Editor’s Note:

A belated Happy Purim to everyone! I can’t believe this academic year is almost coming to a close.

This edition of the newsletter has a few pieces related to our most recent holiday as well as various academia articles.

Thank you to everyone for all the contributions. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading them all, as I am sure you all will.

Good luck and best wishes for this final term.

Sefora Casto Scantlebury
A belated Purim sameach! In the last two terms, the Department has progressed in leaps and bounds. Many of us have been involved last week with Jewish Book Week, a wonderful opportunity to share our work with the wider community. In December, a highly successful conference was hosted by the Department, the Institute of Jewish Studies (UCL), and the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies (Oxford) on ‘Jews and non-Jews in Lithuania’. It was attended by 130-150 people each day, and addressed by several dignitaries such as the Lithuanian Ambassador, the President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Deputy President of the Jewish Community of Lithuania, as well as by eminent academics such as Professor Antony Polonsky (Brandeis). A great thanks to François Guesnet (UCL) for convening this major event.

Other good news: my ERC (European Research Commission) funded project, on ‘Calendars in Antiquity and the Middle Ages’, was launched on 1 February with the appointment of François de Blois as Researcher. The project, which is to last for five years, will be joined later this year by Ilana Wartenberg and Israel Sandman, and by two additional researchers who are currently being recruited (see the UCL jobs website!). For more information on the project, see http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hebrew-jewish/research/research-pro. We look forward to the fresh blood, and fresh buzz, that this project will inject into the Department.

Before moving on to real business, I should also thank everyone who has been working so tirelessly in the Department: academic staff, teaching staff, research staff, admin staff, the Newsletter editors, and above all – students! Every single person deserves a full paragraph on their efforts and achievements, and for helping me out at all levels as young Head of Department; please keep it up, you are all doing a fantastic job.

In this issue of the Newsletter, I would like to write briefly about Open Access. This concept – perhaps I could call it ‘slogan’ – has been around for many years, but now it is being rolled in as official and binding government policy. What is Open Access? Very simply, it is to make the outputs of research, such as articles and books, accessible on the internet free of charge, for everyone to read. This is truly a wonderful way of disseminating knowledge and ideas, although I suspect government ministers are motivated by political agenda. Their argument is not, ‘we would love to read your research’, but rather, ‘if tax payers contribute vast amounts of funding to universities and to research, they should be entitled in return to free access to the outputs’.
You never know, this rhetoric might bring in a few extra votes at the next elections...

In any event, from 1 April 2013 all research funded by UK and European Research Councils (including, for example, the ERC mentioned above), and in the near future, all research funded by the Government, will have to be published Open Access. Is this good news? Read on.

The problem with Open Access – but a very major one – is how to implement the policy. As we all know, publishing is an expensive exercise. The traditional model has always been that academic publishers recovered the costs of publishing (plus, in some cases, a nice little profit) through sales and subscriptions, which Open Access will effectively abolish. The Open Access model proposes, therefore, that instead of the readers paying to read, the authors should pay to be published and read.

Academics like us cannot afford, of course, to pay for our own work to be published. The Government will therefore allocate funds to universities for this purpose. I am not sure where this money will be coming from, but never mind. More troubling is the unpleasant prospect of academics, within a university like UCL, competing with one another for a limited pot of funding in order to have their work published. Fortunately for us, UCL are very generous and promising that they will ensure no one is deprived. After seven years at UCL, I am becoming a real fan of the institution.

Open Access may turn out to be a blessing for small publishers such as the *Journal of Jewish Studies*, of which I am Editor, because income from authors will be much more secure and reliable than from sales and annual subscriptions. But for authors and scholars, Open Access will be far more problematic. Will scholars from the USA, who are not subject to Open Access regulations, be deterred from publishing in *JJS* because of prohibitive Open Access charges? And conversely, will UK scholars be barred from publishing in the USA, where Open Access is normally not on offer? In this event, the UK will quickly become international backwaters – a crippling prospect for a subject area like Jewish Studies, that is so internationally far-flung. And what about researchers who are not employed in universities: students, post-docs, independent scholars – there are many of them in Jewish Studies – where will they find the money to publish their work in the UK, once everything has gone Open Access?

