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This is an author's accepted manuscript of an article published in the Stand 11 (3), pp. 18-26, 2013.

The final definitive version is available online at:

<https://www.standmagazine.org/archive/stand-199-113/11>

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## HANNAH COPLEY

### *Committed Rootlessness: The Perspective and Rhetoric of Jon Silkin*

In his poem 'White Balloon', the Welsh-Jewish poet Dannie Abse addressed the troubled yet unavoidable effect of the Holocaust upon the formation of post-War Jewish identity. Opening with an intimate appeal to his 'love', the speaker reveals that:

...Auschwitz made me  
more of a Jew than Moses did.<sup>1</sup>

The endings of these powerful two lines fold together Old Testament scripture with modern day genocide, highlighting the power of atrocity to shatter and then re-build the history and identity of an entire culture. Although applicable to non-Jewish poets, its focus is determinately fixed upon the dynamic between the Holocaust and post-War Jewish community in Britain. The compression of histories between one line and the next raises the difficult question of what exactly it was that 'made' a Jewish writer in the aftermath of the Second World War. This question, and the subsequent solutions that the Anglo-Jewish poetic community came to in the decades following 1945, has been the subject of limited critical discussion, both in and out of the pages of journals such as *The Jewish Quarterly*, the *Jewish Chronicle*, and the *Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*. However, given the origins of *Stand*, and its often forgotten involvement in the debate surrounding these issues, this article will discuss the role that Jon Silkin, the founding editor of the magazine, played in the Anglo-Jewish community's collective attempts to comprehend their post-Holocaust identity. Furthermore, drawing upon the *Stand* archive, housed in the Brotherton Library at the University of Leeds, it will attempt to shed light on the way that Silkin juggled his sometimes conflicting poetic identity as a left-wing, Northern-based 'committed' writer, and a 'rootless' Anglo-Jew.

Just as Dannie Abse acknowledged the continuing, troubled importance of his Jewishness in post-War Britain ('Auschwitz made me') so too did Jon Silkin address the impact that his Jewishness had on shaping his poetic response to the world around him. In a 1973 interview for the *Vanderbilt Poetry Review* he noted how:

Being a Jew, what one is conscious of is not merely the particular form of prejudice and persecution that is happening now, but that it is one incident in a tradition of such incidents. A historical sense is developed by this knowledge of events, and therefore one ceases to make the present event news. One gives it a perspective. It also seems to me that, in my poetry, it is more effective to talk about something that has happened as though it were happening now, as indeed in a way it is. It recurs with monotony.<sup>2</sup>

Silkin's 'historical sense', so similar to the knowledge that Walter Benjamin speaks of when he describes the Historical Materialist as one aware that the 'state of emergency' is 'not the exception but the rule', attributes his repeated evocations of past atrocity to his identity as a Jewish writer.<sup>3</sup> One poem that epitomises this Jewish 'perspective' of History is the poem 'The Coldness', which was published in *The Re-ordering of The Stones*, Silkin's third collection. Even the opening lines suggest that the depiction of York adheres to the 'historical sense' that Silkin felt was particular to his position as an Anglo-Jewish writer:

Where the printing-works buttress a church  
And the northern river like moss  
Robes herself slowly through  
The cold township of York,  
More coldly than usual  
For a cold northern river.  
You see the citizens  
Indulging stately pleasures,  
Like swans. But they seem cold.<sup>4</sup>

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By beginning in this manner the poem is able to direct the reader through the seemingly timeless landscape of York, mapping out the marriage of old and new, man-made and natural, in an environment that could just as easily be medieval as modern. The deliberate lack of any overt reference to the poem's twentieth-century perspective, coupled with the use of archaic descriptive language, highlights the poet's attempt to make medieval York not only physically but empirically proximate to the reader. As the poem goes on, we see how Silkin (like Abse in 'White Balloon'), uses this timelessness to explore the position of the Holocaust in relation to a much larger, and specifically English history of Jewish persecution:

An assertion persistent  
As a gross tumour, and the sense  
Of such growth haunting  
The flesh of York  
Is that there has been  
No synagogue since eleven ninety  
When eight hundred Jews  
Took each other's lives  
To escape Christian death  
By Christian hand; and the last  
Took his own.

