do good, shall it not be lifted up?" "Lifted up" refers here to how the sacrifice was lifted up to God in the ancient Temple in Jerusalem. Malbim (Rabbi Meir Lob ben Jehiel Michael, 1809–1879) teaches us that, our "sacrifice" in modern times is the free-will gift that is lifted up to God when we choose to do good, which is what allows us to be "truly free." If we act with kindness and justice toward others, we free ourselves from the guilt, damaged self-esteem, and diminished self-confidence that usually accompany estrangement from God.

Regarding the words, "And if you do not do good": The weight of the wrongdoing that we carry limits our freedom to live fully, decimating our spirit and energy. Sometimes we consciously know we're carrying that weight and we acutely feel its oppressive burden. But sometimes we carry the weight unconsciously, aware of it only as a vague deadening of the spirit, an elusive feeling of emptiness or enervation.

For instance, there was a time in Rabbi Moshe's life when, as a youngster, he was stealing, without rationalization or self-deception. He knew what he was doing – he was a thief, and he felt like one. When occasionally caught, he was ashamed and embarrassed. Later his stealing became more sophisticated – rationalized, one might say. He was making copies of copyrighted computer software and audio and videotapes, stealing the livelihood of their authors. The burden on his conscience was subtler; the spiritual oppression was fogged by self-deception, but nonetheless burdensome. Exposure was not the same threat, because so many others were doing the same thing – but the tapes and disks were constant reminders to his conscience that he was still stealing.

Today, he occasionally still steals, but typically it is someone's time that he has wasted – which, of course, may be that person's most valuable possession. His conscience is less tolerant of stealing than ever; the struggle with his *yetzer hara* or evil inclination has shifted to a higher, more nuanced level.

Regardless of what he has stolen, there has always been a spiritual price for choosing at any moment to allow the evil inclination to direct his behavior.

If we do not exert the will that God has given us to change our course once we have failed to do right, we will most certainly do greater wrongs to others and ourselves. Moral equilibrium is fictive; we are either raising ourselves up or degrading ourselves. Once we waylay ourselves from the right path, we are ever more likely to move further away, for such is the working of the evil inclination.

Regarding the words, "Sin reposes at the door": It does not lurk, "lying in wait" to attack us at a moment of weakness. Our tradition disallows rationalizations such as "the devil made me do it." Au contraire, as Rabbi Samson Rafael Hirsch (1808–1888) notes, "... [Sin] remains quietly behind your door. It does not come in to you by itself, uninvited...you must in the first instance invite it in, set a chair for it at your table...All its desire is that you should master it and direct it."

Regarding the words, "But you may rule over it": Judaism teaches that we are given our senses not that they should master and direct us, but that we should master and direct them to a higher purpose. Whether our senses lead us to crave food, shelter, or sex, Judaism teaches that they are not to be suppressed as evil, but regulated. We are to rule over them and direct them in the image of God.

Suppose we are stealing other people's property or their rights or their time or their reputation – or doing anything else that estranges us from them, from God,

COVER

(continued from page 3)

of Mea Shearim, Jewish attributes, and people at the Western Wall, one of Judaism most holy places.

The artist's new vision of a Venice Carnival takes a completely unique approach and presents the viewer with a lavish and most prominent feature of Venetian Carnival – the Mask.

The earlier paintings from the "Mask collection" were introduced in 2002 in Venice and were awarded with a scholarship to the Venice Academy of Art to support the artist's continuing artistic development and enable him to devote substantial time to the creation of new work.

In 2007 Levin received the Medal Award for the Contribution to the Judaic Art from the Knesset. ★



and from the Divine Image that God has implanted within us. What can we do to change the course of our lives? How can we "rule over it"?

Certainly we must have a desire for freedom from oppression of the spirit within us. We must want more than a life dedicated to satisfying our sensory and material appetites. We must be prepared to draw upon the Divine Image within us to create an image of ourselves that we seek to fulfill. As Nehama Leibowitz (1905–1997), one of our great modern biblical commentators, has said, our "spiritual salvation lies fully within."

But how do we reconstruct ourselves in the Divine Image? At bottom may be the question, how shall I find within myself the resources to do what has, until this moment, seemed impossible to me?

We can choose to invest in and benefit from a congregational community that shares responsibility for uplifting and sustaining the Divine Image in each and every one of its members. We need not struggle alone with our *yetzer hara*.

It is our choice, then, whether we will "rule over it," mastering our evil inclination, or whether it will rule over us. It is our decision whether to remain alone and vulnerable to our evil inclination or, instead, to gather and strengthen ourselves as members of a congregation, counted among the many who seek with others to lift up our congregational community and, by combining our spiritual resources in that community, to lift ourselves up.

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Rabbi Moshe ben Asher and Magidah Khulda bat Sarah are the Co-Directors of *Gather the People*, a nonprofit organization that provides Internet-based resources for congregational community organizing and development (www.gatherthepeople.org). ★



Jewish America

BY HOWARD W. KARSH

How pogroms occurred in Jewish history

Now I understand it. I knew all of the stories of the pogroms that happened at Pesach and Easter. Plays portrayed Jews as Christ killers. Often when the time was ripe and the anger could rise, Jews died and suffered. But the issue of how it happened always needed more explanation. Could anyone belie the lies? Or did they care if what was being said about killing non-Jewish children for their blood to make *matzah* would really be inflammatory?

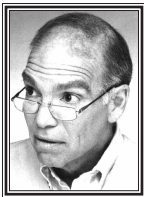
Now history has demonstrated how it happens. Based on facts that are false and ascribed to an entire nation that was blameless, there are fires all over the Middle East. It may be that the majority of the population is not involved in the demonstrations, except for the senseless murder of American officials, but that was also what Germans said, Poles said, and maybe even the residents of Egypt.

For whatever reason, the senseless hatred of Amalek still survives, and it is an act of madness to believe that even if you are an indifferent Jew, you will be safe. We will never be safe.

During this month of Elul, we add a prayer of King David, who talks about the protection of the Almighty. A student of mine counted all the times we say it – 103 according to his counting. We do not run the world. We are not given the means to understand history, in general or in specific, but one thing we have been constantly taught, “If you do not learn from history, you will be forced to relive it.”

We are also in an election year when we are battered, night and day, with non-truths, half truths, wild exaggerations and promises no one can keep. The president is incapable of running the country without the absolute majority. If we believed that, there would be no split tickets. Whoever won would win it all, and if that occurred at least there would be some objective way to judge the competency of the man and the party.

On *Rosh Hashanah*, we beseech our Creator to judge us with mercy. We ask for another year to be a better person, make a difference in the lives of others, and to serve better.



Shipley Speaks

BY JIM SHIPLEY

The road ahead

So, here is where we are. The President of The United States and the Prime Minister of Israel cannot decide which one is the smartest guy in the room (they each think it is he) so we have touchy relations between the two leaders. The Republican nominee for president says the Palestinians do not want peace and the situation is just too complicated for him, so if elected, he will do nothing.

Iran is going to make a bomb. They shift, they obfuscate, they lie – but they are headed for a nuclear bomb of some kind. If they cannot deliver it in devastating force, they can always give it to a group that will transport some form of it to a designated city and set it off.

Israel says stop them now! America says we yet have time for sanctions to bite even harder. Problem is the sanctions are biting the citizens of Iran, not the Ayatollah who probably lives on fruits and berries anyway. For only the second time in recent history we have a head of state who cares little for what happens to his people. For the second time we have a despot whose religious fanaticism believes that if he kills 55 million or so people, including his own it will only make him more welcome in heaven.

The other guy who cared little about his own people? That was Hitler – and 55 million people died as he pursued his own fanatical dream; among them 86 percent of the Jews of Europe.

We also have thousands of people in the Middle East and beyond burning or attempting to burn our embassies and killing Americans. Who are those guys and what do they want? Well, some of them, maybe many of them really do hate everything we are and what we stand for. They will kill indiscriminately – more of their own people than ours, every time. They would like to drag the world back to the 12th century and ignore or overturn every scientific and political gain of the past 1900 years.

But while all of this is deadly serious, the real problem is much more complex. And it has nothing to do with the obvious dislike the leaders of the U.S. and Israel have for each other. It has little or nothing

to do with some kooky-mamey film or maybe even just a trailer for a movie never made at all.

But that is not the heart of the problem. That is a few thousand whackos who just hate as a hobby. The real cause of most of the citizen anger in the Middle East? Same as here. Just the means of displaying it are different. We have millions of people who are either unemployed or under employed and maybe not trained or equipped for a world dominated by technology.

In the Middle East you have roughly 50 million educated but unemployed young men. They revolted against old and stagnant dictatorships that were generational failures. They expected new leadership and this thing called freedom to suddenly and miraculously get rid of the stagnation of hundreds of years and produce jobs for all of them. Not going to happen.

So, they turn their anger against those who encouraged them to revolt: The West. “Yeah!” Our leaders said. “Throw the bums out! Forget that we helped them stay in power and backed them with billions of aid dollars that never trickled down to you!”

And then we figured that there would be an osmosis where democracy would automatically take over and the Muslim Brotherhood and Al Qaeda would just go away. Doesn’t work that way.

In America we have been living on credit cards for years. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, we were asked to sacrifice. Taxes went up, luxuries disappeared and off to war went millions of our men and women. This time? We have the longest war in our history and no sacrifice at home. Nine/eleven hit, we attacked the wrong country with a volunteer army and the president at the time told us to go shopping, everything would be fine.