So, Open Access promises a mixture of good and bad. The principle is wonderful, the implementation problematic. Let us keep smiling, and hope this policy achieves what it sets out to do: to enhance the wide dissemination of our work, and to enable us to share widely the thrill of our new discoveries.
I wonder how many readers have seen Purim at Windsor Castle? Perhaps, on first thoughts, not many. But, if you have ever visited the Royal Apartments, then you most certainly have.

During the tour, when you come back through the Waterloo Room and turn left into the Queen’s Presence Chamber, there it is. As they say in the classics, literally, the ‘gantze megillah’. On the walls are tapestries depicting events in the Book of Esther. The tapestries are individually entitled as follows:

- Esther preparing herself to meet King Ahasuerus (pictured below)
- The crowning of Esther
- Mordechai’s refusal to bow down
- Esther fainting on hearing the news of Haman’s threat
- Esther inviting Ahasuerus and Haman to a meal
- The triumph of Mordechai
- The condemning of Haman

Each measures nearly 14 feet in height and varies between 15 and 24 feet in width.

It is not unusual to find the story of Esther depicted in various works of art, as she was next to King David as the most popular Old Testament figure in the Renaissance. You can go back as far as the 15th century and find a painting by the Florentine, Marco de Buono Gicumberti (1402–1489), or over a century later, to oil on canvas by Gentileschi (1593–1651). Both of these are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Then there is also Racine’s dramatic version of the story, written for the court of Louis XIV.

So what is the story behind this story?

The series of tapestries was based on cartoons produced by the French artist Jean-François de Troy in Paris and Rome between 1737 and 1740 and which are to be found at the Louvre. The tapestries proved to be very popular and several sets were produced in the following 50 years. They were all produced in wool and silk by the famous Gobelin factories.

The Windsor Castle series was purchased specifically for Windsor by Charles Long, 1st Baron Farnborough (1760-1838), Paymaster-General and art connoisseur, whose taste influenced the decoration of the royal palaces. He was also a trustee of the National Gallery and the British Museum.
These tapestries are included in a Royal Collection publication, *One Hundred Treasures of Windsor Castle* written by the Deputy Surveyor of The Queen’s Works of Art, Jonathan Marsden which published in Spring 2008.

Other examples of de Troy’s Esther tapestries are to be found in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, the Banqueting Hall of the Palais d’Elysée, the Palais Thott (French embassy in Copenhagen) and also in the Château de la Roche-Guyon, which is between Mantes-la-Jolie and Rouen. This latter collection was ordered by the Duchesse d’Enville to decorate the great room in the château. The set was woven between 1767 and 1769, of which she kept four. By 1987, they had been sold off to pay death duties and came into the hands of Karl Lagerfeld, the couturier. He put them up for sale at Christie’s in Monte Carlo in 2000. This time, the French authorities intervened and the Ministry of Culture bought them on behalf of the state. The Ministry subsequently banned them from being sold abroad, declaring them a national heritage.

They have now returned them to the Château de la Roche-Guyon which I visited a few years ago with my wife and some Israeli friends and found them purely by chance as I was not aware at that time that a set was even there. Incidentally, the Chateau was Rommel’s residence and headquarters during the War.

So, next time you visit Windsor, do not forget to look out for the tapestries. But, when you see Haman, do not boo or shout, as the Queen’s guards might escort you off the premises!
**Purim Carnival**

Adloyada is the name given to the annual Purim carnival in Israel. The name is derived from the rabbinic saying (Meg. 7b) that one should celebrate on Purim until one no longer knows (ad de-lo yada) the difference between "Blessed be Mordecai" and "Cursed be Haman." The first Adloyada was held in Tel Aviv in 1912. It is celebrated by carnival processions with decorated floats through the main streets, accompanied by bands.
**Recipe for Hamentashen**

**Dough**
- ½ cup (125 ml) butter
- 1 cup (250 ml) sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 (500 ml) cups flour
- 2 tsp. (10 ml) baking powder
- 2 tbsp. (30 ml) milk
- vanilla or lemon extract

Cream butter and sugar, and add egg. Sift flour and baking powder together and add a little to creamed mixture. Add milk, then remaining flour. Mix in flavoring. Roll dough out 1/8 to ¼ inch (2.5 to 5 mm) thick. Cut into rounds, dot each with a spoonful of filling (see below), form into triangles, and bake at 375 degrees (190 C) for 15 to 30 minutes until delicately browned.