The problem however, with attributing this particular style of historically minded poetry to Silkin's identity as an Anglo-Jew, comes when the previously quoted *Vanderbilt* interview is compared with an earlier article by Silkin, which appeared in *Stand* in 1963. Here, the apparently straightforward link between the poet's Jewishness and his subsequent poetic subject matter and rhetoric is called into question, as a new, socially orientated form of historical sense is introduced within the pages of his own quarterly magazine.

Published three years after *The Re-ordering of Stones*, the article – a transcript of an interview conducted between Silkin and fellow magazine editor Anthony Thwaite – offers a 'perspective' very different to that of the former's 'Jewish' perception of History. This time, under the guise of his role as a radical Northern poet, Silkin speaks of his disapproval of the formulaic nature of contemporary poetry, dismissing the 'formal, static' poetry published by The Movement, and championing instead those, like Geoffrey Hill (then a lecturer at the University of Leeds, where *Stand* was based), who were producing what he called the 'poem-in-process'. When asked by Thwaite to define the meaning of this 'organic' way of writing, Silkin explained:

I think what I was trying to do – in my York poem, exemplifies what I mean. Here is a situation of a massacre of Jews at York in 1190. At the end of the poem, an exact correspondence with what happened in York is implied with what happened in Europe in this century. And I'm asking, do we want this kind of thing to continue? If we don't then we have to change society...In other words, writing draws the reader's attention to certain contradictions and anomalies in society and says, Do you want these things, or even if you do, what will the end product be?<sup>5</sup>

What was a 'Jewish' poem has become also a 'committed' poem, depending on which community of writers that Silkin felt himself to be a part of at that time. The problem that this dual poetic identity raises is that the two 'perspectives' that he announces himself to inhabit at times threaten to contradict and compete against one another. His commitment to addressing what he believed were the pressing social and ethical issues of his historical moment, and to the role that poetry could, and more importantly, should play in exposing these 'contradictions and anomalies', meant that he was forced to transgress the unwritten rules that shaped both artistic communities.

In the correspondence between Silkin and the editorial boards of publications such as *The Jewish Quarterly*, the *Jewish Chronicle* and the *Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*, this tension manifests itself repeatedly. On a number of occasions his submission of what he deemed to be a 'Jewish' poem was returned to him with a letter praising yet ultimately rejecting his 'contentious' and overly politicised approach. Jon Kimche, then editor

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<sup>5</sup>

of the *Jewish Observer*, went as far as to argue that one poem, which addressed Middle Eastern Judaism and its relationship to both Christianity and Islam, was too 'tremendously powerful' to be included. Kimche explained:

Because it was so good its effect on our mixed readership might be too strong for our liking.<sup>6</sup>

Another letter, this time from Tosco Fyvel, literary editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*, hands back the poem 'The Church is getting short of breath' with 'a heavy heart', explaining:

It is felt here that JC [sic] is perhaps not the place for a critical appraisal of the church.<sup>7</sup>

The socially radical Silkin, determined to address and combat social and historical injustice, found his subject matter to be at odds with what was expected of the Anglo-Jewish Silkin, a poet highly conscious of his historical and diasporic inheritance. Whether it was his insistence on submitting politically contentious poetry to the *Jewish Observer*, or his decision to write a spirited defense of Isaac Rosenberg for *The Jewish Quarterly*, rather than the speech on contemporary Anglo-Jewish poetry for which he had been commissioned, Silkin succeeded in distancing himself from many of his Anglo-Jewish contemporaries in the earlier stages of his career.<sup>8</sup>