Well, it wasn’t. If there had been a selective service draft and hundreds of middle class kids who did not want to go had been sent to that God forsaken excuse for a nation called Afghanistan the war would have ended ten years ago. Now the chickens are coming home to roost.

We live in a twitterized world. There is no privacy. We know too much too soon. Our representatives here are too busy trying to sabotage each other to get anything done for the people who sent them there. We have two candidates for the presidency that are unable to articulate a bold plan for our future. Iran looms larger. The Arab Spring has produced a random harvest of violence. Wake me when it’s over.

Jim Shipley has had careers in broadcasting, distribution, advertising, and telecommunications. He began his working life in radio in Philadelphia. He has written his JP&O column for more than 20 years and is director of Trading Wise, an international trade and marketing company in Orlando, Fla. ★

We are told that when a man or woman enters the voting booth, they take their
(see Karsh, page 9)



Holocaust Educator

By MIRIAM ZIMMERMAN

Clarifying opinion toward Germany

In an email to Jennie Cohen regarding my April 25, 2012 column, "From Germany and Back Again in Three Generations: A Family Reclaims Its Roots," Michael Blain made provocative observations which prompted me to clarify my current thinking toward Germany. (See pgs 10-13 at www.jewishpostopinion.com/Jewishpost/NAT_4-25-12.pdf.)

Since a part of my brain holds a permanent place for the Holocaust, my feelings for Germany are superimposed on this placeholder. I sometimes wonder if it will ever be possible for Jews and Germans to achieve "normalcy" in their relations, given the underlying place of the Holocaust in our shared history. There is a constant need for me to assess my evolving feelings toward Germany, clouded by memory.

From Mr. Blain's email: "I meant to comment about Miriam Zimmerman and I think I talked to you [Jennie Cohen] about her before... (I knew her parents very well, and met Miriam also). While Eva [Kor] took it upon herself to 'forgive' the Germans, Miriam wrote... [that] she (unlike her father) is enamored with the new Germany... her daughter [Leah] went to school there and also seems to think Germany is great, or maybe I misunderstood them both."

Mr. Blain correctly noticed that my father, of blessed memory, and I diverge in our attitudes toward Germany. Dad could never like Germany, and, to his dying day, hated going back there. In the summer of 1989, just months before he lost his battle to cancer, he and I gave speeches *auf Deutsch* (in German) at BASF's international headquarters near Mannheim, Germany, protesting their plans to build a paint reprocessing plant in the Wabash Valley, near my hometown of Terre Haute, Ind.

Dad was so traumatized by his experiences in Germany during the Third Reich that he did not want to be left alone. He could not wait to leave. During our "pilgrimage" to Germany in the early 1980's about which I wrote in my April article, we had several conversations about the differences between Germany during the Third Reich and Germany now.

We made the observation that for

SHAFRAN

(continued from page 4)

exist without them. They do not define us. They will one day be left behind for good.

It might seem odd, but that thought – after all, Sukkos is *zman simchaseinu*, "the time of our happiness" – is a joyous one. For true happiness begins with the realization of what *doesn't* really make us happy. Possessions may provide a rush but, like any drug's, it quickly wears off. The soul is not satiated, which is why, as per Chazal, "No man dies with half his desires in hand."

True joy comes from things more rarified than what can be purchased. It comes from our relationships not with things, but with people – our parents and our children, our teachers and our students, our friends and our neighbors.

What we really have in life is not what we own, but what we are.

Some who have seen me walking to shul on *yomtov* with my reconstituted cardboard esrog box proudly in hand may have wondered why I hadn't opted for a hiddur mitzvah. What they failed to comprehend is that I did.

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centuries, Jews have been blamed for the death of Jesus, inciting deadly pogroms at the worst and anti-Semitic attitudes at the least. I remember an unexpected phone call from Dad while I was in college during the 1960s asking me if I had heard about Vatican II. He said that the Roman Catholic Church just rescinded its position that Jews killed Jesus. I remember his words almost verbatim: "If that had happened before, there would never have been the Holocaust."

Scholars of religion today agree that it was the Romans and not the Jews who were responsible for the death of Jesus. Unlike the Jews, the grandparents of the third generation of Germans were responsible for the Holocaust. Neither Jews throughout history nor Germans today are guilty.

I did not use the word "enamored" when I described my feelings toward Germany in my article, as Michael Blain described. I do use the word "admire" when talking about Germany today. I have many reasons for doing so, some of which arose after my trip to Germany with my father.

For example, during a sabbatical, former San Francisco Consul General Rolf Schuette conducted research on attitudes toward Germany under the aegis of the American Jewish Committee. He discovered an

LEDERMAN

(continued from page 5)

forgiveness. After three sincere requests, if we continue to refuse to forgive, then the wrongdoer is regarded as forgiven and we are now treated as the wrongdoer!

There are exceptions and times when forgiveness is not required under Jewish law. For example, no one can forgive a crime which is committed against another person except the victim himself. Accordingly, murder, by definition, is an unforgivable act. In cases of slander or speaking *Lashon Hara*, where the damage is deemed irrevocable, forgiveness is not mandated although we are still encouraged to do so.

In American tort law, hurting another person or their property results in the payment of compensatory damages to "make them whole." Jewish law also requires compensation for wrongdoing but goes a step further. Atonement is meant to make us whole in spirit because when we engage in the act of forgiveness, either as the person asking for it or the one granting it, we better understand the nature of being human and what it means to live with compassion.

Lederman is an award winning author, Jewish educator, public speaker and attorney who lives in Tucson. Visit her website at amyhirshberglederman.com. ★



KARSH

(continued from page 8)

single vote important. As Jews, we need to take ourselves more seriously. Living correctly is a demanding commitment.

Howard W. Karsh lives in Milwaukee, Wisc., and can be reached at hkarsh@gmail.com. He is a community columnist for the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. ★



enormous discrepancy between how Israeli Jews feel about Germany compared to the American Jewish community.

The former view Germany as their second greatest friend, just after the United States. American Jews, in contrast, rank Germany much lower. The study, which includes an historical perspective, is much more nuanced than this schematic summary; you can read the 2005 report yourself, published by the American Jewish Committee and uploaded to their website, at www.bit.ly/Q2Gc8a.

Germany and Israel have all kinds of cultural, educational and military initiatives between them; most go unreported in the English language media. For example, Germany recently sponsored a group of
(see Zimmerman, page 14)



Seen on the Israel Scene

BY SYBIL KAPLAN

Street food eating in Israel

One of the nicest and most distinct Israeli traditions is food. Jews coming from the Middle East and Far East, from Europe, Australia, South Africa, North and South America – all adopted the local cooking habits to their dietary laws and passed them on to their children. The cooking style of the countries where they lived came as part of their baggage when they made their way to Israel and they blended with those who had come before them.

One thing about which there has been little debate is Israeli street foods. It's not an exaggeration that in the greater downtown areas of most Israeli cities and towns, there are street food kiosks on every corner! These offer a wide variety of foods for visitors and natives alike. Many of these foods have crossed the ocean and appear in North American cities, but one might ask, what are the real street foods of Israel and what is their origin?

Chickpeas are among the oldest cultivated plants and native to northern Persia. They are a staple of peasant cooking, a source of cheap protein and have been in the diets of Jews of the Mediterranean and North Africa for centuries.

Humus

Chickpeas form the basis of humus (or hummus or hoummous) and falafel. "Israelis hold humus in such high regard that it is rarely made at home. Instead it is savored – or rather worshipped – at a favorite hummusia," writes Janna Gur in *The Book of New Israeli Food*.

Humus is one of Israel's national foods because it is "filling, nutritious, and cheap" and requires no forks and knives just "pita bread and an expert wrist." To the cooked mashed chick peas are added garlic, salt, cumin, lemon juice and tahini. Humus is then spooned onto a plate with tahini in the center and olive oil and chopped parsley added as a garnish. Scoop it up off the plate with pita and enjoy!

Tahini

Tahini or tahina or tchina is from the Arabic word meaning ground because it is ground sesame seeds. As a dip, tahini is then combined with ice cold water, lemon juice, crushed garlic and salt. Tahini is eaten with pita.



Falafel

Falafel (above) probably came from Egypt where it was created by Egyptian Christian Copts who served up this dish with fava beans during Lent when meat was not eaten.

It is a combination of chick peas, garlic, parsley, lemon juice, cumin, coriander, salt and pepper. Sometimes burgul, dry bread crumbs and eggs are added. The mixture is shaped into small balls, often popped into deep oil to fry by a gadget called a felafel maker which scoops up the mixture and then releases it into the oil.

Falafel is served inside a half or whole pita with your choice of salads, sauces, dill pickle, tahini, sometimes eggplant and sometimes French fries.

Sabikh

One street food which Israelis claim they invented or brought from Iraq is sabikh. *Sabakh* means morning in Arabic. In fact, it is pita stuffed with deep-fried eggplant, boiled egg, potatoes, tahini, tomatoes, onions and parsley. It is often topped with ambah, an Indian mango pickle.

Shwarma (below)

Shwarm is the Turkish word for grilled. See that large, vertical rotating spit? Boned turkey is cooked on it, sometimes with lamb fat on the top for flavoring. Pieces are then shaved off and served inside pita or laffa, the pizza-size pita, as a wrap and served with salads.