**Prune Filling**
- 1 lb. (500 g) prunes, pitted
- 1 cup (250 ml) raisins
- 1 tbsp. (15 ml) lemon juice
- 1 tsp. (5 ml) lemon rind, grated
- ½ cup (125 ml) sugar
- 1 tbsp. (15 ml) honey

Soak prunes overnight in cold water, or for two hours in hot water. Drain. Chop prunes and raisins. Mix all ingredients thoroughly.

**Apricot Filling**
- 1 lb. (450 g) dried apricots
- 1 cup (250 ml) honey
- 1 tbsp. (15 ml) orange rind, grated
- 3 tbsp. (45 ml) orange juice

Soak apricots overnight in water to cover. Drain, then puree. Combine with honey, orange rind and juice.

**Poppy Seed Filling**
- 1 cup (250 ml) poppy seed
- 1 cup (250 ml) milk
- 1 oz. (30 g) butter
- 2 tbsp. (30 ml) honey
- 1 tart apple, grated

Bring poppy seed and milk to boil, add butter, 3 tbsp. (45 ml) lemon juice and honey, and boil until thick. Cool, then add grated apple.

**Prune and Date Filling**
- 1 cup (250 ml) prunes
- 1 cup (250 ml) raisins
- 1 cup (250 ml) dates
- ½ cup (125 ml) nuts
- ½ cup (125 ml) jam

Soak prunes in hot water for two hours. Drain. Mince all ingredients and mix well.

*By Hannah Watkins*
Last year I developed a sudden passion for Shakespeare after attending the Globe to Globe festival (www.globetoglobe.shakespearesglobe.com), an incredible event at London’s Globe Theatre featuring all 37 of Shakespeare’s plays* in 37 languages from around the world, such as (these are just some of my favourites) Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Cantonese, Georgian, Korean, Lithuanian, Maori, Polish, Shona, Turkish, Urdu, and Yoruba. It also included The Merchant of Venice in Hebrew performed by HaBimah Theatre. (If you’d like to watch, or re-watch, any of the plays featured in the festival, they can be viewed free of charge at www.thespace.org.)

In the wake of the festival I became fascinated by the history of Shakespeare in Hebrew, and began to investigate the early Hebrew versions of his plays that were translated in Eastern Europe prior to the language’s revernacularisation in Palestine. Interest in Shakespeare among Hebrew authors dates back to the first decades of the Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment) in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when adherents of the movement began to work towards the creation of a European-style literary canon in what they regarded as the Jewish national (albeit non-vernacular) language. Many of these authors regarded Shakespeare’s works (which they typically read in German) as the pinnacle of literature and a model for emulation in their own writing as well as an obvious candidate for translation into Hebrew. The earliest Hebrew translations consisted of individual speeches and other fragments of various plays, the first being Shlomo Levisohn’s 1816 rendering of fifteen lines of Henry IV Part One. It wasn’t until the 1870s and 1880s that Hebrew versions of complete Shakespeare plays began to appear.

The story of the first full translations, and of their translator, is riveting. Isaac Eduard Salkinson was born in Vilna and went through the traditional Jewish educational system of heder and yeshiva as was typical in his generation. Stopping in London while en route to New York in order to enter rabbinical seminary, he had an encounter with some representatives of the London Missionary Society and converted to Christianity. He then trained as an Anglican minister in Edinburgh and Glasgow, whereupon the missionary society hired him and sent him to Vienna with the task of translating the New Testament into Hebrew while aiding the church’s efforts to

*By some calculations there are 38, but the Globe didn’t count the jointly-authored The Two Noble Kinsmen.
convert the local Jews to Christianity. In Vienna he met and befriended Peretz Smolenskin, an extremely prominent Maskilic (Jewish Enlightenment) author and editor who had long wanted to see Shakespeare’s works translated into Hebrew. Smolenskin recognised in Salkinson - a fluent English speaker and translator - a chance for the fulfillment of his dream, and proposed the idea to him. Salkinson agreed and started by translating Othello, which was published in 1874 with Smolenskin’s support under the title of Iti’el haKushi. In his preface to the translation, Smolenskin declared that the publication of Iti’el constituted a day of reckoning for the British, who had appropriated the Jewish people’s national literary treasure, the Hebrew Bible, and used it for their own purposes. ‘Is this revenge not sweet?’ he asked his readers. Salkinson’s translation was lauded by Maskilic literary critics, but when the author was discovered to be a Christian convert, minister, and missionary, the praises were rescinded and Smolenskin was condemned for associating with him. Undeterred, Smolenskin persisted in his friendship with Salkinson and in 1878 the two published a Hebrew translation of Romeo and Juliet entitled Ram veYa’el, though this time much more discreetly and with barely a mention of Smolenskin’s role in the project. Tragically, Salkinson was prevented from translating any more of the plays: not long after the publication of Ram veYa’el another member of the church reported him to his employers for neglecting his missionary activities and New Testament translation while instead spending his time rendering Shakespeare into Hebrew. The church authorities removed him from his post for a year in order for him to complete his New Testament translation, and he died shortly thereafter.