In the case of his two explanations of 'The Coldness', this uneasy contradiction between conflicting poetic identities manifests itself in the juxtaposing proximity and distance between poet and society. Whilst the *Vanderbilt* interview talks of the sense of alienation and rootlessness that Silkin perceives to be a defining attribute of Anglo-Jewish writing, in *Stand* he instead calls for the complete involvement of the poet, and subsequently the reader, in the event and landscape described. For the 'poem-in-process' to be successful:

...the poet would not be an observer; he would not wear the mask or the persona of an observer – he would be a participator...In other words, he would be less detached.<sup>9</sup>

It is no coincidence that Silkin championed the poetry of the 'committed individual'.<sup>10</sup> The 'criteria' that he set out as the mark of a truly 'socially orientated' art form involved the complete immersion of the poetic gaze into the reality of the subject.<sup>11</sup> In the same way that an object might be 'committed' into the earth, so must the poem be rooted in the moral and social landscape that it derived from. However, a question arises when we consider the paradoxical role that historical 'rootlessness' was considered to play in the formation of a distinctly Jewish poetic. What happened when the desire to produce a 'committed' art form came into conflict with the equal need to acknowledge the historical rootlessness that the position of being a Jewish writer placed upon him? The answer to this question lies in the position that Silkin took in relation to his seemingly similar-minded contemporaries within the Jewish community within Britain. When examining his approach in relation to his fellow Jewish poets, a new vision of Silkin emerges; one that sheds new light on the pressures and challenges that led to the formation of his paradoxical committed and rootless rhetoric.

One of the most telling demonstrations of Silkin's equal similarity and disparity to his contemporaries is to compare his position in relation to that of his contemporary Dannie Abse. Abse, like Silkin, was also an editor of a left-wing poetry magazine. Alongside the poet Howard Sergeant, he founded and edited both the anthology *Mavericks* and the magazine *Poetry and Poverty*, a response to what both perceived to be the 'anti-rhetorical' and even 'anti-poetic' style of The Movement poets.<sup>12</sup> Yet alongside his role as a 'maverick' British writer and editor, he was also a self-asserted, consciously 'Jewish' writer, whose self-realization of his artistry and maturity was marked by his witness of the Holocaust - a fact that Abse himself explains in 'White Balloon'.<sup>13</sup>

The importance of his Jewishness upon both the style and content of his writing is reflected in his many contributions to *The Jewish Quarterly*, a journal that gave a voice to many of the major thinkers and voices in Jewish literary, cultural and political life in Britain and further afield. Alongside Abse and fellow poets such as Michael Hamburger and Emmanuel Litvinoff, Silkin was also at one time a regular contributor. At the same time, his work also appeared in both *Mavericks* and various issues of *Poetry and Poverty*. Through their shared belonging to these two distinctive and yet overlapping communities of writers, one comprised of 'Committed'

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'Mavericks', the other of Jewish writers from all over Britain and the world (including many who also appeared in either 'Mavericks' or the *Stand* anthology *Poetry of the Committed Individual*), Abse and Silkin had much in common. Even in terms of their personal development there were significant parallels. They shared, for example, a connection to Wales. Abse was born in Cardiff in 1923, whilst Silkin was evacuated to Wales from London during the War. So too they shared a connection to cosmopolitan London life, Silkin having been born there in 1930, Abse having moved there in 1943 to attend Westminster Medical School. Despite their different personalities (Silkin is frequently described as being 'difficult', even affectionately by his friends, whilst Abse is known as a more 'benign' character), the importance of the connection to one another has been great enough for the Jewish poetry critic Peter Lawson to name them together as "two of the most significant poets of the period".<sup>14</sup> The historian Tony Kushner groups them together as being integral to the 'new generation' of British-Jewish writers in the 1970's; Those who began to engage more 'directly with the Holocaust' compared to their 'apologist' predecessors.<sup>15</sup> Kushner may underestimate the level of poetic engagement that was taking place far earlier than the early seventies, but his assumption nonetheless highlights the critical tendency to group Abse and Silkin together as belonging to one, clearly defined 'group' of poets. However, to take for granted their commonality due to the fact of their Jewishness would be to ignore the varying and even conflicting views that each poet shared and expressed regarding the role of the Jewish poet in post-War England.

