

8.1.1990

Rabbi Dr. Alexander Carlebach,  
1, Hagidem St., Jerusalem 94590.

Answer (short) 24.1.90

Dear Alex,

Your 2-language circular, dated two months ago, reached me from England, and not only under wrong adress (s.a.), but also without sender. As ~~the~~ postoffice here knows me quite well, they hand<sup>ed</sup> it to me with a warning: open it outside our office, as we do not know, if it contains a letter-bomb!

Before I give you a fair warning, which you should better know, I have a few questions to ask. The circular says, that (in Hebrew) you received already the majority of circulars sent out, adding in brackets 50%! You will kindly accept, what I have to say, as strictly confidential, meant only for you. ((Being blind on one eye now, excuse all typing errors)) I can only regret, that the Hebrew and English texts of the circular are dissimilar in certain phrases. I utterly disbelieve, that our cousin Ephraim Adler (ornated with the pseudonym Yair) ever was the right man, to collect and edit the planned book. If he would ever have troubled himself of talking to me at length, I woul have confronted him with the two main questions: a) Who are the people who received the questionnaires? b) What other sources (Archives a.s.o.) did he use? The Joel/Adler/Carlebach family had a great many members, who married into our families. Vide the memoirs of Ephraim's father Alexander. And even Alex A. left out quite a lot, f.i. someone like Wilfrid Israel, famed for his work of rescuing countless Jews from Nazi-Germany, shot down in 1943 by the Nazis, who took his fat, cigar-smoking secretary for Churchill. Israel's mother was an Adler. Did Yair or you send a questionnaire to my cousin Ruth Ascher in Reading? Basic dates about her parents and sisters I do have. But I shall not volunteer them. The English version of your circular speaks about the intent of publishing our Stammbaum. That is, of course, to some extent much easier than to publish a history, but to publish such an enormous Stammbaum is, I restate this, beyond the abilities of Yair. You could have done that. It does not help me, or anyone, at all, to receive a new questionnaire now, with a time-limit (Yair had ten years!), without knowing, who is, in your opinion, still missing. As far as I remember, I sent mine long ago. Did Yair send ~~it~~ it to Chaim Cohn, or was he not "kosher" enough for you? There were so many Joels (again see: Alex Adler's torso of his memoirs) not mentioned, that I ask you, if you received questionnaires from or about the children of my uncle Dr. med. Julius Joel, who, like his brother Eduard died in Lübeck, or about Julius' sons Walther (still living), Ernst and Theodor? Has Yair included, to name but two: the Hamburg Jessuruns and Koch, our sephardic relatives? How much does he have about the two Chief-Rabbis of Great Britain, Adler, and their offsprings? I note, with sorrow, that it would be beyond your means, to provide me, or anyone else with a list of those, you already have. But for me Yair's "work" is a poker-game, no cards shown! So he would, eventually, have to blame himself, if the published Stammbaum will have more blanks then entries. In what language do you plan the Stammbaum? If in German, I doubt, if "Yair" is able to do that. I have ~~xxx~~ reasons, to doubt that.

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And now comes my "warning", resulting from your circular's remark, ~~that~~ you are in doubt, if the Kiel-Government would finance, even in part, the costs of this publication. By the way: 5000 Dollars will hardly suffice for that. You must have contacts with Yad VaShem or Prof. Jacob Katz of the Leo Baeck Institute. Both ~~may~~ be ready to help. --- Why I mistrust Yair, has concrete reasons. He was, at least once, in Lübeck and talked to a high-school teacher there, who intends to publish a 3-volume book on the Jews of Lübeck. As I know more than enough about that pompous fellow, I do not only doubt, that he will be able to write that, I got information (from someone else in Lübeck, concerning also a certain lady there) that Yair, when he visited that man, got confusing if not untrue answers. One reason may be, that Yair does not <sup>know</sup> enough German and misunderstood that teacher's remarks about lots of letters by my Ururgrossvater Fischl/Joel and my Urgrosvater A.S. Adler. In 1984 I received, quite voluntary, 3 handwritten letters <sup>of</sup> the two rabbis, addressed to the district-court Lübeck and the Lübeck Senate. So I made a "test" and wrote to that lady, the director of the Lübeck-City-Archives, asking her for letters of the two and of grandfather E. Adler, pointing out, that the three of them had quite official business with the Lübeck-authorities, my grandfather as head of the Senate's medical court-of-honour. Her Answer: No such letters exist! She "advised" me, to turn to that teacher, who had collected all relevant documents from all Lübeck-Offices and from Kiel, in preparation of his book. So the teacher must have misled Yair! Even more: if that teacher collected so much material from so many official sources, I do not believe, that he is legally entitled to ~~use~~ <sup>use</sup> f.i. documents of our forefathers without our knowing about it at all. Our State-Archivist Prof. Alsberg told me, that Israel would, today, not any more request the handing-over of the originals, but certainly photocopies!