Salkinson was influential not only for his own two translations, which were widely admired by later authors and critics, but also because he paved the way for other Eastern European authors to render complete Shakespeare plays into Hebrew. Over the next two decades four more translations of some of Shakespeare’s best-known works appeared: Isaac Barb’s Makbet (Macbeth), published in 1883; Judah Loeb Elkind’s Musar Sorera (The Taming of the Shrew), published in 1893; Samuel Gordon’s haMelekh Lir (King Lear), published in 1899; and finally Chaim Borenstein’s Hamlet (1900-1). Three of the plays were translated from the original English (though one might suspect that Elkind, Gordon, and Borenstein consulted German and Russian versions because, in contrast to Salkinson, none of them had lived in an English-speaking country). The only exception to this, Makbet, was translated from Schiller’s German adaptation.

Following the publication of these Eastern European translations, Hebrew versions of other Shakespeare plays began to appear in Palestine and the United States in the first few decades of the twentieth century, the language becoming progressively more integrated with revernacularised Modern Hebrew.

These six early Hebrew translations all share many noteworthy characteristics, of which I will give just a few examples here. Firstly, there is a strong tendency to Hebraise the names of characters,
as evident in the designations Iti’el for Othello, Ram for Romeo, and Ya’el for Juliet. Usually the Hebraised names are drawn from the Hebrew Bible and there is an attempt to retain a phonetic link with the original. Secondly, in many cases the Hebrew versions rhyme, and it is extremely interesting to observe the authors’ various ways of accomplishing this while attempting to remain faithful to the sense of the original. Thirdly, the translators find novel ways of rendering the foreign languages appearing in the English source plays. For example, *The Taming of the Shrew* contains some lines in Latin, and Elkind distinguishes these lines linguistically in his Hebrew version not by presenting them in the original but rather by translating them into Aramaic.

These issues and many other intriguing aspects of the Hebrew translations form the subject of my new research project, a bilingual (or, in the case of *Makbet*, trilingual) edition of the six Eastern European Hebrew Shakespeare plays with commentary on their linguistic composition and translation techniques. I hope that the project will make this compelling chapter in the history of Hebrew literature accessible to a wider audience.
Dr. Francois Guesnet’s encounter with Shomrei Hadath……

By Rachel Harris

I saw for the first time the film Undzere Kinder at University College London while I was a student on a course of Dr. Francois Guesnet on Polish Jewry. The lecture hall was packed to capacity with people sitting in the aisles. The film made such an impression on everyone; the audience was visibly moved as it watched the last film made in Yiddish, in Poland in 1948.

The film, a wonderfully moving drama about a group of children, who survived the Holocaust, largely shot on location at Medem an orphanage school, near Lodz. The film stars children who were actual survivors of the Holocaust, and focuses on how they came to terms with this unimaginable horrific experience.

Afterwards I asked Dr. Guesnet whether I could borrow the film to show to my kehilla. He not only agreed but was willing to present the film. This was to be Dr. Guesnet first encounter with Shomrei Hadath. Once again the film was watched by a packed audience, the reactions the same as when the film was shown at UCL.

There were questions following Dr. Guesnet explanatory talk after the film. Seeing the interest the film aroused and the warm reception Dr. Guesnet received, prompted me to invite Dr. Guesnet to speak on Polish Jewry, at a seuda shlishit, last June to which some members of the kehilla came.

Dr Guesnet gave a brief outline about how the Jews came to be invited to live in Poland and the privileges (charters) they received from the monarchy which gave them protection and allowed them to set up their own autonomous communities.

Afterwards everyone present said he must be asked, if possible, to come and talk to the community on Polish/Lithuanian Jewry, perhaps a mini series of three lectures was
suggested.