Shashlik/Kebab

Two very typical Israeli foods, particularly in Middle Eastern restaurants are Shashlik and kebab. These words are often used interchangeably, although they mean something different. Shashlik are pieces of meat put on a skewer and grilled; kebab is ground meat combined with parsley,

onions and garlic and wrapped around a skewer and grilled.

Mixed Grill

I happen to have a very strong stomach, but one of my favorite foods (and one of my husband's) is mixed grill. This is done on the street and in restaurants and consists of chicken livers, hearts, regular chicken, onions, paprika and a special spice blend very quickly stir fried and often stuffed into pita.

Burekas

Burekas are a stuffed, turnover-type pastry made from thin phylo dough spread on a cookie sheet, sprinkled with oil and sometimes filled with spinach, potatoes or butter before melted butter is spread on top and the whole pastry baked until brown and puffy then cut into squares.

Nuts

One cannot forget nuts and seeds, freshly roasted – sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, chick peas, pistachio nuts and more are favorites from the street vendors.

Coffee

Cafes are very popular in Israel, practically on every corner. Most, if not all, are dairy and some even serve alcoholic beverages. Two of the most popular coffee drinks are *café afukh* and *ice café*.

Café afukh means upside down coffee. It was probably given this name because originally a small amount of coffee was added to the milk. Today, *café afukh* is the same as cappuccino. Interestingly enough, German Jews who came in large numbers in the 1930s brought the concept of a small amount of coffee with a lot of milk, otherwise known as *café au lait*.

Ice café has two meanings in Israel. One is what we might call slush or crushed ice with coffee or coffee flavoring added; the other is actual coffee with ice cubes added.

Sahleb

In winter, a drink which originated in the Arab countries has come into Israel, served from very large brass or silver containers. The drink is Sahleb made from the flour of ground tubers of orchids, possibly with rose water added; sometimes milk and sugar are also added. What emerges is a starchy, cream of wheat-thick drink, eaten with a spoon, garnished with coconut, crushed pistachio nuts and cinnamon.

Fruit juices

On street corners and throughout the markets are places offering freshly squeezed fruit and vegetable drinks in varying sizes. Whatever you choose to eat, whether standing at a kiosk or walking

(see Kaplan/Israel, page 13)



Jewish Theater

REVIEWED BY IRENE BACKALENICK

Carousel and Chaplin

Among the many Jewish-American creators of the Broadway musical, Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II played a critical role. In point of fact, their splendid shows offered a turning point in the genre. Rather than use the songs as mere ornament, the songs helped to tell the story, incorporating and interweaving song, dance, and story.

The team's splendid shows go on forever, with *Carousel* which played up-state Connecticut at the Goodspeed Theatre. It is an appropriate venue, a beautiful old castle located on the banks of the Connecticut River, and dedicated to lovingly restoring the old-time musicals.

It is strange to think that the musicals of composer Richard Rodgers and lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II would fall into that category. But in fact *Carousel* is now more than half a century old, having burst upon the Broadway stage in 1945, succeeding the team's ground-breaking *Oklahoma*. So, indeed, why not play host to *Carousel*?

Though Rodgers/Hammerstein shows invariably follow a happily-ever-after format, the team was hard put to give this dark tale a happy ending. Based on the play *Liliom* by Ferenc Molnar, *Carousel* depicts the tragic love story of Julie Jordan and Billy Bigelow – she a naïve young mill worker and he a swaggering carousel barker. It all takes place in a small Maine fishing village in the late 1800s (rather than Molnar's Budapest of 1919). This

mismatched couple fall in love, resulting in job losses for both. To compound their problems Julie becomes pregnant, and Billy desperately strives for money, legally or otherwise. Though the show heads for a dark ending, the writers offer up a *deus ex machina* finale, which makes everything okay – sort of. God – or someone like God – comes to the rescue.

But never mind the book (also Hammerstein's creation). It is the glorious tunes matched by its lines, which are irresistible. How can we not succumb to "If I Loved You," "June Is Bustin' Out All Over," "When I Marry Mister Snow" and the numerous other memorable tunes?

As to this Goodspeed production, the show was alive and fresh, despite its venerable years. Director Rob Ruggiero's staging is highly innovative, though he remains true to the musical arrangements. (Why fix something when it's not broken?) Ruggiero has a gift for creating superb company numbers, despite the limitations of the small Goodspeed stage. Every company number, with song, dance, and movement, is rousing.

All told, this *Carousel* offers a memorable experience, whether for old-timers revisiting a classic or a new generation about to be indoctrinated.

Charlie Chaplin – Yiddish or British?

With *Chaplin* now on stage on Broadway at the Barrymore, the Big Question surfaces once again. Is Charlie Chaplin Yiddish – or merely British? Certainly he fits the long-standing stereotype – or at least his memorable creation, the Little Tramp, fits that image. Here is the long-suffering little anti-hero, the *schlemiel* (fool) – who could easily be the powerless Jew in a hostile, anti-Semitic world. And indeed we American Jews, again and again, have proudly proclaimed him as one of our own.

It is a legacy that Chaplin himself chose



James Snyder and Teal Wicks in *Carousel*. Photo credit: Diane Sobolewski.

to acknowledge, at least when it suited his purpose. But the facts are that there is no proof of this legacy. Chaplin, and his older half-brother Sydney were the children of music hall performers. The mother was Christian and all indications (at least on paper) are that Sydney's father was Jewish while Charlie's father was not. But Charlie Chaplin's background was indeed murky, perhaps even to his mother. Whether Charles Chaplin, Sr. was his father is open to question. And genes or early environment or an unknown quality within created the boy and man who would become the great Chaplin. Who can identify the sources of genius?

In any event, in viewing the rise and fall of Chaplin, everyone knows where his sympathies lay, proof of which are spelled out in *The Great Dictator*, his own blitzkrieg attack on Hitler. But Chaplin's expulsion from America in 1952 was probably based on the fact that his FBI file combined his being Jewish, Communist, a Russian sympathizer and a ravager of under-aged girls. (Only the latter, unfortunately, was unquestioningly true.)

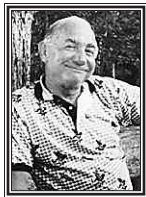
Whatever Chaplin's origins and affiliations, his genius is a fact. And how appropriate that a modern musical surfaces to pay tribute to that genius. But does it truly pay tribute? What of the *Chaplin* at the Barrymore on Broadway?

A quick look at the show's positives reveals a series of smoothly choreographed and impeccably executed company numbers, all appropriately staged in black-and-white. (After all, Charlie Chaplin personifies those early Hollywood days, with their black-and-white silent films.) Secondly, videotapes on a large screen recreate the Chaplin films effectively integrated into the on-stage proceedings. But, above all, is the lead himself – Rob McClure – in the title role. When McClure first emerges as the Little Tramp, perfect in look and manner, the show finds its meaning. Though McClure is adequate when he portrays

(see Backalenick, page 13)



Cast of Goodspeed Musicals' *Carousel*. Photo credit: Diane Sobolewski.



Spoonful of Humor

By TED ROBERTS

Succos explains a cultural mystery

Succos, like perfect sweet and sour cabbage soup, has two flavors. A single holiday with two themes. We celebrate the bounty of the grape and olive harvest in the Promised Land; also we commemorate 40 hungry years of wanderings in that huge sand pile – the Sinai Peninsula – a garden that can only grow rocks.

The *Humash* commands us to relive our wilderness days. “Ye shall dwell in booths seven days...that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths” when he took us out of Egypt. This holiday is one of the three special ones when the Israelite male was required to show up at the Temple.

A booth, a *succah*, must have been a challenge on those chilly Sinai nights. It’s cold as only a desert can be bone-cold at night. So you can bet most adults were drawn to the social warmth of the campfire. Conversation, maybe a little music from a homemade flute, and somebody might be passing around a skin of fermented goat’s milk.

Some sages say that the Jewish love for books and literature was born on those long Sinai nights. You see, Moses and Aaron and their Levite kinfolk had plenty of time to sit around and talk since there was yet no temple to attend to. Moses, himself, didn’t have the leisure of his brother Levites since he was busy as a Goshen scribe putting down all that he heard on the mountaintop. You remember he spent forty days and nights listening to the Master Magistrate lay down the law.

And sitting around the fire, Moses passed on the message from the mountaintop. Those five books were full of tales of love and adventure. But full of rules, too, which occasionally brought on heavy eyelids and deep breathing to the nighttime audience huddled close around the fire. “Ten is enough,” they groaned. “613? We can’t even remember them. Let’s go back to Genesis. Tell us some more about that garden.” The men especially loved the story of Eve and the snake.

(Mark Twain, a spiritual skeptic who had a remarkable short attention span and therefore never went to synagogue on *Yom Kippur*, remarked that nobody heard a word a preacher said after the first ten minutes. He would have hated my synagogue.)

So, the first and greatest prophet of Israel, blessed with divine understanding of human inattention and the human temptation to doze off when anyone lectured for over ten minutes, knew he had to vary his curriculum. So, he told stories, the best of which found their way into the oral tradition.

