OBITUARY: LEON YUDKIN  
(8 SEPTEMBER 1939–8 JUNE 2013)

Leon Yudkin was born into a well-known Anglo-Jewish family and began his Jewish education at Carmel College where he was noted for his involvement in drama, debate and editing the school magazine. He studied at University College London and the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He obtained his Doctor of Literature degree from the University of London in 1995 for research that went into his first book on the Israeli poet Isaac Lamdan.

He taught Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of Manchester and then at University College London. He served as visiting professor at the University of Paris and lectured extensively in Israel, South Africa, Australia, the USA and Europe. He was a leading authority on modern Jewish and Hebrew literature as the author of twelve books on these subject areas and the editor of a further five. At the Hebrew University of Jerusalem he led workshops for university academics from around the world concerned with the teaching and promotion of Hebrew literature.

The cover of his last published book, In and Out: The Prague Circle and Czech Jewry (Prague 2011), based on a number of years’ participation in a continuing seminar at the Hussite Institute of the Charles University of Prague on Bohemian nationalism and religion, reads:

His written work concerns both the history of literature in its context, and analysis, of the texts. His first publications opened with a discussion of the concept of the Modern and its Judaic implications in the rejection or adaptation of the sacral. He then went on to draw a picture of the emergence of quintessentially Israeli literature. This was followed by a characterisation of modern Jewish writing overall. He has also written a number of extensive monographs on both European and Hebrew writers, and followed this up with studies of the post-modernist tendencies of current fiction.

A partial bibliography begins with his work on modern Hebrew literature:

A broadening of his area of interest is signalled by the publication of:


His relationship with this journal also includes the many years he participated, together with his wife, Mickey, in the Annual International Jewish–Christian Bible Week, initially in Bendorf at the Hedwig Dransfeld Haus and more recently at Haus Ohrbeck in Osnabrück. He lectured twice in the former location on Biblical topics and for the past few years the two of them have been popular Jewish resource people in the morning study-group work. As was said at the shivah, he was both a scholar and a great communicator of his learning, and that combination will be sorely missed.

**Note**