We as a community considered ourselves very fortunate to have Dr. Guesnet, whose field is Eastern European Jewry with emphasis on Polish/Lithuanian Jewry. His depth of knowledge on the subject is quiet incredible.

Jewish Life in Poland, a series of three lectures spanned eight hundred years from the 12th - 20th century. The title of the first lecture held last October was ‘Emergence of the autonomous Jewish Community and Golden Age 12th-17th Century’. The second one was held in November titled ‘Internal diversification and political change: the rise of Hasidut and the partitions of Poland’ 18th - 19th Century. The last one in January this year titled ‘Jews in Eastern Europe and the challenges of modernity: Napoleon, emancipation and nationalism’ 19th - 20th Century. All three lectures were extremely interesting.

The lectures, which gave us a small insight into Jewish life in Poland, were well attended and most successful. Dr. Guesnet provided lecture notes and recommended reading lists.

The Shomrei Hadath kehilla hopes it will not be too long before Dr. Guesnet returns to give us further illuminating talks on Jewish life in Poland.

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**DON'T MISS THIS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY**

**Sunday 11th March 7.15 p.m. at Shomrei Hadath**

*The last film made in Poland in Yiddish*

**Undere Kinder**

1948 film with English sub-titles

*Starring comedians Shimen Dzigam & Yisroel Shumacher and the children of a Jewish orphanage near Lod; one of the first post war films about the Holocaust*

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**JEWISH LIFE IN POLAND**

12th - 20th Century

A series of 3 talks by Dr. Francois Guesnet

21st October

Emergence of the autonomous Jewish Community and Golden Age. 12th-17th Century

18th November

Internal diversification and political change: the rise of Hasidut and the partitions of Poland. 18th-19th Century

13th January 2013

Jews in Eastern Europe and the challenges of modernity: Napoleon, emancipation and nationalism. 19th-20th Century

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*Refreshments will be served*
Hyman Hurwitz (whose likeness hangs in the Departmental office – how many of you have even noticed it??) is a virtually forgotten man whose name should be familiar to all – particularly at UCL and even more essentially – to all in the Hebrew and Jewish Studies Department. His claim to fame was to be the very first Jewish Professor in England.

The University of London, (as UCL was then known) was the first secular university in England, accepting boys and men (no girls or women for quite some time) of all creeds and financial backgrounds. Hyman Hurwitz’s appointment, as Professor of Hebrew, at the university, in 1828 was revolutionary. Several men, both Jewish and non-Jewish, had applied for the position, The Council, however, had received a letter of support regarding his application from none other than Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the poet, who was a neighbour of Hurwitz in Highgate. Coleridge, despite his dependence on opium, was a highly regarded man and he relied heavily on Hurwitz to assist him in his Hebrew learning and was, unusually for his time, a supporter and admirer of this foreign Jew, corresponding and meeting with him on a regular basis.

Hyman Hurwitz was born in Posen around 1770 – although the date has never really been confirmed. He arrived in England as a young man and embarked on rapidly learning the language. He married an English woman and had a daughter. His application, in 1817, for
British citizenship was refused, despite being supported by many eminent men, representing the Church, law and medicine. The reason for the refusal is not stated. This, however, did not preclude him from being a loyal royalist and he wrote several poems, one of which was translated into English by Coleridge, on the death of members of the royal family. He also translated God Save the King into Hebrew which was first sung in 1826. Reading Hurwitz’s English works, however, it could never be said that his knowledge of the language was in any way inferior. There is a clarity apparent therein, that is sadly lacking in many modern writings.

Hurwitz was the author of several books, including a Hebrew Grammar, which explained the Hebrew language with ease and simplicity and was designed for the absolute beginner. He also wrote a polemic work called “Hebrew Tales” based on Talmudic stories. Coleridge translated three of these and they were first published in the poet’s magazine, “The Friend”. Hebrew Tales is still available today but, at the time, was translated into German and also published in America – a virtually unknown feat for the era.

Hyman Hurwitz was to remain as a Professor at UCL until his death in July 1844. His grave, in the cemetery of the Great Synagogue, Brady Street, is marked by a large granite column honouring his achievements. His obituary, published in Voice of Jacob, by a friend and colleague, Leopold Neumegen poignantly stated “He has ascended to on high/His memory will not be forgotten on earth.” Sadly, Hyman Hurwitz is now almost totally forgotten, I hope this article will be a gentle reminder of his being.
Judeo-Spanish, also known as Judezmo or Ladino, exists today as a heritage language in grave danger of extinction, with very few who can still read and or write it, and even less that still speak it. Up until a few years ago I had never even heard of the Ladino language. My first encounter came when a friend told me about a research project he had undertaken in New York, during which he had visited several nursing homes with the purpose of interviewing and recording some of the last generations of Ladino speakers. Knowing I was studying Spanish and Hebrew as part of my degree, he gave me several books on the history of Sephardi Jewry and their unique language, formed throughout the various Jewish communities of Eastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire.