Moses was careful to only repeat the best, the most fabulous tales. He knew he had a tough audience. Often he told the story of Malcha, who invited the handsome, but weary traveler into her succah and quenched his thirst and put a platter of lamb chops in front of him. Too late did the innocent victim find that her succah was a *chupah*. The men hated this story. But you can bet that once in a while, when Moshe told the same story for the fifth time, some creative Israelite got up and told one of his own inventions. It was like the Improv where freshmen storytellers tried their skills.

But the mystics tell us that on those star-glittered nights when Moshe cut back on the adventure tales and went back to his revelation of the Word of G-d to Israel, the desert creatures beyond the light of the campfire, quietly listened. No night birds sang and even the desert fox refrained from calling his mate.

Time, as still as Horeb itself, ceased to exist so that the prophet could look both before and after. Did he not tell of history that was, and would be? Some say the scroll of time stood before him like a giant Torah as he recited to the people the oral tradition. Moses and the people talked. Many, many words – outnumbering the stars – filled the night. They talked ‘til the moon grew pale and weary. And I think that’s why the ancestors of these wanderers predominate in today’s world of words.

Historians, sociologists, anthropologists still today, wonder about this mystery of Judaism. I mean, how could it be that we’re about .025 percent of the world’s population, but we write about 20% of the books? (Check the best seller lists.) Why do we win all the Pulitzer Prizes? Why do we predominate in the world of entertainment, movies, and television? Jewish themes, Jewish scriptwriters, Jewish producers, Jewish actors, including Mel Gibson’s plot about one of our better known kinsmen, the Man from Galilee (And Mary, the mother of the subject of the movie, is a Jewish actor yet.)

What is it about words and their sequencing into literary art – like jewels on a bracelet – that attracts the former Children of Israel – now known as Jews?

It’s almost like the old-fashioned anti-Semites used to say. Wherever you look, you see the Jew. Well, in the world of ideas it’s as true as the wisdom in Proverbs. Where stories are told, you’ll



Yiddish for Everyday

By HENYA CHAIET

What my clever mother used to say

Yiddish speaking friends listen “up”, and let’s speak a little. Not a literary Yiddish, but a common every day one:

1) *Geh nisht mit schlechteh chaverim*. (Don’t associate with bad friends.)

2) *Ess ah bisseleh nor zaul daus zein eppes goot*. (Eat a small amount, but be sure it is something special.)

3) *Zizeye nisht farnotisht*. (Don’t be a fanatic!)

4) *Vaus der mensch lehren sich aus gait nisht farloren*. (Whatever a person learns never gets lost.)

5) *Ah mol iz besser ahz nieh shvaikt*. (Sometimes the best answer is none at all.)

6) *Ahz meh lehpt der lehpt mehn*. (If you live long enough everything will happen.)

7) *Der mensch dahf zach tzoo grayten tzoom shtarben, nor meh darf nisht varten*. *Ahz der malach ahmauress haut dein kvittel vet err deer gehfinen*. (We should prepare ourselves for the inevitable death, but don’t sit around waiting for it to happen. When the angel of death has your ticket, he will find you wherever you are.)

8) *Ah zay vee meh lept ahzay shtarpt mehn*. (The way you live your life is the way you die.)

9) *Ahz meh kaucht shane, macht mehn ah bissele mere effshare veht imehtzer kumen*. (When you’re already cooking, cook a bit more – never can tell when someone might drop in.)

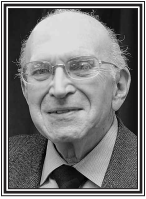
10) *Ah mol iz besser ahz meh hert nisht ah zay goot*. [On her deafness] (Some things are better not heard.)

Henya Chaiet was born in 1924 ten days before Passover. Her parents had come to America one week before Passover the year prior. They spoke only Yiddish in their home so that is all she spoke until age five when she started Kindergarten. She then learned English, but has always loved Yiddish and speaks it whenever possible. ✨

find Jews. But why?

I say it was those wild Sinai nights around the campfire when Moses told his tales. When the audience trooped back to their succahs, their wilderness huts, they had plenty to think about. Oh the dreaming that went on in those succahs. And it still goes on – and on.

(see Roberts, page 19)



As I Heard It

By MORTON GOLD

Some thoughts about Yizkor

My readers should realize that I am a composer (among other things) and not a theologian. What follows are the thoughts of a practicing musician.

For openers, there is the 23rd psalm. If one reads an English translation of this psalm, it is evident that the thrust of this psalm has nothing to do with consoling a mourner, any mourner. The thrust is to comfort anyone going into "harms way." Thus, "though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil."

Since to me this psalm has nothing to do with consoling a mourner, one may well ask what is this psalm doing in a Yizkor (memorial service) or a Jewish funeral service? I have no ready answer for that. When was it first used and why was it used are questions I cannot answer.

This leads me to the matter of English translation of the Hebrew and the folly of making all things gender neutral and thus politically correct. The standard English (King James) version has been in use since the 16th century. In addition to being poetic, the words are for the most part readily adaptable to be set to music. One cannot, at least I cannot say the same for the newer translations. Where the King James version begins, "The LORD is my shepherd, ...HE makes me to lie down in green pastures.... The new translation begins *ADOSHEM* is my shepherd, ...GOD makes me to lie down in green pastures and so forth. The psalms, all of them are read and used by most English speaking people, Jew and non-Jew alike.

To start with, the word Lord has been changed to AdoShem. This would be a non starter for any non-Jew. Assuming that we are not concerned with them and that *HaShem* (the NAME) is only the God of the Jews, the syllables A-DO (before NOI) have to be set to two notes, both upbeats. This is not necessarily an obstacle although it is more awkward than merely one note as opposed to two.

Instead of the nasty sexist word HE, the worthy rabbis have now substituted the word GOD. One can then ask, if *HaShem* is the (Hebrew) name for our God, why change it for the second line? Since *HaShem* means God, why then use a different word even though (to us) the two terms mean the same thing? (One can't

use the word "Lord" as that implies the male gender and that also is now a no-no!) There comes a point of no return.

At the time King David authored all 150 psalms, from the stand point of his time, his allusions to *HaShem* are perfectly proper. These words, yes, I refer to the King James version, are beautiful and simply ought to be left alone. Then there is the phrase "Your rod and staff they comfort me." This has been changed to read "Your staff and your rod..." This seems to be a change simply for the sake of making a change. It seems to be as arbitrary as it is unnecessary.

One positive change that I can and readily applaud is the change from "You set a TABLE before me..." which now reads "You prepare a BANQUET for me..." This is much more visual and effective and I have used this in my recent setting of this psalm. If one wishes, one can add a caveat to state that David, *haMelech* (the king) was writing with the standards of his day and the psalms are not gender neutral. Period.

Another thing while I am at it, I deliberately did NOT spell *melekh* with the letter "K" to substitute for the letter "C." This recent innovation is a visual obstacle, even an impediment for most people. I would rather have people say ba-rook then squint at ba-rukh and wonder what on earth that means. (The learned folk who made and have enforced that change never trained a choir in their lives.) I would rather see the nearly invisible dot underneath the letter "H." In Maine we have a saying that goes: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

This now leads me to consider the beautiful prayer, "*HaShem*, what is MAN, or the SON of MAN that you should be mindful of HIM." *Gevalt, gevalt!* (*Al cheyt shechatanu...*) One recent change now reads "What are we MORTALS, and so forth. Overlooking the fact that the word "mortals" has two syllables as opposed to the more forceful and generic term "man" we are once more careening down a slippery slope.

The most recent version has an even better solution: Omit ANY translation and go straightaway to an English reading. There comes a point when trying to make the entire *sidder* (or *machzor* – prayer book) gender neutral and thus politically correct becomes not only futile but at times even ridiculous.

I conclude these observations with a phrase recited seven times (for emphasis) at the conclusion of the *Neilah* service: "*HaShem*, *HU ha-Elohim*. *Ha-Shem* HE is God." Jews, pious and observant have recited this phrase on their death bed or before martyrdom. Shall we now change (or omit) it in the name of being politically correct? I hope not. Like David of old, I am merely a musician.

KAPLAN/ISRAEL

(continued from page 10)

along the street, you will find these street foods reasonably priced, plentiful and healthy as well.

Sybil Kaplan is a journalist, food writer, lecturer and cookbook author. She also leads walks through Machaneh Yehudah, the Jewish produce market in English. ★

BACKALENICK

(continued from page 11)

Charlie Chaplin, he is at his best as the legendary Little Tramp. From that initial moment of emergence to the next-to-final scene, when the Little Tramp shuffles off into the sunset, McClure provides the heart of the show.

Or whatever heart exists. The difficulty, from start to finish, is the book. Writers Christopher Curtis and Thomas Meehan skip lightly over the Chaplin bio, giving the nod to each event, but never probing into relationships. Particularly disappointing is the treatment of Charlie and his devoted, but mentally ill, mother. Where is the *schmaltz*, the heart, the soul in these potentially poignant scenes? And Charlie's scenes with his numerous wives and his colleagues are duly noted, but little more. It is only those exchanges with his brother Sydney (ably played by Wayne Alan Wilcox) which offer substance sadly lacking elsewhere.

Nor do the music and lyrics of Christopher Curtis lift the show to a higher level. Granted that the numbers sung with considerable clout by Jenn Colella as Hedda Hopper offer strong moments in the show. But on the whole, the tunes, though workable, pleasant, and sometimes moving, will not live on in memory.