In one of the first articles published in the newly formed *The Jewish Quarterly*, Dannie Abse sets out his definition of what makes a truly Jewish poet, as opposed to a poet who is a Jew. The difference between the two categories, he argues, comes down to the matter of exile:

To be a Jewish poet means more than to produce poetry that is pervaded by an Old Testament fury or by a certain prophetic quality; rather it is to accept a unique situational predicament, a fugitive otherness resulting from a historical tradition of exile.<sup>16</sup>

By this definition the First World War poet Isaac Rosenberg, who was championed by Silkin, was not a Jewish poet, despite his Jewish faith. He did not accept or cherish his otherness, but rather resented his alienated position. The piece, entitled 'Portrait of a Jewish Poet', which intended to champion the 'first' Anglo-Jewish poet Emmanuel Litvinoff (another regular in *Stand*), highlights the potential tension between the two poet's perspectives on their relationship to English and British society. By his own admission, Silkin adhered to the opinion that to be a Jew was to inherit a tradition of alienation, yet the condition that Abse places on this alienation – that it must be not only accepted, but also accentuated and embraced - did not fit with Silkin's vision of poetry as a means of cross-cultural communication and social outreach.

Yet despite the fact that the editorial team echoed Abse's opinion, Silkin continued to contribute to the journal. His involvement attests to his determination to offer an alternative view on the future of Jewish writing in Britain. In a letter to *The Jewish Quarterly*, published in autumn 1955, Silkin responded to the question of Jewish cultural survival with an imperative very different from Abse's. In the wake of the creation of the state of Israel, and the subsequent fact that by definition the Jews are no longer a people without a home, Silkin suggested that if a diasporic Anglo-Jewish culture was to survive, then it must begin to look outside its own 'community of experience'. Rather than emphasising the particularity of the Jewish experience, as Abse had done, he advocated a pluralistic approach, asking that the Jews must be portrayed as just one example of a number of minority groups who have suffered. Instead of focussing upon the 'fugitive otherness' of historical and modern Judaism, Silkin demanded that the 'Jewish experience' be put into dialogue with other 'communities of suffering'.<sup>17</sup>

What both Silkin and Abse focussed upon as the decider of the fate of Jewish writing, revolved around the question of who – rather than what – must be addressed in the Jewish poem. Abse's portrait of the historical and contemporary Jewish poet pointed to a rhetoric that more openly sought to emphasise otherness, whereas in his letter to the *Quarterly* Silkin advocated a style that celebrated the capability of the Jewish writer to address a universal community, both in England and further afield. Yet whilst this approach signalled Silkin's wish to open out the Jewish experience, there is nonetheless still an unresolved tension that tempers this sentiment, illuminated in his choice of language when he describes his intention to reach out to:

a community which is not Jewish (but is nevertheless quite human and civilized).<sup>18</sup>

The parenthesised caveat, though ironic in tone, undermines the sincerity of the initial intention. Its inclusion reveals the continuing rawness of Silkin's collective memory of racial exclusion and persecution throughout

English history. As well as this revelation, the double-ness of the phrase raises the rather contentious question as to the origin of Silkin's wish to open out the Jewish experience. It left unclear whether his call for universality in fact derived from a point of anger as to the continued ignorance and even racism of those around him in England. The estrangement between the poet and the community he apparently wished to address demonstrates the unresolved paradox between inclusivity and alienation that appears time and time again throughout Silkin's early representation of English society.