As a Language and Culture student the assessment for my year abroad in Israel consisted of a project on a topic of my choice, to be presented orally in Hebrew on my return to UCL. Ladino seemed like a natural option for me. From this point on I was to become more acquainted with the Sephardi community and the different forms in which their language was still being maintained to this day. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Hilary Pomeroy from the Hebrew and Jewish studies department, who acted as my supervisor, for all her input towards my project.

Much of my work focused on the increasing academic interest in the field, ranging from university courses to conferences on scholarly findings. Whilst conducting my research I consequently encountered several native speakers within the community, and it is this handful of individuals I would like to dedicate this article to.

During my time in Israel I became acquainted with a Mexican family that made Aliyah over ten years ago. This was a great way for me to keep up my Spanish whilst also learning
more Hebrew, the language of choice among their six children. Mentioning my Ladino project one
day I came to discover, the mother, Sara, had in fact grown up speaking Ladino in a small
community in Mexico. She was immediately very interested in my work. Before I knew it I was
watching films in Ladino and listening to her reminiscing fond memories of her childhood
amongst the community. These not only revealed a strong sense of her identity, but the nostalgic
bond she felt towards the language of her youth, now being completely isolated from the Ladino
speaking community. For her, coming to Israel, learning Hebrew and the demanding lifestyle of a
mother of six meant she had neither invested time into the teaching of Ladino to her family, nor
continued to practise it herself. Sadly this is the case for the majority of the native Ladino
speaking community who, continue to highly esteem its cultural value yet don’t regard it as a
language of everyday use.

Nevertheless there are some who have attempted the continued practice of Ladino in spoken form.
One day, browsing on the website of the Ladino Authority, an organization established by the
Knesset for the safeguarding and preservation of the Sephardi language, I stumbled upon a group
called ‘El Salon del Ladino’. They ran monthly meetings, congregating in varying venues, with
the sole purpose of conversing in Ladino. This was something I had to see for myself.

On this particular evening an elderly lady gave a lecture on the interpretation of dreams, to the
thirty or so members present. Afterwards a full blown discussion on the topic took place, all in
Ladino. To my delight, with my knowledge of Spanish, I was perfectly able to understand and
communicate. Nevertheless, it was interesting to note the alternating use of Ladino and Hebrew.
Hebrew often used when addressing a person to the left or to the right. Having lived the majority
of their lives in Israel, it appeared Hebrew was the language of custom and ease. From the
conversation you could catch glimpses of the rich Sephardic roots and tradition, with frequent
nostalgic references to Turkey and Spain, places of strong emotional attachment the majority had
never even been to. After the talk a number of people approached me, some in Ladino but most in
Hebrew, although they also spoke a variety of other languages such as French, Turkish, and
English. The moderator of the society, who had held his position for six years, told us he had
never spoken Ladino prior to this. Turkish was the language he felt most comfortable conversing
in. Another man explained that he hadn’t taught his children Ladino since his wife of Moroccan
descent couldn’t understand it. He didn’t regret this. Although he greatly valued his Sephardic
heritage, he had embraced the Hebrew language as part of the Israeli acculturation process.

This is very much a reflection of Ladino’s standing within the community of today. Although it is
no longer in daily use, it remains a large and vital part of the Sephardi Jewry’s cultural heritage,
something which it not only strongly identifies with, but also takes great pride in.
"And Europe Will be Stunned" - Art meets Polish-Jewish History
By François Guesnet

A remarkable event at Jewish Book Week 2013 showcased the potentials of a joint cross-disciplinary reflection of artists, academics, and political activists. Inspired by an exhibition in Hornsey Town Hall in 2012, the writer Eva Hoffman (best known for her autobiographic novel 'Lost in Translation'), UCL historian of art Tamar Garb and myself started a conversation about the highly successful and thought provoking video trilogy 'And Europe Will be Stunned'. Yael Bartana, the author of this trilogy, represented Poland at the Art Biennale in Venice in 2011, which in itself was a surprising demonstration of flexibility by Polish cultural diplomacy. The videos develop a historical utopia of the return of the Jews to Poland, invited to return to Poland by a political activist, Slawomir Sierakowski of Krytyka Polityczna, a left leaning, eastern central European movement based above all in Poland, who plays himself.