Though Chaplin is certainly a subject worthy of a major musical drama, it is yet to be written – or, indeed, to be rewritten. Would the Little Tramp, looking down from on high, be satisfied with this interpretation as it now stands? We think not.

Theater critic Irene Backalenick covers theater for national and regional publications. She has a Ph.D. in theater criticism from City University Graduate Center. Her book East Side Story – Ten Years with the Jewish Repertory Theatre won a first-place national book award in history. She welcomes comments at IreneBack@sbcglobal.net and invites you to visit her website: nytheater scene.com or at: jewish-theatre.com. ★

Dr. Gold is a composer/conductor as well as arts reviewer and can be reached at: drmortongold@yahoo.com. ★

ZIMMERMAN

(continued from page 9)

Arab and Israeli youth to learn “peace leadership” [my term] in Germany, skills that they could employ when they returned to their respective communities.

For many years, the German government funded German schoolteachers to travel to Yad Vashem, the Israeli institution dedicated to Holocaust memory, education, and research, for Holocaust teacher training. Beginning this year, Germany will also provide a grant of one million Euros to Yad Vashem. For more information about this grant, see <http://bit.ly/Q3DDmu>.

Unlike Eva Kor, forgiveness is not part of how I feel about Germany. As a 2nd generation German Jew, there is nothing for me to forgive since I was not a victim. As my feelings toward Germany evolve, I have tried to experience Germany free from the toxic filter of the Holocaust, despite my professional immersion in that history as a Holocaust educator. Yet, to be free of something does not mean to forget.

Germany has demonstrated that she has not forgotten, as evidenced from the many Holocaust memorials that dot the country, including ubiquitous *Stolpersteine* [stumbling stones], stones placed in the pavement that list the names of Holocaust victims in front of the buildings where they lived or worked.

A few years ago, I researched how to go about procuring a *Stolperstein* [singular] for my family’s home/business. Unfortunately, the years-long waiting list for such a memorial from sculptor Gunter Demnig deterred me. Demnig started the project in the 1990’s. It has expanded to include other European nations, including Austria and Denmark. An informative article can be found in the *Smithsonian* online, <http://bit.ly/QknOI0>. The www.stolpersteine.com website is in German only.

The awesome German language was denied me, understandably, because of my father’s aversion to all things German. It would have been so easy for me to become bilingual, as a child growing up in a two-language household. Instead, as an adult, I struggle with choosing the appropriate German articles for all nouns, *der*, *die*, or *das*; and distinguishing when to use the *Akkusativ* and when to use the *Dativ*. When I went away to college, my father expressed regret that he had not permitted his children to learn German at home.

I wrote my master’s thesis on Thomas Mann’s *Doctor Faustus*, applying the rhetorical principles of Kenneth Burke to this novel. Mann described the novel as his “penance for being away” (from Nazi Germany). I was able to work on a translated novel since as a

Communication major I did not have to adhere to the English Department’s prohibition of translated literary works as subjects for research.

But I vowed that someday, I would read Mann’s version of the Faust legend in the original German. I have the same urgency to read Goethe’s *Faust*, *auf Deutsch*. At my age, I do not know if I will accomplish yet one more goal: to tell my father’s story and his perspective of German medicine, in Germany, to German schoolchildren, *auf Deutsch*.

I am doubly motivated to study German: not only because of my internal longing to be able to read and express myself *auf Deutsch*, but also because of recent medical reports. Research indicates that learning a language might be able to stave off diseases such as Alzheimer’s and dementia. I have reached the age that such preventative measures should be taken.

One of my happiest moments occurred a few years ago when my daughter Leah called from Munich. “Mom, you will be happy to know that when we go out with our German friends, we speak German.” I had prodded her to learn German, something she had to do on her own. Her international Ph.D. program in physics pulled students from all over the world; English was the common denominator, the official language used in the program. Learning German was optional, even though she was living in Germany.

Currently, Leah and her husband are visiting Munich. Since they do not converse *auf Deutsch* when alone, I am delighted she will have the opportunity to refresh her language skills. I do not know whether or not she thinks Germany is great; she called it a “scientific powerhouse.”

More reasons to admire Germany: as a scientific powerhouse, Germany recognizes the reality of climate change and is providing international leadership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. German Chancellor Angela Merkel gave a speech on July 16, 2012 in Berlin, to delegates from over 30 countries discussing the urgency of the problem. Here in the U.S., we are still debating whether or not climate change actually exists.

Two years in a row, Chancellor Merkel topped Forbes’ list of the world’s most powerful women, beating out Michelle Obama who topped the list in 2010, www.forbes.com/power-women. Forbes also listed the top cities world-wide in which to live. Forbes concluded that German cities cluster at the top because of the quality of their infrastructure.

More nuances regarding my feelings toward Germany follow. During this summer’s 2012 Olympics, I noticed a disconnect in my feelings toward German teams. Part of me gloated when they did

not win; yet, at the same time, I felt pride when they did. Clearly, I am ambivalent regarding German sports achievement.

Writing in *Doctor Faustus*, Thomas Mann described the German attitude of contempt for democracy prior to the rise of Hitler. Democracy was seen as a weak form of government, a decline into mere “debating societies.” Scholars agree that the best way to prevent a totalitarian takeover, such as Hitler accomplished in 1933, is to ensure that democratic institutions remain strong.

The recent erosion of the right to vote by Republican state legislatures is a chilling reminder of how vulnerable such institutions can be. The Republicans claim this legislation is needed to combat voter fraud, which statistics indicate is non-existent. In suppressing fictitious voter fraud, they are blatantly suppressing the right to vote.

Every Holocaust survivor, every Holocaust educator, and anyone with a memory of the tyrannical, usually fascist takeovers from the last century, should make their voices heard in protest. Universal voting in free elections is the hallmark of a democratic country. Have we forgotten so quickly this lesson from the Holocaust: the need to protect our democratic institutions?

There is so much room for repair between German and Jew, both of whom need to remember the many lessons from the Holocaust. I believe that having a positive attitude toward Germany does not mean we forget. The demonstrated strengths and achievements of both peoples can be enhanced by working together as evidenced from the many initiatives that exist between Germany and Israel. It is in our mutual interest to forge a constructive relationship.

I admit that I long for a “normalcy” between Jew and German, a time when Germans and Jews can meet and not wonder when the topic of the Holocaust will arise. Such might not be possible in my generation. But why cannot the third generation after the Holocaust achieve a normal relationship that would include an absence of guilt for the descendants of the perpetrators, matched by an absence of blame by the descendants of the survivors? In writing this column, I came to realize that healing from one generation to the next is possible. Is such healing to be regarded as a bad thing?

In communication theory, there is an axiom: “No message by itself is entirely complete.” Thank you, Michael Blain, for stimulating me to make my message more complete and, despite any ambivalence, more clear.

Dr. Miriam L. Zimmerman is professor (see Zimmerman, page 18)



Media Watch

By RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

On *The Possession*, *The Closer*, and *Ted*

The Possession

Gripping, well-paced, well-acted and arrestingly filmed, *The Possession* is a very scary movie, not only in its plot but in its implications. Two sweet and vivacious sisters are being shuttled between their divorced parents, their likable but driven basketball coach dad (Jeffrey Dean Morgan) and their rather self-absorbed and accusatory mother (Kyra Sedgwick) who is, at the moment, living with her lapdog boyfriend, a smug dentist.

Dad has bought a house in a new development which is still somewhat remote – a perfect place for an evil spirit to emerge surreptitiously. But the evil spirit in question, a *dybbuk* or clinging spirit right out of *shtetl* (East European Jewish village) folklore, is portable. Younger daughter Emma (Natasha Calis), the ten-year-old, picks up an old box with Hebrew writing on it when her dad and sister stop off at a tag sale because, after all, there is a new house to decorate. We have already been informed that that box has a murderous track record, though Emma and her parents, along with the audience, must discover the true evil of its contents.

Realizing that his daughter is being taken over by a sinister force, Dad consults with a colleague who happens to be a flippant Jew and who deciphers enough of the Hebrew wording to send the coach to a *Hasidic* community in Brooklyn. Upon seeing the box, the horrified Rebbe blurts out, “This must be left to the will of God.” (The Yiddish phrasing is accurate and appropriate, by the way.) The coach replies with justified indignation, “If this were your child, would you leave it to the will of God?”

Fortunately, the Rebbe has a hip son, Tzadok (singer Matisyahu) who feels obligated to help the coach even though the bewildered father has visited the Hasidic community on the Sabbath. Writers Juliet Snowden and Stiles White have Matisyahu say explicitly that this is a case of *pikuach nefesh*, the saving (literally, the close watching) of a life, and that he is not only allowed but required to act by Jewish law. So the Rebbe’s son hops into the car with the coach and the dybbuk box.

Though a case can be made for waiting a few hours until the end of the Sabbath, a good Jewish concept is taught by the young



Matisyahu and Natasha Calis in *The Possession*.

Hasid’s decision. Besides, more scenes with Hasidic Jews *shuckling* (swaying) at their prayers might have put off any assimilationist Jewish viewers.

A good old fashioned Jewish exorcism takes place at the hospital where Emma has been undergoing CT scans, which reveal the horrible demonic parasite within, thus convincing her difficult mother of the need for the exorcism. These are frightening, grueling and brilliantly shot scenes. The young Tzadok has obviously not taken any pastoral courses in hospital chaplaincy. His first comment upon entering the medical center is that he hates hospitals because people die there.