It is only in his first full collection, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, that Silkin was able to transcend this tension. This is because, unlike his following two collections, the poems dwell in a symbolic realm, one that transcends the specific modern landscapes associated with Jewish persecution, focussing instead on a more universal, biblical representation of suffering. The result is a poetry that addresses alienation and displacement, and yet reaches out to appeal to the sympathy, and above all the humanity, of its readership, whatever their faith or background. The visionary ambition of *The Peaceable Kingdom* did enough to earn the accolade of the 'finest first volume of poetry written by a living English poet' by Merle Brown.<sup>19</sup> In poems such as 'No Land Like it' Silkin showcases what Peter Lawson has defined as his pluralistic, 'inclusive humanism' – his desire to 'deterritorialise' the different cultures and landscapes of England and Europe.<sup>20</sup> The poem does not shy away from the displacement and victimisation of the speaker, or from his Jewishness. Yet the acknowledgement of persecution works to unite the speaker with the imagined universal reader, rather than highlight their difference. The land of the speaker may be a 'hollow land', whose 'limbs are out of joint elsewhere', and whose blood 'is fevered with/a loveless climate', yet despite this a hand can still be 'given in love'.<sup>21</sup> The poem is elegiac, full of the dark reminders of Jewish suffering. Yet whilst the 'shadows' of those who hunt the Jews like foxes are kept anonymous, elusive, the 'I' of the speaker invites the reader to share in his homelessness. It is the state of victimhood that unites the protagonist with his readers rather than his complicity. It is easy to glimpse the pluralistic desire to open out experience that Silkin talks of in his letter to the magazine. Yet *The Re-Ordering of The Stones*, published seven years after his first full collection, features a landscape that was less recognisable as the *Peaceable Kingdom* of the painter Edward Hicks, and more as an urbanised, mapping out of post-War England and Europe. It would seem that whilst Silkin was able to advocate universalism in a non-specific, imagined 'kingdom', when faced with real, tangible artefacts of a specifically English history of persecution, he found the act of geographical and cultural de-territorialisation harder to achieve.

The problem of Silkin's rhetorical distance from his poetic landscape is a subject that has previously been considered not in relation to the pressures placed upon him by his Jewish inheritance, but rather as stemming from his position as the editor of *Stand*. Comments in the various editorials of the *Quarterly* (a notable example being his assertion that 'the relation of a poet to his poems is the same as that of a lavatory cleaner to the job of cleaning lavatories') have led critics of his work to attribute his early 'inscrutable remoteness' to his over-emphasis on the communicative, social potential of the poem.<sup>22</sup> Merle Brown has gone as far as to claim that it took Silkin's exposure to the 'healing emptiness' of America, (first in 1965 and then again in 1968, where he took up a year-long residency at the Writer's Program at the University of Iowa) to 'liberate' his style into one connected to the scenes and people he addressed.<sup>23</sup> The importance that Brown places on Silkin's transatlantic experience is not without basis. Certainly his release from what Michael Wood, in an article accompanying Brown's, exaggeratingly called the 'sense of crowding; of litter, both material and moral; ... of the oppressive, inescapable, thoroughly internalized presence of others' in post-war British culture, aided what would become his less sermonistic and more involved later style.<sup>24</sup> However, what Brown and Wood do not account for is the fact that Silkin was negotiating with a further creative tradition besides that of the centrist or socialist English canon. What the difference between *The Peaceable Kingdom* and *The Re-ordering of Stones* arguably suggests is not that it was the specific influence of American culture that altered Silkin's relation to his subject. Rather, it was the act of voluntary exile from England that allowed Silkin to form a new perspective on his scarred but regenerative homeland.