The first video shows this speech, the second video shows the return of the Jews, most surprisingly staged as the construction of a 'Wall and Tower' kibbutz in the heart of contemporary Warsaw, at the very site where the new Museum for the History of Polish Jews is being completed at the moment (and hopefully opened later this year). The third video leaps forward to a more distant future, and shows that the political activist has been shot dead - a reference to the assassination of the Polish president Gabriel Narutowicz in 1922 - and a very colourful crowd of Jews, Poles, and people of a great variety of skin colour mourn the leader of what has emerged as a new political movement: the Movement for the Jewish Renaissance in Poland. The speeches at the leaders' mourning ceremony reflect the diversity of understanding the past - a Polish-Jewish one, a non-Jewish Polish one, a Polish-Israeli one, an Israeli (and Zionist, for that matter) one, etc.

These videos operate through the deliberate superimposition of meanings, which are evoked with images, textual references, tunes, symbols, staging. They let us associate the Holocaust, the early postwar period in Poland, the Jewish pioneers in prestate Palestine, the contemporary world. The trilogy, praised by art critics internationally, has been performed last February at an event at Jewish Book Week. It had to be moved to the largest hall at King's Place due to the overwhelming demand for tickets. Further to Hoffman, Garb and myself, Slawek Sierakowski came from Warsaw, as did Stanislaw Krajewski, an influential public intellectual and one of the most visible representatives of the contemporary Jewish community in Poland. The discussion revolved mostly around the question what art can do with history. By mobilizing and juxtaposing a great variety of references, the videos puzzle and disturb us, our preconceptions of the Jewish past in Poland and of Polish-Jewish coexistence are intentionally undermined. It is the strength of this trilogy that they refuse to give a direction how we are supposed to understand the past, the present, and how we are supposed to think about the future. Most of the panelists agreed at the end, I believe, that this form of destabilizing connotations is a highly productive process. And preparing this event was a highly rewarding process.
I am not new to the department...in fact I have been here since 2006. After doing a combined degree in history between our department and the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, I decided to opt for the latter to do my masters – only to write a dissertation, and in fact most of my essays, in the field of Jewish history! So, not surprisingly, I came back in November last year to start a PhD with Dr François Guesnet. I did not, however, completely deny my SSEES past and asked Dr Bojan Aleksov to be my second supervisor.

The broad topic of my research is the identity of Jews in France in the second half of the 19th century. When I say this, people usually answer “ah...so you’re researching the Dreyfus Affair!” Well, no, not really. I am more interested in what comes before and in exploring how a Western European Jewish identity began to develop in that period. Indeed, French Jews became progressively more integrated not only into their surrounding national society but also into ‘European’ society. My research examines how ideas and projects that were dominant in Europe at the time (such as, for instance, imperialism, paternalism and the European ‘civilising mission’) shaped French Jewish identity. More precisely, I look at how the interaction with the new divisions that accompanied the construction of Europe impacted on French Jewish perceptions of Jews in one of Europe’s ‘peripheries’ – the Balkans.
From the team who brought *Reservoir Dogs* and *The Usual Suspects*, we are excited to announce the third installment of our trilogy...

**Revenge is Coming**

**Titus Andronicus**

MARCH 27th-29th 2013 at the Rag Factory in Shoreditch

Produced by Scarlett Young and Lily Fisher
Directed by Dan Garber (and Guido Cavaciuti)

To sum this Shakespearean tragedy up succinctly, Titus Andronicus is a play with fourteen killings, nine of which take place on stage, six severed members, one rape, one live burial, one case of insanity and one of cannibalism. With an average of 5.2 atrocities per act or one every ninety-seven lines, Titus Andronicus is certainly one of the Bard's more shocking creations.

The violence and themes of revenge can be applied to many historical events and locations but we have adapted Titus Andronicus to take place in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union. A more modern take set in the late eighties/early nineties; we have kept the original Shakespearean language and applied the story to the shocking state of the eastern bloc twenty years ago. With feuding factions fighting desperately for power and money, a time where Mafioso and government officials (including the ruthless KGB) were difficult to distinguish from one another, the fall of communism in the USSR seemed a perfect setting for this bloody tale of violence and revenge: **Titus Andronicus**.