The implication of the film is that the dybbuk, as legend and as active or activated demon, is a kind of Jewish cootie that can infect Gentiles and that requires an ultra-Orthodox Jew to stop. (No Reform, Conservative or Reconstructionist rabbis needed.)

There is also the suggestion in this movie that one should think twice about getting an order of protection because it might protect a demon. In this case, the order of protection was not necessary. But do we need filmic reasons to delay such an order before one knows that there is no danger?

In any case, a clear suggestion here is that a dybbuk or two might be the perfect way to undo a divorce, the hope of most children of divorce. But this movie does not settle for being a metaphor or a psychological etude.

Most disturbing and scary about this film is the cynical ending. The writers and filmmaker have movingly cited passages from the Psalms: “Dwelling in the shelter of the Most High, abiding in the shadow of the Almighty, I say that the Lord is my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust.” Yet what happens at the end, which seems to be due, at least in part, to irresponsible cell phone use on the part of someone committed to saving lives, suggests that God may not be so trustworthy or, even worse, that an out of

sorts demon might be a real foil for the Almighty and for religion in general.

I suppose that the producers and writers wanted to leave open the way for a sequel. But it is not only a sequel possession picture for which they have allowed. They open the box, as it were, to a sequel spirituality to Judaism.

In this picture, a Jew has had to clean up a mess of Jewish folklore. But the final suggestion is that this demon thing is too big for the Jews alone, even if it has its roots in Jewish demonology. From a tag sale it was catapulted into the wider more universal world of spirituality. This is no longer the folklore of the Jewish ghetto, which was very ethical in its underpinnings, by the way: More often than not, the opening for a dybbuk came through a broken promise or a vulgar word or an immoral or immodest act. Now the dybbuk raps at the windows of the Joseph Campbells of the world. It is box office magic in a box, and New Age ready.

The Closer

As it turned out, Kyra Sedgwick’s series *The Closer*, took its final bow just as she was about to appear in the dybbuk film, *The Possession*. In both she played a rather neurotic woman: in the former, a deputy police chief, in the latter, a divorced mom.

I have to admit that I was shocked (though I should not have been) that the final episode turned out to be a tribute to the cruelty and deviousness of the character, Peter Goldman (Curtis Armstrong), a fanatical and smug lawyer who had been suing Sedgwick’s character for wrongful death of a vicious suspect.

There had been suspicions that one of the squad members was a mole, and Goldman, the character of questionable ethics with a Jewish-sounding name, had clearly been maneuvering to isolate the African American officer, Detective Sergeant David Gabriel (played sympathetically by Corey Reynolds) and to position him as the target of suspicion. In the end, series creator James Duff writes, with Michael Berchem, that Goldman callously and cynically planted a young attorney, cajoling her to seek him out at his church (!), to enter into a relationship with him, and to report his pillow talk to Goldman.

What does that say about the way the now defunct series regarded the Goldmans of the world?

Ted

It is not surprising that there would be a few gratuitous references to Jews in a first theater film by Seth MacFarlane, whose TV series *Family Guy* and *American Dad* regularly indulge in this, not to mention the vulgar Holocaust jokes in his 2009

(see Gertel, page 19)



Book Review

REVIEWED BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

Moving memorial to victims of oppression

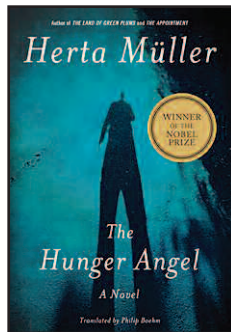
The Hunger Angel (A Novel). By Herta Muller. Translated by Philip Boehm. Metropolitan Books. Pp. 290. 2012. \$26.00.

Author Herta Muller, the 2009 Nobel Laureate in literature, is a native of Romania who lives in Berlin. Her latest book, *The Hunger Angel* was first published in Germany in 2009. It was rightfully hailed as a unique contribution to the portrayal of the human condition in the straits of oppression. The author's literary style of stark realism fits the dreariness of existence in a forced labor camp of the past Soviet gulag, exposing the human body and spirit to grave suffering and death.

The novel is rooted in the historical account of the punitive deportation of ethnic Germans living in Romania including Muller's mother. This was done at Stalin's order following the victory over Nazi Germany in which the Fascist Romanian dictator, Ian Antonescu was aligned. Affected were those ages 17–45, male and female who, if they survived, would spend five trying years away from home, forever changing and marking their lives.

The book's title is indicative of the constant and extreme hunger hovering over the unfortunate deportees, hunger for food that they received in meager, starving portions of one shovel of coal equal to one gram of bread. "What can be said about chronic hunger? Perhaps that there's a hunger that can make you sick with hunger...That there is a hunger that is always new, which grows insatiably, which pounces on the never-ending old hunger that already took such effort to tame. How can you face the world if all you say about yourself is that you're hungry?" (p.18).

Hunger can drive one to steal food even from dear family members, as it happened in my family. Not everyone can resist hunger's corroding moral impact. Each laborer was assigned a number, not unlike the inmates in the German concentration



Book Review

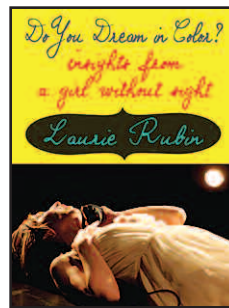
REVIEWED BY JULIE BLOOM

A girl looking for love, acceptance, and actualization

Do You Dream in Color? Insight From A Girl Without Sight. By Laurie Rubin. New York: Seven Stories Press, Random House. 393 Pages. 2012.

What a wonderful title for Laurie Rubin's sweet memoir written for teens! It's a question we have all asked one another at some point in our lives; an attempt to understand how we perceive the world through dreams. But for Laurie Rubin, blind since birth, the question introduces us to an up close look at one woman's determination to live those dreams, colorfully, despite her inability to see.

Our impulse is to underestimate those with perceptual impairments like blindness, where the unemployment rate is approximately 70%. Rubin's book, however, serves to challenge the naysayers among us who told her that she'd never experience a meaningful relationship or hold a satisfying job and encourages all of us to move beyond our own limitations, whatever they may be. For Laurie, this has meant finding love and becoming an acclaimed opera singer.



camps, with the goal to dehumanize and destroy the "old" identity.

My own Polish family, exiled to Siberia and Kazakhstan during WWII, similarly experienced deprivation and the struggle to maintain one's humanity and dignity in extremis. There is the added hunger of homesickness that is debilitating too, given such a frustrating reality; but a harsh environment is also nourishing with hope, keeping one focused on survival. Sexual identity and drive are also at risk.

In the novel, bartering one's precious items such as clothes and even book pages for food was a common phenomenon, as well as swapping bread with fellow inmates since it appeared, though delusional, that one

(see Zoberman, page 18)

Laurie's book describes her parents' early encouragement of her musical abilities, their recognition of her perfect pitch, her love of classical music. Her gift was nurtured through lessons and mentoring and competition. And though she felt herself blossoming as a musician, she also felt the emotional withering of a young girl without friends. Like most teens, Laurie experienced the heartache of rejection by peers, the not knowing of social expectations, the desperate desire to fit in, the need for that one friend who can be loved and trusted. Though her blindness contributed to this disconnect with peers, Laurie's ability to universalize the struggle for identity and belonging is what makes her book so relevant to all teens.

From her awakening to the world of words on paper when her 4-year-old fingers first touched Braille letters, to the excitement and anxiety of the college application process, Laurie invites us into her life of struggle and privilege, success and disappointment. What teenage girl hasn't experienced the sting of exclusion as she awkwardly tries to engage in conversation with other 10th graders? What college student hasn't felt the disappointment of failing to perform well on a test or land a role in the play or orchestra? What young adult hasn't struggled with learning the skills of independent living? And who among us hasn't longed for the delight of falling in love and the joy of seeing a future with a loved one stretch out before us? Rubin's antidote to failure is perseverance and belief in oneself; her prescription for success: patience, hard work, and the willingness to throw one's whole self into life.

What separates Laurie from many, we learn, is her extraordinary talent as an operatic vocalist, and her good fortune to have been born into a family of significant means and support. The opportunities to achieve are simply not as available to many of her readers as they were to Rubin growing up. The best mentors, camps, schools, living accommodations, and resources are, for most, a wish, not a reality, and this fact, for some readers of her book, will serve to alienate, not connect them to her story.

If the reader is able to transcend the details of privilege, however, and hear the humanness of Laurie Rubin's memoir of a girl looking for love, acceptance, and actualization, they will grasp the universality of her message: that to dream in color is to mark one's place in the world as a fully human and alive being regardless of our imperfections.

Julie Bloom is a long-time psychotherapist in Bloomington, Ind., who is committed to the process of self-actualization regardless of the many obstacles we all must face. ★

Book Reviews

REVIEWED BY MORTON I. TEICHER

Rousing account of Israel intelligence service

Mossad: The Greatest Missions of the Israeli Secret Service. By Michael Bar-Zohar and Nissim Mishal. New York: Ecco (HarperCollins), 2012. 400 Pages. \$27.99.

