EDITORIAL

Amongst many commemorations of the start of the First World War, Professor Marc Saperstein organized a unique international one-day conference on *Rabbis and the Great War*, sponsored by Leo Baeck College with the Jewish Historical Society of England. Four other partners in the project were London synagogues: West London, New North London, North Western Reform (Alyth Gardens) and Belsize Square, all of which were the beneficiaries, directly or indirectly, of the arrival in the UK of refugee rabbis from Germany during the prelude to the second great European war. The conference was funded by the Ruth Ivor Foundation, Inc. of New York, named after one of the daughters of Rabbi Bruno Italiener, who served as a chaplain in the German army during the war, came to London as a refugee in 1939 and served as Associate Minister of the West London Synagogue from 1941 to 1951.

Through examining sermons preached during the war and other materials, the conference explored the significant fact from a Jewish perspective that the First World War was the first conflict in which hundreds of thousands of Jews loyal to one European nation state found themselves in direct conflict with Jews holding a similar allegiance to another state. Chaplains and religious leaders across Europe brought comfort, raised morale and offered a religious perspective to world events: how belief in God can be reconciled with the unprecedented slaughter, the efficacy of prayer from opposing sides, magnanimity in victory and courage in defeat. The eleven articles printed here, edited by Professor Saperstein, from Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Belgium, Hungary, Poland and America, reflect very different attitudes and perspectives.

Jay Winter offers an overview of the impact of the First World War on Jewish thought and the consequent changing nature of the relationship between Jewish history and memory.

Great Britain is represented by three rabbinic figures. Colin Eimer charts the internal Jewish challenges faced by newly appointed Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz at the outbreak of the War. Marc Saperstein and Janet Darley explore the attitudes to the war of Morris Joseph and Israel Mattuck, respectively rabbis of the West London (Reform) and Liberal Jewish Synagogues, both of whom express concerns about its destructive effect. In marked contrast, the sermons of continental rabbis reflect enthusiasm for the war, at least in its early stages, as a way of emphasizing the patriotism of the Jewish populations and the hopes that this would finally seal their full integration into their respective nations (Pierre Birnbaum, Janet Darley, Marsha L. Rozenblit).

Joseph Levi reflects on the changing attitude within Italy from patriotism at the beginning to Zionist nationalism towards the end of the war. The particular challenges of living under occupation throughout the war are discussed in Daniel Dratwa's account of the Belgian Chief Rabbi Armand Bloch. Kinga Frojimovics focuses on issues raised in the monthly journal of the Hungarian National Rabbinical Association reflecting the daily lives of army chaplains and soldiers. Andrew Koss's study of the Vilna rabbinate during the war follows the internal struggles within Orthodox Jewry between compromises with modernity because of requirements of the state and the desire to hold fast to more traditional views, later expressed as religious Zionism or ultra-orthodoxy.

Finally, Marc Saperstein brings another perspective on the war with his article on Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf, who moved from his native Prussia to the United States and experienced the conflict of someone loyal to his German roots. A review of Peter C. Appelbaum's important collection of sermon materials and memoirs, *Loyalty Betrayed: Jewish Chaplains in the German Army during the First World War*, is included and a new section is introduced in this issue, From the Pulpit, with Howard Cooper's reflection on the random series of events that sparked the beginning of the conflict. To complete the theme of this issue Ruth Fainlight, the poetry editor, has chosen two rightly celebrated poems.

Finally, and with great sadness, we record the death of Rabbi Sheila Shulman, who featured most recently in this journal with her article 'Reading Whole' on contemporary voices in dialogue with Jewish thought (Vol. 45, No. 2, Autumn 2012, pp. 165–171). We print the tributes that were paid to her at her funeral and shivah. Additional memories can be found on the website of Leo Baeck College: <http://www.lbc.ac.uk/201411101901/News/rabbi-sheila-shulman-zql.html>.

Shortly before going to press we learnt of the death of Sir Martin Gilbert who has made such an enormous contribution to the history of Jewish experience in the twentieth century, as recorded here by Marc Saperstein. Martin's own memoir of the late Roman Halter, published in this journal in Autumn 2012, is a fine reminder of the warmth of his personality.

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