This newly independent platform is reflected in Silkin's notable absence from the pages of both *The Jewish Quarterly* and *Poetry and Poverty* after the mid-1960s, though he subscribed to both publications up to his death.<sup>25</sup> In turn, *The Jewish Quarterly* distanced itself from Silkin. He was replaced as editor of an anthology issue of Jewish poetry by the then-editor Jacob Sonntag, who later published Silkin's intended introduction with the disclaimer:

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The views expressed by the writer...may not be shared by other Anglo-Jewish poets and novelists...Nevertheless, as an expression of an *individual view* by one who is deeply and wholly engaged in writing *English poetry*, it deserves the closest attention by *everyone* concerned with *Anglo-Jewish writing*, its present and its future. [my italics]<sup>26</sup>

My italics highlight the distinction that Sonntag makes between Silkin – an ‘individual’ writing ‘English poetry’- and the rest of the Anglo-Jewish community. The message, though polite, is clear enough. Though Silkin’s poem continued to appear infrequently for another few years, this article was to be the last of his contributions in prose, even if, up to 1966, he still attempted to remain involved in the *Quarterly*’s on-going discussion of the state and future of Anglo-Jewish writing.<sup>27</sup> In his 1958 article, he writes of rootlessness, declaring it to be the ‘distinguishing mark’ of Anglo-Jewish ‘distinctiveness’, and goes on to explain that:

My poetry reflects the rootlessness of my Jewish community, but it reflects as well, I think, the rootlessness many of us felt then, and do still feel, a rootlessness generated by the War, an isolation increased by the chaos in which we grew up.<sup>28</sup>

What Silkin called for was the recognition that rootlessness was a condition local to all those who experienced the War, in whatever capacity. What his particular position eventually and rather ironically allowed him, despite the disapproval from many of his contemporaries, was the capacity and ethical authority to make rootlessness and alienation the uniting attribute of a Europe-wide community of experience. In doing this he was able to make commitment and rootlessness mutually beneficial terms.

Silkin’s position as an ‘individual’, balancing but never equating the obligations placed upon him by his heritage and ideology, created a poetry that refused to be pigeonholed. Like Abse, Auschwitz may have ‘made’ Silkin a Jew, yet he was always keen to show how it had also made him a human being. It was this realisation that imbued him with a sense of responsibility to broaden out his experience. Poetry, with its capability to collapse histories and compress geographical distance, became a way to illuminate the importance of the Jewish ‘historical sense’ for the wider population. For Silkin the Jew and Silkin the radical it could unite a community, reminding them, sometimes in forceful terms, of the varying but nonetheless shared need to come to terms with and respond to the Holocaust.

## Notes

I’m grateful to the Silkin estate for allowing permission to access and quote material from the Silkin archive.

Dannie Abse, ‘White Balloon’, *Selected Poems* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1994), pp.209-210.

<sup>2</sup>Jon Silkin, in Peter Marchant, Jon Silkin, Michael Waters, ‘Attend to the Unnecessary Beasts: a Conversation with Jon Silkin’, *Vanderbilt Poetry Review*, Vol. 1, no.2, (Summer 1973), p.28.

<sup>3</sup> Benjamin, ‘Theses on the Philosophy of History’, p.259.

<sup>4</sup> Jon Silkin, ‘The Coldness’, [The Re-ordering of Stones], *Selected Poems*, (London: Sinclair and Stephenson, 1990) p. 28.

<sup>5</sup> Silkin, ‘No Politics, No Poetry’, p.14.

<sup>6</sup> Jon Kimche to Jon Silkin, 4<sup>th</sup> August 1961, Silkin Correspondence, Brotherton Archive, University of Leeds, BC MS 20c Silkin/8/JEW-3, accessed 21/01/2013.

<sup>7</sup> Tosco Fyvel to Jon Silkin, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1976, Silkin Correspondence Brotherton Archive, University of Leeds, BC MS 20c Silkin/8/JEW-1, accessed 21/01/2013.