Originally published in Israel in 2011 where it quickly became a best-seller, this rousing account of stirring feats of derring-do by the country's highly esteemed intelligence service will be available in American bookstores in the Fall, 2012. Place your order early for a not-to-be missed thriller that honestly recounts failures as well as successes. Each chapter is devoted to a well-written account of an episode in Mossad's electrifying history as it contributed significantly to Israel's survival. Both authors are experts on espionage with ready access to authorities who have provided the details on which the stories are reliably based. They are writers with many books to their credit.

Mossad begins with an introduction and ends with an epilogue that emphasizes the Iranian threat to Israel and identifies the Mossad as a crucial element in preventing the Iranians from carrying out their menacing intent to annihilate Israel. The second chapter of the book is devoted to an analysis of the Iranian situation and Mossad's achievement in slowing down Iran's efforts to produce a nuclear bomb.

Each of the book's 21 chapters presents a vivid account of a Mossad operation, starting with the 1971 effort to eliminate terrorism in Gaza. Following the authors' discussion of Iran, they turn to the messy beginning of Israel's secret service in the War of Independence and then they describe the first time that an order to kill was given to Israeli agents. Skipping to 1956, the book recounts how Israeli-American relationships were greatly facilitated when the Israelis turned over to the CIA a copy of Khrushchev's speech in which he described Stalin's crimes.

Although the story of Adolf Eichmann's capture has been told and re-told, it never ceases to be exciting. The account provided here ably continues that tradition while providing a few previously unfamiliar details. Also stirring is the chronicle of

locating Yossele Schuchmacher, the young boy who was kidnapped by his grandparents, who lived in Mea Shearim and who used the network of ultra-Orthodox Jews to send their grandson to observant Jews in Brooklyn.

One of Mossad's worst failures was the unmasking and hanging of their spy in Damascus, Elie Cohen. For a long time, he transmitted Syria's military secrets to Israel but his luck eventually ran out. By contrast, the remarkable achievement of securing the intact delivery of a MIG-21 is a tribute to the Mossad's ingenuity. This feat proved to be of great importance in helping the Israelis to destroy the Egyptian air force in the Six-Day War of 1967. A further accomplishment was locating and killing a Nazi criminal, the "Butcher of Riga" who was found to be living in Brazil under his real name, Herberts Cukurs. He was executed in 1965 shortly before the West Germany parliament was set to adopt a statute of limitations on war crimes.

Revenge for the 1972 killing by Black September of Israeli athletes at the Olympic Games in Munich is detailed and the story of Mordechai Vanunu's revelation of the Israeli atomic reactor at Dimona is delineated. Other daunting activities by Mossad are portrayed.

This book brings together a formidable account of why the Mossad is so highly and deservedly esteemed.

Honest and well-balanced appraisal

Moshe Dayan: Israel's Controversial Hero. By Mordechai Bar-On. New Haven, CT. Yale University Press, 2012. 262 Pages. \$25.

In 2010, Yale University Press, in partnership with the Leon D. Black Foundation, began publishing *Jewish Lives*, a series of brief, interpretative biographies of noteworthy Jewish figures. Starting with Sarah

Bernhardt and continuing to Leon Trotsky, seven books have appeared. This biography of Moshe Dayan is the eighth in the series. The lives of 25 more subjects have been assigned to selected biographers and are scheduled for publication in the coming few years. Astute perceptiveness in picking the writers of these books is fully demonstrated by the choice of Mordechai Bar-On as the author of this story of Moshe Dayan's life. Bar-On is now a senior research fellow at the Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi

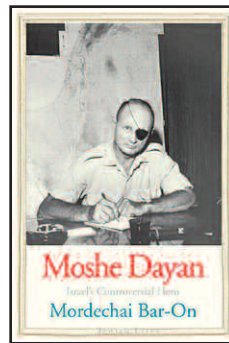
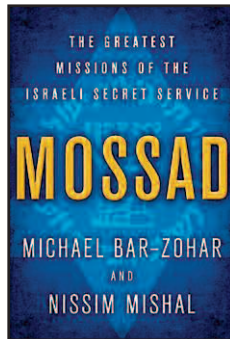
Institute in Jerusalem. Before winning a term as a member of Israel's parliament, Bar-On was an officer in the Israel army with a special relationship to Dayan.

At the end of 1953, Ben-Gurion, having served for more than five years as Israel's Prime Minister, decided to retire. He was familiar with Dayan as a brave and brilliant soldier which led to his decision to appoint Dayan as the Israel Defense Forces chief of staff just before he left for Kibbutz Sde Boker. Dayan kept this job during the two years that Moshe Sharett, Ben-Gurion's successor, was Prime Minister and remained in it after Ben-Gurion returned to office. In 1956, as tensions between Egypt and Israel heated up, Dayan's leadership became more important. It was at this time that Dayan made Bar-On a senior member of his staff as "bureau chief." He remained in this post during the Sinai campaign, working closely with Dayan throughout the fighting and the intricate negotiations with Great Britain and France. This gave Bar-On a unique opportunity to learn more and more about Dayan, providing an unusually authoritative basis for this biography.

In addition to his personal relationship with Dayan, Bar-On drew on documents, interviews, autobiographies, and other biographies to produce his excellent story of Dayan's life. The account falls into four periods in Israel's history. The first begins with Dayan's birth in 1915 to Zionist parents who had immigrated to what was then Palestine and helped to start Deganya, the first kibbutz. He was a sickly child, developing trachoma and eventually losing one eye in battle years later. The picture of Dayan with his black eye patch can be traced back to these early days. As a young adult, Dayan contributed to establishing other Jewish communities against the opposition of the Arabs. He fought vigorously against the Arabs and his growing reputation resulted in his being appointed commander of the Jewish section of Jerusalem after the War of Independence in 1948.

During the ensuing years, Dayan held increasingly important positions in government and security, culminating in his appointment as Minister of Defense in 1967. He worked hard to protect the new borders but the difficult Yom Kippur War of 1973 led to the resignation of the government and Dayan's seven-year career as defense minister came to an ignominious end. He returned to government after Menachem Begin became the Prime Minister in 1977, serving during the exciting Camp David years until resigning in October, 1979, effectively ending his political career. He died two years later.

In addition to his frank and often admiring
(see Teicher, page 19)





My Kosher Kitchen

By SYBIL KAPLAN

Vegetable soups for the Sukkah

When I think of the *shlepping* of food from the kitchen to the *sukkah*, two ideas come to mind – casseroles and soups. Since the weather may be a bit cool, a nice soup to start the meal is my suggestion. Below is one of my favorites for company.

Consume Madrilene (8 servings)

- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped leeks
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 3 cups chopped tomatoes
- 1 tsp. thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 large sprig chopped parsley
- 1 sliced green pepper
- 1/4 cup sliced red pepper
- 1/2 cup sliced turnips or kohlrabi
- 1/4 cup dry sherry
- 8 cups water with 8 tsp. pareve beef soup powder
- 1/2 cup tomato juice
- 2 beaten egg whites

In a large soup pot, combine all vegetables, herbs, and dry sherry. Add water, beef soup powder and tomato juice and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 1 1/2 hours. For a real madrilene, strain soup from vegetables, add beaten egg whites and serve hot. Sometimes, I alter this by just mashing the vegetables before I add the egg whites and leave them in the soup.

Asian Vegetable Noodle Soup

(8 servings)

This is my adaptation from a Food & Wine recipe.

- 2 Tbsp. oil
- 12 chopped scallions
- 8 minced garlic cloves
- 4 tsp. chopped ginger
- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 7 cups water
- 7 tsp. pareve chicken soup powder
- 8 sliced carrots
- 6 cups shredded Chinese cabbage
- 1 1/2 pounds cut up bok choy
- 1/2 pound white rice or Chinese noodles
- grated rind of 2 lemons
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 3 tsp. Asian oil

Heat oil in a soup pot. Add scallions,

ZIMMERMAN

(continued from 14)

emerita at Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont, Calif. She can be reached at mzimmerman@ndnu.edu. ★

Michael Blain responds: *I should have added to my remarks that I do not hold the post war German generations responsible for the Holocaust or for the sins of their fathers and grandfathers.....but unlike Eva Kor, (see pg. 2 at www.jewishpostopinion.com/Jewishpost/NAT_8-29-12.pdf), I cannot "forgive" those Germans who were responsible for the murder of my Mother, Father, sisters, brother and other relatives, and the six million of my Jewish sisters and brothers.* ★

On this date in Jewish history

On October 3, 1875

Hebrew Union College opened.

~ From *The Jewish Book of Days* published by Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, Inc., New York.

garlic and ginger and cook 1–2 minutes. Add soy sauce, water and chicken soup powder. Bring to a boil. Add carrots and simmer for 5 minutes. Add cabbage and simmer 5 minutes. Add bok choy and lemon peel and simmer 5 minutes then add lemon juice. In another pot, bring water to a boil, add noodles and cook 9 minutes. Drain, return to pot and add Asian oil. To serve, place some noodles in each bowl and ladle soup over noodles.

My Minestrone (6–8 servings)

- margarine
- 1 chopped leek
- 3/4 cup chopped onions
- 2 mashed garlic cloves
- 1/4 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped carrots
- 1 1/2 cups chopped squash
- 2 chopped turnips or kohlrabi
- 11/2 cups chopped cabbage
- 1 cup chopped potatoes
- 1 cup chick peas
- 2 cups chopped tomatoes
- 8 cups water
- 2 Tbsp. pareve beef soup powder
- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 2 Tbsp. chopped parsley
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 tsp. basil
- 1/2 tsp. oregano
- 1/4 tsp. marjoram
- 1/2 cup shell or other small macaroni
- Grated Parmesan cheese

Melt margarine in a soup pot. Sauté leek, onion and garlic. Add remainder of

ZOBERMAN

(continued from 16)

would end up with a larger piece, but often ending up following several swaps with the original bread. Another challenge was not eating up one's saved and hidden portions.

