

that the Israelis are in fact on their way to something entirely new as twentieth-century Hebrews, this is "ipso facto" different from the fascinating problem of the Galuth, where the essential condition is that it must have gone on for two thousand years. Only in New York

has something new and Jewish emerged in this sense — which is of course why it is so absorbing. All this may seem a far cry from the stories which are set out in my book, and which hark back to my early years in England and Europe rather than to New York; but it is

relevant for me because in letting my mind drift back to earlier times I thought it was precisely to recover from the exuberance of New York and set my feet firmly on the ground in the safe exactitude of small-scale existence — small countries, a small town, a small Jewish community, a few odd individuals exchanging a "Shalom Aleichem" or two while the non-Jewish world caught us up in its fate or passed by regardless. In New York even years ago it was "Stop the world — I want to get off!" — and everybody knew what one meant. But on the Tyneside near Hadrian's Wall, or in the Cathedral Close at Lydford, or in Florence or Cordova or pre-Israel Jerusalem the world was never spinning fast enough to need stopping: one got on or off without too much difficulty, and one could even sit there quietly for a time. Remembering that quiet mood it would be easier to set things apart — to hear the words as well as the music. That, anyhow, was what I felt getting back to England after a dizzy spell of fifteen years in New York. Before I could catch up with New York I had to catch up with myself.

But the self is an elusive creature. At first, memories came back simply and factually, and I found it easy to put them down that way. But once I had unlocked the door, much more came through that I had bargained for, especially when I came to write of Jerusalem. Memories and dreams of many people and many things shook themselves free of time and place. I let it all flow,

for if something impelled me to write this way in fact and fantasy, this too was part of the self (Copyright, The Jewish Chronicle Feature & News Service)

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ON THE FRINGE OF JEWISHNESS

By JONATHAN MILLER

At the time of writing this, I am 27 years old. I am six foot tall, take size eleven shoes, and have a stammer which sometimes proves troublesome. I dislike crowds and am scared stiff of physical violence. I was born in England, have red hair and a long nose. I am a doctor, though I no longer practise medicine. I am also a Jew.

These are just some of the items of my private dossier. The sort of personal identity card we often draw up of ourselves and sometimes consult whenever we are in doubt about the form and outline of our own personality. In times of doubt or anxiety, hesitation, or indecision, it is often useful to glance at a list of this sort and see what kind of behaviour one can expect of oneself. Remembering my stammer, I steer clear of awkward consonants. I avoid Bank holidays and thereby miss the irritation of large crowds. As an Englishman I feel sad when I am abroad for a long time, but acknowledging my physical cowardice, I shun violent sport and galantry of all sorts. What help does the Jewish entry on my dossier provide?

I have no religious belief and observe none of the cultural practices of Judaism. The notion of race is too diffuse to arouse any special sense of loyalty in this matter: apart from which the atmosphere of liberal dissent in which I have grown up has taught me to be suspicious of any alliance which has an ethnic or racial sanction. I like Jewish food and admire the tolerant pessimism of Yiddish humour. But, I also enjoy some forbidden foods, and have a soft spot for Lewis Carroll. In brief, there

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