<sup>8</sup> In 1966 Silkin implored Sonntag to involve him in an Israeli based symposium on Jewish poetry, asking to be taken to Israel alongside Dannie Abse, Emanuel Litvinoff, and Chaim Bermant (check?), as part of a delegation of Anglo-Jewish writers. When Sonntag capitulated, and commissioned Silkin to write a piece on ‘contemporary anglo-Jewish writing’, what he received instead was a spirited defence of Isaac Rosenberg, apparently inspired by Sonntag and Abse’s earlier omission of Rosenberg in a *Jewish Quarterly* feature on Anglo-Jewish Poetry. Exasperated, Sonntag was forced to reject and withdraw Silkin’s contribution less than three weeks before the group were set to fly. Jacob Sonntag to Jon Silkin, Correspondence, 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1966, BC MS 20c Stand/3/ JEW-2, accessed 21/01/2013.

<sup>9</sup> Silkin, ‘No Politics, no Poetry’, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> Jon Silkin, ‘Introduction’ (1971), *Poetry of the Committed Individual: A Stand Anthology of Poetry*, (London: Gollancz, 1973), pp. 17-39.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, p.18.

- <sup>12</sup> Howard Sargeant and Danny Abse (Eds), 'Introduction', *Mavericks: An Anthology*, (London: Editions Poetry and Poverty, 1957), (pp.9.13), p.9.
- <sup>13</sup> Dannie Abse, 'White Balloon', *Selected Poems*.
- <sup>14</sup> Rodney Pybus, Jon Silkin: *Obituary*, *The Independent*, (Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December 1997), <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/obituary-jon-silkin-1286290.html>, accessed 10/01/2013; Peter Lawson, in, Nicolas Wroe, 'Doctor of Verse: Profile of Dannie Abse', *The Guardian*, (Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2003), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2003/mar/15/featuresreviews.guardianreview31>, accessed 10/01/2013.
- <sup>15</sup> Tony Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination: A Social and Cultural History* (Oxford and Cambridge (Mass): Blackwell, 1994), p.256.
- <sup>16</sup> Abse, 'Portrait of a Jewish Poet', *The Jewish Quarterly*, spring 1955, vol.1, no.4, (pp.16-22), p.16.
- <sup>17</sup> Abse, *ibid.*; Jon Silkin, 'Letter: Cultural Survival', *The Jewish Quarterly*, autumn 1955, vol. 3, no 2 (10), p.36.
- <sup>18</sup> Silkin, *ibid.*
- <sup>19</sup> Merle Brown, 'Stress in Silkin's Poetry', *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 18, no.3, (Summer, 1977), p. 363.
- <sup>20</sup> Peter Lawson, *Anglo-Jewish Poetry: From Isaac Rosenberg to Elaine Feinstein*, (London and Portland, Or: Vallentine Mitchell, 2006), pp. 13, 7, 133.
- <sup>21</sup> Silkin, 'No Land like It', *The Peaceable Kingdom*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1954) pp.11, 12.
- <sup>22</sup> Jon Silkin and Merle Brown, 'Stress in Silkin's Poetry and the Healing Emptiness of America', pp. 373,389.
- <sup>23</sup> Merle Brown, 'Stress in Silkin's Poetry', p.373.
- <sup>24</sup> Michael Wood, 'We all hate home: English Poetry Since World War II', *Contemporary Literature*, Vol. 18, No. 3, 'The Two Poetries Special Issue, (Summer, 1977), (pp.305-318), p.305.
- <sup>25</sup> This was obtained through gaining access to Silkin's archived library, courtesy of Jon Glover and Brotherton Special Collections.
- <sup>26</sup> Jacob Sonntag, 'Editorial Introductory note to Jon Silkin's "Some Reflections on Anglo-Jewish Poetry"', *The Jewish Quarterly*, winter 1958, vol. 5, no. 3 (19) (pp.9-11), p.9.
- <sup>27</sup> Jacob Sonntag to Jon Silkin, Correspondence, 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1966, BC MS 20c Stand/3/ JEW-2, accessed 21/01/2013.
- <sup>28</sup> Jon Silkin, 'Some Reflections of Anglo-Jewish Poetry'.