Sixty years after his release, the book's protagonist 17-year-old Leo Auberg, still does not take eating as a matter of fact, he rejoices in the very act. I know from my own once refugee mother that hoarding food years later is an instinctive response to past deprivation.

Trudi Pelican, Leo's friend, who became a human horse, pulling the lime wagon and later on would remove the naked corpses, shared with him her dream of a rich American whose money gets her out of the camp to marry her, and even has a sister for Leo. Dreaming is a temporary and consoling way to escape a harsh present. In the camp's last year with freedom within reach, love budded among the starved inmates, physically and emotionally. Couples came to be formed if only temporarily, with babies being born along with abortions and both women and men suddenly taking note of their appearance. A reminder of what happened in the Displaced Camps of Europe – my family and I were in the Wetzlar, Germany camp – following WWII.

Freedom, however, can be a scary proposition following lengthy denial, as expressed by Leo upon his return, nearing home. After all, the dreaded "home" he could not wait to leave became his real home paradoxically and ironically. Indeed, freedom is not free from the preceding experience of enslavement which is bound to leave a scar. He was already 22 years old while his family presumed he had died, given that there was no communication. Both sides found it hard to adjust.

In the book's afterward the author expresses gratitude to the poet Oskar Pastior, who shared with her his experiences at the camp. They had planned to jointly write the novel but he died unexpectedly in 2006. The book is a moving memorial to all victims of oppression as well as a celebration of the durability of human spirit and its undying quest for freedom – physically, psychologically and spiritually.

Rabbi Israel Zoberman is the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach. ★

vegetables, beef soup powder, water, tomato paste, herbs and macaroni, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 1 hour until vegetables are soft. Ladle into soup bowls and serve with Parmesan cheese to be sprinkled on top.

Sybil Kaplan is a journalist, food and feature writer, and author of nine kosher cookbooks. ★

GERTEL

(continued from 15)

"musical special" with Alex Borstein. And so Jews figure a little bit in *Ted*, MacFarland's tale about a teddy bear come alive through the powers of wishing and of thunderbolts.

John Bennett (Mark Wahlberg) was the bullied loner on his block, yearning for a friend. He was only allowed to join the neighborhood kids activities when, on Christmas Eve, they beat up the one Jewish kid on the block, but even the Jewish kid wanted nothing to do with him. So he wished for a friend and his teddy bear came alive to fulfill that role – and never stopped talking and cursing and carousing and dominating John's time, much to John's delight, until his fiancée Lori (Mila Kunis) gave him the ultimatum.

John was not left in obscurity by the *Ted* phenomenon, as a reclusive eccentric. If anything, *Ted* brought him out of his shell, enabling him to find a social life. *Ted* also remained John's loyal protector, willing to sacrifice his life for John's and Lori's. Early on, *Ted* becomes a media sensation, landing on Johnny Carson's *Tonight Show*. Here, too, MacFarland, who wrote *Ted* and gives the toy bear voice, has a comment about Jews: "When I was on Carson," *Ted* says, "Ed [McMahon] thought I was Alf and spurted anti-Semitic stuff" (thinking that Alf was Jewish).

When John and *Ted* discuss opening a restaurant, the bear makes a point of saying that Jews would be welcome, and John wants to know why the subject of Jews would even be brought up in this context – a question not worth asking given MacFarland's idea of what is "funny." It is little comfort that a "half-Muslim" is directly insulted with "thanks for 9-11."

MacFarlane is known for his outspoken atheism, though he has been quoted as saying that he has no problem with religious people. Still, in *Ted* he obviously takes pleasure in blaspheming the Christian savior and even suggests that "wishing" can yield its own kind of resurrection. In the absence of religion, Christmas is just another day to wish for magic, and marriages are sanctified by icons of pop culture and one does not even have to believe because the universe and its raindrops are arbitrary but somehow fair, at least once in a billion times.

Rabbi Gertel has been spiritual leader of Conservative Congregation Rodfei Zedek in Chicago since 1988. He is the author of two books, *What Jews Know About Salvation* and *Over the Top Judaism: Precedents and Trends in the Depiction of Jewish Beliefs and Observances in Film and Television*. He has been media critic for The National Jewish Post & Opinion since 1979. ★

TEICHER

(continued from 17)

account of Dayan's military and political career, Bar-On minces no words in describing Dayan as a womanizer and as a collector of archaeological artifacts, sometimes unscrupulously. Dayan's frailties sullied his deserved reputation as an important contributor to the history of Israel. We are indebted to Bar-On for presenting his honest and well-balanced appraisal of Moshe Dayan.

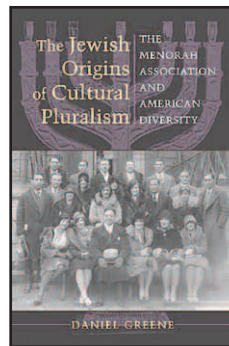
Aids understanding of American Jewish history

The Jewish Origins of Cultural Pluralism: The Menorah Association and American Diversity. By Daniel Greene. Bloomington:

Indiana University Press, 2011. 278 Pages. \$24.95

Based on author Greene's doctoral dissertation, this scholarly book deals with two inter-related developments: the history of cultural pluralism and the history of the Menorah Association. Cultural pluralism is the concept associated with philosopher Horace M. Kallen as an alternative to the notion of the "melting pot" as a description of the relationship among American groups. The Menorah Association was an organization for Jewish college students that thrived from its founding in 1906 until its demise in the late 1930s, replaced by the Hillel Foundation and by Jewish fraternities. Its influential periodical, the *Menorah Journal*, struggled on, appearing less and less frequently until its final issue in 1962.

At the time the Menorah Association was organized at Harvard, Kallen was working on his dissertation there and became involved with the organization, remaining an important influence throughout its existence. Having published a number of articles in the *Menorah Journal*, Kallen wrote the lead essay in its final 1962 edition. He reflected on what it meant to be a Jewish student at Harvard when the 20th century began and, more important, on what it meant to be an American. It was this thinking that led him to reject the notion of the melting pot in which all groups gave up their special identity. Instead, he argued for cultural diversity, comparing "the nation to an orchestra in which each cultural group played its own instrument in harmony, although not in unison, with others."



The book describes the movement towards general acceptance today of America as a multicultural society while pointing out the historical resistance by nativists, opponents of "hyphenated Americans," and advocates of "100 percent Americans." The "melting pot" idea had many advocates who believed that the nation would be stronger if all groups surrendered their identities to one American culture. By contrast, those who argued for diversity, especially Jews, and especially Kallen, ultimately dominated the debate. As author Greene sets forth, the Menorah Society made its special contribution by stressing the Jewish aspects of pluralism.

While the history of the Menorah Society is interesting, that aspect of the book for many readers will take second place to the development of Kallen's ideas about cultural pluralism. Nevertheless, in detailing the birth, life, and death of the Menorah Society, Greene provides valuable information about the difficulties of Jewish students before World War II and especially about the open anti-Semitism of A. Lawrence Lowell who became President of Harvard in 1909 and who instituted a quota system discriminating against the admission of Jewish students.

The material in the book, somewhat ponderously presented, is supplemented by 63 pages of notes and bibliography. It deals with specific aspects of the Jewish experience in America that round out the perceptions of readers, significantly adding to our knowledge about American Jewish history. Greene makes out a good case for his contention that what happened to American Jewish college students is a good representation of what happened to American Jews generally during the early part of the 20th century. More significant is his analysis of cultural pluralism. These two elements of the book make for a useful addition to our comprehension of American Jewish history.

Dr. Morton I. Teicher is the Founding Dean, Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University and Dean Emeritus, School of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. ★

**ROBERTS**

(continued from page 12)

Ted Roberts, a Rockower Award winner, is a syndicated Jewish columnist who looks at Jewish life with rare wit and insight. Ted worships at Etz Chayim Synagogue in Huntsville, Ala., where he has served as bar mitzvah teacher. Check out his Web site: www.wonderwordworks.com and Blog: www.scribblerontheroof.typepad.com. His collected works *The Scribbler on The Roof* can be bought at Amazon.com or lulu.com. ★



Musings from Shiloh

BY BATYA MEDAD

The Jewish Post & Opinion

1427 W. 86th St. #228
Indianapolis, IN 46260

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Signs of Succot around Shiloh and Jerusalem

Let the pictures speak for themselves...



Jennie Cohen's rainbow sukkah. (see Editorial pg. 2)



Batya Medad is a veteran American olah, immigrant in Israel. She and her husband made aliyah in 1970 and have been in Shiloh since 1981. She has two active blogs, <http://shilohmusings.blogspot.com> and [http://](http://me-ander.blogspot.com)

me-ander.blogspot.com, besides having established the Kosher Cooking Carnival; details on me-ander. You can contact her at shilohmuse@yahoo.com. ✪

Posted on me-ander.blogspot.com on Sept. 30, 2012.