And, to end this story: I received a short while ago two publications, a) a booklet with photographs of the Moisling-Cemetery. (With silly translations of the inscriptions - the banker Alexander Carlebach f.i. described as "Junggeselle", also we know, what Alex Adler does not mention explicitly in his memoirs, that A.C. was married to Sonja née Persitz, who escaped to south-Africa and died later there. Chaim Cohn told me, when I asked him about "missing" tombs, like those of Julius u. Eduard Joel and his wife and his father-in-law, the banker Cohn, who must be buried there, that he, Chaim, had visited the cemetery himself and found a lot of inscriptions already too faded to be readable. The same happened to me.-)

The second publication, I received the same week, was a Lübeck-History, edited by the a.m. directice of the City-Archives, Jews hardly mentioned at all, certainly not by name. I regard as quite possible, that the teacher will in main use the histories of the Jews of Moisling by your grandfather and by Raw David Winter. As Guttkuhn, the teachers' name, never turned to any of us here to receive necessary material, and being the very bad historian, he is, knowing no Hebrew at all, nevertheless much nearer to the Kiel-Government, ~~who~~ <sup>they</sup> might give him the money, to publish his History of the Jews of Lübeck. ~~So they will...~~

F from the predecessor of the lady (!)

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Even if Yair was foolish enough, to give his father's Memoirs to Guttkuhn, and even if Guttkuhn is clever enough to have detected Caim Cohn's and your own essays in the "Year Books" of the Baeck Institute and the (much weaker) book by your uncle Hartwig (if Guttkuhn reads English), he remains still unable, to reconstruct the history of all Lübeck's Kehillah-history. For ~~the~~ he would have to wade through archives of all Lübeck Associations and offices, who deal with physicians, lawyers, industrialists and what not. If such Archives exist, or open their files to him !

I am especially mistrusting Lübeck's Cityhall, with which I made the worst possible experiences. And noting now, that the head of the Lübeck Archives "knows" nothing about us all, referring us to Mr. Guttkuhn, Lübeck returned, after some good times, when my grandfather was a physician there, to its ages-old Antisemitism.

For me the a.m. mentioned Publications came as a shock: Jews buried are registered, their lives are not worth mentioning.

So, no one will write about the lives of our families, incl. the Carlebachs, Adlers and Joels, for Gentiles to behold. Nor about others of our relatives, the Mühsams and Landaus. *No "Stammbaum" can replace a history.*

The "trained reader", you are, you may forgive me my long letter and my anger. I have myself some good friends in Germany. But after a very long period of Hasbarah-tours throuout Germany I know, that the whole lot of our friends there, called contemptuously "Philosemites", may all in all reach the number of hundertthousand. Among more then 60 Million Germans. I had, last week, reason to write a sharp letter to one of the German leaders of those friends of ours, as one of his most active friends on the way to Israel had sent us a circular letter, revealing, that he became by now a Follower of the German so called "Republicans", who, spreading out by now to East-Germany too, preach friendship with the Arabs and war on the Jews.

You once wrote me about your "surprise", that I refused to intervene in Lübeck for this Stammbaum-Project of yours. You will have to take it from me, that, if you (we) had chosen Hamburg instead of Lübeck, we might have found open ears there! You may know my dear old friend Baruch Ophir. He knows Hamburg. It is in Hamburg, where we have, and had, good friends. I certainly can attest to that.

About two months ago I had house-guests from a group from Kiel, on a 14-days-roundtrip in Israel. I seldomly heard so much idiotic misinformation about Israel, then on that long evening. They, like the circular-letter-man, I mentioned above, "knew" only, that we are the suppressers of the "poor" Arabs, and had no real claim to our land.

I certainly am no match to you in Rabbinical knowledge, even if I had my grand grandfather Adler and was in my Lübeck-school-days a pupil of your grandfather and of uncel Joseph, but there is nothing you could teach me on the Germans.

You will be kind enough, to read this letter, if I add my promise, that I shall not bother you ~~again~~ again, ever.

*25 years ago, I refused Kurt Blumenfeld's offer to send me as "Schwimmer" to the German Jews of to-day over there. I told him, the formula "non olet" was unacceptable to me. 1/13 1972 Yours Eli R.*

*P.S. In 1962 Dr. Alex Bein sent me for 7 1/2 years to Germany, to rescue documents of the burned-out Jewish Kehillah. That is, how I managed "i.a. to get the last documents of the Lübeck-Kehilla to Jerusalem.*