Following the death of the Russian leader and the fall of Communism, Titus returns to Moscow after many years of battling against the ever-empowered Vory y zokonye. The weary Titus is thrust, unwillingly, into a bloody battle for power as he is given the authority to decide the
future leadership of the tarnished state. As the casualties mount, Titus struggles to maintain control over not only the warring factions but also his own family. In the face of one of the most, if not the most, despicable adversary in the whole of Shakespeare will Titus emerge with his own sanity, as well as the lives of his sons and devoted daughter, intact?

Needless to say, the play ends with an explosion of violence, paranoia and revenge, but we won’t ruin it with too many more details!

In this production, we really wanted to highlight how a regime formed on lies, deceit and murder is always doomed to fail. This is why setting the play in Russia just after the fall of communism is perfect. This period of history of Russia is very bloody and the Russia we see today is still riddled with corruption.

Can military intervention ever lead to a truly peaceful society?

The excessive violence in the play is key to putting across many of the plays’ themes, the central one being revenge. How far should a man go to seek justice? The gruesome nature of these incidents should shock the audience so much that they start to consider how far is too far? It effectively amplifies the effects of seeking revenge to show how the hunt for retribution can quickly transform into an all-consuming circle of self-destruction. Titus finds himself dragged into a cycle of revenge which eventually destroys everything he once held dear.

The play is a true excess in violence, blood and gore but it all serves to make a point. When Shakespeare wrote the play England was at a particularly bloody point in its history. Audiences were baying for blood and murder. Shakespeare wrote a play in the popular revenge-tragedy style but then blew the events out of proportion to act as a wake-up call to the masses, to show what their society had become. Now the events are no longer shocking enough to achieve this goal. In a society constantly desensitized by violence this production will highlight how shockingly plausible these events are and serve as an outcry against the amount of violence in our everyday lives.

The main artistic idea of this production is to turn one of Shakespeare’s most famous plays into a live action graphic novel. Through a combination of a fully animated stylized set and creating a white frame around each scene the play will feel more like ‘Sin City’ than ‘Shakespeare’. The graphic novel effect will only serve to enhance the bloody gore of the play creating a fully immersive, exciting and at times horrifying experience!
Anyone who has seen our previous plays will know how bloody the stage can get, and a production with fourteen deaths certainly won’t disappoint... tickets will only be £4.50 for UCL Students and Concessions or £7 for Adults*, so if anyone is interested, please do come and support us, it would be really great to see people from the department in the audience!

It will be our last show at UCL and we hope to go out with an explosion...

Thanks a lot and hopefully see you all there!

Scarlett

*You can book tickets online, or on the door, follow us on twitter or check out our Facebook page, our blog or email us for any more information!

www.twitter.com/titusuclu
www.facebook.com/titusuclu
titusuclu@blogspot.com
titusuclu@gmail.com
The Summer School offers eight days of intensive teaching in Greek and Latin. This year there will also be classes in Coptic and Biblical Hebrew. There are four language classes each day as well as lectures and a debate, between 10.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. The fee is £100. There will also be a workshop on how to make mosaics (the cost of which is £60), visits to the British Museum and the Petrie Museum and an exhibition of mosaics. The course is not residential, and there is no teaching on the weekend of 13-14 July. Bursaries and travel grants may be available for certain categories of students.

Students will be assigned to teaching groups of normally not more than 12-15 people. As far as possible, groups for each language comprise students of roughly the same level of experience (beginners, intermediate or advanced). The style of teaching is friendly, but demanding: a lot of work is expected from students during the School, but they usually find the whole experience both stimulating and valuable. Some classes concentrate chiefly on reading texts, while others offer a mixture of grammar and translation practice. Our tutors include some of the most experienced and talented teachers of Classics in the London area and beyond.

The Summer School in Classics caters for a wide range of interests. In recent years, we have had substantial numbers of students from both schools and universities, but also mature students who wish to learn Greek or Latin, or to revive their knowledge of the languages. Our principal concern is to provide a thorough programme of language learning in a lively university environment.

For application forms and the programme please visit [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/classics/engagement/summerschool](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/classics/engagement/summerschool) and for enquiries, please contact:
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Closing date for applications is Friday 31 May 2013